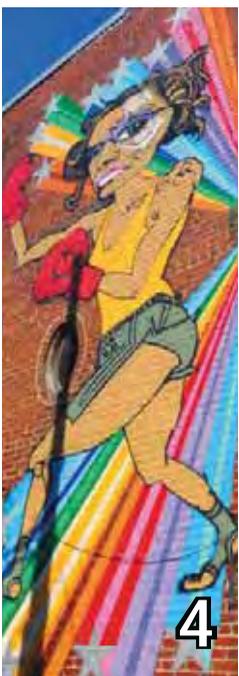




# TABLE OF CONTENTS



EXECUTIVE STATEMENT



4

1: INTRODUCTION



8

2: VISION



18

3: KEY FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS



20

4: NEIGHBORHOOD HIGHLIGHTS



54

5: CORRIDOR HIGHLIGHTS



76

6: IMPLEMENTATION PLAN



110

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS



128

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



The Mid City East Small Area Plan provides a framework for conservation, development, sustainability and connectivity in Mid City East, a mosaic of neighborhoods including Bates/Truxton Circle, Bloomingdale, Eckington, Hanover, LeDroit Park, and Sursum Corda as well as sections of Edgewood and Stronghold. The Mid City East area sits near the center of the District of Columbia and showcases historic residential fabric and institutions, a rich diversity of residents, valued open spaces and burgeoning retail amenities. The inviting character of these neighborhoods is juxtaposed by the presence of major corridors - Florida Avenue,

New York Ave, New Jersey Avenue, North Capitol Street, and Rhode Island Avenue - that bisect these neighborhoods and create real and formidable boundaries, but also opportunities for retail enhancement, new development and improved connectivity.

The catalyst for studying and analyzing the Mid City East area was the notable activism on the part of some residents and civic organizations. The 2006 DC Comprehensive Plan also specifies the preparation of a small area plan for the North Capitol/Florida Avenue business district. Neighborhood groups advocated strongly to the District for a small area plan for their respective neighborhoods, as they were beginning to feel the effects of growth and change and wanted an opportunity to plan for the area's future. This level of civic engagement and neighborhood-based leadership at the outset was a harbinger of the important role that the plan's Advisory Committee, comprised of representatives from Advisory Neighborhood Commissions, civic organizations, community groups, and the business community, would play throughout the process in the development of the plan.

With a number of planning efforts already completed in the vicinity of Mid City East, the boundaries of the small area plan were designed to encompass those neighborhoods situated around a contiguous portion of North Capitol Street that had yet to have an approved small area plan to guide land use and development, filling an important gap in planning for this part the District of Columbia. Sursum Corda, while already addressed in the Northwest One Plan, was also included to address that community's intent to redevelop their property

while retaining affordability. The boundaries of the Mid City East area reflect a political amalgam, with most of the area in Ward 5, and other portions in either Ward 1 or 6.

The Office of Planning (OP), working with its consultant team, launched the process to create the Mid City East Small Area Plan in 2013. OP also partnered with the District Department of Transportation (DDOT) to coordinate outreach since that agency was simultaneously developing a Livability Study for the same study area. By having a single integrated process and website, OP and DDOT were able to create a seamless public participation experience for the development of both documents. The planning process integrated a more robust and creative range of engagement opportunities beyond community-wide meetings, including interactive online forums, office hours, community meet-ups and storytelling. The community's values combined with technical analysis and input from District Agencies helped define the plan's foundation. Technical work completed include an Existing Conditions analysis, a Historic and Cultural Resources report, and a Market study. The plan also incorporates recommendations from DDOT's Mid City East Livability Study completed in October 2013.

The public process began with a study area wide Kick-Off on April 27, 2013, during which the planning team engaged residents and stakeholders in facilitated activities to begin developing a vision for the plan and to identify issues and opportunities. **Neighborhood character** was a key concern especially the impact of architecturally inconsistent additions to the tops of homes, or "pop-ups" and the desire to preserve certain

buildings and structures that could be restored and reused. Reinforcement of neighborhood place-making and improvements to **public realm** were desired as was addressing the loitering and litter that detract from the community's image. Residents were supportive of **commercial revitalization** along key corridors as well as growing retail amenities and options. Opportunities for **redevelopment** focused on infilling vacant parcels and preserving housing affordability. Residents expressed a desire for more **park** improvements and multi-generational programming as well as higher-quality green space and a safer Metropolitan Branch Trail. Residents also raised concerns about major vehicular roadways and corridors within the study area and the desire for better connectivity and crossings and the opportunity for green decking over North Capitol Street. They also described the need for better wayfinding and lighting to and from Metro stations, all of which are located on the periphery of the study area.

The many voices of the Mid City East community emerged to define a cohesive vision for the area: **improve quality of life and enhance neighborhood amenities and character while supporting a community of culturally, economically, and generationally diverse residents.** The plan conveys goals and key recommendations for neighborhood character, commercial revitalization, redevelopment and housing, neighborhood place-making and public realm, parks/green space/stormwater and connectivity. The following pages, 6 and 7, summarize the plan vision and goals by theme.

The Mid City East Small Area Plan has already gathered momentum for some of its recommendations, with early implementation

underway on the following items:

- Pursuit of preservation strategies for Bloomingdale
- Restoration of North Capitol Main Street
- Revival of a “clean team”, with a focus on North Capitol between New York and Florida Avenue
- Optimizing access for North Capitol businesses to the Great Streets Small Business Capital Improvement Grants
- Partnership with local architecture students to complete a visualization of the North Capitol Green Deck concept
- Development of historic resource brochures for neighborhoods in Mid City East
- Completion of an agency resource fair at Metroball DC's 13th annual New York Ave basketball tournament
- Submission of grant application for North Capitol Street Streetscape design
- Request for transfer of National Park Service (NPS) triangle parks to District jurisdiction to improve programming
- Release of the solicitation for redevelopment of Department of Housing and Community Development's parcel at Florida Avenue and North Capitol

### What's Inside:

The plan is organized as follows:

**Chapter One** provides an introduction to the Study Area and the Small Area Planning process, plan methodology and overview of community engagement.

**Chapter Two** presents the vision for the Mid City East Plan.

**Chapter Three** presents the key findings of existing conditions and technical analysis and the plan vision, goals and recommendations by theme.

**Chapter Four** highlights select plan recommendations from Chapter Three which are organized for summary and reference purposes by neighborhood.

**Chapter Five** highlights select plan recommendations from Chapter Three which are organized for summary and reference purposes by corridor.

**Chapter Six** provides an implementation plan to serve as a roadmap for implementing plan recommendations including projected timeframe and lead entity

### Appendices:

This plan is further supplemented by the following companion documents:

**Appendix A:** Mid City East Market Study

**Appendix B:** Mid City East Historic Resources Report

**Appendix C:** Mid City East Additional Maps and Figures

**Appendix D:** Mid City East Historic Neighborhood Brochures



## 1. NEIGHBORHOOD CHARACTER

*Vision: Mid City East neighborhoods will retain their historic and cultural diversity, while preserving their distinctive architectural character and public spaces.*

### Goals:

1. Create the structure and employ the tools for pursuing neighborhood-led conservation efforts.
2. Reinforce and support neighborhood identity.



LeDroit Park Gateway



## 2. COMMERCIAL REVITALIZATION

*Vision: Mid City East will be an attractive area with thriving existing businesses, emerging small businesses, vibrant retail, and a growing neighborhood residential base. North Capitol Street and other major corridors will provide neighborhood serving retail, dining options and amenities to the community.*

### Goals:

1. Improve resident access to healthy food and dining opportunities throughout Mid City East.
2. Strengthen and expand the dining cluster emerging at the intersection of Rhode Island Avenue and First Street NW, and the dining establishments along North Capitol Street.
3. Leverage Mid City East's unique location along North Capitol Street to support commercial corridor vitality and local entrepreneurs. Build on existing efforts and explore new programs and incentives to improve and promote commercial areas, including the emerging creative economy cluster.
4. Improve the appearance and functionality of commercial properties in MCE through reinvestment in façades and interior spaces.



## 3. REDEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES AND HOUSING

*Vision: Mid City East will prosper as an inclusive community with a strong neighborhood fabric, thriving businesses, and a diverse mix of quality housing options.*

### Goals:

1. Support strategic land use designation changes on key sites and the redevelopment of publicly-owned properties.
2. Encourage infill of privately-held vacant lots and increase site utilization to strengthen neighborhood fabric and create opportunities for new housing, unique retail offerings, and/or workplaces.
3. Support the redevelopment of Sursum Corda.
4. Maintain or increase the number of affordable housing units throughout Mid City East to better serve all household types, including families.



## 4. NEIGHBORHOOD PLACEMAKING AND PUBLIC REALM

*Vision: Mid City East neighborhoods and corridors will showcase a unique identity and enhanced sense of place. Sidewalks and public spaces will be attractive, safe and well-maintained.*

### Goals:

1. Enhance North Capitol Street to celebrate its importance and symbolic axial connection to the Capitol.
2. Improve and maintain street trees and increase tree cover throughout Mid City East.
3. Improve the appearance, walkability, safety and cleanliness of Mid City East streets and public spaces.
4. Celebrate the creativity of artists in the Mid City East area and throughout the District.
5. Promote opportunities to enhance the sense of identity in the Eckington and Bates/Truxton Circle and Hanover neighborhoods.

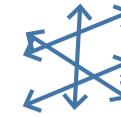


## 5. PARKS, GREEN SPACE AND STORMWATER

*Vision: Mid City East will enjoy a variety of parks, green spaces, and recreation options. Flooding will be mitigated through the DC Clean Rivers project and the employment of Low Impact Development (LID) stormwater management strategies.*

### Goals:

1. Improve the quality and accessibility of existing playgrounds, parks and green spaces.
2. Identify opportunities and sites for new parks, community gardens, green spaces and other recreation.
3. Improve access to public recreational facilities within Mid City East.
4. Decrease neighborhood flooding and improve stormwater management.



## 6. CONNECTIVITY

*Vision: Mid City East residents will experience safe and enhanced connectivity between neighborhoods. Residents will be able to travel via car, bus, bike or on foot, through a pleasant environment to their daily destinations.*

### Goals:

1. Improve mobility and physical connectivity between the neighborhoods of Mid City East, and connect the neighborhoods to the city.
2. Reduce or remove physical barriers and provide for safe pedestrian routes and crossings to schools, transit, parks and amenities.



North Capitol Street (Southbound)