

**LARGE TRACT REVIEW
BY THE
D.C. OFFICE OF PLANNING**

**Application of 2800 8th Street Partners LLC
Statement of the Applicant
2800 8th Street, N.E. (Square 3643, Lot 822)**

Consistency with the Comprehensive Plan (Section 2301.3(e))

The following is a summary statement describing how the proposed development of a new self-storage facility with space for future ground floor retail is consistent with the citywide and area elements of the District of Columbia Comprehensive Plan (“Comprehensive Plan”). The proposed self-storage facility is a matter of right use.

A. Purposes of the Comprehensive Plan

D.C. Code § 1-306.01 states that the District Elements of the Comprehensive Plan are designed to:

1. Define the requirements and aspirations of District residents, and accordingly influence social, economic and physical development;
2. Guide executive and legislative decisions on matters affecting the District and its citizens;
3. Promote economic growth and jobs for District residents;
4. Guide private and public development in order to achieve District and community goals;
5. Maintain and enhance the natural and architectural assets of the District; and
6. Assist in the conservation, stabilization, and improvement of each neighborhood and community in the District.

The proposed development advances these purposes by (i) promoting the District’s social, economic, and physical development; (ii) promoting economic growth and jobs for District residents; and (iii) by stabilizing and improving the surrounding community.

B. The Future Land Use Map and the Generalized Policy Map

The Future Land Use Map of the Comprehensive Plan designates the subject property for Production, Distribution, and Repair (“PDR”) uses. This designation is used to define areas characterized by manufacturing, warehousing, wholesale and distribution centers, and other utility activities. 10A DCMR § 225.12. Consistent with these uses, the project will be a five story, 112,670 square foot self-storage facility with approximately 872 individual self-contained storage units. The ground floor is designed to accommodate future retail uses along 8th Street.

The Generalized Policy Map of the Comprehensive Plan includes the Site in a Neighborhood Conservation Area. The Comprehensive Plan provides that Neighborhood Conservation Areas that are designated PDR on the Future Land Use Map are expected to be

retained with the mix of industrial, office, and retail uses they have historically provided. The guiding philosophy in Neighborhood Conservation Areas is to conserve and enhance established neighborhoods. The diversity of land uses and building types in these areas should be maintained and new development and alterations should be compatible with the existing scale and architectural character of each area (10A DCMR §§ 223.4-5). The proposed development is consistent with this designation since it will enhance the existing neighborhood and provide new development that is compatible with the surrounding mixed-use context.

C. Compliance with the Citywide Elements of the Comprehensive Plan

The project is consistent with the citywide elements of the Comprehensive Plan and will advance a number of their stated goals and policies.

1. Framework Element

The Framework Element of the Comprehensive Plan provides the context for the rest of the Plan by describing the forces driving change in the city. 10 DCMR § 200.2. The proposed project directly addresses a number of the guiding principles of the Framework Element, including creating successful neighborhoods, managing growth and change, and increasing access to education and employment.

a. Creating Successful Neighborhoods

The project incorporates the guiding principles specified in the Creating Successful Neighborhoods section of the Framework Element. This section recognizes that commercial uses are important to neighborhoods, and provides that:

Many neighborhoods include commercial and institutional uses that contribute to their character. Neighborhood businesses, retail districts, schools, park and recreational facilities, houses of worship and other public facilities all make our communities more livable. These uses provide strong centers that reinforce neighborhood identity and provide destinations and services for residents. They too must be protected and stabilized. 10A DCMR § 218.2.

The Applicant has designed the project in accordance with the existing character of the surrounding neighborhood. The self-storage facility with potential ground floor retail will provide much needed services to individuals and businesses within the community, will provide new job opportunities for District residents, and will help reinforce the identity of the neighborhood. The nature of the infill development of this vacant site and the proposed streetscape and landscape improvements will increase safety and livability within the community. Building on the vacant lot will put additional eyes and ears on the street and discourage illegal behavior on and around the site. Overall, the project will provide the vacant site with a high-quality, state of the art self-storage facility that will be utilized by residents in the area and throughout the city.

b. Managing Growth and Change

The project also incorporates several guiding principles identified in the Managing Growth and Change section of the Framework Element. One of the enumerated guiding principles in this section is that “the District needs both residential and non-residential growth to survive. Non-residential growth benefits residents by creating jobs and opportunities for less affluent households to increase their income.” 10A DCMR § 217.4. Another principle is that “redevelopment and infill opportunities along corridors and near transit stations will be an important component of reinvigorating and enhancing our neighborhoods.” 10A DCMR § 217.6. Further, Section 217.7 provides that “growth in the District benefits not only District residents, but the region as well. By accommodating a larger number of jobs and residents, we can create the critical mass needed to support new services, sustain public transit, and improve regional environmental quality.”

The proposed self-storage facility will encompass non-residential development that will benefit the residential community by creating construction and permanent job opportunities for District residents. Redevelopment of the vacant site will help to further the revitalization currently underway in the neighborhood, and will generate additional real property, employment and sales tax revenue for the District. Rental fees for the individual storage units will expand the District’s tax receipts and attract revenue to the area. Furthermore, the development will help support overall redevelopment in the burgeoning neighborhood that will be necessary to support new services and improve the urban quality of life in this area.

With large demand drivers to include the existing commercial businesses, residential community, and close proximity to several universities as well as the existing vacancy rate of competitors, the site has every indication of a strong demand for a self-storage facility in this location within the District.

c. Increasing Access to Education and Employment

The Increasing Access to Education and Employment section provides for a number of policy goals focused on increasing economic activity in the District, including increasing access to jobs by District residents (§ 219.1); encouraging a broad spectrum of private and public growth (§ 219.2); supporting land development policies that create job opportunities for District residents with varied job skills (§ 219.6), and increasing shopping and services for many District neighborhoods and creating more opportunities for local entrepreneurs and small businesses (§ 219.9). The project is consistent with these goals because it will provide new jobs for District residents with a varied level of job skills, increase much needed storage services for District residents, and create new opportunities for small businesses to flourish. The vacant site was formerly the home of a DC based business that closed and ceased operations. Furthermore, the proposed development will be a stable business establishment with employment opportunities for residents within the surrounding community, Ward 5, and the District as a whole.

2. Land Use Element

The Land Use Element of the Comprehensive Plan establishes the basic policies guiding the physical form of the city, and provides direction on a range of development, conservation, and land use compatibility issues. 10A DCMR § 300.1. The Land Use Goal of the Comprehensive Plan is to:

Ensure the efficient use of land resources to meet long-term neighborhood, citywide, and regional needs; to help foster other District goals; to protect the health, safety, and welfare of District residents and businesses; to sustain, restore or improve the character and stability of neighborhoods in all parts of the city; and to effectively balance the competing demands for land to support the many activities that take place within District boundaries. 10A DCMR § 302.1.

The project furthers a number of the policies articulated in the Land Use Element. Specifically, the proposed project is consistent with *Policy LU-1.3.2: Development Around Metrorail Stations*, which encourages concentrating redevelopment efforts on those Metrorail station areas which offer the greatest opportunities for infill development and growth, particularly stations in areas with weak market demand, or with large amounts of vacant or poorly utilized land. In this case, the Site is located approximately 0.5 miles from the Brookland Metrorail station along 8th Street, N.E., which runs adjacent and parallel to the Metrorail Red line and has enormous potential for future infill development and growth. The project is also consistent with *Policy LU-1.3.5: Edge Conditions Around Transit Stations*, which is intended to ensure that development adjacent to Metrorail stations is planned and designed to respect the character, scale, and integrity of adjacent neighborhoods. This project will respect the existing neighborhood context with a building of a scale and density that is appropriate for the site. Moreover, the proposed storage facility will improve the area's existing physical image by constructing a new state-of-the-art building on a vacant lot, with an opportunity for future street-level retail.

The project is also consistent with *Policy LU-1.4.1: Infill Development*, which encourages infill development on vacant land within the city, particularly in areas where there are vacant lots that create "gaps" in the urban fabric. In this case, the project will redevelop a vacant lot that currently creates a gap in the streetscape and neighborhood. The project will complement the established character of the neighborhood and will not create any sharp changes in the physical development pattern of the area. In addition, the project complies with *Policy LU-2.3.2: Mitigation of Commercial Development Impacts*, because it will not result in unreasonable or unexpected traffic, parking, litter, shadow, view obstruction, odor, noise, or vibration impacts on surrounding residential neighborhoods. The facility is a low traffic-generator and will not negatively impact existing traffic patterns. The Applicant will provide on-site parking for patron and employee usage. Moreover, the project is consistent with *Policy LU-3.1.1: Conservation of Industrial Land*, which recognizes the importance of industrial land to the economy of the District, specifically its ability to accommodate PDR activities. The proposed project will actively take advantage of the viable PDR land use designation of the Site, while allowing for compatible retail uses and development standards established in the CM-2 District.

3. Economic Development Element

The Comprehensive Plan provides that the goal of the Economic Development Element is to “strengthen the District’s economy by sustaining its core industries, attracting new and diverse industries, accommodating future job growth, fostering the success of small businesses, revitalizing neighborhood commercial centers, improving resident job skills, and helping a greater number of District residents find and keep jobs in the Washington regional economy.” 10A DCMR § 701.1.

PDR jobs include the construction trades, utilities, transportation, publishing, manufacturing, wholesalers, and service providers. When these various industries are considered collectively, they account for approximately ten percent of the District’s employment. PDR employment in the District has been stable over the past several years. Declines in some sectors, such as manufacturing, have been offset by growth in other sectors, such as construction and warehousing. PDR jobs are particularly desirable in the District, as they offer competitive wages to persons with limited education and academic credentials. 10A DCMR § 711.1. The PDR sector also plays an important role in supporting other sectors of the economy. The federal government, the hospitality industry, the construction trades, and many of the District’s large private employers require services that are delivered from warehouses, trucking, and distribution centers. 10A DCMR § 711.4.

Consistent with these goals, the proposed self-storage facility will contribute to the growing self-storage warehousing industry in the District. The facility will create a number of full-time and part-time employment positions that offer competitive wages and benefits to District residents. The proposed self-storage facility and future retail opportunities will expand the economic viability of the surrounding area and favorably contribute to the quantity and quality of PDR employment opportunities. Tax revenues from the construction and operation of the facility will benefit the District. Moreover, although the use is classified as industrial, there are no manufacturing by-products or other external effects generated by the use. Overall, the proposed self-storage facility will assist in stabilizing and improving the surrounding neighborhood by removing an unattractive vacant lot and replacing it with a new building to house a stable business establishment that enhances the economic viability of the area.

4. Upper Northeast Area Element

The site is identified as part of the Upper Northeast Area Element, which encompasses 8.7 square miles and includes about two-thirds of the District’s northeastern quadrant (10A DCMR § 2400.1). Upper Northeast is principally known as a residential community (10A DCMR § 2400.2), but the mix of uses in Upper Northeast is particularly diverse compared to other parts of the city (10A DCMR §§ 2400.3). The planning area contains the second largest concentration of industrial land uses in the District, and a new generation has “discovered” Upper Northeast, driving up prices and increasing housing demand (10A DCMR §§ 2400.3 and 2400.8).

Consistent with *Policy UNE-1.2.1: Compatible Infill*, the project will provide a new infill use that is consistent with its designation on the Future Land Use Map. The project is also consistent with *Policy UNE-1.1.8: Untapped Economic Development Potential*, because it responds to the significant potential of the area's commercially and industrially-zoned lands to generate jobs, provide new shopping opportunities, create new business ownership opportunities, and promote the vitality and economic wellbeing of the Upper Northeast Community. Similarly, the project takes advantage of *Policy UNE-1.1.9: Production, Distribution, and Repair Uses*, which encourages the upgrading of PDR uses in Upper Northeast through higher design standards, landscaping, and improved screening and buffering. This policy also emphasizes new uses that create jobs for Upper Northeast area residents, and that minimize off-site impacts on the surrounding residential areas. In addition, the project complies with *Policy UNE-1.2.4: Linking Residents to Jobs*, which encourages improving linkages between residents and jobs within Upper Northeast so that more of the area's 40,000 working age adults fill the approximately 40,000 jobs located within the planning area.