



# OUR SHARED DC VALUES

Re-engaging the Public in the District of Columbia  
Comprehensive Plan Amendment Process



# BRIDGING THE GAP

## RE-ENGAGING DC STAKEHOLDERS

**T**he District of Columbia's Comprehensive Plan (Comp Plan) is a 20-year framework that guides future growth and development. Originally adopted in 2006 and first amended in 2011, the Comp Plan is the guiding document that District residents, agencies, employers, developers and other stakeholders use to make sure that Washington, DC evolves in line with our collective *Vision for Growing an Inclusive City*.

In 2016, the DC Office of Planning (OP) launched the second amendment to the Comp Plan to ensure that it remains responsive to the community's needs. OP kicked off the process to the Comp Plan with robust outreach and engagement, including a series of public meetings throughout the District.

An Open Call for amendment proposals was held in 2017. OP received more than 3,000 amendment submissions from Advisory Neighborhood Commissioners (ANCs), agencies, community organizations, the general public, and other stakeholders. Due to the overwhelming responses, OP transmitted the Comp Plan's foundational chapter, the Framework Element, separately to Council in January 2018.

OP initiated the DC Values campaign as an important step to re-engage with the public and provide a bridge between Open Call and the release of the remaining chapters of the Draft Comp Plan, anticipated for Fall of 2019.



**2019**

DC Values Engagement & Report  
Public Engagement

## COMP PLAN LAUNCH

Engagement  
Public Amendments  
Internal Analysis

## PUBLIC FEEDBACK + COUNCIL APPROVAL

### 2016

- Coordination with District Agencies
- [PLAN] DC Kickoff Campaign
- Citywide Public Engagement

### 2017

- Open Call for Proposed Amendments
- Framework Element Development

### 2018

- Framework Element Introduced to Council
- Framework Element Council Hearing
- Analysis of Open Call Amendments

### 2019 and beyond

- Council Approval of Framework
- Draft Plan Amendment Release & 60-Day Public Review Period
- Final Submission of Amendment to Council
- Council Review & Approval





# IDENTIFYING DC VALUES

The DC values identified in the campaign were derived from the public input received since the Comp Plan amendment process began in 2016. OP analyzed open call responses, community meeting notes, public hearing testimony, and government agency feedback, and distilled the responses into these eight high-level values.

Using Mayor Muriel Bowser’s DC2ME online platform, OP developed a survey and an interactive game as a way to gain insight from DC residents and support an amendment process that produces a Comp Plan that is by and for all residents.

Insight from residents is essential to a successful Comp Plan amendment process, which is why a conversation about District stakeholders’ values is critical. The feedback helped OP shape and prioritize how the Comp Plan addresses the District’s current and future needs and improves the quality of life for all. District stakeholders guided OP in developing a Comp Plan amendment that is visionary and responsive to the needs of the Washington, DC community.

The following eight Values launched on May 10, 2019, initiating OP’s DC Values Campaign:





## Accessibility

**We care about reaching the places we want to go in our city.**

We've heard that we all need *complete streets that are green, walkable, and bike-friendly, reliable public transportation, innovative travel options, and broadband and other digital resources* to help us get around and experience all our city has to offer.



## Diversity

**We care about the culture and character of our city.**

We've heard that diversity manifests itself through *special places and architecture, music, art, food, cultural facilities and venues, and social institutions*. We heard that these assets, both old and new, help define who we are and enrich our daily lives.



## Equity

**We care about staying and excelling in our city.**

Through the Comp Plan amendment process, we've heard that *affordable housing, convenient commutes, healthy food, local business development, retail options, and great community facilities* should be found close to home and in all neighborhoods across the city. We heard that achieving equitable outcomes for our residents involves targeting resources to those communities that need them most.



## Livability

**We care about meeting our needs and enjoying life in our city.**

We've heard that many things contribute to happiness and wellness for our families and diverse populations, including *adequate parks and open spaces, social and community events, healthy and accessible food, sports and entertainment, and well-designed urban spaces*.



## Opportunity

**We care about striving for the best in our city.**

We've heard that opportunity stems from investment in the right stepping stones, especially for those with low income and financial challenges in Wards 7 and 8. We heard that *better education, diverse jobs, professional training, available capital, and technical assistance for small businesses* should be emphasized.



## Prosperity

**We care about prospering with our growing city.**

DC has grown by 100,000 residents in the last decade alone. Through the Comp Plan amendment process, we've heard that the benefits and responsibilities of our growth should be shared by all our residents—whether they have been here for five generations or for five minutes. We heard that investments should focus on our *schools, infrastructure, social services, childcare, world-class places and spaces, and housing for families*.



## Resilience

**We care about thriving in the face of changing conditions.**

Through the Comp Plan amendment process, we've heard that *environmental design guidelines, building and transportation innovations, flood protection and preparedness, training in new technologies, prevention of displacement, and an emphasis on our vulnerable populations* should be infused in all our planning work and community development decisions.



## Safety

**We care about feeling safe in our city.**

We've heard that *safe drinking water, modern waste management and recycling, fewer traffic fatalities and injuries, reduced crime, and sound emergency response services* should be among our priorities.

# HOW DO THE VALUES RELATE TO THE COMP PLAN?

## DC VALUES

The current forces driving population growth and change in DC have evolved since the 2006 Comp Plan process and are discussed in the Framework Element. Now that our population has grown to more than 700,000 residents, and is intended to surpass the one million mark in many of our lifetimes, this amendment process considers how residents in all eight Wards can benefit from the city's growth and have an opportunity to thrive.

The results of the DC Values Campaign will help align the Comp Plan Amendment with residents' aspirations for future growth that builds towards a vibrant and inclusive city. OP will incorporate the results of this Campaign into the Comp Plan to establish the context in which our growing city is evolving and to capture our shared values for the future.

## CORE THEMES AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The Comp Plan is organized around five Core Themes and 36 Guiding Principles, which are outlined in the Framework Element.

The Guiding Principles flesh out the Core Themes in more detail, acknowledging that the benefits and opportunities of living in the District are not available to everyone equally and that divisions in the city—physical, social, and economic—must be overcome to make our inclusive vision for the city a reality.

**Resilience is important because without it, DC cannot continue to exist as we face increasing environmental pressures due to climate change. Livability and safety will make DC a place where people want to live not only because of our economy, but that will ultimately feed into our continued economic growth.**

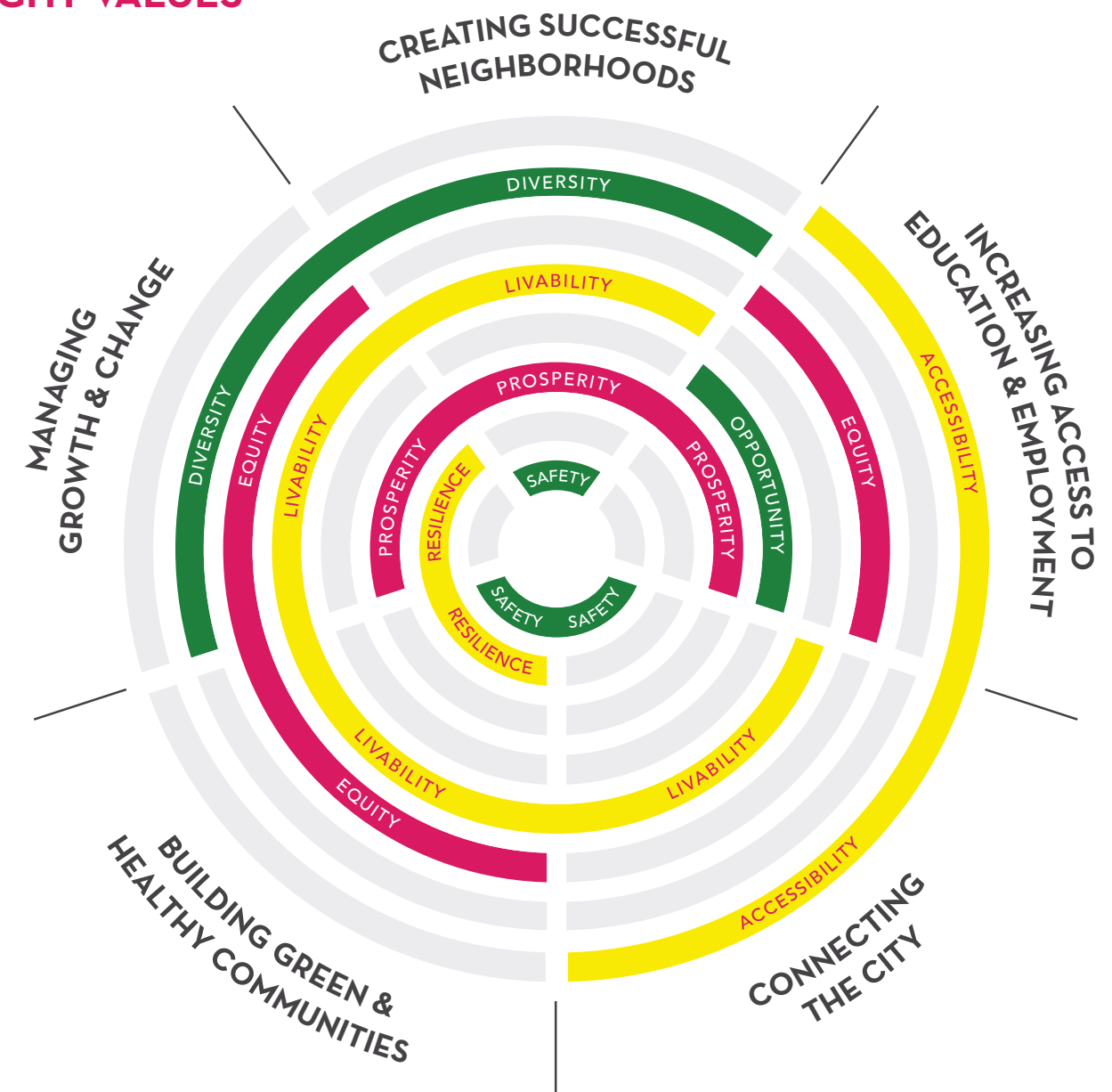
— WARD 8 RESIDENT

**A city government should treat citizens equitably and work to enable them all to live.**

— WARD 1 RESIDENT

## FIVE CORE THEMES RELATE TO EIGHT VALUES

The eight DC Values can be considered updated overarching principles that are aligned with and further support the five Core Themes outlined in the Comp Plan Framework.



# WHAT WE HEARD

3,097

Total Responses

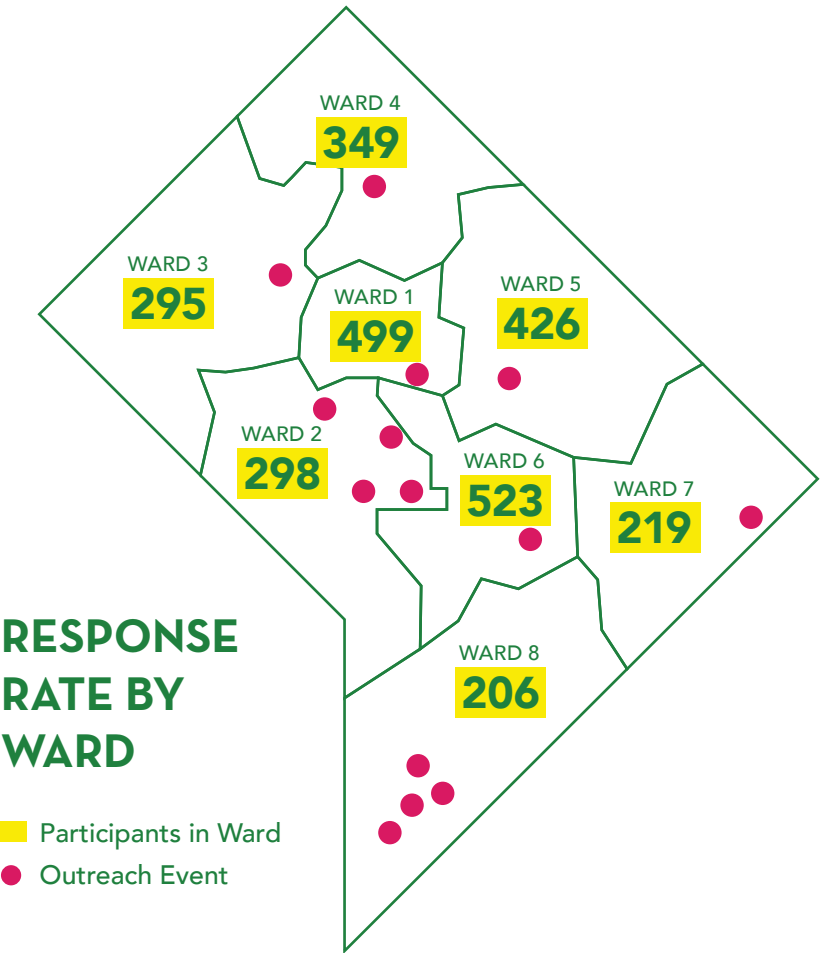
2,494 from Survey

603 from Activity

## OUTREACH OVERVIEW

OP developed a two-pronged outreach approach to provide different opportunities for public response. We sought public feedback on the values through both an online survey and a playful engagement activity. Information about the survey was distributed through ANCs, community networks, and at community events. OP staff developed a mobile activity for outreach at neighborhood events, meetings, and festivals.

We reached nearly 3,100 District stakeholders across all eight Wards. Of the eight values, Livability (57% of participants), Safety (51% of participants), and Equity (46% of participants) received the highest number of votes. Prosperity received the fewest number of votes overall.

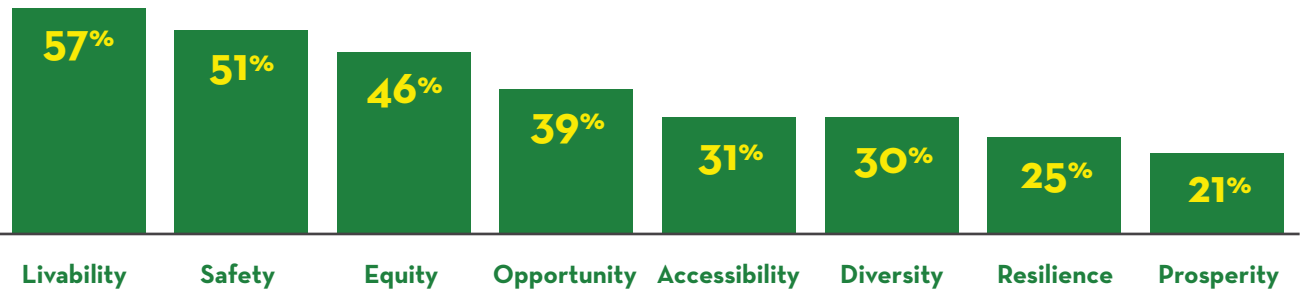


## RESPONSE RATE BY WARD

■ Participants in Ward  
● Outreach Event

## OVERALL VALUES RESPONSES

Percentage of participants that voted for each value



## ONLINE SURVEY RESULTS

Launching from the Mayor's DC2ME Campaign, the online survey asked residents and stakeholders which values resonated most for them and which values should be the highest priorities for amending the Comp Plan. The online survey received 2,494 responses, and overall, each of the values resonated with respondents.

Livability, Safety, and Equity were considered to be the top priorities by respondents. These values were also reflected in Comp Plan priorities.

Respondents who chose **Livability** frequently cited a lack of affordability, negative development impacts, and an inequitable distribution of public amenities and resources.

Respondents who chose **Safety** as a top priority discussed pedestrian and bike safety and violent crime prevention as the most prevalent reasons.

Respondents who chose **Equity** shared concerns about rising costs and inequitable access to opportunity, not just for housing, but for businesses, employment, and other necessities. A desire for racial equity seemed to be a driving reason for selecting Equity as a priority as well.

For District residents who participated in the survey, not only were these values considered the most important values, they were also considered foundations for the rest and critical for retaining growth in the District.

# TOP 3 VALUES



LIVABILITY



SAFETY



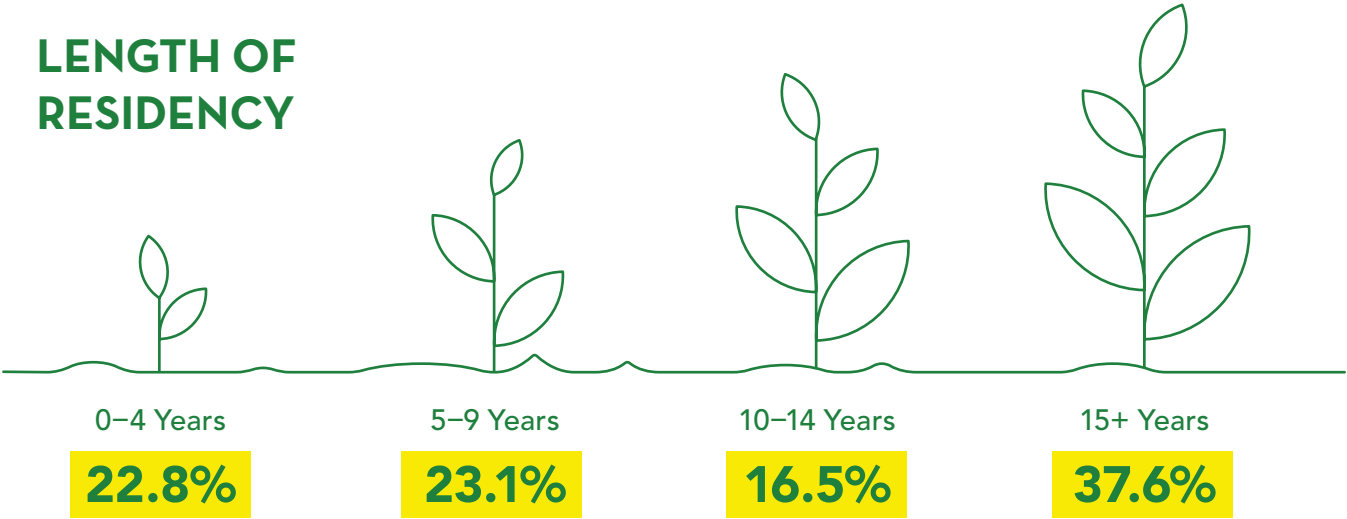
EQUITY

Creating a livable and affordable city encompasses many of the goals of being an inclusive city which offers opportunity and encourages diversity among residents.

– WARD 3 RESIDENT

“  
Every District resident needs a safe space and community  
to call home with access to the goods and services  
necessary to thrive.  
”  
– WARD 6 RESIDENT

LENGTH OF  
RESIDENCY



City values were measured with pom-pom balls at ten events across the District.

PLAYFUL ENGAGEMENT RESULTS

Along with the Values survey, OP developed a mobile engagement activity that allowed stakeholders, from youth to seniors, to vote on the top three values that they felt should be a priority through the Comp Plan Process. Votes were represented by small pom-pom balls, color-coded to represent the Ward represented by each participant. OP featured the activity at 10 community events, festivals, and farmers markets, and engaged more than 600 stakeholders in person.



OP discussing Values at Senior Day in Oxon Run Park

Among the stakeholders engaged through this activity, Safety, Equity, and Opportunity were considered to be the highest priorities. In particular, participants expressed a desire to be safe from crime and traffic accidents, a need for housing affordability, and support for more equitable access to amenities and employment.

COMP PLAN LAUNCH



PUBLIC FEEDBACK +  
PUBLIC AMENDMENT



Town Halls

500

Attendees in

7

Meetings

PlanDC

13,000

Unique Page Views of PlanDC Webpage

Open Call

3,000+

Public Amendment Submissions

100+

Office Hours at 26 Locations

DC2ME

2,494

Online Survey Responses

603

Activity Participants





# MOVING THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN FORWARD

## Comprehensive Plan Introduction and Framework Element

The Introduction and the Framework Element set the tone for the other Elements of the Comp Plan, and OP is recommending inclusion of the DC Values Campaign results in both.

The Introduction describes the Comp Plan amendment process and engagement, and will include information about the efforts outlined in this report. OP has also proposed the addition of a new Guiding Principle on Equity during the legislative process for the Framework Element. This new Guiding Principle will specifically address racial justice, fair housing, and displacement through an equity lens.

# HOW TO STAY INVOLVED

## COUNCIL APPROVAL OF FRAMEWORK

Contact your Council Member.

## FINAL SUBMISSION OF AMENDMENT TO COUNCIL

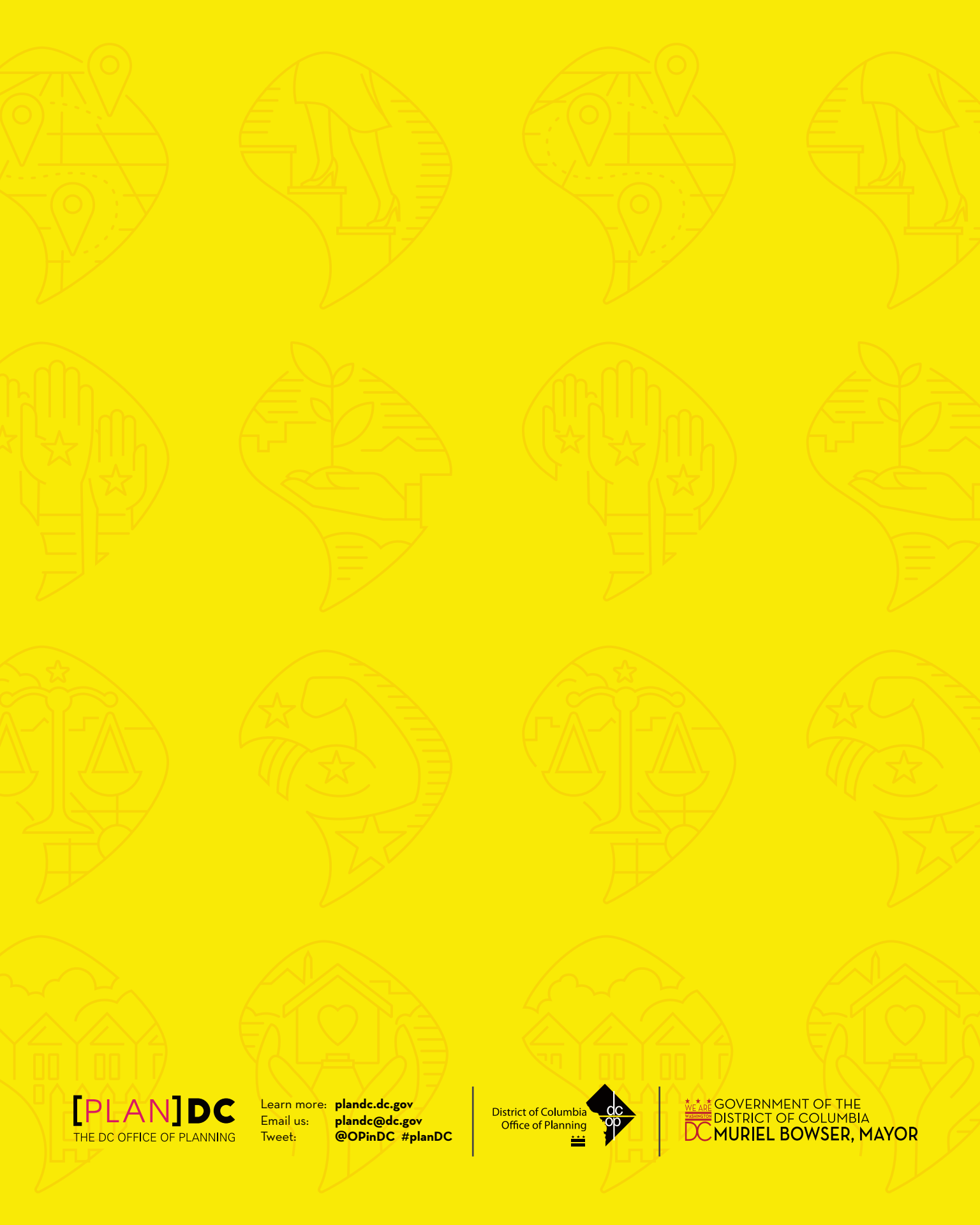
## DRAFT PLAN AMENDMENT RELEASE + 60-DAY PUBLIC REVIEW PERIOD

Review the Comp Plan amendments and work with your ANC to propose an official action.

## COUNCIL REVIEW + APPROVAL

Provide formal comments to your Council Member or sign up to testify at the public hearing.





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THE DC OFFICE OF PLANNING

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DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA  
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