



AFTER THE SMALL AREA PLANS

## After the H Street

### Small Area Plan

*Snap Shots of Progress Made Since the Adoption of the Plan...*



In 2002, the H street, NE community challenged the District to produce a plan that would reflect the needs of the surrounding residents and promote a preferred mix of diverse commercial uses. After decades of disinvestment in the commercial corridor of H Street, the community came together with the following planning goals:

- To provide vital information and expert recommendations to help existing businesses grown and thrive on H Street, NE
- To recommend a realistic strategy for encouraging the reuse of the numerous vacant lots and storefronts on the corridor to create a desirable mix of commercial offerings on the corridor
- To assist in determining the public investment needed to improve the infrastructure and physical appearance of the corridor
- To improve the physical and market perception of the corridor to attract shoppers, tourists, residents and visitors and private investors



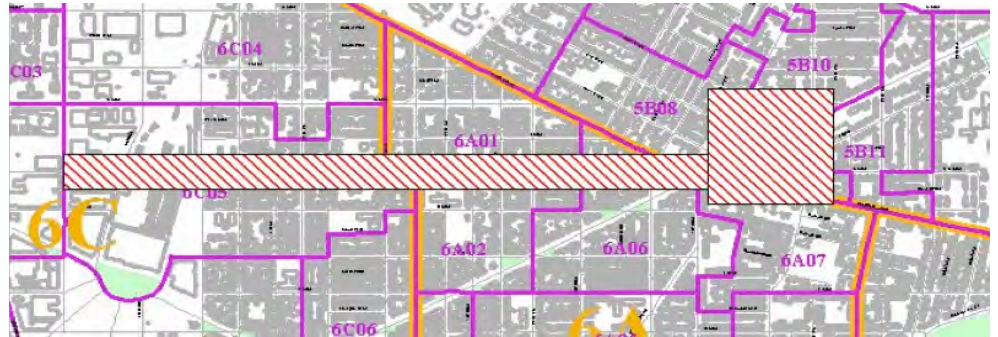
Government of the District of Columbia  
Vincent C. Gray, Mayor

### WHAT IS "asap"?

This document, *After Small Area Plan* report (asap) has been created to help report the progress made and to assess implementation efforts since the adoption of the Small Area Plan in 2004.

### STUDY AREA

The project area extends from North Capitol Street to 17th Street NE just beyond the "Hechinger Mall" site. The length is approximately 1.5 miles or 13 blocks. At the time the plan was initiated, a mix of small local businesses, churches, some national chains and abandoned buildings and vacant land of various types defined the commercial corridor.



Map of Sub-Areas within the Study Area

### The Hub

**Vision:** Bustling regional center or major transportation modes. Downtown-East end employment center and thriving national retailers/restaurants with H Street addresses.

### Recommendations:

- 2-3 million sq feet of Class A office space
- Multimodal transit center
- 3,000-4,000 parking spaces
- Potential Hotel Uses
- Dynamic public realm along bridge and a bold H Street NE entrance

### Streetcars on H Street

- One of the most significant and catalytic developments on H Street has been the DC government investment into Streetcars
- H Street will become the pilot project for the return of a citywide streetcar project
- The City committed to significant streetscape improvements as part of the H Street plan implementation and coordinated the installation of streetcar infrastructure with this construction project
- Interview with new business owners on H Street confirm that anticipation of streetcars has had a significant impact on luring new businesses to the corridor
- DDOT plans to have the portion of streetcar on H between 2nd Benning Road operational in 2012

### APPROACH

Following the adoption of the H Street plan in 2004, the City made significant public investments very quickly after the approval of the Plan. For instance, the City committed to investing approximately 65 million in infrastructure improvements for H Street and Benning Road. Also, the City began constructing the Streetcar tracks as part of the overall streetscape improvement. The City sent a clear signal to the residential and development community that the City was fully committed to improvements on the corridor over the long haul. This type of financial commitment builds confidence in the community and may encourage the private sector to make additional investment.

The Plan focused geographic "thematic areas" on H Street and created location specific recommendations for each of the five locations:

- "the Hub"-North Capitol to 2nd Street NE
- "Urban Living" 2nd to 7th Street NE
- "the Shops" 7th -12th Street NE
- "Arts and Entertainment" 12th-15th Street NE
- "Arboretum Place" (Hechinger Mall/Old Sears site)

Senate Square residential was constructed with over 200 units of housing in 2007. Air Rights north of Union Station zoning approved to allow for over a million sq feet of development in the future.

**Status: Partially complete.** The Air rights development will take almost 20 years to achieve full build out. The City will be replacing the H Street Bridge in the next five to ten years.

### Urban Living

**VISION:** Architecturally distinctive with 4-8 story buildings strengthen within a mixed income, walkable, transit oriented community easily accessible to quality goods and services and work opportunities.

### Recommendations:

- 500-600 Units of mixed income housing
- 5,000-10,000 sq feet of retail
- 100,000 sq feet of Class B office space for local professionals

A key site on the north side of H Street at 3rd will break ground in 2011. This site will include over 100 units of housing and a full size grocery store on the ground floor.

Status: Ongoing Retail will continue to develop as the residential development grows. Small businesses have found success at this location including the Bikram Yoga Studio and Sidamo Coffee.

## The Shops

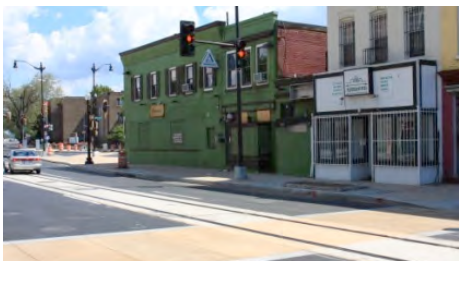
**VISION:** Inviting and unique neighborhood goods and services in a mix of successfully preserved existing buildings and sensitively infilled new development.

### Recommendation and Description

- 120,000-200,000 sq feet of retail
- 100 units of mixed income housing
- 50,000 sq feet of Class B office space for local professionals or organizations

“H Street Connector” PUD was approved in 2010 to redevelop two blocks between 8th and 10th. The development will replace existing suburban style shopping center with a mixed used project with 300 units of housing, approximately 45,000 sq feet of ground floor retail and underground parking.

**Status: Ongoing**



## Arts and Entertainment District

**VISION:** Eclectic restaurants, cafes, bookstore, galleries, artist workshops, boutiques, live music centered around the H Street Playhouse and The Atlas Performing Arts Center.

### Recommendation and Description

- 15,000-40,000 sq feet of retail
- 100 units of mixed income housing
- 50,000 sq feet of Class B office space for local professionals and arts related groups
- Public art at both 13th Street and Maryland Avenue

This area has become the entertainment anchor of H Street. Over 10 new bars and restaurants have opened on these blocks.

The first “Temporium” in the City was held at RL Christian site to showcase local artists in 2010. Over 4 weekends, almost 1,600 people attended the event which featured over 20 artists, designers and local musicians. Sales reached over \$11,000 at the Temporium. Additional promotions and events were coordinated with H Street businesses to further benefit the local businesses along the entire corridor.

The RL Christian library site will be redeveloped into a mixed use site retail and affordable housing.

**Status: Ongoing.** DMPED will likely issue the Request for Proposals to redevelop the RL Christian site in 2012.

The Atlas performing art center was rehabilitated and reopened in 2006. Joy of Motion Dance Center has opened a location at Atlas.

**Status: Complete**

The City completed designs to reconfigure the “Starburst” Intersection. Construction has started and will likely be completed in 2011. The design will incorporate public art and serve as gateway to the Eastern end of H Street.

**Status: On-going**



## Arboretum Place/The Flats at Atlas District

**VISION:** Vibrant mixed-income residential and regional retail development beyond more pedestrian friendly crossings at the “spider” streets.

### Recommendation and Description

- Retail with mixed income housing on Old Sears Site
- Redevelopment of Hechinger Mall site with a mix of uses (long term).
- Pedestrian-friendly intersections
- Maryland Avenue as a prominent axial corridor between the National Arboretum and the US Capitol

The “Sears” site is currently being redeveloped into “The Flat at Atlas District” which will include 250 units of housing and 5,000 square feet of retail.

**Status: On-going**-The Flats at Atlas District are under construction with an expected delivery date of Spring 2012. There are no current plans to redevelop the Hechinger Mall site at this time.

## SUMMARY OF SUCCESSES

Out of the 32 recommendations in the SAP, 24 have been initiated or completed. This progress wouldn't have been possible if it weren't for strong community support, main street leadership and the initiative of key agencies like DDOT and DMPED. The Office of Planning will monitor the status of the following key recommendations over the next three to five years through standard tracking and zoning revisions:

- Affordable Housing
- Retail Opportunity
- Historic Preservation
- Transit Oriented Development
- School Site Revitalization

## SUMMARY OF SUCCESSES

Without question, the effects of the H Street implementation efforts have affected H Street in positive ways. By many accounts, the Plan can be considered an on-going success with all of the priority implementation items completed or currently in process. There has been a significant amount of progress on the corridor that is directly related to recommendations of the Plan. Immediate and significant resource investment by the City was critical to keeping momentum going for implementation. Following the adoption of the H Street plan in 2005, the City made significant public investments very quickly after the approval of the Plan. For instance, the City committed to investing approximately 65 million in infrastructure improvements for H Street and Benning Road. Also, the City began constructing the Streetcar tracks as part of the overall streetscape improvement. The City sent a clear signal to the residential and development community that the District was fully committed to improvements on the corridor over the long haul. This type of financial commitment built confidence in the community and encouraged the private sector to make additional investment.

## H STREET TODAY

The area continues to add new businesses (including the Queen Vic, a British Pub and the Atlas Room fine dining, both opened recently), which has contributed to bringing positive energy back to this area of Capitol Hill. Over 80 businesses come to the area in recent years. Progress on the streetcar construction continues with a 2013 target for the city's first operating Streetcar in fifty years. The Office of Planning along with residents and community leaders are proactively working to help organize ongoing and planned agency projects, investments, and priorities to ensure coordinated success. Despite the numerous challenges that may still exist, area residents today are focused on moving their community forward by forging its newly energized, positive identity.

## FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:

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