

# 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.

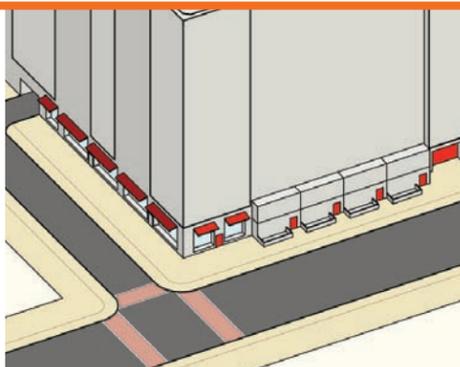
### BUILDING DESIGN

- 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

