



dc vibrant retail streets toolkit

DC Vibrant Retail Streets: Toolkit and Implementation Overview

Summer, 2014

Meeting Roadmap

- **Context**
 - Why focus on retail
 - Purpose of toolkit
- **Toolkit Development**
 - Research & data analysis
 - 8-step vibrancy scale
 - Retailer site selection process
- **Implementation**
 - Technical Assistance Program
 - Products and Tools
- **Looking Ahead**
 - Key takeaways & lessons learned...so far

WHY FOCUS ON RETAIL?

DC Vibrant Retail Streets Toolkit Overview

Toolkit designed to take advantage of—

- Retail as a key ingredient of a **livable** neighborhood
- Private and public initiatives and **investments** in DC's commercial corridors
- Renewed interest in **urban markets** by retailers
- DC's growing population who are shopping in an increasing number of walkable, transit-rich neighborhoods...yet DC remains **under-retailed**



- Develop a **menu of approaches** for use across various retail environments
 - Areas with retail mix issues & food-entertainment heavy districts
 - Balance between 'destination' and neighborhood serving uses
- Account for **changing standards & preferences** of consumers and retailers
 - Location, format and right mix of retail offerings is key
- Engage a range of stakeholders in a **different retail conversation**
 - DC Retail Action Strategy and Retail Action Roadmap were based on more traditional analyses

Toolkit offers -

- A diagnostic for neighborhoods to assess starting point on an 8-step **vibrancy scale**
- Customizable **toolbox** of programs and implementation steps to improve retail streets
- Direction and next steps for a **range** of retail streets & stakeholders

✓ **Lead consultant: Streetsense**



DIY!

TOOLKIT DEVELOPMENT (Phase 1)

Vibrant Streets Defined



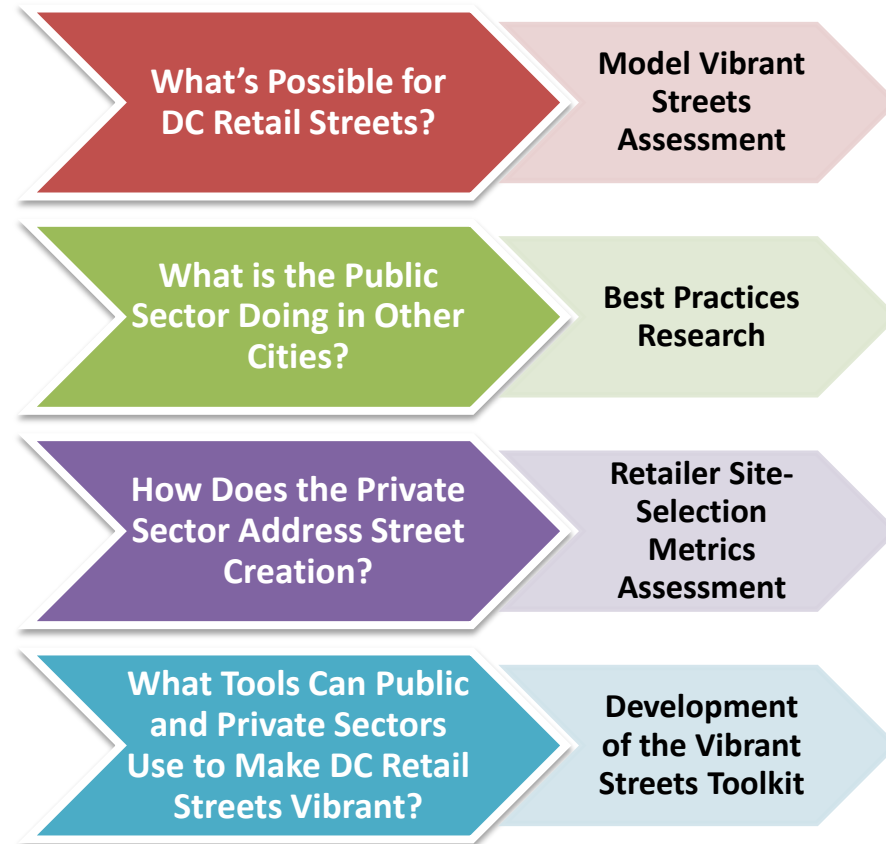
VIBRANT STREET (adj + noun):

A neighborhood's core.

A retail environment that is treasured by its residents, customers and retailers whose daily actions ensure its enduring vitality.

Approach

1. Apply metrics analysis to understand the essential components of vibrant retail streets.
2. Evaluate streets with similar conditions to various DC streets.
3. Research best practices of other cities.
4. Assess retailers' current strategies for site consideration given evolving interest in urban locations.
5. Identify opportunities for urban neighborhoods to attract the attention of retailers, with information, incentives, or both.
6. Devise a toolkit approach to improving the quality, mix, sales, aesthetics, and viability of DC's retail streets to create a solid foundation upon which they can become extraordinary.



Model Vibrant Streets

Small-Scale Shopping Streets

North Market Street • Frederick, MD

Charles Street • Boston, MA

Bethesda Row • Bethesda, MD

East Davis Street • Culpeper, VA



Destination Streets

Walnut Street • Philadelphia, PA

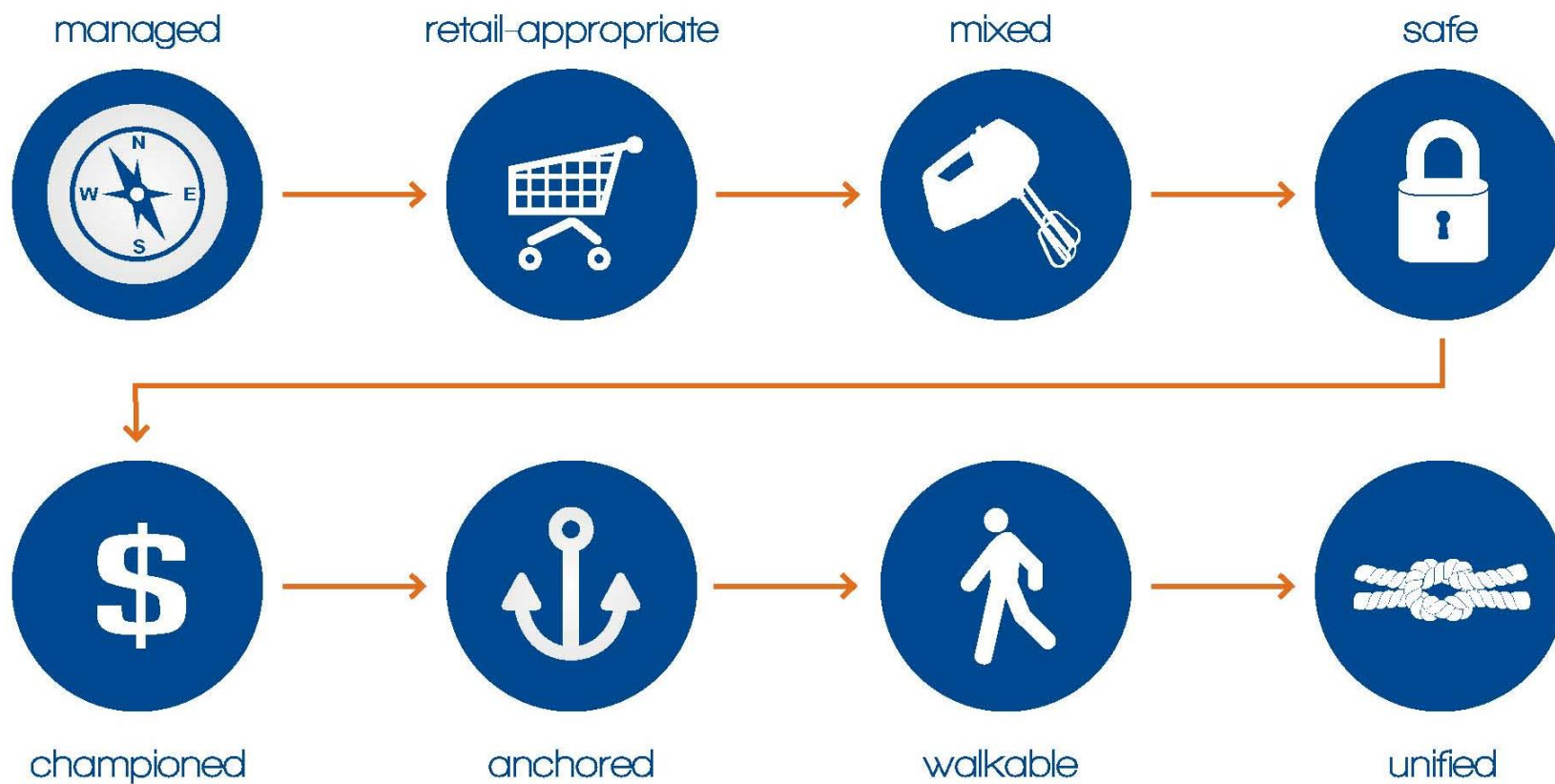
Newbury Street • Boston, MA

North Michigan Avenue • Chicago, IL



THE VIBRANT RETAIL TOOLKIT

Process



Vibrant Streets: how it works



step 1: is your street MANAGED?

Self-Evaluation
Questions

If "NO"

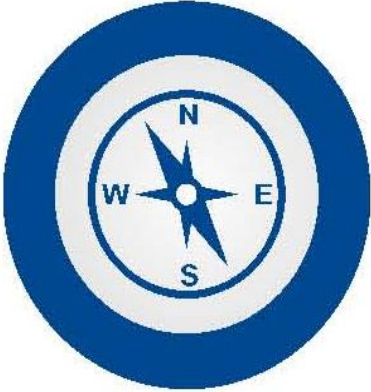
Do these
things

If "YES"

Proceed to
Step 2



step 1: is your street MANAGED?



- Does your neighborhood have an organization that oversees business activity in your retail district?
- Is there one firm or individual who owns a majority of the parcels included in your retail district?



You need a single entity to organize, represent, and oversee interests that impact the entire street.

step 2: is your street RETAIL-APPROPRIATE?



- Are fewer than 10 percent of the storefronts in your retail district occupied by non-retail uses (offices, churches, non-profit headquarters, etc)?
- Is your street's retail vacancy rate lower than 20 percent?



Stores and restaurants have basic architectural requirements. Retail has the best opportunity to thrive when surrounded by other retailers.

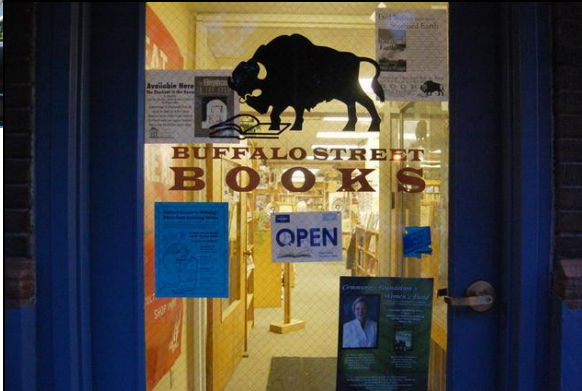
step 3: is your retail MIXED?



- Does the existing mix of tenants on your Vibrant Street correspond to its market strength?



Your retail should offer what its customer base needs.



step 4: does your street feel SAFE?



- Is there a low crime rate in your retail district?
- Are there residences nearby or another type of activity that encourages daytime, evening, and weekend occupancy of your street?
- Does your street have pedestrian level lighting that illuminates the sidewalk?
- Does your principal retail street feel safe to local residents? What about visitors?

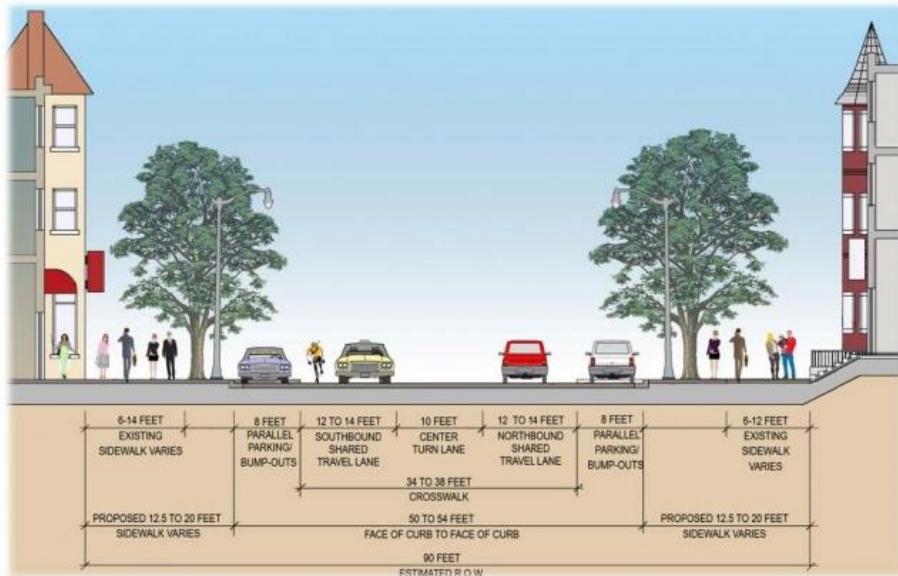
People want a safe environment to undertake commercial activities.



step 5: is your street CHAMPIONED?



- Is there a developer that is planning or has undertaken a large-scale project in your neighborhood?
- Has a sizable public or private initiative been undertaken to enhance your retail district (i.e. power lines undergrounded, streetscape program, mature tree planting, sidewalk paving, public art, or similar)?



A retailer will make a significant personal investment in an establishment. They are more willing to make a commitment to an area where another entity has made a similar investment.

step 6: is your street ANCHORED?



- Is there a civic or cultural facility active in your retail district?



Retailers prefer locations that are integrated into the community. They seek opportunities for exposure created by uses that are part of non-commercial, complementary activity.

step 7: is your street WALKABLE?



- Are the sidewalks in your retail district wider than six feet on average?
- Have Food & Beverage establishments created outdoor cafes in your district?
- Do the number and spacing of trees and streetlights provide adequate shade and lighting respectively?



The most reliable customer base for any retailer is the adjacent community (residents or workforce). A walkable/connected street increases the retailers' ability to capture reliable, regular sales.

step 8: is your street UNIFIED?



- Is your retail district located in an historic district?
- Has your neighborhood initiated a branding strategy for your retail district?
- Are your district's retail storefronts in good condition and well-maintained?



It is much easier to draw a customer to an area for a general retail experience than it is to repeatedly attract someone to a single establishment.

retail decision-making trees: regional home decor

Example Neighborhoods	1	2	3
Population: 35,000 + within 3 miles	39k	52k	16k
Avg HH Inc: \$50k+ within 3 miles	\$83k	\$63k	
Min. Education: College	Grad	College	
Competitive Environm't: Low to Moderate	Low	High	
Appropriate Site Available	4,000 sf signed		

TOOLKIT IMPLEMENTATION

(Phase 2)

DC Vibrant Retail Streets – Neighborhood Program Overview

- Neighborhoods applied for Technical Assistance program
- Opportunity to learn about and implement the Toolkit with the assistance of OP's consultant, Streetsense.
- Teaming was encouraged (e.g. merchants association, a community group or civic association, property owners)



Toolkit Neighborhoods

Anacostia

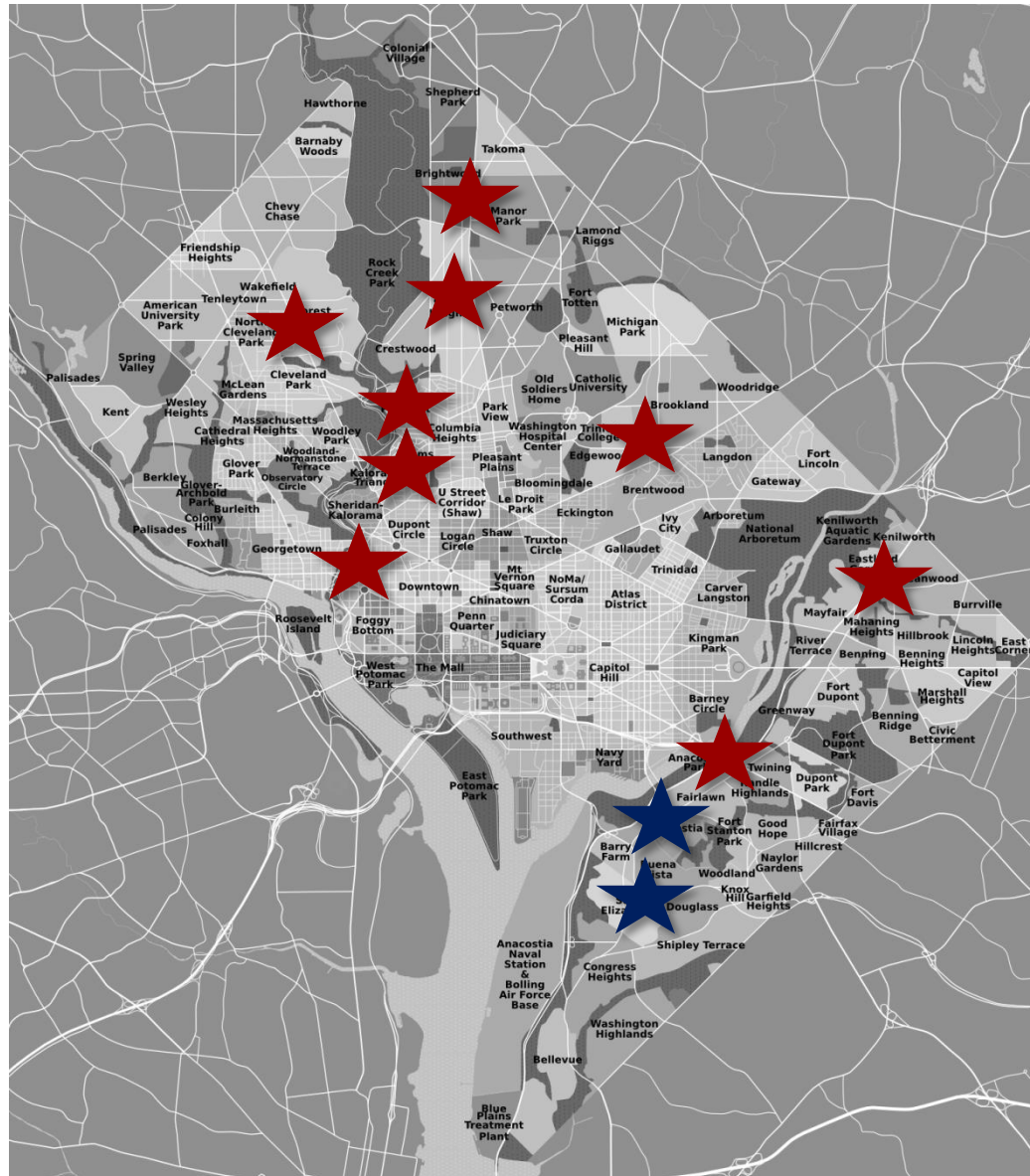
Congress Heights

Van Ness

Mount Pleasant

Adams Morgan

Central 14th Street



Brightwood

Deanwood

Fairlawn

Golden Triangle

Rhode Island Ave
NE

Vibrant Streets Technical Assistance Program - Overview

- COMMUNICATION: “Train the translator”
- EDUCATION: Retail 101
- IMPLEMENTATION: Reality-based approach to tackling retail issues within your community



Contents of the Workshop Binder

APPLICATION OF THE DC VIBRANT RETAIL STREETS TOOLKIT

Congress Heights Workshop, March 21, 2013

PREPARED BY:
streetsense.
STREETSENSE.COM / 301.652.9020



- A. Workshop Presentation Materials
- B. Diagnostic Data and Assessments for your Vibrant Street
 - Population Data
 - Household Data
 - Employment Data
 - Inventory of Existing Retail Tenants and Spaces
 - Retail Vacancy Rate
 - Traffic Counts
 - Transit Data



DC Vibrant Retail Streets Products – Summary

Neighborhood	Products	Neighborhood	Product
Anacostia (Federal grant)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safe Streets Audit • Non-retail Spatial Uses Assessment • Neighborhood Broker Program & Junior Broker integration • Marketing Brochure • Business buy-in program 	Brightwood	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business Outreach Program • Business Buy-in Meeting
		Deanwood	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reuse of space as commercial kitchen (technical memo)
		Fairlawn	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Materials & prep for Community Meeting
Congress Heights (Federal grant)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Temporary Urbanism Event ‘Reimagine MLK’ • Visioning Session & Playbook • Safe Streets Audit • Marketing Brochure 	Golden Triangle	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Asset manager guidance on importance of retail • Memo on building a retail market in GTB
		Mount Pleasant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pitch deck & package for broker outreach
Adams Morgan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cooperative Liquor License Process (memo) • O’Donnell Square Field Visit & Summary 	Rhode Island Ave NE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safe streets audit • Temporary urbanism guidance
Van Ness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management Structure (memo) • Street Renderings 	Central 14th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Porch strategy • Renderings and public space permit assistance

Neighborhood Broker Training



Neighborhood Broker Training

- Designate a single neighborhood brokerage representative for Anacostia.
- Serve as the commercial brokerage liaison between retailers and your neighborhood
- Work with a member of the commercial brokerage community who has the appropriate license to complete a lease transaction

Two-Day Intensive Training Session

1. Anacostia Retail Market Basics and “Thinking” – Explaining Retail to the Community
2. Retail Data Collection Training, Data Interpretation
3. Learning How to Show the Market (“staging” your neighborhood) and Mock Touring

Neighborhood Marketing Brochure



Business Buy-in Meeting

SHOPPERS! YOUR RETAILER IS
IN A MEETING
ABOUT OUR VIBRANT STREET.
WILL RETURN AT 3PM.

- ✓ Helps businesses get organized
- ✓ Engages retailers in a visioning, marketing, merchandising and street-activating initiative
- ✓ Attract & share customers, share information with other retailers, tackle common issues



Envisioning a Vibrant Street



SATURDAY FEBRUARY 8, 2014

1:00 – 4:00 PM

BE A PART OF THE FUTURE
OF CONGRESS HEIGHTS!

JOIN US FOR FUN, FOOD, & ENTERTAINMENT

3100 BLOCK OF MLK JR. AVE., SE

Contact Chelsea Liedstrand or Evelyn Kasongo with the DC Office of Planning
for more information at 202.442.7600

- ✓ Pop-up event
- ✓ Activated sidewalk with café furniture
- ✓ 3-D example of potential to become a more vibrant retail district



District of Columbia
Office of Planning



VIBRANT
STREETS



CONGRESS HEIGHTS
MAIN STREETS



District of Columbia
Office of Planning

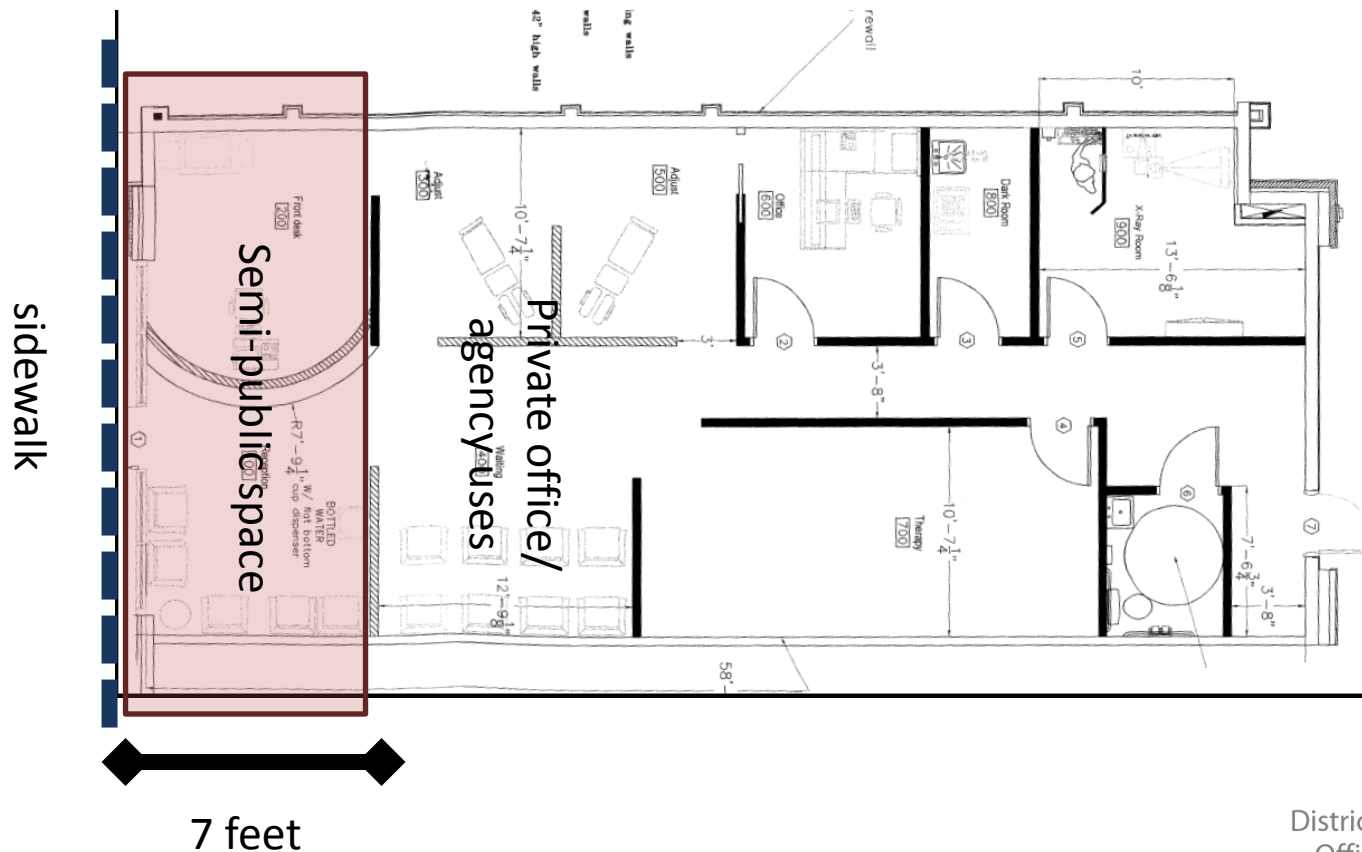




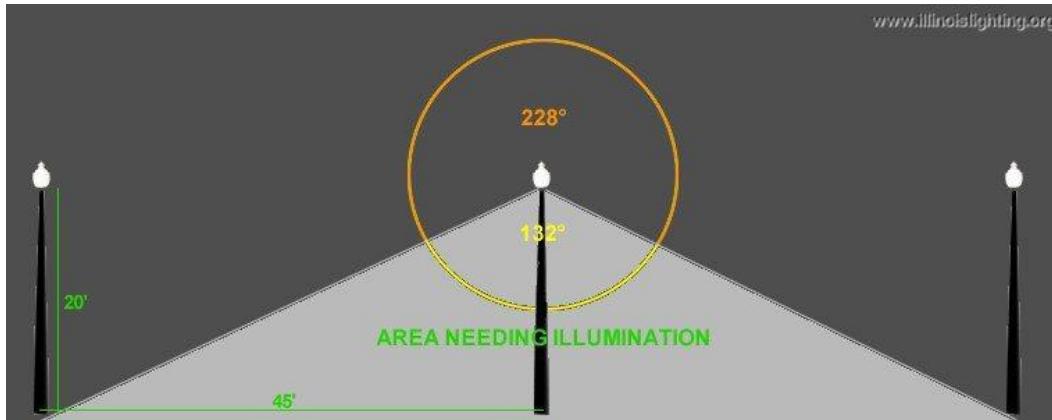
Non-Retail Spatial Uses Assessment

SOLUTION: Let's find and provide interior spaces "to be."

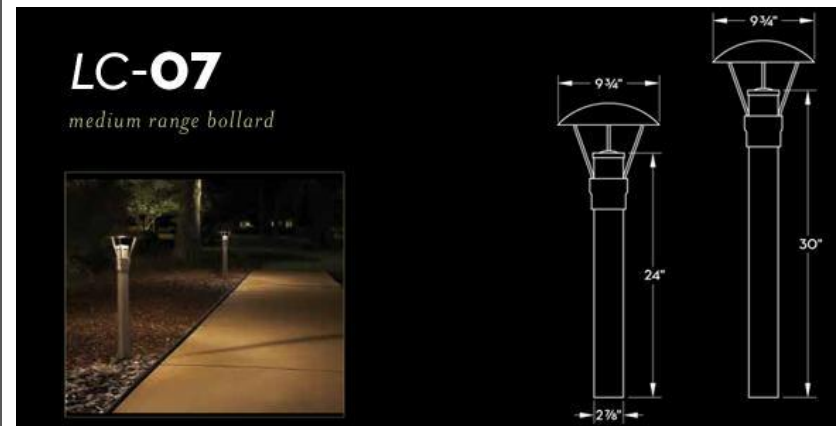
Need to identify the opportunity for waiting areas or other semi-public areas for non-retail uses located in Vibrant Street zone.



Safe Spaces Audit for Vibrant Retail Streets

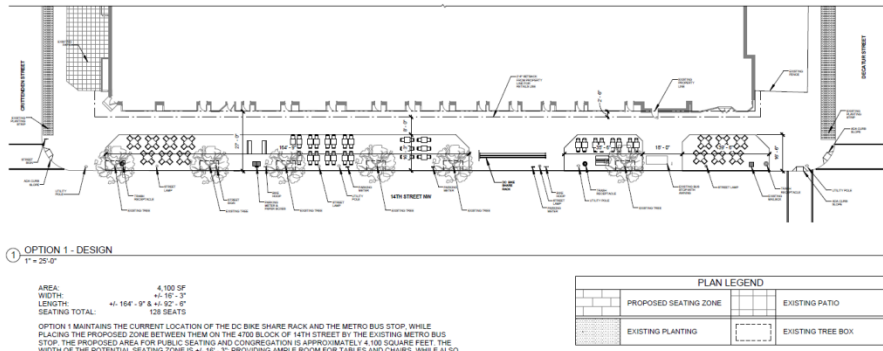


- Evaluate working status of streetlights
- Measure light levels and coverage from existing light units
- Detail steps to improved maintenance and reuse of vacant lots along the corridor



Innovative Activation & Collaboration

14TH STREET NW OPTION 1



THE PORCH AT 30TH STREET STATION BETA TESTING PHILADELPHIA'S NEXT GREAT PUBLIC SPACE

University City District is pleased to celebrate the opening of The Porch at 30th Street Station, a transformative urban open space for Philadelphia. With magnificent views of the Schuylkill River, bridges, and the Center City skyline, and bounded by two monumental historic buildings, The Porch is a place of activity, respite, and social interaction at a location where there has long been a dire need for pedestrian amenities. In addition, it is a vibrant and welcoming gateway for travelers emerging from 30th Street Station, whether visiting Philadelphia for the first time or commuting daily.

The Porch at 30th Street Station is a place of activity, respite, and social interaction at a location where there has long been a dire need for pedestrian amenities.

Adjacent to the nation's second busiest train station, the site is at the heart of the University City's eastern end, an area only growing in vitality with the addition of more than 4,000 federal employees across the street, the prospect of future Cira buildings, the creation of Penn Park, and Drexel University's growth-oriented master plan. Within a 1/4 mile radius of The Porch, there are approximately 5 acres of surface parking, much of which is controlled by institutions with specific plans for development. These parcels present a rare opportunity to create a vibrant and walkable new district linking Center City, 30th Street Station, and University City.



AERIAL RENDERING

WHAT'S IN A NAME?

"The Porch" is the result of a juried naming contest, which garnered nearly 500 entries. The jury chose the name because they found it welcoming, low-key, and unpretentious, with a freshness and simplicity reflective of UCD's placemaking methodology.



To create The Porch, University City District was able to piggyback on a larger PennDOT project to rehabilitate six bridges adjacent to 30th Street Station. A true public/private partnership between area stakeholders – including Councilwoman Jannie L. Blackwell, the Philadelphia City Planning Commission, the Streets Department, Amtrak, Brandywine Realty Trust, and many others – engineered the creation of a 50' wide sidewalk where there was once an outer parking lane. PennDOT plans were designed to "lay the foundation" for the future, and UCD seized the opportunity to layer upon them.

LIGHTER, QUICKER, CHEAPER

UCD's vision for the site is the creation of an inviting, animated public place, with amenities such as abundant and comfortable seating, sun and shade, trees and plantings, ultimately, The Porch at 30th Street Station will become a vibrant magnet and a source of civic pride. However, in the interest of quickly and economically building upon the work of the PennDOT project, UCD looked to examples of new public spaces in other cities that have been developed by taking small, iterative, and experimental steps – in order to determine what works best, rather than starting with large capital expenses.

New urban open spaces can be developed by taking small, iterative, and experimental steps in order to determine what works best, rather than starting with large capital expenses.



GANSEVOORT PLAZA IS AN EXAMPLE OF A LIGHTER, QUICKER, CHEAPER PUBLIC SPACE IN MANHATTAN'S MEATPACKING DISTRICT



MOUNT PLEASANT
A CITY IN ITSELF



Some Key Takeaways

✓ Toolkit has allowed OP to have a very different conversation with retail stakeholders

- Grounded in an education about retail realities
- Championed by neighborhoods
- Geared towards realistic implementation

