

# SOUTHWEST NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN



Government of the  
District of Columbia

Vincent C. Gray, Mayor

**November 21, 2014**

Draft Plan









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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



PROPOSED 4TH STREET SW



## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: A VIBRANT, ATTRACTIVE, AND CONNECTED PLACE

For nearly 50 years, the Southwest neighborhood has been a quiet, tucked-away, stable neighborhood to almost 12,000 residents. The product of Urban Renewal interventions of the 1950's and 1960's, this predominantly residential enclave is quite unlike any other neighborhood in the District of Columbia. Reflective of Modernist architecture, large swaths of green open space, and a variety of residential development including market rate and public housing, the neighborhood's unique built environment is a source of pride for many Southwest residents. Southwest's people are its other great asset, celebrating a rich diversity of residents in terms of income, race, ethnicity and age.

However, as the District of Columbia experiences historic population growth and development pressures surrounding Southwest continue to mount, neighborhood residents are adamant that Southwest be a place that retains its integrity while positioning the neighborhood to be a vibrant, attractive, and connected place with a shared vision to guide growth. The nature of Southwest is one of successive waves of change incorporating and building on what existed to create new forms and new communities. Preservation and growth can be compatible as exemplified in the stunning Arena Stage Theater. This nationally recognized theater created a magnificent expanded facility by transforming the existing structure. It is the perfect mix of historic and new construction to better accommodate growth and demand. The community can play a critical role in shaping how development occurs and what amenities it can bring to balance growth with livability – achieving an even stronger Southwest neighborhood.

### The Plan

The Southwest Neighborhood Plan (The Plan) is a framework to shape the future of the neighborhood over the next five to ten years. It focuses on a Planning Area that extends from South Capitol Street, west to Maine Ave SW; from P Street SW, north to the I-395 Freeway. It reflects community aspirations, District-wide goals and market opportunities. It is a community-based framework to enhance parks, pedestrian and street connections, bolster retail, integrate community amenities, enhance transportation choices, and accommodate and guide the direction of future growth in the Southwest neighborhood. The Plan aims to provide residents and property owners with assurances of what future development may look like, including recommendations to preserve and enhance existing assets and ensure that Southwest retains social and economic diversity.

### Pressures for Change

In the past 10 years, the Southwest community has been undergoing significant change. Beginning with the Anacostia Waterfront Initiative in 2002, renewed interest in Washington DC's waterfront communities along the Southwest Channel and the Anacostia River began to grow quickly. Since then, major changes have already taken shape in Southwest such as the removal of the Waterside Mall to allow for the reopening of 4th street and the addition of new offices, retail and planned residential developments to form a "town center". Additional developments and proposals in and around Southwest include:



- **“The Wharf”** – This project, currently under construction on the Southwest waterfront, will create an entirely new waterfront destination of approximately 3.2 million square foot development that will comprise a major entertainment and retail destination in the vicinity.
- **Nationals Park at the Navy Yard Metro** – This ballpark now brings an average of 31,000 fans to each game as well as to additional concerts and events through out the year. This influx of people has created demands for additional amenities in the area but has also strained some aspects of the transit network. The Navy Yard/Capitol Riverfront neighborhood is one of the fastest growing in the District.
- **Buzzard Point** – There is a current proposal to construct a 24,000 seat soccer stadium in the Buzzard Point area of Southwest. This area has generally accommodated industrial uses with a few residential units on the edge. Buzzard Point is one of the last large swaths of riverfront property in the District. The potential new soccer stadium in Buzzard Point will contribute to the transformation of the broader Southwest area as a center for events and activity.
- **Greenleaf Public Housing** – The District of Columbia Housing Authority owns four large parcels of land adjacent and close to M Street, near the Waterfront Metro Station. In the past year, DCHA has begun discussions with the Greenleaf residents about redevelopment of the properties into a mixed income and mixed use community with additional housing and amenities.

- **District Properties** – The neighborhood also contains an abundance of District and federally owned parcels, many of which are currently underutilized and/or underdeveloped with low-scale buildings and expansive surface parking, clustered on M Street near South Capitol Street. As technology changes and service needs grow and evolve, the District is interested in optimizing its properties as well as finding opportunities to utilize property to best serve residents and contribute to the local neighborhoods through improved design and function.

All of these changes and existing opportunity areas served as a catalyst for studying and analyzing the Southwest neighborhood and developing a small area plan to enhance existing neighborhood assets, guide future growth and direct investment priorities.

### The Planning Process

The planning process was community-based, drawing on the strong “social infrastructure” in Southwest and allowing for multiple opportunities to provide feedback throughout. The Plan was also shaped by neighborhood leadership through an Advisory Committee comprised of Councilmember Tommy Wells, affected Advisory Neighborhood Commissioners (ANCs), and representatives from civic organizations, homeowner and tenant associations, community groups, and the business community who provided insight and guidance to the planning team throughout process (see the full list of Advisory Committee members in the Acknowledgements, Page 141). The community engagement process included four community-wide meetings, seven Advisory Committee meetings, three focus groups (seniors, schools, historic preservation), a joint Jefferson Amidon PTA meeting, and two meetings for Greenleaf



residents. In addition to a project website (swneighborhoodplan.org), opportunities to provide input were also available through an interactive online forum (engage.swneighborhoodplan.org), which enabled stakeholders to map issues and opportunities and engage in dialogue about ideas and recommendations for the neighborhood.

### Some key concerns and opportunities that arose at the outset of the planning process included:

**Varied Housing Choices** – Since 2000, home prices in the Planning Area have appreciated at a lower rate than the DC average and home sales prices and rents are lower than the DC average. However, this is starting to change, and the apartment communities that are currently leasing are catering toward a higher-income demographic. Community residents want to see affordable housing preserved and new units created. They also want new housing developments to offer varied products, especially units sized for families. Development pressures and potential gentrification were specifically considered a threat to the most economically vulnerable residents.

**Enhanced Neighborhood Serving Retail** – Retail development along 4th Street was of particular concern for most residents. Many expressed frustration at the length of time it has taken to lease up existing retail spaces and the lack of a full range of neighborhood-serving retail amenities and businesses.

**Park-like Neighborhood Character** – Residents also highlighted characteristics that make Southwest special. The neighborhood was often described as “green” with a network of open spaces and parks as well as the full growth tree canopy lining many neighborhood

streets. Reinforcing this green character and enhancing parks were a key priority. There was also sentiment to improve parks and recreation facilities.

**New Development** – Residents also expressed civic pride in the neighborhood’s Modernist architecture and were concerned that new development could compromise the neighborhood’s unique character. They also expressed reservations about the impacts of surrounding major developments like The Wharf and Capitol Riverfront on the quality of life in the Southwest neighborhood.

**Diverse Community** – Southwest’s most defining characteristic is its people. Residents overwhelmingly expressed their desire to maintain the economic and racial diversity that makes the community so strong and vibrant.

**Community Facilities** – There was near universal support in the community to see a new library in the neighborhood, with considerable discussion surrounding whether to leave it at the current location or move to 4th Street SW.

Through the planning process, a Vision for the Plan was developed: **to create a thriving, active environment that preserves and enhances the Southwest neighborhood’s culture and character.** The Vision and Guiding Principles, which are listed on pages 67 and 68, serve as the core, community-based underpinnings of the Plan and provide direction and values to build the Plan concepts and recommendations. The following pages summarize seven core concepts and the visions for each, around which the Plan goals and recommendations are framed.



## Concept **MODEL COMMUNITY**



ILLUSTRATIVE BY ED ESTES

### Vision

Southwest will remain an exemplary model of equity and inclusion - a welcoming and engaged community that celebrates and retains a diversity of races, ages and income levels and enhances wellbeing for all amidst neighborhood growth and change.

### Goals

- Support the responsible redevelopment of Greenleaf to benefit existing Greenleaf residents and realize a well-designed development and mixed-income community.
- Maintain a mix of affordable and market-rate residential units that better serve community needs.
- Update public realm and transit infrastructure to enhance accessibility for all.
- Promote healthy living and food access for the entire community.
- Provide high quality public facilities.

## Concept **MODERNIST GEM**



ILLUSTRATIVE BY ED ESTES

### Vision

Southwest will promote the preservation of its unique architectural legacy and support new development that reflects the form and rhythm of the historic fabric, reinforcing the neighborhood design as a “Modernist Gem”.

### Goals

- Celebrate the distinctive character of Southwest and promote preservation of its outstanding Modernist architecture, landscape architecture, and urban design.
- Retain and enhance the character of the L’Enfant Plan in Southwest including associated vistas and reservations.
- Ensure that future development is compatible with the existing design of the community.



## Concept GREEN OASIS



ILLUSTRATIVE BY ED ESTES

### Vision

Southwest will thrive as a green oasis in the city, with lush tree canopy and vegetation, landscaped building edges, thriving parks and robust connections between green spaces, while attaining new levels of neighborhood sustainability and environmental performance.

### Goals

- Ensure Lansburgh Park evolves into a central park that will become a center of activity for the Southwest neighborhood.
- Improve connectivity through greenways, improved pedestrian and bicycle facilities, wayfinding signage, and coordinated programming throughout all Southwest parks.
- Adopt Sustainable DC goals to showcase the Southwest Neighborhood as a model of green, sustainable practices including stormwater management, healthy living, and energy efficiency.

## Concept ARTS + CULTURAL DESTINATION



ILLUSTRATIVE BY ED ESTES

### Vision

Southwest will flourish as a premier arts and cultural destination, creating synergies between existing cultural assets and attracting new creative uses and arts-related activities.

### Goals

- Build on and market existing cultural assets and institutions to reinforce the concept of an arts and cultural destination.
- Strengthen 'I' Street as a cultural corridor.
- Grow the presence of the arts throughout the Southwest neighborhood.

## Concept THRIVING TOWN CENTER



### Vision

Southwest will enjoy 4th Street as a thriving town center and commercial heart of community, with a range of neighborhood-serving retail options, an active street atmosphere, a high quality public realm, quality new development and easily accessible transit.

### Goals

- Establish a strategic marketing approach to attract a unique and tailored retail mix to promote 4th Street as Southwest's neighborhood main street.
- Encourage future land use designation changes to key corner parcels to promote a vibrant mix of neighborhood town center uses along 4th Street.
- Celebrate 4th Street's envisioned vibrancy as a neighborhood main street, through temporary urbanism practices and through the burgeoning local arts movement as encouraged by the city's creative economy agenda.

## Concept OPTIMIZED DISTRICT PARCELS



ILLUSTRATIVE BY ED ESTES

### Vision

Southwest will be prepared for the future redevelopment of the neighborhood's outdated public facilities and underused publicly owned land, allowing for the use of public resources in a way that benefits everyone and ensures that development aligns with neighborhood expectations for high-quality design and provides community benefits.

### Goals

- Address current land use and the future potential for District owned parcels that comprise Southwest's government cluster to reflect opportunities to accommodate improved services, allow a mix of uses, and optimize government operations and assets.
- Provide new and improved state of the art public facilities.



## Concept VIBRANT CONNECTIONS



ILLUSTRATIVE BY ED ESTES

### Vision

The Southwest neighborhood will feature vibrant connections that support an active community and attractive environment, accommodate multiple transportation modes, increase mobility within the community and provide ease of access to adjacent neighborhoods and the waterfront.

### Goals

- Enhance pedestrian connections and safety throughout neighborhood.
- Improve neighborhood bicycle infrastructure and safety.
- Establish M Street as a multimodal neighborhood boulevard linking Southwest to adjacent neighborhoods and the waterfront.
- Ensure that Maine Ave provides an attractive transition from the Southwest neighborhood to the Wharf development.
- Support the transformation of South Capitol Street into a high density, urban boulevard that establishes a robust pedestrian realm.
- Restore L'Enfant Streets on redevelopment sites, including public properties.
- Improve the underpasses connecting Southwest neighborhood to areas to the north.

## PLAN FRAMEWORK

The remainder of the Plan is organized as follows:

**Chapter 1** provides an introduction to the Planning Area and the Small Area Planning process and plan methodology.

**Chapter 2** presents the key findings regarding existing conditions and technical analysis.

**Chapter 3** provides an overview of the community engagement process and presents the community-based vision and guiding principles for the Plan.

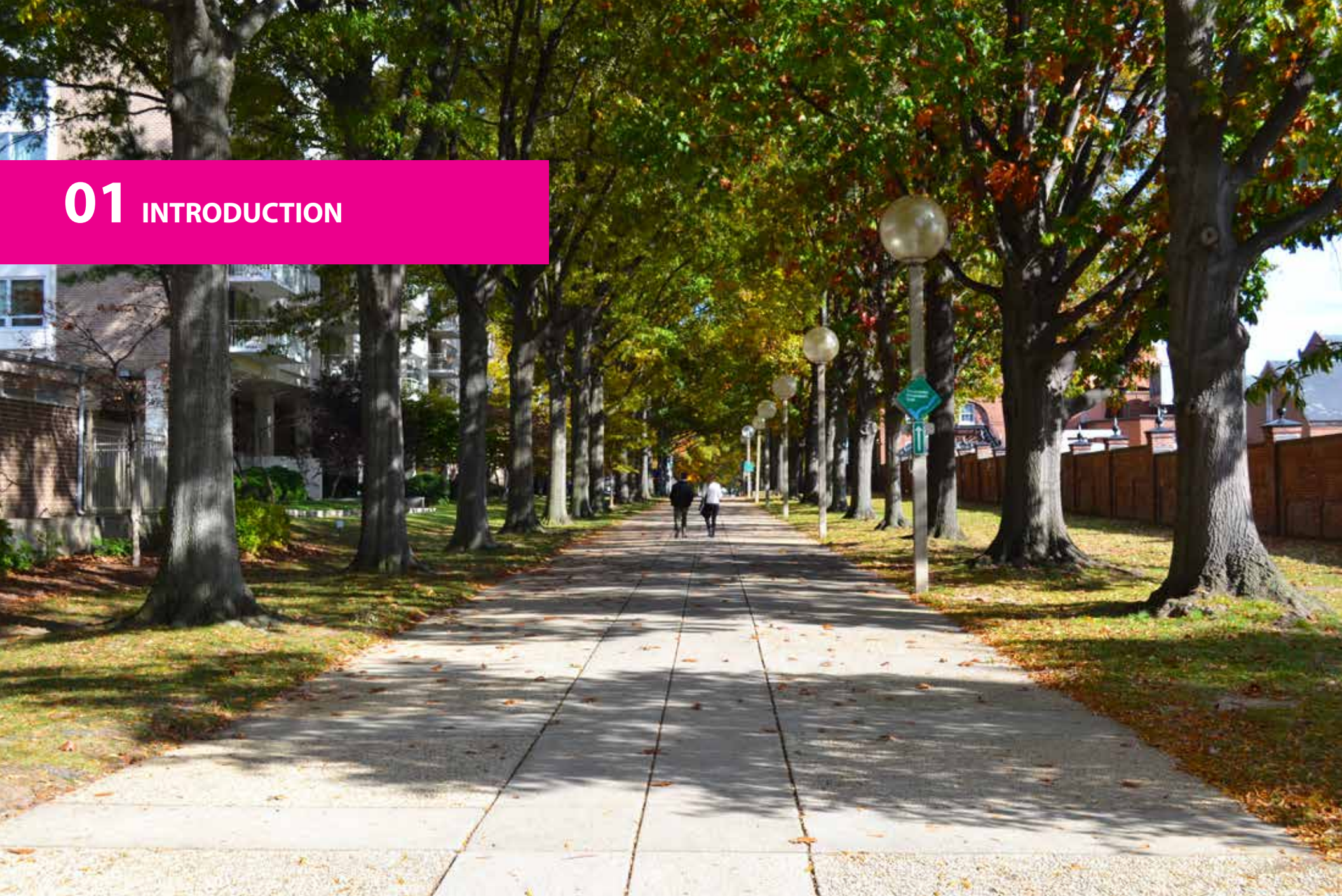
**Chapters 4 through 10** are framed around seven core concepts and the vision and recommendations for each:

<b>Chapter 4:</b>	Model Community
<b>Chapter 5:</b>	Modernist Gem
<b>Chapter 6:</b>	Green Oasis
<b>Chapter 7:</b>	Arts and Cultural Destination
<b>Chapter 8:</b>	Thriving Town Center
<b>Chapter 9:</b>	Optimized District Parcels
<b>Chapter 10:</b>	Vibrant Connections

**Chapter 11** provides a plan to serve as a roadmap for implementing Plan recommendations, including projected timeframe and lead and partner entities.



# 01 INTRODUCTION



PEDESTRIAN WALKWAY NEAR FORT MCNAIR | SOUTHWEST'S MATURE TREE CANOPIES CREATE AN ENJOYABLE PEDESTRIAN ENVIRONMENT



# INTRODUCTION: THE TIME TO PLAN IS NOW

## Overview

This Southwest Neighborhood Plan (the Plan) is a Small Area Plan, a community-based strategy developed for the purpose of creating an urban design, land use, and neighborhood preservation framework to enhance parks, pedestrian and street connections, integrate community amenities, enhance transportation choices and guide the direction of future growth in the Southwest neighborhood. The Plan also explores the potential for development to have a positive impact and provides land use guidance for multiple, underutilized District-owned properties where government uses are currently located. The Plan provides residents, property owners, city officials and District agencies with a blueprint for informing future capital funding priorities, shaping growth and preserving neighborhood character.

The planning process was centered on robust community engagement and participation from residents, Advisory Neighborhood Commissioners, neighborhood and civic organizations, Ward 6 Councilmember Tommy Wells, property owners, institutions and government agencies. The Plan documents the community-based process and records the shared vision and guiding principles that were collectively developed to serve as the foundation for the Plan's key opportunity areas and recommendations. It includes an implementation strategy for transforming the Plan into reality.

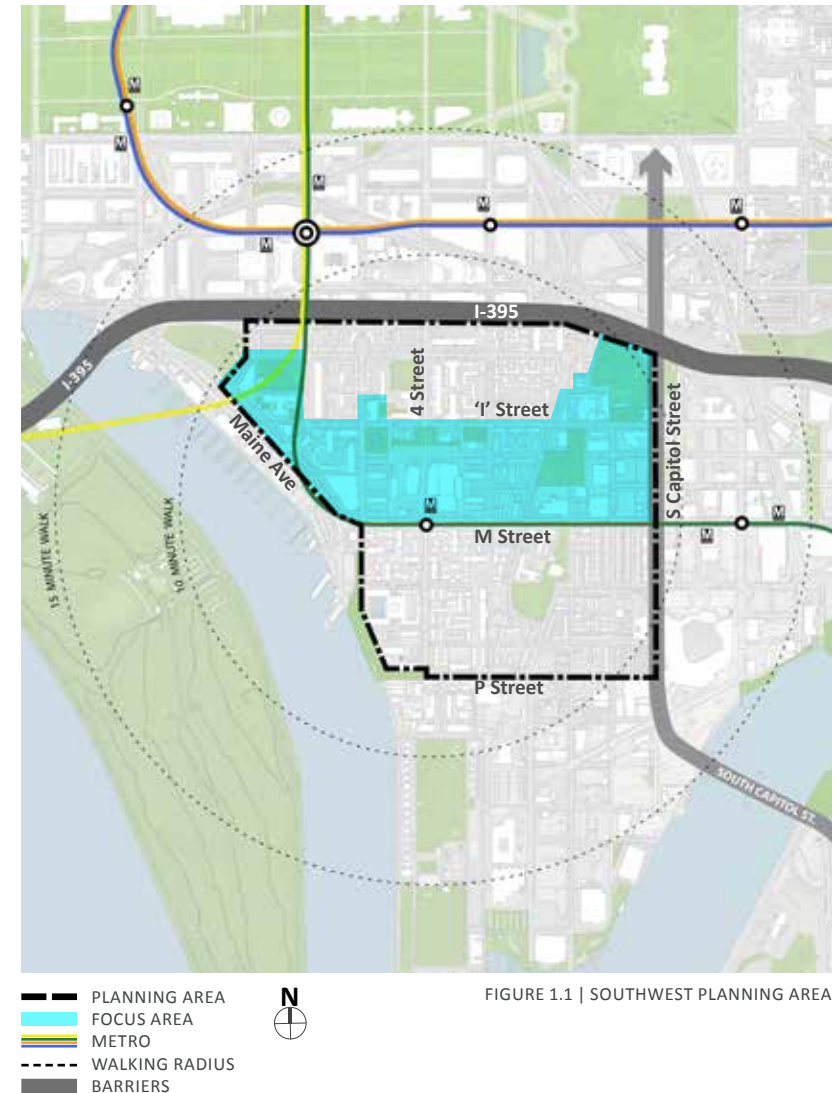


FIGURE 1.1 | SOUTHWEST PLANNING AREA

## Planning Area

The Planning Area extends from South Capitol Street to Maine Ave SW; from P Street SW, north to the I-395 Freeway (see Figure 1.3). The area highlighted in red is the Focus Area which contains the Plan’s development opportunity sites, primary urban design issues and new development context. The areas highlighted in blue in Figure 1.4 represent the Secondary Area, where neighborhood conservation, neighborhood connectivity and sustainability are the principal focus. To better understand the dynamics of the real estate market, a market analysis was conducted with a broader boundary than the Planning Area to include Buzzard Point and Capital Riverfront to better reflect real estate market dynamics.



FIGURE 1.2 | SOUTHWEST PLANNING AREA IN CONTEXT OF THE RIVERFRONT COMMUNITY



FOCUS AREA  
PLANNING AREA

FIGURE 1.3 | SOUTHWEST FOCUS AREA



SECONDARY AREA  
PLANNING AREA

FIGURE 1.4 | SOUTHWEST SECONDARY AREA



## Why Plan Now

After decades of population decline and disinvestment, the District is currently experiencing a resurgence, with sustained growth of approximately 1,100 additional residents every month, over the past few years. The demand for housing and other community amenities is strong and likely to continue not only in Southwest but in all quadrants and neighborhoods in the city.

New residents are demonstrating transit preferences that value Metro accessibility and other alternatives to private auto use, as well as neighborhood walkability. They are seeking centrally located neighborhoods with the sensibilities and amenities of city-living and easy access to Downtown D.C. Given the plentiful transit options and locational advantages of Southwest, just steps from the National Mall and adjacent to both the Potomac River and

the Washington Channel, the neighborhood will continue to be a magnet for residential development. The appeal is only likely to magnify with the increase in local retail amenities and the build-out of surrounding developments like The Wharf and potential soccer stadium, which will boost citywide recognition of the neighborhood. The time to plan is now, to ensure that the characteristics that the community cherishes about Southwest will be protected and enhanced while accommodating growth, change and new residents moving into the community.

Similar to the city as a whole, the Planning Area comprises a particularly diverse community that is growing and is expected to continue to grow into the foreseeable future. The Planning Area population is expected to increase from approximately 12,000

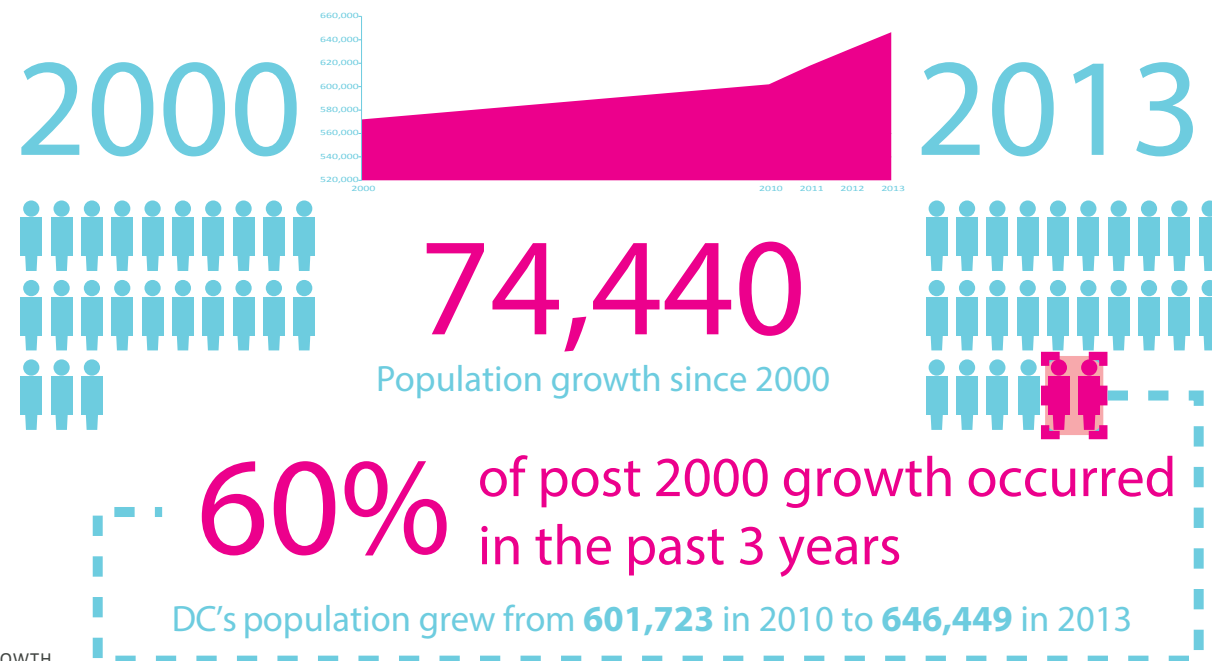


FIGURE 1.6 | DISTRICT POPULATION GROWTH

residents in 2013 to more than 15,000 residents in 2023, a number of which are likely to be young professionals, a growing segment of the population citywide. Currently, Southwest is unique in part because there are greater proportions of low-income households and senior households than the citywide average, reflecting the neighborhood's supply of income-restricted and senior-oriented housing, and the neighborhood's appeal for aging in place. However, there are many households within all income levels, age brackets and family types and it is precisely this diversity that is a treasured and defining aspect of the Southwest neighborhood. Planning is needed to address community concerns regarding the future of affordable and quality housing options in the neighborhood for a variety of incomes, family sizes, ages and for people with disabilities.

A significant amount of change has happened to the areas surrounding the core of the Southwest community since the adoption of the Comprehensive Plan in 2006, which set the stage for development in the city over a 20 year timeframe. On the

Southwest Waterfront, "The Wharf" has begun active construction. This catalytic development will bring approximately 3.2 million square feet of new development, including destination-type entertainment and retail experiences.

To the east of the neighborhood and beyond South Capitol Street are ongoing and significant changes in the Capital Riverfront/Navy Yard Area. This burgeoning district is anchored by the Nationals baseball stadium, which averages 31,000 fans per game. New offices, restaurants, high rise residential buildings and destination parks have been built in the last 10 years with more development to follow. To the South of the planning area, the District is currently negotiating with DC United to build a soccer stadium for approximately 22,000-25,000 fans, which could dramatically change the character of Buzzard Point (not within this Planning Area) which is currently a more isolated, industrial area.

There is also a significant amount of change planned or underway

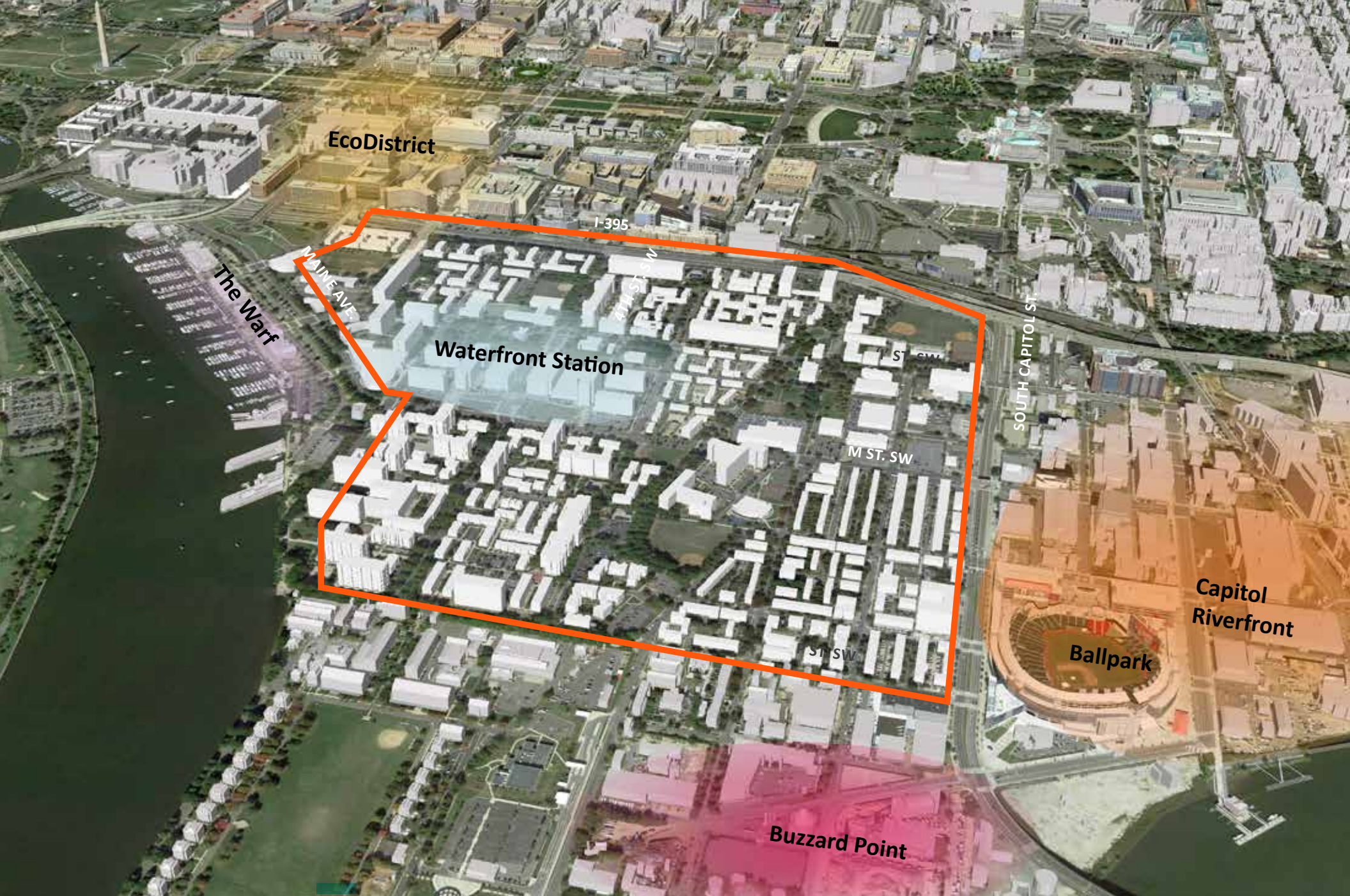


THE WHARF MASTER PLAN



CAPITOL RIVERFRONT DISTRICT DEVELOPMENT





 PLANNING AREA  
 CURRENT / FUTURE DEVELOPMENT



FIGURE 1.7 | MAJOR DEVELOPMENT IN AND AROUND THE SOUTHWEST PLANNING AREA





RENDERING OF PROPOSED SOCCER STADIUM AT BUZZARD POINT



WATERFRONT STATION PLANNED UNIT DEVELOPMENT MASTER PLAN

within the Planning Area itself. Approved development at the Waterfront Station has been partially completed with two new office towers flanking a restored 4th Street and creating a Main Street environment. Additionally, renovation of the Sky House residential towers is well underway. Full build out of the remaining four buildings will bring a total of 1.1 million square feet of new development to Waterfront Station. Along M Street, the DC Housing Authority has stated its intention to redevelop the aging Greenleaf Housing complex, which consists of four large parcels straddling M Street, into a larger mixed-income development that incorporates housing for existing residents as well as market rate housing. In addition, there is an abundance of District and federally owned parcels, many of which are currently underutilized and/or underdeveloped, with low-scale buildings and expansive surface parking, particularly clustered near M Street closer to South Capitol Street. There is a need to take a closer look at this cluster of District parcels to more judiciously utilize these assets as the City grows, allowing for consolidation and co-location of municipal uses or for private disposition to raise revenue or achieve citywide goals like affordable housing.

The District Department of Transportation (DDOT) is now in the process of determining the routing of a proposed streetcar network through SW on either M or 'I' Streets SW, connecting through the central city for 22 miles. Opportunities for a premium transit mode in Southwest will likely bring additional market demand for development to the community. In short, there is a large swath of land in the vicinity of M Street SW that will likely be targeted for development in the next five to ten years. The time to plan in the Southwest is now. The community can play a critical role in



shaping just how development occurs and what amenities it can bring to balance growth with livability – achieving an even stronger Southwest neighborhood. Residents have expressed concerns about the significant changes happening around the Southwest neighborhood and wonder what the longer term impacts might be on their close-knit community.

While it is possible for private and government property owners to move forward with development without the guidance of a Small Area Plan, the Plan allows for the community to consider all of the potential development as a whole and create predictability for the neighborhood regarding future change. By thinking holistically about the neighborhood through the planning process, there is an opportunity to better understand future housing and retail needs, provide guidance on the design of new development to meet those needs, preserve essential aspects of neighborhood character, and identify needed

STREETCAR ROUTES  
PLANNING AREA  
METRO  
BUS ROUTES

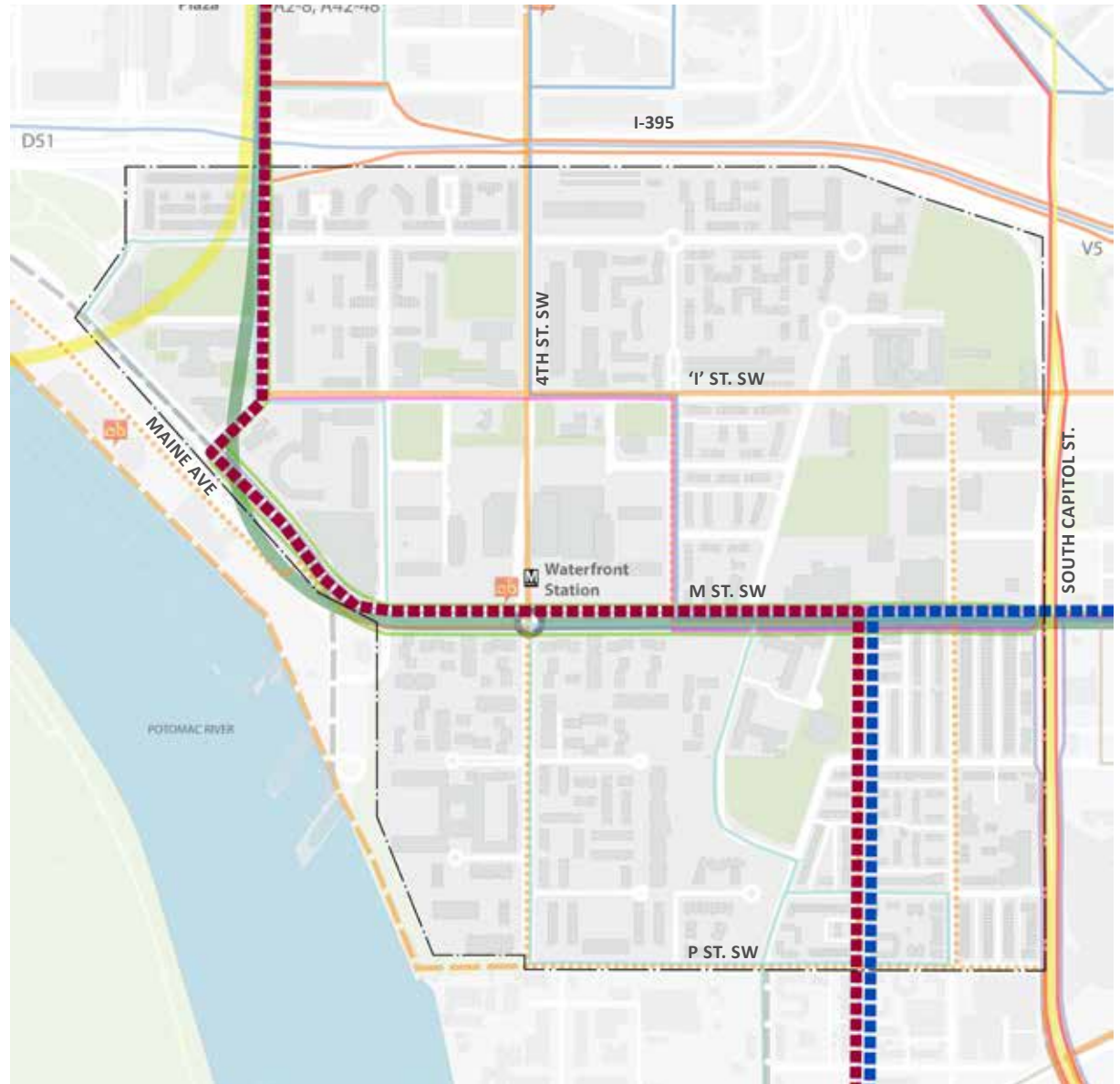


FIGURE 1.8 | POTENTIAL STREETCAR ALIGNMENT

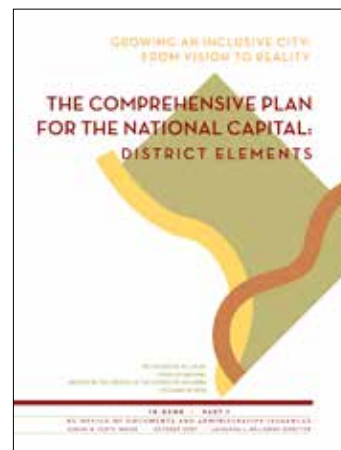
improvements to amenities such as parks and open spaces.

The *2006 Comprehensive Plan* is the District’s foundational planning document which provides general policy and overall guidance for future planning and development of the city for a 20-year period. Amendments to the Comprehensive Plan were made in 2011. While the Comprehensive Plan establishes broad policy goals for the entire City, Small Area Plans (SAP) address planning needs and goals at the neighborhood level to supplement the Comprehensive Plan. The SAP provides detailed direction for the development of city blocks, corridors, parks and neighborhoods, providing supplemental guidance to the Comprehensive Plan.

Since 2006, many of the Comprehensive Plan recommendations for the Southwest Neighborhood have been completed or are currently underway, such as restoration of the 4th Street SW connection, replacing the Waterside Mall with new buildings to anchor 4th street, transit-oriented development at Waterfront Station, and the ongoing construction of “The Wharf” development on the Southwest Waterfront. Much of Southwest was designated a Neighborhood Conservation Area. For the established residential portions of the neighborhood, this conservation focus has been realized through designation of historic landmarks and additional conservation measures that are contemplated as part of this Plan. At the time of the Comprehensive Plan in 2006 and subsequent amendment, DCHA was not yet considering the possible redevelopment of Greenleaf housing complex and the City was not considering a reevaluation of its public assets and operations in Southwest, making the Small Area Plan a timely and necessary supplement to the Comprehensive Plan.

Another critical planning foundation for the Plan is the *Sustainable DC Plan*, an ambitious 20 year plan to make DC the “healthiest, greenest and most livable city in the United States”. Sustainable DC provides a framework of recommendations, big and small, related to energy, the built environment, food, nature, transportation, public health, community equity and climate, to showcase the District as a leader in innovative sustainability policy. Many of these recommendations can be implemented through Small Area Plans, Comprehensive Plan amendments, future developments and also at the block and individual building level. The Southwest Neighborhood Plan incorporates recommendations where applicable from Sustainable DC and includes sustainability as a guiding principle for the Plan.

The District Department of Transportation (DDOT) has undertaken transportation planning work for the Southwest Neighborhood



THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN, 2006



SUSTAINABLE DC PLAN, 2012



which informed this Plan. In December 2012, DDOT completed the *M Street SE/SW Transportation Study*. The M Street SE/SW Transportation Study identified existing and future transportation challenges and ways to address them within a roughly 1.7-square-mile area along M Street SE/SW, encompassing the Southwest waterfront from 12th Street, SE to 14th Street, SW and from the Southwest/ Southeast Freeway south to the Anacostia River/ Washington Channel. The study analyzed how to integrate transit, bicycling and walking with motor vehicle traffic in order to best serve neighborhoods in this burgeoning section of the city. In addition, the study sought ways to most safely and effectively balance the travel needs of residents with those of visitors and workers in the area.

DDOT also completed the *Southeast-Southwest Special Events Transportation Analysis* which evaluates transportation pressures as a result of the numerous large-scale event venues in Southeast

and Southwest—Nationals Park, Arena Stage, DC United Stadium (proposed), Theater at the Yards (proposed) and The Wharf. This analysis affects both pedestrian and transit components of the Southwest Neighborhood Plan and attention is given to ensure these components are consistent in both plans. The *MoveDC Plan*, a citywide transportation plan, which was concurrently completed with the Southwest planning process, also helped guide the Southwest Neighborhood Plan.

Another basis for the Plan recommendations was the *Play DC* Master Plan, a long-range plan for the District of Columbia’s parks and recreation resources. The Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) vision framework was released in the Spring of 2014, concurrent with the planning process for the Southwest Neighborhood Plan. The Plan builds upon the District’s unique parks legacy and charts a course to improve DC’s parks and recreation system by creating equitable access, great spaces and world-class experiences to District residents.

Also concurrent with the process for this Plan was the development of the *Buzzard Point Urban Design Framework*, for which a draft was released in July 2014 and which informs development just outside the Planning Area boundaries to the South. This Framework design concept seeks to improve the public realm and physical environment of Buzzard Point and connect it with the emerging Capitol Riverfront area to the east while protecting the low scale residential areas of the Southwest neighborhood to the north. It builds on existing and proposed plans and initiatives, like the South Capitol Street and Frederick Douglass Memorial Bridge improvements, which will create three acres of open space and transform traffic circulation as well as a potential new stadium for professional soccer. The



M STREET / SOUTHWEST TRANSPORTATION STUDY, 2012



COMMUNITY MEMEBERS PARTICIPATE IN MODELING WHAT SOUTHWEST COULD BECOME



urban design concept is intended to create a vibrant, mixed-use neighborhood, improve pedestrian circulation, provide continuous public access to the water, identify new development opportunities that could increase the inventory of mixed-use development and affordable housing through inclusionary zoning, suggest ways to improve the environmental health of Buzzard Point, and enhance the physical connections to the surrounding community.

## Process and Methodology

### ***Community-Based Process***

The Plan was developed using an extensive community outreach and engagement process, including four community-wide meetings, seven Advisory Committee meetings, three focus groups, a joint Jefferson / Amidon PTA meeting, and two meetings held specifically for Greenleaf residents on site at the Family Center. In addition to utilizing a project website ([www.swneighborhoodplan.org](http://www.swneighborhoodplan.org)) to share planning information, an interactive online engagement forum, Engage Southwest (<http://engage.swneighborhoodplan.org>), was created to initiate a neighborhood dialogue and solicit feedback on ideas and concerns. Over 100 users registered at Engage Southwest to post comments, answer questions, map opportunities and share ideas. The goal of the community outreach methodology was to ensure that the community had multiple ways to interact and provide feedback on the Plan throughout the entire process. Community input informed the Plan vision, guiding principles, and recommendations to ensure local stakeholder desires help shape and influence future change in the neighborhood.

### ***Technical Approach***

In addition to reviewing all relevant planning documents prepared

by OP and other District agencies that pertain to Southwest as a planning foundation, the consultant team also completed a full range of technical analyses to understand the existing conditions and opportunities in land use, housing, retail, urban design and public realm, planning, historic preservation, architecture, open space, landscape architecture, transportation and sustainability. The overall consultant team included an interdisciplinary group of experts, further complemented by the guidance and direction of a District inter-agency working group.

A comprehensive market analysis was also completed. By analyzing neighborhood demographics, real estate conditions and trends, and planned development projects, market studies aim to better understand constituencies being served, as well as opportunities and limitations for real estate development in a given area with a special focus on retail demand. The Plan's market analysis offers a framework to inform policy, design, and development recommendations for the Southwest neighborhood.

## 02 EXISTING CONDITIONS ANALYSIS



ARENA STAGE | A MAJOR CULTURAL ANCHOR IN SOUTHWEST



# EXISTING CONDITIONS ANALYSIS

## Overview

This chapter presents the summary and key findings of existing conditions and technical analyses of the Southwest Neighborhood Planning Area. It also provides highlights from the Market Analysis to better understand the market outlook for future housing, office and retail uses in the neighborhood. The findings provide a baseline for building the Plan recommendations which appear in subsequent chapters.

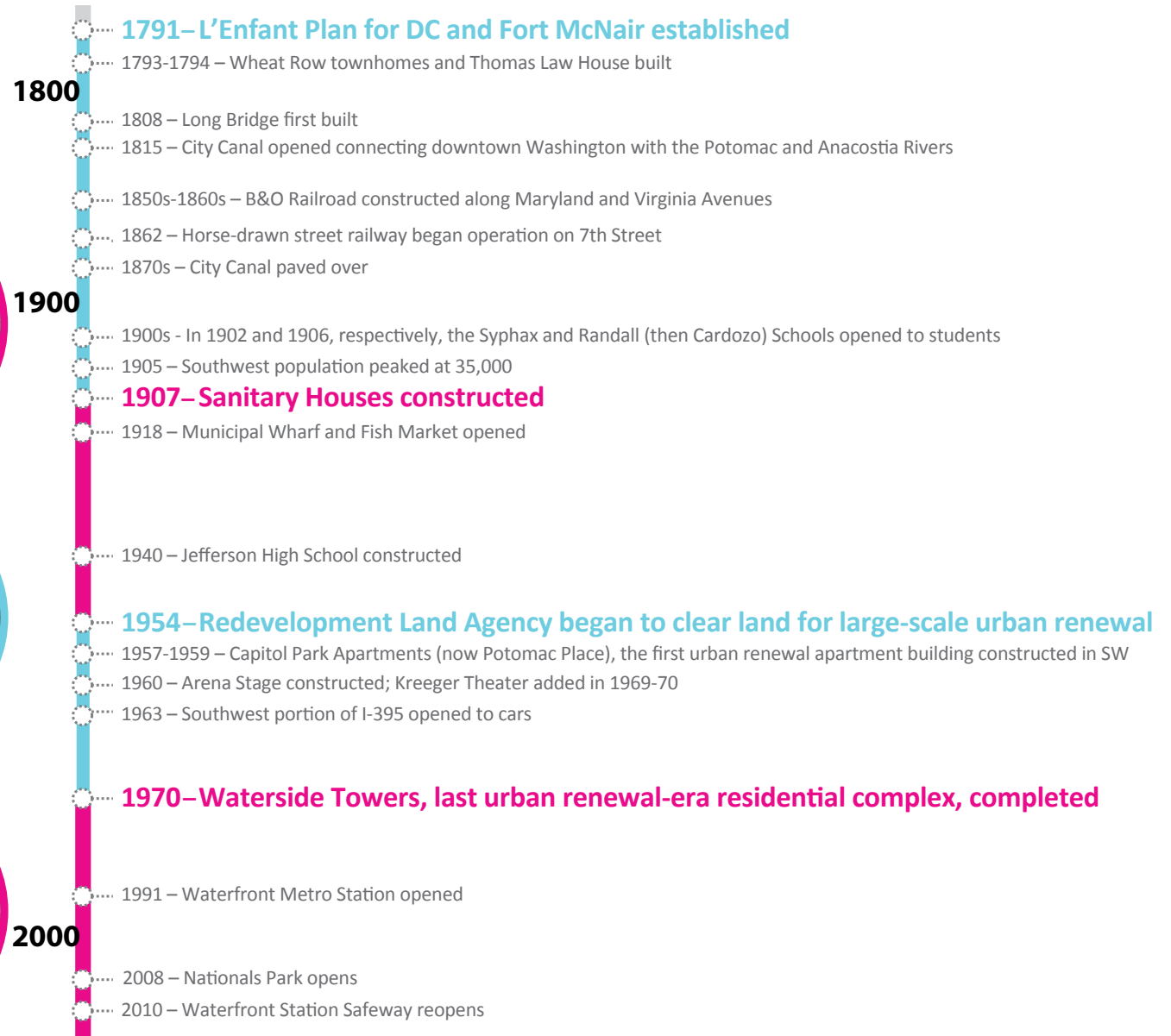
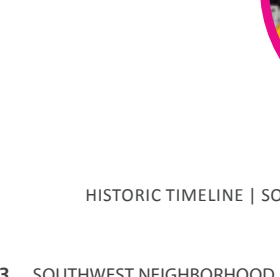
## History and Neighborhood Context

The Southwest neighborhood has a rich history and a defining character that is derived from buildings, urban design and open space. French engineer, Pierre Charles L'Enfant, completed a plan for the capital city in 1791. Reminiscent of Europe's great cities, this plan featured radiating avenues connecting a network of public squares and circles, and formed four quadrants, of which the Southwest quadrant was the smallest and earliest to develop. As the city's population moved north and west in the early 1800's, Southwest came to be regarded as outmoded and neglected. The Washington City Canal, which opened in 1815, effectively cut Southwest off from commerce and construction to the north. In 1846, the land west of the Potomac River was retroceded to Virginia, further distancing Southwest from its Washington neighbors, and creating a self-contained community, both physically and culturally.

Despite its isolation, Southwest was a bustling community with a diverse population and building stock. Industrial areas developed, particularly around the waterfront, and active commercial corridors were established along Fourth and Seventh Streets. The neighborhood was notable for its large African American, Jewish and immigrant populations. Between 1870 and 1900, the population of Southwest doubled, largely as a result of these growing communities. To accommodate the new residents, the Syphax and Cardozo High Schools were constructed in the first decade of the twentieth century. For a brief time, Southwest even became a fashionable residential neighborhood, with speculative developers such as James Greenleaf building prominent masonry



AERIAL OVER THE CAPITOL FACING SOUTHWEST, 1862





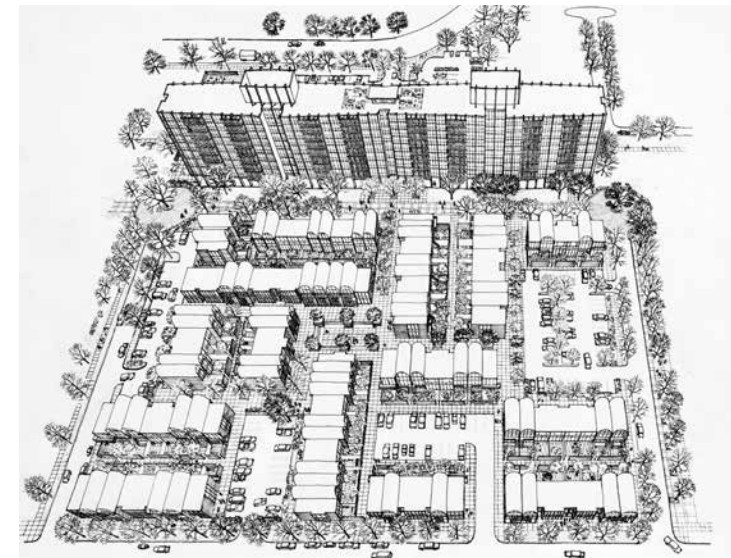
buildings near the water. Around 1905, the population of Southwest peaked at about 35,000 residents. During this period, a number of changes—including pressure from federal development to the north, pollution and noise from commercial and industrial activity, and an aging building stock—caused Southwest to be characterized as a “blighted” neighborhood. Despite the best efforts of residents and community organizations, the neighborhood was unable to shake its image as a slum.

Beginning in the 1940s, reformers, planners and legislators targeted Southwest—and its existing housing stock—to become a testing ground for large-scale urban renewal. The practice of using government-funded development to address issues of urban blight was not a new one, but during this period, the scope and vision of urban renewal projects expanded enormously, largely empowered by federal legislation and funding. Southwest was deemed to meet the criteria for a blighted neighborhood and—in the literal and figurative shadow of the Capitol—it became a laboratory for urban renewal.

The redevelopment of Southwest between 1945 and the early 1970s was the most ambitious and comprehensive urban renewal effort undertaken in the nation during that time. It brought dramatic changes to the architectural, political and social landscape of Washington, and particularly for the residents of “Old Southwest”. For many these changes were traumatic. Neighborhoods and communities were dismantled to make way for renewal. Approximately 23,000 residents and 1,500 businesses were displaced to allow for a massive redevelopment program of Southwest, including approximately 5,800 new housing units, for 13,000 middle- and upper-class residents. Then beginning from a clean slate, the new character of Southwest included Modernist high-rise buildings and townhouses, government buildings, a suburban-type mall and a revitalized waterfront.

## Urban Design and Neighborhood Character

In the 1950’s, the Southwest neighborhood could be experienced in two very distinct ways; one with a thriving commercial district and active entertainment, including a movie theater and a few elaborate homes and the other as a shantytown of tenements, shacks and even tents. Under the direction of the US Congress, the Redevelopment Land Agency implemented a plan to completely rebuild Southwest into a “New Town in the City”. This radical new development incorporated modern high rises, townhouses, and landscapes. Later phases of the development used “modern” style residential complexes, like townhomes or high-rises, closely situated around open spaces and separated from each other by green space and surface parking. A product of comprehensive urban renewal of this magnitude, Southwest’s urban design can be defined as “a museum of mid-century modern architecture”. Today, the urban,



SKETCH OF RIVER PARK BY CHARLES GOODMAN, 1961

architectural and historic character of this ‘new town’ still embodies a unique and very distinct neighborhood character and serves as home to a diversity of cultures, incomes, and nationalities.

Defined by Modernist architecture, Southwest’s large urban blocks with limited through streets and a blend of public and private open spaces delineates a character unique to Southwest in the city and nationally. Its high rise and low rise building heights, evident in the 1960’s Tiber Island development, exemplifies another defining urban design feature of Southwest that contributes to the neighborhood’s physical character. Still unabashedly “modern” in look and feel, Southwest may seem an unlikely candidate for historic preservation. And yet as its stock of Modernist architecture and landscapes reaches maturity, planners and historians have begun to reevaluate the historic significance of Southwest. In addition to structures predating urban renewal, several of the Modernist buildings in Southwest have been listed in the DC Inventory of Historic Sites. Other resources, less immediately recognizable as historic—like the neighborhood’s collection of sanitary, public and municipal housing—also merit investigation into their potential significance.

The community embraces and celebrates this unique character and has made strides to preserve individual buildings and open spaces of high historic value. Older buildings have also seen new life, such as Friendship Baptist Church, home to the arts non-profit, Blind Whino, and the expanded Arena Stage. It is important that buildings and landscapes continue to be revitalized as they add vitality and renewed purpose to the neighborhood.



BLIND WHINO ART EVENT SPACE



HISTORIC ARENA STAGE



The following properties within the Planning Area have been listed in the DC Inventory and National Register:

1. Tiber Island, 429 N St, SW
2. Thomas Law (Honeymoon) House, 1252 6th St, SW
3. Harbour Square, 500 N St, SW \*
4. Edward Simon Lewis House, 456 N St SW
5. Duncanson-Cranch House (Barney Neighborhood House), 468-470 N St, SW
6. Wheat Row, 1315-1321 4th St, SW
7. Town Center East, 1001-1101 3rd St, SW
8. Arena Stage, 1101 6th St, SW \*
9. Capitol Park Apartments, 800 4th St, SW \*
10. William Syphax School (1360 Half St, SW)
11. Randall School (65 'I' St, SW)
12. Friendship Baptist Church (734 First St, SW)
13. Capitol Park Towers (301 G Street SW)
14. Randall Recreation Center -the former District pound and stable- (820 South Capitol Street)

\* In DC Inventory Only

- HERITAGE TRAIL
- HERITAGE TRAIL SIGNS
- HISTORIC LANDMARKS

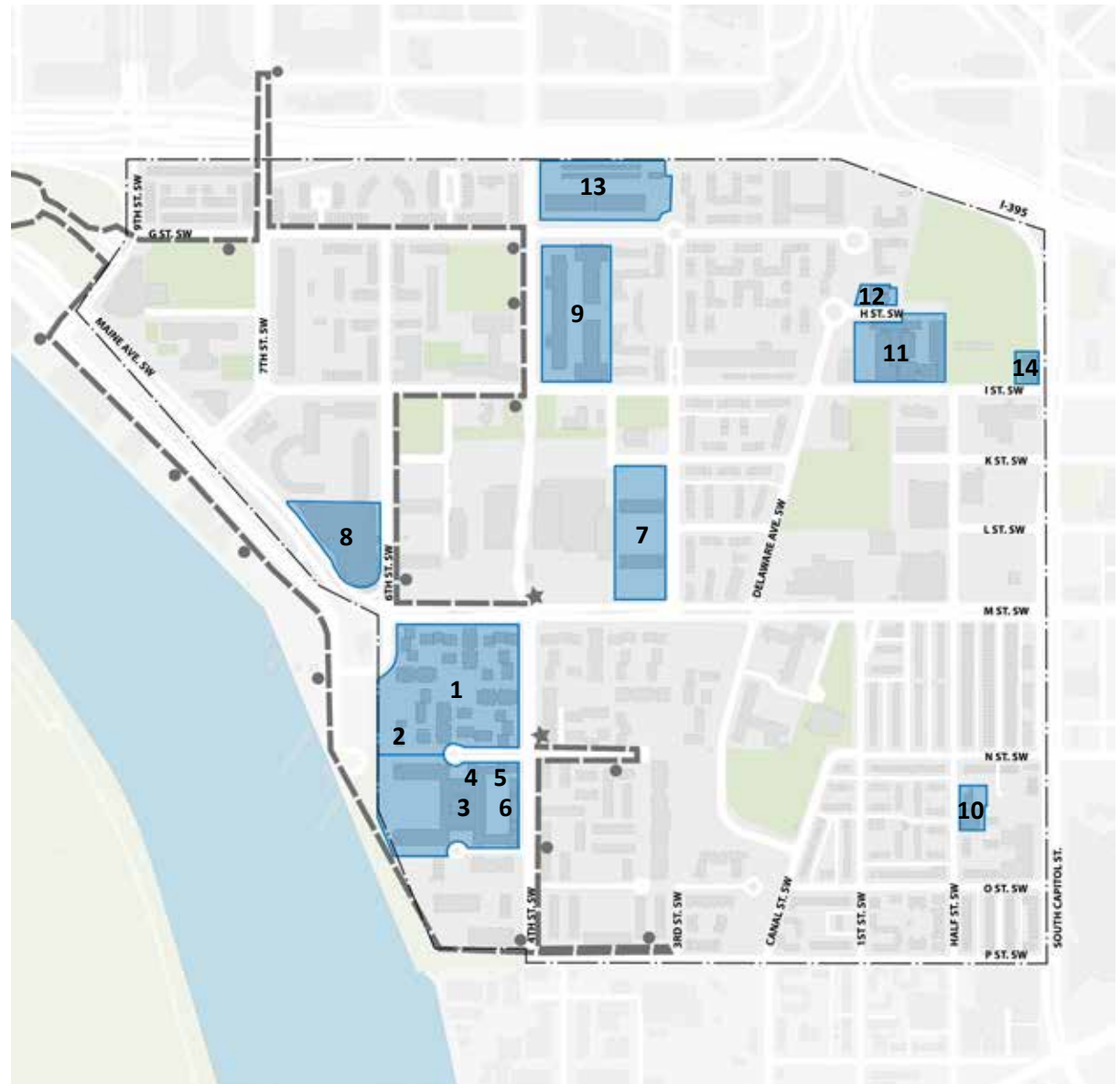


FIGURE 2.1 | HISTORIC LANDMARKS DIAGRAM

Beyond landmark applications, the neighborhood is also a potential candidate for designation as a historic district or conservation district (that is, if Council were to adopt legislation to create conservations districts which are recommended in the Comprehensive Plan). There is support among existing community-based organizations in the neighborhood such as the Southwest Neighborhood Assembly (SWNA) to create and adopt an historic district, though some property owners have expressed hesitation about the level of regulation involved with such a district.

Several community have expressed concern about the design of new development and whether it will threaten the treasured Modernist neighborhood character. Given that planned development and neighborhood growth are underway, how development is shaped becomes integral to evolving character in a direction that can be embraced as complementary and enriching. Arena Stage, Sky House, and Randall School have been identified by the community as examples of new development more in line with the neighborhood's characteristics. This Plan outlines design guidelines to be applied to new development achieved through the Planned Unit Development process to ensure future development is compatible with the existing built environment and contributes positively to the neighborhood form and rhythm that many Southwest residents appreciate.

Other preservation initiatives implemented in the neighborhood include the Southwest Heritage Trail, which tells the story of the development of Southwest from the eighteenth to twentieth centuries. Through seventeen illustrated panels, the trail leads visitors through the neighborhood, passing landmarks both lost and preserved. The panels use both interpretive text and historic photographs to tell stories of old and new Southwest.



FIGURE 2.2 | SOUTHWEST HERITAGE TRAIL (CULTURAL TOURISM DC)

The Southwest Heritage Trail *River Farms to Urban Towers* is composed of 17 illustrated historical markers. You can begin your journey at any point along the route. The walk should take about 90 minutes. Each marker is capped with an **H**.

Sign 1 is found atop the Waterfront/SEU station on Metro's Green line. Sign 6 is at the corner of Seventh and E streets near the L'Enfant Plaza station on the Blue, Orange, Yellow, and Green lines.

## Existing Land Use

The Southwest neighborhood features a blend of residential and commercial land uses as well as a number of public amenities and municipal facilities. The neighborhood is predominately residential in character with an eclectic mix of high and low density residential housing typologies, from single family townhomes to apartment towers. Commercial uses are focused on 4th Street between 'I' and M Streets and also on South Capitol Street, while residential uses of varying densities dominate the remainder of the Planning Area.



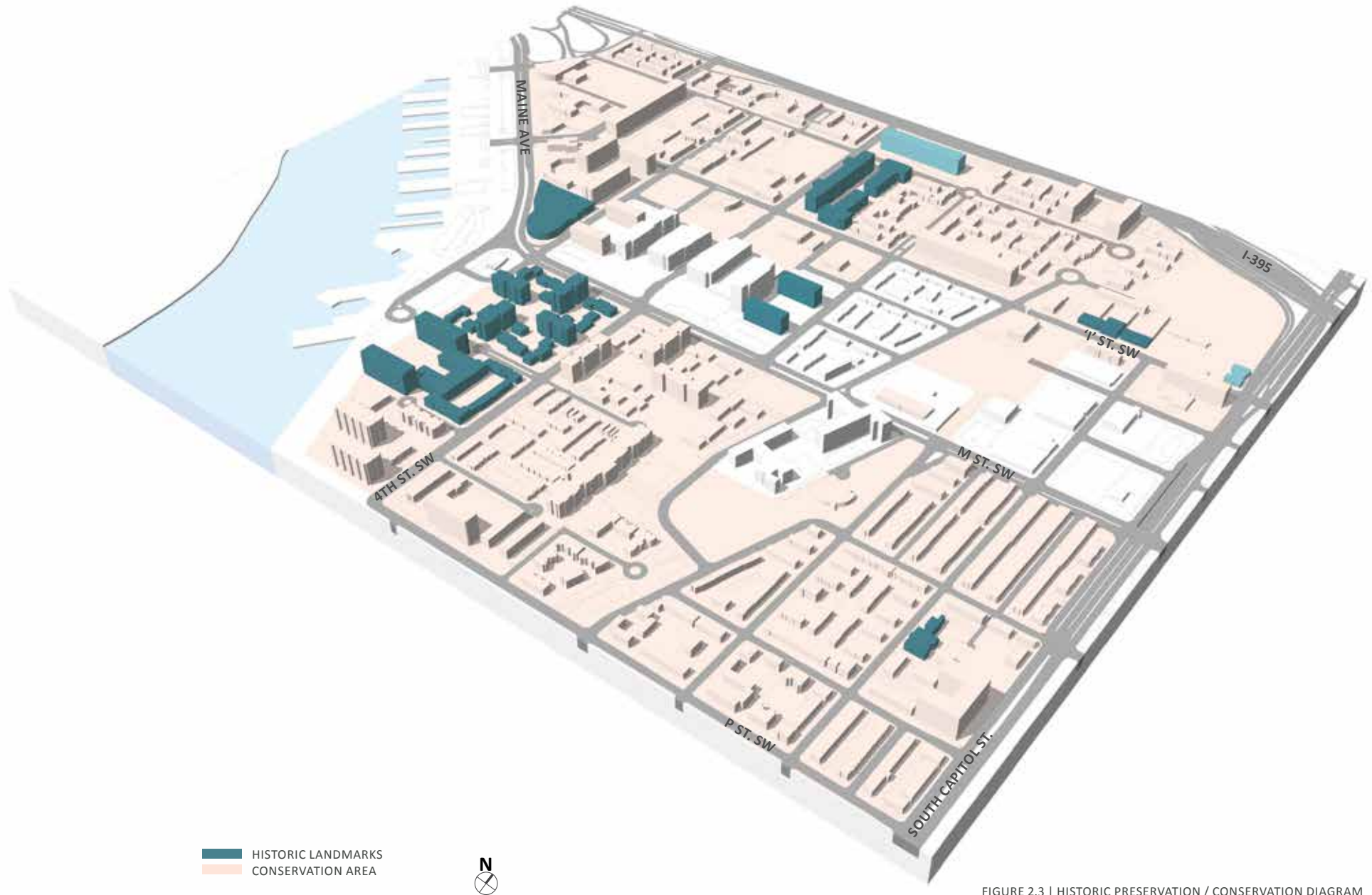


FIGURE 2.3 | HISTORIC PRESERVATION / CONSERVATION DIAGRAM

The neighborhood values its commercial center along 4th Street between 'I' and M Streets and in recent years has leveraged public and private investment to attract improved retail and active uses. South Capitol Street serves as the Planning Area's most eastern boundary, and has the viability to function as an active, mixed-use corridor in the future. Parks and community facilities are also interspersed throughout the Planning Area and are valuable assets that enhance the neighborhood's amenities.

There are 21 publicly-owned (federal and local) properties in the Planning Area – a very high number given the neighborhood's size. Aside from parks and the library, public land is concentrated north of M Street SW near South Capitol Street. Several sites feature low-density single use buildings that house city services and are surrounded by surface parking that render them underused and contribute stormwater runoff.



TIBER ISLAND | PREDOMINATE CHARACTER OF SOUTHWEST IS RESIDENTIAL

The 2006 DC Comprehensive Plan, in the next pages, designated future land use in most of the neighborhood as moderate to medium density residential with scattered high density parcels throughout the planning area.

Neighborhood commercial uses are also strategically targeted along the 4th Street SW and South Capitol Street commercial corridors. The Comprehensive Plan identifies a number of city-owned parcels along M Street as local public land uses, such as the Department of Motor Vehicles and Metropolitan Police Department buildings. This government cluster is being evaluated, given that the District's municipal services and facility needs are increasing with population growth and there is recognition of the importance of responsible management of public assets. Future opportunities exist for the city to consolidate these properties and optimize municipal uses or to release them through a competitive bidding process to the private sector for redevelopment that can best meet the community's needs. These sites can enable new populations to move into the neighborhood, while striving to meet neighborhood goals for preserving income and family diversity and physical character.

The Comprehensive Plan future land use designations were based on market expectations from 2004-2006, which had not fully anticipated the robust population growth or developments such as the proposed soccer stadium. This Plan will propose revised land use designation for targeted opportunity sites, where future demand, community interest and the market analysis completed during this planning process can provide improved development opportunities for the Southwest neighborhood. Additionally, the





DEPARTMENT OF MOTOR VEHICLES (DMV)



DEPARTMENT OF MOTOR VEHICLES (DMV) INSPECTION STATION



FIRE AND EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICE MAINTENANCE SITE

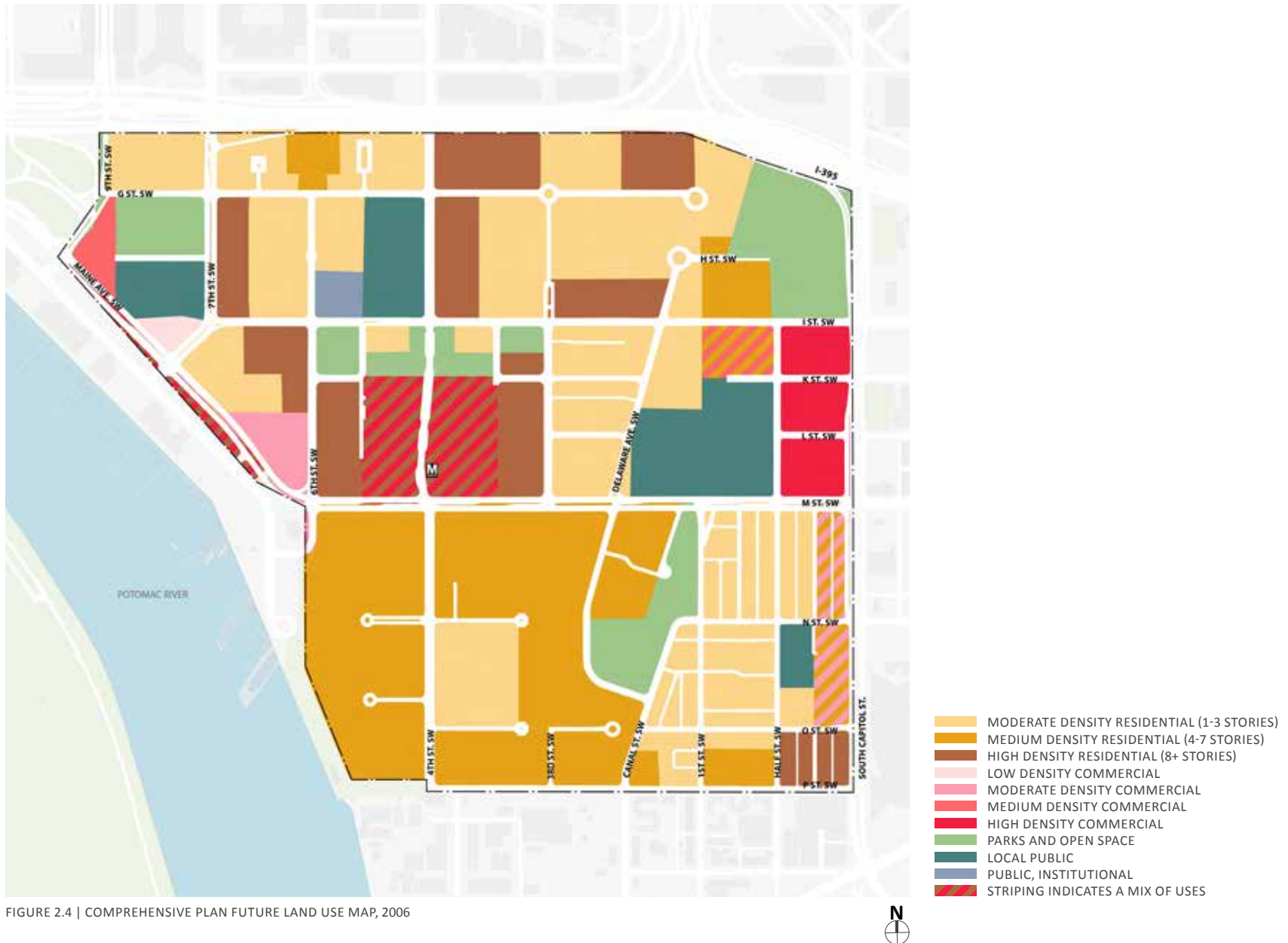


FIGURE 2.4 | COMPREHENSIVE PLAN FUTURE LAND USE MAP, 2006



plan an ongoing community need to preserve and enhance existing green space. In addition to the government uses identified above, the Planning Area is home to the following local schools, all of which add to the livability of the Planning Area: Amidon- Bowen Elementary School and Jefferson Middle School. The Appletree Early Learning Public Charter School, located temporarily within the Jefferson campus, is focused on early childhood education for pre-kindergarten levels. The Southwest Public Library Branch provides a valuable educational amenity and also hosts a variety of community programs including family and kids programs, educational activities, yoga and meditation, job readiness preparation, author talks, and more. For more on the library, please see the summary box on page 107.

## Recreational and Uses

Arena Stage and Nationals Park are two entertainment venues that draw visitors from throughout the metropolitan region. Arena Stage is a leading producer and presenter of theater and other performing arts, bringing audiences totaling over 300,000 people to the neighborhood each year. Located at the intersection of Maine Avenue and 6th Street SW, it is two blocks from the Waterfront Metro Station and adjacent to The Wharf development. Nationals Park is the stadium for Washington DC's baseball team, the Nationals, and also hosts a variety of concerts and other activities throughout the year. Located on the border of the Planning Area along South Capitol Street, the venue attracts four million visitors each year.

The Planning Area also has a variety of neighborhood serving facilities. Numerous parks provide green space, playgrounds, athletic fields and courts, and an outdoor pool. The Randall Recreation Center and King Greenleaf Recreation Center provide indoor spaces for community education, fitness, and recreational activities for all age groups. The Anacostia Riverwalk is a pedestrian and bike trail which will provide a continuous path from the National Arboretum to Georgetown once completed. These facilities play a role in making Southwest a family-friendly, livable neighborhood.

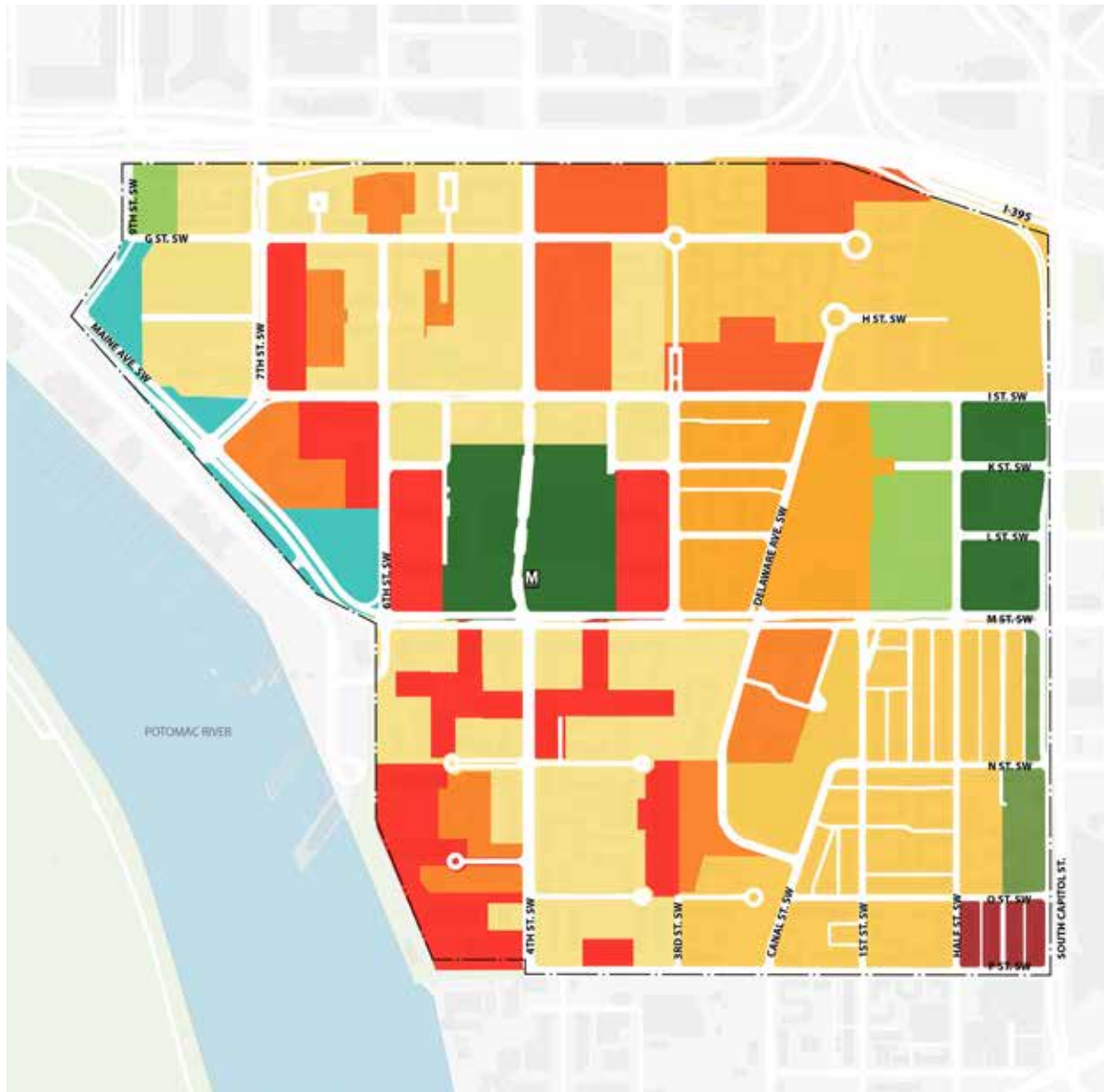


FIGURE 2.5 | ZONING MAP

## Existing Zoning

A variety of high and low building heights is unique to Southwest, an intentional mix of townhouses and high-rise towers. Most buildings in the area are under four stories or over eight stories. This defining feature of Southwest is valued by the community; however, most of the current land use and zoning designations call for densities that would not permit new buildings as tall as the existing towers in Southwest and some zoning would permit construction of new buildings in green space.

For example, a medium density residential land use with an R-5-B zone allows, by right, a maximum height of 50 feet with a 1.8 floor area ratio (FAR). Under this designation, any new development on that parcel would not be able to achieve the current high-low

- C-2-C
- C-3-A
- C-3-C
- R-3
- R-4
- R-5-A
- R-5-B
- R-5-C
- R-5-D
- R-5-E
- W-1





mix as reflected in the existing Southwest area because the zoning height restrictions prevent constructing a building over five floors. Although this model may be desirable in other neighborhoods, in Southwest, it would discourage developers from varying building heights or building upwards to free up more room for open space.

This plan recommends some changes to the Comprehensive Plan future land use designations where appropriate in targeted areas to both accommodate growth and promote the neighborhood pattern of high and low scale development through corresponding design guidelines realized through the Planned Unit Development process.

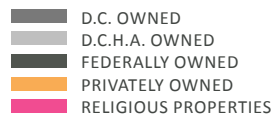


FIGURE 2.6 | PROPERTY OWNERSHIP

## Transportation

Southwest has a unique set of challenges when it comes to circulation and transportation. With limited street grid connections across I-395 and South Capitol Street, Southwest ties into the city fabric of DC at just a few key locations. The neighborhood has good access to Metrorail, bus and bike facilities, giving residents a wide range of transit alternatives. These options will be vital to improving sustainability and serving the community as the neighborhood and surrounding areas experience growth in years to come.

The great irony of “Old” Southwest was that transportation and infrastructure improvements, designed to speed the movement of people and goods across Washington, DC, isolated the small community from the city as a whole. Southwest became an island, defined by its watery edges (including the Washington and James Creek Canals and Potomac River) and by railroad tracks along Maryland and Virginia Avenues. These factors fostered commercial and industrial activity, which contributed to the Southwest’s diverse urban mix and vitality.

Urban renewal erased much of the industrial and commercial legacy of Southwest, yet did little to improve its connectivity with the rest of urban Washington. Certain elements, like the Southwest Freeway (Interstate 395) and the dead-end cul-de-sacs created by new residential superblocks, served to underscore Southwest’s sense of seclusion and impeded vehicular circulation within the neighborhood.

Recent developments and current planning efforts, however,

attempt to reverse the planning missteps of earlier generations. The Waterfront Metrorail station, opened in 1991, connects Southwest with the rapidly developing Green Line corridor. Two streetcar routes are being explored, which could connect Southwest with its neighbors to the east and north. These new transportation options are being paired with smaller efforts, such as a Bikeshare station, bicycle lanes and improved pedestrian safety, as well as the DC Circulator which are targeted at improving transportation both within and across Southwest.

### ***Metrorail***

The Planning Area has one centrally located Metrorail station, Waterfront Station, which anchors the “main street” core on 4th Street and supports transit-oriented development. The station offers quick access to other stations. Within a five-minute walk of the Planning Area boundaries, are L’Enfant Plaza, Federal Center Southwest and Navy Yard-Ballpark stations. These locations provide direct access to four of the five Metrorail lines: Green, Yellow, Blue and Orange.

### ***Bus***

Southwest has seven major bus routes that traverse the Planning Area. These routes connect to the north to the Rhode Island Metrorail station and Farragut Square; to the south to Buzzard Point, Congress Heights and Fort Washington; and to the East to Anacostia and Benning Heights.



FIGURE 2.7 | BUS ROUTES





CARS ON M STREET

### ***Car***

The Planning Area is bounded by a two major arterials—I-395 and South Capitol Street. Due to the fragmented street grid in Southwest, much of the neighborhood’s traffic is channeled onto just a few key streets. Only ‘I’, M and P Streets connect to South Capitol, and only 4th, 6th and 7th Streets connect under I-395 to the street grid to the north. Most streets are collector or local serving, and reinforce the internally focused structure of the urban renewal developments in Southwest. However, this also means that a tie-up on one arterial can quickly create gridlock.

### ***Bike***

The neighborhood has one Capitol Bikeshare station which is centrally located across from Waterfront Station on 4th Street at M Street SW. Other stations are located just outside of the Planning



BIKE LANE ALONG 4TH STREET

Area at the Federal Center Metrorail station and Navy Yard. The bike network in Southwest is continuing to evolve with recent striping of bike lanes along ‘I’ Street and 4th Street as well as signed routes along P Street and Half Street.



FIGURE 2.8 | MAJOR CORRIDORS AND BIKE LANES

## Corridors and Public Realm

Southwest has a well-established public realm with mature trees lining streets, landscaped frontages along private buildings and varied building setbacks that collectively establish a sense of greenery along many corridors. The public realm is part of what makes Southwest distinctive and it is important to retain and improve upon this character in the future.

The mid-twentieth-century urban renewal of Southwest also changed the design and perception of public space within the neighborhood. To allow for the creation of residential superblocks, some of the original L'Enfant street grid was closed. These closures dictate the pattern today of more limited pedestrian and vehicular connectivity throughout neighborhood. Some (although not all) former streets remained in the public right-of-way and were converted to pedestrian walkways lined with shady tree canopies. The orientation of buildings around these superblocks was carefully considered to create transitions between public (parks, streets, and sidewalks), semi-public (setbacks, cul-de-sacs, parking lots and lawns), and private (inner plazas, gardens, and swimming pools) spaces.

Public space in Southwest has remained fluid. Some residential communities have sought to assert the privacy of their properties by adding fences, signage and other visual indicators. In other cases, L'Enfant streets have been restored, including 4th Street, rendering them back to full public use. As the urban character of Southwest relies on this interplay of public and private spaces, it is important to strike a balance in preserving that relationship while also providing for twenty-first century needs.

### ***I' Street***

The 'I' Street corridor has a dense, mature tree canopy with large setbacks and a number of civic buildings along the street. This cultural corridor has four churches, two schools, three parks and a diverse range of housing scales and styles.

### ***M Street***

The M Street corridor is one of Southwest's key connections to Southeast. This street is bordered by a number of underutilized, publicly-owned parcels. With heavy traffic and sporadic tree canopy, M Street is not an ideal corridor for pedestrians. Fortunately, this corridor has the highest capacity for growth and opportunity to create a desirable artery within the community. In December 2012, the District Department of Transportation (DDOT) completed the M Street SE/SW Transportation Study which identified existing and future transportation challenges and ways to address them within a 1.7-square-mile area along M Street SE/SW, and the Southwest waterfront from 12th Street, SE to 14th Street, SW and from the Southwest/Southeast Freeway south to the Anacostia River/Washington Channel. It provides direction for integrating multiple modes- transit, bicycling and walking with motor vehicle traffic, in order to best serve neighborhoods in this burgeoning section of the city. In addition, the study sought ways to most safely and effectively balance the travel needs of residents with those of visitors and workers in the area.



#### 4th Street

The central portion of the 4th Street corridor North of M Street is gradually becoming a neighborhood retail hub for the community. With the Waterfront Metrorail station and surrounding planned unit development, many public realm improvements have been completed in this section of the street, creating a pleasant urban environment. North and south segments of 4th Street have mature tree canopies and large building setbacks, creating a distinctive experience entering Southwest from the north under I-395.

#### South Capitol Street

Currently, South Capitol Street has an uninviting public realm for pedestrians. Busy traffic moves along this corridor and the street lacks trees or buffers so pedestrians have little protection from moving vehicles. Fortunately, the city sees great opportunity for South Capitol Street and envisions it as a walkable boulevard with ground floor retail and mixed uses in years to come.

■ VEGETATION IN THE PUBLIC REALM  
■ VEGETATION IN COURTYARD SPACES



FIGURE 2.9 | VEGETATION AND GREENSPACE



FIGURE 2.10 | ROAD NETWORKS

### ***Maine Avenue SW***

This is a major thoroughfare for commuters through the neighborhood seeking access to downtown and also to points outside of the city. With the build-out of The Wharf development, the street will be reconstructed and serve as more of a gateway and urban boulevard for not only cars but also bikes and pedestrians. The improvements will better connect Southwest with the new amenities and destinations on the Waterfront.

STREETS



## Parks and Open Space Existing Conditions

Residents in Southwest take pride in the verdant landscapes enveloping the neighborhood. A large number of parks and open spaces, in addition to some of the District’s most established tree canopies, provide places to stroll, exercise, play and gather. Per the tree canopy analysis by Casey Trees, the tree canopy in the Southwest Planning Area is currently 25 percent of land area.

Yet many of Southwest’s parks do not meet the programmatic needs of the community. In some cases, residents have formed groups such as the Friends of the Southwest Duck Pond to lead maintenance and programmatic improvements. The following key parks and open spaces have helped build community pride and are revered as community gems:

### ***Lansburgh Park***

This multi-use park is home to a community garden, basketball courts, pavilion, and dog park. Lansburgh Park is important to residents and serves a number of needs. Although existing conditions identify underutilized amenities that are essentially hidden from plain view within the neighborhood, efforts to improve the use of the park and publicly owned parcels surrounding its open space provide the unique opportunity to recast this park as Southwest’s “Central Park.”



AERIAL IMAGE OF LANSBURGH PARK



### ***Randall Recreation Center***

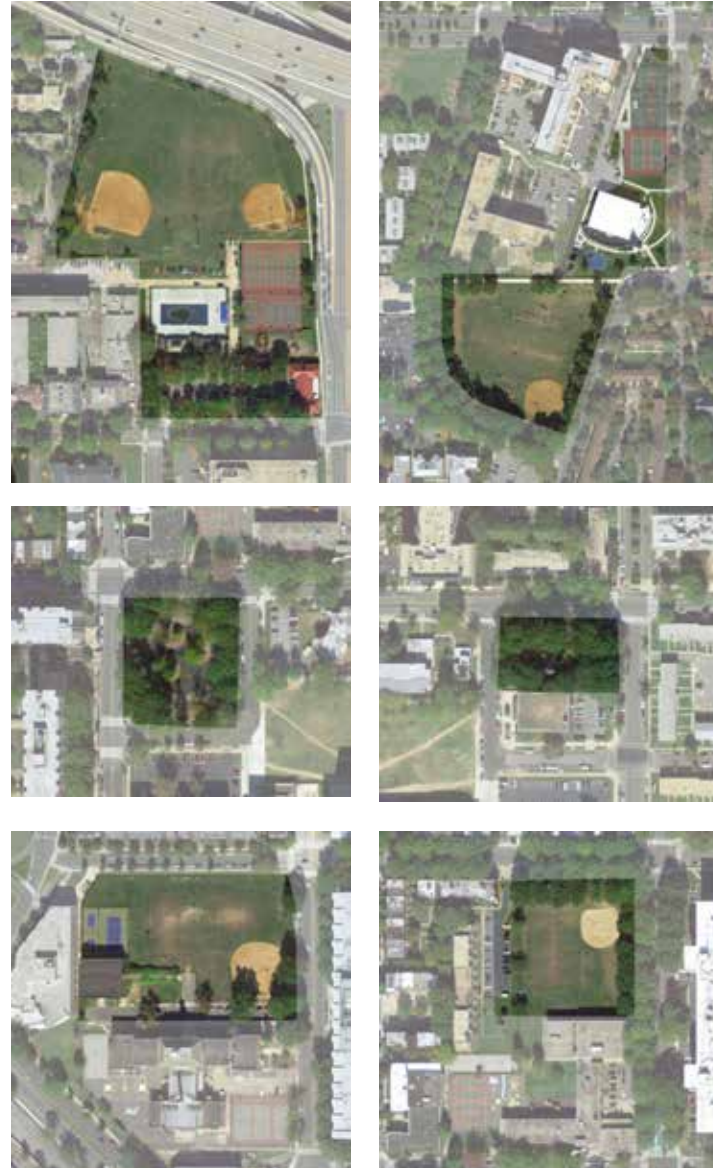
The recreation center is home to an outdoor pool as well as recreational fields and a couple of aging buildings. The community desires renovations and improvements to make this park more accessible and visible. Both existing buildings are in dire need of repair. Community sentiments regarding future improvements include more robust arts-centered programming to meet the demand of an expanding art culture within the neighborhood. Additionally, both buildings exhibit unique historic character and are likely to be considered historic should a landmark application be considered. Overall, Randall Recreation Center is considered by neighborhood residents of high historic value.

### ***King Greenleaf Recreation Center***

This large venue in the center of the study area offers both indoor and outdoor facilities. Its fields are frequented by sports groups and the indoor recreation center has a gymnasium, meeting rooms and other facilities for the community. Recent investments in the park and surrounding recreation center offer improved services and amenities for all Southwest residents.

### ***Southwest Duck Pond***

The Friends of the Southwest Duck Pond community group has taken on programming and fundraising for this beloved and historic park. With its central location in Southwest and proximity to nearby elementary schools, Arena Stage and 4th Street, the Southwest Duck Pond is a great community gathering venue.



FROM TOP LEFT TO BOTTOM RIGHT – AERIAL IMAGES OF RANDALL RECREATION CENTER, KING GREENLEAF RECREATION CENTER, SOUTHWEST DUCK POND, LIBRARY PARK, JEFFERSON MIDDLE SCHOOL FIELDS AND AMIDON-BOWEN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL FIELDS

### **Library Park**

Library Park recently completed major improvements including the addition of a playground. This park complements the Southwest Library and serves as a small oasis in the heart of the community.

### **Jefferson Middle and Amidon-Bowen Elementary School Fields**

The recreation fields located at the local schools are both gated and typically not open for public use during school hours. These facilities provide space for student recreation during school hours and are sometimes used for external events.

 PARKS  
 RECREATION FIELDS



FIGURE 2.11 | PARKS AND OPEN SPACE



FIGURE 2.12 | ARTS AND CULTURAL AMENITIES



- ARENA STAGE
- PLACES OF WORSHIP
- PUBLIC SCHOOLS
- LIBRARY
- RECREATION CENTERS
- ART WHINO



## Arts, Culture and Community Facilities

Over time, Southwest has developed and upheld a vibrant art and cultural scene. Residents take pride in the unique identity established in Southwest over the years. Although Southwest is located only a few blocks from the National Mall, Smithsonian museums and downtown Washington, its residents have a longstanding tradition of fostering art and culture within their own neighborhood. To instill a sense of community after the wholesale redevelopment of Southwest in the 1960s, residents inaugurated an annual Festival of the Arts, featuring craft demonstrations, folk music, modern dance, film screenings and art exhibitions. Murals and sculptural installations were carefully integrated throughout the neighborhood, reflecting the high value placed on public art and good design—both by the planners of Southwest and the residents themselves. Enduring institutions like the Arena Stage have broken the mold of a neighborhood arts venue, staging productions of a national caliber within an intimate, community setting.

In the recent past, neighborhood art amenities have diversified, engaging the unique venues and talents latent in the community. The expansion of the historic Arena Stage Theater, has truly transformed Southwest into a beacon for locally produced art and cultural activities. The vividly imaginative reuse of the former Friendship Baptist Church to house the non-profit arts venture Blind Whino testifies to the tradition of engaging arts and culture in Southwest. Recent proposals for the historic Randall School, Southeastern University, and The Wharf further demonstrate the huge potential of Southwest to become an even more dynamic center for arts and culture in Washington, DC.

Local schools, nearby places of worship, and a neighborhood library add to the livability of the Planning Area. There are eight churches of varying denominations, many in beautiful buildings that also serve as a venue for various community uses. The Amidon-Bowen Elementary School and Jefferson Middle School are within walking distance for those living within the Planning Area. The Southwest Public Library Branch provides a valuable educational amenity and also hosts a variety of community programs including family and kids programs, educational programs, yoga and meditation, job readiness preparation, author talks, and more.

## Market Analysis Summary and Outlook

A market analysis was conducted to analyze neighborhood demographics, real estate conditions and trends, infrastructure and planned development projects to better understand potential opportunities and limitations for real estate development in the Southwest Planning Area. The Plan's market analysis offers findings to inform policy, design and development recommendations for the Southwest neighborhood.

### Demographics

The market analysis projects neighborhood population growth from 11,929 in 2013 to approximately 15,500 people in 2023 and more than 20,100 people in 2033. A number of people moving into the planning area for the first time are young professionals in their 20s and 30s – a growing segment of the population citywide. Community residents have expressed support for seeing real estate development that retains the neighborhood's balance and diversity.

The Planning Area saw very little real estate development between 2000 and 2010, and correspondingly, the neighborhood population gained only 745 residents between 2000 and 2013 — a 0.5 percent annual rate of growth (DC's annual growth rate during these years, by comparison, was 1.01 percent).

Development has since increased quite dramatically with two new apartment communities currently leasing and more than 2,600 housing units proposed in the neighborhood over the next 5-10 years. This sudden surge in real estate development likely stems from the recovery after the recent economic downturn. Developers and residents across the city are starting to pay attention to Southwest— an often overlooked residential neighborhood in the past.

While historically families have tended to move out of the District when children reach school age, there is indication that this trend is starting to reverse. The DC Public School system notes that more families with young children are remaining in the District, and projects that the number of children in the city will start to increase.

Future development in the neighborhood should support the needs of current and future residents while helping to retain the character and diversity of the Planning Area's population. The Planning Area has a particularly diverse population. The senior population is larger than the city-wide average (22 percent of residents are over 65 as opposed to 19.7 percent across DC), which reflects the supply of senior-oriented housing and the fact that many residents have lived in the neighborhood for a long period of time. The Planning Area has a much smaller proportion of families with children (11 percent) than DC does as a whole (17 percent). Overall, the average

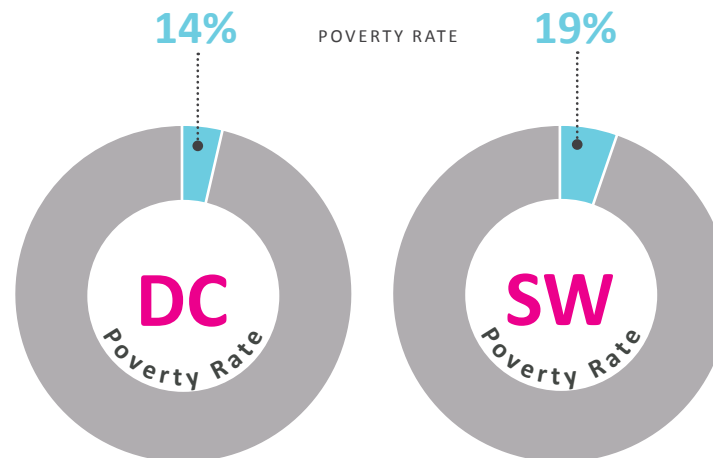


FIGURE 2.13 | HOUSEHOLD COMPARISONS - PLANNING AREA

age in the Planning Area is 39.1 while the average age in DC is 33.8. However, in 2000, 20 percent of households in DC had children; in 2010, the number had declined to 17 percent of households. The Planning Area has historically had fewer households with children than the DC average, and has experienced a similar decline in family households, from 13 percent in 2000 to 11 percent in 2013. Over this period, DC's average age has declined slightly between 2000 and 2010 (34.6 to 33.8) while the average age in the Planning Area has increased slightly from 38.8 to 39.1.

### ***Housing***

The neighborhood housing market is anticipated to continue to be strong and absorb a significant number of units in the near and long term.

Southwest is largely tucked away from the rest of the city by the Potomac River, Anacostia River and Interstate 395. It lacks the large supply of retail sought by many of DC's new residents who are drawn to neighborhoods with those amenities. Until recently, it was unclear whether sufficient rents could be collected in Southwest to cover construction costs for new development. So far, both actively-leasing apartment developments in the neighborhood – Sky House and Camden South Capitol – have absorbed units quickly and at high lease rates, a sign that the Planning Area is becoming a viable location for new residential development.

Much of the new construction that is currently leasing and that is in the development pipeline for the Planning Area are higher-

end apartment complexes with in-building amenities such as pools and fitness centers, and with units ranging from studios to two-bedrooms. This housing typology is oriented towards young professionals, and can be unaffordable for households with moderate or lower incomes or households with multiple children. Despite an expected increase in young professional households, the population of elderly individuals and families is not expected to decline.

Since 2000, home prices in the Planning Area have appreciated at a much lower rate (3.9 percent per year) than the DC average (6.3 percent per year), and home sales prices and rents are considerably lower than the DC average. This situation is starting to change as the apartment communities that are currently leasing cater to a higher-income demographic.

The Planning Area is also home to a particularly diverse community. Not only is the neighborhood older, it also has more racial diversity, and breadth of income levels. Approximately 775 households with children live in the Planning Area, many of whom live in subsidized apartment buildings. The neighborhood also has a larger proportion of low-income households (19 percent) than the citywide figure (13 percent). However, there are many households within all income levels, age brackets and family types.

In all, the average household size is projected to remain approximately the same in the near future, staying around 1.69 per household. DC, meanwhile, has 2.23 people per household on average. Housing sizes in the Planning Area reflect the fact that most units are located in multifamily buildings. There are fewer



three-, four-, and five-bedroom units than the DC average, and a greater concentration of studios and one-bedrooms.

There is likely to be an increase in housing demand in the Planning Area for most income brackets and family types. The greatest increase in demand is expected to come from the young professional demographic. However, if the proportion of families below the poverty level (19 percent), families with children (11 percent), or households with elderly residents (22 percent) 65 or older) are to be retained, new housing must cater to these populations as well.

### **Income, Poverty, and Employment**

Approximately 19 percent of the units in the planning area are subsidized—a nearly 50 percent higher proportion than the city-wide average, where 13 percent of units are subsidized. The planning area also has 19 percent of household units below the poverty rate (DC’s overall poverty rate is 14 percent). Despite this, the median household income in the SW planning area is slightly higher than the DC average (\$67,750), at \$68,106. However, the average household income for the city of Washington DC (\$103,429), exceeds that of the planning area, \$93,096. Also, when compared to the city, Southwest has quite a diversity of household incomes, with a lower percentage of households either making under \$25,000 a year in income (approximately 10 percent) or making over \$250,000 a year in income (less than 10 percent). A greater proportion of households (approximately 30 percent) make between \$50,000-\$100,000.

It is estimated that approximately 243 new housing units are needed each year to satisfy the expected demand for new housing, or a total of approximately 2,429 new housing units combined over the next ten years. The demand projection also accounts for two additional factors: first, that limited recent supply means a level of pent-up demand that should result in higher housing demand over the next few years; and second, that the Wharf development will draw a sizeable portion of households that would otherwise move to the Planning Area. Annual new housing demand is projected from 2014 through 2034 in the charts on the following page. In all, it is estimated that a total of 2,255 new housing units can be sold or leased up at a healthy absorption pace between the year 2014 and 2023, and 5,517 new housing units can be sold or leased by 2034.

### ***Retail***

The retail market is somewhat limited in scale and opportunity, but can be bolstered through branding and tenant attraction, growth in the residential population, and the increased recognition that nearby entertainment destinations will generate.

Residents within the Planning Area want to see more local-serving retail such as restaurants, coffee shops, bars, a hardware store, a laundromat, a hair salon, a bank and a bakery. Over the last few years, a Safeway, CVS drug store and multiple new restaurants have opened on 4th Street. However, the Planning Area's lack of retail-ready spaces, small day-time population, and local serving retail nature limit the overall retail opportunity. However, The Wharf, a large redevelopment on the waterfront, will bring a wide variety of retail uses within walking distance of the Planning Area, and will generate enough pedestrian traffic at the Waterfront Metrorail

station to allow for additional local-serving retail at that location. Successful retail development on 4th Street could promote the corridor as the planning area's retail main street, better serve the community and provide a pedestrian-oriented gateway from the Waterfront Metrorail station to The Wharf.

Additionally, with the anticipated creation of a Southwest Business Improvement District (BID), there is a potential to bolster market positions and perception by marketing the corridor to future tenants and retailers. This is an expected and necessary action to help bolster visibility and attractiveness of this main street corridor. The BID and other District Agency partners should also establish temporary urbanism activities, such as pop-up retail and creative placemaking activities to incite interest and viability to existing vacant space. This collaborative approach to changing the market perception is a vital step to achieving a successful, vibrant, neighborhood serving town center.



FIGURE 2.15 | RETAIL AMENITIES

The Market Analysis finds that there will be demand for between 11 and 20 additional stores within the Planning Area by 2023, totaling between 75,000 and 110,000 square feet. See the table below for more detail. It is important to note that these figures reflect the amount of retail space that could potentially be supported within the Planning Area under ideal conditions, not the amount that is likely to be built. For example, the analysis demonstrates that there is demand for as many as three automotive stores and two gas stations. Despite the necessary market demand to make these uses viable, there are numerous reasons why these uses are unlikely: there are not an abundance of parcels that are large enough and have the type of vehicular access necessary to support these uses, the community may not support one or more auto-centric uses, and it is unlikely that three of the same uses would decide to locate in such close proximity.



## Office

The office market is weak, although it may continue to attract future government office uses given the concentration of public land. In the first phase of the Waterfront Metrorail station development, two new office towers were built totaling 640,000 square feet of space leased by DC government agencies. While this land use helps diversify the activity around the station, it did not establish a private sector office market in the Planning Area. In fact, office real estate trends indicate that the Planning Area is a challenged market for office development. New office construction in the Capitol Riverfront neighborhood to the east is marked by high vacancies and lease rates that are too low to justify new construction. In addition, upcoming office supply at The Wharf, Capitol Riverfront and Southwest EcoDistrict to the north make developing office space in the Planning Area a difficult proposition over the next 10 to 20 years.

Although the planning area is home to a variety of government agencies and nonprofit organizations, it is not an established destination for private office tenants. In addition, the large amount of existing nearby office vacancy and the very high amount of proposed office development indicate that there is not a strong opportunity for office development in the Planning Area in the near future. There are two planned projects in the planning Area that call for office development. The Waterfront Station development calls for two additional office towers to be constructed, totaling 440,000 square feet, and has been approved by the city as a planned united development. As a result, these proposed office developments could prove less viable in the near term than residential developments with ground-floor retail uses. The second planned office project in

the study area, a vacant parcel on the corner of L Street SW and South Capitol Street owned by the Ruben Companies, would be more viable if it included a mix of retail and residential uses as well.

There is a significant amount of development planned for the Planning Area, and the type and quantity of land use supply generally aligns well with projected neighborhood need. The market analysis projects market demand for approximately 2,330 new residential units in the Planning Area over the next ten years. There are currently 2,690 units proposed – some of which will likely come on line close to ten years in the future. In addition, the 55,000 square feet of proposed retail space also fits demand projections relatively well. One incongruity between projected future land use needs and proposed supply is office space. The 600,000 square feet of new office space planned for Waterfront Station may be very difficult to lease. As a result, the developer should have the flexibility to incorporate residential uses within the building – whether mixed-use or solely residential – to make the project more economically viable.

## 03 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT | PROCESS TO VISION



COMMUNITY MEETING 1 | MEMBERS OF THE COMMUNITY SHARED THE STRENGTHS AND ISSUES IN SOUTHWEST



## COMMUNITY VISION: *PROCESS TO VISION*

### Overview

The Southwest Neighborhood Plan is a community-based plan. The document is envisioned as a framework that balances growth with the community's values and neighborhood culture. A robust community engagement process was carried out to learn about community preferences, build a collective vision, identify guiding principles, and receive feedback on proposed recommendations.

The community engagement approach for the Southwest Small Area Plan included community meetings, an advisory committee, focus groups, consultation with other agencies, input from neighborhood groups, an extensive review of existing plans, and a thorough site and market analysis. This level of engagement was critical to building a comprehensive neighborhood plan with input from all stakeholders.



COMMUNITY MEETING 3



COMMUNITY MEETING 2



COMMUNITY MEETING 4

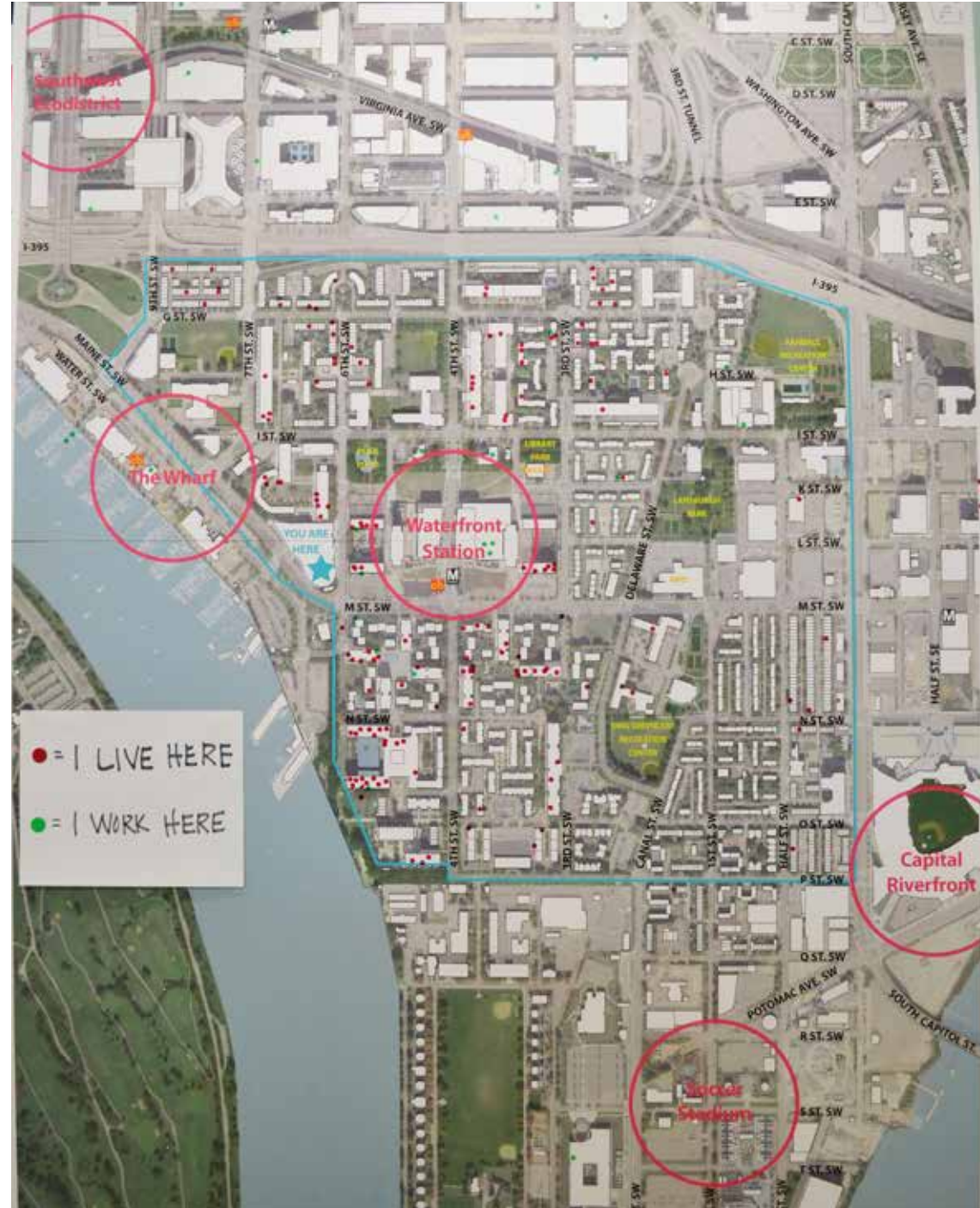


## Project Timeline

The community engagement plan was implemented over a 12-month timeframe.

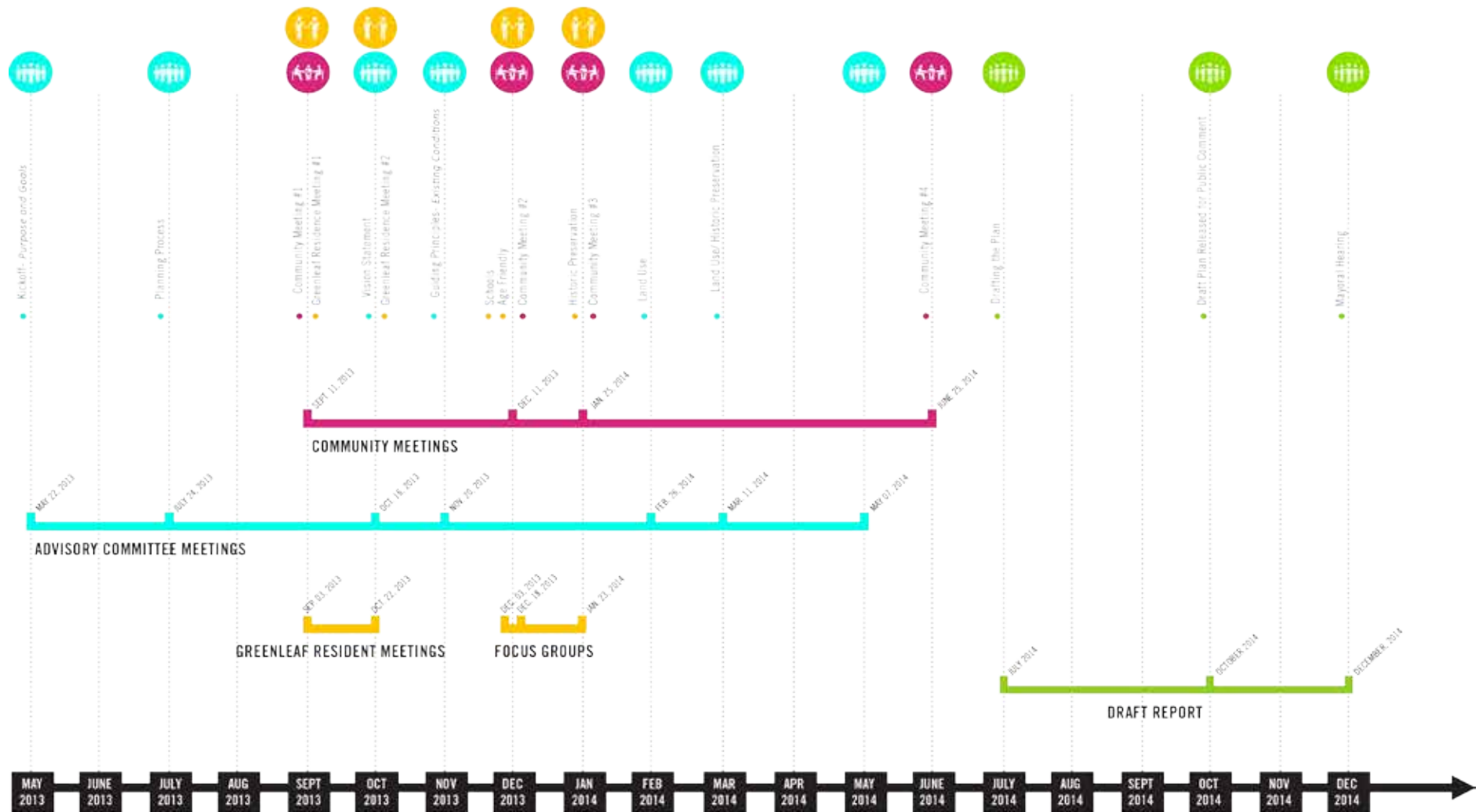
- May 22, 2013 – Advisory Committee
- July 24, 2013 – Advisory Committee
- September 3, 2013 – Greenleaf Residents Meeting
- September 11, 2013 – Public Kickoff Meeting
- October 16, 2013 – Advisory Committee
- October 22, 2013 – Greenleaf Residents Meeting
- November 20, 2013 – Advisory Committee
- December 3, 2013 – Education Focus Group
- December 11, 2013 – Public Meeting
- January 14, 2014 Amidon/Jefferson PTA Presentation
- January 23, 2014 – Historic Preservation Focus Group
- January 25, 2014 – Public Meeting
- February 26, 2014 – Advisory Committee
- March 11, 2014 – Advisory Committee
- May 7, 2014 – Advisory Committee
- June 25, 2014 – Public Meeting

A Mayoral Hearing will be scheduled in the community when the Draft Plan is released for official public comment.



COMMUNITY MEETING 1: MAP EXERCISE

# PROJECT TIMELINE



PROJECT TIMELINE

## Advisory Committee

An Advisory Committee composed of over 35 Southwest community members was convened to advise the project team. Councilmember Tommy Wells and his staff played an integral role on the Advisory Committee and regularly attended public meetings. The Advisory Committee was also comprised of Commissioners from the Advisory Neighborhood Commission and leadership from the Community Benefits Coordinating Council (CBCC), Southwest Neighborhood Assembly (SWNA), resident organizations and homeowner associations, Friends of the Southwest Duck Pond, and others representing a cross section of the Southwest community. The Advisory Committee represented the interests of the community and engaged in a robust dialogue with the Office of Planning through seven Advisory Committee meetings.

- May 22, 2013 – Kick Off meeting, Purpose/Goals of Advisory Committee and the Small Area Plan, Breakout Group Discussions
- July 24, 2013 – Discussion of the Planning Process, Format and Goals of the Kick Off Meeting
- October 16, 2013 – Recap/Discussion of the Kick off Meeting, Finalizing the Vision Statement, preview and discussion of existing land use/planning conditions
- November 20, 2013 – Discussion and edits to Guiding Principles, Further Review of existing conditions analysis
- February 26, 2014 – Recap of Jan 25 meeting, Beginning of Land Use designation recommendations discussion
- March 11, 2014 – Review of “Roles and Responsibilities” of Advisory Committee members, discussion on Historic Character and continuation of Land Use Designation Discussion
- May 7, 2014 – Open House with Draft Recommendation Boards, discussion, notes and edits from Advisory Committee



ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING



ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING



SUSTAINABILITY	COMMUNITY	EAT	CHILL	COMMUNITY	NEIGHBORHOOD	ACCESSIBILITY	RESIDENTS	PLACES	OPPORTUNITIES	JOBS	CONSERVATION	CHARACTER	PEDESTRIAN	ACCESSIBILITY	BIKE	TRANSIT	
<b>PARKS</b>				<b>PEOPLE</b>				<b>BUILDING</b>				<b>CONNECTIONS</b>					
HISTORIC	LANDSCAPE	WELLNESS	PLAY	BUSINESS	FAMILIES	CULTURE	DIVERSITY	INSTITUTIONS	BUSINESSES	GREEN	DEVELOPMENT	HISTORY	AMENITIES	VEHICULAR	WATERFRONT	HISTORIC	LANDSCAPE

PUBLIC KICKOFF | STATION TOPIC AREAS

## Interagency Coordination

Throughout the planning process, the Planning Team held coordination meetings with an Interagency Working Group comprised of District agencies, as well one-on-one meetings with key agencies. The purpose of inter-agency meetings was to brief agencies on the planning process, solicit information on agency initiatives and priorities in the Planning Area, gather feedback on proposed recommendations and most importantly, coordinate the future work effort of each agency to ensure that all recommendations are actionable and can be implemented. Agencies consulted during this process include: DC Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD); DC Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR); DC Public Library (DCPL); DC Department of Public Works (DPW); DC Department of Transportation (DDOT); DC Historic Preservation Office (DCHP); District Department of the Environment (DDOE); Office of the Deputy Mayor for Planning & Economic Development (DMPED); the Department of General Services (DGS); and the District of Columbia Housing Authority (DCHA). Non-government organizations consulted included the Washington Project for the Arts and the Southwest Business Improvement District (in the process of forming).



COMMUNITY MEETING 1

KICK-OFF  
#1  
**Community Meeting**

The planning process began with a Kick-off public meeting on September 11, 2013 at Arena Stage which approximately 250 people attended. This initial meeting included a presentation from Harriet Tregoning, the DC Director of Planning at the time, as well as several “engagement stations” where stakeholders were able to provide input regarding what the final plan needed to accomplish. Four main categories—buildings, connections, parks, people—were used to guide feedback and organize comments. The meeting generated over 825 comments that were categorized and grouped into themes. These key themes were adapted into guiding principles that were instrumental to the planning process and the development of Plan recommendations.



COMMUNITY MEMBERS REVIEW MATERIAL AND PROVIDE COMMENTS



GRAPHIC RECORDING STATION



COMMUNITY GATHERS FOR A BRIEF PRESENTATION

## EXISTING CONDITIONS #2 Community Meeting

Following the kickoff, the planning team began a thorough analysis of the Southwest Planning Area. Physical analysis of the Planning Area and market analysis of existing and future economic forces were researched and documented. These findings were presented to the community for feedback at a December 11, 2013 public meeting at Westminster Church. Market analysis revealed a strong market for residential development, a small market for increased retail, and little to no market for office space.



COMMUNITY MEMBERS PROVIDE CONSTRUCTIVE FEEDBACK



COMMUNITY REVIEWS THE EXISTING CONDITIONS ANALYSIS



## Community Meeting

The Planning Team recognized the high level of participation from community stakeholders, as well as the desire for further engagement. Therefore the third community meeting was organized as a community workshop utilizing a “design charrette” model to give attendees the opportunity to roll-up their sleeves and directly wrestle with the planning issues. On January 25, 2014, approximately 120 residents gathered at the Capitol Skyline Hotel to talk through their concerns in Southwest and discuss goals and values for future change and development in the area. Specific details were discussed through conversation, model building and visual exercises to map improvements and amenities. Participants were divided into five groups and paired with a set of facilitators who led discussions. Note-takers carefully captured participants’ comments, which were used to further guide plan recommendations.



BREAKOUT GROUPS DISCUSS FUTURE DEVELOPMENT AND URBAN DESIGN



SPECIFIC FEEDBACK WAS GATHERED FROM COMMUNITY MEMBERS



A MODEL OF THE FOCUS AREA GAVE THE COMMUNITY A DIFFERENT VIEW OF SOUTHWEST

## GOALS + RECOMMENDATIONS #4 Community Meeting

Following the third public meeting, the planning team began to craft recommendations for the Plan that were generated directly from public comments and feedback, findings of technical analyses, and District agency priorities. A draft of these recommendations was presented at the fourth public meeting on June 25, 2014. At this meeting, the community was able to identify the ten recommendations that were most important to them and provide specific feedback on recommendations they had concerns or questions about. The comments from this meeting, combined with feedback from the Advisory Committee and District agencies, helped to modify and craft Plan recommendations.



COMMUNITY MEMBERS DISCUSS DESIGN GUIDELINES



COMMUNITY MEMBERS REVIEW A DRAFT OF THE PLAN'S RECOMMENDATIONS

## Focus Group Meetings

In addition to these four well-attended community meetings, the project team held focus groups to dig deeper into issues and opportunities for neighborhood schools, serving the senior population, and historic preservation.

The first focus group, held on December 3, 2013, discussed local schools and the student population related to access, enrollment and safety. Seven local stakeholders participated in this focus group, which was held at Amidon-Bowen Elementary School. Representatives participated from Amidon-Bowen, Jefferson Middle School, and Appletree Early Learning Center. Community members said the schools are considered “community anchors” that are important to family life in the neighborhood. During these meetings community members expressed concern over rising housing costs and the need for more family sized units of housing to allow more families to stay in the neighborhood and the diversity of local school enrollment. Additionally, community members wanted to see an emphasis on safe transportation corridors and on the continued public use of playground equipment and recreation fields at local schools. As a follow up to the focus group, the planning team also presented information on the plan at a joint Parent Teacher Association (PTA )meeting between Jefferson Middle School and Amidon Bowen Elementary on January 14, 2014.

As part of the District-wide “Age Friendly DC ” initiative, the planning team held a focus group for seniors in the Southwest community on December 18, 2013. Approximately 15 residents were in attendance for this focus group. A facilitator from the District Office of Aging led the residents through a discussion related to aging in place, access to transportation and amenities, safety concerns and health care facilities. Additional topics included ways to make day to day livability easier such as more benches in public spaces, better lighting on the streets, real-time bus information at bus shelters and more affordable food options in the neighborhood.

The third focus group on January 23, 2014, brought together ten stakeholders to discuss the historic preservation and neighborhood character in Southwest. Community members expressed concern that where developers and planners see large, open, and “underutilized” spaces, community members see green space, which helped draw them to the Southwest in the first place. Additionally, community members said they believe development and change is acceptable and expected, but not at the expense of the Southwest’s unique character. Participants said they believe development can be compatible with local character and pointed to developments like Arena Stage, Sky House, and Randall School as examples of where development was compatible with the neighborhood’s unique features.



## Online Engagement

From the beginning, the Planning team deployed online engagement tools to supplement the community outreach and provide a path of engagement for residents unable to attend meetings. Meeting materials, presentations and announcements were made available at [www.swneighborhoodplan.org](http://www.swneighborhoodplan.org). To augment outreach and connect with additional populations, an interactive online forum, <http://engage.swneighborhoodplan.org>, supplemented the in-person meetings. The Engage Southwest portal allowed the project team to ask specific questions, and gave community members the opportunity to submit ideas, ask questions, engage in the planning process alongside their neighbors, and provide feedback regarding different proposals. Overall, 135 registered users participated in the online engagement site where they responded to questions, assessed recommendations and generated their own ideas for peer review. Of the 135 users, 107 reside in the Southwest zip code of 20024 and the average age was 40. Users also had the ability to post their own photos and map areas of interest or concern via the Engage Southwest site.



ONLINE ENGAGEMENT



COMMUNITY MEMBERS GET HELP WITH ONLINE TOOLS

## Vision and Goals

Community input, gathered from the over 800 comments received at the September 11, 2013 kick-off meeting as well as from input from initial Advisory Committee meetings, informed the Vision and Guiding Principles for the Southwest Neighborhood Plan. The Vision and Guiding Principles were developed in the Fall of 2013 and presented at the December 11, 2013 Community Meeting, and again at the January 25, 2014 Community Workshop. The Vision and Guiding Principles serve as the core, community-based underpinnings of the Plan and provide direction and values upon which to frame the Plan Opportunities and Recommendations.

The Vision for Southwest is further supported by the Guiding Principles listed on the following pages. These principles reflect the community's values and aspirations for their neighborhood. An implementation plan in Chapter 11 illustrates how each plan recommendation supports a guiding principle.

Building on the overarching Vision and the Guiding Principles, the remainder of the Plan is organized around the following Concepts for Southwest's Future listed below.

**Model Community**  
**Modernist Gem**  
**Green Oasis**  
**Arts and Cultural Destination**  
**Thriving Town Center**  
**Optimize District Parcels**  
**Vibrant Connections**

## Vision Statement

**"TO CREATE A THRIVING, ACTIVE ENVIRONMENT THAT PRESERVES  
AND ENHANCES THE SOUTHWEST NEIGHBORHOOD'S CULTURE AND  
CHARACTER."**







# GUIDING PRINCIPLES

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## 01 SOUTHWEST CULTURE

Foster an environment that encourages and embraces cultural and economic diversity.

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## 02 NEIGHBORHOOD CHARACTER

Preserve the varied scale and green character of the neighborhood.

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## 03 PEDESTRIAN SAFETY

Design buildings, connections and sidewalks to improve safety, security and pedestrian circulation.

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## 04 RETAIL

Support, enhance and expand neighborhood retail amenities.

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## 05 PARKS

Enhance, connect and better utilize parks -both active and passive- as open space.



## 06 COMMUNITY AMENITIES

Invest in community, arts and education uses that serve resident needs.



## 07 HOUSING

Preserve and develop a range of housing for a mix of income, age and family size, and encourage quality design and architecture.



## 08 TRANSPORTATION

Strengthen multi-modal transportation and improve street connections, parking and safety.



## 09 HISTORIC PRESERVATION

Remember the history and legacy of the Southwest community while planning for change in the future.



## 10 NEW DEVELOPMENT

Develop a strategy for height, density and open space that enhances, acknowledges and complements the character of the neighborhood.



## 11 SUSTAINABILITY

Incorporate goals and targets from the Sustainable DC Plan to protect/conservate our environment and resources to foster a vibrant, healthy neighborhood.

## 04 CONCEPT | MODEL COMMUNITY



MODEL COMMUNITY ILLUSTRATIVE | THE SOUTHWEST COMMUNITY IS A CHAMPION OF DIVERSITY AND PERSERVERANCE



## MODEL COMMUNITY VISION

*Southwest will remain an exemplary model of equity and inclusion - a welcoming and engaged community that celebrates and retains a diversity of races, ages and income levels and enhances wellbeing for all amidst neighborhood growth and change.*

### Today

While the Southwest community has been wrought by a complex history of urban renewal and displacement, the planned community that formed since the 1960s is remarkable not only for its legacy of modernist architecture, but perhaps more importantly for its idealism and inclusion. Southwest celebrates the diversity of its residents – a model mix on intergenerational, racial, religious, and socioeconomic levels. The plentiful neighborhood churches and community based organizations are a further foundation for a strong sense of neighborhood identity, tolerance and commitment to justice. Southwest is a rarity in what it has accomplished as a community, evidencing very high civic participation with strong turnout at community meetings and a conviction about the importance of diversity to community identity. In many ways, today's Southwest is not unlike the community that thrived before urban renewal where different races and ethnicities intersected, community bonds flourished, and social capital was high.



YOUNG FAMILY ENJOYING THE AMENITIES IN SOUTHWEST

## Opportunity

The Southwest neighborhood can remain a model community celebrating its diversity, pursuing engagement and advocacy, and creating a welcoming cultural and physical environment for all. The addition of preschool and prekindergarten at Amidon Elementary school is attracting more and more families to the school and the student population has been growing over the last 5 years. This is just one of many opportunities the community can embrace as a positive change. Even with new residents and additional development, the community can remain balanced –growing families, retaining public housing, supporting affordability, and improving the accessibility of infrastructure.

***Affordable and Diverse Housing Choices.*** Neighborhood residents support the responsible redevelopment of the Greenleaf public housing community, by doing so it will ensure that all current qualifying residents have the option to remain in Southwest and receive workforce and education tools and programs to prosper into the future. The community supports transparency and clarity in communications throughout the process as the DC Housing Authority embarks on planning and redevelopment. The community seeks to provide guidelines and expectations for new development, like the replacement of all subsidized units and the contextual design and massing of new buildings. The community voiced a desire to see emphasis on the human capital portion of the transition, with residents receiving all the support and capacity-building measures needed to ease transition and succeed in employment, education, and other matters.



PEOPLE IN SOUTHWEST ENJOY WALKING ALONG STREET UNDER MATURE TREE CANOPIES



SOUTHWEST PRIDES ITSELF IN THE DIVERSITY OF ITS RESIDENTS

Also of importance to residents are the availability of affordable housing, family-sized units in new development, and a mix of housing types, including townhouses and apartments. The Southwest neighborhood already exceeds the District in its share of subsidized and affordable housing units. This is one of the important building blocks of housing and community diversity. The neighborhood will look to preserve existing affordable housing units and add affordable units in new development through Planned Unit Developments (PUDs), inclusionary zoning, and the disposition of District-owned land.

***Economic Development and Access to Jobs.*** The community seeks to benefit and grow economic opportunities from the development occurring adjacent to the neighborhood, such as The Wharf, Capitol Riverfront, and the proposed soccer stadium. There are vast opportunities for residents to connect to the District’s workforce development, education and entrepreneurship programs and resources to best leverage and access these nearby development opportunities.

***A Healthy Community, Accessible to All.*** Residents envision an age-friendly neighborhood, where senior residents can thrive as they age in the place they have called home for many years. Southwest, like DC and the world’s population, is aging. The Southwest neighborhood can be responsive to this trend by improving the accessibility of transportation and open spaces. Improved bus shelters and new bus services like the Circulator will enhance mobility for seniors. Introducing benches where feasible into the street network will ease distances the elderly travel by foot.



SOUTHWEST SHOULD BE ACCESSIBLE FOR ALL RESIDENTS

Open spaces can showcase universal design and intergenerational programming to ensure active lifestyles for seniors.

Southwest residents visualize a neighborhood that is welcoming for all, where the disabled and anyone with mobility issues can comfortably navigate the neighborhood. Improved sidewalks, redesigned park entrances, and a potential new library will open up new opportunities to enjoy the neighborhood’s many amenities.

Community members also desire to prioritize healthy living education and fresh food access for all residents. There is opportunity to demonstrate the potential of urban agriculture in the neighborhood’s parks and connect residents, particularly the student population, to fresh foods through their participation and care for orchards and gardens. Additionally, farmers markets can be expanded in the neighborhood to ensure all residents have access to fresh produce, enabling them to adopt sound eating habits to support healthy living.





## RECOMMENDATIONS

**Goal:** *Support the responsible redevelopment of the Greenleaf complex to benefit existing residents and realize a well-designed development and mixed-income community*

- MC.1** Develop a strategy during the DCHA Greenleaf Master Planning process for keeping current residents in the community during and after construction/redevelopment of the site.
- MC.2** Develop an Interagency Working Group for DCHA to coordinate with District agencies to identify, through the Master Planning process, the potential to utilize District-owned properties in the vicinity to support a potential “build first” strategy for keeping current qualifying Greenleaf residents in the Southwest neighborhood.
- MC.3** Change the future land use designations at Greenleaf to promote mixed-income redevelopment and replacement housing for existing Greenleaf residents (see figure 4.1):
  - a. Change northernmost Greenleaf parcels (Parcel A) between ‘I’ and L Streets from Moderate Density Residential to Medium Density Residential.
  - b. Change Greenleaf parcel on north side of M Street (Parcel B) from Moderate Density Residential to Mixed Use: High Density Residential/Low Density Commercial.
  - c. Change the Greenleaf parcel on the south side of M Street (Parcel C), from Medium Density Residential to Mixed Use: High Density Residential/Low Density Commercial.
 Any development under the new land use

designation must be achieved through a Planned Unit Development and meet the following criteria:

- Conform to the design guidelines for each parcel as outlined in this Plan (pages 81-83).
- Provide replacement housing for all the existing affordable units within the project or immediate Southwest Neighborhood Plan study area.
- Encourage a mixed-income community through the inclusion of market rate units and to the extent practicable, workforce housing .
- Achieve a significant level of green design in terms of both site and building design to contribute to healthy living and improve environmental performance.



GREENLEAF HOUSING

## GREENLEAF PUBLIC HOUSING

Greenleaf Public Housing is comprised of four sites on both the north and south sides of M Street SW between 3rd and Delaware streets, and extends northward to 'I' Street. The development is comprised of two-story low rise garden apartment buildings as well as a midrise family building and high rise seniors building. At the outset of the planning process for the Southwest Neighborhood Plan, DCHA announced their interest in exploring the potential redevelopment of the current Greenleaf properties to create a new mixed income and mixed use development. DCHA had submitted an application to the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) for a Choice Neighborhood planning grant for which was not awarded. DCHA has begun to meet with Greenleaf residents to discuss potential redevelopment and will be initiating in late 2014 a formal process with Greenleaf residents and the broader Southwest community to develop a Master Plan for the site. Proximity to transit and other amenities in Southwest as well as the size of the parcels make this an ideal location for such a development. Southwest residents were very clear about the desire to ensure that the needs and interests of existing residents at Greenleaf are a priority in any redevelopment scenario and that transparency with the community is maximized. This Plan encourages DCHA to prioritize ways to replace all existing affordable housing (almost 900 units) on the current sites to accommodate existing qualifying Greenleaf residents while adding in additional market-rate residential units. Improvements to green spaces, walking paths, lighting and public realm must also be included in the Master Plan. This Plan recommends increasing the land use designations at the Greenleaf site to provide enough development rights to accommodate the replacement of all affordable units with enough cross-subsidy from market-rate units and to promote a mix of high and low building heights and mix of densities spread across the four sites in keeping with the current style prevalent throughout Southwest.

**Goal:** *Maintain a mix of affordable and market-rate residential units that better serve community needs.*

- MC.4** Retain the neighborhood's 19 percent of subsidized units by establishing targets that exceed current inclusionary zoning thresholds for future development on publicly owned land and in future Planned Unit Developments.
- MC.5** Future redevelopment of District owned sites should, at a minimum, require at least 20 percent of the units be affordable at varying levels of the area median income (AMI), preferably for longer than 20 years.
- MC.6** As part of a community benefits package through the PUD process for new construction, prioritize affordable units above the Inclusionary Zoning requirement or fewer affordable units, but larger in size (e.g., three bedrooms) to better serve families.



JAMES CREEK HOMES



*Goal: Update public realm and transit infrastructure to enhance accessibility for all.*

- MC.7** Improve lighting, seating and maintenance at bus shelters throughout Southwest.
- MC.8** Pilot bus time monitors at bus shelters at locations that serve a high number of seniors, such as stops near the Greenleaf Senior Center.
- MC.9** Increase the number of and signage for disabled parking spaces on 4th Street along the commercial blocks.
- MC.10** Prioritize funding to bring the Southwest Duck Pond into ADA compliance.

*Goal: Promote healthy living and food access for the entire community.*

- MC.11** Promote community gardens at local schools, Amidon-Bowen and Jefferson, both for student use/educational purposes as well as for resident use. Expand existing community gardens already in Southwest.
- MC.12** Allow for “pop up” agricultural landscapes, temporary food installations and community gardens on underutilized sites such as the sites on the corner of 4th and M Street SW.
- MC.13** Strengthen and extend access to the Southwest Farmer’s Market, by connecting and marketing it to schools, public housing, and seniors and providing recipes and other information and demonstrations on healthy food preparation.



BUS SHELTERS AND ACCESSIBLE TRANSIT



COMMUNITY GARDENS IN LANSBURG PARK





# 05 CONCEPT | MODERNIST GEM

MODERNIST GEM ILLUSTRATIVE | SOUTHWEST IS A MUSEUM OF MODERN ARCHITECTURE



## MODERNIST GEM VISION

*Southwest will promote the preservation of its unique architectural legacy and support new development that reflects the form and rhythm of the historic fabric, reinforcing the neighborhood design as a "Modernist Gem".*

### Today

Southwest is like no other neighborhood in the District of Columbia, where buildings, urban design, streets and open space combine to form an urban neighborhood of quintessential mid-century modern design. The neighborhood is a product of urban renewal and comprehensive redesign that occurred from the 1940s through the 1970s. The more residential portions of the neighborhood are defined largely by Modernist architecture, large urban blocks with limited through streets, a blend of public and private open spaces and mature trees. Today, the unique physical character of the neighborhood is a major source of pride and identity for residents, who appreciate the sensibilities and social values behind this design and the sunlight, building variety, and sense of micro-communities it affords. Already, the neighborhood is dotted with historic landmarks. Preservation of historic structures and making sure that new development features high quality design are key goals for the Southwest community.



ARCHITECT CHLOETHIEL WOODARD SMITH WITH MODEL OF HARBOUR SQUARE, CIRCA 1960 (LIBRARY OF CONGRESS)



## Opportunity

The Southwest residents can promote the neighborhood as a “Modernist Gem”, celebrating the character and promoting preservation of the outstanding collection of Modernist architecture and urban design.

**Conservation of Neighborhood Character.** There are a variety of options to preserve the integrity of existing design and encourage compatible design in new development. These include drafting applications to designate additional historic landmarks, creation of a historic district, or designation as a conservation district (if the District adopts legislation to permitting them). Already, the Southwest neighborhood has a strong neighborhood conservancy group, the Southwest Neighborhood Assembly (SWNA), which can help organize and steer the community conversation around preservation opportunities.

Southwest can also pay homage to its roots and the rich history of the neighborhood prior to urban renewal. Although it already boasts a heritage trail with interpretative signage, the community can identify ways to continue to showcase its history through events, exhibits and more permanent installations.

**Design Expectations for New Development.** In addition to the preservation of existing residential, Southwest still has the potential to evolve and dynamically change in certain areas, as it has done in recent years with the redevelopment around 4th Street. Given the sentiment of many Southwesterners regarding the importance of conserving current neighborhood character, this Plan translates that sentiment into guidelines. The goal is to ensure that new

construction and adaptive reuse will contribute positively to the neighborhood’s identity. This concept is perhaps best exemplified through the rehabilitation of Arena Stage itself, the neighborhood’s shining cultural anchor, that mixes a historic design with new architecture in ways that delight and progress the neighborhood’s character not detract from it.



RIVER PARK HOMES

## RECOMMENDATIONS

**Goal:** Celebrate the distinctive character of Southwest and promote preservation of its outstanding Modernist architecture, landscape architecture, and urban design.

- MG.1** Continue the community-led process of engagement to garner support for preserving modernist properties in the Planning Area. The community – including property owners, neighborhood groups and the Advisory Neighborhood Commission should determine a preferred preservation strategy: Historic District, Conservation District (if approved by Council), or the continued designation of individual landmarks.
- MG.2** Provide the community with information and tools that outline the pros and cons associated with various preservation strategies.
- MG.3** Support infill and adaptive reuse of existing buildings in Southwest to promote the preservation of the community's architectural character



WHEAT ROW TOWNHOMES

**Goal:** Retain and enhance the character of the L'Enfant Plan in Southwest including associated vistas and reservations.

- MG.4** Retain existing streets and open spaces that contribute to the L'Enfant Plan.
- MG.5** Ensure future development and improvements reinforce the L'Enfant Plan as an important historic feature tying Southwest to its greater urban context.

**Goal:** Ensure that future development is compatible with the existing design of the community.

- MG.6** Apply the Design Guidelines contained in this Plan (pages 81-83) to all new development achieved through the Planned Unit Development process. Matter of right development is also strongly encouraged to apply the Design Guidelines.

## DESIGN GUIDELINES

In keeping with the unique character of the Southwest neighborhood, new development, including development undergoing a Planned Unit Development (PUD) or other design review process, should adhere to the following principles:

### **Principle 1:** *Encourage a mix of building heights.*

Provide a massing and mix of building heights which complement and uphold the current mixture of high-rise and low-rise buildings. Particularly on large sites, this should include the provision of rowhouses and high-rise buildings, and avoidance of mid-rise building forms.



### **Principle 2:** *Achieve design excellence for high quality and timeless development.*

Achieve high quality development and the creation of attractive buildings and landscapes through design excellence- by using distinguished architecture, durable high quality materials and detailing, and advanced sustainable design.





**Principle 3:** *Promote variation in building frontages along streets with continuous massing.*

Promote cohesive building forms and design, while incorporating articulation in the building and landscape design to ensure a pedestrian scale of development and to lessen the perceived length of high-rise buildings or rowhouse groupings. Blank, unarticulated walls should be avoided, particularly along streets and pedestrian ways.



**Principle 4:** *Enhance green space through landscaped perimeters and internal green or amenity spaces.*

Support the Southwest's vibrant green character through the provision of publicly visible landscaped perimeters; internal green or amenity spaces; and landscaped setbacks appropriate to the streetscape, particularly for high-rise structures.



**Principle 5:** *Incorporate sustainable building and site design.*

Employ a range of innovative sustainable design strategies and building standards to promote a high performing environment that encourages healthy living, energy efficiency, and stormwater management.



**Principle 6:** *Ensure parking is not a detractor.*

Locate vehicle parking underground, or in above-grade structures that are visually buffered from the street and adjacent properties. Services such as parking and loading access should avoid the interruption of street-facing building fronts or communal open space.



**Principle 7:** *Maximize transparency and viability of ground floor uses along key commercial corridors.*

For high-rise structures, provide vibrant ground-floor uses and street-level design that promote pedestrian-oriented usage, particularly on M Street, 4th Street and South Capitol Street.



**Principle 8:** *Encourage connectivity, for pedestrians, bikes, vehicular access, including transit where feasible.*

Promote connectivity by re-establishing the street grid where feasible, as noted in the Plan.

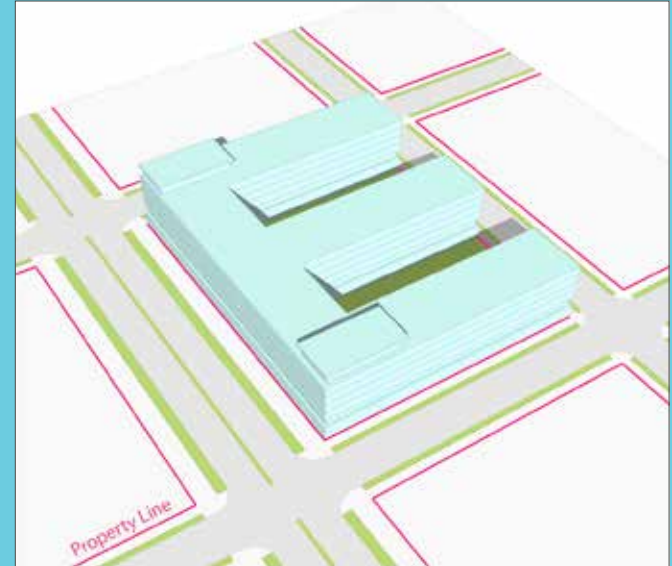


# DEVELOPMENT COMPARISON

## DEVELOPMENT WITHOUT DESIGN GUIDELINES

*Medium Density | Floor Area Ratio (FAR) - 4.0*

- Lack of green space
- Mid-rise structures
- Large buildings
- Tall, continuous streetwalls
- Less daylight in courtyards and on streets
- Monotony of architecture



## DEVELOPMENT WITH DESIGN GUIDELINES

*Medium Density | Floor Area Ratio (FAR) - 4.0*

- Mix of high and low rise buildings
- Variety of architectural character
- Views through and around buildings
- Greater mix of building and housing types
- Reduces the “urban canyon” effect along corridors
- Public facing open spaces created by setbacks
- Private open spaces in the form of courtyards





## 06 CONCEPT | GREEN OASIS



GREEN OASIS ILLUSTRATIVE | PARKS AND OPEN SPACE IN SOUTHWEST HAVE GREAT POTENTIAL FOR FUTURE ENHANCEMENT



## GREEN OASIS VISION

*Southwest will thrive as a green oasis in the city, with lush tree canopy and vegetation, landscaped building edges, thriving parks and robust connections between green spaces, while attaining new levels of neighborhood sustainability and environmental performance.*

### Today

A defining feature of the Southwest neighborhood is its preponderance of strategically located green spaces, from major public open spaces, walking paths, parks, playgrounds, recreation centers and mature street trees to the green perimeters and landscaped courtyards of private development. This landscape creates spaces of visual beauty, physical respite, community-gathering, nature, play, shade and stormwater management. Southwest's green spaces, both majestic and minor, offer the community common ground for intersection and building connections. For a neighborhood just minutes from downtown, they soften the urban edges and offer relief from density. This distinguishing green atmosphere is not only a key to the success of today's Southwest, but an essential ingredient for retaining Southwest's unique character, desirability and quality of life as it moves into the future.



SOUTHWEST DUCK POND

## Opportunity

Southwest can be a green oasis, an equalizing counterpoint to a growing and thriving residential neighborhood. Southwest has the potential to become the rival of other DC neighborhoods, striking a balance between nature and urban building form.

**Great and Connected Parks and Open Spaces.** It is possible to not only retain the atmosphere of a “parks” neighborhood but expand on this concept to realize the enhancement of existing streets, open spaces and parks, and the delivery of green connective tissue throughout the neighborhood. An open space network can take the shape as an even stronger greenway that links assets, provides visual connectivity, and enhances bicycle and pedestrian access. Residents would like to see capital investments, design enhancements and outstanding programming at its signature parks: Randall, King Greenleaf, The Southwest Duck Pond, and Library Park. Unlike the other parks, Lansburgh Park, located centrally within the Planning Area, has significant potential to be transformed from a beloved but underperforming park with very limited transparency or access into an attractive and active “central park” for the neighborhood showcasing design excellence in landscape architecture, increased access and activity, and new “eyes on the park”. Collectively, Southwest parks will be called upon to serve a range of populations – youth, seniors, the disadvantaged, dog-owners, urban gardeners, athletes, everyone – and provide a mix of active and passive recreation opportunities. Parks can help support active lifestyles and serve as an educational ground for increasing understanding of the environment and healthy living choices.



EXISTING LANSBURGH PARK







LANSBURGH PARK RENDERING



Outstanding Environmental Performance and Sustainability. Southwest can celebrate its figurative “green” through the adoption of sustainability measures and progressive community actions. Tree planting and the landscaping of parks and streets provide the opportunity to serve dual purposes – natural beauty and stormwater management / flood mitigation. This approach will be particularly important in the context of climate change and rising sea levels.

The adoption of “green” can go beyond public spaces. Southwest can support model private development providing attractive, high-performing landscaping, internal recreational and open spaces for residents, provision of electric vehicle charging stations, bike and shared vehicle parking, and environmentally conscious construction. Existing residential communities may voluntarily improve their carbon footprint through green retrofits and increased energy efficiency, paving removal, composting, and other actions furthering the goals of Sustainable DC.



COMMUNITY GARDEN AT ST. MATTHEWS CHURCH SITE



BASKETBALL AT RANDALL RECREATION CENTER

## RECOMMENDATIONS

**Goal:** *Ensure Lansburgh Park evolves into a central park that will become a center of activity for the Southwest neighborhood.*

- GO.1** Redesign Lansburgh Park to create a true “Central Park” for the Southwest community. Continue the dog park and community garden functions but also include improved walking paths, new landscaping and permeable edges that invite “eyes on the park”. Include additional trees, benches, sustainable vegetation and enhanced signage. Consider a design competition to create a signature design and beautiful park space.
- GO.2** Consider an orchard feature as a “gateway” into Lansburgh park from ‘I’ Street, SW. Sustainable DC recommends the inclusion of food-bearing trees where possible.
- GO.3** Remove the two brick walls at the northeast corner of Lansburgh Park in order to improve visibility from ‘I’ Street and apply landscape improvements and low impact development practices.

**Goal:** *Improve connectivity through greenways, pedestrian and bicycle facilities, wayfinding signage, and coordinated programming throughout all Southwest Parks.*



LANSBURGH PARK



SOUTHWEST DUCK POND



- GO.4** Design a “green path” with signage to provide pedestrians with visual connections and walking routes between the Southwest Duck Pond, Library Park, Lansburgh Park and Randall Recreation Center.
- GO.5** Ensure that all park entry points at the Southwest Duck Pond are clearly marked and visible from the street, through the use of signage, public art and lighting as needed.
- GO.6** Enhance the presence of King Greenleaf Recreation Center along M Street through improved signage and landscaping at First and M Streets.
- GO.7** Visually extend Canal Street as a sidewalk between N Street and M Street to better connect pedestrians to the King Greenleaf Recreation Center.

*Goal: Adopt Sustainable DC goals to showcase the Southwest Neighborhood as a steward of green, sustainable practices targeting stormwater management, healthy living, and energy efficiency.*

- GO.8** Increase the tree canopy in the Southwest study boundary from 25 percent to 37 percent with the addition of trees in all new developments, streetscape improvements and potentially at existing parks such as Lansburgh. The creation of larger setbacks for new developments may allow for more tree planting opportunities. Ensure that any diseased trees are removed and replaced at appropriate times.
- GO.9** Designate the 100-year flood zone that extends from south of I-395 to P Street as a “Green Zone.” In this Green Zone, prioritize natural stormwater percolation and



KING GREENLEAF RECREATION CENTER

general perviousness of public and private space, parking lots, plazas and courtyards.

- GO.10** Promote low impact development in all future upgrades along Delaware Avenue and Half Street, which run parallel to the flood zone, to maximize their capacity to hold storm and flood water.
- GO.11** Reduce stormwater runoff by transforming key areas of existing impervious surfaces to pervious materials and encouraging bioretention and landscaping.
- GO.12** New Private Development: Meet or exceed current flood-proofing requirements (requirements are currently set for 100-year floods). The Southwest community should consider negotiating with developers so that future PUDs meet flood-proofing for 500-year floods given the rapidly increasing sea-level rise projections. Any setbacks for new developments should become an opportunity for

stormwater and flood water retention rather than lawns.

- GO.13** Maximize open spaces, vegetation and sustainable practices in new developments achieved through Planned Unit Developments (PUDs). (Also see Design Guidelines on pages 81-83).
- GO.14** Require the installation of electric vehicle-charging stations and set aside electric vehicle-only parking spaces in the garages of future buildings constructed under Planned Units Developments (PUDs) as a community amenity.
- GO.15** Partner with the Sustainable Energy Utility (SEU) and DC Department of the Environment (DDOE) to organize follow-up community meetings on energy efficiency. Work with existing homeowner associations and other citizen organizations to identify specific project opportunities and market existing programs and subsidies for energy efficiency, renewable energy and green roof retrofits.

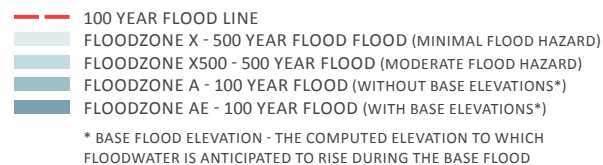


FIGURE 6.1 | PLANNING AREA FLOOD MAP



## 07 CONCEPT | ARTS AND CULTURE



ARTS AND CULTURE ILLUSTRATIVE | SOUTHWEST LOOKS TO FURTHER ENHANCE ITS CREATIVE AND ARTISTIC COMMUNITY



## ARTS AND CULTURE VISION

*Southwest will flourish as a premier arts and cultural destination creating synergies between existing cultural assets and attracting new creative uses and arts-related activities.*

### Today

Southwest boasts strong arts institutions, the most central of which is the Arena Stage, a nationally known theater and the cultural icon of the neighborhood. The Blind Whino and planned Rubell Museum at the Randall School will create an arts hub at one end of 'I' Street. The Westminster Church at 4th and 'I' Streets not only serves as a religious institution but also a de facto performing arts space that attracts large crowds to its weekly live Jazz series. The long vacant Southeastern University site has languished due to the difficulty of redevelopment under the current zoning and land use designation and lends itself to a future ground floor institutional or arts use to reinforce 'I' street as a cultural corridor. Vacant parcels on 4th Street have been activated with temporary public art installations through the District's "5x 5" program in 2014. The neighborhood is also bolstered by its community facilities including local schools (Amidon-Bowen Elementary School and Jefferson Middle School), the library, and two recreation centers.



ARENA STAGE

## Opportunity

Southwest has the potential to become one of the City’s premier arts and culture destinations.

**A Cultural Hub.** While Southwest already has great cultural assets, these institutions and programs can be better leveraged collectively through joint promotion and marketing that puts the neighborhood and its institutions on the cultural map. There are also opportunities to foster an arts hub in the neighborhood by expanding local events and drawing on the existing successful ones such as Jazz Night at Westminster, Southwest Night at Arena Stage, and activities with Art Whino. The future Rubell Museum at the Randall School can also reinforce the local arts scene. Importantly, this exciting range of institutions and programming can serve as an enriching and accessible community amenity for all Southwest residents.

**Invigorated ‘I’ Street.** The Southwest neighborhood has the opportunity to continue to concentrate cultural activities along the ‘I’ Street corridor. Renovation of the Randall Recreation Center should be prioritized – not only to improve access, entrances and the overall facility, but also to introduce programming that provides both recreational and cultural offerings for residents. To increase the presence of artists as local residents, priority can be placed on marketing the affordable units at the redeveloped Randall School to artists. The redevelopment of Greenleaf, with the responsible and thoughtful participation of the Southwest community, can include some ground floor spaces along ‘I’ and M streets that may house arts/creative incubator uses. The Southwest Neighborhood Library also contributes to the corridor and a new library can create a space that further establishes an iconic presence for community institutions. The Southeastern University site can be ignited for



WESTMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

redevelopment to bookend one side of the ‘I’ Street cultural corridor, remain sensitive to its context, and include an institutional/cultural use and possibly artist housing.

**Arts in the Public Realm.** The Southwest Neighborhood can reinforce its identity as an arts and culture destination by manifesting the arts in the public realm. Temporary installations, “pop-up” programming and events can be focused around the Southwest Duck Pond, and vacant parcels and retail spaces along 4th Street SW. Underpasses have long stood as a neighborhood barrier that may be significantly enhanced through incorporation of public art and lighting.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

**Goal:** *Build on and market existing cultural assets and institutions to reinforce the concept of an arts and cultural destination.*

- AC.1** Foster the Southwest neighborhood arts hub by expanding events, such as Jazz Night at Westminster, Southwest Night at Arena Stage, activities with Art Whino, and future events with the Rubell Museum at the Randall School.
- AC.2** Promote the arts as a community amenity in neighborhood marketing materials and communicate current and planned activities involving the arts to residents throughout the District of Columbia. Develop a single source to advertise and promote all arts events in one place for easier access and more effective marketing.

**Goal:** *Strengthen 'I' Street as a cultural corridor.*

- AC.3** Renovate the Randall Recreation Center to support diverse multi-purpose, community-oriented and arts programming functions at the Center.
- AC.4** Market the required affordable units in the new Randall School development to artists who meet the affordability requirements.
- AC.5** Encourage the creation of incubator space for local arts organizations or other creative entrepreneurs (e.g., web designers, film editing, production, culinary space etc.) or local business start-ups on the ground floors of new buildings on M and 'I' Streets.



BLIND WHINO ART EVENT SPACE



INSIDE BLIND WHINO



## SOUTHEASTERN UNIVERSITY SITE

This site, located at 501 'I' Street SW, was initially constructed in 1948 as the Metropolitan Boys Club. It was later expanded by modernist architect Charles Goodman to become the Hawthorne School. Additional wings were added as was the concrete façade that is still in existence. The building was sold in 1972 to Southeastern University which operated an adult education campus until closing permanently in 2010. Since that time, that building has been vacant and fallen into disrepair.

During this planning process, a prominent theater company proposed a plan to convert the property into its new headquarters with artist space by tearing the existing building down and erecting a larger building in its place. The theater company planned to partner with a private developer to include additional market rate housing as well as housing specifically for visiting actors. This site is a preferred location for an arts and cultural use as it complements and augments the growing arts already in Southwest and further anticipates the Plan's vision for cultural uses along Eye Street. Convenient access to metro is also a plus for many of the visiting actors who would use the rehearsal space.

The site itself is currently designated "Institutional" on the Comprehensive Plan Future Land Use map which is in keeping with its historic educational and nonprofit uses. It is zoned R-3 which permits low density residential uses such as townhomes.

During this planning process, the community expressed an understanding of the theater's need for additional space and recognized the merits of having a world class theater headquartered in Southwest. However, it was clear that many adjacent residents have serious concerns about the compatibility of a 6-9 story building within the existing townhome community. The land use designation would need to be changed to facilitate the full building program as required by the theater company and their development partner.

At this time, the Southwest Neighborhood Plan is not making a recommendation for a land use designation change for this site until further outreach efforts can be conducted by the Shakespeare Theater and their development partner to address community concerns. A cultural use at this site would be a preferred use going forward and efforts to change the land use should seriously be considered by the community and the ANC. The theater is encouraged to continue the dialogue with the Southwest community through the upcoming Comprehensive Plan Amendment process which will get underway in early 2015.



FIGURE 7.1 | DISTRICT PROPERTIES

**Goal:** *Grow the presence of the arts throughout the Southwest neighborhood.*

- AC.6** Initiate a pilot improvement project for at least one underpass to include unique public art and lighting.
- AC.7** Use grants, pilot programming or public/private partnerships to help fund “pop-up” programming, short-term events and other efforts by the Neighbors of the Southwest Duck Pond to expand activities in this location.



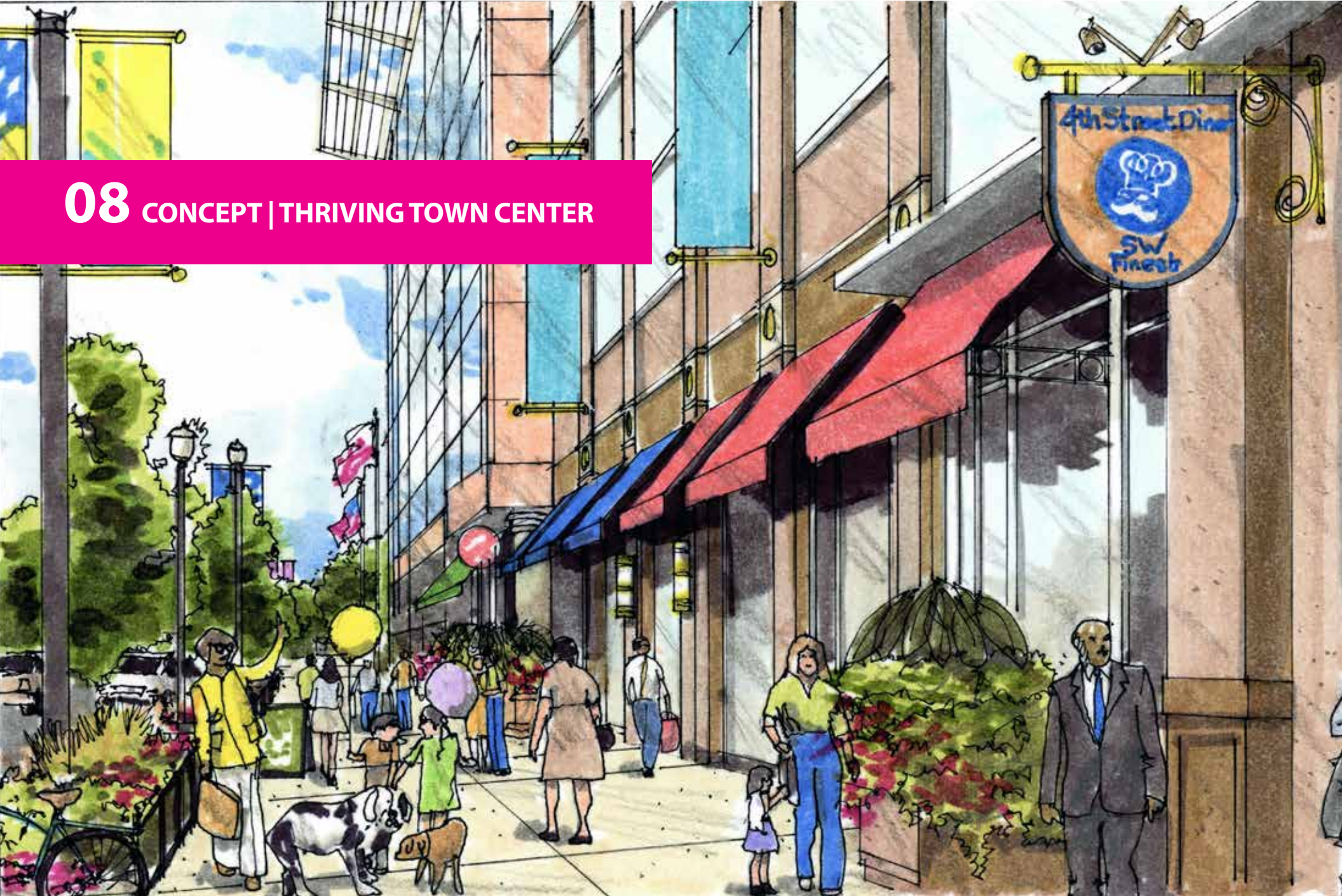
SOUTHEASTERN UNIVERSITY



ART ON 6TH STREET SOUTHWEST



## 08 CONCEPT | THRIVING TOWN CENTER



THRIVING TOWN CENTER ILLUSTRATIVE | 4TH STREET HAS GREAT POTENTIAL TO GROW AS A VIBRANT NEIGHBORHOOD COMMERCIAL CENTER



## THRIVING TOWN CENTER VISION

*Southwest will enjoy 4th Street as a thriving town center and commercial heart of community, with a range of neighborhood-serving retail options, an active street atmosphere, a high quality public realm, quality new development and easily accessible transit.*

### Today

The reinstatement of 4th Street from M to 'I' Streets SW has transformed the landscape of Southwest, creating the opportunity for a traditional Town Center along the ground level floors of new development. This prominent street at the heart of the neighborhood featuring the Waterfront Metro station and an attractive streetscape is actually privately owned and maintained, but provides a fully public “Main Street” atmosphere. The street already boasts key retail anchors – a major grocery store and drug store – as well as two sit-down restaurants, two fast food establishments, and a dry cleaner in the storefronts of the two recently constructed office buildings tenanted by government agencies. However, there are still some vacancies and at least 30,000 SF of new retail space is coming online in new development. Growing retail amenities and civic anchors in the neighborhood is a goal shared by all residents.



RETAIL ALONG 4TH STREET

## Opportunity

The Southwest neighborhood can magnify the already strong design of 4th Street to realize its full potential and broaden the number of walkable retail and cultural amenities for residents. Fourth Street can thrive as a bustling Town Center and neighborhood focal point. This block-long stretch has the potential to support transit-oriented development with new high density office and residential uses with ground floor retail space along both sides of 4th Street and spilling onto the corners of M Street.

**Enhanced and Vibrant Retail Options.** Retail on 4th Street should focus on a diverse array of neighborhood-serving shopping, services and dining. The Southwest Business Improvement District (BID) that is currently forming will be instrumental to completing targeted marketing and retail attraction to boost the neighborhood's brand and retail mix. The BID will help strengthen the appearance of the broader area through activities like clean-up of the many underpasses which some traverse en route to 4th Street. The energy of this commercial strip has the potential to extend all the way to 'I' street as the corner churches may be redeveloped or the structures incorporated into future redevelopment with landscaped setbacks/rights of way retained. Growing the population on and around 4th Street will strengthen the market position and overall vitality of the Town Center.

The development of the Wharf and the ongoing development at the Capitol Riverfront/Navy Yard will create strong attractors of people and potential retail demand. While those areas are more focused on regional retail and entertainment, creating good way finding and the use of public art and well designed buildings and landscaping, particularly at the corners of 4th and M Street, SW and 4th and 'I' street SW, will tap into the energy created by those developments. These catalytic developments will strengthen the market for retail along the 4th Street, "town center" permitting the neighborhood to attract additional local retailers.

The Town Center will likely be locally-focused and complement rather than compete with the nearby destination retail and entertainment venues. Fourth Street can exhibit strong physical connections for cars and pedestrians to nearby attractions: the Wharf, Fort McNair, and the proposed Soccer stadium and Ballpark District. New destinations like the Wharf will also augment the amenities within the reach of Southwest residents without compromising the existence of a 4th Street commercial core that most directly serves the Southwest neighborhood.



EXISTING 4TH STREET SW







PROPOSED 4TH STREET SW



Exciting pop-up retail and cultural uses will enliven vacancies in new retail spaces created along 4th Street and generate activity and interest to help draw potential long-term tenants. Fairs and festivals will invigorate public spaces and expose new populations to what Southwest has to offer. Fallow development parcels will offer places for temporary public art installations, community gatherings and events. Retail energy, sidewalk activation and new trees will enhance the already strong public realm that features mature trees, landscaping, street furniture, and gathering places.

While not the primary retail artery, M Street will serve as a landscaped urban boulevard with contextual new development (through the redevelopment of Greenleaf and potentially other public properties) that may offer ground floor activation opportunities. While retail will be best served clustered on 4th Street and along the M Street corners that intersect it, other portions of M street will likely support incubators, creative enterprises, medical services, daycares, and other community services in ground floor spaces. South Capital Street will eventually attract new development that will likely include a retail component, but it will be more peripheral to the neighborhood Town Center.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

*Goal: Establish a strategic marketing approach to attract a unique and tailored retail mix that can promote 4th Street as Southwest's neighborhood main street.*

- TC.1** Create a robust and proactive marketing strategy, BID can be lead entity, to create awareness about retail, entertainment and cultural opportunities in the Southwest neighborhood. Use this strategy to attract, incentivize and/or incubate neighborhood-serving retailers on/near 4th Street and potentially on South Capitol Street.
- TC.2** Promote a cohesive and concentrated retail cluster along 4th Street through the development of retail-appropriate spaces, coherent storefront design, signage, streetscape and street furniture as well as management of the retail mix and marketing.
- TC.3** Pursue a neighborhood-focused retail attraction and retention strategy that provides an array of locally-serving shopping, services and dining to residents and the daytime office worker population. In new retail development consider allowing for different formats and sizes of spaces so that a variety of retail tenants, including small businesses, may lease space.

*Goal: Encourage future land use designation changes to key corner parcels to promote a vibrant mix of neighborhood town center uses along 4th Street.*

- TC.4** Change the future land use designation of Westminster Church from moderate density residential to medium density residential with low density commercial.
- TC.5** Change the future land use designation of Christ United Methodist Church from moderate density residential to medium density residential with low density commercial.
- TC.6** For proposed for land use designation changes on 4th Street SW, a Planned Unit Development (PUD) process will have to be initiated. Should any site be landmarked as historic, thoughtful incorporation of existing structures and setbacks into future development is strongly preferred, with new construction limited to underdeveloped portions of the parcel.

**Goal:** *Celebrate 4th Street's envisioned vibrancy as a neighborhood main street, through temporary urbanism practices and through the burgeoning local arts movement as encouraged by the city's creative economy agenda.*

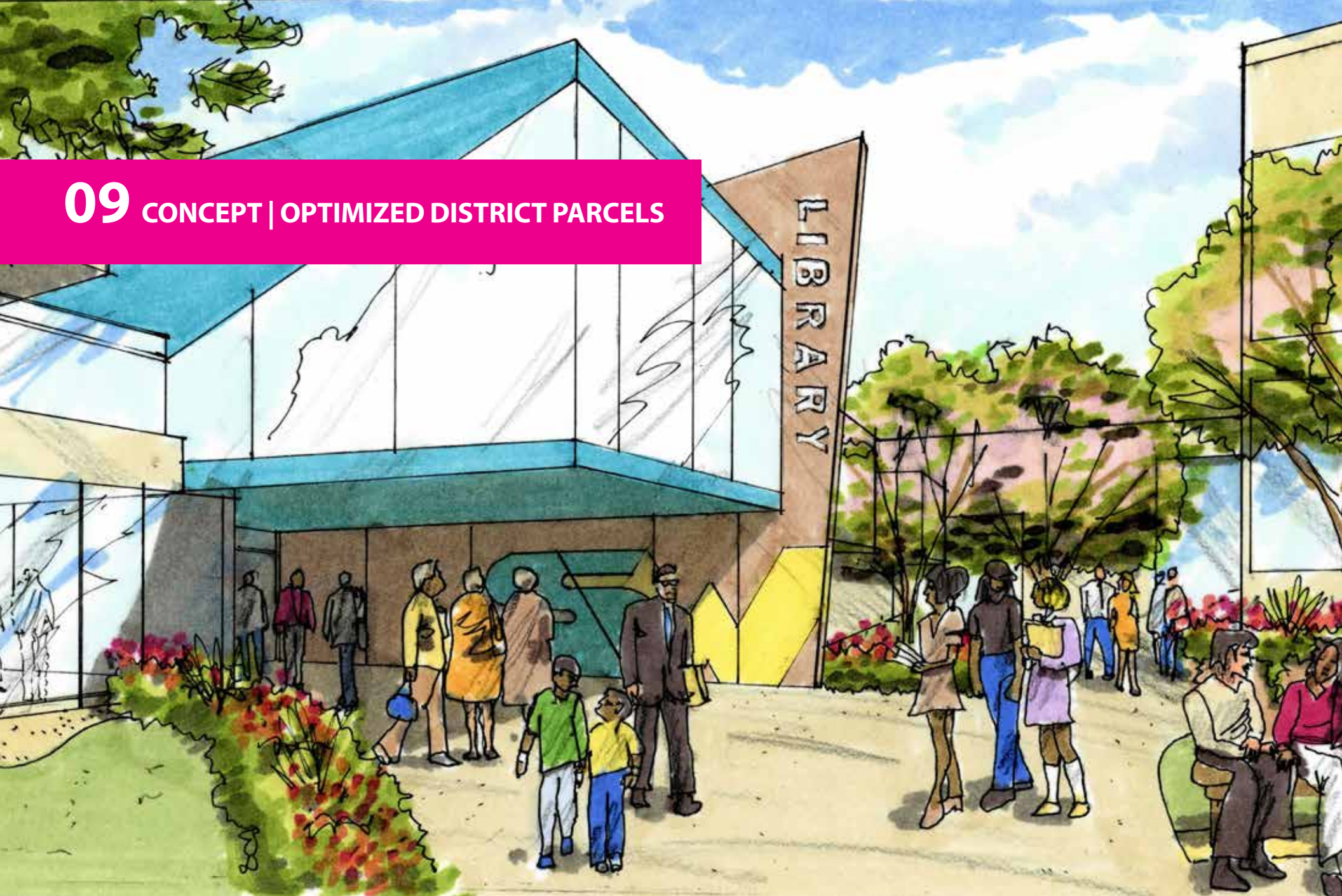
- TC.7** Encourage pop-up retail in vacant spaces as a means to enliven a space, maintain retail continuity along 4th Street, and promote small and local retailers.



FIGURE 8.1 | CHURCH SITES



## 09 CONCEPT | OPTIMIZED DISTRICT PARCELS



**OPTIMIZED DISTRICT PARCELS ILLUSTRATIVE** | SOUTHWEST HAS A NUMBER OF PARCELS THAT HAVE THE POTENTIAL TO TRANSFORM THE NEIGHBORHOOD AND ENHANCE AMENITIES.



## OPTIMIZED DISTRICT PARCELS **VISION**

*Southwest will be prepared for the future redevelopment of the neighborhood's outdated public facilities and underused publicly owned land, allowing for the use of public resources in a way that benefits everyone and ensures that development aligns with neighborhood expectations for high-quality design and provides community benefits.*

### Today

Southwest has established residential areas with strong neighborhood character and identity. Nearby public land or facilities owned by the District or Federal agencies contribute little to the neighborhood. The concentration of public land north of M Street near South Capitol Street is currently home to police, fire and DMV facilities and is poorly designed with single use buildings and aesthetically unappealing surface parking. This enclave is a non-descript “no man’s land” with limited connectivity and visual interest. Lansburgh Park, just north of the DMV facilities, a somewhat hidden asset with untapped potential, sits in the center of these public parcels yet bears no relationship to them as the buildings back on to the park. By comparison, some facilities are treasured community assets like Amidon-Bowen Elementary School and Jefferson Middle Schools Academy and the Southwest Library. Although the library is beloved, it was built in 1961 and designed without the amenities, natural light, or inviting spaces found in libraries being built today. A new library would better serve the growing population of Southwest.

### Opportunity

The residents of Southwest can anticipate improvements to government-owned properties so that they contain more efficient and attractive public facilities or are made available through a competitive process to the private sector for redevelopment that is consistent with neighborhood goals. Residents can help to shape redevelopment so that it is compatible with the existing community character and can meet programing demands of the broader neighborhood.

**Re-envisioned Government Cluster.** As a growing city, the District will have increasing demands on parks, schools, libraries, public safety, public works and other operations. The Department of General Services will need to effectively manage how public agencies use and operate their facilities, making sure the District judiciously uses public assets and facilities to their fullest potential but in a way that is environmentally responsible. Changing the land use designations for some government properties in Southwest can increase the options for their redevelopment in a way that

## SOUTHWEST LIBRARY

During this process, DC Public Library (DCPL) in coordination with the Office of the Deputy Mayor for Economic Development and Planning (DMPED) and OP explored the potential of relocating the existing library to 300 Wesley Place SW to the ground floor of a planned residential building to be constructed on 4th Street Southwest. The benefits of the moving the library would have included an increase in visibility on a more active community thoroughfare, creating a civic anchor on the “Main Street” in the community, and most likely, achieving a new facility in much less time than rebuilding at the existing site. DCPL presented renderings of what a mixed use building could potentially look like on 4th Street at a community meeting held on June 16th, 2014. In addition, DMPED researched other mixed use buildings with libraries around the Country to determine best practices. The community overwhelmingly decided that constructing a new library at the existing site is the preferred option. The recommendation in this Plan reflects that community preference.



SOUTHWEST LIBRARY

has design compatibility with the neighborhood, outstanding environmental performance, improved connectivity around buildings, and an affordable housing requirement when there is a residential component (at least 20 percent of units to be affordable in any residential development). All residential, commercial, or government facilities will be expected to go through Planned Unit Developments that will allow higher densities focused near M Street and conform to design guidelines that require variation in building height and inclusion of building setbacks, as appropriate. Redevelopment of government properties and facilities north of M Street near South Capitol Street can include connections and create a “front door” for a revamped Lansburgh Park, making it a high-quality and accessible open space activated by adjacent development. (See the Design Guidelines on pages 81 - 83 for additional information on principles for development).

**A New Library.** A model community deserves a model library. Residents in Southwest seek a state-of-the-art public library at its current location on 3rd Street/Wesley Place SW. The desire is to have an inspiring structure that would take full advantage of the adjacent library park playground and serve as a community anchor and important gathering place for meetings and civic conversation. A new library can be a source of community pride where all facets of the diverse community come together and enjoy current periodicals and literature, use computers with the latest programs and technology, and attend classes, lectures, and programs.

**Government Parcels.** The District government currently owns approximately 7 acres of land in the “Government Cluster” around M and Half Streets which house a number of municipal uses including the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) Service Center at 95 M

Street SW, DC Fire and Emergency Medical Service Department (FEMS) maintenance facility and fire station at 1101 Half Street SW, the Metropolitan Police Department (MPD) First District Station at 101 M Street SW (Bowen School) , and the DMV Inspection Station at 1001 Half Street SW. While the District population continues to grow, municipal services grow but also change through the use of innovation and technology. For example, many services of the DMV are now available on online, thus significantly reducing the number of in person trips to a physical location. As stewards of limited public resources, the District government must continually analyze ongoing and changing needs of the City and how best to utilize public properties to create for a more efficient and effective property portfolio.

Given the underused nature of the sites in the SW Government Cluster with large surface parking and low-scale buildings, there is the potential to improve operations through state of the art design and co-location of municipal uses and services, and to consider in the future, where appropriate, allowing for competitive disposition of property to the private sector for a mix of uses such as residential (with affordable housing) and retail, and potentially accommodating municipal service centers. Improving the use and design of these District-owned sites could create higher efficiencies, save tax dollars, as well as improve the public realm in the Southwest neighborhood. These sites offer exciting potential to become vibrant mixed use developments activating M Street SW, providing better street connectivity, and enhancing the relationship with a to-be-redesigned Lansburgh Park.



FEMS MAINTENANCE SITE



DEPARTMENT OF MOTOR VEHICLES





FIGURE 7.1 | DISTRICT PARCELS



## RECOMMENDATIONS

**Goal:** Address land use and future potential for District owned parcels that comprise Southwest's government cluster to reflect opportunities to accommodate improved services, allow a mix of uses, and optimize government operations and assets.

- DP.1** Change future land use designations of the properties at the Southwest government cluster (shown in Figure 7.1) as follows:
- Change the future land use designation on Parcel A (MPD/Bowen School) from Local Public to Mixed Use- Local Public /Medium Density Commercial and Medium Density Residential.
  - Change the future land use designation on Parcel B (Department of Motor Vehicles and FEMS Maintenance Site) from Local Public High Density Residential, High Density Commercial and Local Public.
  - Change the future land use designation on Parcel C (DMV Inspection Station) from Local Public to Mixed Use- Local Public/ Medium Density Residential.

 KEY SITES



MPD/BOWEN SCHOOL BUILDING

Any development under the new land use designation should be achieved through a Planned Unit Development and should meet the following criteria:

- Conform to the design guidelines outlined in this Plan (pages 81-83).
- Restore portions of the L'Enfant street grid through the dedication of former rights of way (ROW) for creation of streets or pedestrian corridors.
- If there is a public solicitation/disposition for residential development, require at least 20 percent of the total residential square footage to be set aside for affordable units.



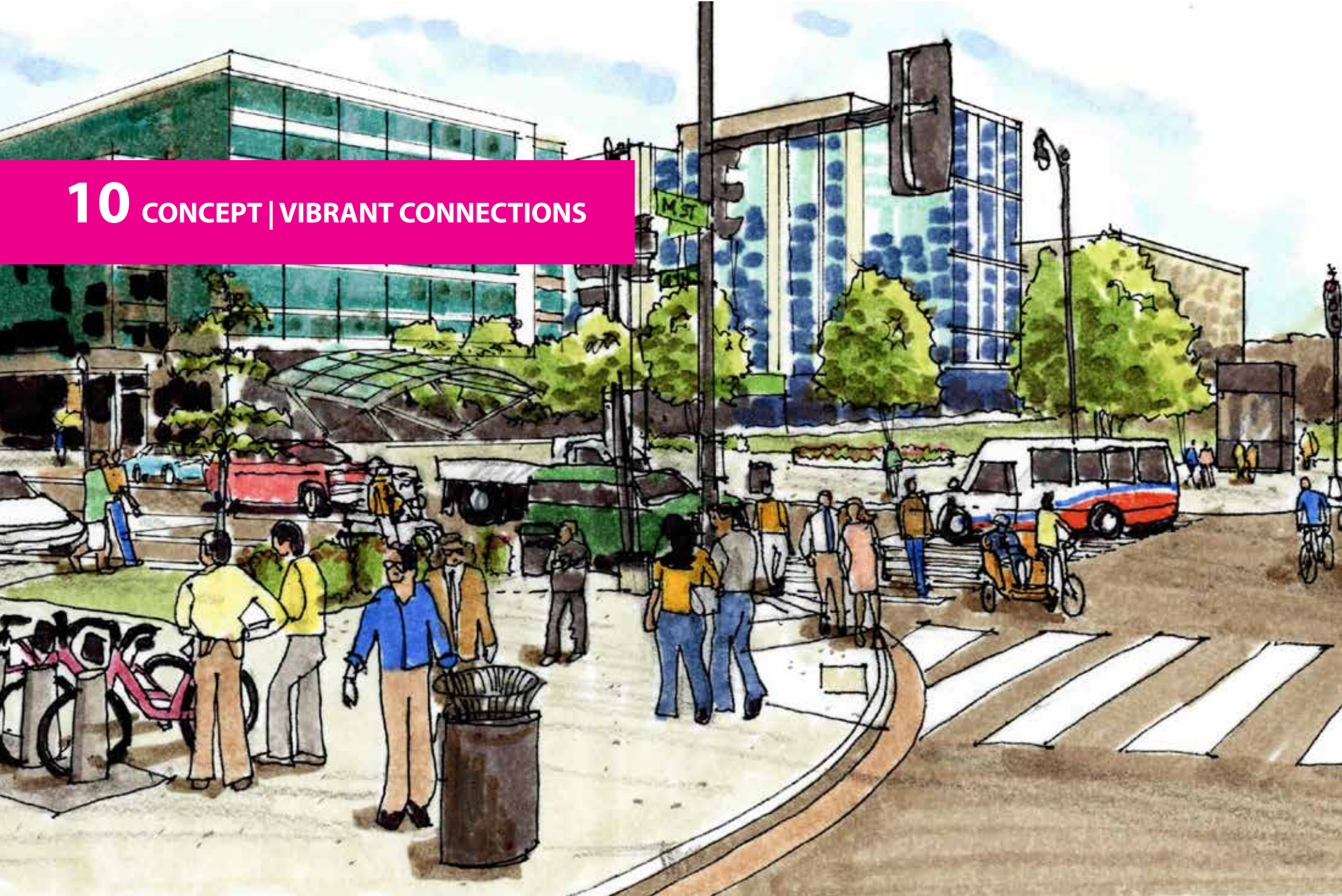
COMMUNITY LIBRARY EXAMPLE | PHOTO CREDIT PAUL RIVERA

**Goal:** *Provide new and improved state of the art public facilities.*

- DP.2** Construct a distinctive new Southwest Library at the current site of the existing library on Wesley Place. Future design of the library should incorporate/enhance the adjacent park space currently being developed into "Library Park".
- DP.3** Support a feasibility study to determine how best to improve the athletic fields/recreation space adjacent to Jefferson Middle School Academy. Currently DPW uses an existing storage facility that prohibits full use of the recreation space.
- DP.4** Support excellent design for any new municipal facilities at the Southwest government cluster (See Design Guidelines, 81-83).



# 10 CONCEPT | VIBRANT CONNECTIONS



VIBRANT CONNECTIONS ILLUSTRATIVE | SOUTHWEST HAS GREAT POTENTIAL FOR ENHANCED MULTI-MODAL CONNECTIVITY IN YEARS TO COME

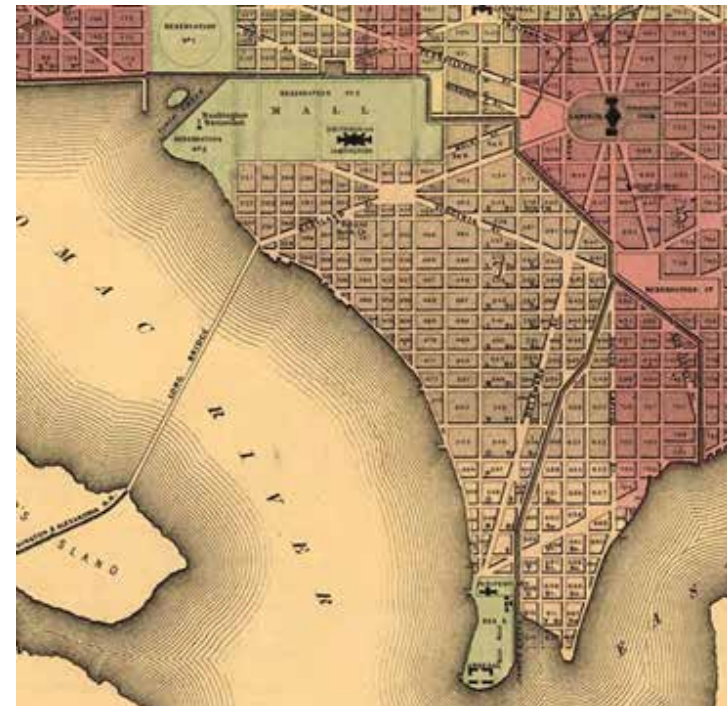


## CONCEPT | VIBRANT CONNECTIONS VISION

*The Southwest neighborhood will showcase vibrant connections that support an active community and attractive environment, accommodate several safe and convenient transportation modes, increase mobility within the community and provide ease of access to adjacent neighborhoods and the Waterfront.*

### Today

Just minutes from Downtown Washington and the National Mall, Southwest is connected to all the great amenities of City living while being removed from the limelight and hustle and bustle. Given that the neighborhood has natural and manmade boundaries on several sides – the waterfront to the East, Fort McNair to the South, Interstate-395 to the North, and the South Capitol Street to West – the neighborhood provides some challenges to traversing beyond its boundaries. Circulation within the neighborhood can be challenging for pedestrians given the larger than typical block-lengths and closures of the street grid but is greatly softened by the prevalence of tree-lined streets and regular sidewalks. Several of the key corridors – Maine Avenue, M Street and South Capitol Street – still have room for improvement of streetscape, transportation accommodations, and pedestrian experience. The neighborhood is rich with transit options, from a centrally-located Metrorail station to bus and bike facilities and a potential streetcar line. Despite superior proximity and access, Southwest has retained neighborhood cohesion and a sense that the neighborhood is a special, quiet enclave and retreat.



THIS 1862 MAP OF WASHINGTON ATTESTS TO THE ISOLATION OF SOUTHWEST CAUSED BY RAILROAD, CANAL, AND RIVER (LIBRARY OF CONGRESS)

## The Opportunity

The Southwest neighborhood must prepare for its local transportation needs given the development occurring in and around the neighborhood at the Wharf, Capitol Riverfront and Buzzard Point. By building a pleasant pedestrian and biker experience, strengthening the quality of its key corridors, restoring lost connections and improving physical barriers, Southwest neighborhood has the opportunity to feature vibrant connections to support an active community.

***Safe Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety and Infrastructure.*** One of the hallmarks of a livable neighborhood is well designed pedestrian infrastructure. Southwest can focus on upgrading pedestrian crossings and signage along South Capitol Street, Maine Avenue, and 7th Street SW. Additional, enforcement measures and safety enhancements could be taken to address difficult intersections on 'I' Street, M Street and P Street SW. Importantly, concentration should be placed on creating safe walking routes to school, with a special focus on the immediate circulation around the Jefferson Middle School and Amidon-Bowen Elementary. Southwest can and should be a walker's paradise, creating delight and opportunities for activity for residents and visitors of all ages.

With a growing legion of residents who bike for commute or recreation, Southwest can enhance its bicycle infrastructure to better tie into broader District greenways, like the Anacostia River Riverwalk Trail, The Wharf development and Potomac River, as well as major bike routes. Additional Capital Bikeshare locations should be identified to accommodate needs as demand grows.

***Enhanced Corridors.*** Southwest's defining thoroughfares can be redesigned to enhance mobility while improving the character and aesthetics of the public realm. While M Street currently lacks a cohesive streetscape, it has the potential to become an attractive and green urban boulevard and "complete street" that accommodates buses, traffic, bikes and potentially streetcars. As the waterfront develops, Maine Avenue will no longer be an "edge" roadway and commuter cut-thru but rather a gateway boulevard that unifies Southwest and The Wharf. Maine Avenue is being redesigned and reconstructed to become a more attractive and multimodal urban boulevard. The width of the street will remain the same but improvements to public realm and streetscape elements will change this current commuter route into a more dynamic, pleasant and safe boulevard.

***Reclaimed Connections.*** Urban Renewal and the modernist designs that followed it left an indelible mark of the block structure of Southwest, which many residents appreciate for the internalized residential communities it forged. However, the restoration of the L'Enfant street grid in strategic locations that do not impact existing residences will enhance the mobility and ease of walking through the neighborhood. In particular, the government-owned parcels around Lansburgh Park offer the opportunity to restore mapped streets when redeveloped in the future. This will also bring additional activity and visibility to a now "hidden" park asset. Southwest can also tackle the unpleasant experience of traversing underpasses of the I-395 and CSX rights of way by ensuring appropriate lighting and regular maintenance and cleaning, as well as piloting public art interventions.

## CHARACTER OF KEY CORRIDORS

**I' Street.** This corridor is characterized by wide sidewalks and the extensive full growth tree canopy lining the street. While an important east-west connector, the street offers a beautiful and shaded walking experience. Future developments such as the transformation of the Randall School into a world class art gallery will assist in branding the corridor as a “cultural corridor”. Temporary public art and way finding would create better links between other cultural uses in this area to the Wharf and Arena Stage.

**M Street.** Currently, M Street lacks a cohesive streetscape and public realm but has the potential to become an attractive and green boulevard that accommodates multi transportation modes. New development that conforms to the Design Guidelines in this Plan will create some linear green space through landscaped setbacks and additional trees and will deliver buildings that are better oriented towards M Street to create a feeling of greater safety, interest and enjoyment. DDOT envisions M Street becoming a true multi-modal transportation corridor with improvements to design of the roadway to better accommodate buses, traffic, bikes and potentially streetcars. The addition of streetcar stops and improvements to bus shelters will greatly activate the sidewalks on M Street SW. New development will potentially offer active ground floor uses and a retail experience, although the bulk of commercial activity will continue to be concentrated on 4th Street SW.

**Maine Avenue.** As the Wharf develops, Maine Avenue will no longer be an “edge” roadway and commuter cut-thru but rather a gateway boulevard that unifies Southwest and the Wharf. Maine Avenue is being redesigned and reconstructed to become a more attractive urban boulevard and “complete street” that can also accommodate cars, bike and pedestrians. Improvements to crosswalks will be critical to ensure the safety of pedestrians who will access the Wharf via Metro at Waterfront Station. The width of the street will remain the same but improvements to public realm

and streetscape elements will change this current commuter route into a more dynamic, pleasant and safe boulevard.

**4th Street.** The commercial blocks of 4th Street between M and I' Street serve as the neighborhood's “Main Street” and will retain this character going forward. The roadway is anchored at the M street Intersection by the presence of the Waterfront Station Metro and the Capitol Bikeshare Station. This neighborhood commercial stretch still has multiple large lots slated for redevelopment. The existing office buildings and retail are almost at full capacity but have struggled to lease out the existing retail bays since completion. Additional residential density to be built along these blocks will improve the customer base and foot traffic in the area. This plan recommends the use of “pop ups” and other temporary use such in future vacant retail space to activate the street level uses. Increased foot traffic to and from the Waterfront metro station of people going to the Wharf will also have a positive impact on 4th Street.

**South Capitol Street.** This is a major thoroughfare dividing the Southeast and Southwest quadrants of the City and acomodates a significant amount of commuter traffic in and out of the District daily. The corridor was part of the original L'Enfant streets and runs south from the US Capitol into Maryland. It varies from 2 to 4 lanes along the length. Given the high volume of traffic on this corridor, pedestrian safety and crossing at key intersections is challenging. There are several large potential development sites adjacent to the corridor that if developed well could improve the street level activation and improve the pedestrian experience on the sidewalks. Comprehensive streetscape and roadway redesign as part of the South Capitol Bridge project should improve the aesthetics and functionality of the corridor from a pedestrian perspective.



# RECOMMENDATIONS

**Goal:** *Enhance pedestrian connections and safety throughout the neighborhood.*

- VC.1** Clearly delineate school crossings for Jefferson Middle School Academy and Amidon-Bowen Elementary School with vehicular and pedestrian wayfinding signage and/or street markings. Pursue funding opportunities with the National Center for Safe Routes to School.
- VC.2** Enhance neighborhood edges and gateways by improving crosswalks, signage, lighting and/or streetscapes at key gateways:
- a. South Capitol Street at 'I', L, M and N Streets.
  - b. Maine Avenue and P Street between 4th, 3rd, Canal, First and Half Streets.
  - c. I-395 at 7th Street, 4th Street and Randall Recreation Center.
- VC.3** Improve pedestrian crossings through enhanced signage, redesigned crosswalks flashing signals and/or speed cameras at the following intersections:
- a. 'I' Street at 7th Street, Delaware Avenue and First Street.
  - b. M Street at Half, First, 3rd and 6th Streets.
  - c. P Street between Half, First, 3rd, 4th and Canal Streets.



INTERSECTION OF SOUTH CAPITOL STREET AN M STREET



SIGNAGE AND TRANSIT IN SOUTHWEST

**Goal:** *Improve neighborhood bicycle infrastructure and safety.*

**VC.4** Link bike routes across Southwest by extending dedicated bike lanes as recommended in the Move DC plan along the following segments:

- a. 7th Street between 4th Street and Maine Avenue.
- b. 3rd Street between 'I' Street and M Street.
- c. First Street between M Street and P Street.

**VC.5** Work with Capital Bikeshare to install additional bikeshare stations in Southwest, particularly at the following locations:

- a. 'I' Street at Randall Recreation Center.
- b. P Street and South Capitol Street .
- c. 'I' Street and Wesley Place at Library Park.
- d. The new Wharf development.

**VC.6** Coordinate with DDOT to install signage, paving and plantings for a biking and walking path along P Street that ties the Anacostia Riverwalk Trail to The Wharf development and Potomac River.

**Goal:** *Establish M Street as multimodal neighborhood boulevard linking Southwest to adjacent neighborhoods and the waterfront.*

**VC.7** Support the District Department of Transportation's (DDOT) final recommendations and infrastructure changes along M Street to create a true multimodal transit corridor that improve connections and access throughout the Planning Area to the Wharf, Waterfront Metrorail station, Buzzard Point and Capitol Riverfront.



BICYCLIST IN SOUTHWEST



M STREET SW



FIGURE 10.1 | RIVERSIDE BAPTIST CHURCH

KEY SITES



**Goal:** *Ensure that Maine Ave provides an attractive transition from the Southwest neighborhood to the Wharf development.*

**VC.8** Improve streetscape and pedestrian infrastructure along Maine Avenue to create a complete street in alignment with plans depicted by Hoffman-Madison Waterfront for its development at The Wharf.

**VC.9** Change the future land use designation of Riverside Baptist Church from Moderate Density Residential to Medium Density Residential/Low Density Commercial use to create a gateway into the community on the corner of 'I' Street and Maine Avenue. Any development under the new land use designation should be achieved through a Planned Unit Development. Development should consider the site's gateway quality and conform to the design guidelines contained in this Plan (see page 81).

**VC.10** Create way-finding signage from Waterfront Metrorail station across Maine Avenue to The Wharf through collaboration with Hoffman-Madison Waterfront and a future Southwest Business Improvement District.



**Goal:** *Support the transformation of South Capitol Street into a high density, urban boulevard that establishes a robust pedestrian realm.*

**VC.11** Coordinate with the South Capitol Street Corridor Project to promote a high performance “green” streetscape, improve connections across South Capitol Street at ‘I’, M and P Streets, and reduce/limit commuter traffic through the Southwest neighborhood.

**Goal:** *Restore L’Enfant Streets on redevelopment sites, including public properties.*

**VC.12** Improve access to and use of Lansburgh Park by reinstating K and L Streets for improved access (including bike/pedestrian use) to increase visibility, increase access and reduce the isolated feel of the park. Maintain and improve the First Street pedestrian greenway from M Street to ‘I’ Street to increase visibility and access and reduce the isolated feel of the park.

**Goal:** *Improve the underpasses connecting the Southwest neighborhood to areas to the north.*

**MC.13** Convene regular interagency meetings to determine the best approach to upgrading the underpasses and identify an entity to lead the effort to clean and maintain the underpasses.



SOUTH CAPITOL STREET



I-395 PEDESTRIAN UNDERPASS AT RANDALL RECREATION CENTER

# 11 IMPLEMENTATION



4th Street Today

## GUIDING PRINCIPLES



### 01 SOUTHWEST CULTURE

Foster an environment that encourages and embraces cultural and economic diversity.



### 02 NEIGHBORHOOD CHARACTER

Preserve the varied scale and green character of the neighborhood.



### 03 PEDESTRIAN SAFETY

Design buildings, connections and sidewalks to improve safety, security and pedestrian circulation.



### 04 RETAIL

Support, enhance and expand neighborhood retail amenities.



### 05 PARKS

Enhance, connect and better utilize parks, both active and passive, as open space.



### 06 COMMUNITY AMENITIES

Invest in community, arts and education uses that serve resident needs.



### 07 HOUSING

Preserve and develop a range of housing for a mix of income, age and family size, and encourage quality design and architecture.



### 08 TRANSPORTATION

Strengthen multi-modal transportation and improve street connections, parking and safety.



### 09 HISTORIC PRESERVATION

Remember the history and legacy of the Southwest community while looking ahead.



### 10 NEW DEVELOPMENT

Develop a strategy for height, density and open space that enhances, acknowledges and complements the character of the neighborhood.



### 11 SUSTAINABILITY












Incorporate goals and targets from the Sustainable DC Plan to protect/conserv e our environment and resources in fostering a vibrant, healthy neighborhood.



## CONCEPT | MODEL COMMUNITY

**VISION:** Southwest will remain an exemplary model of equity and inclusion - a welcoming and engaged community that celebrates and retains a mix of races, ages and income levels and enhances wellbeing for all amidst neighborhood growth and change.

ACTION	GUIDING PRINCIPLES ADDRESSED	TIMELINE	LEAD AGENCY	PARTNER AGENCY
<b>MC.1</b> Develop a strategy during the DCHA Greenleaf Master Planning process for keeping current residents in the community during and after construction/redevelopment of the site.	1, 7	Short Term	DCHA	DCOP
<b>MC.2</b> Develop an Interagency Working Group for DCHA to coordinate with District agencies to identify, through the DCHA Master Planning process, the potential to utilize District-owned properties in the vicinity to support a potential “build first” strategy for keeping current qualifying Greenleaf residents in the Southwest neighborhood.	1, 7, 10	Short Term	DCHA	DCOP, DMPED
<b>MC.3</b> Change the future land use designations as follows at Greenleaf to promote mixed-income redevelopment and replacement housing for existing Greenleaf residents(see figure 4.1): a. Change northernmost Greenleaf parcel (Parcels A) between L and ‘I’ Streets from Moderate Density Residential to Medium Density Residential. b. Change Greenleaf parcel on north side of M Street (Parcel B) from Moderate Density Residential to Mixed Use: High Density Residential/Low Density Commercial. c. Change the Greenleaf parcel on the south side of M Street (Parcel C), from Medium Density Residential to Mixed Use: High Density Residential/Low Density Commercial.  Any development under the new land use designation should be achieved through a Planned Unit Development and should meet the following criteria: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conform to the design guidelines for each parcel as outlined in this Small Area Plan on pages 81-83.</li> <li>Provide replacement housing for all the existing affordable units within the project or immediate Southwest Neighborhood Plan study area.</li> <li>Encourage a mixed-income community through the inclusion of market rate units and to the extent practicable, workforce housing.</li> <li>Achieve a significant level of green design in terms of both site and building design to contribute to healthy living and improve environmental performance.</li> </ul>	7, 10	Short Term	DCOP	

GUIDING PRINCIPLES:											
	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	10	11
ACTION						GUIDING PRINCIPLES ADDRESSED	TIMELINE	LEAD AGENCY	PARTNER AGENCY		
MC.4	Retain the neighborhood’s 19 percent of subsidized units by establishing targets that exceed current inclusionary zoning thresholds for future development on publicly owned land and in future Planned Unit Developments.					1, 7	Short to Long Term	DCHA , DHCD, DMPED	DCOP		
MC.5	Future redevelopment of District owned sites should, at a minimum, require 20 percent of the units be affordable at varying levels of the area median income (AMI), preferably for longer than 20 years.					1, 7	Short to Long Term	DMPED, DCHA	DCOP		
MC.6	As part of a community benefits package through the PUD process for new construction, prioritize affordable units above the Inclusionary Zoning requirement or fewer affordable units, but larger in size (e.g., three bedrooms) to better serve families.					1,7	Short to Long Term	DCOP, ANC			
MC.7	Improve lighting, seating and maintenance at bus shelters throughout Southwest					3, 8	Mid Term	WMATA	DDOT		
MC.8	Pilot bus time monitors at bus shelters at locations that serve a high number of seniors, such as stops near the Greenleaf Senior Center.					3, 8	Mid to Long Term	WMATA			
MC.9	Increase the number of and signage for disabled parking spaces on 4th Street along the commercial blocks.					3, 8	Short Term	DDOT			
MC.10	Prioritize funding to bring the Southwest Duck Pond into ADA compliance.					1, 5	Mid to Long Term	DPR			
MC.11	Promote community gardens at local schools, Amidon-Bowen and Jefferson, both for student use/educational purposes as well as for resident use. Expand existing community gardens already in Southwest.					6, 11	Short Term	DCPS	DPR, ANC		
MC.12	Improve access to and use of Lansburgh Park by reinstating K and L Streets for improved access (including bike/pedestrian use) to increase visibility, increase access and reduce the isolated feel of the park. Maintain and improve the First Street pedestrian greenway from M Street to ‘I’ Street to increase visibility and access and reduce the isolated feel of the park.					6	Short to Mid Term	DCOP	Property Owners, ANC		
MC.13	Strengthen and extend access to the Southwest Farmer’s Market, by connecting and marketing it to schools, public housing, and seniors and providing recipes and other information and demonstrations on healthy food preparation.					6, 11	Short to Mid Term	DDOE			

## CONCEPT | MODERNIST GEM

**VISION:** Southwest will promote the preservation of its unique architectural legacy and support new development that reflects the form and rhythm of the historic fabric, reinforcing the neighborhood design as a “Modernist Gem”.

ACTION	GUIDING PRINCIPLES ADDRESSED	TIMELINE	LEAD AGENCY	PARTNER AGENCY
<b>MG.1</b> Continue the community-led process of engagement to garner support for preserving modernist properties in the Planning Area. The community – including property owners, neighborhood groups and the Advisory Neighborhood Commission should determine a preferred preservation strategy: Historic District, Conservation District (if approved by Council), or the continued designation of individual landmarks.	9, 10	Short Term	Civic Organizations	SHPO
<b>MG.2</b> Provide the community with information and tools that outline the pros and cons associated with various preservation strategies.	9	Short to Mid Term	SHPO	ANC
<b>MG.3</b> Support infill and adaptive reuse of existing buildings in Southwest to promote the preservation of the community’s architectural character.	10	Long Term	SHPO	ANC



GUIDING PRINCIPLES:












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ACTION		GUIDING PRINCIPLES ADDRESSED	TIMELINE	LEAD AGENCY	PARTNER AGENCY
MG.4	Retain existing streets and open spaces that contribute to the L’Enfant Plan.	8	Short to Long Term	DCOP	ANC
MG.5	Ensure future development and improvements reinforce the L’Enfant Plan as an important historic feature tying Southwest to its greater urban context.	10	Long Term	DCOP	ANC
MG.7	Apply the Design Guidelines contained in this Plan (pages 81-83) to all new development achieved through the Planned Unit Development process. Matter of right development is also strongly encouraged to apply the Design Guidelines.	2, 9, 10, 11	Short to Long Term	DCOP, DCHA	ANC

## CONCEPT | GREEN OASIS

**VISION:** Southwest will thrive as a green oasis in the city, with lush tree canopy and vegetation, landscaped building edges, thriving parks and robust connections between green spaces, while attaining new levels of neighborhood sustainability and environmental performance.

ACTION	GUIDING PRINCIPLES ADDRESSED	TIMELINE	LEAD AGENCY	PARTNER AGENCY
<b>GO.1</b> Redesign Lansburgh Park to create a true “Central Park” for the Southwest community. Continue the dog park and community garden functions but also include improved walking paths, new landscaping and permeable edges that invite “eyes on the park”. Include additional trees, benches, sustainable vegetation and enhanced signage. Consider a design competition to create a signature design and beautiful park space.				
<b>GO.2</b> Consider an orchard feature as a “gate-way” into Lansburgh park from ‘I’ Street. Sustainable DC recommends the inclusion of food-bearing trees where possible.	2, 11	Mid to Long Term	DPR	Community Garden
<b>GO.3</b> Remove the two brick walls at the northeast corner of Lansburgh Park in order to improve visibility from ‘I’ Street and apply landscape improvements and low impact development practices.	11	Mid to Long term	DPR	
<b>GO.4</b> Design a "green path" with signage to provide pedestrians with visual connections and walking routes between the Southwest Duck Pond, Library Park, Lansburgh Park and Randall Recreation Center.	3, 5, 11	Short to Mid Term	DPR	
<b>GO.5</b> Ensure that all park entry points at the Southwest Duck Pond are clearly marked and visible from the street, through the use of signage, public art and lighting as needed.	3, 6	Short Term	DPR	Friends of the Southwest Duck Pond
<b>GO.6</b> Enhance the presence of King Greenleaf Recreation Center along M Street through improved signage and landscaping at First and M Streets.	3, 5	Short Term	DPR	
<b>GO.7</b> Visually extend Canal Street as sidewalk between N Street and M Street to better connect pedestrians to the King Greenleaf Recreation Center.	3	Mid Term	DDOT, DPR	
<b>GO.8</b> Increase the tree canopy in the Southwest study boundary from 25 percent to 37 percent with the addition of trees in all new developments, streetscape improvements and potentially at existing parks such as Lansburgh. The creation of larger setbacks for new developments may allow for more tree planting opportunities. Ensure that any diseased trees are removed and replaced at appropriate times.	3, 5, 10, 11	Short to Long Term	Casey Trees, DDOT	DPR

GUIDING PRINCIPLES:											
	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	10	11
ACTION						GUIDING PRINCIPLES ADDRESSED	TIMELINE	LEAD AGENCY	PARTNER AGENCY		
GO.9	Designate the 100-year flood zone that extends from south of I-395 to P Street to a "Green Zone." In this Green Zone, prioritize natural stormwater percolation, stormwater ponds and general perviousness of public and private space, parking lots, plazas and courtyards.					3, 11	Long Term	DDOE			
GO.10	Promote low impact development in all future upgrades along Delaware Avenue and Half Street, which run parallel to the flood zone, to maximize their capacity to hold storm and flood water.					11	Long Term	DDOT, DDOE			
GO.11	Reduce stormwater runoff by transforming key areas of existing impervious surfaces to pervious materials and encouraging bioretention and landscaping.					11	Long Term	DDOE, DCOP			
GO.12	New Private Development: Meet or exceed current flood-proofing requirements (requirements are currently set for 100-year floods). The Southwest community should consider negotiating with developers so that future PUDs meet flood-proofing for 500-year floods given the rapidly increasing sea-level rise projections. Any setbacks for new developments should become an opportunity for stormwater and flood water retention rather than lawns.					10, 11	Short to Long Term	DCOP	ANC		
GO.13	Maximize open spaces, vegetation and sustainable practices by discouraging surface parking in new developments achieved through Planned Unit Developments (PUDs). (Also see Design Guidelines on pages 81-83).					10, 11	Short to Long Term	DCOP	ANC		
GO.14	Require the installation of electric vehicle-charging stations and set aside electric vehicle-only parking spaces in the garages of future buildings constructed under Planned Units Developments (PUDs) as a community amenity.					10, 11	Short to Long Term	DCOP	ANC		
GO.15	Partner with the Sustainable Energy Utility (SEU) and DC Department of the Environment (DDOE) to organize follow-up community meetings on energy efficiency. Work with existing homeowner associations and other citizen organizations to identify specific project opportunities and market existing programs and subsidies for energy efficiency, renewable energy and green roof retrofits.					11	Short to Long Term	DDOE	SEU, ANC		



## CONCEPT | ARTS AND CULTURAL DESTINATION

**VISION:** Southwest will flourish as a premier arts and culture destination creating synergies between existing cultural assets and attracting new creative uses and arts-related activities.

ACTION	GUIDING PRINCIPLES ADDRESSED	TIMELINE	LEAD AGENCY	PARTNER AGENCY
<b>AC.1</b> Foster the Southwest neighborhood arts hub by expanding events, such as Jazz Night at Westminster, Southwest Night at Arena Stage, activities with Art Whino, and future events with the Rubell Museum at the Randall School.	6	Short Term	SW BID	Art Whino, Rubell Museum, and Randall
<b>AC.2</b> Promote the arts as a community amenity in neighborhood marketing materials and communicate current and planned activities involving the arts to residents throughout the District of Columbia. Develop a single source to advertise and promote all arts events in one place for easier access and more effective marketing.	6	Short to Mid Term	SW BID	DCOP
<b>AC.3</b> Renovate the Randall Recreation Center to support diverse multi-purpose, community-oriented and arts programming functions at the Center.	5, 6	Mid Term	SW BID	ANC
<b>AC.4</b> Market the required affordable units in the new Randall School development to artists who meet the affordability requirements.	6, 7	Short to Mid Term	Randall School Development Team	DCHA

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ACTION		GUIDING PRINCIPLES ADDRESSED	TIMELINE	LEAD AGENCY	PARTNER AGENCY
AC.5	Encourage the creation of incubator space for local arts organizations or other creative entrepreneurs (e.g., web designers, film editing, production, culinary space etc.) or local business start-ups on the ground floors of new buildings on M and ‘I’ Streets.	4, 6	Long Term	DMPED, WDCEP	DCOP
AC.6	Initiate a pilot improvement project for at least one underpass to include unique public art and lighting.	3,6	Short Term	DCOP	DCCAH, Underpass Owner
AC.7	Use grants, pilot programming or public/private partnerships to help fund “pop-up” programming, short-term events and other efforts by the Neighbors of the Southwest Duck Pond to expand activities in this location.	5,6	Short to Mid Term	DCOP	Community Groups, Southwest Duck Pond

## CONCEPT | THRIVING TOWN CENTER

**VISION:** Southwest will enjoy 4th Street as a thriving town center and commercial heart of community, with a range of neighborhood-serving retail options, an active street atmosphere, a high quality public realm, quality new development and easily accessible transit.

ACTION	GUIDING PRINCIPLES ADDRESSED	TIMELINE	LEAD AGENCY	PARTNER AGENCY
<b>TC.1</b> Create a robust and proactive marketing strategy, led by the local BID, to create awareness about retail, entertainment and cultural opportunities in the Southwest neighborhood. Use this strategy to attract, incentivize and/or incubate neighborhood-serving retailers on/near 4th Street and potentially on South Capitol Street.	4	Mid Term	SW BID	
<b>TC.2</b> Promote a cohesive and concentrated retail cluster along 4th Street through the development of retail-appropriate spaces, coherent storefront design, signage, streetscape and street furniture as well as thorough management of the retail mix and marketing.	2,4	Mid Term	DDOT, SW BID	
<b>TC.3</b> Pursue a neighborhood-focused retail attraction and retention strategy that provides an array of locally-serving shopping, services and dining to residents and the daytime office worker population. In new retail development consider allowing for different formats and sizes of spaces so that a variety of retail tenants, including small businesses, may lease space.	4	Mid Term	Private Developer	WDCEP
<b>TC.4</b> Change the future land use designation of Westminster Church from moderate density residential to medium density residential with low density commercial.	2, 3, 4, 7, 9	Long Term	DCOP	ANC



GUIDING PRINCIPLES:	 01	 02	 03	 04	 05	 06	 07	 08	 09	 10	 11
ACTION	GUIDING PRINCIPLES ADDRESSED						TIMELINE	LEAD AGENCY	PARTNER AGENCY		
TC.5	Change the future land use designation of Christ United Methodist Church from moderate density residential to medium density residential with low density commercial.						2, 3, 4, 7 9	Long Term	DCOP	ANC	
TC.6	For proposed for land use designation changes on 4th Street SW, a Planned Unit Development (PUD) process will have to be initiated. Should any site be landmarked as historic, thoughtful incorporation of existing structures and setbacks into future development is strongly preferred, with new construction limited to underdeveloped portions of the parcel.						2, 3, 4, 7, 9, 10	Long Term	DCOP	ANC	
TC.7	Encourage pop-up retail in vacant spaces as a means to enliven a space, maintain retail continuity along 4th Street, and promote small and local retailers.						4, 6	Short Term	DCOP, Private Developer		

## CONCEPT | OPTIMIZED DISTRICT PARCELS

**VISION:** Southwest will be prepared for the future redevelopment of the neighborhood’s outdated public facilities and underused publically owned land, allowing for the use of public resources in a way that benefits everyone and making sure development aligns with neighborhood expectations for high-quality design and community benefits.

ACTION	GUIDING PRINCIPLES ADDRESSED	TIMELINE	LEAD AGENCY	PARTNER AGENCY
<p><b>DP.1</b> Change future land use design designations of the properties at the Southwest government cluster (shown in Figure 7.1) as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Change the future land use designation on Parcel A (MPD/Bowen School) from Local Public to Mixed Use- Local Public, Medium Density Commercial and Medium Density Residential.</li> <li>b. Change the future land use designation on Parcel B (Department of Motor Vehicles and FEMS Maintenance Site) from Local Public to mix use High Density Residential, High Density Commercial and Local Public.</li> <li>c. Change the future land use designation on Parcel C (DMV Inspection Station) from Local Public to Mixed Use- Local Public/ Medium Density Residential.</li> </ul> <p>Any development under the new land use designation should be achieved through a Planned Unit Development and should meet the following criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conform to the design guidelines outlined in the Optimized District Parcels Section in this plan (Pages 81-83).</li> <li>• Restore portions of the L’Enfant street grid through the dedication of former rights of way (ROW) for creation of streets or pedestrian corridors.</li> <li>• If there is a public solicitation/disposition for residential development, require at least 20 percent of the total square footage to be set aside for affordable units.</li> </ul>	7, 10	Short Term	DCOP	ANC












11 IMPLEMENTATION PLAN 132

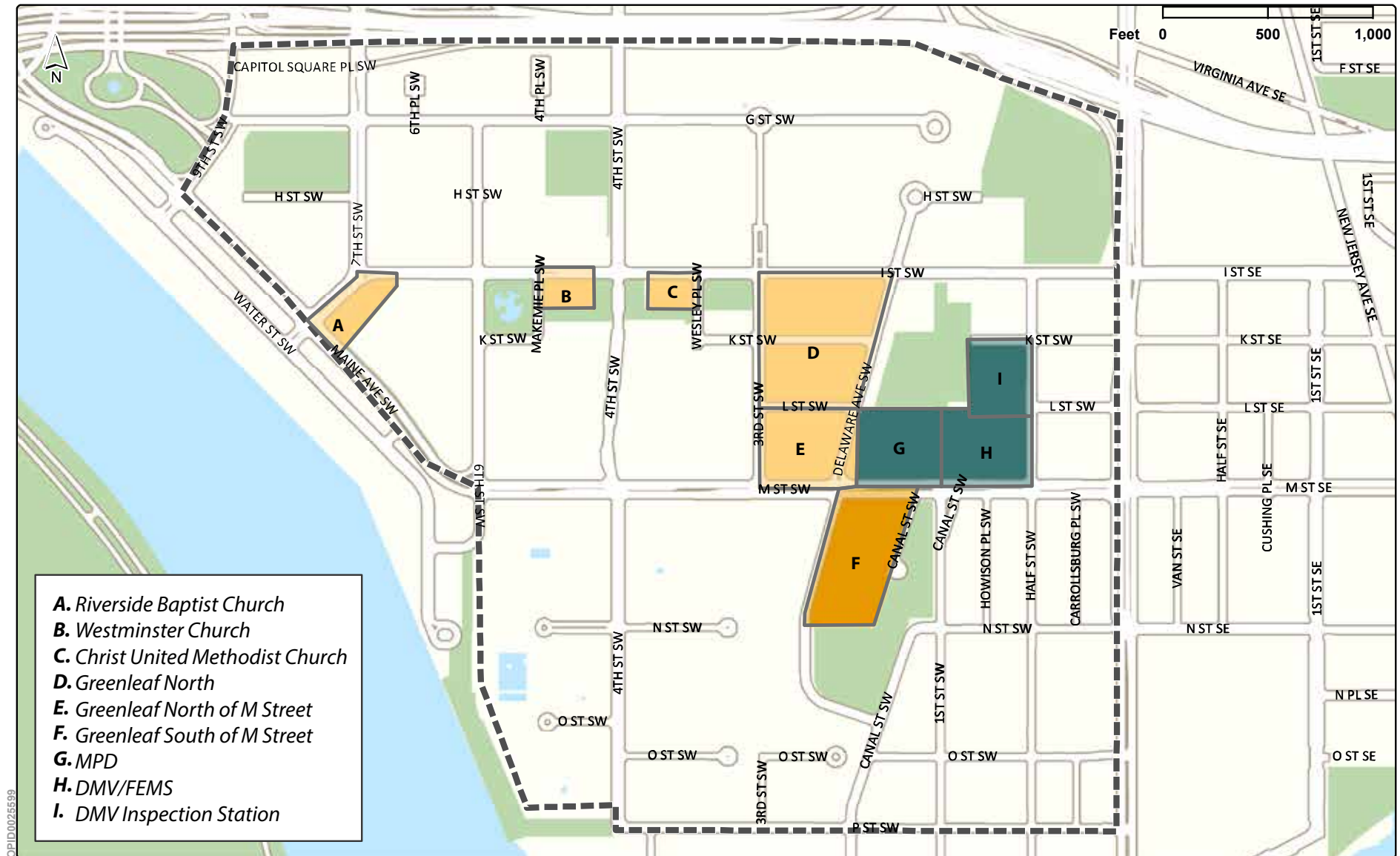


## CONCEPT | VIBRANT CONNECTIONS

**VISION:** The Southwest neighborhood will showcase vibrant connections that support an active community and attractive environment, accommodate multiple transportation modes, increase mobility within the community and provide ease of access to adjacent neighborhoods and the waterfront.

ACTION	GUIDING PRINCIPLES ADDRESSED	TIMELINE	LEAD AGENCY	PARTNER AGENCY
<b>VC.1</b> Clearly delineate school crossings for Jefferson Middle School and Amidon-Bowen Elementary School with vehicular and pedestrian wayfinding signage and/or street markings. Pursue funding opportunities with the National Center for Safe Routes to School.	3, 6	Short Term	DDOT	Jefferson, Amidon-Bowen
<b>VC.2</b> Enhance neighborhood edges and gateways by improving crosswalks, signage, lighting and/or streetscapes at key gateways: a. South Capitol Street at 'I', L, M and N Streets. b. Maine Avenue and P Street between 4th, 3rd, Canal, First and Half Streets. c. I-395 at 7th Street, 4th Street and Randall Recreation Center.	3,8	Mid to Long Term	DDOT	DPR, DCOP
<b>VC.3</b> Improve pedestrian crossings through enhanced signage, redesigned crosswalks flashing signals and/or speed cameras at the following intersections: a. 'I' Street at 7th Street, Delaware Avenue and First Street. b. M Street at Half, First, 3rd and 6th Streets. c. P Street between Half, First, 3rd, 4th and Canal Streets.	3,8	Short Term	DDOT	ANC
<b>VC.4</b> Link bike routes across Southwest by extending dedicated bike lanes as recommended in the Move DC plan along the following segments: a. 7th Street between 4th Street and Maine Avenue. b. 3rd Street between 'I' Street and M Street. c. First Street between M Street and P Street.	3,8	Mid Term	DDOT	DCOP
<b>VC.5</b> Work with Capital Bikeshare to install additional bikeshare stations in Southwest, particularly at the following locations: a. 'I' Street at Randall Recreation Center. b. P Street and South Capitol Street. c. 'I' Street and Wesley Place at Library Park. d. The new Wharf development.	8	Short to Mid Term	DDOT	DCOP
<b>VC.6</b> Coordinate with DDOT to install signage, paving and plantings for a biking and walking path along P Street that ties the Anacostia Riverwalk Trail to The Wharf development and Potomac River.	3,8	Short to Mid Term	Private Developer, DDOT	DCOP

GUIDING PRINCIPLES:											
	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	10	11
ACTION							GUIDING PRINCIPLES ADDRESSED	TIMELINE	LEAD AGENCY	PARTNER AGENCY	
VC.7	Support the DDOT’s final recommendations for transportation and infrastructure changes along M Street that improve connections and access throughout the Planning Area to the Wharf, Waterfront Metrorail station, Buzzard Point and Capitol Riverfront.						8	Mid to Long Term	DDOT, Private Developers		
VC.8	Improve streetscape and pedestrian infrastructure along Maine Avenue to create a complete street in alignment with plans depicted by Hoffman-Madison Waterfront for its development at The Wharf.						3	Short to Long Term	DDOT		
VC.9	Change the future land use designation of Riverside Baptist Church from Moderate Density Residential to Medium Density Residential /Low Density Commercial use to create a gateway into the community on the corner of ‘I’ Street and Maine Avenue. Any development under the new land use designation should be achieved through a Planned Unit Development. Development should consider the site’s gateway quality and conform to the design guidelines contained in this Plan (see pages 81-83).						3	Short to Long Term	DDOT, DCOP	ANC	
VC.10	Create way-finding signage from Waterfront Metrorail station across Maine Avenue to The Wharf through collaboration with Hoffman-Madison Waterfront and a future Southwest Business Improvement District.						3, 7	Short Term	DCOP		
VC.11	Coordinate with the South Capitol Street Corridor Project to promote a high performance “green” streetscape, improve connections across South Capitol Street at ‘I’, M and P Streets, and reduce/limit commuter traffic through the Southwest neighborhood.						3, 8	Long Term	DDOT, Private Developers	DCOP	
VC.12	Improve access to and use of Lansburgh Park by reinstating K and L Streets for improved access (including bike/pedestrian use) to increase visibility, increase access and reduce the isolated feel of the park. Maintain and improve the First Street pedestrian greenway from M Street to ‘I’ Street to increase visibility and access and reduce the isolated feel of the park.						8	Short Term	DDOT		
VC.13	Convene regular interagency meetings to determine the best approach to upgrading the underpasses and identify entity to lead the effort to clean and maintain the underpasses.						2, 8	Short Term	DDOT	Underpass Owners, ANC	



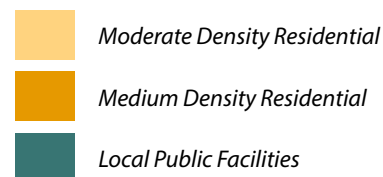
## Southwest Small Area Plan Comp Plan Future Land Use



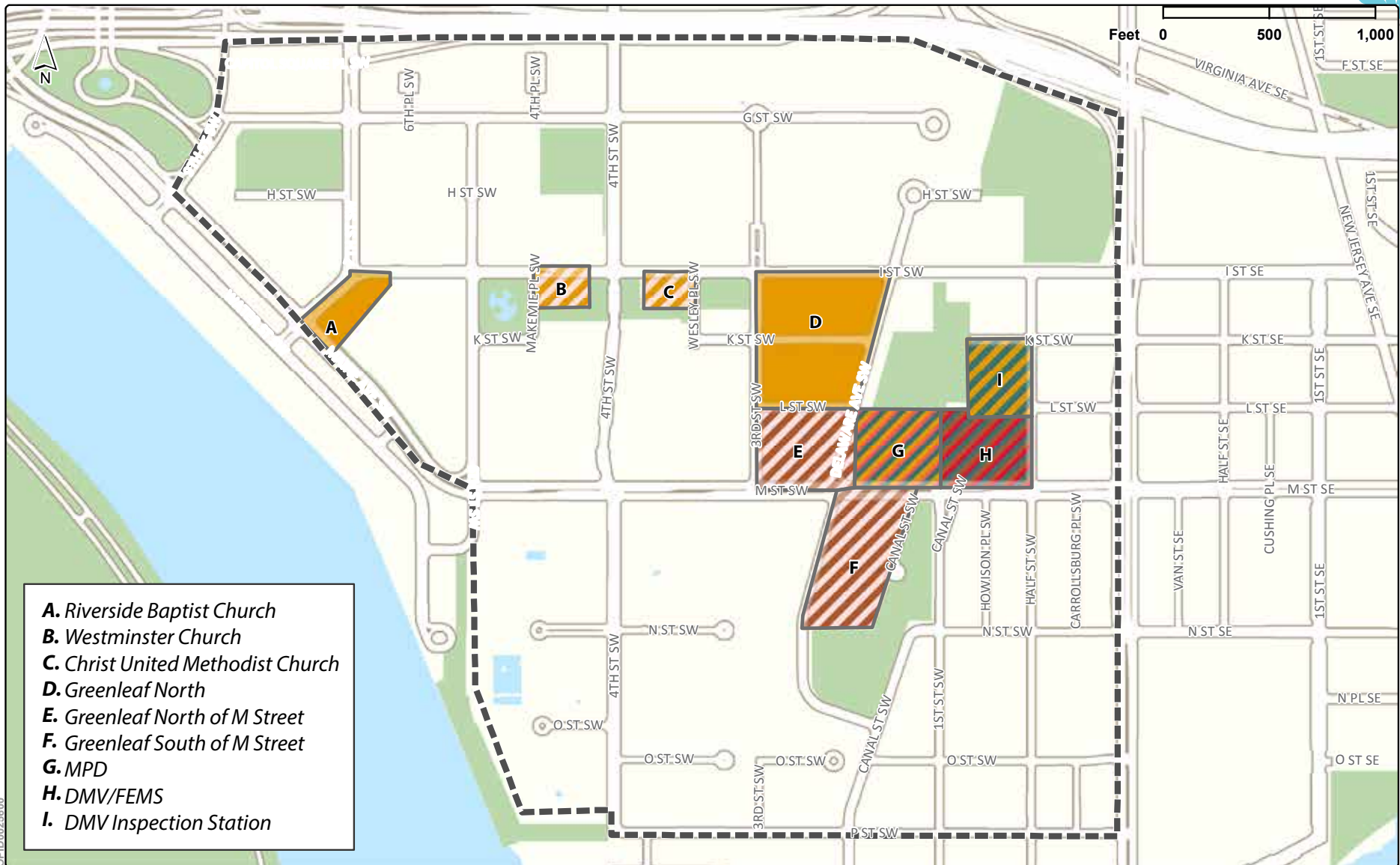
Office of Planning ~ November 7, 2014

Government of the District of Columbia

This map was created for planning purposes from a variety of sources. It is neither a survey nor a legal document. Information provided by other agencies should be verified with them where appropriate.



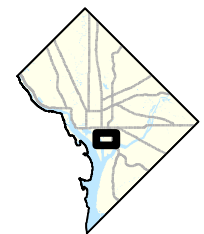




## Southwest Small Area Plan Proposed Future Land Use

**Office of Planning ~ November 7, 2014**  
**Government of the District of Columbia**  
 This map was created for planning purposes from a variety of sources. It is neither a survey nor a legal document. Information provided by other agencies should be verified with them where appropriate.

**Local Public Facilities**  
**Medium Density Residential**  
**High Density Residential**  
**Mixed Use**  
**Low Density Commercial**  
**Medium Density Commercial**  
**High Density Commercial**



## ABBREVIATIONS

<b>BID</b>	Business Improvement District
<b>DCCAH</b>	District of Columbia Commission on Arts & Humanities
<b>DCOP</b>	District of Columbia Office of Planning
<b>DCHA</b>	District of Columbia Housing Authority
<b>DCPL</b>	District of Columbia Public Library
<b>DCPS</b>	District of Columbia Public Schools
<b>DCRA</b>	Department of Consumer & Regulatory Affairs
<b>DDOE</b>	District Department of the Environment
<b>DDOT</b>	District Department of Transportation
<b>DC Water</b>	District of Columbia Water & Sewer Authority
<b>DGS</b>	Department of General Services
<b>DHCD</b>	Department of Housing & Community Development
<b>DMPED</b>	Deputy Mayor for Planning & Economic Development
<b>DOES</b>	Department of Employment Services
<b>DPR</b>	Department of Parks & Recreation
<b>DPW</b>	Department of Public Works
<b>DSLBD</b>	Department of Small & Local Business Development
<b>WDCEP</b>	Washington, DC Economic Partnership
<b>WMATA</b>	Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority

## DEFINITIONS

### Small Area Plan (SAP)

The Small Area Plan provides a framework for the strategic development, redevelopment, or preservation of a specific neighborhood(s) or corridor(s). Small Area Plans address the District’s planning goals on a more localized level and seek to update the Comprehensive Plan by providing detailed direction for the development of city blocks, corridors, and neighborhoods. Small Area Plans allow citizens to develop strategic priorities that will shape future development in their neighborhoods, identify gaps and opportunities in city services and resources deployed at the neighborhood level, and shape critical capital budget decisions and agency investment priorities. Small Area Plans are submitted to DC Council as legislation and are subject to Council approval. The SW Neighborhood Plan is classified as a Small Area Plan.

### Comprehensive Plan

A long-range (20-25 year) plan containing maps, policies, and actions to guide the future physical development of a city or county. In DC, the Comprehensive Plan consists of “District” elements prepared by the Office of Planning and “Federal” elements prepared by the National Capital Planning Commission. The District’s last major update to the Comprehensive Plan was conducted in 2006 and a minor update was completed in 2010. The Comprehensive Plan is available to the public on the Office of Planning’s website ([planning.dc.gov](http://planning.dc.gov)) or can be reviewed by visiting the Office of Planning in person. In April 2013, the Office of Planning released a Comprehensive Plan Progress Report to detail the status of implementation efforts for the 2006 Comprehensive Plan. The Progress Report is available at OP or on our website.

### SAP Advisory Committee

For every Small Area Plan, an Advisory Committee is formed. The SAP Advisory Committee is typically comprised of a group of local community leaders (ANC commissioners, resident council members, civic association leaders, and other designated or elected residents of the study area) whose role is to assist the Office of Planning with outreach and the design of the planning process for the SAP. While OP looks to the Advisory Committee for guidance on outreach and process as well as review of plan materials, the entire community fully participates in creating the plan vision, the guiding principles and the plan recommendations that comprise the SAP. In addition to meetings with the Advisory Committee, every SAP follows a highly participatory process with several public meetings and opportunities for input.

### Choice Neighborhoods Program

From [www.hud.gov](http://www.hud.gov):

“The Choice Neighborhoods program supports locally driven strategies to address struggling neighborhoods with distressed public or HUD-assisted housing through a comprehensive approach to neighborhood transformation. Local leaders, residents, and stakeholders, such as public housing authorities, cities, schools, police, business owners, nonprofits, and private developers, come together to create and implement a plan that transforms distressed HUD housing and addresses the challenges in the surrounding neighborhood. The program is designed to catalyze critical improvements in neighborhood assets, including vacant property, housing, services and schools.”

### Density

Density is an indicator of the number of people, or amount of building (usually measured in square feet), in a given area.

### Development

The process of creating new buildings, amenities, or infrastructure. Development is often a collaborative process that involves government agencies, private companies (developers), and community input.

### Economic Development

Economic Development refers to any of a number of programs and activities designed to increase a community’s overall wealth. This includes policies geared towards the creation of new jobs, establishment of new businesses, improvement of existing businesses, and training of residents to fill local jobs.



### **Historic Preservation**

The preservation of historically-significant structures and neighborhoods, often with the intent of restoring or rehabilitating the structures to their former condition, or the goal of retaining an area’s character and recognizing its heritage.

### **Land Use**

Land use refers to the type of activity or development that occupies a parcel of land. Common land uses include housing, retail, industrial/manufacturing, recreation, and institutional. Increasingly, two or more compatible uses (commonly retail and office or retail and housing) are allowed or encouraged on a single site (mixed use).

### **Mixed-Use Development**

A development type in which various uses, such as office, retail, and residential, are combined in a single building or on a single property.

### **Mixed-Income Housing**

Generally refers to housing (or neighborhoods) that includes both affordable (subsidized) units and market-rate units, suitable for a mix of low, moderate, and above-moderate income households.

### **Mobility**

The ability to move from one place to another, or to transport goods from one place to another. This can mean the ability to go from place to place (like commuting from home to work), or the ability to move within a space (the sidewalks in a neighborhood, the width of aisles in a store, whether a building has stairs, or elevators).

### **Planned Unit Development (PUD)**

The process through which a land owner (often a developer) seeks to develop a property in a way that is not allowed “by right” (meaning that current zoning does not allow the building size or building use without seeking special permission). PUDs must still comply with the District’s future land use goals, and the process allows a greater level of community input than “by right” development.

### **Public Realm**

The areas throughout the city that are not privately owned. Public realm includes parks, streets, sidewalks, civic institutions (such as libraries), and all other land and buildings that are controlled by the local or federal government.

## Streetscape

Streetscape encompasses the look and function of the District’s streets, sidewalks, street furniture, lights, and other related amenities. In considering streetscape improvements, the District considers a wide variety of elements such as street width, bike lanes, sidewalk width, on-street parking, tree boxes and planters, median strips, and other elements. Streetscape improvements have a number of goals including improving mobility through a space, enhancing public safety, economic development, and environmental sustainability.

## Sustainability

A philosophy of managing development that merges economic, social, and environmental considerations, and that seeks to create self-sustaining systems. Environmentally sustainability, which often gets the most attention, focuses on reducing the use of non-renewable materials. In a similar way, economic sustainability and social sustainability focus on creating communities that are healthy, and that create economic, recreational, mobility, and other opportunities across all demographics.

## Transit-Oriented Development (TOD)

Development directly surrounding major public transit access points such as Metro, Amtrak, commuter rail stations, or streetcar lines, that is generally higher-density and mixed-use in order to allow the greatest possible access to living near shopping and employment opportunities.

## Urban Design

The art and science of giving form, in terms of both beauty and function, to selected urban areas or to whole cities. “Urban design” includes the location, size, and design of all types of urban structures from parks to streetlights to buildings, and combines elements of urban planning, architecture, and landscape architecture.

## Zoning

A set of locally-adopted regulations which implement the Comprehensive Plan Land Use Map and policies, establish the range of allowable uses in defined geographic areas of a community (districts), set the standards for development in each district, and define the process for gaining approval to develop land or change land uses.

A close-up photograph of a person's hand holding a black marker, writing on a yellow sticky note. The hand is positioned over a wooden surface, and several other yellow sticky notes are scattered around. The background is slightly blurred, showing a person's arm and a dark blue garment.

# 12 ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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Stacy Cloyd	Sam Marrerro
David Garber	Ron McBee *

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\* On behalf of the planning team and the community, we would like to thank former ANC Commissioner Ron McBee who died on October 8, 2013 before this plan could be finalized. Mr. McBee, often referred to as the “Mayor of Southwest”, was a tireless activist and advocate for the community. He will be missed.





**SW**  
NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN

