

# Places for Focused Investment

- **Poplar Point** – Gateway to Center City and Historic Anacostia
- **Capitol Riverfront** – Along M Street SE
- **Southwest Waterfront** – Between 12th and 4th Streets SW
- **NoMa** – The Intersection of Florida and New York Avenues
- **Massachusetts Avenue Landmark** – The I-395 Corridor
- **Mount Vernon Square** – Centerpiece of a New Destination District
- **The National Mall** – The Heart of Center City

As Center City DC takes action to enhance its position as one of the most treasured urban centers in the nation, places that are distinctive, recognizable, and memorable become critical elements in each emerging neighborhood. These places offer the opportunity to express the unique identity of an area and the diversity of character so reflective of DC's multi-faceted reality. Great places are well-defined, public, and inviting to all. They provide an anchor where people assemble for events and meet others, and they provide the market confidence for both developers and buyers/tenants that a real neighborhood is in the making.

The areas around the traditional downtown where the expansion is occurring are the most likely to lack the essential character-defining attractions and standard amenities. For example, both NoMa and Mount Vernon Triangle lack both neighborhood parks, and recreation facilities, standard amenities that contribute to a healthy life and make high-density living appealing. Canal Park is a great model for a new neighborhood park as is or the Banneker overlook where there is an admirable vision for a landmark place that is not yet realized. There are also key Center City Gateways, such as South Capitol Street and New York Avenue that have the potential to contribute to the creation of great places but have lost their architectural and landscape features through neglect and roadway changes over the decades.

The parts of Center City where growth is starting to occur are the locations that have the best prospects of continuing the District's competitiveness, ensuring a great place to live and a dynamic economic future. These are the places where we need to ensure that the real estate market continues to attract job providers, that the market for residential customers stays strong, and that retail leases get signed. These are the places where the provision for, and the strategic investment in, public places will generate the most impact and have the greatest catalytic effect on future private investment and market appeal.



*Suburban developers now offer transit-oriented, urban-style entertainment and shopping destinations, and employment centers. This competition makes the design of Washington's new neighborhoods—their convenience, attractiveness, uniqueness, quality, and affordability—critical.*

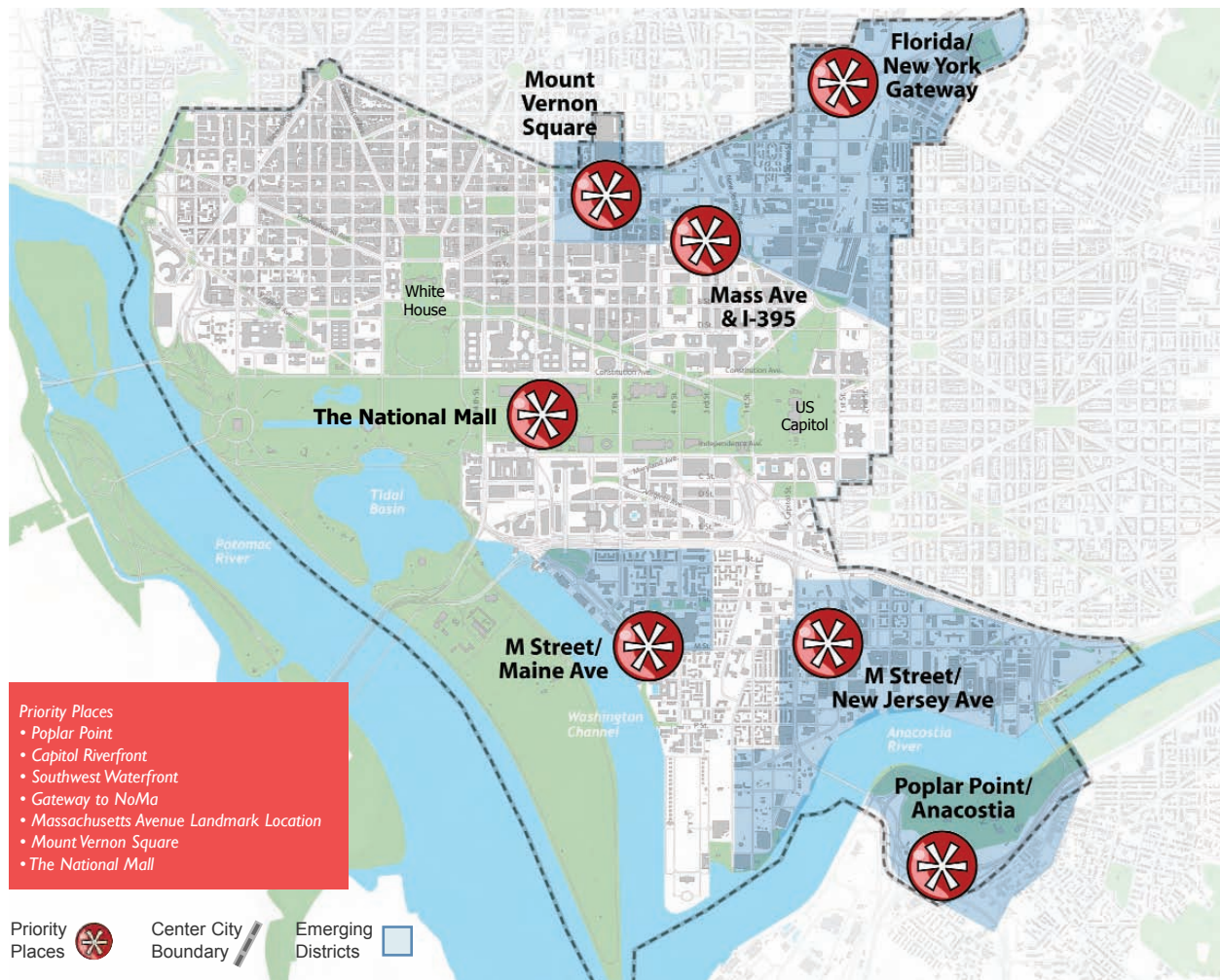
*“Residents are connected by places of “common ground”, such as Union Station and Eastern Market. Such public gathering places should be protected, and should be created in all parts of the city as development and change occurs.”*

Connecting the City: Guiding Principles, Citywide Elements, page 2-26, The Comprehensive Plan for the National Capital: District Elements 2007

In designating “priority places” for the purposes of this Action Agenda, these characteristics were considered:

- Existing momentum in the place, including current public or private investments already flowing to the area.
- Places where investments will enhance connections between neighborhoods that have been perceived as disconnected.
- Proximity to Metro and reinforcement of transit use in the Center City.
- Availability of developable parcels that will benefit from public investment.
- A lack of amenities and identity that could be provided with additional investment or strategies.
- Short-term action needed by the public sector to improve or instigate development.

### Priority Places





## Places for Focused Investment

# Poplar Point

The Gateway to Historic Anacostia



### VISION

Poplar Point is currently vacant, federally-owned land in need of environmental cleanup and investment. Future realignment of South Capitol Street and the Frederick Douglass Bridge will enable significant redevelopment on “the Point” as well as the creation of a large recreational park and additional memorial sites. Poplar Point and the cherished neighborhood of historic Anacostia will be reinvigorated with improved waterfront parklands and housing, jobs and a mix of retail and entertainment venues. Access to these areas and to the Anacostia River will be seamless, highlighting the proximity to Capitol Hill and the emerging southeast Ballpark District. As Poplar Point gains new development, the increasing numbers of residents and commercial uses will add vitality to historic Anacostia neighborhoods and retail areas along Martin Luther King Jr. Avenue SE. Improved connections between the Anacostia River, Metro Stations, and the historic neighborhood will ensure that benefits of the waterfront setting are shared by residents, both new and old.

### CURRENT CHALLENGES

The greatest challenges include: 1) ensuring pedestrian-friendly connections between an improved waterfront and existing neighborhoods, 2) ensuring that the benefits of the new park, the retail offerings, residences and offices on Poplar Point are shared and accessible by residents in surrounding neighborhoods, 3) ensuring that the existing history and culture, as well as residential and retail areas in historic Anacostia are strengthened and complimented by additional commercial and office development.

*A national museum of the environment and major tourist destination is planned as the focal point of the 110-acre mixed-use development at Poplar Point.*



Connections are made between The Frederick Douglas House, the Anacostia neighborhood and Poplar Point and the waterfront along W Street SE..



Credit: Clark Realty



Credit: Clark Realty

- Potential Development Site
- Planned and Proposed Projects
- Recently Completed and Under Construction
- Existing Building

**Initially Proposed:**

- |  |  |  |
|--|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The National Museum of the Environment</li> <li>2. International Environment Center (ICE)</li> <li>3. The Point (Waterfront Retail District)</li> <li>4. Douglass Boathouse</li> <li>5. Deck Over I-395</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>6. W Street Landscaping Improvement</li> <li>7. The Preserve</li> <li>8. Waterfront Park</li> <li>9. Outdoor Amphitheater</li> <li>10. MLS Stadium Location (option only)</li> <li>11. The Village at Poplar Point</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>12. KIPP Academy</li> <li>13. The Marketplace (Neighborhood Retail)</li> <li>14. Metro Square</li> <li>15. New Martin Luther King Jr. Park</li> <li>16. The Frederick Douglass Homestead at Cedar Hill (not shown)</li> </ul> |
|--|--|--|

**RECOMMENDED ACTIONS**

**Develop a retail strategy for this emerging neighborhood.** As part of the *Citywide Retail Strategy*, prepare the retail cluster plan to provide neighborhood retail and services complimentary to the Anacostia Main Street area. *Responsible entities: DCOP, DMPED, DCEP, future BID*

**Prepare development plans for major development sites and the connections between them.** Define land-uses, height, density, neighbor-

hood focal points, prioritize public improvements, and identify funding sources. Coordinate this effort with implementation of the adopted Anacostia Waterfront Plan. *Responsible entities: DCOP, DMPED*

**Secure funding support for a BID to serve the Poplar Point/Anacostia area.** Convene property owners to consider a new BID, modeling it on the process used by the recently-created NoMa and Capitol Riverfront BIDs. *Responsible entities: Property owners*



## Places for Focused Investment

# Capitol Riverfront

At M Street SE



### VISION

The Capitol Riverfront is anchored by the Navy Yard employment center and by the new Nationals Ballpark – a major visitor and entertainment destination. These definitive anchors are catalyzing new office, residential and retail uses. Two key areas of mixed use development are Half Street, the entertainment gateway to the Ballpark, and The Yards, a 42-acre site that blends adaptive uses of historic buildings with new construction and a riverfront park. The area along the riverfront is envisioned as a series of connected parks, with the 20-mile Riverwalk Trail running the length of the Anacostia River and with Diamond Teague Park south of M Street. The Capitol Riverfront will be an environmentally sustainable neighborhood, and will include the new Canal Park north of M Street as a model of sustainability.

The development dynamic of the Capitol Riverfront points to the intersection of New Jersey Avenue and M Street, SE as the location for a symbolic gateway and identity for the neighborhood - especially the segment between Half Street on the west and Third

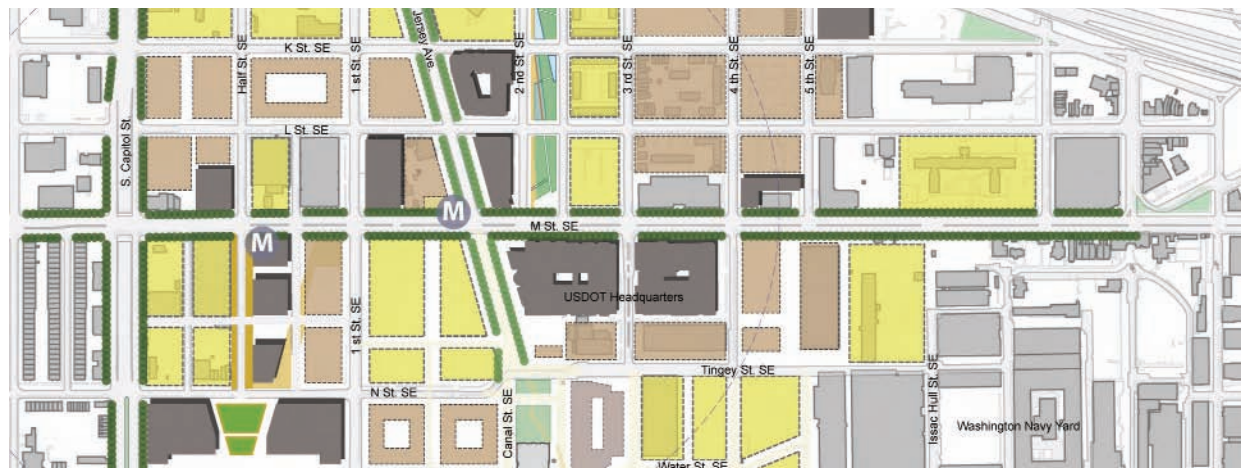
Street on the east. This intersection and surrounding uses have the potential to tie the area together, create a sense of place, and begin to establish civic and community qualities. The existing Metrorail, future transit solutions, new parks and plazas, and supporting retail will be the focus of public life in this rapidly developing neighborhood. A high quality public realm that is designed to support a distinct identity will provide a framework for, and links to, the 23 million square feet of development capacity.

### CURRENT CHALLENGES

Without a civic focal point on M Street, many disparate developments along the riverfront and north of M Street could emerge without a sense of neighborhood identity and common ground. Without well-designed public improvements to this busy corridor, M Street could become, like South Capitol Street, a barrier rather than a meeting place. Extending the dynamism of development and connecting the neighborhood to the waterfront are also critical elements.



The Yards development is 42 acres of office, residential and other uses, as well as a 5.8 acre park along the Anacostia River. It includes an 1,100 foot long boardwalk that is part of the much larger Anacostia River Walk Trail, extending 16 miles from the Potomac River to the Maryland border.



- Potential Development Site
- Planned and Proposed Projects
- Recently Completed and Under Construction
- Existing Building
- Priority Corridor
- Secondary Corridor
- Within Historic District

**RECOMMENDED ACTIONS**

**Prepare an updated development plan.** Update the Near Southeast Urban Design Framework Plan to identify public investments and amenities needed to create a vibrant community and high quality public realm. *Responsible entities: DDOT, DMPED, DCOP, Capitol Riverfront BID*

**Commence construction of Canal Park and Diamond Teague Park.** Finish the designs for, and commence construction of, Canal Park and Diamond Teague Park. Secure any remaining funding necessary to create these neighborhood open spaces. *Responsible entities: DCPR, DCOP, DMPED, Capitol Riverfront BID*

**Develop a retail strategy for this growing neighborhood.** As part of the Citywide Retail Strategy, prepare a retail cluster plan with tenant mix and leasing strategy that identifies specific actions for

securing neighborhood retail and services throughout the Capitol Riverfront and along key street frontages such as M Street, SE. *Responsible entities: DMPED, DCOP, WDCEP, Capitol Riverfront BID*

**Develop a final infrastructure assessment and improvements plan.** Assess the condition and capacity of existing infrastructure systems - water and sewer, access and parking, etc. - and prioritize the necessary improvements and make recommendations for funding those actions. *Responsible entities: DDOT, DMPED, Capitol Riverfront BID, DCOP, utility providers.*



## Places for Focused Investment

# Southwest Waterfront

At 7th and 4th Streets SW



### VISION

The redevelopment of Waterside Mall, the re-opening of the now-interrupted 4th Street and the reconnection of the long isolated Southwest community to the National Mall and beyond, will anchor this existing neighborhood to its envisioned and improving waterfront. The segment of Maine Avenue, as it becomes M Street, between 12th and 4th Streets, is the recommended focal point for the Southwest Waterfront. Place making at this location will link Arena Stage (a major focal point), with the Waterfront Metro Station and the proposed 4th Street Mall. Early implementation of Channel Parks, streetscape improvements to M Street, and enhancement of pedestrian crossings will be necessary to catalyze investment in the redevelopment of restaurant row along Maine Avenue into a mixed-use district along the Washington Channel. The waterfront is being planned as a vibrant maritime-themed mix of housing, office, shopping and cultural/entertainment use, with parkland and a waterfront promenade. A dramatic connection from the Banneker overlook to the waterfront is also envisioned.

### CURRENT CHALLENGES

Strategic public investments are critical to connect the Metrorail station to Arena Stage and the waterfront. Views to the water from the Metro, signage and neighborhood amenities are currently lacking.

Longer-range challenges involve cooperation with NCPC and the National Park Service to accomplish improvements and development at Banneker Overlook and open space improvements in East Potomac Park across the Channel. Future pedestrian or vehicular connections to East Potomac Park could include additional bridges over the Washington Channel at M Street and at 7th Street.



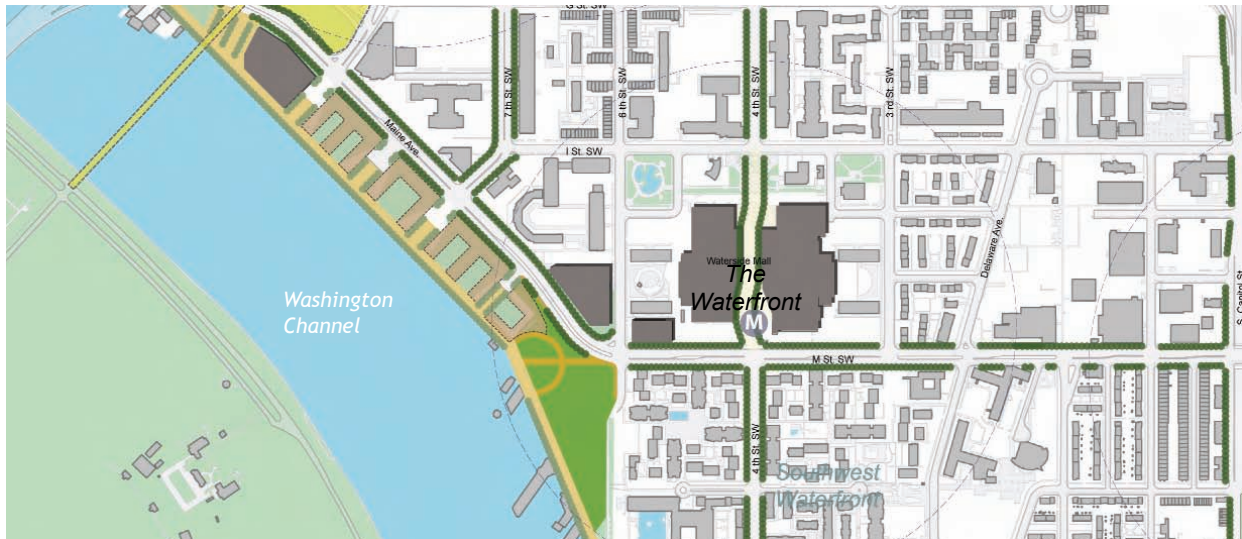
Proposed development on the Washington Channel at 9th Street and Maine Avenue SE..

Credit: PN Hoffman



The proposed plan for The Waterfront project includes residential, office and retail, including a supermarket.

Credit: Forest City Washington



- Potential Development Site
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**RECOMMENDED ACTIONS**

**Continued implementation planning for a major activity center that includes the Fish Wharf and complimentary new waterfront destinations.** Plans need to link the major new developments at the waterfront with the SW Federal Center, National Mall, and other destinations in Center City. *Responsible entities: DMPED, DCOP, Future BID*

**Re-Design Maine Avenue.** Initiate design and identify funding sources to make the conversion from a high-speed parkway to a pedestrian-friendly boulevard connecting the Southwest Waterfront to Arena Stage and the Metrorail stop. *Responsible entities: DDOT, DMPED, DCOP, future BID*

**Complete Conceptual Plans for Banneker Overlook.** Finalize a concept that defines the land-use elements and activates the area, incorporates an inter-modal transportation facility, and makes a dramatic link to the Southwest Waterfront. *Responsible entities: DMPED, DCOP, NCPC, NPS, DDOT, BID*

**Explore the creation of a BID to serve the Southwest Waterfront and the SW Federal Center.** Convene property owners to consider a new BID, modeling it on the process used by the recently-created NoMa and Capitol Riverfront BIDs. *Responsible entities: Property owners, neighboring BIDs*



## Places for Focused Investment

### NoMa

#### The Intersection of Florida and New York Avenues



#### VISION

This major northeast gateway to Center City and important transition point between the emerging NoMa neighborhood and the traditional neighborhoods of Eckington, Truxton Circle, and Florida Avenue Market, can be transformed to create safe connections across its width, to improve the access to the New York Avenue Metrorail Station, and to create a dramatic entry point into the NoMa neighborhood. *The NoMa Vision Plan and Development Strategy*, developed in collaboration with DDOT, proposed a redesign of this intersection to support its role as a gateway and entry point to the NoMa neighborhood. The new headquarters for ATF has anchored this intersection of New York and Florida Avenues, and several other major developments are planned or under construction in the vicinity. A dramatic gateway intersection design at this location is necessary to address pedestrian safety, traffic function, curbside management, and transit service function. This will encourage connections between established neighborhoods north of New York and Florida Avenues, including McKinley Technology High School, the emerging NoMa district and its future employment opportunities, and the planned retail and other amenities in the immediate vicinity of New York Avenue Metrorail Station. A traffic circle that accomplishes the traffic calming and pedestrian safety goals and also creates a neighborhood focal point, as Thomas Circle does, would do a great deal for NoMa and the neighborhoods around it.

#### CURRENT CHALLENGES

New York Avenue, like South Capitol Street, functions today as part of the highway system rather than a neighborhood street, is plagued by congestion and high-accident rates and has become a barrier to surrounding neighborhoods. Studies have shown that the traffic volumes on New York Avenue drop dramatically after the entrance to I-395 at New Jersey Avenue, just a few blocks west of NoMa. Reducing or eliminating through-traffic would greatly improve traffic conditions at the New York and Florida Avenue intersection, eliminating bottle necks and enhancing pedestrian, bicycle and transit access. Long term solutions that are being evaluated include closing the I-395 entrance at New York Avenue. In the meantime, DDOT's FY 2008 budget includes \$5 million for pedestrian and vehicular traffic improvements to create a "virtual circle" at the intersection of New York and Florida Avenues. DDOT's design should address pedestrian safety, lighting, streetscape, landscaping and public art to ensure that the area truly becomes a gateway to a new neighborhood. The Washington Metropolitan Branch Trail is another key component of improving this gateway intersection. The eight-mile trail will eventually connect NoMa with Silver Spring, including an elevated trail that provides direct pedestrian and bicycle access from the New York Avenue Metro to neighborhoods north and south of New York Avenue. Construction of this trail is vitally important as a recreational and pedestrian resource.

*Proposed Gateway Circle at the intersection of New York and Florida Avenue in NoMa. First Street is the main entrance to NoMa from the North leading south toward the US Capitol.*



Looking North from the new ATF headquarters, the proposed Metropolitan Branch Trail is to be located along the rail line visible at the right edge of this image.



- Potential Development Site
- Planned and Proposed Projects
- Recently Completed and Under Construction
- Existing Building
- Priority Corridor
- Secondary Corridor
- Within Historic District

**RECOMMENDED ACTIONS**

**Proceed with construction of the “Gateway Circle” currently under design.** Create this “virtual” traffic circle to improve safety, accommodate pedestrians, ease traffic flow through the intersection, and enhance the image of NoMa and surrounding neighborhoods as “green” neighborhoods.  
*Responsible entities: DDOT, DCOP, DPR, NoMa BID*

**Develop a NoMa retail strategy to include necessary support to attract initial retail and anchors.** NoMa has the potential to develop substantial retail offerings that will serve NoMa resident and workers as well as residents in surrounding neighborhoods (Capitol Hill, Eckington, Shaw, Bloomingdale, NW One). A cohesive marketing and financing strategy is needed to attract a unique mix of retailers and to

incentivize early retailers to invest in the area.  
*Responsible agency: NoMa BID, DMPED, DCOP, DDOT, DCEP*

**Accelerate construction of Washington Metropolitan Branch Trail.** The initial construction does not allow access to the trail north of New York Avenue. The next phase of the trail is critically important for providing a safe pedestrian route from Eckington to NoMa, the Metrorail station, Gallaudet University and on to the National Mall, the Ballpark, and the waterfront.  
*Responsible agency: NoMa BID, DMPED, DCOP, DDOT, DPR*



## Places for Focused Investment

# Massachusetts Avenue Landmark Location

### The I-395 Corridor



#### VISION

The Massachusetts Avenue juncture with I-395 can become the activity hub that connects and anchors several emerging neighborhoods: Mount Vernon Triangle, NoMa, Northwest One, in addition to Penn Quarter and other existing downtown neighborhoods. This “in-between” place is comprised of several major development opportunity sites and surrounded by emerging areas in need of a major new 'place' - a neighborhood park and public space environment that provides the amenities to create true neighborhoods and maintain the market for residential development in the area.

The reconnection of F and G Streets across the I-395 corridor provides the opportunity to restore an important link between Union Station, the Georgetown Law School, the Building Museum, Harmon Center, Portrait Gallery, American Museum of Art, and the Verizon Center/Gallery Place/Chinatown entertainment area. These restored roadways will connect the energy and activity of the downtown to the transportation and activity hub at Union Station. The District has identified a development partner for the I-395 corridor as well as plans for mixed-use development and the restoration of F and G Streets.

Reconnecting Eye and L Streets north of Massachusetts Avenue overcomes the isolation of the Northwest One neighborhood and connects residents directly to the Safeway grocery and other retail scheduled to open in summer '08 at 5th and K Streets in Mount Vernon Triangle.

With traffic-calming at the interstate entrance, enhanced pedestrian crossings, sufficient improvements to public space and the addition of a neighborhood park, this location will link emerging districts with the downtown and create a focal point for adjacent development sites including development within the I-395 corridor and at the Government Printing Office site to the east.

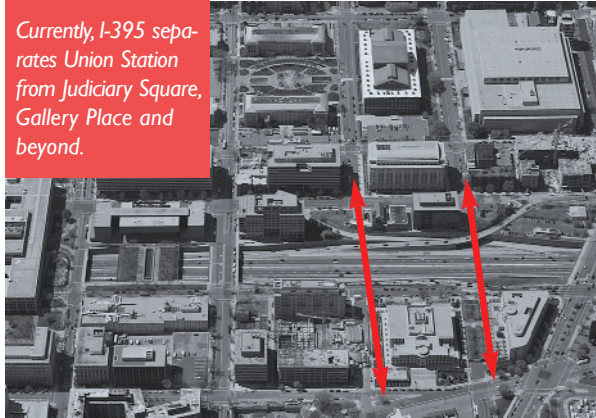
#### CURRENT CHALLENGES

A significant challenge is presented by the lack of a full transportation analysis of the function and role of I-395 at this location and a determination regarding the access/exit points to both Massachusetts and New York Avenues. The absence of this study produces uncertainty in the planning and design of real estate development projects both north and south of Massachusetts Avenue, extending all the way to New York Avenue.

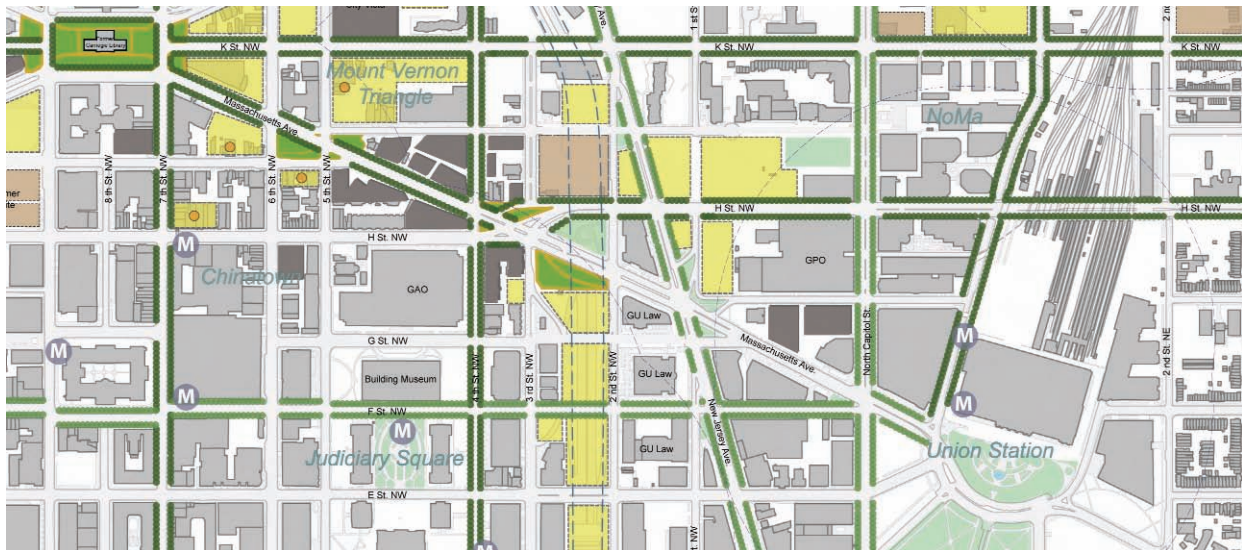
The existing discontinuity of streets contributes to the isolation of Union Station from Judiciary Square, Gallery Place, Chinatown, and the remainder of the downtown to the west. Reconnecting F and G streets across the submerged roadway, in an effort to overcome the barrier between important landmark locations in Center City, will add value to emerging neighborhoods such as Mount Vernon Triangle, NoMa, and major development opportunity sites; however, it requires rebuilding the streets through the I-395 corridor at great additional expense and restoring street connections through the Georgetown University Law School campus. DDOT has been working with the Deputy Mayor's Office and the selected developer to re-establish F and G streets and address other traffic and pedestrian safety and flow issues in the vicinity. There are similar challenges associated with reconnecting Eye and L Streets north of Massachusetts Avenue. In addition, there are cost obstacles to air-rights development, including the difficulty of providing parking since below-grade space is consumed by the roadway.

There are 16,000 people currently living within 5 blocks of this area and, conservatively, another 8,500 projected by 2012, and no neighborhood park. The public cost of creating a major neighborhood park at this would be a significant, though essential investment towards the long term viability and success of Mount Vernon Triangle, NoMa, Northwest One, Mount Vernon Square District, and Penn Quarter Neighborhoods.

Currently, I-395 separates Union Station from Judiciary Square, Gallery Place and beyond.



Neighborhood parks are an essential amenity for emerging residential areas.



**RECOMMENDED ACTIONS**

**Undertake a comprehensive traffic study of I-395, its connection to New York Avenue, and its impact on the surrounding street network.** Evaluate the transportation impacts and development alternatives associated with the termination of I-395 at Massachusetts Avenue or further south. Evaluate the traffic impacts in the vicinity associated with the reconnection of L and I streets between Northwest One and Mount Vernon Triangle and the reconnection of F and G Streets between 2nd and 3rd Streets NW. *Responsible entities: DDOT, DCOP, DMPED*

**Design and designate funding for a major neighborhood park in the vicinity of Massachusetts Avenue, H and 3rd Streets NW.** The rehabilitation

of DPR parkland or the swap for another site at this location would serve multiple existing and developing neighborhoods, including Mount Vernon Triangle, Northwest One, and Penn Quarter. This major public amenity would anchor new developments on several adjacent vacant sites to the east and northeast. *Responsible entities: DMPED, DPR, DCOP, Downtown Neighborhood Association*

**Complete planning for development in the I-395 corridor.** Planning for the area in and around the corridor from New York Avenue NW south to D Street can catalyze a significant amount of new development, creating an entirely new neighborhood and reweaving currently disconnected areas. *Responsible entities: DCOP, DMPED, DDOT, DDOE*



## Places for Focused Investment

# Mount Vernon Square

Centerpiece of a New Destination District

### VISION

Mount Vernon Square and its surrounding blocks are poised to become a new entertainment, shopping, and hospitality district on the north edge of the traditional downtown. With the 2003 opening of the Walter E. Washington Convention Center on Mount Vernon Square, the recently approved construction of a 1,150-room convention center headquarters hotel, and the roughly 2 million square feet of development potential at the 10-acre former convention site, the area is positioned to become a bustling, mixed-use center of local and visitor activities. With 280,000 square feet of retail proposed as part of just one development, the critical mass will finally exist to anchor the downtown as a destination shopping experience sufficient to entice visitors from the National Mall, convention goers, and metro area shoppers. Foot traffic around Gallery Place, the Verizon Center, and the recently reopened Portrait Gallery/American Museum of Art can extend seamlessly north to this emerging district based on enhanced programming and the design of new developments, streets, and public spaces.

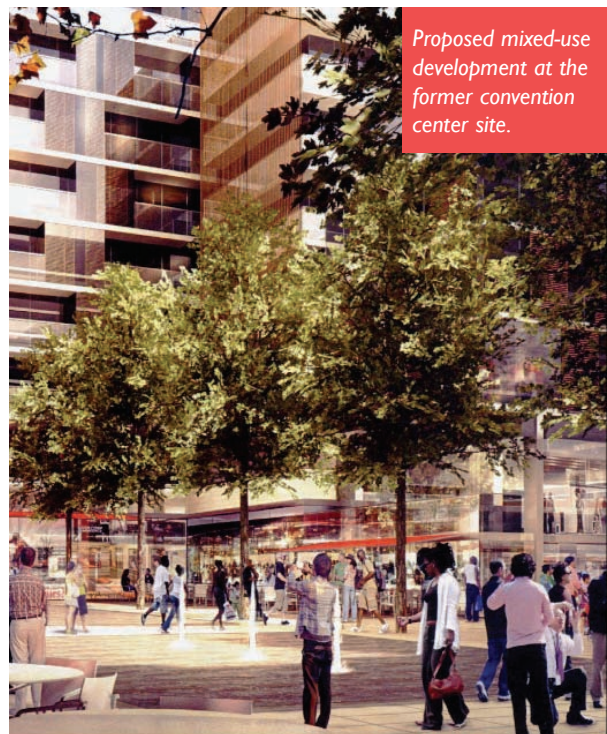
Mount Vernon Square needs to add a new identity to its important layers of history, not only with reinvigorated and relevant programming at the old Carnegie Library Building, but also as a multi-modal transportation crossroads with future north-south and east-west Circulator/street car lines crossing at “the Square” that connects Georgetown to Union Station and Georgia Avenue the Convention Center to the National Mall and the waterfront. Greatly improved public space with street vendors, seating areas, safe pedestrian crossings, and active ground-level uses around “the Square” will contribute to the draw and invite citizens and visitors to stroll from district, to district enjoying the increasingly varied range of Center City experiences.

### CURRENT CHALLENGES

At present, there is a gap between the dynamism that exists at the Verizon Center, Gallery Place, and the Portrait Gallery/American Museum of Art, and the Convention Center to the north, especially during

evenings and weekends. A significant challenge exists in extending street-related retail and other attractions north and south across Massachusetts and New York Avenues to connect to the Convention Center. By achieving the mix of land uses around Mount Vernon Square, this district can become a great place and support optimal economic performance by the convention center and the proposed headquarters hotel.

Public-sector efforts and dedicated funding streams are critical to implement the street, sidewalk, multi-modal transit, park, traffic and signalization improvements that are needed to realize the opportunity that this area offers. Traffic calming and improved pedestrian and bicycle connections that work in concert with the future light rail or rapid bus line running along K Street are essential to the function of the area, though costly. The DC Historical Society needs to identify the resources to deploy dramatic programming that generates a draw to the old Carnegie Library, and undertake modifications to the building, signage and outdoor spaces to greatly increase attendance and activity.

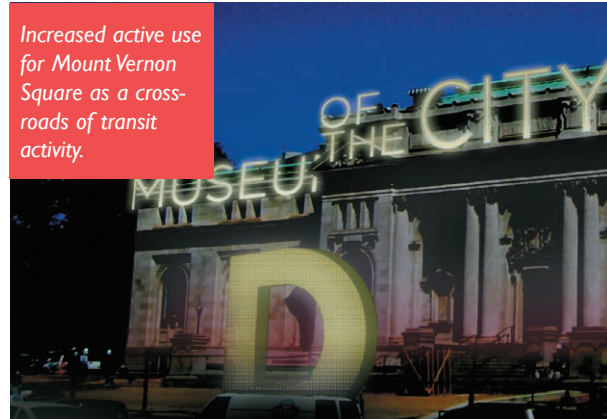


Credit: Hines Architects - Smith

The Mount Vernon Square District has many underutilized sites.



Increased active use for Mount Vernon Square as a cross-roads of transit activity.



- Potential Development Site
- Planned and Proposed Projects
- Recently Completed and Under Construction
- Existing Building
- Priority Corridor
- Secondary Corridor
- Within Historic District

**RECOMMENDED ACTIONS**

**Prepare a development plan.** Coordinate public and private investment in the area to realize a major new destination district focused on Mount Vernon Square, capitalizing on the convention center, the proposed convention center hotel, development at the former convention center site and other sites in the immediate vicinity, various vacant or underutilized development sites, and development momentum in the Mount Vernon Triangle neighborhood directly to the east. *Responsible entities: DCOP, DDOT, DC Historical Society, DMPED, BIDs*

**Improve transportation, access, and public space problems around Mount Vernon Square.** By identifying the necessary traffic, pedestrian, and transit improvements and funding sources we can capitalize on Mount Vernon Square District as a great new destination and expand its role as a

transit crossroads. *Responsible entities: DDOT, DMPED, DCOP, DC Historical Society, BIDs*

**Develop streetscape and public space designs and developer guidelines for the Mount Vernon Square District.** Prepare and put guidelines in place so that as each site redevelops and as public and private investments are made, continuity is achieved in the design of streets, sidewalks and open spaces. *Responsible entities: DDOT, DMPED, DCOP, DC Historical Society, BIDs*

**Analyze intensified-use options for the historic Carnegie Library building and Mount Vernon Square.** Undertake additional feasibility studies in cooperation with the DC Historical Society and develop concepts for the intensified use of the building and activation of the grounds. *Responsible entities: DMPED, DCOP, DPR, DC Historical Society, BIDs*



## Places for Focused Investment

# The National Mall

The Heart of the Center City



### VISION

The new definition of Center City now extends well beyond the traditional downtown, including the southeast and the southwest water frontage, positioning the National Mall at the center, rather than at the southern edge. This constitutes a major shift in our mental map and presents a great opportunity to weave central Washington across this national treasure with cultural institutions, revered monuments, major events, and large amounts of open space. Today's conception of the Center City as the heart of a federal complex and the heart of a thriving metropolis inspires a National Mall that relates to residents and workers in the District, as well as visitors from across the nation and around the world. This vision includes greater connectivity between the Mall and north-south into the city and to the waterfronts. With seamless transitions, improved pedestrian access, and enhanced programming that extends to evening and after-hours, one envisions the National Mall as part of the day-to-day life of the City. Along existing vehicular routes across the Mall, additional street trees, and ground-level activity, encourage walking by providing spatial definition and activity.

### CURRENT CHALLENGES

The National Mall is the symbol and the primary focus of the typical visitor's experience in the nation's capital. Yet for the Center City resident and worker, the National Mall is often viewed as a barrier between the everyday life of their workplaces in the downtown and the occasional visit to the Southwest Waterfront or the

Tidal Basin. Similarly, for federal workers in the Southwest Quadrangle, the Mall is a barrier separating their single-use office environment from the pleasures and experiences of urbanity in the downtown.

Achieving connectivity and overcoming physical gaps and security barriers requires dramatic improvements in the treatment of public space, roadways, signage systems, and transit service. This is a shared challenge for the government of the District of Columbia, the National Park Service, and other Federal decision-makers. The air quality, congestion, and aesthetic problems associated with tour buses is an additional challenge.

There is a need to incorporate ground-level retail in federal buildings, and to limit internalized services such as food and fitness in order to encourage Federal office workers to use the city surrounding them. There is also a need to activate street-level frontage in ways that welcome residents and workers during lunch hours, on evenings, and on weekends, and to study the infill development that mixes land uses – including hotels and housing – within areas now dominated by federal offices.

These issues can be addressed by continued cooperation between local and federal agencies and a coordination of initiatives and implementation priorities.



*The Smithsonian Festival activates the Mall and serves District residents as well as regional and national visitors.*

Existing streetscape at Hirshhorn Museum of Art. An unwelcoming discourages walking cross the Mall.



Additional locations for active recreation and events are needed to reduce impacts on the National Mall.



- Potential Development Site
- Planned and Proposed Projects
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- Within Historic District

**RECOMMENDED ACTIONS**

**Coordinate with NPS on its National Mall and Pennsylvania Avenue Planning Initiative currently underway.** Participate in the planning process to ensure that views, services, land uses, way-finding, communications, signage, sustainability strategies, and transit support strong and inviting connections between the Mall and surrounding Center City areas. *Responsible entities: NPS, DMPED, DCOP, DDOE, DDOT, DPR*

**Work with the NPS to develop a plan for visitor-serving transit.** Develop transit and parking strate-

gies that interface with other transit to be convenient and to serve destinations both on and off the Mall. *Responsible entities: NPS, DDOT, BIDs, DCOP, DPR*

**Partner with the NPS to manage tour buses.** Develop plans to provide for reasonable access, drop-off, parking and related facilities while reducing visual impact, congestion, noise, odor, and idling. *Responsible entities: NPS, DDOT, DCOP, BIDs*