

# DRAFT PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE EAST SMALL AREA PLAN

SEPTEMBER 1, 2022

District of Columbia  
Office of Planning



WE ARE WASHINGTON  
GOVERNMENT OF THE  
DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA  
DC MURIEL BOWSER, MAYOR

PENNSYLVANIA

AVENUE EAST



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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Pennsylvania Avenue East Small Area Plan (PAESAP) is a guide for the community, District government, housing providers, property owners, and advocacy organizations to implement the Comprehensive Plan's policies for greater equity and resilience. Developed during the COVID-19 public health emergency, the PAESAP sets a community-informed vision in advance of future development within the neighborhood and in relation to broader local and metropolitan growth patterns.

At first glance, Pennsylvania Avenue SE seems to be a congested commuter route moving vehicular traffic in and out of the District's city center. However, a closer assessment reveals a community of close-knit, multi-generational neighborhoods on either side of the corridor. Community concerns include the need for additional affordable housing, including both rental and ownership options, to support families and first-time homebuyers.

To address these concerns, the Office of Planning (OP) undertook a people-centered planning effort that aligns with citywide priorities including housing production, economic recovery, and racial equity. Most significantly, the PAESAP outlines a community vision for the future of Pennsylvania Avenue East that creates a vibrant and inviting destination for all. The recommendations provided here guide infill development along the corridor, create more vibrant public spaces including Twining Square, improve access to existing and new community amenities; reduce conflicts between vehicles; pedestrians; and cyclists; and increase housing opportunities to meet the needs of the community.

The PAESAP when realized, will create an environment where families could leisurely stroll the corridor lined with mature trees and green spaces. Traffic calming would allow for bike lanes, less noise, and enhanced views of the Capitol Dome. The community envisions restaurants, coffee shops, and boutique shops, owned by local residents and people of color, that would entice residents, visitors, and stakeholders to linger on an enjoyable

commercial street to pass the time. The PAESAP includes public realm and urban design guidelines for Pennsylvania Avenue stakeholders to lead conversations around community development.

The PAESAP is framed around the following themes:

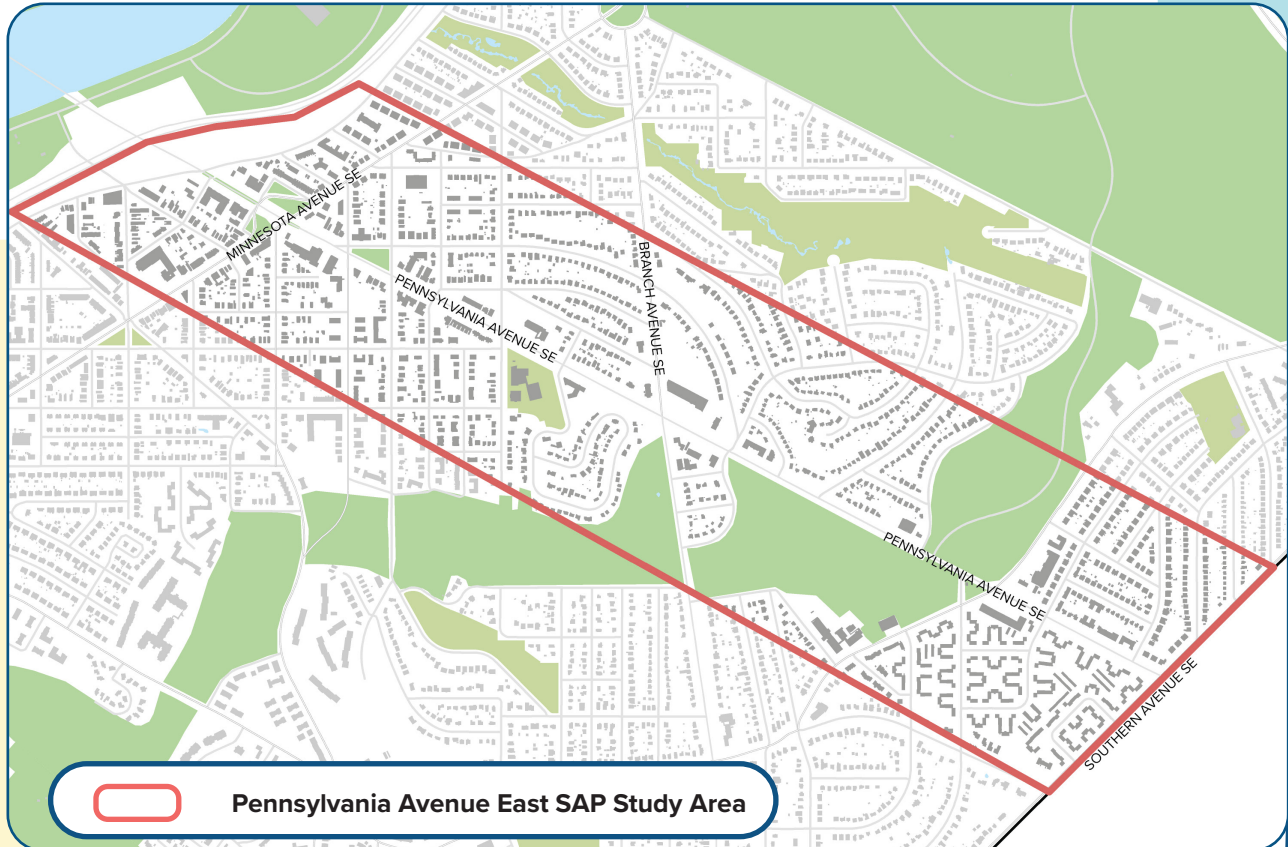
- Economic Development and Retail Opportunity
- Transportation Access and Connectivity
- Housing Opportunities and Affordability
- Vibrant Public Realm and Urban Design

Collectively, the recommendations around each theme establish a framework that will support a thriving commercial main street where all residents can live, work, eat, and play. Through the implementation of this plan, residents will see increased investments in inclusive resources and neighborhood amenities. Future private redevelopment and zoning changes will also be guided by recommendations in this Small Area Plan, which emphasizes increased housing opportunities and neighborhood amenities.

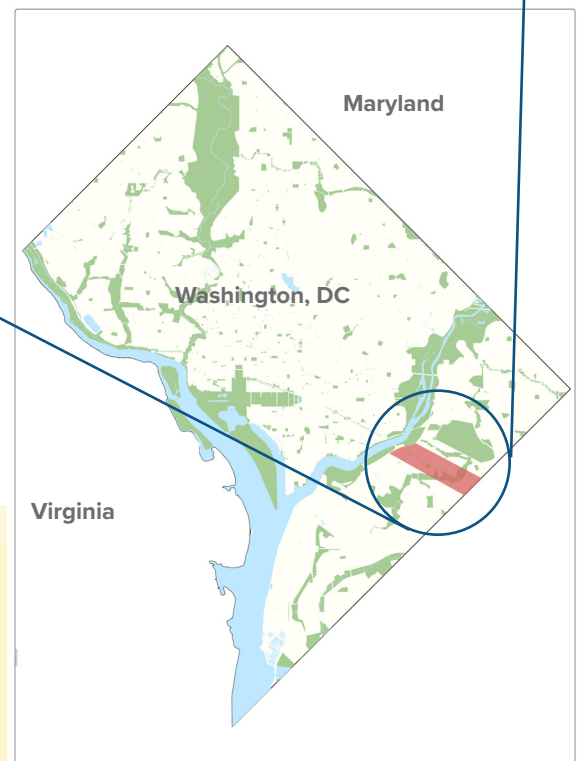


Pennsylvania Avenue East Main Street Initiative

## PAESAP Study Area



Pennsylvania Avenue East refers to the study area boundaries and includes the section of the Pennsylvania Avenue SE corridor from the Sousa Bridge to Southern Avenue SE. Also included are the adjacent blocks within  $\frac{1}{4}$  mile of the corridor. In the PAESAP, the term Pennsylvania Avenue East refers to both the corridor itself along with the surrounding community. Recommendations for Pennsylvania Avenue SE or the “corridor” include the roadway and adjacent public rights of way only.





Thai Orchid Kitchen exterior mural located at the 2300 block of Pennsylvania Ave SE

# INTRODUCTION

Pennsylvania Avenue SE is one of the best-known streets in the country. It is one of the busiest arterials in the District of Columbia, carrying nearly 40,000 vehicles per day. Corridor traffic also includes Metro and commuter buses, and commercial vehicles during morning and evening rush hours. For Ward 7 residents who call Pennsylvania Avenue East home, this corridor is loved for its majestic tree-lined landscaping, history, and iconic views of the Capitol.

In Fiscal Year 2021, the Council allocated funds for OP to engage the community in drafting a small area plan for the Pennsylvania Avenue East corridor. The PAESAP boundary extends approximately 1.5 miles along Pennsylvania Avenue SE from the eastern landing of the Sousa Bridge to Southern Avenue SE and extends a quarter mile to the north and south of the corridor. The corridor is roughly 0.7 square miles in total – representing 1% of the District’s total land area. The neighborhoods in this plan area include L’Enfant Square, Randall Highlands, Penn Branch, DuPont Park, Fairlawn, Hillcrest, and Fairfax Village/Fort Davis. The

plan boundary constitutes the areas where the plan’s recommendations will be focused.

## WHY PLAN NOW?

### The Comprehensive Plan and other Planning Efforts

The PAESAP is informed by the 2021 Comprehensive Plan update and guided by the plan’s major themes including equity and racial justice, COVID-19 and recovery, and housing access and affordability. During the 2021 Comprehensive Plan Update, the Pennsylvania Avenue East Community Coalition,

residents, and other stakeholders advocated for a plan that could lead to implementation efforts along the corridor; drive responsible and inclusive development; help establish the corridor as a retail destination; encourage a vibrant public realm and gateway; and position the corridor as a multimodal, pedestrian and bike friendly community. The PAESAP builds on the 2008 Pennsylvania Avenue SE Corridor Land Development Plan, incorporates policy approaches established in the DC Vibrant Retail Streets Toolkit and DC Cultural Plan, and was informed by the 2021 Pennsylvania Avenue East Main Street Market Analysis, as well as subsequent District Department of Transportation (DDOT) studies and plans including the Pennsylvania Avenue/Minnesota Avenue Intersection Improvement Project and Far Southeast Livability Study.

The PAESAP seeks to direct public, private, and philanthropic investment along the corridor and

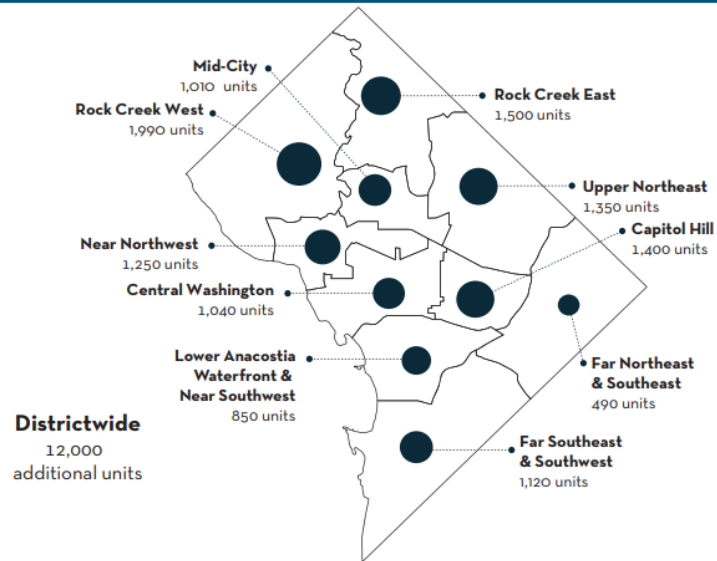
acts as a guide for District government, community stakeholders and leaders, and developers to follow. By focusing on the issues most relevant to the community, this plan helps establish a guide towards equitable development and provides supplemental guidance to the Comprehensive Plan.

### Driving Forces: Housing

In 2019, Mayor Bowser set a bold goal to deliver an additional 36,000 new units of housing and 12,000 units of dedicated affordable housing by 2025. The District’s Housing Equity Report, released later that year, created planning area-specific goals for total housing units and dedicated affordable units. The report established a need for an additional 490 new affordable units in the Far Northeast and Southeast planning area, where the study area is located.

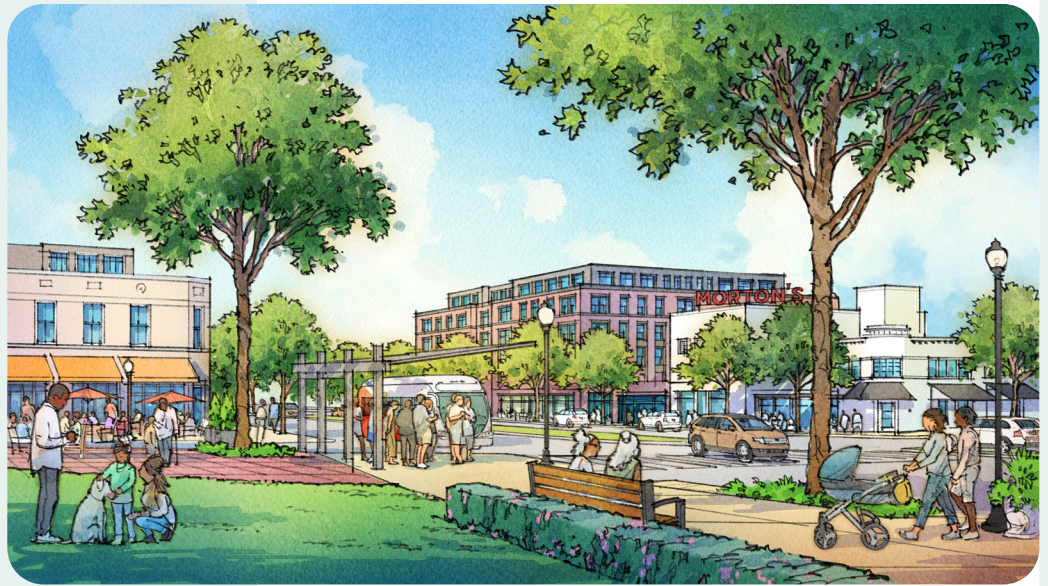
## 2019 Housing Equity Report: *Creating Goals for Areas of Our City*

The Housing Equity Report and the District’s Comprehensive Plan set a goal for a minimum of 15% of each planning area’s housing units to be affordable by 2050. To chart a path toward a more equitable and inclusive future, the Housing Equity Report set affordable housing goals by planning area. The Housing Equity Report determined that of the District’s ten planning areas, Far Northeast and Southeast was one of three planning areas on track to meet this goal.





The PAESAP outlines a community vision for the future of Pennsylvania Avenue East that creates a vibrant and inviting destination for all.



A Vision of Pennsylvania Avenue, SE at Twinning Square looking towards the Sousa Bridge

## EQUITY IN PLACE

The 2021 Comprehensive Plan update states that “equity exists where all people share equal rights, access, choice, opportunities, and outcomes, regardless of characteristics such as race, class, or gender.”

The Comprehensive Plan Framework Element provides guidance for racial equity in particular, stating that “the District achieves racial equity when race no longer determines one’s socioeconomic outcomes; when everyone has what they need to thrive, no matter where they live or their socioeconomic status; and when racial divides no longer exist between people of color and their white counterparts.” The PAESAP is an essential step towards addressing the historical disinvestment and segregationist land use and development practices that have contributed to the present state of the Pennsylvania Avenue East corridor.

The Comprehensive Plan’s commitment to equity and racial justice guided the recommendations of this SAP by prompting key questions: How has the neighborhood changed? How will it continue to change? And, for whom? This framing has guided the planning process and recommendations in the following ways:

- Understanding and acknowledging the role urban planning has played in furthering discrimination and inequitable outcomes in communities of color.

- Disaggregation of demographic and community participation data by race, gender, and other socio-economic factors, where possible.
- A transparent and open engagement process that centers Black voices and the lived experiences of residents.
- Developing a community vision for equitable and inclusive growth rooted in participatory engagement.

Through the implementation of the PAESAP, Pennsylvania Avenue East will experience improved access to transit and multimodal opportunities; improved pedestrian safety; and an enhanced public realm. The community will also experience infill development that provides additional retail and economic development opportunities especially for local small Black-owned businesses. Additionally, the community will benefit from an affordable housing development pipeline that will include family-sized rental units as well as homeownership options providing opportunities for generational wealth building.

## Health and Social Resiliency

There are numerous factors that influence people’s health and wellbeing – and when taken together, these factors can impact a community’s overall resiliency. Clinical care is just one factor. Social, environmental, and economic factors also determine a community’s health outcomes. These social and structural determinants of health include education, employment, income, housing, transportation, food environment, medical care, outdoor environment, and community safety.

Residents in the Pennsylvania Avenue East study area experience chronic health conditions such as diabetes, high blood pressure, and heart disease at a higher rate on average than other District residents. Households with lower incomes are more susceptible to high blood pressure due to factors such as stress, lack of healthy food access, and poor living conditions. The average life expectancy within the study area is 74 years, 4.5 years shorter than the District’s average. Approximately, 19% of residents living in the Pennsylvania Avenue East study area live with a disability.

Residents have adequate access to physical health resources as compared to mental health facilities in the study area. There are two physical healthcare facilities within the study area as well as additional services within two miles of the area. However mental health services are largely located west of the river, making access more challenging.

## Equity Challenges along Pennsylvania Avenue East Corridor



The average life expectancy within the study area is 74 years, 4.5 years shorter than the District’s average.



19% of residents living in the PAESAP study area live with a disability.

Source: 2019 American Community Survey

## ABOUT SMALL AREA PLANS

A Small Area Plan (SAP) supplements the Comprehensive Plan and outlines recommendations for growth and development at the neighborhood scale. SAPs are developed through a collaborative public process that provides opportunities for community input on priorities in the planning area. SAPs are approved by resolution of the DC Council, and their key recommendations may be incorporated into the Comprehensive Plan in the future.

### Small Area Plans:

- Supplement the Comprehensive Plan by providing land use and urban design guidance for the development of city blocks, corridors, and neighborhoods.
- Engage residents to develop strategic priorities that will shape future development in their neighborhoods.
- Guide capital budget decisions and agency investment priorities.

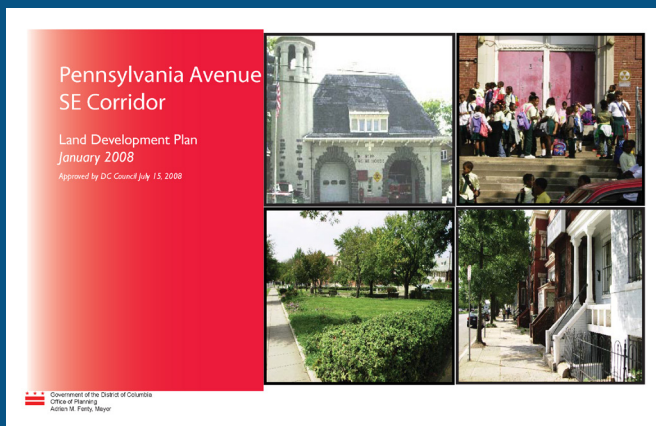
This SAP will guide future growth in the Pennsylvania Avenue East corridor through multi-year implementation

by both the public and private sectors. Community members, advocates, and stakeholders are critical to the implementation process. A SAP can be used by:

- District Agencies: to plan capital improvements, public investments, and programming.
- Zoning Commission: to evaluate development proposals that require discretionary approval.
- Property Owners & Developers: to understand community development priorities to create more compatible projects that meet existing and future needs.
- Community Stakeholders: to implement community-led recommendations, evaluate development proposals, and to advocate for implementation actions by District agencies and by DC Council.
- Residents: to inform their neighbors about the recommendations and continue to build community consensus and advocate for the identified changes.

## 2008 Pennsylvania Avenue SE Corridor Small Area Plan

In 2008, the Office of Planning prepared, and the DC Council approved by resolution, a Small Area Plan for Pennsylvania Avenue SE from Independence Avenue, SE/2nd Street SE eastward to Southern Avenue. The [2008 Pennsylvania Avenue SE Corridor Land Development Plan](#) identified development concepts for selected focus areas within the three-mile study area. The 2021 Comprehensive Plan update integrated the 2008 plan's guidance. The PAESAP builds on the 2008 plan by revisiting existing plan recommendations, highlighting new community aspirations, and providing supplemental guidance to the policies and land use changes approved in the 2021 Comprehensive Plan update. The PAESAP is intended to serve as a companion to the 2008 plan.



## PLANNING PROCESS AND ENGAGEMENT

The PAESAP planning process was centered on robust community engagement with residents, Advisory Neighborhood Commissions (ANCs), neighborhood and civic organizations, businesses and business groups, faith-based organizations, and the Pennsylvania Avenue East Main Street (PAEMS) organization. OP formed a voluntary Community Advisory Committee (CAC) comprised of residents, ANC Commissioners, service providers, and representatives of the active civic associations. Community outreach took place between April 2021 and July 2022.

### Engagement Principles

The PAESAP engagement strategy was informed by the following principles:

- Delivering a transparent and open engagement process that listened, acknowledged, and responded to the voices from the community.
- Expanding opportunities for broad and inclusive participation to fulfill OP's commitment to equity, articulated in the Comprehensive Plan.
- Co-developing a process and content that was informative to a broad a range of audiences.
- Striving for greater accessibility when sharing and presenting information throughout the planning process by developing a range of digital, in-person, and analog formats that are free of technical jargon and coded language.
- Providing a transparent account of expressed desires, aspirations, and concerns reflected throughout the development of the Small Area Plan.

The planning process began during the COVID-19 public health emergency, which severely impacted the possibility of in-person engagement. Community meetings, which would have typically been held in-person, were transitioned to a virtual platform. Working closely with the CAC, the engagement plan was revised to include participatory methods that met public health emergency guidelines. All town hall and community meetings were conducted virtually with multiple



Soufside Market Pop-up at Pennsylvania and Minnesota Avenues



Community event at The Dream Center

# Project Timeline



call-in and participatory methods. The PAESAPs dedicated [project website](#) was used to broadcast all public meetings, save meeting recordings, and allow community members to provide meeting feedback by calling in or leaving a comment. The project website was also used to share plan background, updates, and community surveys. Community members could also sign up for plan notifications including monthly newsletters.

Additionally, the PAESAP was developed in collaboration with several District government

agencies through the interagency working group (IAWG) to inform plan development and ensure plan recommendations are supported by respective implementing agencies.

As public health guidance shifted in response to increasing COVID-19 vaccination rates, the project team launched in-person community engagement through community canvassing, community clean ups, public space activations, and partnerships with local community groups.

## In-person Community Engagement

In-person community engagement took the form of community canvassing and public space activations. Partnerships with local and national organizations helped OP collect community feedback and expand capacity among Ward 7 leaders. OP's partnership with the Pennsylvania Avenue East Main Street allowed them to work with local artists to develop a signage and wayfinding campaign and improve the transit experience along the corridor through temporary seating. Partnering with Soufside Market allowed for a Juneteenth retail activation that featured local Black entrepreneurs, activated the public realm, and built momentum for the Pennsylvania Avenue East Main Street and Soufside Market to continue hosting pop-up retail markets.



Pennsylvania Avenue East Main Street Initiative

## Engagement Summary



Online:  
660+ Participants  
3,650+ Responses  
300+ subscribers



3 - Community  
Town Halls



2 - Recommendation  
Workshops



4 - Visioning  
Conversations



1 - Urban Design  
Workshop



1 - 3 hour Office Hour  
session



9 - Meetings of the Community Advisory Committee

5 - Meetings of the Interagency Workgroup



Community Residents participating in a visioning mural at the annual Juneteenth Celebration during Soufside Market Pop-up at Pennsylvania and Minnesota Avenues



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Earl Howard Photography Studios located on the 2500 block of Pennsylvania Avenue SE





Pennsylvania Avenue SE corridor looking east

# ABOUT PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE EAST

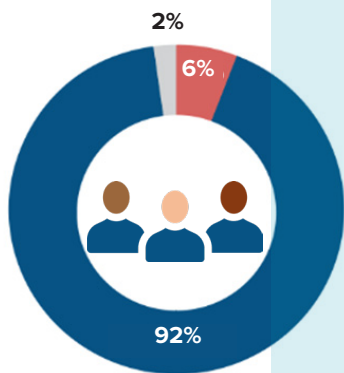
## DEMOGRAPHICS SNAPSHOT

### WHO LIVES IN THE PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE EAST STUDY AREA?

Today, almost 22,000 people call Pennsylvania Avenue East and surrounding communities home, comprising 3% of the District's total population. The community has grown in recent years. Since 2010, the total population along the corridor has risen by 21%. Approximately 92% of Pennsylvania Avenue East residents are Black or African American compared to

48 % of District residents. Pennsylvania Avenue East also has a higher share of residents over the age of 45 compared to the District as a whole. District-wide, residents are two times more likely to receive either a Bachelor's or Graduate degree than residents living in the Pennsylvania Avenue East study area.

### Race

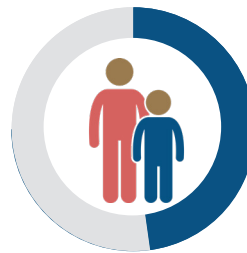


- Black
- White
- Other

### Age Breakdown



**Youth**  
22%



**Adults**  
48%



**Seniors**  
48%

Source: 2019 American Community Survey

# HISTORY AND CULTURAL CONTEXT

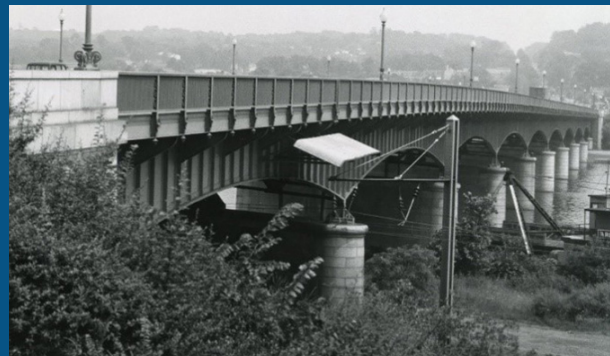
The earliest residents were the Nacotchtank Indians who fished, hunted, and traded along the banks of the Eastern Branch of the Potomac River. In the 1600's, European settlers colonized the land and immediately set about cultivating tobacco, a cash crop for nearly two centuries. They also introduced new diseases which the Nacotchtank had no immunity and displaced the remaining local population from their traditional hunting and fishing camps.

The Anacostia River was the earliest route to Bladensburg, founded in 1742 as a tobacco port. A road from Bladensburg, known as Eastern Branch Road, was carved through the area to Piscataway,

Maryland, a port on the Potomac River. Its route was roughly today's Minnesota Avenue. Maryland formally transferred its ownership to land within the new federal district on December 19, 1791 in what is now Ward 7 of the District. In the period between the establishment of the District of Columbia and the Civil War, much of the area was characterized by large landholdings and small-scale agriculture. Names of the farmers are familiar as they survive today as street names – Sheriff, Lowrie, and Naylor. Some of the farmers held Black people as slaves. For example, in 1855, Thomas Talbert, whose farm was near what is today Alabama and Pennsylvania Avenues SE, enslaved nine people.

## Historical Spotlight: John Philip Sousa Bridge

In 1805, the first Pennsylvania Avenue bridge across the Anacostia River opened. However, the bridge burned during the War of 1812. Fueled by residential growth, a new narrow iron bridge was erected in 1890. This connection to Hill East accelerated economic and residential development. Starting in the early 1930's, the Randle Highlands Citizens Association led efforts to modernize the structure. Their campaign and those followed by the Southeast Businessmen's Association helped propel both state and federal government to fund the new bridge, which were completed by 1941.



District Department of Transportation, "John Philip Sousa Bridge," DDOT Historic Collections

### BEFORE 1800

#### PRE-1800s: NATIVE AMERICAN TRIBES

Nacotchtank Indians inhabited the Eastern Branch of the Potomac River.

#### 1790: DC RESIDENCE ACT

DC is established as the seat of the Federal Government.

#### 1791: DISTRICT GROWTH

Maryland formally transferred its ownership to land within the District, including the land encompassing the PAESAP study area.

### 1800-1899

#### 1861-65: AMERICAN CIVIL WAR

Civil War defenses were spread throughout the District these include Forts Baker, Chaplin, Dupont, Davis, Mahan, and Meigs all located in Ward 7.

#### 1890: PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE BRIDGE OPENS

The bridge connected Pennsylvania Avenue SE to the former Washington County.

The area remained agricultural until 1888, when Twining City was laid out at the landing of the Pennsylvania Avenue Bridge then under construction. That subdivision established streets named for landholders in the original city and created the public space still known as L'Enfant Square. It also began the extension of Pennsylvania Avenue which was later continued to the District border by the Highway Plan of 1893.

Following the creation of the 1901 McMillan Plan for Washington, DC and the "City Beautiful" movement, development along Pennsylvania Avenue reflected classical architecture, streets lined with trees, and

landscaped public parks. In 1907, Arthur E. Randle, a prolific developer east of the river, began to market his newest community in Randle Highlands. New residents called for paved and lighted streets, underground wiring, regular garbage collection, and adequate water and sewer systems. The District's Commissioners installed public parks at Twining Square, L'Enfant Square, and Dupont Park. The original Randle Highlands School built in 1912 has just reopened as part of the enlarged neighborhood school.

**1910: THE "LITTLE WHITE HOUSE"**

The "Little White House" at 2901/2109 Pennsylvania Ave SE was built in 1910 by the architect William Plager. This "white house of the east" was written about in the newspapers of the time and became a popular site along the corridor. It has become a long-standing landmark and an example of classical style architecture.

**1911: STREETCAR LINE OPENS IN WARD 7**

Residents are linked to downtown.

**1958: DC ZONING CHANGES**

The majority of residential land in the study area is zoned for multifamily housing, resulting in a decline of owner-occupied housing.

**2020: PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE EAST MAIN STREET ORGANIZATION FORMED**

A Main Street America affiliate and DC Main Street member, the Pennsylvania Avenue East Main Street works to revitalize the community by retaining and recruiting businesses, improving commercial properties and streetscapes, and attracting consumers.

1900-1999

2000-PRESENT

**1907: GROWTH EAST OF THE RIVER**

East of the river prolific developer Arthur E. Randle began to market his newest community in Randle Highlands.

**1920: ORIGINAL LAND USE AND ZONING ADOPTION**

Washington, DC adopts land use zoning. The ordinance restricted apartment buildings to a certain height and use zones, principally along major avenues.

**EARLY 1970S: WHITE FLIGHT BEGINS**

Brown v. Board of Education case ends school segregation, kicking off white flight from the area into nearby suburbs.

**2021: COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE**

The Comprehensive Plan updates land use designations to allow for more development opportunities along Pennsylvania Ave SE.

## CULTURAL CONTEXT

Cultural and historic resources in and around Pennsylvania Avenue East have not been fully explored or documented, but some sites, such as the “Little White House,” are widely recognized in the community. There are only a few officially designated historic resources, but more have been identified as eligible for designation.

Also within the study area, there is a sizable cluster of homes and commercial buildings designed by Lewis Giles in the west end of the Pennsylvania Avenue study area. Giles was a prolific African American architect based out of DC.



Front Facade of The Dream Center located on the 2800 block of Pennsylvania Avenue SE

## CIVIC INVESTMENTS AND PUBLIC FACILITIES

The District has made significant investments in improving facilities in and around the community. Pennsylvania Avenue East has a number of existing and planned public resources. Over the last decade public investment has targeted elementary schools, recreation centers, libraries, and public safety facilities. Two recreation centers, the Fort Davis Recreation Center and Joy Evans Therapeutic Recreation Center are planned for new construction or renovation. These centers will include new amenities to better serve the Pennsylvania Avenue East community.



Engine Company No. 19 - Randle Highland Firehouse located on the 2800 block of Pennsylvania Avenue SE

### Community Facilities Serving Pennsylvania Avenue East



3

DC PUBLIC SCHOOLS



1

PRIVATE SCHOOL



1

DPR FACILITY



1

NEIGHBORHOOD LIBRARY



1

DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES



2

POLICE DEPARTMENT FACILITIES



1

FIRE STATION

# LAND USE AND ZONING

## LAND USE

Land use and development density differs from one end of the corridor study area to the other. The 2021 updated Comprehensive Plan Future Land Use Map (FLUM) largely identifies areas west of 30th Street SE as appropriate for moderate density residential development, with low-rise multifamily buildings and pockets of single-family houses mixed throughout. Areas east of 30th Street SE are mostly identified as appropriate for low density residential development and single-family housing.

There are three areas identified for mixed commercial and residential use within the study area along the Pennsylvania Avenue corridor – at Minnesota Avenue, Branch Avenue, and Alabama Avenue SE. The 2021 update to the Comprehensive Plan identified the area at the west end of the corridor, at Minnesota Avenue, as appropriate for moderate density mixed use development; the other two nodes are identified as appropriate for low-density mixed-use development.

## ZONING

The western portion of the planning area includes a variety of low to moderate density residential zones. The R-2 zone is mainly intended for detached and semi-detached houses. The R-3 zone is mainly intended for detached, semi-detached and attached single-family houses. The RF-1 zone permits rowhouses with one or two principal dwelling units (a “flat”). Existing multifamily buildings that pre-date the current zoning may also exist. The RA-1 and RA-2 zones permit predominantly low to moderate density multifamily buildings.

The middle portion of the planning area is primarily zoned R-1-B, which permits single-family detached residential development on moderate-sized lots. The eastern portion of the planning area is mainly zoned RA-1 and R-2.

There are three pockets of mixed-use zoning in the planning area along the Pennsylvania Avenue corridor. MU-4 zoned land is located at Pennsylvania Avenue SE and Minnesota Avenue SE and at Pennsylvania Avenue SE and Alabama Avenue SE. MU-4 permits a mix of low to moderate density multifamily residential and commercial uses. MU-3A and MU-3B zoned land is located at Pennsylvania Ave and Branch Ave. These two zones allow a mix of low-density multifamily residential and neighborhood commercial uses.



## Future Land Use Map Descriptions

**LOW DENSITY RESIDENTIAL:** single-family detached and semi-detached housing units with front, back, and side yards. The R-1 and R-2 Zone Districts are consistent with the Low-Density Residential category, and other zones may also apply.



**MODERATE DENSITY RESIDENTIAL:** row houses as well as low-rise garden apartment complexes. The designation also applies to areas characterized by a mix of single-family homes, two- to four-unit buildings, row houses, and low-rise apartment buildings. In some neighborhoods with this designation, there may also be existing multi-story apartments, many built decades ago when the areas were zoned for more dense uses (or were not zoned at all). Greater density may be possible when complying with Inclusionary Zoning or when approved through a Planned Unit Development. The R-3, RF, and RA-2 Zone Districts are consistent with the Moderate Density Residential category, and other zones may also apply.

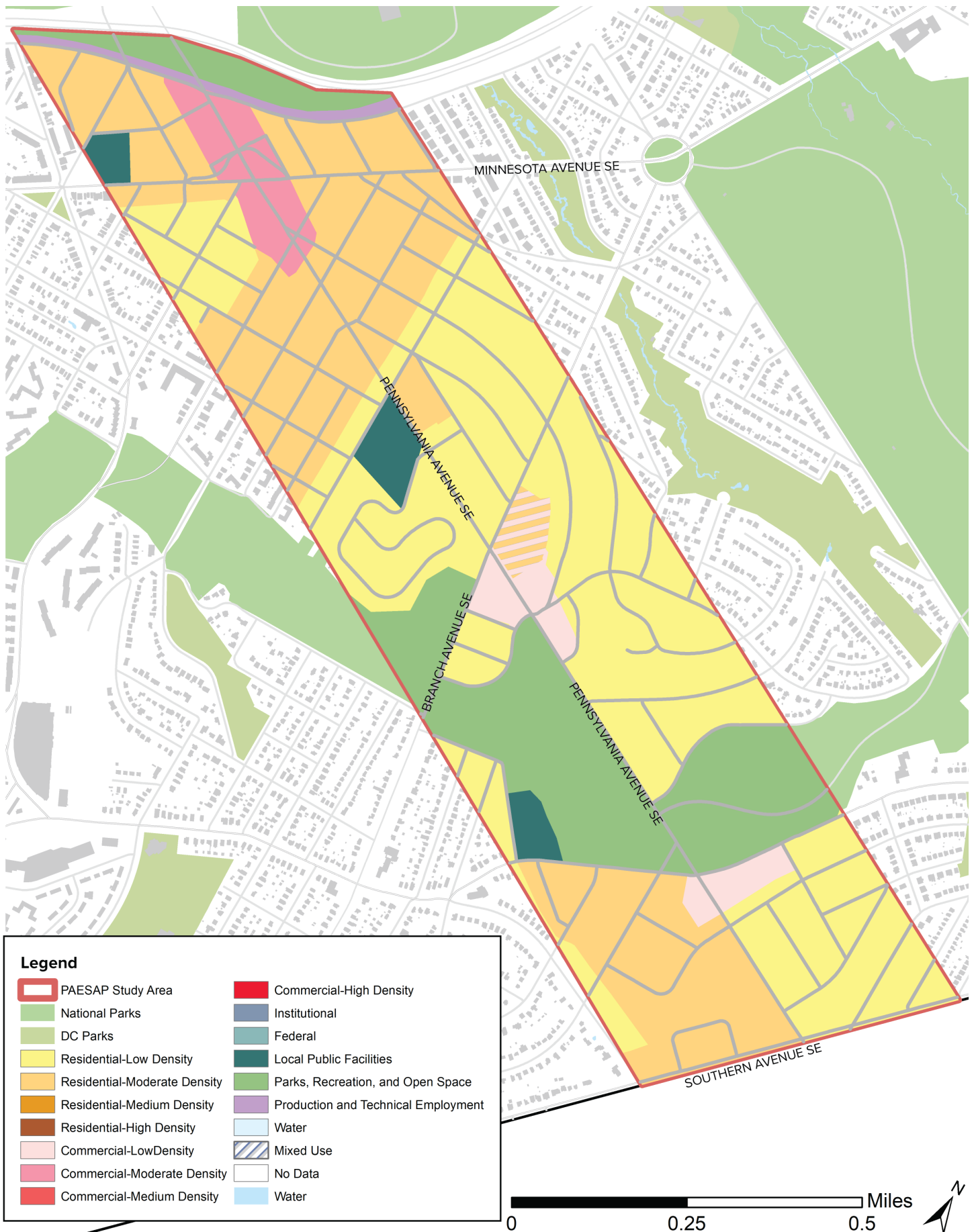


**MODERATE DENSITY COMMERCIAL:** Retail, office, and service businesses are the predominant uses. Areas with this designation range from small business districts that draw primarily from the surrounding neighborhoods to larger business districts uses that draw from a broader market area. Buildings are larger and/or taller than those in Low Density Commercial areas. Density typically ranges between an a Floor Area Ratio (FAR) of 2.5 and 4.0. Floor Area Ratio is the ratio of the total gross floor area of a building to the area of its lot measured in accordance with Zoning Regulations.

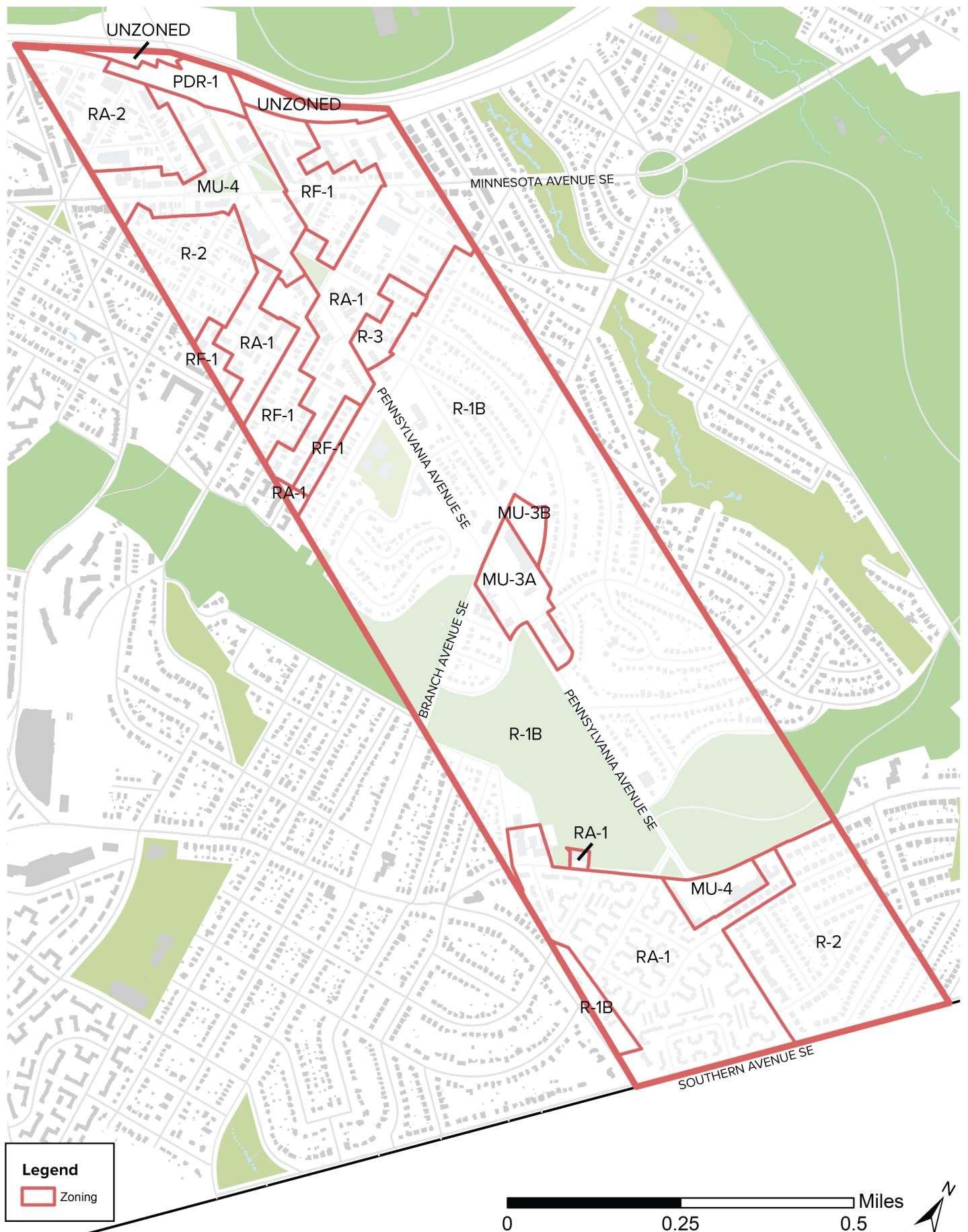


Source: 2021 Comprehensive Plan Update

# Future Land Use Map



# Zoning Map



# RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations were developed in collaboration with community stakeholders, advocates, and public agencies. The Community Advisory Committee provided critical perspective on proposed policies and the Interagency Working Group worked closely with community participants and the project team to outline recommendations that addressed the needs heard throughout the planning process. Finally, recommendations were analyzed using the Mayor's Office of Racial Equity assessment tools to meet District goals for racial equity outlined in the 2021 Comprehensive Plan.

The PAESAP frames recommendations around the following four themes:

1. Economic Development and Retail Opportunities
2. Transportation Access and Connectivity
3. Housing Opportunities and Affordability
4. Vibrant Public Realm and Urban Design

The desired outcomes for each theme and contributing recommendations are detailed in the following pages.



Fairfax Village Shopping Center located on the 3800 block of Pennsylvania Avenue SE



The agencies and organizations listed in the table below are referenced in the PAESAP recommendations.

Acronym	Agency/Organization Name
ANC	Advisory Neighborhood Commission
Community Partners	Civic Associations, Ward 7 Business Partnership, Faith-based Institutions, or other Community-based organizations
DCCAH	DC Commission of Arts and Humanities
DCFPC	DC Food Policy Council
DCOZ	DC Office of Zoning
DCRA	Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs
DDOT	District Department of Transportation
DHCD	Department of Housing and Community Development

Acronym	Agency/Organization Name
DMPED	Deputy Mayor for Planning and Economic Development
DPR	DC Department of Parks and Recreation
DSLBD	Department of Small and Local Business
NPS	National Park Service
OCTO	Office of the Chief Technology Officer
OP	DC Office of Planning
PAEMS	Pennsylvania Avenue East Main Street
WMATA	Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority

# THEME 1: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND RETAIL OPPORTUNITIES



Penn Branch Shopping Center located on the 3200 block of Pennsylvania Avenue SE

## VISION

An inviting destination with a variety of neighborhood serving retail options in a walkable neighborhood, where existing and new businesses are supported by a strong local customer base can thrive.

Pennsylvania Avenue East has experienced multiple challenges to increasing employment opportunities for residents or attracting private sector investments. Starting with exodus of white middle-class residents in the middle of the 20th century, followed by the construction of the Anacostia Freeway which encouraged commuters to by-pass the community, Pennsylvania Avenue East has felt the impacts of disinvestment. The median household income in the Pennsylvania Avenue East study area is \$60,467, approximately \$16,000 less than the median household income District-wide. While the median household income has risen by 27% since 2010, nearly half of Pennsylvania Avenue East residents live at or below the poverty line and the income growth is predominantly attributed to an increase in the number of households earning more than \$100,000.

As of December 2020, Ward 7 had an unemployment rate of 13.4%. Exacerbated by the COVID-19 public health emergency and subsequent economic shock, Ward 7 is experiencing higher unemployment than all other wards except Ward 8. The arts and hospitality industry has been severely impacted with citywide unemployment down nearly 30% year over. Within the study area, 11% of all residents are employed in this industry, further exacerbating economic hardships felt within the study area.

## Pennsylvania Avenue East by the numbers

### Household Income

54% - \$50,000+

46% - Less than \$50,000

### Occupational Composition

20% - Educational services, health care, and social assistance

18% - Public administration

14% - Professional, scientific, management, and administrative

### Educational Attainment

17% - Graduate professional degree

40% - Some college or bachelor's degree

30% - High school graduate (includes equivalency)

Source: 2019 American Community Survey

District-wide, residents are two times more likely to receive either a Bachelor's or Graduate degree than residents living in the Pennsylvania Avenue East study area.

### FOOD ACCESS

With the nearest supermarket one or more miles away, Fairfax Village and Fort Davis Park are considered low food access or food challenged areas. Other parts of the corridor, except for Randle Highlands and the western most part of Penn Branch, are considered low food access areas with the nearest supermarket being at least 0.5 miles away.

Mayor Bowser has made it a priority of her administration to ensure that all District residents have access to healthy food, including supporting the development of three new grocery stores in Wards 7 and 8, the Wards with the fewest grocery stores per capita. Currently, there are three bodegas in the study area participating in the District's Healthy Corners initiative, which delivers fresh produce and healthy snacks to corners stores. The three bodegas are the Dollar Food Plus at 2529 Pennsylvania Avenue SE, the Surprise Grocer at 2233 Minnesota Avenue SE, and the G & G Grocery Store at 2924 Minnesota Avenue SE.

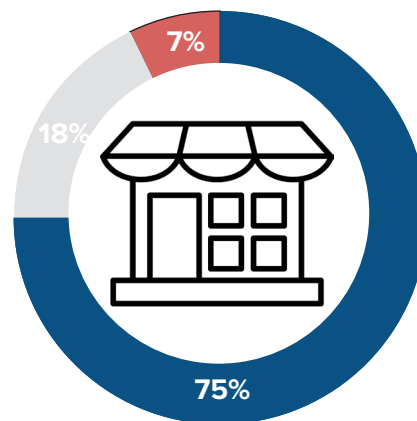
### RETAIL OPPORTUNITY

Pennsylvania Avenue East has long served as a significant retail and commercial corridor in Ward 7, and it continues to serve nearby residents with convenience stores and automobile-focused commercial centers.

Pennsylvania Avenue East has seen recent investments including the phased redevelopment of the Shops at Penn Branch, newly established Pennsylvania Avenue East Main Street, and the upcoming Pennsylvania Avenue Minnesota Avenue Intersection Improvement Project.

While the commercial node closest to the Anacostia Freeway is poised for increased investment, economic impacts from the pandemic have further slowed new development opportunities.

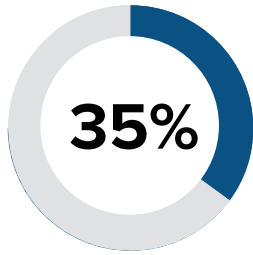
## RETAIL USES IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD



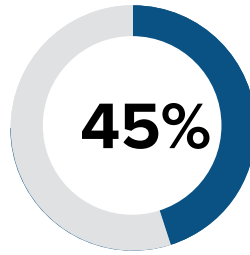
- **Neighborhood Goods and Services (Pharmacies, Convenience Stores, etc.)**
- **Food & Beverage**
- **General Merchandise (Apparel, Beauty Supply Stores, etc.)**

Source: 2019 American Community Survey

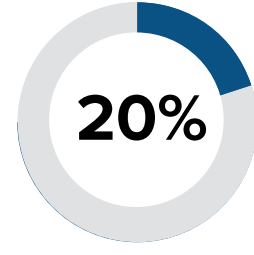
## EXISTING CUSTOMER BASE



of customers come from adjacent neighborhoods to the corridor including Dupont Park, Randle Highlands, Hillcrest, Fairlawn, Penn Branch, Fort Davis Park, and Fairfax Village.



of customers come from other neighborhoods in Wards 7 and 8, Prince George's County, and nearby commuters.



of customers come from neighborhoods west of Anacostia River, Montgomery County, and Northern Virginia.

Source: 2019 American Community Survey

The following recommendations will complement and leverage these recent investments to amplify the corridor's visibility, harness existing opportunities, retain and attract investment, and position the corridor to better serve local residents and improve economic outcomes.

Economic Development and Retail Opportunities		Implementing Body
1.1	Support development which takes advantage of 2021 Comprehensive Plan direction for moderate density development, to provide additional retail and business ownership opportunities, and new residents to support local businesses and enhances the quality of place for the neighborhood.	OP, Property Owners
1.2	Bolster the role of Pennsylvania Avenue East Main Street to support retail development and growth through business promotion and retention efforts and establish a retail-oriented neighborhood branding campaign that makes use of logos, signage, and other means to promote the corridor. Develop marketing and branding partnerships with Black-owned retail pop-up managers to attract buyers and sellers at a local and regional level.	PAEMS, DSLBD
1.3	Provide technical, design, and financial assistance for business improvements. Support local businesses and partners in accessing opportunities through DHCD's Storefront Façade Improvements, DMPED's Great Streets Retail Small Business Grant or Neighborhood Prosperity Fund, or DSLBD grants.	PAEMS, DSLBD, DHCD, DMPED

Economic Development and Retail Opportunities	Implementing Body
<p>1.4 Support temporary retail activations in vacant or disused storefronts to showcase potential opportunities or emerging markets along the corridor. Make effective use of grants, pilot programming, or public-private partnerships to help finance these efforts.</p>	<p>DSLBD, PAEMS</p>
<p>1.5 Attract fresh food grocery options to the corridor:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leverage the Food Access Fund and Nourish DC to encourage healthy food options along the corridor.</li> <li>• Launch a Farmers Market along the corridor at an opportunity site identified in partnership with the community and adjacent property owners.</li> <li>• Prioritize the use of the Supermarket Tax Incentive Program and DMPED's <i>East of the River Leasing Strategy</i> to encourage new grocery tenants.</li> <li>• Incentivize bodegas and corner stores across the corridor to participate in the Healthy Corner Stores program.</li> </ul>	<p>DCPFC</p> <p>DCPFC</p> <p>DMPED</p> <p>DMPED</p>



Fairfax Village Shopping Center located on the 3800 block of Pennsylvania Avenue SE

Economic Development and Retail Opportunities		Implementing Body
1.6	Support Black entrepreneurs and entrepreneurs of color to establish brick and mortar stores along the corridor, through support of Black-owned retail pop-up events and activations along the corridor.	PAEMS, DSLBD
1.7	Increase opportunities for sit-down and outdoor dining opportunities along the corridor by informing business owners of existing unenclosed and enclosed sidewalk dining and streatory options and providing financial assistance for implementation.	DSLBD, PAEMS
1.8	Expand and build a stronger connection to frequent or local customers while diversifying the types of businesses, in terms of their size, offerings and operators.	DSLBD, PAEMS
1.9	Promote façade improvements and use partnerships with local artists, creative signage or storefront displays, and activation along the corridor through grants or other funding opportunities.	DSLBD, DCCAH, PAEMS
1.10	Incorporate requirements for streetscape activating and neighborhood serving retail as part of any new development proposal or zoning requirement.	OP, Property Owners



District Crunchy Restaurant located on the 2400 block of Minnesota Avenue



Commercial Lease sign on Highland Theater located on the 2500 block of Pennsylvania Avenue



# THEME 2: TRANSPORTATION ACCESS AND CONNECTIVITY



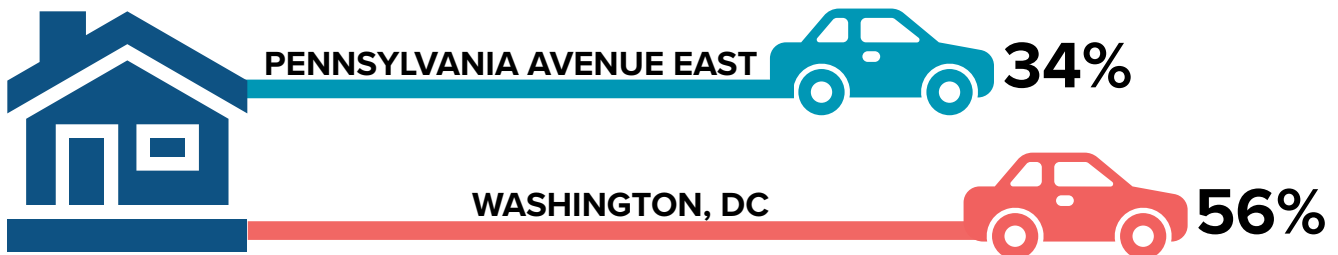
Metrobus Stop along Pennsylvania Avenue SE

## VISION

Anchored by a multi-modal transit hub on the west end, the Pennsylvania Avenue East corridor is connected by a safe and reliable transit network including motor vehicles, bikes, and pedestrians without conflict, especially at major intersections.

Pennsylvania Avenue East attracts nearly 40,000 vehicles per day in addition to high vehicle volumes on cross streets such as Minnesota Avenue and Branch Avenue including Pennsylvania Avenue SE Minnesota Avenue, and Branch Avenue. Approximately 56% of Pennsylvania Avenue East residents drive to work, as compared to 34% of District residents. The study area does not have direct access to Metrorail. The Potomac Avenue Metrorail Station is located approximately 1.5 miles west of the center of the study area and the Naylor Road Metrorail Station is approximately 1.5 miles away from the southeast boundary of the study area.

### RESIDENTS WHO DRIVE TO WORK



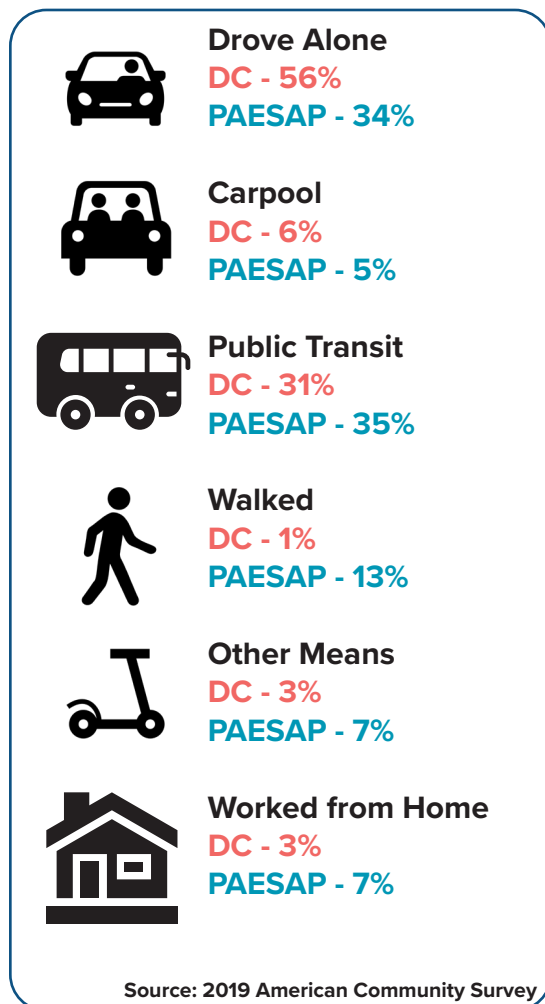
Source: 2019 American Community Survey



Lack of direct metro access limits the commuting options available to Pennsylvania Avenue East residents. In turn, residents have slightly longer commuting times than the rest of the District. On average, Pennsylvania Avenue East residents spent 34 minutes a day commuting as compared to the District's average of 31 commuting minutes daily.

A large share of Pennsylvania Avenue East residents commute to jobs in Wards 7 and 8, with smaller shares of residents commuting to Downtown DC, Capitol Hill, and New Carrollton. A small share of residents work along the corridor. Most jobs along the corridor are filled by residents living outside of the study area.

### Percent Commuting to Work



## Vision Zero

Vision Zero is a part of Mayor Bowser's response to the US Department of Transportation's [Mayor's Challenge for Safer People and Safer Streets](#), which aims to improve pedestrian and bicycle transportation safety by showcasing effective local actions, empowering local leaders to take action, and promoting partnerships to advance pedestrian and bicycle safety. Minnesota Avenue and Alabama Avenue SE are both considered Vision Zero high-crash corridors. In the first quarter of 2021, Ward 7 had experienced the most crashes and most fatalities of any other Ward. After two fatal crashes along the corridor, DDOT had identified the following next steps:

- For the Pennsylvania and Minnesota Avenue, SE intersection: install signage noting curving roadway, include advisory speed signage, install pedestrian signs at Minnesota Avenue and L'Enfant Square crosswalk, refurbish road markings on Minnesota Avenue, and continue evaluation of the block through the Pennsylvania Avenue-Minnesota Avenue Intersection Improvement Project.
- For the 3800 block of Pennsylvania Avenue, SE: improve pavement markings and conduct a traffic calming/speed evaluation.



# TRANSIT OPTIONS ALONG THE CORRIDOR

## BUS SERVICE

The corridor is primarily served by the M6, which provides residents with access to the Potomac Avenue Metrorail Station. The corridor is also served by the 30N, 30S, 32, 36, V2, V4, V7, and W4 routes. The 30's connect residents to jobs downtown. The 30's and V2 and V4 lines help connect residents to other neighborhoods in Wards 7 and 8. Pennsylvania Avenue SE, up until the Branch Avenue SE has been identified as a "transit priority corridor" by DDOT. This identification represents a need for improved infrastructure to help buses move more efficiently to improve travel times and reliability for passengers. Residents of the study area that frequently patronize the bus service along the corridor expressed the need for additional bus shelters. They felt with the amount of vehicular traffic on the corridor during morning and evening rush hours, bus shelters created a visual and physical buffer from traffic and the elements while waiting for arriving buses.



Metrobus Stop

## BIKE FACILITIES

The corridor is served by three Capital Bikeshare Stations – located at Pennsylvania and Minnesota Avenue SE; Pennsylvania and Branch Avenue SE; and a Fairfax Village location at Pennsylvania Avenue and Alabama Avenue SE. The Pennsylvania Avenue and Minnesota Avenue SE location is the most popular for both starting and ending a Capital Bikeshare trip. The majority of trips ending at Pennsylvania and Minnesota Avenue SE originate from the Bikeshare Station at Anacostia Metrorail station.



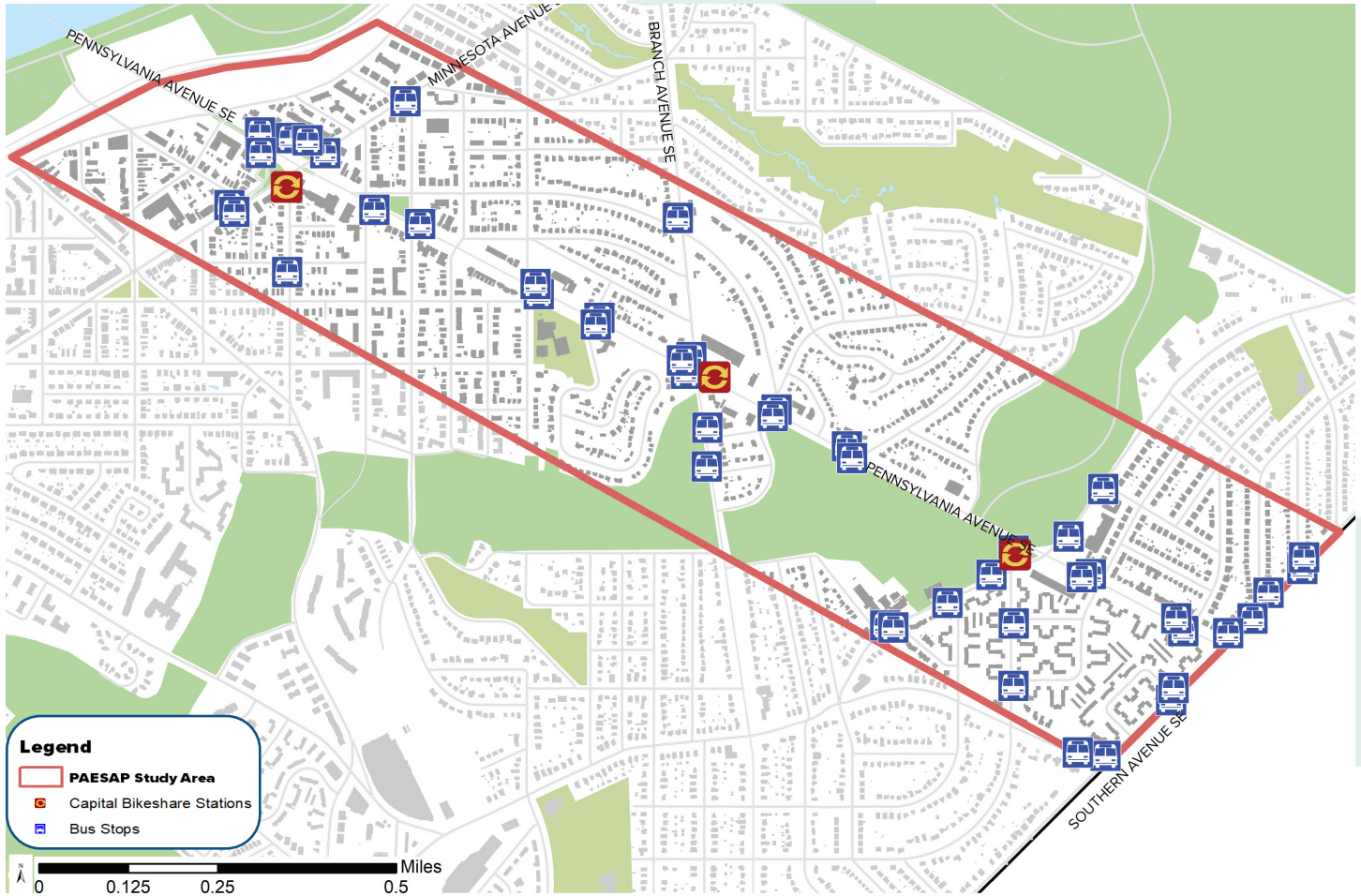
Bikeshare at 25th Avenue and Minnesota Avenue

## Imagination Bench

The Office of Planning received a grant from the American Association for Retired Persons (AARP) to design a creative way to provide much needed bus stop seating along the corridor. The Pennsylvania Avenue Main Street partnered with Creative JunkFood, a talented local artist organization to design appropriate street furniture that was functional, moveable, and inspirational. The final product was the "Imagination Bench."



Transit Stops and Capital Bikeshare Docking Stations



The following recommendations will improve connectivity, pedestrian, and bike safety.

Transportation Access and Connectivity	Implementing Body
<p>2.1 Improve the pedestrian access and connection between Pennsylvania Avenue East to Anacostia Park and Anacostia River through improvements to the pedestrian experience leading to and along the Sousa Bridge.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify locations where pedestrian sidewalks can be widened leading to the Sousa Bridge and provide direct and ADA-accessible pedestrian connection to the river.</li> <li>Study improvements to the I-295 on/off ramps to increase safety for pedestrians and cyclists while slowing vehicle traffic. Study should address physical improvements to roadways, including opportunities for enhanced ADA ramps and pedestrian crossings, and introduction of traffic signals, signs, lighting, pavement markers, and guardrails.</li> <li>Identify locations for and design gateway features that highlight both the sense of arrival to Pennsylvania Avenue East and to visually connect the community.</li> </ul>	<p>DDOT</p>

Transportation Access and Connectivity		Implementing Body
2.2	To improve pedestrian safety and reduce vehicular conflict, explore developing a “transit hub” at the reconfigured intersection of Pennsylvania Avenue SE and Minnesota Avenue SE, within the restored Twinning Square to include an expanded bus shelter with digital displays, improved lighting, and direct access to micro-mobility such as Bikeshare.	DDOT, WMATA
2.3	Extend the Pennsylvania Bus priority corridor west of the Anacostia River.	DDOT, WMATA
2.4	<p>Improve pedestrian and bicycle access throughout the study area:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Build the Shepherd Branch trail on the unused portion of the CSX property along Fairlawn Avenue SE in coordination with DDOT’s feasibility study for a pedestrian/cyclist trail from E Street SE to Firth Sterling. Highlight this section of the trail as part of the Pennsylvania Avenue community through creative signage and public art or lighting.</li> <li>Study phasing out actuated pedestrian signals along the corridor and prioritize Pennsylvania Avenue and Branch Avenue.</li> <li>Study design improvements that would expand the bicycle network in and surrounding the study area. Expanded facilities should consider north-south bicycle lanes, additional trails, and bicycle connections west of the study area (i.e., across the Sousa bridge and to the Potomac Avenue Metro station), and connections from areas along Fairlawn Avenue SE to Anacostia Drive.</li> </ul>	DDOT



Missing sidewalk connections near the intersection of Minnesota Avenue SE and L'Enfant Square SE

Transportation Access and Connectivity		Implementing Body
2.5	<p>Provide an enhanced system of bus shelters and bus stops along the Pennsylvania Avenue East corridor.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Install new bus shelters with seats at key locations along the corridor.</li> <li>• Identify bus shelters that would be appropriate candidates for solar power, illumination, and passenger information display screens.</li> <li>• Work with DDOT, NPS, and WMATA to identify the appropriate owner/maintainer of the bus shelter at Penn/38th Street SE to improve the bus rider experience.</li> <li>• Coordinate with WMATA to conduct a comprehensive review of transit service including the possibility of Metrorail service in the future that would improve travel times to critical services and employment areas.</li> </ul>	WMATA, DDOT
2.6	<p>Study improvements to the Southeast Freeway I695 exit to Pennsylvania Avenue, which provides access to I-395 north (westbound only) and 11th Street and Southeast Boulevard (eastbound). This exit takes you to 11th Street and a stop sign. There is only one lane to continue on the Southeast Boulevard to Pennsylvania Ave SE. There is a tremendous need for a ramp that will take you to Southeast Boulevard eliminating a long wait time and keeping the traffic moving.</p>	DDOT
2.7	<p>Study and improve the traffic crossing the Sousa Bridge both east and westbound.</p>	DDOT


**A safe corridor for pedestrians and cyclists with better transit and bus lanes. A place where I can age in place and access services safely.**

  
**-Resident Vision**



# THEME 3: HOUSING OPPORTUNITIES AND AFFORDABILITY



Apartment buildings and townhomes along 1300 block of L'Enfant Square SE

**VISION**  
A mix of housing types, both market rate and affordable, are available to families and individuals for rent as well as purchase, enabling generational wealth building.

The study area is largely residential, with 85% of the area’s parcels used for housing. While the area has predominantly single-family housing, multifamily housing is largely found between Minnesota Avenue and 29th Street SE. While multi-family housing is limited, demand for this housing type is high in the study area, leading to multi-family vacancy rates that are lower than the citywide average. Additionally, there is a strong desire for more affordable family-size units within the study area for both purchase and rental. Residents expressed the desire to build generational wealth through homeownership while being able to remain in the neighborhood.



## HOME VALUES

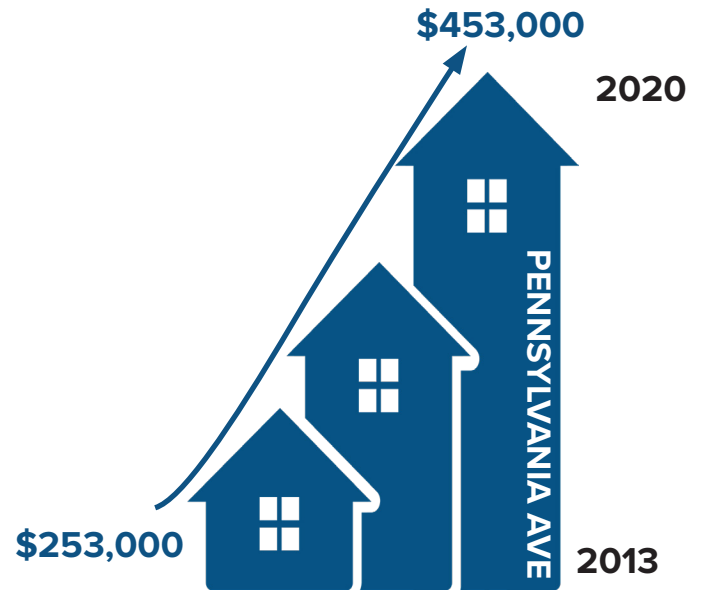
Since 2013, home values in the study area have increased from an average of \$248,000 to \$453,000 by the end of 2020, twice the average increase citywide.

As the city recovered from the 2008 financial crisis, and housing costs were comparatively higher in other parts of the District, the relative affordability of housing units in the study area became more attractive and accessible. It wasn't until 2017 that home values in the study area returned to their pre-financial crisis peak.

Detached homes in the study area have also seen higher valuations and were by and large new construction or recently remodeled, have 3 to 4 bedrooms, and averaged 2,100 square feet. The higher sale prices, quality, and prevalence of remodeling suggest that there is increasing pressure on this housing segment. The bulk of this housing segment is located between 30th Street SE and Alabama Avenue SE.

The study area has 71 apartment buildings, providing 1,100 units averaging \$1,160 per month. Over 20% of these rental units were built before 1949.

## HOME VALUE CHANGES : 2013-2020



Source: 2019 American Community Survey

	Pennsylvania Avenue East Study Area – Average Monthly Rent	Citywide – Average Monthly Rent
<b>Studio</b>	\$950	\$1,497
<b>1 Bedroom</b>	\$1,157	\$1,755
<b>2 Bedrooms</b>	\$1,221	\$2,273
<b>3+ Bedrooms</b>	\$1,147	\$2,489

Source: 2019 American Community Survey

As of March 2021, the multifamily vacancy rate in the study area was 5%, well below the citywide multifamily housing vacancy rate. This low vacancy rate indicates a strong demand for multifamily along the corridor.

## HOUSING AFFORDABILITY

The study area has 288 dedicated affordable housing units located in nine buildings primarily concentrated between Minnesota Avenue and Benning Road SE. None of these units are at risk of loss due to expiring subsidy nor have they been identified as redevelopment sites.

Out of the 1,570 attached and detached housing units in the study area, 40% are considered affordable to a household of four earning over \$63,000 annually or 50% of the median family income. The study area also has an estimated 775 condos, that based on average citywide data, could be affordable to first time home buyers earning 50% of the median family income.

**Pennsylvania Avenue East has not experienced a significant amount of redevelopment or market rate construction. New infill market rate construction would require rents upwards of \$2.35 per square foot and large, steel, and concrete buildings, would require rents upwards of \$2.60 per square foot. The highest proven rent in the planning area is \$2.15 per square foot with most rents below \$1.50 per square foot. This gap indicates new construction of market rate multifamily housing is unlikely in the short-term without subsidy. However, here are significant opportunities for infill housing.**

**The following recommendations will increase housing opportunities and expand affordability.**

Housing Opportunities and Affordability		Implementing Body
3.1	Support Zoning Map Amendments, consistent with the Comprehensive Plan, to increase housing supply and encourage a mixed-income community that includes market-rate and dedicated affordable housing.	OP, Property Owners, Developers
3.2	Maximize the provision of family-sized housing, multi-generational housing and senior housing, especially through the PUD process.	OP, Property Owners, Developers
3.3	Maintain and improve existing rental housing opportunities along the corridor through collaborative partnerships, while preserving naturally occurring affordable housing. Target owners of owners of small apartment buildings along the corridor who might be eligible for the Districts' by promoting the Small Building Program which provides resources to improve sub-standard housing conditions.	Property Owners, Developers, OP
3.4	Develop partnerships between DHCD's training programs – Community Based Organizations, Faith-based institutions and other Black and people of color led organizations (such as the Marshall Heights Community Development Organization) to engage in regular training sessions in the community about housing opportunities in the District.	DHCD, Property Owners, PAEMS



Housing Opportunities and Affordability		Implementing Body
3.5	Use the District Opportunity to Purchase Act for small apartment buildings to preserve affordability on the corridor, increase the number of units available along the corridor, and mitigate displacement of existing residents.	DHCD, DMPED
3.6	Explore opportunities for the formation of a Community Land Trust to maintain affordability along the corridor through acquisition of vacant properties.	DMPED
3.7	<p>Activate online, policy, and other resources available through CBOs, faith-based organizations, and other organizations representing Black people and/or people of color, to educate residents on tenant rights issues.</p> <p>Options include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Leverage Tenant Opportunity to Purchase Act (TOPA), District Opportunity to Purchase Act (DOPA), for the conversion of apartments to limited equity cooperatives.</li> <li>Promote <a href="https://www.frontdoor.dc.gov/">https://www.frontdoor.dc.gov/</a> and other digital resources to residents on housing programs and opportunities, rent and utility assistance within the study area.</li> </ul>	DHCD, Community Partners
3.8	<p>Provide area residents more opportunities to age in place in the neighborhood:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Encourage accessory apartments, particularly in the Penn Branch and Hillcrest neighborhoods, to support aging in place, wealth building opportunities for homeowners, and to create more housing opportunities for long-time residents.</li> <li>Explore opportunities to work with an affordable housing builder to assist in building accessory apartments along the corridor.</li> </ul>	DHCD, OP, DCOZ



Housing along L'Enfant Square SE

**A vibrant multicultural community with a range of progressive and relevant commercial and mixed-use opportunities; including mixed-use housing opportunities.**  
**-Resident Vision**

# THEME 4: VIBRANT PUBLIC REALM AND URBAN DESIGN



Pennsylvania Avenue SE looking West towards the Sousa Bridge

## VISION

The impact of an auto-centric corridor is mitigated by putting people and safety first, by maintaining open viewsheds, enhancing streetscapes and open spaces that create options for public gatherings, connections, and preserving the historic character of the corridor.

The Pennsylvania Avenue corridor was first established as an extension of the L'Enfant Plan and radiates from the U.S. Capitol Building. Drivers enjoy scenic views and vistas when traveling west along Pennsylvania Avenue SE. It was designated as a National Scenic Byway by the U.S. Department of Transportation and serves as a gateway corridor into the District. Even with these designations, the portion of Pennsylvania Avenue SE on the east side of the Anacostia River is less ceremonial than the portions on west side of the river.

The corridor includes hilly, steep terrain, that while offering terrific views of Capitol Hill, detracts from the corridor's overall walkability. The hilly nature of the corridor also makes accessing businesses, schools, and houses of worship difficult as a pedestrian or cyclist. Additionally, retaining walls cut off visibility, hamper access to destinations off the corridor, and detract from a comforting pedestrian environment. However, this hilly and green environment provides for large setbacks and a green boulevard.

## WHAT IS THE PUBLIC REALM?

The Public Realm includes the public right of way and publicly accessible areas such as street frontages, plazas, and unprogrammed green space. These spaces are impacted by adjacent building uses, public space design, and the infrastructure quality. Public Realm Design and programming of the public space can help define the unique character of the neighborhood and create a sense of community



National Cherry Blossom Festival Art in Bloom  
Cherry Blossom Chair Installation

Along parts of the corridor, the terrain also tends to obscure a drivers' view of activities and businesses on either side of the sloping terrain. While the corridor has a 30-mile per hour speed limit, vehicles tend to exceed those limits creating a less safe pedestrian environment. The streetscape infrastructure along the corridor is inconsistent particularly from Fairlawn Avenue to 31st Street SE where tree boxes are incomplete or in poor condition.

The corridor's auto-centric feel is further reinforced by the types of street lighting used along the corridor. Between Fairlawn and Minnesota Avenue SE, the available street lighting is designed for the roadway, not for pedestrians on the sidewalk.

The corridor is widest closest to the Anacostia Freeway, tapering down at 28th Street SE. The road widths and freeway interchange make L'Enfant Square a congested and dangerous intersection. The corridor's use as a major river crossing severely impacts and divides the community. Street widths

make crossing the street very challenging, unsafe, and at points, impossible. Additionally, pedestrians must cross on-off ramps to remain on Pennsylvania Avenue. These crossings are inhospitable to pedestrians as vehicles are picking up speed entering and exiting the freeway and the pedestrian islands do not provide sufficient safety features.

The corridor is also bifurcated by densely forested parkland. The 376-acre Fort Dupont Park is one of the largest and most diverse parks in DC and provides an important greenspace amenity and urban design feature to the corridor. In addition to major NPS land, there are numerous small parks (sometimes referred to as "pocket parks") flanking the corridor. Even though there are large swaths of parkland and green space bordering the corridor and around the study area, the corridor is still lacking "green amenities" such as community gardens, farmers markets and more. This lack of access to green features is consistent with many communities east of the river.

The following recommendations and Urban Design Guidelines will improve access to amenities and vibrancy along the corridor.

Vibrant Public Realm and Urban Design		Implementing Body
4.1	Implement the PAESAP Urban Design Guidelines related to building form and use and specific to the “Anacostia Gateway” character area through OP initiated changes to the zoning, or through PUDs.	OP, Property Owners, Developers
4.2	Along other sections of the corridor, use the Urban Design guidelines related to building form and use in discussions with landowners wishing to redevelop, and in the review of any discretionary zoning action before the Zoning Commission or Board of Zoning Adjustments.	OP, Property Owners, Developers
4.3	Implement the Urban Design guidelines related to public space in the review of temporary and permanent public space permitting applications.	DDOT, OP, Property Owners, Developers
4.4	Showcase the neighborhood’s local civic and cultural identity and enliven its public sidewalks through creative placemaking opportunities for public art along exposed retaining walls or on facilities such as bus stops. Dedicate a mural on the Anacostia Freeway underpass that honors “Angie,” an unhoused resident of Ward 7, and other inspirational community members.	DCCA, PAEMS, DDOT, Community Partners
4.5	Provide enhanced, high visibility crosswalks along Pennsylvania Avenue SE to calm traffic speeds and make the corridor safer and more comfortable for pedestrians.	DDOT



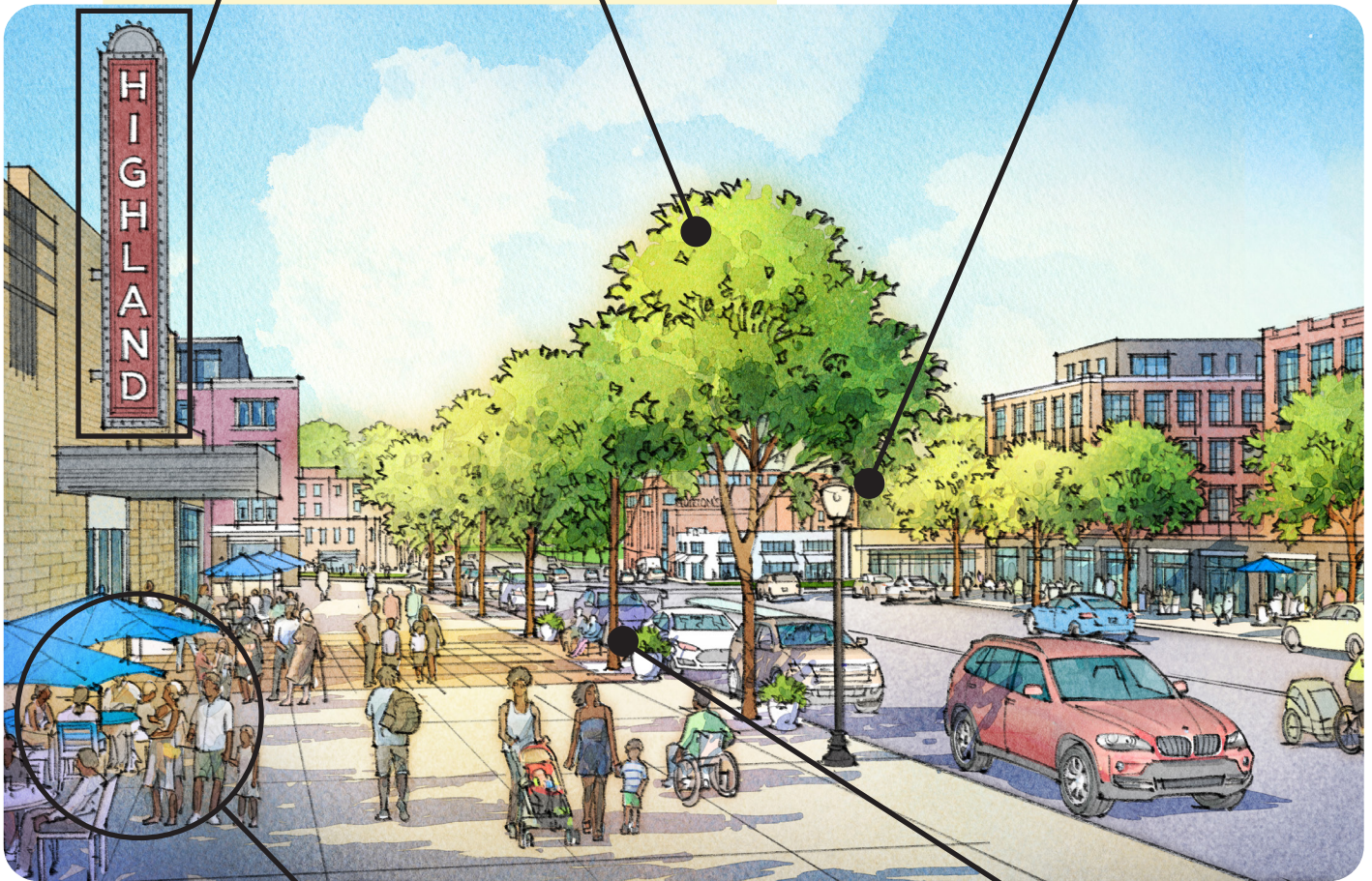
Vibrant Public Realm and Urban Design		Implementing Body
4.6	<p>Develop, sponsor, and maintain a digital community platform that highlights local organizations and events. This platform should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Share information related to business development and retail offerings.</li> <li>• Provide updates on government projects and plans related to the corridor.</li> <li>• Connect the public realm through digital posts/markers.</li> </ul>	PAEMS, OCTO

**EXAMPLE OF A REIMAGINED PUBLIC REALM:  
2500 BLOCK OF PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE SE**

**RESTORED HISTORIC BUILDINGS**

**INCREASED VEGETATION**

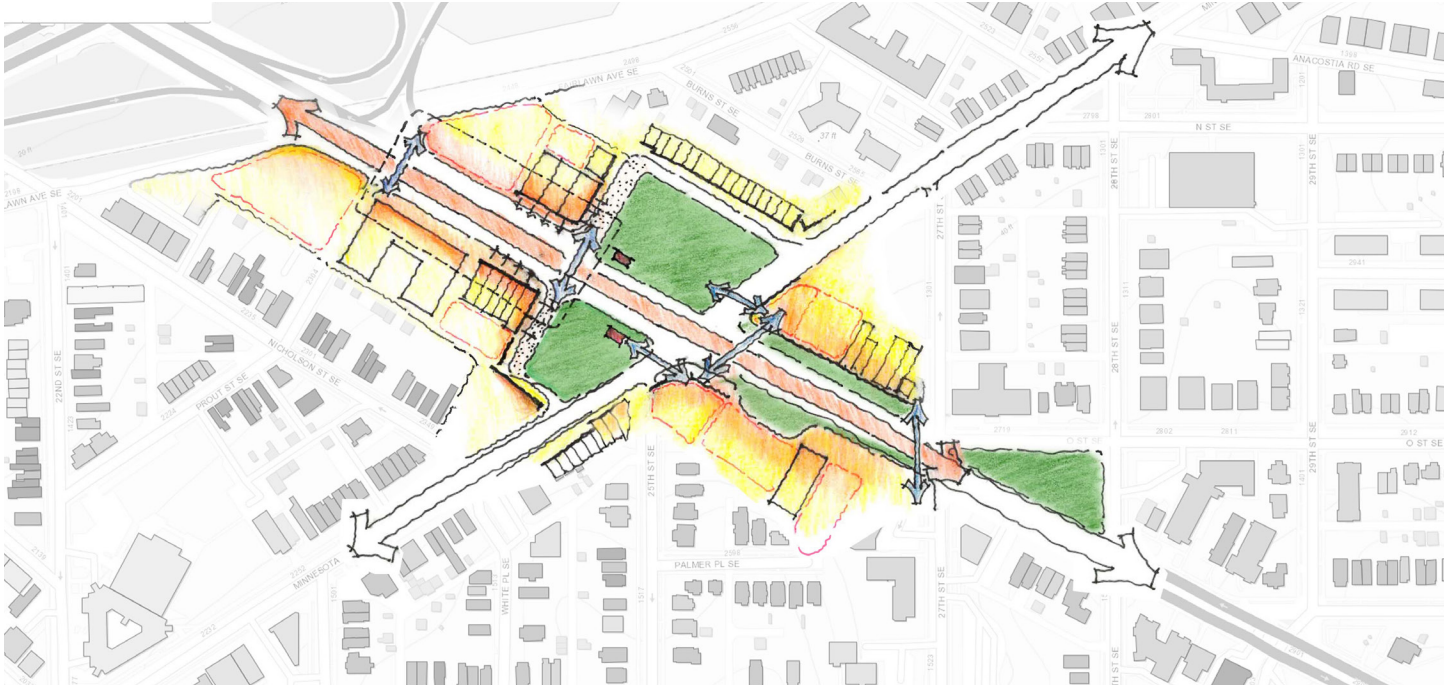
**IMPROVED PEDESTRIAN LIGHTING**



**STREET FRONTAGE ACTIVATED BY  
OUTDOOR DINING.**

**STREET FURNITURE FOR  
PEDESTRIAN COMFORT.**

# URBAN DESIGN



The Vision: A community anchored destination located at the intersection of Pennsylvania Avenue SE and Minnesota Avenue SE

To realize the complete vision for Pennsylvania Avenue East urban design principles and guidelines establish an overall strategy for future development that is focused on the creation of a high-quality and community-oriented experience in the public spaces along the corridor. The 2021 Comprehensive Plan amended citywide policies and the Future Land Use Map (FLUM) designations on several locations on the western end of the corridor to encourage more housing production and support for retail and commercial corridors. The Comprehensive Plan and FLUM determine the height and density for each site.

**Urban Design Principles:** The design principles set high-level values for the three distinct character areas. They are used as a basis for the design guidelines to promote thoughtful development along Pennsylvania Avenue as it is envisioned in the Comprehensive Plan and based on input from community stakeholders.

**Urban Design Guidelines:** The design guidelines offer more tailored direction for development and public space projects. They illustrate potential design strategies for how the elements of buildings, streets, sidewalks, and open spaces should be designed and arranged in relation to one another to form a

comfortable and interesting experience for the people who use them. Their primary intent is to positively impact the community and to provide stakeholders with the tools to advocate for better urban design in their neighborhood.

The Pennsylvania Avenue Southeast Urban Design Guidelines supplement the broader recommendations found in this document and should be seen as a way of enhancing the vision for the corridor.

## APPLICABILITY

The Urban Design Guidelines are intended for use by various entities including private property owners, developers, design professionals, District agencies, and community groups when developing or reviewing proposals for development projects or public space improvements. Applicants considering PUDs should incorporate the PAESAP Urban Design Guidelines to the extent feasible. Property owners pursuing matter-of-right development are encouraged to apply PAESAP Urban Design Guidelines to support compatibility with the surrounding buildings and public realm.

The Urban Design Guidelines can assist the following approval authorities and groups as they review projects along the corridor:

- The Zoning Commission in review of PUDs or custom zoning for the area.
- The Public Space Committee in its review of temporary and permanent uses of public space.
- The ANCs and other community groups in reviewing development applications.
- Projects subject to Historic Preservation Review Board are encouraged to take into consideration the PAESAP Urban Design Guidelines.
- The Pennsylvania Avenue East Main Street is considering grants or other programs aimed to improve building façades and commercial sidewalks.

## GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The following guiding principles are an over-arching vision for the urban design of the public realm along Pennsylvania Avenue SE and were developed with input from community members and stakeholders as they contemplated the future of their neighborhood.

- **Create a destination** - a place for community to come together and gather.
- **Put pedestrians first** - improve walkability and pedestrian safety.
- **Shape an inviting streetscape** - with active ground floor retail, restaurants, and art.
- **Preserve historic interest** - in buildings and notable open spaces to retain the special qualities of a unique and memorable sense of place
- **Maintain diversity, variety, and choice** – to retain culture memory.

## WHAT IS URBAN DESIGN?

Urban design is the physical shaping of the built environment – the architecture, streetscapes, sidewalks, and open spaces of a city or neighborhood – with the focus on how their visual character and arrangement impact the human experience to promote a positive, comfortable, and interesting public realm for the people who use them. It is about understanding how people interact with and pass-through public spaces to ensure they are designed in a way that enables people to use them how they should expect to.

Urban design guidelines inform how the specific elements of a building, sidewalk, park, or plaza are designed, built, and arranged in relation to one another and is rooted in how people experience the public realm.



# CHARACTER AREAS

Though the blocks that make up Pennsylvania Avenue SE work together to create a broader neighborhood, each has its own specific look and feel. As part of the design vision for the corridor, the Urban Design Guidelines focus on the three key “character areas” on the east end of the corridor considered the most in need by the community. However, the urban design guidelines are applicable to any mixed-use area along the corridor. We want to build upon the existing strengths and identity of these spaces to better enhance their roles within the community.

Key improvements in roadway design can calm vehicle speeds and encourage pedestrian access and activity for all ages and ability levels and allow the community to gather and connect with one another at events in the neighborhood square.

The Pennsylvania Avenue SE corridor can be divided into three distinct character areas that can make for a beloved neighborhood destination when combined:

- A. Anacostia Gateway
- B. The Square
- C. Theater District



## A. ANACOSTIA GATEWAY

Pennsylvania Avenue is identified in the District 2021 Comprehensive Plan as both a Gateway Corridor to the District and as an important access point to the Anacostia River waterfront. As such, this stretch of Pennsylvania Avenue, from the Anacostia Freeway in the direction of Minnesota Avenue, can serve to celebrate both through a special focus on good urban design, high quality architecture, improved streetscapes, and public art.

Design Principles:

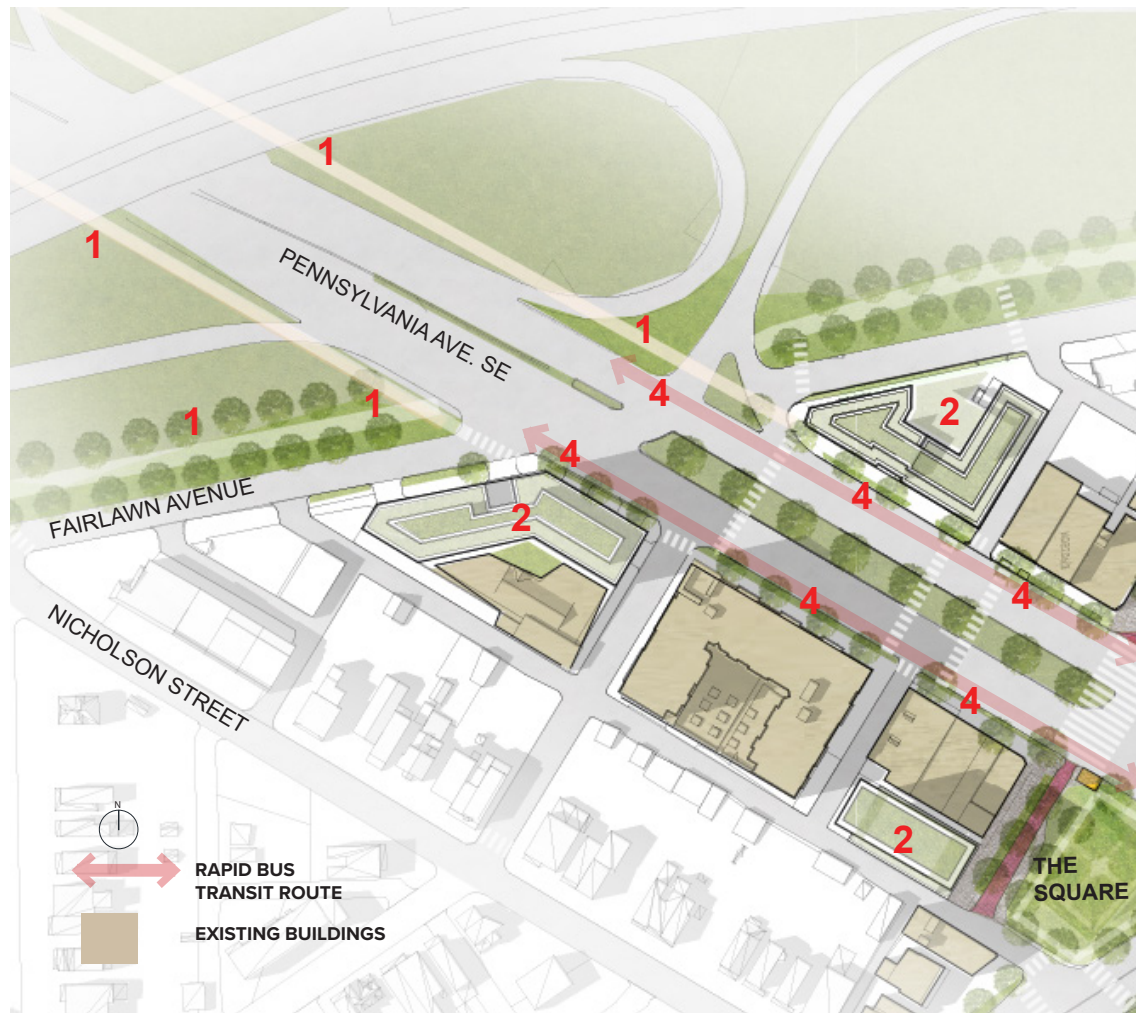
- Visually tie the Pennsylvania Avenue neighborhood to the river and reinforce its identity

as a waterfront community through physical and spatial design.

- Improve pedestrian safety and calm traffic speeds by shifting the design of the Pennsylvania Avenue roadway to a more pedestrian focused layout with robust street tree canopy, pedestrian furniture zones, signage, curbside parking lanes, and enhanced crosswalks.
- Prioritize high-quality architecture at sites closest to the river to signal the importance of the gateway district and promote a sense of arrival to the neighborhood.



## Implementation - Anacostia Gateway



### 1 TRAIL CONNECTIONS

- Multimodal, pedestrian, accessible path to Anacostia Park
- Placemaking, lighting and pathway provided to encourage movement to park under or near freeway

### 2 NEW MIXED USE + MULTIFAMILY

- Architectural design features gateway or iconic elements that invite visitors to the neighborhood including distinguished architecture, greater height, and details at the corner.
- Encourage affordable homeownership, and a blend of market and affordable rental opportunities to a variety of family types.

### 3 TRAFFIC CALMING

- Greater pedestrian access to Anacostia waterfront and traffic calming into the neighborhood from the freeway
- Better signaling, lane striping, and placemaking to improve pedestrian experience

### 4 STREET-SCAPE ENHANCEMENTS

- Improvement of ADA and accessibility access
- Encouraging outdoor seating and activated retail
- New trees, storm-water infrastructure, and planters where possible to enhance canopy and climate resiliency

## B. THE SQUARE

The reorientation of the Pennsylvania and Minnesota intersection currently proposed by DDOT, will bring with it the opportunity to witness an expanded Twining Square in the heart of the retail district. With this reorientation there is the opportunity to completely redesign the Square at a neighborhood landmark and gathering space, accessible to people of all ages for use as a market, event space, or recreation.

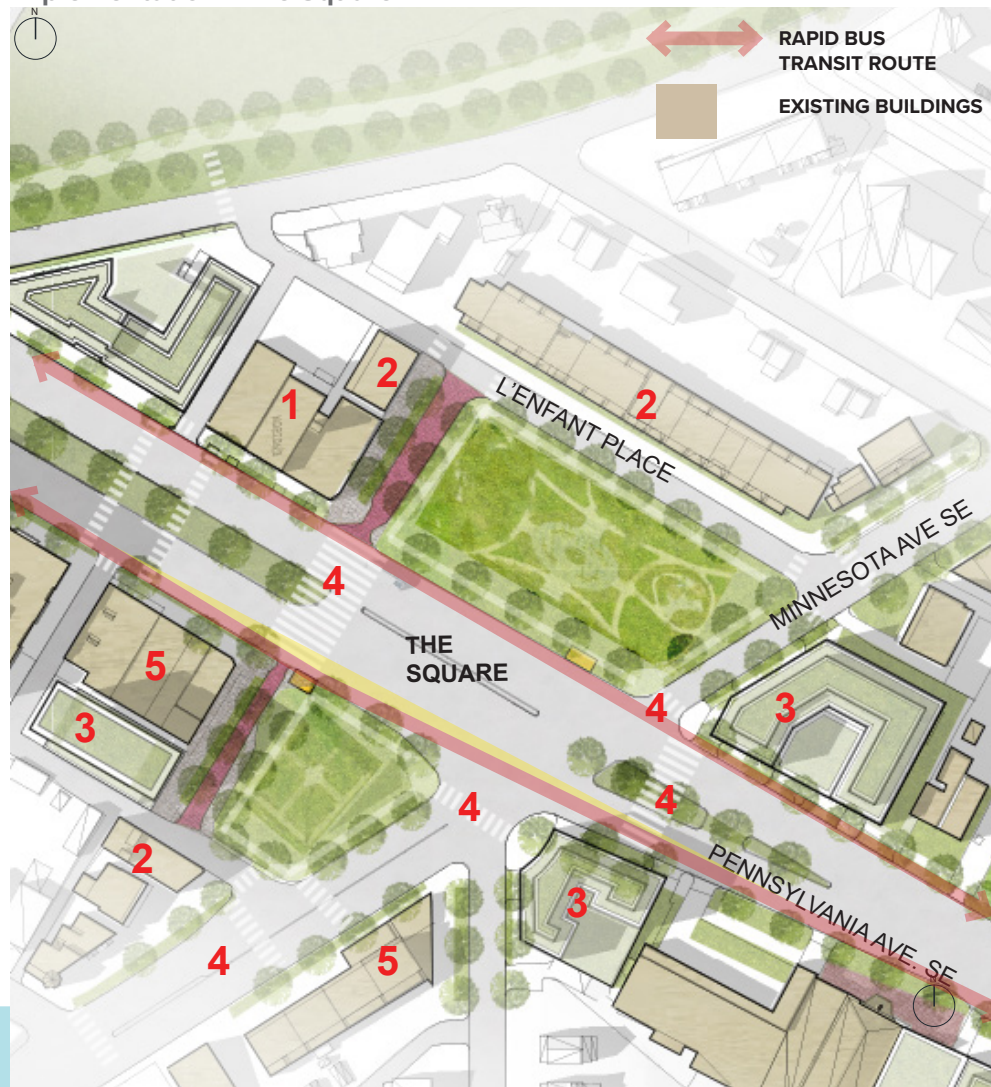
Design Principles:

- Restore the central neighborhood Square through a community-led design process (including the selection of a new name) to reflect the cultural values and heritage of the residents who frequent the space.
- Cultivate a sense of safety and comfort within the Square through enhanced lighting and paving designs, with ample trees and vegetation to provide for beautification and shade, outdoor seating, and gathering/performance space for community events, as prioritized by the community.
- Promote the use of the streets on the western edge of the Square as a pedestrian retail space on weekends and orient adjacent retail entrances, windows, and seating towards the Square.
- Restore and revitalize the unique architectural details and historic signage such as the Morton's sign at sites adjacent to the Square to contribute to the prominence of the space along the streetwall.

## STREET LEVEL VIEW AT SQUARE LOOKING TOWARDS MORTONS TO THE NORTH



## Implementation - The Square



### 1 MORTON'S CORNER MIXED USE

- Repainting, repositioning, and retaining the Morton's signage with enhanced lighting.
- Retail facade enhancements
- Activation of pedestrian-oriented street along square with seating, vegetation, and art.

### 2 RESIDENTIAL ENHANCEMENTS

- Architectural support to existing residential along square to provide facade improvements
- Retain access and parking with pedestrianized street.

### 3 NEW MIXED-USE BUILDINGS

- New mixed-use or multifamily with active ground floor uses along square.
- Encourage affordable homeownership, and a blend of market and affordable rental opportunities to a variety of family types.

### 4 TRAFFIC CALMING

- "Right-sizing" Minnesota Avenue to actual traffic volumes that balance vehicular travel needs, pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure.
- Activation of pedestrian-oriented street along square with seating, vegetation, and art

### 5 EXISTING BUILDING ENHANCEMENTS

- Retail facade enhancements including promotion of upper floor uses, new glazing, repaintings, signage,
- Better canopies and easing of fees for parklets and streeteries that support retail

### C. THEATER DISTRICT

The existing Highland Theater is an important historic and cultural asset within the neighborhood and should continue to serve as a vital entertainment and performance hub of the corridor. With context-sensitive infill and redevelopment at sites within this character area, this space can be the pedestrian-oriented and livable main street that links the Pennsylvania Avenue retail district with the adjoining neighborhoods.

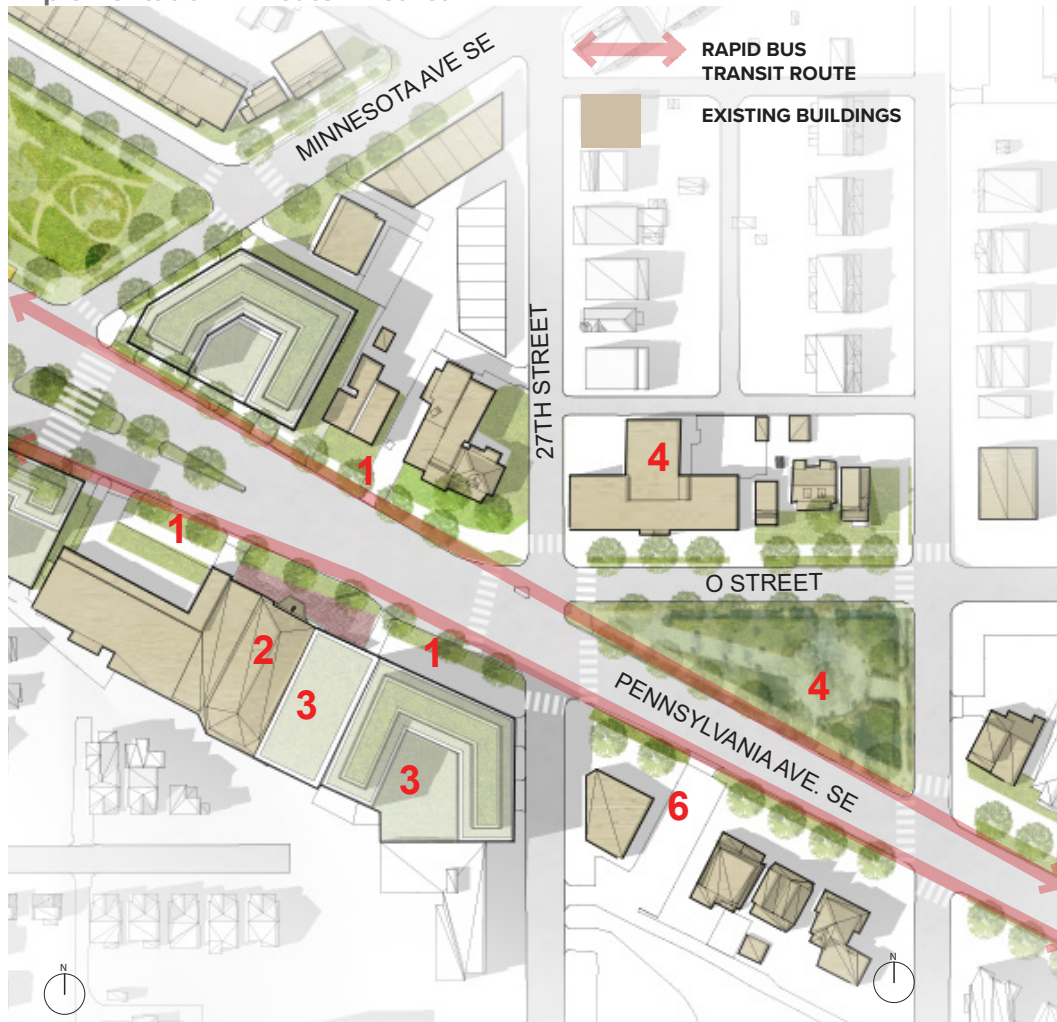
#### Design Principles:

- Adaptive re-use, high quality revitalization or expansion of the Highland Theater to promote it visually as the iconic landmark it is. Celebrate its street presence through restoration of signage, and provide opportunities for enhanced lighting, street furniture, and to allow indoor artistic performances and events to spill out into the sidewalk.
- Work with the Theater and other local artists and performers to produce a programming strategy for the pocket park along Pennsylvania Avenue.
- Focus on an architectural character for new buildings and renovations to showcase the area as a Theater district through massing, materials, and details that are contextually sensitive to the design of the Theater.
- Encourage ground floor uses that complement the adjacent Theater through live-work spaces for artists or performers, with high transparency windows or large openings to support retail and streetscape activation.

### STREET LEVEL VIEW: STANDING NORTH OF THEATER - LOOKING NORTHWEST



## Implementation - Theater District



### 1 ACTIVATE STREETScape

- Encourage conversion of parking and underutilized front lawns to streateries, art, and outdoor focused retail to enliven the street.
- Support mixed-use redevelopment as a method of increasing homeownership and affordable rental opportunities.

### 2 ADAPTIVE REUSE OF THEATER

- Encourage adaptive reuse of Highmark Theater into active retail or community use.
- Allow for careful additions to existing structure if historical features are maintained.
- Encourage activation of streetscape in front of plaza and temporary uses in space.

### 3 MIXED-USE OR MULTIFAMILY BUILDINGS

- Encourage distinctive architecture that reflects the character of the existing structures.
- Encourage affordable homeownership, and a blend of market and affordable rental opportunities to a variety of family types.

### 4 ENHANCED EXISTING URBAN ASSETS

- Encourage architectural lighting of St. Xavier School.
- Promote visibility and access to programming for pocket park.

### 5 CITY OWNED BUILDINGS AND LOTS

- Prioritize redeveloped mixed-use with police station and community driven uses such as affordable and workforce housing, or community space.

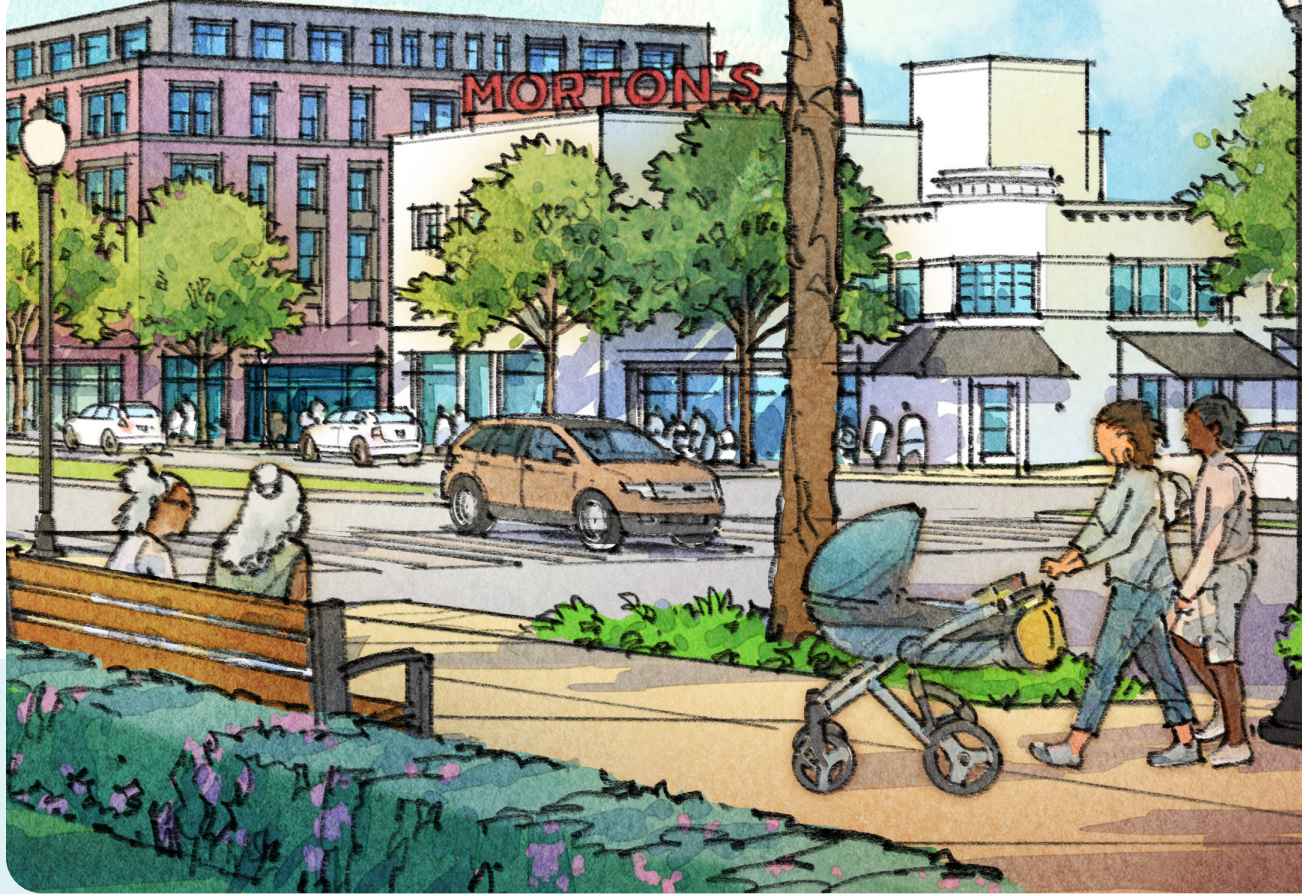
## CHARACTER DEFINING BUILDINGS & FACADES



- Significant Existing Facades to Be Retained, Renovated or Preserved
- Encourage Upgrades and Careful Treatment Of Building Facades On Square
- Community Green Space
- New Infill Mixed Use & Housing
- Existing Buildings



The distinctive rooflines and porches of the rowhouses facing square provide a distinctive sense of place and should be retained while allowing for paint, masonry repairs, or porch repairs.



A Vision of Pennsylvania Avenue, SE at Twinning Square

# URBAN DESIGN GUIDELINES

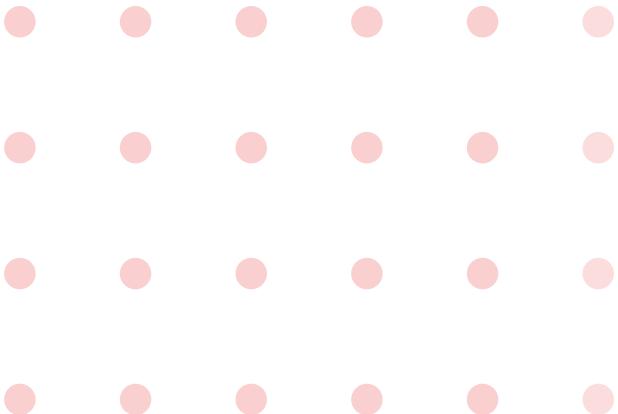
To promote pedestrian comfort along Pennsylvania Avenue and to reinforce the corridor’s identity as a neighborhood main street and retail destination, the design guidelines are organized into two categories:

## Building Form | Public Realm

The first, Building Form, is intended to shape a more human-scale environment along mixed-use portions of the corridor and enable new developments, in these areas consistent with the direction already established in the updated 2021 Comprehensive Plan and FLUM. New development should be designed to be more compatible with the adjacent lower-scale residential neighborhoods and to signal to drivers that they have entered a pedestrian-oriented community. This can be

achieved by striving for balance between the massing and scale of infill development, specifying how buildings transition down towards adjoining residential blocks, and highlighting the need for high-quality materials and architectural designs.

The second, Public Realm, is intended to open up the street and sidewalk zones to promote visual interest, and pedestrian comfort and safety on the corridor. This can be achieved through specifications for minimum sidewalk dimensions and materials, promoting shade trees and opportunities for landscaping and beautification, and identifying spaces to support outdoor amenities such as café seating, public art, and markets.








Illustrative Plan - Buildings fronting Connecticut Avenue with active ground floor uses help to frame the sidewalk and maintain a pedestrian-scale environment.

# BUILDING FRONTAGE

Creating a consistent building edge along the commercial corridor helps to define public spaces and delineate the pedestrian sidewalk environment.

-  Active Building Frontage and Storefronts
-  Outdoor Seating at Square, Outdoor Retail at Extra Wide Sidewalks
-  Community Green Space





## BUILDING FORM

### 1.1 Building Frontage

#### Guidelines:

- a. Ground floor retail uses fronting onto Pennsylvania Avenue SE should take full advantage of allowances for show window projections or similar high transparency glazing to create strong visual connections between the sidewalk and interior spaces.
- b. Building façades should be oriented parallel to Pennsylvania Avenue SE to maintain a continuous and engaging streetwall that gives scale and definition to adjacent streets and civic space. Building façades that are directly adjacent to the restored square should also prioritize public entrances and visibility onto the square as well as onto Pennsylvania Avenue SE.
- c. The front façade of the building should be generally at the property line, and the ground floor of the building should be at the same elevation as the sidewalk.
- d. Mixed-use buildings that provide ground floor residential units should locate unit entrance directly to the sidewalk (rather than through a central lobby space) and should front on side streets to incorporate social features such as stoops and porches to transition to adjacent residential blocks.
- e. All loading and parking garage access points should be located on existing alleys at the rear of the lot, or if unavailable on adjacent side streets to minimize adverse impact on the pedestrian-prioritized retail zone of Pennsylvania Avenue SE.

## EXAMPLES OF ADAPTIVE REUSE AND CONVERSIONS TO MIXED-USE



The Clayborne, adaptive reuse housing and retail with pedestrian storefronts in Alexandria, VA.

SOURCE: CUNNINGHAM QUILL ARCHITECTS



Coca Cola bottling plant conversion to mixed-use in Atlanta, GA

## 1.2 STREETWALL VARIATION AND ARTICULATION

### Guidelines:

- a. The streetwall height should generally be no less than 25 feet. Change in building articulation above the streetwall are encouraged.
- b. Larger development sites should space retail storefronts and entrances frequently along a block, typically every 25 to 40 feet, to attract small businesses, promote visual interest for pedestrians, and better encourage streetlife and activation.
- c. Floor-to-ceiling heights of between 15 and 18 feet should be provided for commercial ground floors in new mixed-use buildings. The depth of new retail spaces along the building frontage should be a minimum of 50 feet.
- d. Include elements such as projections, textured materials, awnings, plantings, signage, and seating to create a visually engaging and inviting building edge to frame the sidewalk and create points to relax, gather, and socialize.

## 1.3 BUILDING MASSING

### Guidelines:

- a. Encourage balconies, bay windows, varying step-backs at upper floors, or material changes to break up larger façades.
- b. Expansions and additions should incorporate architectural details that are consistent or complementary to those of the existing structures, preserving unique and well-built design features to the extent feasible.

# STREETWALL

“Streetwalls” refer to the façades of the various buildings that face a street. They shape the level of visual interest on each block, and create a sense of enclosure for travelers.



Local example of infill development: The Strand Residences adjacent to the historic Strand Theater, Ward 7, Washington, DC

## 1.4 TRANSITIONS TO ADJACENT BLOCKS

### Guidelines:

- a. New buildings or additions to existing buildings should provide appropriate transitioning or buffering from low density housing on blocks to the north and south of the corridor. Building height step downs, upper story step-backs, and other building form articulation and modulation should be employed, particularly where there is no intervening alley.
- b. Building setbacks in the form of open space, landscaped buffers, and courtyards should be employed on the rear of new buildings where they transition to lower scale residential uses.

## 1.5 BUILDING MATERIALS

### Guidelines:

- a. The use of brick or other masonry or similar high-quality materials as cladding characteristic of the neighborhood is encouraged for new buildings.
- b. Large windows providing visibility and social connections to the street are appropriate for ground-floor retail. However, glass curtain walls are discouraged for upper-level residential floors in mixed-use buildings.
- c. Sustainable materials that are recycled and less carbon intensive are encouraged both for exterior cladding and interior structural components. The preservation or re-use of existing building materials in new buildings is also encouraged.



Local example of Historic Preservation: The restoration of the Howard Theater is a key example of how historic character can be maintained in a modern context through careful building material choice.

# PUBLIC REALM

## 2.1 IDENTITY AND PLACEMAKING

### Guidelines:

- a. Along the restored Square, prioritize access for all ages and provide a diversity of space types and uses that are coordinated with the Pennsylvania Avenue East Main Street and other civic groups. Enable community-led activation and gathering for outdoor markets, performances or similar events, café seating, and/or recreational purposes as a community landmark and destination.
- b. Development opportunity sites within the Anacostia Gateway character area should incorporate signature design elements on prominent corners such as bay or tower projections, angled or curved façades, and special lighting and/or materials as well as landscape designs that visually communicate a sense of arrival to the Pennsylvania Avenue neighborhood and link the area to the Anacostia River.
- c. Public art such as sculptures, murals, or other forms of art installations should be explored along the corridor to both mark this entry point into the neighborhood and Anacostia River, to showcase the importance of the Theater District and as a way to showcase the history and cultural values of the neighborhood.
- d. Murals should be considered on highly visible side walls of mid-block buildings where windows are not feasible and under the Anacostia Freeway overpass.

## PUBLIC REALM

Design and programming of the public space can help define the unique character of the neighborhood and create a sense of community



Mural on the side of the Thai Orchard Restaurant

## 2.2 STREETScape

### Guidelines:

- a. Enhance the pedestrian experience with streetscape elements such as enlarged street tree planter boxes and increased tree canopy, pedestrian scale lighting and signage, wide sidewalks along Pennsylvania Avenue SE, and space for tenant activation along storefronts.
- b. Enhance existing pedestrian crossings along Pennsylvania Avenue SE to better connect the two sides of the retail main street, increase pedestrian safety, and signal to vehicle drivers that they are entering a pedestrian-oriented neighborhood.
- c. Establish dedicated sidewalk areas that accommodate outdoor seating, clear pedestrian paths, landscaping, and other amenities. The sidewalk along Pennsylvania Avenue SE can be broken down as follows beginning with the curbside zone:
  - i. Amenity Area (four to six feet): Provides a sizable amenity area that enhances pedestrian comfort including planting and trees, streetlights, regulatory signage, bicycle parking, and other furnishings such as benches and trash cans.
  - ii. Circulation Area (eight feet): An unobstructed linear pedestrian path between the Tenant Area and the Amenity area.
  - iii. Tenant Area (remaining space up to building line): Located immediately adjacent to building façades, the tenant area provides an area of transition between circulation and building entries. The area also activates the storefronts through a range of uses including tenant displays, outdoor seating, building projections, and planting areas.
- d. Allow for unique pavement, landscaping, and streetscape materials as sidewalks approach the restored Square that is distinctive, reflecting the civic use of those spaces.
- e. Parking and loading entrances should be located on alleys or secondary streets to minimize curb cuts along Pennsylvania Avenue SE and promote an uninterrupted pedestrian path.

## OPPORTUNITIES TO IMPLEMENT URBAN DESIGN GUIDELINES



### BEFORE:

- UNFRIENDLY RETAIL FRONT
- NARROW SIDEWALKS
- NO EXTERIOR LIGHTING
- NO OUTDOOR SEATING
- CAR-ORIENTED SPACE






### AFTER:

- OUTDOOR DINING
- IMPROVED SIDEWALK PAVING
- STREET LIGHTS PROVIDED
- IMPROVED RETAIL SIGNAGE
- MULTI-MODAL TRANSIT ACCOMMODATED IN THE STREET



# DEVELOPMENT GUIDE

This Development Guide is a summary of recommendations that can be implemented through private development, the Planned Unit Development (PUD) process or by developing Requests for Proposals (RFPs) for the disposition and redevelopment of public lands in the PAESAP planning area.

	<p>Support development which takes advantage of 2021 Comprehensive Plan updated direction for moderate density development, to provide additional retail and business ownership opportunities, and new residents to support local businesses and enhances the quality of place for the neighborhood. (Policy 1.1)</p>
	<p>Attract fresh food grocery options to the corridor:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leverage the Food Access Fund and Nourish DC to encourage healthy food options along the corridor.</li> <li>• Launch a Farmers Market along the corridor at an opportunity site identified in partnership with the community and adjacent property owners.</li> <li>• Prioritize the use of the Supermarket Tax Incentive Program and DMPED’s East of the River Leasing Strategy to encourage new grocery tenants.</li> <li>• Incentivize bodegas and corner stores across the corridor to participate in the Healthy Corner Stores program. (Policy 1.5)</li> </ul>
	<p>Support Black entrepreneurs and entrepreneurs of color to establish brick and mortar stores along the corridor, through support of Black-owned retail pop-up events and activations along the corridor. (Policy 1.6)</p>
	<p>Increase opportunities for sit-down and outdoor dining opportunities along the corridor by informing business owners of existing unenclosed and enclosed sidewalk dining and streatory options and providing financial assistance for implementation. (Policy 1.7)</p> <p>Incorporate requirements for streetscape activating and neighborhood serving retail as part of any new development proposal or zoning requirement. (Policy 1.10)</p>
	<p>Support Zoning Map Amendments, consistent with the Comprehensive Plan, to increase housing supply and encourage a mixed-income community that includes market-rate and dedicated affordable housing. (Policy 3.1)</p> <p>Maximize the provision of family-sized housing, multi-generational housing and senior housing, especially through the PUD process. (Policy 3.2)</p>
	<p>Implement the PAESAP Urban Design Guidelines related to building form and use and specific to the “Anacostia Gateway” character area through OP initiated changes to the zoning, or through PUDs. (Policy 4.1)</p>



House of Ruth Kids Space Playground

# IMPLEMENTATION

The PAESAP will be implemented through private redevelopment and public investment, led by government agencies, private property owners, and community partners.

## PRIVATE DEVELOPMENT AND PUBLIC INVESTMENT

Following Council adoption of the PAESAP, future physical changes in the built environment would mainly occur through private redevelopment and public investments. Many of the recommendations in the PAESAP will be implemented through property redevelopment and improvements to public rights-of-way. Improvements to the Pennsylvania Avenue SE streetscape, enhanced urban design, high-quality architecture, enhanced sustainability measures, and affordable housing can be addressed as part of the redevelopment process, through PUDs or zoning changes.

The timing of the redevelopment of individual properties is contingent on market conditions and myriad personal, corporate, and political decisions. Market conditions are often cyclical, so physical changes in the built environment can sometimes appear to occur in waves. While the construction of new buildings can sometimes seem swift, the site planning, financing, and permitting for these projects takes years of preliminary work that often goes unseen.

Public investments also take time, and begin with budget allocations for planning and design. The upcoming redesign and construction of the

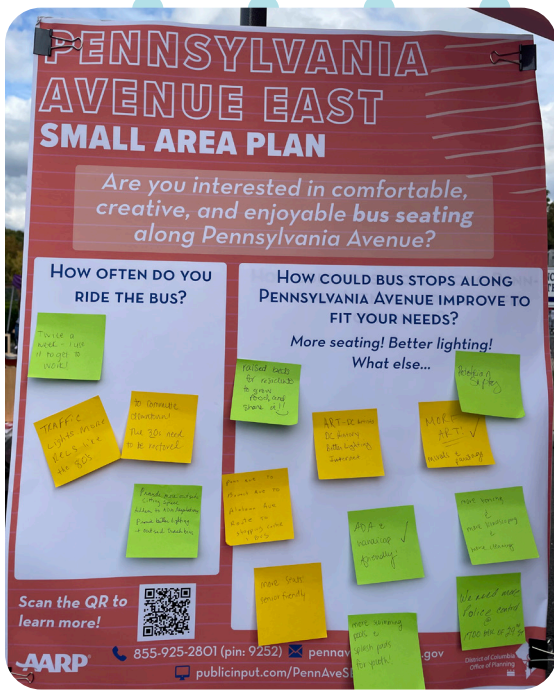
Pennsylvania Avenue SE and Minnesota Avenue SE intersection began in 2005 through the Great Streets Initiative to improve pedestrian and vehicular safety at the intersection; create a consolidated, usable park space; improve multimodal connectivity and access to and through the intersection; and support land use and community needs. The final design will reconfigure the intersection at-grade to improve the existing split roadway system by reducing multiple traffic movements into one signalized intersection. The District Department of Transportation anticipated hiring a design and construction firm by 2024.

## ROLE OF GOVERNMENT AGENCIES

While OP led the development of the PAESAP from inception through Council approval, other DC agencies and Federal agency partners implement many of the PAESAP recommendations through construction projects, funding streams, regulatory processes, or operating programs. OP tracks and communicates the progress of the PAESAP recommendations and advocates for implementation whenever possible.

Approval authorities play an important role in the PAESAP's implementation as venues for discretionary decisions on development, and public space improvements. The Zoning Commission,





OP PAESAP Engagement at Community Day



Historic Preservation Review Board), Public Space Committee, National Capital Planning Commission, and Commission of Fine Arts are all potential approval authorities that would weigh in on a prospective change in the built environment. These bodies operate within their respective purview and processes, with varying levels of public involvement depending on the type of application they are reviewing. Approval authorities are not proactive, they are charged with deliberating on applications submitted for their review.

To implement relevant recommendations for the Anacostia Gateway area, a new zone should be created for the mixed-use sites at the intersection of Pennsylvania Avenue SE and Minnesota Avenue SE that reflects the height and density established in the 2021 Comprehensive Plan update and incorporates the Urban Design Guidelines specific to this location. Consistent with Inclusionary Zoning Plus, the zone would require up to 20% of the building's residential square footage be dedicated affordable units. The creation of a new zone modeled from a planning effort like the PAESAP is typically drafted by OP and would be achieved through a public process and hearing before the Zoning Commission.

Planned Unit Developments (PUDs) are initiated

by property owners for their respective sites, OP and relevant partner agencies will review these applications and submit reports to the Zoning Commission, including analysis of how the proposal would implement the development and urban design guidelines outlined in the PAESAP. PUDs are also assessed through a public process including a hearing before the Zoning Commission.

### ROLE OF COMMUNITY PARTNERS

As advocates and stewards of the neighborhood, community groups play an important role in implementing the PAESAP. Advisory Neighborhood Commissions, Community and Civic Associations, Main Street Organizations, faith-based groups, historic preservation advocates, mutual aid groups, and others were thoughtful contributors to the PAESAP development and are key to its ultimate success. Community groups implement recommendations through community programming and events, activating and stewarding public spaces, supporting social and economic initiatives, providing services to discreet and vulnerable populations, advocating for future studies, and participating in public processes for discretionary development applications.

## DISTRICT RESOURCES

District agencies have produced many online and printed resources for developers, community groups, and agency staff to help inspire new projects, track progress, and fund policy priorities. Here are a list of helpful guides, manuals, maps, dashboards, and local funding sources that will be instrumental helping to implement the Plan's recommendations in future years:

### Affordable Housing

- [Housing Equity Report \(2019\)](#)
- [The Housing Production Trust Fund and DHCD's Consolidated RFP](#)

### Business Development

- [Makers & Creatives Toolkit](#)
- [Office of the Deputy Mayor for Planning and Economic Development](#)
- [Starting A DC Business](#)

### Development and Zoning

- [DC Interactive Zoning Map](#)
- [DC Zoning Handbook](#)
- [Front Door DC](#)
- [Future Land Use Map](#)

### Historic Preservation

- [How to Apply for Listing in the DC Inventory](#)

### Public Space Activation and Design

- [Commemorative Works Program](#)
- [Our City, Our Spaces!](#)
- [Public Space Activation & Stewardship Guide](#)
- [Public Realm Design Manual](#)

### Sustainability

- [Building Energy Performance Handbook](#)



Ward 7 Speaks Community Visioning



# Glossary of Terms

## DEVELOPMENT AND DESIGN

**Community Land Trust:** Community land trusts create and preserve affordable homeownership opportunities by retaining ownership of land and leasing it under a long-term ground lease to homebuyers who purchase the improvements on the land (typically, houses) at prices below market rates (Freddie Mac).

**Inclusionary Zoning Plus (IZ+):** Adopted in 2021, IZ+ seeks to achieve higher affordability set-asides from the District's regular IZ program when properties receive a change in zoning that permits greater density. The affordable set-aside requirements for IZ+ can increase the affordability requirements from the existing requirement of 8% - 12.5% to as much as 20%.

**Floor Area Ratio (FAR):** The ratio of the total gross floor area of a building to the area of its lot measured in accordance with Subtitle 303 of the Zoning Regulations.

**Infill Development:** Infill Development refers to the construction of buildings or other facilities on previously unused or underutilized land located within an existing developed area. This type of development is meant to encourage new development consistent with established policy direction, and accommodate environmentally sustainable urban growth by making use of existing utility and transportation infrastructure.

**Pedestrian-Scale/ Human-Scale:** The proportional relationship between the dimensions of a building or building element, street, outdoor space or streetscape element and the average dimensions of the human body, taking into account the perceptions and traveling speed of a typical pedestrian.

**Placemaking:** The intentional use of public space to create experiences that connect people, inspire action, support creativity, and celebrate the unique aspects of neighborhoods.

**Planned Unit Development (PUD):** PUDs provide developers additional density and zoning flexibility when they seek to build projects that exceed existing matter-of-right zoning regulations. In exchange for this flexibility, developers are required to provide community benefits, such as increased affordable housing.

**Public Realm:** The area under public and private ownership that is publicly accessible and experienced from public space.

**Streetwall:** Refers to the line of building façades that face a street. They shape the level of visual interest on each block and create a sense of enclosure for travelers.

**Urban Design:** Addresses a neighborhood's design and visual qualities, ultimately shaping perceptions of the District and contributing to the way people interact and experience the environment around them.

## HOUSING

**Affordable Housing:** Income- and rent-restricted housing supported or subsidized by local and federal programs for households ranging from extremely low-income, earning less than 30% of the Median Family Income (MFI), up to households earning less than 80% of the MFI.

**Median Family Income (MFI):** The median household income for the Washington Metropolitan Area (including suburban Maryland and Virginia), stratified by household size. The MFI for a household of four in the Washington Metropolitan Area, as published by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development on April 1, 2021, was \$129,000.

**Naturally Occurring Affordable Housing (NOAH):** Unsubsidized and not income-restricted but rather is privately-owned housing with market-based rents affordable to low- and moderate-income residents. NOAH rents are relatively low compared to the regional housing market typically due to age and condition of the rental buildings.

## OUTREACH AND ENGAGEMENT

**Community Advisory Committee:** Composed of residents, Advisory Neighborhood Commissioners, and representatives of civic associations and houses of worship, the Community Advisory Committee (CAC) has worked with OP since the beginning of the planning process to connect to stakeholders and provide guidance around the community's most pressing issues.

**Interagency Working Group:** Implementation partners across District Government. In addition to working cooperatively with OP to engage the public and develop the plan, IAWG partners also provided insight into available resources and programming to the project team and the public.

**Community Pop-Ups:** In-person community engagement in the form of community canvassing and meaningful public space activations.

# ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The development and completion of the PAESAP was not a solo effort. We wish to thank the following residents, stakeholders, District agency staff and the consultant team for their expertise, experience, and support.

## **District of Columbia**

Muriel Bowser, Mayor

## **District of Columbia Council**

Vincent C. Gray, Councilmember for Ward 7

## **Advisory Neighborhood Commissioners**

Commissioner Travis Swanson, ANC 7B03  
Commissioner Tiffany Brown, ANC 7B02  
Commissioner Cydne Smith Nash, ANC 7B04  
Commissioner D. L. Humphrey (Chair), ANC 7B07  
Commissioner Kelvin Brown, ANC 7B06  
Commissioner Tierra Fletcher, ANC 7E02  
Commissioner Holly Muhammad, ANC 8A01  
Commissioner Brian Thompson, ANC 8A03

## **Community Advisory Committee**

D.L. Humphrey, Office of Councilmember Vincent C. Gray  
M. Viveca Miller, Pennsylvania Avenue East Community Coalition (PAECC)  
Jacquelyn Cannon, PAECC  
Stephen Downing, PAECC  
David L. Retland, President, Dupont Park Civic Association  
Dr. Marla Dean, Dupont Park Civic Association  
Dr. Moreland, Dupont Park Civic Association  
Barbara Morgan, Dupont Park Civic Association  
Cortez Johnson, Fairfax Village Community Association  
Stan Benton, Penn Branch Citizens Association  
Kyle Murphy, Penn Branch Citizens Association  
Travis Swanson, Randle Highlands Citizens Civic Association

Rev. Dr. Kendrick E. Curry, Senior Pastor, Pennsylvania Avenue Baptist Church  
Latisha Atkins, Marshall Heights Community Development Corporation  
Deborah Jones, Ward 7 Business Partnership  
Linda Green, Fort Davis Circle Association/ Ward 7 Leadership  
Graylin Presbury, Fairlawn Citizens Association  
Villareal Johnson, Hillcrest Community Association

## **DC Office of Planning**

Anita Cozart, Interim Director  
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#### **Interagency Working Group**

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Wendell Felder, East of the River Services  
Cristina Amoruso, DSLBD  
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Timothy White, DMPED  
Gabby Johnson, DHCD

#### **Consultant Support**

American University Game Center  
Center for Urban and Racial Equity  
Creative JunkFood, LLC  
Cunningham|Quill Architects, PLLC  
Link Strategy Partners  
Seaberry Design and Communications  
Symmetra Design

#### **Additional Support**

American Association for Retired Persons

