

# Gallery Place-Chinatown Streetscape Design Guidelines



Gallery Place and Chinatown bustling with activity, showcasing public life in the District

## Overview

Gallery Place and Chinatown are vibrant and bustling neighborhoods in the heart of downtown. Extending down to the Penn Quarter neighborhood, this area has welcomed District residents and visitors from around the world seeking cultural experiences and nightlife. From major anchors like the Capital One Arena, the Reynolds Center, and the award winning Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial Library, to the restaurants of Penn Quarter, hotels, museums and seasonal markets, the area is a vital cultural and entertainment destination.

This document provides guidance for three distinct streetscape types: Gateway Streets, Cultural Streets and Festival Streets. These streetscape types aim to bolster retail opportunities, foster a dynamic public life, and support the existing fabric of each neighborhood.

With the development of the DC 2050 Comprehensive Plan and the progression of development of the District in recent years, it is important to provide guidance for the evolution of Downtown and prepare for how the needs of the streets might change. This includes consideration

of sidewalk accessibility, materials, pedestrian lighting, shading, stormwater management, and much more. Opportunities for the development of curbsless streets are also set forth in the following pages.

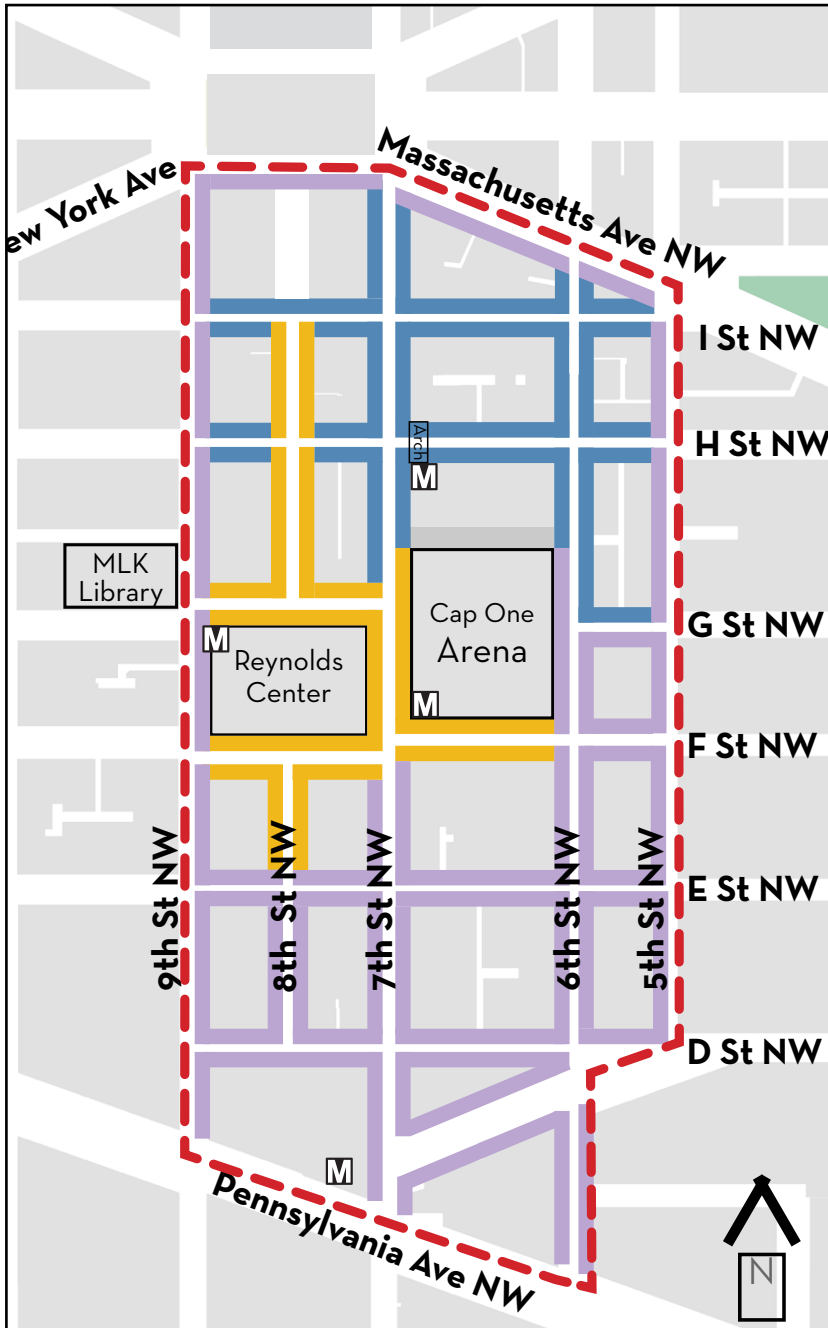
Taken together, these streetscape types are intended to create a sense of arrival and transition, and to facilitate connectivity through the distinct cultural character of each downtown neighborhood.

Design standards for these streetscape types are drawn from the 2023 Standard District Streetscape Design Guidelines prepared by the DC Office of Planning (OP) and Department of Transportation (DDOT). This document includes the regulations that are most often referenced by District agencies and should be followed when preparing any public space application with OP. These guidelines can be found here:

<https://planning.dc.gov/streetscape-design-guidelines>.

# Street Types

## SITE MAP



### Map legend

- Gateway Street
- Cultural Street
- Festival Street
- Area Boundary

## STREET TYPE DESCRIPTIONS

**Gateway Streets** draw visitors up from Pennsylvania Avenue and the National Mall and down from the Washington Convention Center. These streets support a mix of uses including residential and commercial and set the stage for vibrant pedestrian activity. They are designed with opportunities for small scale public art. These streets can be flexible spaces and serve as a portal into Chinatown/Gallery Place.

**Cultural Streets** reflect and celebrate the neighborhood's historic Chinese-American heritage, identity, and expression. They incorporate storytelling elements and cultural markers. Cultural streets are now evolving into dynamic, interactive spaces that support everyday engagement and serve as a living cultural hub.

**Festival Streets** are highly adaptable and designed to be temporarily closed to traffic to accommodate large gatherings, cultural events, and seasonal programming while maintaining accessibility. Festival Streets emerge from pedestrian-focused corridors and open plazas, and serve as gathering hubs. These streets are reimagined with flexibility to accommodate year-round outdoor events, with seating and lighting adaptable for both daily activities and other large-scale festivals.

## CURBLESS STREET DESIGN



Festival Streets are prime for a transition to curbless streets. Curbless streets provide an opportunity to expand a street for active uses such as markets and festivals or to promote increased pedestrian activity adjacent to restaurants and retail. The blending of the pedestrian path across a roadway allows for flexibility between vehicle and pedestrian uses and can better support routine transitions to allow for game-day activities or cultural events.

## Gateway Streets

Gateway Streets provide a clean transition between neighborhoods. The design of the streetscapes for Downtown balance the need for wide sidewalks that facilitate high pedestrian activity and ground floor uses activated with show windows and sidewalk cafes. They encourage small public art installations or pop-up vending near corners or open spaces. Lighting should be consistently bright and oriented to the sidewalk to promote public life into the evening hours, and tree soil should be plentiful and protected for ample street trees and shade. Sidewalk materials should prioritize ease of maintenance and cleaning.

### Design Standards

#### Lighting

1. DDOT streetlight standards apply on streets and intersections and should incorporate a mix of Washington Globe and teardrop pendants.
2. Secondary lighting sources provided on private property are encouraged for highlighting art, architecture, and activated spaces.

#### Landscaping

1. Seasonal plantings that are native to District weather and climate shall be prioritized.
2. Diverse planting species shall be prioritized, as well as opportunities for low impact development treatment to properly flow stormwater.

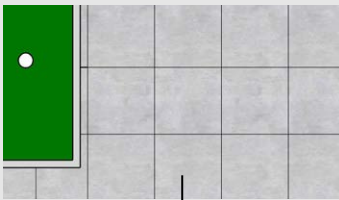
#### Street Furniture

1. Furniture location should not obstruct pedestrian flow or compete with retail activity such as sidewalk cafes.
2. Planters, landscaped walls, vegetation, and street furniture should take precedence over barriers and other approaches that detract from aesthetic quality.

#### Sidewalks

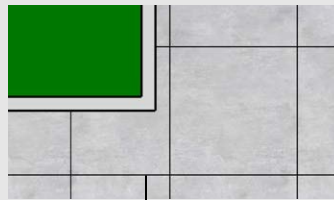
1. Sidewalks should be DDOT standard cast-in-place concrete implemented with a 3'x3' scoring pattern out to curb line.

#### Sidewalk Plan View



Standard Sidewalk Pattern

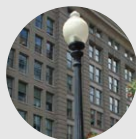
#### Sidewalk Detailing



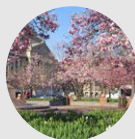
3'x3' Scored Concrete



Sidewalk Cafes

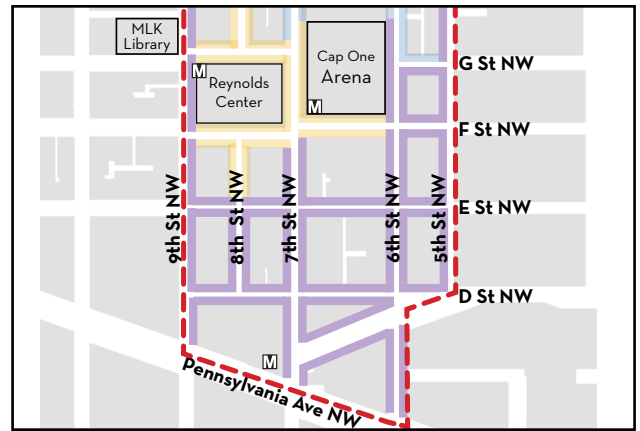


Washington Globe

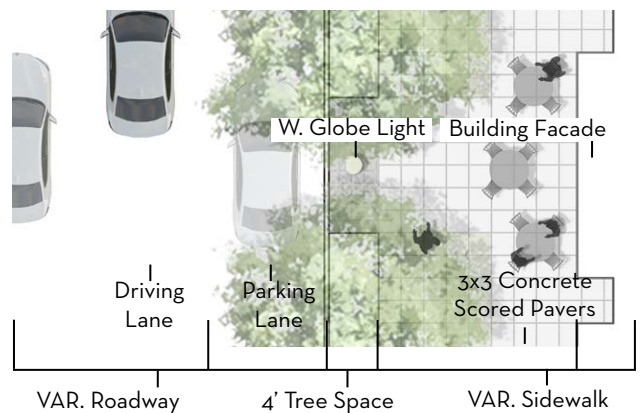


Seasonal Plants

## SITE PLAN



### Plan View



VAR. - Area to have varying sizes and dimensions

Tree Space - Area for planting and landscaping



Wide sidewalks to accommodate crowds



Space for economic activity such as sidewalk cafes



Gathering space before, after, or during events



## Cultural Streets

Roughly bounded by the Friendship Arch on 7th Street and the open space of Chinatown Park on 5th Street, Cultural Streets should preserve and enhance the visibility of Chinese-American culture in the neighborhood. As part of downtown, the pedestrian clear path should be wide and well kept and facilitate moments for cultural celebration and commemoration. A distinctive sidewalk pattern and brightly adorned signage, awnings, and architectural elements are to demarcate the street borders and reflect traditional Chinese character and styles.

### Design Standards

#### Lighting

1. Chinatown Lantern style street lights to be maintained along a block.
2. DDOT standard streetlights to be maintained at intersections.

#### Landscaping

1. Seasonal plantings that are native to District weather and climate shall be prioritized.
2. Diverse planting species shall be prioritized, as well as opportunities for low impact development treatment to properly flow stormwater.

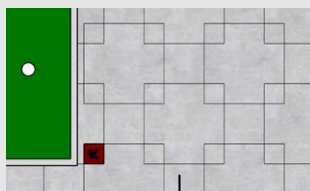
#### Street Furniture

1. Benches, seating and other street furniture installations to depict aspects of Chinese design/symbols in their form and/or materials.

#### Sidewalks

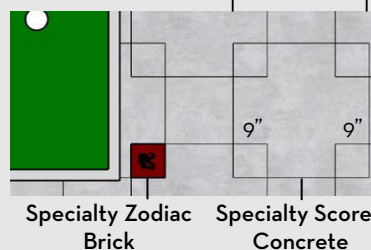
1. Existing brick sidewalks should be replaced with standard grey poured-in-place concrete with a specialty Chinese-American character scoring pattern in line with the Chinatown Design Guidelines. Pattern is a repeating 3' box with 9" overlap. See diagram below.
2. The tree box zone will be bordered by edge-to-edge concrete sidewalk.
3. Existing 8"x8" Chinatown decorative bricks to be reused and located at random within the specialty scored pattern. A covenant of maintenance will be required.

#### Sidewalk Plan View



Cultural Scoring Pattern

#### Sidewalk Detailing



Specialty Zodiac Brick

Specialty Scored Concrete



Cultural Design

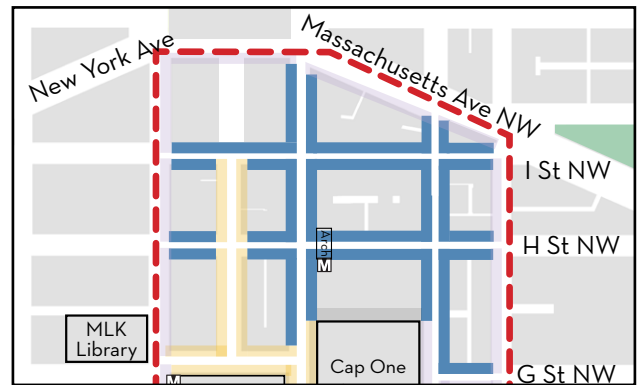


Lantern Light

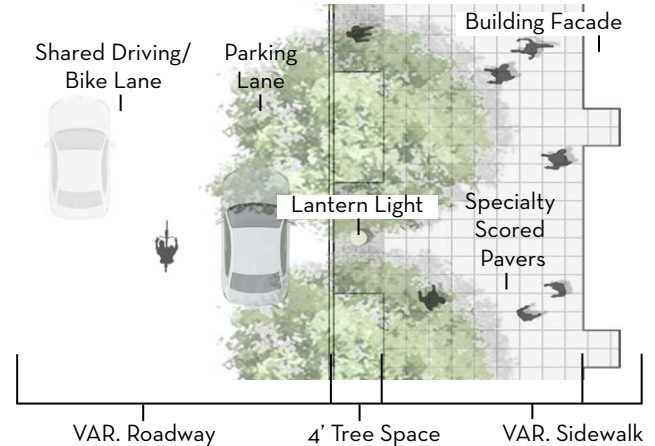


Zodiac Brick

### SITE PLAN



### Plan View



Street Festivals



Retail storefronts

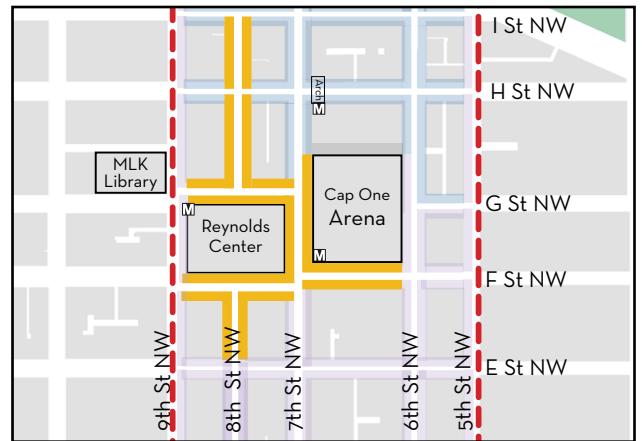


Cultural signage

## Festival Streets

Festival Streets are intended for gathering and celebratory use. These streets can be readily restricted to vehicle traffic for one-off or routine occasions, such as festivals, farmers markets, parades, cultural celebrations, or game-day activities. Festival Streets create these opportunities by redefining the roadway and adapting to temporary closures to vehicles. While activated, they can create a dynamic space while maintaining access for pedestrians, cyclists, and transit users. Festival Streets have access to amenities, space, foot traffic and bring together the three different street types.

## SITE PLAN



## Typical Activated Street Section



## Design Standards

### Lighting

1. Twin-20s streetlights to be standard along a block.
2. DDOT teardrop pendants to be standard at intersections.
3. Special streetlight designs are encouraged. Supplemental lighting will require a maintenance covenant and designed to DDOT standards on blocks adjacent to the arena.

### Landscaping

1. Seasonal plantings that are native to District weather and climate shall be prioritized.
2. Diverse planting species shall be prioritized, as well as opportunities for low impact development treatment to properly flow stormwater.

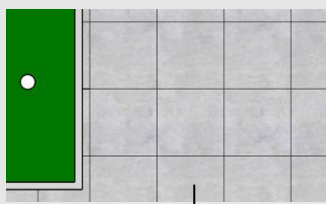
### Street Furniture

1. Seating should be adjacent and parallel to the buildings shared along the street. Seat walls are encouraged.

### Sidewalk

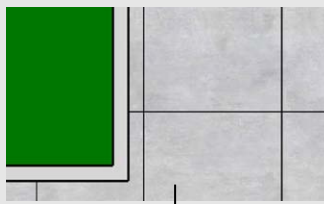
1. DDOT standard cast-in-place concrete sidewalk to be implemented with a 3'x3' scoring pattern out to curb line.

### Sidewalk Plan View



Standard Sidewalk Pattern

### Sidewalk Detailing



3'x3' Scored Concrete



Festival Tents



Twin-20 Light



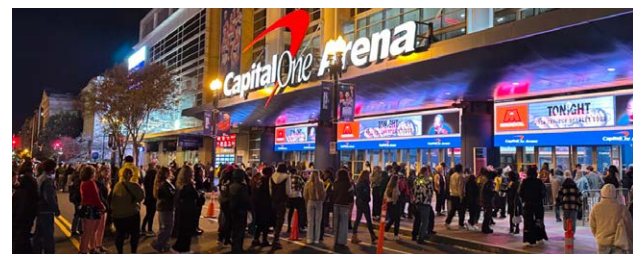
Temp Activations



Street festivals



Holiday market

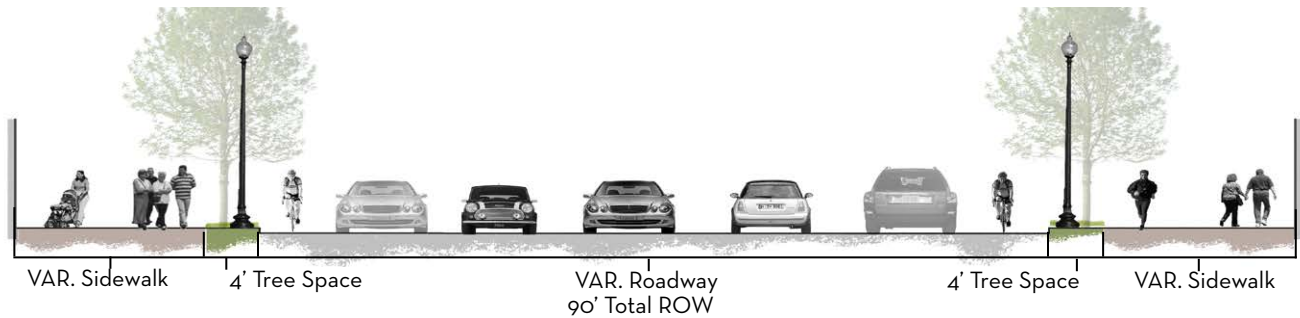


Sporting events

# Streetscape Dimensions

To ensure consistency in design across Chinatown and Gallery Place, all streetscape plans are recommended to follow the dimensions and materials specified below.

## Typical Street Section



Total ROW	Minimum Clear Sidewalk <sup>1</sup>	Total ROW	Minimum Clear Sidewalk <sup>1</sup>
<b>Cultural Streets</b>		<b>Gateway Streets</b>	
Streetlight: Chinese Lantern Material: CIP Concrete, Cultural Pattern		Streetlight: Washington Globe Material: CIP Concrete, 3'x3' Scoring	
6th Street (700-900 block)/ I Street (500-800 block)		5th Street (400 to 800 block, West side)	
100'	8 to 10'	100'	10'
7th Street (700-900 block) / H Street (500-800 block)		6th Street (200 to 700 block)	
85'	10'	100'	10'
G Street (500 block, North side)		7th Street (300 to 500 block)	
90'	10'	85'	10'
<b>Festival Streets</b>		8th Street (400 block)	
Streetlight: Twin-20 Material: CIP Concrete, 3'x3' Scoring		85'	8 to 10'
7th Street (600 block)		9th Street (400 to 900 block East side)	
85'	10'	85'	8 to 10'
8th Street (500 to 800 block)		D Street (500 to 800 block)	
100'	10'	70'	10'
F Street (600 to 800 block)		E Street (500 to 800 block)	
100'	10'	90'	8 to 10'
G Street (700 to 800 block)		F Street (500 block)/G Street (500 block, South side)	
90'	10'	90'	10'
<sup>1</sup> Denotes the minimum clear path in sidewalk excluding tree box spacing. Remainder of available sidewalk up to building may be reserved for use by the adjacent tenant.		K Street / Massachusetts Avenue (South side)	
		varies	10'
		Indiana Avenue (600 block)	
		160'	10'

For questions about these guidelines, contact:  
Urban Design at OP (202.442.7600 or [planning@dc.gov](mailto:planning@dc.gov)) or  
Planning and Sustainability Division at DDOT (202.673.6813 or [ddot@dc.gov](mailto:ddot@dc.gov))

