

# *ing a Vision for the NoMA Neighborhood*

## IMPLEMENTATION

**OVERVIEW**  
**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT TOOLS**  
**CHARACTER AREA DEVELOPMENT GUIDELINES**

OCTOBER 2006

# Overview

The NoMA Vision, comprising Chapter 2 of this plan document, is supported by the Planning Fundamentals and Development Strategies laid out in Chapter 3. Carrying out these Development Strategies requires a variety of implementation techniques as presented below. The NoMA Vision Plan and Development Strategy will be adopted as a Small Area Plan that will serve as the legal mechanism governing new project approvals and the coordination of public initiatives and investments. It provides a framework that responds to changing market conditions with flexibility and recommends a series of concrete actions and detailed design interventions.

## Coordination

Implementing the Plan's vision requires an effective partnership between the public and private sectors and the members of the community. Coordination between City departments will be critical in carrying out badly needed public improvements and continuing timely infrastructure investments. Regular updates will be necessary to keep the neighborhood informed and involved.

Many of this Plan's proposed infrastructure improvements correspond to existing utility upgrade plans, street reconstruction and other capital improvement projects. The massive disruptions caused by these types of public projects require coordination to take advantage of opera-

Implementation will require a combination of:

- Public infrastructure investment.
- Development incentives.
- Private development that is coordinated with the Vision and Development Strategy.
- Regulatory changes (Comprehensive Plan, Zoning Overlays, Character Area Guidelines, PUD approval process).
- Investment through Special Assessment areas.
- General implementation functions, including more detailed planning and timely coordination of activities to seize opportunities.

tional and cost efficiencies, and to avoid future disruption and duplication of cost and effort.

The Office of Planning, along with the Deputy Mayor For Planning and Economic Development, should continue to take the lead in moving forward with implementation activities. The "Developer Forums" and "Technical Advisory Committee" meetings held throughout this process proved successful in coordinating work between City agencies and in communicating effectively with property owners. Their continuation is recommended.

# Economic Development Tools

## The Current Situation

NoMA's poor infrastructure makes the area unattractive to investment and to potential new residents and office tenants. This visual first impression is difficult to overcome and makes marketing projects in the area difficult.

Although the prevalence of vacant land provides a great opportunity for redevelopment, it also serves as a significant liability. With no established market, many office tenants, retailers, and eventually home buyers and renters will be reluctant to be the first to locate in NoMA. This reticence perpetuates itself since corporate offices and potential residents are deterred by the lack of retail and retailers are deterred by the lack of existing daytime or evening populations.

Developers are necessarily motivated to build the product that generate adequate returns for investors. Several parcels in NoMA have changed ownership in recent years, in some cases doubling land value in one year, and this requires a correspondingly high return on investment. In addition, construction costs are increasing up to 15 to 20 percent per year, and with the residential market softening, property owners in NoMA may develop office product or delay any development until market dynamics change or development catalysts are in place.

Within this context, the NoMA Vision Plan offers an action plan for creating a new, vibrant, mixed-use neighborhood that includes residents and retail services. The most immediate catalyst for improving the outlook for NoMA is an expedited schedule of public infrastructure improvements. Such improvements will directly address NoMA's most glaring weaknesses while taking advantage of its most immediate opportunities. Shorter blocks and new roads, sidewalks, curbs, trees and lighting will help even vacant land in NoMA make a good impression. Safer, more attractive underpasses will help to connect the area to its neighboring communities.

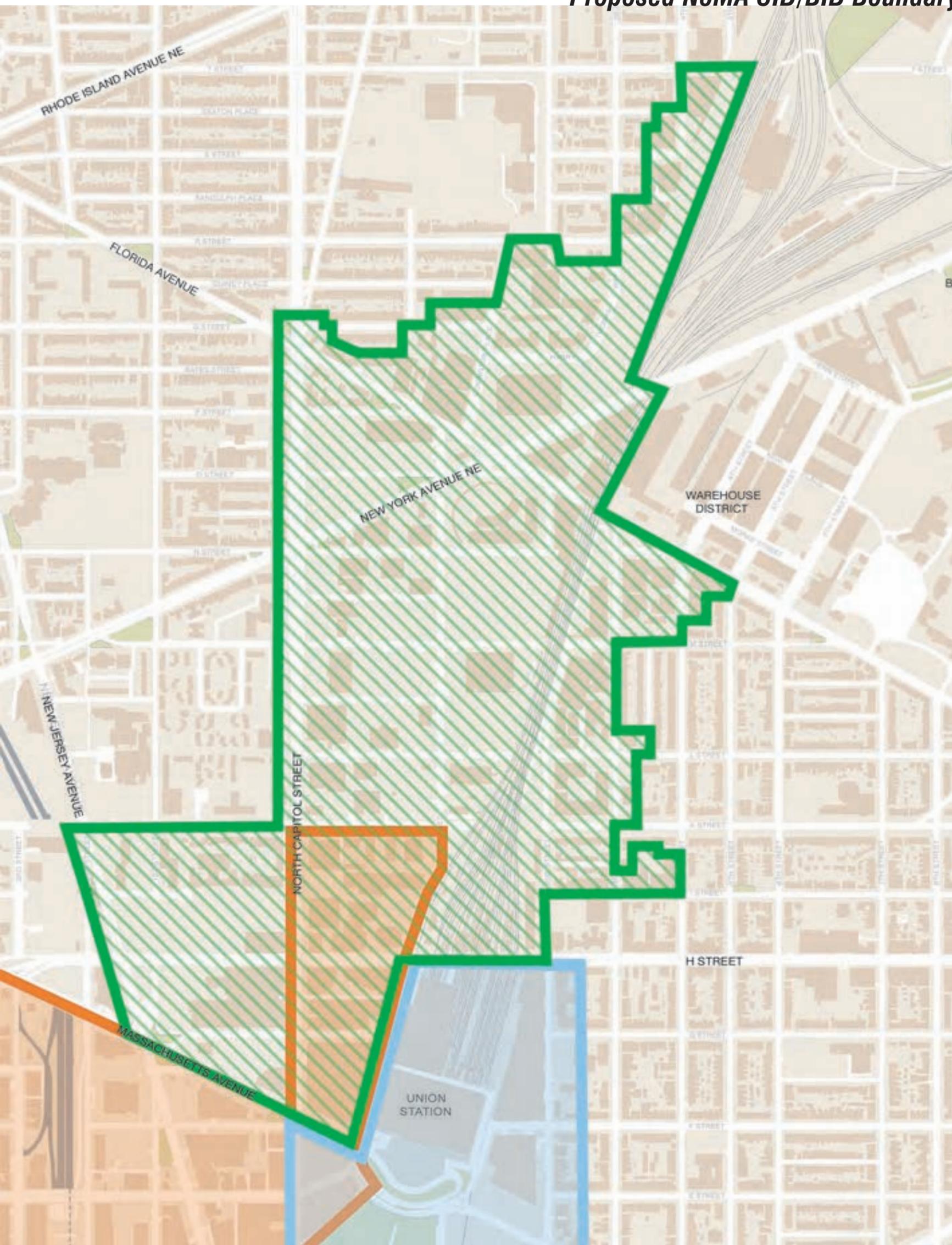
Projects already underway demonstrate the development potential and market feasibility of NoMA. The success of these "pioneers"; the ATF headquarters, One NoMA Station, XM Radio, and Capital Place all demonstrate market

momentum, instilling market confidence and stabilizing the area's northern edge along New York Avenue. Residential development on National Capitol Revitalization Corporation (NCRC) and DC Housing Authority (DCHA) land fronting on North Capitol Street will bring new residents to NoMA, with small amounts of ground floor retail to serve both residents and new office tenants.

As noted already, decisions by the federal government on its office requirements will have a significant impact on the DC market – ideally incorporating any security requirements in a way that supports pedestrian-friendly streetscapes and retail activity. This Plan supports design of GSA properties that reinforces urban design principles and contributes to NoMA's economic vitality.

Finally, a mix of targeted development incentives aimed at getting a satisfactory mix of uses that includes sufficient amounts of housing and ground floor retail, could also achieve ambitious goals for a new neighborhood. In addition, the District should implement a NoMA Retail Zoning Overlay that would target retail uses for ground floor space in high priority areas and establish guidelines for transparency and ground floor ceiling heights. These initiatives are stepping stones toward increasing the value of NoMA in the eyes of investors and potential residents and tenants. They are critical in influencing the choices and timing of decisions made by private property owners now.

# Proposed NoMA CID/BID Boundary



## LEGEND

-  Proposed NoMA BID Boundary
-  Downtown BID Boundary
-  Capitol Hill BID Boundary



## Recommended Development Catalysts and Incentives

To accelerate development in NoMA, the District needs to provide dedicated funding for infrastructure construction, and in addition, take action as soon as possible to put incentives in place for preferred development. With such a significant potential return to the District – in terms of tax revenue and community improvement – this is an investment that needs to be made. A 10-year build-out yields a significantly greater gain in tax revenue over a build-out that takes 20 years. (See *Potential Impact of NoMA Development*, p 4.5).

In addition, development incentives are likely necessary to encourage sufficient residential development to balance the office development that seems certain to occur and to encourage the thoughtful design of first floor space that can support retail 10 years from now, if not immediately.

Securing these funds will not be easy. There are many competing needs in the District’s operating and capital budgets and pressure from rating agencies to limit the District’s debt per capita ratio. This makes it all the more important to establish clear, targeted programs and priorities; to put the necessary economic incentives in place; and to proceed in a timely way with catalytic infrastructure investments to improve streets and ensure that utility capacity will keep pace with development.

Mechanisms for plan implementation, sources of funds and their recommended uses are listed below:

SOURCES	USES
1. <b>Public Funds</b> .....	Dedicated, multi-year investment in transportation and infrastructure improvements.
2. <b>Tax-based Incentives</b> .....	Utilization of targeted abatements and/or tax increment financing (TIF), and other tax-based incentives for residential, retail in high-priority locations, grocery, cultural, and entertainment uses and an ongoing investment in infrastructure. Grocery stores could qualify for abatements under the Super Market Tax Exemption Act but may also require additional incentives to ensure an anchor for residential development early in the neighborhood-building process.
3. <b>Special Tax Assessment</b> .....	Additional public realm improvements, district energy conservation measures.
4. <b>BID Special Tax Assessment</b> .....	Management entity, i.e. Community Improvement District for cleanliness, safety, marketing, plan implementation, jobs program.
5. <b>PUD Requirements</b> .....	Affordable housing, street and alley extensions, Metropolitan Branch Trail connections and other investments, vertical public connections between street and elevated trail, use mix, green roofs, public realm features e.g. green space and art, excellent design, and other high-priority community benefits.

### 1. PUBLIC FUNDS: Local CIP, WMATA and Federal Sources to Fund Infrastructure

An important part of the NoMA planning process has been the consideration of prudent and catalytic investments that will stimulate the market and create a critical mass of economic activity to continue to attract development. A critical incentive is the dedication of public dollars, including Federal funds, WMATA investments, and local capital improvements dollars for the following:

Highest Priority:

- Transportation improvements: New York Avenue and Florida Avenue intersection;
- Sidewalks and streetscape along 1st Street NE;
- Improvements/art installations at 4 underpasses;
- Improvement to handle traffic capacity through conversion of one-way streets to two-way streets, signalization and signage; station access improvements; safety improvements and pedestrian enhancements;
- Undertake infrastructure capacity studies of water, sewer, power, technology spine and other utility service; and undertake infrastructure investment planning, funding strategies, and construction to keep pace with development.

Highest Priority continued:

- Study, justify and fund 2nd Street extension between M and N Streets, in addition to other street extensions to add traffic capacity, connect the grid, and improve access to Metrorail stations.
- Develop public realm design and streetscape standards for NoMA including provision for burying utility lines.

Secondary Priority:

- Extensions, enhancements, and links (vertical and horizontal) to the Metropolitan Branch Trail;
- Sidewalks and linear park treatment along K Street, NE; and
- Improvements to North Capitol Street sidewalks and streetscape enhancements.

## 2. Tax-Based Incentives:

### A. Residential Tax Abatement

A limited-time, fixed-amount residential tax abatement to create a critical mass of 3,000 residential units in several projects distributed throughout NoMA is recommended. Zoning and current market conditions only tenuously support residential development in NoMA. Without an incentive for residential, many developers may focus on office developments to maximize their investment returns under current conditions. Build-out could take several years, as the NoMA office market faces stiff competition from other sections of the city and surrounding suburban jurisdictions, or it could result in a preponderance of GSA clients looking for lower rents. It is recommended that tax abatement be tied to urban design guidelines and to design review and that it include an affordability requirement in response to this District priority and to achieve an inclusive neighborhood.

To create this critical mass of housing in NoMA, a program of \$20-30 million over ten years is recommended for projects in NoMA.

1. \$1.00 per rentable or usable square foot for ten years.
2. Awarded on a first-come-first-serve basis.
3. Must lay the first layer of concrete or have a full building permit by December 31, 2010.
4. Must receive certificate of occupancy within 30 months of abatement reservation, with possible six-month extension.
5. May transfer tax abatement in the case of condominium projects to office or rental residential projects in NoMA.

6. Consideration is given to housing affordability
7. Is accompanied by design guidelines and design review.

The residential tax abatement program, enacted in 2001 for Downtown (\$25 million over ten years at \$0.81 per SF of rentable/usable space, but not transferable to other projects) and Mount Vernon Triangle (\$20 million over ten years at approximately \$0.90 per SF of rentable/usable space, and transferable to other projects in Downtown) helped create a critical mass of housing since their enactments. Both programs were competitive: those who built first were the first to receive tax abatement awards. Both programs were focused on near-term results: the Downtown tax abatement required substantial construction or a full building permit by December 31, 2003 and Mount Vernon Triangle's tax abatement's cut-off date was December 31, 2005. The modest investment of approximately \$800 per residential unit in property tax abatement for 10 years is estimated to yield \$10,000 to \$20,000 per year per unit in all taxes to the District depending upon: (1) the income of the residents living in the units, (2) the number of residents paying DC income taxes, (3) the number of residents per unit, and (4) the assessment of the unit for real property tax purposes.

### B. Tax Abatement for Retail and Other Preferred Uses at High-Priority Locations

Tax incentives in the first few years of build-out will help bring retail and other uses earlier than otherwise would occur. The uses at key locations could reinforce circulation patterns, provide neighborhood services and amenities, and create active streets and sidewalks. Properties in the targeted NoMA Retail areas (p 3.8/3.9) could be eligible for targeted tax abatements.

A grocery store has the potential to literally 'make' the neighbor-

hood. From a real estate market perspective it will ensure the future neighborhood's residential viability and anchor other retail services and attractions. Tax abatement, in addition to that available under the Super Market Tax Exemption Act, should be considered as a useful and necessary tool in attracting a full-service grocery store and the necessary parking, both east and west of the tracks.

### C. Tax Increment Financing for Infrastructure and Other Preferred Uses

Properties in the targeted NoMA areas (p 3.8/3.9) could be eligible for tax increment financing (TIF), which could apply to both property and sales taxes. Specific retailers, including a grocery store, restaurants, hardware store, flower shop, athletic/exercise club, etc. In addition, small music venues, recreational, creative industries, cultural, and entertainment uses could be eligible.

In addition, TIF is recommended as a means of getting infrastructure improvements and open space amenities built.

## 3. SPECIAL TAX ASSESSMENT DISTRICT:

NoMA property owners may decide to contribute to amenities and infrastructure improvements where there is a direct benefit from well-executed improvements, for example, burying utility lines and other enhancements, that may be beyond the scope of public investment.

A special assessment district is a proven program for achieving equitable contribution from all property owners and the current NoMA special assessment district has been successful in helping to fund the new Metro station by raising \$25 million in private funds to contribute to the station project. The special assessment district raises approximately \$1.85 million each year from private property owners

to support the debt service on \$25 million of DC general obligation bonds. (See map of New York Avenue Metro Special Assessment District in Appendix B, page B.2)

By way of example, if the NoMA property owners were to fund 20% of a projected \$50 million capital improvements program, then an additional \$740,000 per year would need to be added to the current special assessment district in order to raise \$10 million of additional property owner contributions.

## 4. BID SPECIAL TAX ASSESSMENT: Create a Management Entity

A new NoMA management entity would take the form of a Business Improvement District (BID), funded through a supplemental real property tax on both commercial and residential properties. (Nearby, the Mount Vernon Triangle Community Improvement District is successfully funded in this manner.) The map on page 5.3, *Proposed NoMA BID Boundary*, illustrates the area currently under consideration by the founding members of the NoMA BID.

The new BID would provide the following services in NoMA:

1. A clean program that supplements the clean services provided by the District.

2. A safety and hospitality program that makes workers, residents and visitors feel welcome in NoMA.
3. Marketing and promotion of NoMA as a premier neighborhood in the District and region.
4. Assistance in implementing the NoMA Small Area Plan.
5. Management of a neighborhood jobs program to provide employment opportunities within NoMA by connecting local residents to good paying jobs, including property managers, office workers, hotel and restaurant positions.

## Other Measures

Additional public measures can help to encourage and direct development in NoMA in order to meet public goals. Currently, proposed mandatory inclusionary zoning legislation excludes the Transferrable Development Rights areas of NoMA from its requirements, because of the inability to provide density bonuses.

Density bonuses can not be granted in a TDR receiving zone because the available density is maximized under the 1910 Height Act.

The pace of development in NoMA may also be encouraged through strict enforcement of tax rates for vacant land. Vacant properties being taxed at the current five percent rate are more costly to keep vacant than those being taxed at 1.85 percent if they are categorized as being under development.

## Transition Area A: East NoMA Neighborhood

*An eclectic mix of the new and old, and a carefully designed transition between high and low buildings*



(orange w/ purple border on Recommended NoMA Character Areas map, page 5.7)

Boundaries: Any C-2-A and C-2-B zoned area, east of the tracks, that borders an R-4 zone; and the C-M-1 zone east of the tracks between I and K Streets.

### VISION

- A residential neighborhood with neighborhood-oriented retail. The scale is larger near the tracks and H Street and tapers-down towards the existing neighborhood fabric.
- Residential projects should include small scale retail to support residents.
- Encourage creative, adaptive re-use of historic structures with special consideration for structures currently pending historic designation.
- Ensure that additions or alterations maintain historic integrity of structures.
- Further relate to scale of adjacent residential neighborhoods with human-scaled architectural and streetscape elements.
- New architecture should be comfortable with adjacent neighborhoods, without resorting to false historic elements. Contemporary architecture should be encouraged as long as scale transitions and related architectural elements provide continuity and visual interest.

### DESIRED LAND USE MIX

#### OFFICE /RESIDENTIAL GOALS:

- Moderate to medium densities.
- Residential/neighborhood-serving retail mix.

#### RETAIL GOALS:

- Limited neighborhood-serving retail recommended: smaller scale uses such as restaurants, coffee shops, dry cleaners, etc.
- Emphasize fine-grained street grid with strong residential character (multiple individual entrances) on east-west streets.
- Essentially no office uses (office allowed only as an accessory use).

### INFRASTRUCTURE, TRANSPORTATION, ENVIRONMENT & OPEN SPACE

- Proceed with the next step in planning: a Conceptual Public Realm Plan, comprising streets, open spaces, transit hubs, landscape guidelines, etc.
- Work with DDOT to develop a Pedestrian Plan for the area
- Discourage truck and commuter traffic flow through neighborhood 'short-cuts'.
- Neighborhood traffic calming, including discouragement of Florida Avenue Market truck traffic, construction traffic, and other neighborhood cut-throughs along 3rd Street.
- Metropolitan Branch Trail amenities and upgrades for at-grade segments east of the tracks).
- Engage DC Commission on the Arts and Humanities to pursue and fund artist/underpass projects.

### BUILDING DESIGN

- Encourage residential townhouses embedded in base of larger buildings.
- Develop height and massing criteria for all new infill structures with proximity to existing neighborhood rowhouse fabric.
- Height limits on new PUD development or any development requesting zoning changes or relief should step down close to existing rowhouse fabric; and may step up towards the railroad tracks.
- See Scale Transition Diagram below.

### INDIVIDUAL RESIDENTIAL ENTRANCES

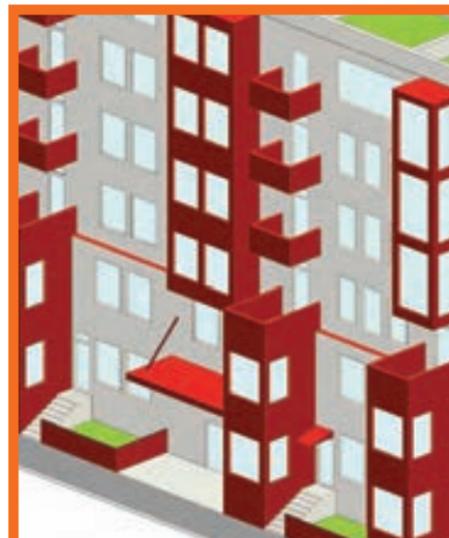


**DISCOURAGED**  
Single building entry



**ENCOURAGED:**  
Individual entrances to ground-floor units

### CREATIVE FACADE COMPOSITION



#### ENCOURAGED:

- Break facade repetition both vertically and horizontally
- Variety of window types and scale
- Changes in material
- Recess lines
- Roof gardens
- Expression of building openings
- Bay windows
- Balconies
- Overhangs
- Sunscreens
- Low garden walls

# CHARACTER AREA DEVELOPMENT GUIDELINES

## Transition Area B: Creative Industries/Mixed-Use



*An area anchored by the Uline Arena where existing historic buildings and alley patterns are infused with new higher-density infill construction to create a mix of uses and a transition between the Florida Avenue Market, the Metrorail Station and the existing rowhouse neighborhoods.*

*(Orange w/ purple border on Recommended NoMA Character Areas map, page 5.7)*

Boundaries: East of the tracks, including the areas zoned C-M-1 and C-M-3 south of Florida Avenue and north of L Street and the sites along the tracks, north of I Street.

### VISION

A mixed-use precinct with a diversity of uses including creative industries, residential and non-profit office uses, studio and live-work spaces, and a performing arts or recreation venue at Uline Arena. The area's location along the tracks, near the New York Avenue Metrorail Station and the Florida Avenue Market, makes it ideal for an urban neighborhood, based on its inherent characteristics and gritty quality. A study of the Florida Avenue Market will be proceeding in the near future. It will help determine appropriate uses along Florida Avenue and further define the opportunities for a relationship between this area and the Market.

- Support infill architecture inspired by the area's working past, its brick and concrete frame construction, the existing stone walls and the topography of sites along the tracks. Encourage imaginative loft-type buildings and flex space and take advantage of adaptive re-use opportunities.
- Call for historic preservation, adaptive re-use of certain existing structures and expansion of alley typology.
- Enhance connections to the Florida Avenue Market and strive for a synergy of uses in new project plans.
- Determine historic designation eligibility of the area, including National Capital Press Printing Plant, (301 N Street, NE) built in 1931. This brick and concrete warehouse has a distinctive saw-tooth monitor roof—an industrial roof type not common in DC.
- Consider adaptive re-use in the entire Uline Arena block, including alley, recognizing the uniqueness of the ensemble of residential, light industrial, and assembly-hall building typologies.
- Work with DC Commission on the Arts and Humanities to ensure a strong art presence in streets and public spaces, to include visual artists in preliminary phases of projects, and to fund artist/underpass projects.

- Mix of diverse residential and non-residential uses, with greatest height and density along rail tracks, Florida Avenue and N Street, transitioning to lower-density along streets facing existing rowhouses.

### RESIDENTIAL GOALS:

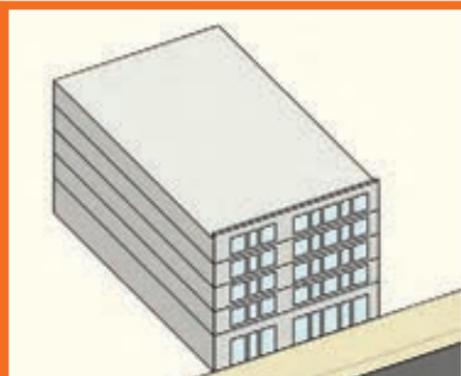
- Encourage diversity of housing types, including live-work and flexible space for artists and artisans.

### NON-RESIDENTIAL GOALS:

- Arts and design-oriented businesses and creative industries can be broadly defined around the goal of creating job diversity. Potential tenants could include: technology companies, furniture manufacturers and designers, architects, engineers, electronics distributors, sign-makers, metal fabricators, jewelers, artists/sculptors, graphic designers, software engineers, video, radio, and television production, motion picture and sound recording, broadcasting, publishing industries, internet-related services, in addition to other uses.
- Non-profit office uses.
- Retail, in particular at ground floor, neighborhood-serving, smaller scale, such as coffee shops, dry cleaners, restaurant/café/bar/club; including design-related retail, showroom component of live-work uses, and uses that reinforce the connection between the Florida Avenue Market and the Metrorail Station entrance at M Street.
- Community and cultural uses, in particular Uline Arena, for indoor recreation or entertainment activity, functioning as a neighborhood anchor with open space/plaza in front.
- Some neighborhood areas, including those along the tracks, may not be suitable for residential; other uses, including hotel, retail and office may be appropriate. Single-use office projects are not recommended.

### DESIRED LAND USE MIX

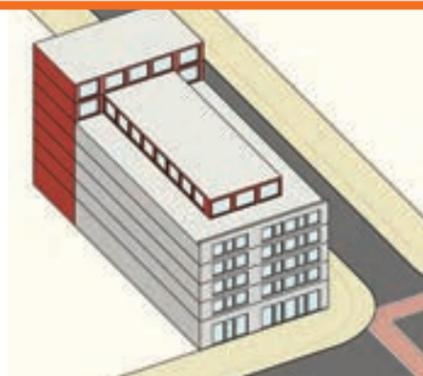
#### RESPECT FOR HISTORIC BUILDINGS



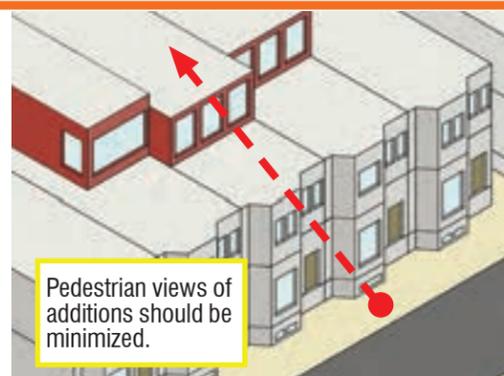
**EXISTING BUILDING**



**DISCOURAGED:** 'Facadectomy'



**ENCOURAGED:** Potential Addition



**ENCOURAGED:** Potential Addition.

## INFRASTRUCTURE, TRANSPORTATION, ENVIRONMENT & OPEN SPACE

- Work with WMATA to study improvement of bus routes and connections to New York Avenue Metro Station.
- Limit truck and commuter traffic cut-throughs on neighborhood streets.
- Implement traffic calming measures and limit construction and Florida Avenue Market delivery truck traffic from cutting-through the neighborhood on 3rd Street.
- Construct Metropolitan Branch Trail amenities and upgrades on at-grade segments.
- Engage DC Commission on the Arts and Humanities to pursue and fund underpass art projects.
- Encourage finer-grained street grid with potential continuation of Abbey Place or pedestrian link north from M Street to N Street, and pedestrian links between Florida Avenue Market and Metrorail Station.
- Encourage public art in streetscape design as part of the proposed public realm plan and in individual projects.

## BUILDING DESIGN

- Conduct design review for significant projects for prominent sites, large developments, and modification of historic resources, etc.
- Concentrate higher density and development taller buildings near NY Avenue Metrorail station and along Florida Avenue and N Streets; stepping down along M Street (frontage facing existing rowhouse fabric on the other side of the street), which would be limited to approximately 45', for a depth of approximately 40'.
- Establish special height and massing criteria for all structures that are adjacent to existing rowhouse fabric. See Scale Transition Diagram on page 5.10.

- Buildings designed for live-work situations and for artist housing have special characteristics, including:
  - High floor-to-floor heights
  - Units with access to freight elevators
  - Extra high and wide unit entry doors
  - Adequate electrical supply, cable and other technology infrastructure
  - Units capable of sustaining sufficient loads related to proposed new uses

## IMPLEMENTATION RESOURCES

### Cultural Development Corporation

*Engages artists and arts organizations in community development and neighborhood revitalization efforts*

Anne Corbett, Executive Director

Work: 202.315.1308 direct

E-Mail: [anne@culturaldc.org](mailto:anne@culturaldc.org)

916 G Street, NW

Washington, DC, 20001

[www.culturaldc.org](http://www.culturaldc.org) | [www.flashpointdc.org](http://www.flashpointdc.org)

### Artspace Projects, Inc. Minneapolis, MN

*Develops living and working space for artists*

<http://www.artspaceusa.org>

612-333-9012

E-mail: [info@artspaceusa.org](mailto:info@artspaceusa.org)

Contact: Mr. L. Kelley Lindquist

### Artscape

*Unlocks the creative potential of people and places by building creative places and developing creative districts and clusters, on a local, national and international level*

Tim Jones, Chief Executive Officer

Telephone: 416-392-1038

Fax: 416-392-1059

Address: 60 Atlantic Avenue

Suite 111

Toronto, ON M6K 1X9

E-mail: [liz@torontoartscape.on.ca](mailto:liz@torontoartscape.on.ca)

Website: [www.torontoartscape.on.ca](http://www.torontoartscape.on.ca)

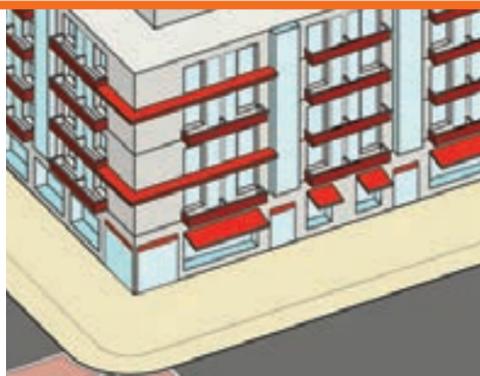
## FACADE ARTICULATION

***In preservation and adaptive re-use of buildings with historic value:***

Entire structure should be maintained, historic fabric should be restored, significant interior spaces maintained; rooftop and rear additions are permitted.



**DISCOURAGED**



**ENCOURAGED:** Balconies and bay windows to animate residential building facades.

# Character Area Development Guidelines

## GUIDELINES FOR:

## BROAD APPLICATION and SPECIFIC USE WITH PLANNED UNIT DEVELOPMENT REQUIREMENTS:

The following Character Area Development Guidelines are intended to provide development guidance for both public and private decision-makers in shaping development activity and to assist in the evaluation of all projects. These guidelines will be use for any future zoning changes and will be specifically applied to the evaluation and approval of Planned Unit Developments or any other District government Development Review activity.

Since Planned Unit Development zoning is one of the most powerful tools we have in achieving the vision developed throughout this process and in implementing the specifics of this Plan, these Character Area Development Guidelines form the basis for shaping those projects. These guidelines break down the NoMA Planning Area into six smaller sub-districts that are generally based on current underlying zoning designations.

There are certain implementation recommendations that are common to many or all Character Areas and they are repeated in each area where they are relevant. For example, recommendations relating to the the re-introduction of a finer grained street network, the avoidance of “superblock” development, the need for a *NoMA Public Realm Plan*, connections among the subareas of NoMA and adjacent areas, the conservation of historic resources, the importance of neighborhood involvement and close consultation between the private and public sectors etc. reappear throughout.

### NoMA CHARACTER AREA BOUNDARIES

**Central NoMA Boundaries:** All C-3-C-zoned areas north of I Street, east of North Capitol Street and south of Florida Avenue, except for Northwest One planning parcels along North Capitol Street; plus the triangular area bounded by New York Ave, Florida Ave, and the railroad tracks; as well as Union Station and all areas west of Union Station south of G Street.

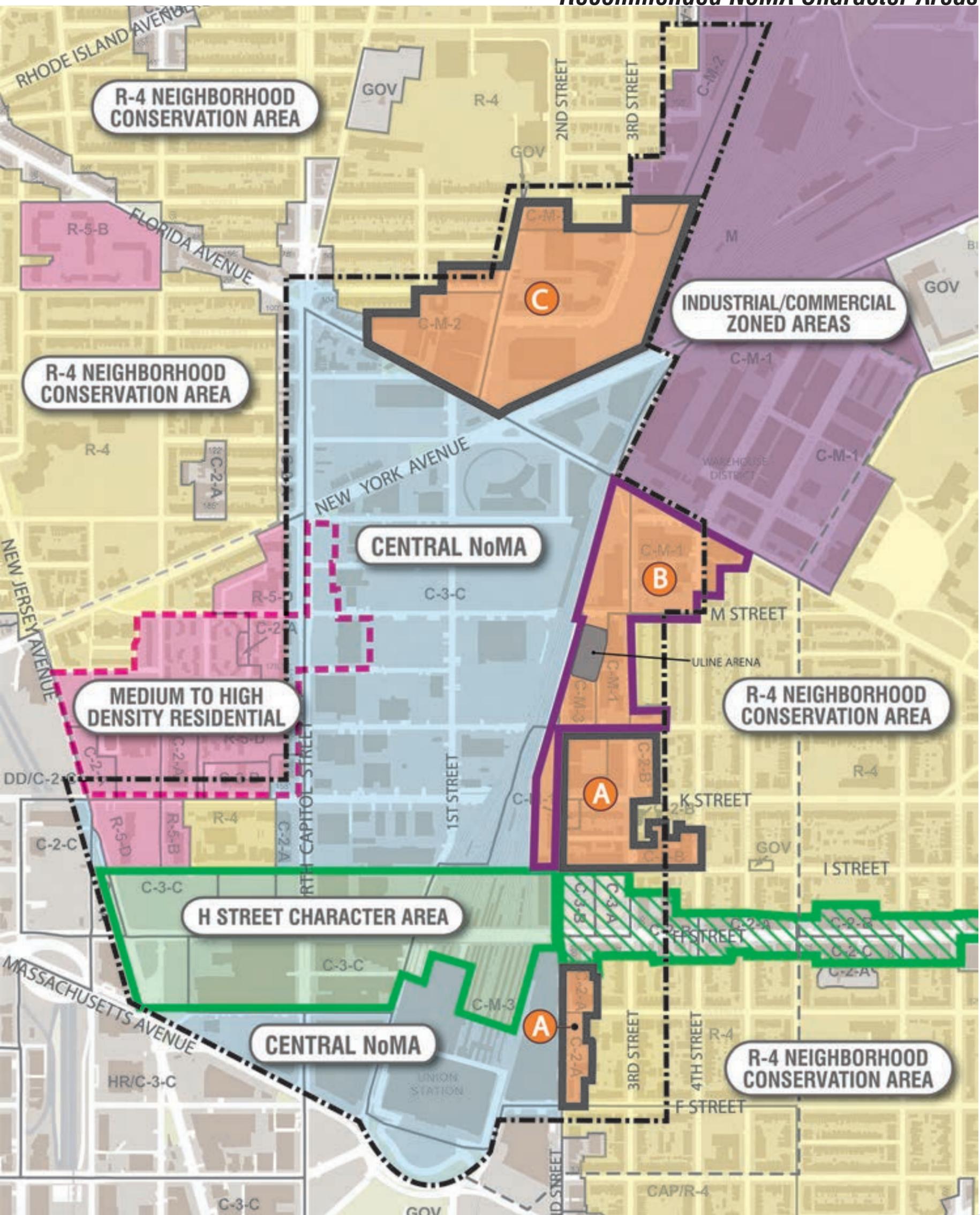
**Transition Area A: “East NoMA Neighborhood” Boundaries:** C-2-A and C-2-B zoned area, east of the tracks, that border R-4 zone.

**Transition Area B: “Mixed-Use/Creative Industries District”:** East of the tracks, within the areas zoned C-M-1 and C-M-3 south of Florida Avenue, as well as the sites between I and L Streets along the tracks.

**Transition Area C: “North NoMA/Eckington Neighborhood” Boundaries:** Within the area zoned C-M-2 and M north of Florida and New York Avenues and below R Street, NE.

**H Street Character Area (West of 2nd Street NE) Boundaries:** Area between G & I Streets, from 2nd Street NE, west to New Jersey Avenue.

**R-4 Residential: “Neighborhood Conservation Areas” Boundaries:** All R-4 zoned areas.



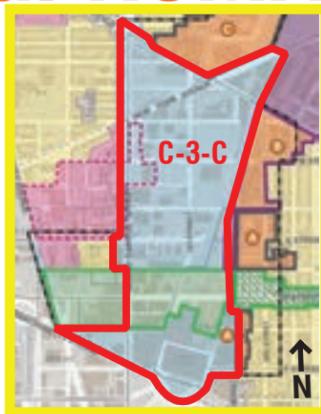
**LEGEND**

- Neighborhood Transition Area: Sub Areas A, B, C
- H Street Overlay
- H Street Character Area
- R-4 Neighborhood Conservation Area
- Central NoMA
- Industrial/Commercial Zoned Areas
- Medium to High Density Residential
- NorthWest One
- Zoning Boundary
- Study Area Boundary

# CHARACTER AREA DEVELOPMENT GUIDELINES

## Central NoMA

*A Downtown neighborhood with a great environment for living and working and a unique identity*



(blue area on Recommended NoMA Character Areas map, page 5.7)  
Boundaries: All C-3-C-zoned area north of I Street, east of North Capitol Street and south of Florida Avenue, except for Northwest One planning parcels along North Capitol Street; plus the triangular area bounded by New York Ave, Florida Ave, and the railroad tracks; and, Union Station and all areas west of Union Station south of G Street.

### VISION

- Capitalize on substantial vacant land and Metrorail connections to create a balanced 50/50 mix of high density office and residential uses. With its proximity to Downtown, this is the area with the best long-term potential for office development. It is also where a limited-term residential tax abatement might be employed to ensure the desired mix of uses.
- Break down the scale of developments on large tracts of assembled land, emphasize a fine-grained street grid with the re-introduction of some streets that were closed when rail lines were consolidated for Union Station.
- Encourage the provision of multiple individual entrances in residential developments, especially on east-west streets, by embedding townhouse-like structures within the lower floors of large building.
- Emphasize creative architecture that keys-off the area's prior industrial character through the preservation and creative adaptive re-use of historic structures.
- Capture lower-price point office and residential markets through the innovative use of inexpensive building materials.
- Locate community-serving retail along 1st Street to focus community activity. This may require a zoning overlay to encourage development of ground floor space suitable for significant retail use, including restaurants.
- Take advantage of the area's excellent rail-oriented infrastructure by enhancing pedestrian connections to the New York Avenue Metro Station and Union Station.
- Emphasize creative linkages to the Metropolitan Branch Trail, as a unifying element and as a unique public space.

### DESIRED LAND USE MIX

#### OFFICE /RESIDENTIAL GOALS:

- Target 50/50 mix of commercial/residential uses.
- Promote active streets with many residential entrances.

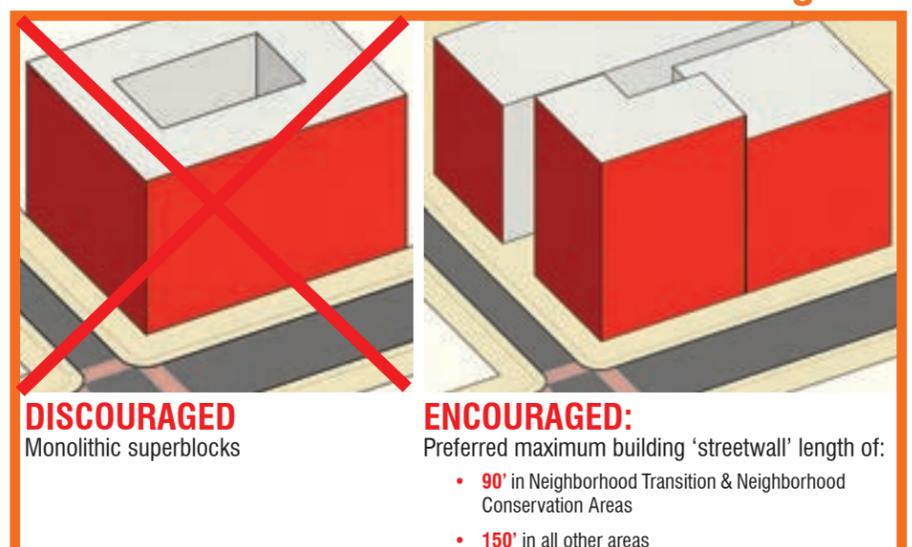
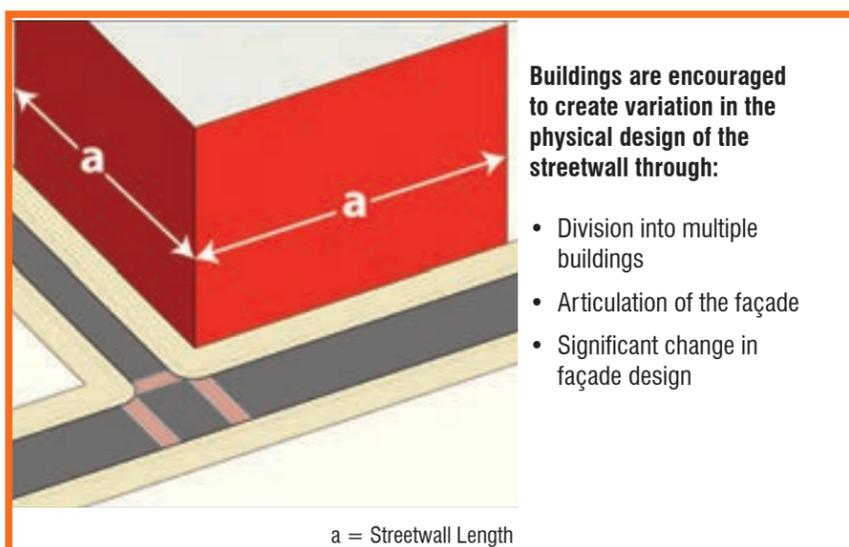
#### RETAIL GOALS

- Mix of retail focus areas, including:
  - Neighborhood serving retail along 1st Street spine.
  - Anchor retail at Union Station and, possibly along N Street between North Capitol and 2nd Streets.

#### IMPLEMENTATION TOOLS

- A limited amount of Residential Tax Abatements available for a defined period of time to induce preferred land-use mix.
- Omit Transferable Development Rights (TDR) receiving zones in NoMA from areas where Inclusionary Zoning would be required. TDRs have already maximized development potential, and few or no incentives remain to developer to provide affordable housing.
- Emphasize fine-grained street grid with strong residential character (multiple individual entrances) on east-west streets.
- Potential zoning overlay for limited first floor areas at corners of 1st Street, NE and K, L, M and N Streets to require 14'-clear heights and clear glass and to permit only sales-tax producing (e.g., retail) uses in these corner spaces.
- Encourage public space permits to allow for temporary vendors along 1st Street, NE.
- Develop design review procedures and conduct design review for projects receiving tax abatement and other incentives and for those on prominent sites and large sites. This will insure that public incentives are well invested.

### STREETWALL VARIETY: Streetwall Length



## INFRASTRUCTURE, TRANSPORTATION, ENVIRONMENT & OPEN SPACE

- Develop an Infrastructure and Utility Impact study for the whole area.
- Work with DDOT to study the feasibility and cost of introducing new streets and alleys designated in the Open Space Section of the Plan.

### SHORT-TERM

- Work with DDOT on re-design of 1st Street rebuilding in time to facilitate a FY 2007 completion date; work with DDOT to provide sidewalks and basic streetscape improvements at appropriate locations including a possible public plaza in the block of 1st Street between K and L Streets. (See 1st Street Recommendation Box at right). Include Casey Tree Foundation in the process.
- Work with WMATA to study improvement of bus routes and connections to New York Avenue Metro Station.

### SHORT-TERM

- Improve existing north-south shuttle service as more developments are completed.

### MID-TERM

- Better bus connections to New York Avenue Metro Station.

### LONG-TERM

- Develop better city-wide connections with K Street transit way, and/or north-south circulator route.
- Work with DDOT to develop a “Pedestrian Plan” for the area.
- Introduce new streets/alleys to improve “Central NoMA” vehicular/pedestrian movement, and alleviate existing traffic diversions through nearby R-4 residential areas.
- Proceed with the next step in planning: a Conceptual Public Realm Plan, comprising streets, open spaces and parks, transit hubs, landscape guidelines, etc.
- Engage DC Commission on the Arts and Humanities to pursue and fund artist/underpass projects.
- Metropolitan Branch Trail/“Burnham Spine” developed as transportation as well as a recreation spine:
  - Vertical connections to trail: ramps, stairs, elevators
  - Trail-level connections to adjacent buildings
  - Continuation of “public-art” emphasis to trail: art-walk
  - Potential “greening” of the trail in some areas
  - Extension of the elevated trail down to L Street, connecting into future air-rights development over tracks

## BUILDING DESIGN

- Offer increased design review assistance for projects of significant importance (i.e., prominent site, extremely large development site, modification of historic resource, etc)

- Advocate the use of NCPC security design standards, (summarized in Appendix E.1-E.3) Note that the District’s standards and open space review process may require design solutions that exceed the requirements of NCPC’s security design standards.
- High quality retail ground floor design (see below).
- For large residential building types, encourage building type with residential ‘townhouses’ embedded in base of larger buildings.
- Most buildings will reach 110 to 130 foot height limits with potential TDR floor area.

## 1st Street: Recommended Revisions

*Adjusting DDOT’s current plans to fit the new NoMA Vision*

### Intent

The current plans for rebuilding 1st Street were conceived before the emergence of a comprehensive vision for the area. 1st Street was not yet seen as the ‘main street’, social spine, and pedestrian-oriented heart of a mixed use neighborhood. Given this new context, the Office of Planning and DDOT should continue the process (already begun) of working together to adjust current plans in time to meet project deadlines for capital improvements that have already been budgeted for.

### Recommendations

1. Alter current plans for 5’ grassy strip and 6’ sidewalk to: 4’ pervious paving strip with tree wells and 9’ sidewalk.
2. Study the elimination of bike lane (or portion of bike lane) on east side of 1st Street, so that on-street parallel parking can be accommodated. Bike trail can be accommodated through one or more of the following means: on elevated Metropolitan Branch Trail extension (proposed in this Plan; or, on extension of 2nd Street west of the tracks (proposed in this Plan); or, on an enlarged version of the already-proposed at-grade bike trail east of the tracks along 2nd Street.
3. Encourage simple, inexpensive paving materials (such as placed concrete in a 3 foot joint grid), executed with the highest quality. Simple, utilitarian (not ‘over-designed’) street furniture and material-palette for 1st Street can achieve an understated elegance and functional beauty appropriate to NoMA’s industrial past and future.
4. Incorporate quality security design strategies to the 1st Street design so that they don’t have to be added later, using NCPC’s National Capital Urban Design and Security Plan.
  - Use street design to limit large vehicle movements in certain areas, rather than adding artificial physical barriers at the curb line.
  - Incorporate physical perimeter security barriers with decorative tree wells, planters, light poles, signage, benches, parking meters, trash receptacles and other streetscape elements.
  - Plant new trees and protect existing trees as they help minimize the visual impact and physical intrusion of the security barriers in the urban landscape.
  - Include curbs, copings and retaining walls into the design to reduce the perceived height of the security barriers.

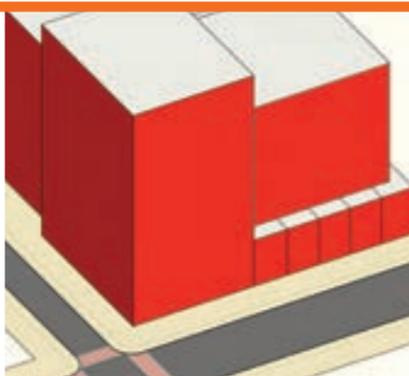
## STREETWALL VARIETY: Building Massing

## QUALITY RETAIL DESIGN



### DISCOURAGED:

A single building with a base designed to look like multiple ‘fake’ buildings.



### ENCOURAGED:

A single building with articulated massing.



### DISCOURAGED:

Low visual openness at street level



### ENCOURAGED:

Significant glass coverage for transparency & views

- Discourage tinted glass
- Opaque, smoked or decorative glass for accents only
- Maintain minimum 80% (approximately) glass coverage for overall storefront dimensions
- Ground floor window tops no lower than 9’ above sidewalk
- Minimum 14’ floor-to-ceiling height at ground floor retail

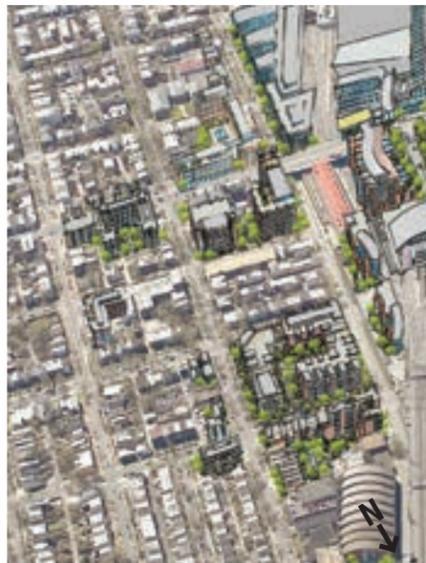
# CHARACTER AREA DEVELOPMENT GUIDELINES

## R-4 Residential: Neighborhood Conservation Areas

*DC's great residential legacy - protection for thriving rowhouse neighborhoods*

*(yellow areas on Recommended NoMA Character Areas map, page 5.7)*

*Boundaries: All R-4 zoned areas*



### VISION

- Historic preservation and creative, adaptive re-use of historic structures.
- Preserve and enhance existing residential rowhouse fabric.
- Human-scaled architectural and streetscape elements.
- New architecture should be comfortable with existing neighborhoods, without introducing false historical elements. Modern, contemporary architecture should be encouraged, as long as scale transitions and architectural elements provide continuity.

### DESIRED LAND USE MIX

- Low density.
- Primarily residential.
- Limited office uses.
- No support for PUD's or zoning changes in existing rowhouse residential areas.

#### RETAIL GOALS:

- Limited neighborhood serving retail.
- Primary retail along H Street.

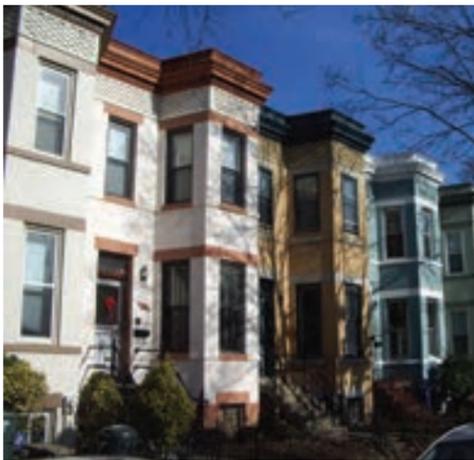
### INFRASTRUCTURE, TRANSPORTATION, ENVIRONMENT & OPEN SPACE

- Discourage truck and commuter traffic flow through neighborhood 'short-cuts'.
- Neighborhood traffic calming (including discouragement of construction & Wholesale Market truck neighborhood cut-throughs along 3rd Street).
- Stricter parking enforcement to free up more spaces for residents.
- Landscaping & Public Realm plan for street improvements.

### BUILDING DESIGN

- Consistency with existing neighborhood fabric

### Stanton Park



### Truxton Circle



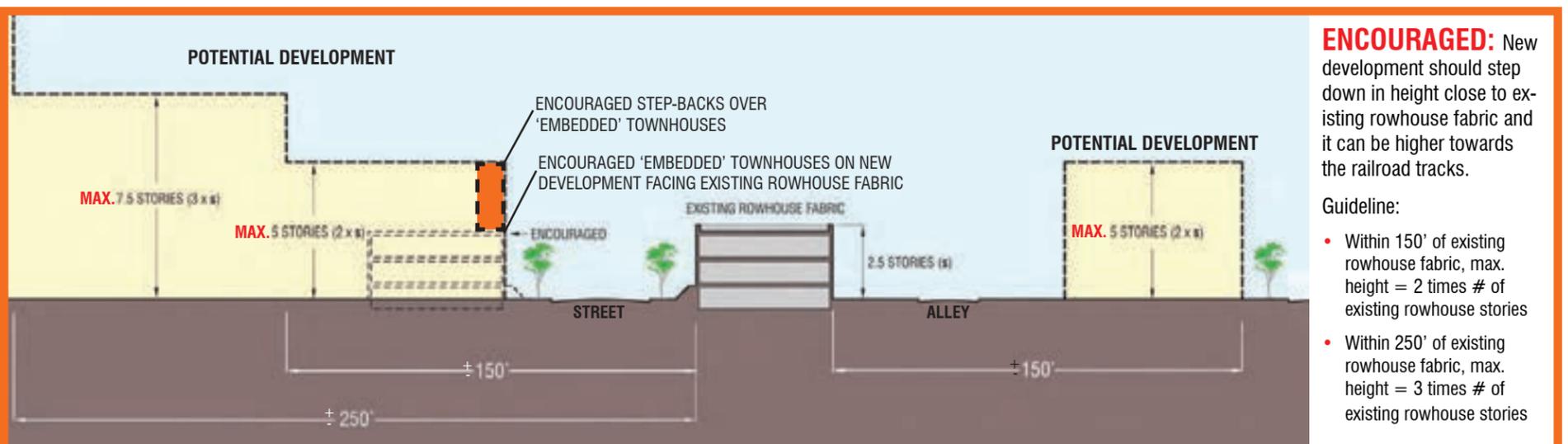
### Eckington



### Near Northeast



## BUILDING SCALE IN TRANSITION AREAS



# CHARACTER AREA DEVELOPMENT GUIDELINES

## Transition Area C: North NoMA Neighborhood

*A broad mix of uses where Eckington and NoMA meet*

*(orange w/ grey border on Recommended NoMA Character Areas map, page 5.7)*

Boundaries: Within the area zoned C-M-2 and M north of Florida and New York Avenues and below R Street, NE.



### VISION

- Strong connections to the Eckington neighborhood at the northern end of NoMA suggest the importance of residential development with neighborhood-serving retail for both residents and commercial tenants, in the transition to the larger scale, commercial structures along Florida and New York Avenues.
- Historic preservation and creative, adaptive re-use of historic structures.
  - Move forward with Historic Designation of existing properties outside of R-4 Zoning areas that are currently recognized as “pending designation”
  - No support for any changes to the underlying zoning (in PUD applications) in areas currently zoned R-4
  - PUD applications will be considered within other zoning designations in the Transition Areas because the process allows for more detailed, subtle solutions to scale transitions that cannot be accomplished simply by zoning designations.
  - Develop PUD criteria guidelines to evaluate PUD applications
  - In the PUD evaluation process, for applications in the above-mentioned Transition Areas, include staff from the Historic Preservation office. Evaluate PUD’s in these areas using criteria that would be used in Historic Districts, such as character and scale issues.
- New architecture should ‘fit in’ with adjacent neighborhoods without false historic elements. Contemporary architecture should be allowed, as long as scale transitions and related architectural elements provide continuity and visual interest.
- Further relate to scale of adjacent residential neighborhoods with human-scaled architectural and streetscape elements.
- Potential future redevelopment of FedEx site should contribute to ‘gateway’ definition of NY/ Florida Ave intersection.

### DESIRED LAND USE MIX

#### COMMERCIAL/INDUSTRIAL/RESIDENTIAL GOALS

- Moderate, medium and high densities.
- Commercial-residential and light industrial mix with larger scale, commercial-residential mix along tracks.
- Larger scale, more commercial and light-industrial character closer to Florida Ave/ NY Ave intersection.
- Smaller scale, more residential character closer to northern boundaries and existing residential fabric.

- Larger commercial uses should focus on office uses, with industrial uses only encouraged in conjunction with improved transportation routes directing traffic toward the major roads to the south of the area and not through the residential core of Eckington.

#### RETAIL GOALS

- Limited neighborhood-serving retail: smaller scale uses such as restaurants, coffee shops, dry cleaners, etc
- Emphasize fine-grained street grid with strong residential character (multiple individual entrances) on east-west streets, connecting into patterns of existing adjacent neighborhoods

### INFRASTRUCTURE, TRANSPORTATION, ENVIRONMENT & OPEN SPACE

- Work with DDOT to develop a “Pedestrian Plan” for the area
- Metropolitan Branch Trail developed as transportation as well as recreation spine, with amenities and upgrades
- Introduce new streets and alleys; increase street frontage along and access to Metropolitan Branch Trail
- Discourage truck and commuter traffic flow through neighborhood “short-cuts”; limit truck traffic on certain roads.
- Neighborhood traffic calming (including discouragement of FedEx truck neighborhood cut-throughs).
- Development between Harry Thomas Way & tracks should incorporate pedestrian connections to Metropolitan Branch Trail.
- Landscaping & Public Realm plan for street improvements and screening/ buffering of Fed Ex site.

### BUILDING DESIGN

- Encourage residential townhouses embedded in base of larger buildings.
- For residential buildings, activate ground floor residential entrances along east-west streets (avoid suburban-type drop-off circles, as currently proposed at Fairfield).
- Special height and massing criteria for all structures that require zoning processing and that are proximate to existing neighborhood rowhouse fabric.
- Height limits on new development should step down close to existing rowhouse fabric; and may step up towards the railroad tracks.
- See Scale Transition Diagram on page 5.6.

## H Street West Character Area: West of 2nd Street NE

*Dramatic, contemporary forms and materials in the architecture over the rail tracks to create a landmark and a north-facing entrance to Union Station.*

*(Green area on Recommended NoMA Character Areas map, page 5.7)*

*Boundaries: Area between G & I Streets, from 2nd Street NE, west to New Jersey Avenue.*



### VISION

Significant retail, hotel and other uses within development of air rights over the tracks to expand upon the regional retail draw and transit hub at Union Station. There is an opportunity to enhance the services available to NoMA and other existing adjacent neighborhoods and provide a central point along H Street to connect neighborhood-scale retail to the east and new uses to the west. The intersection of H Street and North Capitol Street should be a hub of activity.

- Take advantage of new construction and high visibility of air-rights buildings to create a dramatic addition and focal point for the NoMA area and DC.
- Combine hotels, retail and other uses in the air rights development
- On H Street west of North Capitol, emphasize existing brick architecture with new architecture of the highest quality, inspired by the red-brick Government Printing Office buildings.
- Brick articulation encouraged.
- Large window openings, consistent regulating lines & architectural continuity.
- Historic preservation and creative, adaptive re-use of historic structures.
- North Capitol as a “seam” instead of a barrier.

### DESIRED LAND USE MIX

#### OFFICE/RESIDENTIAL GOALS:

- High density.
- Target 50/50 mix of Commercial/ Residential uses.

#### RETAIL GOALS:

- Mix of retail focus areas, including:
  - Neighborhood-serving retail along H Street
  - Anchor retail including potential air-rights development over tracks (connecting into Union Station anchor), and potential medium-box retail opportunities nearby to Union Station (such as U.S. Government Printing Office buildings)
  - Potential recreation element as part of air-rights development over tracks

#### IMPLEMENTATION TOOLS

- A limited amount of Residential Tax Abatements available for a limited time period.

- Omit Transferable Development Rights (TDR) receiving zones in NoMA from areas where Inclusionary Zoning would be required. TDRs have already maximized development potential, and few or no incentives remain to developer to provide affordable housing.

### INFRASTRUCTURE, TRANSPORTATION, ENVIRONMENT & OPEN SPACE

- Work with DDOT to develop a Pedestrian Plan for the area.
- Metropolitan Branch Trail developed as transportation as well as recreation spine: connections between Metropolitan Branch Trail and air-rights development and Union Station.
- Potential future re-organization of Gonzaga High School’s athletic facilities (open space) to allow for development parcel facing North Capitol Street.
- Potential new public street (extension of I Street) between Gonzaga and existing playing field upon completion of athletic field relocation and development of parcel facing North Capitol Street.
- Proceed with the next step in planning: a Conceptual Public Realm Plan, comprising streets, open spaces, transit hubs, landscape guidelines, etc.
- Engage DC Commission on the Arts and Humanities to pursue and fund artist/underpass projects.
- Landscaping & Public Realm plan for street improvements.

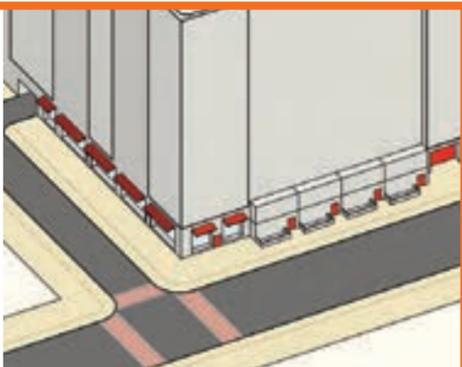
### BUILDING DESIGN

- Work closely with developers with actual projects on the boards.
- Increased design review for projects of significant importance (i.e., prominent site, extremely large development site, modification of historic resource, etc).
- For large residential building types, encourage building type with residential ‘townhouses’ embedded in base of larger building.
- Most buildings will reach height limits with potential TDR floor area.

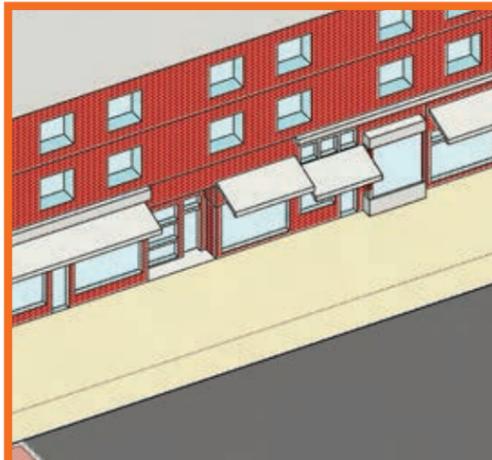
### ACTIVE GROUND FLOORS: Framing the Street



**DISCOURAGED**  
Motorcourt drop-offs



**ENCOURAGED:** Active lower floor uses and pedestrian-oriented design at ground level. Avoid large ‘motor court’ drop-offs.



#### MATERIALS AND DURABLE QUALITY

Encourage high quality materials for the entire building, with a special emphasis on detailing and durability for the first 2 floors.

- Richer materials, more intensive details and lighting to enhance pedestrian views at the first 2 floors
- Avoid easily damaged materials, such as EIFS at first 2 floors

