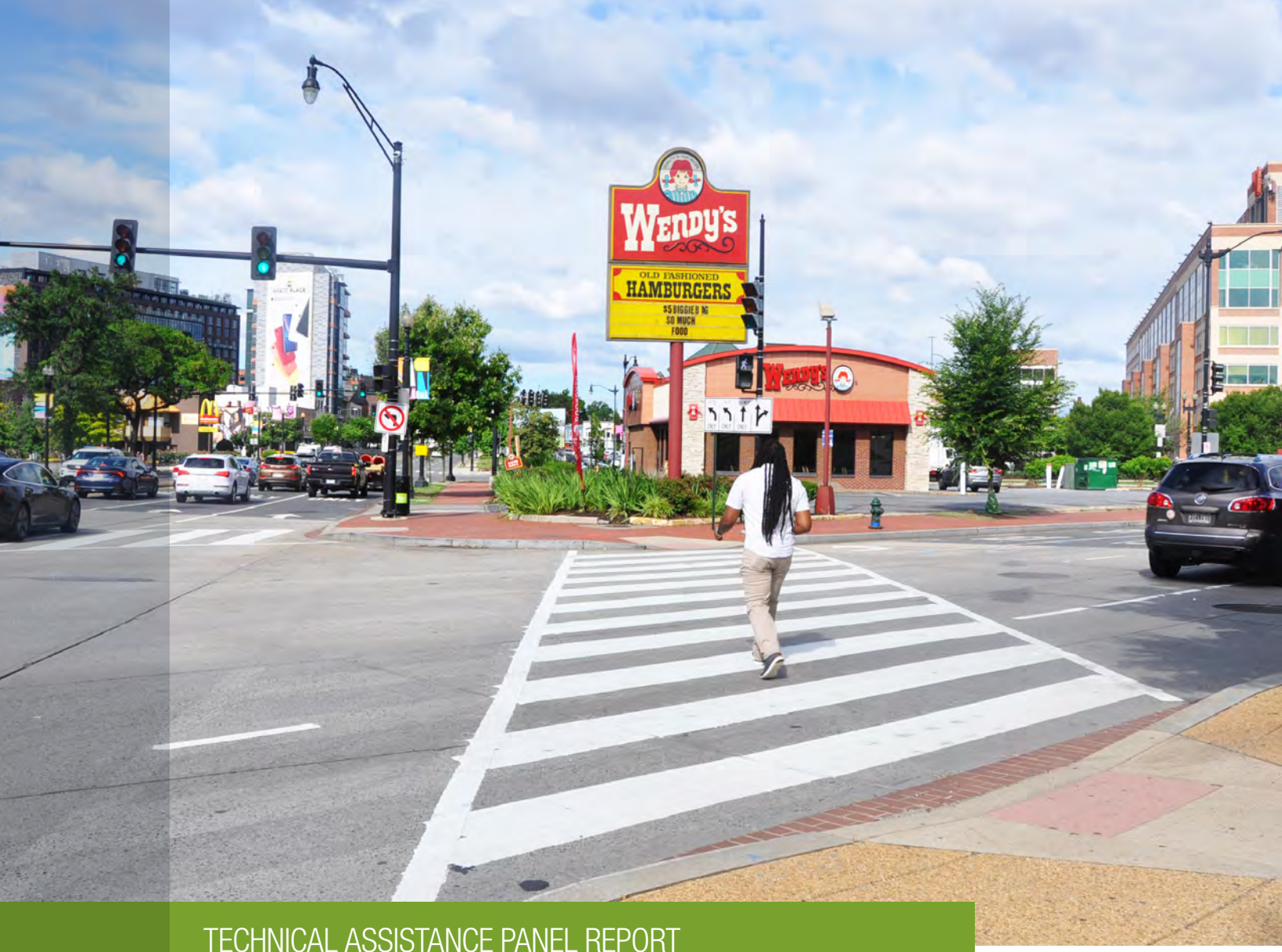

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PANEL REPORT

Transforming the Virtual Circle to Reconnect the Neighborhoods

SPONSORED BY:
NoMa Business Improvement District
and NoMa Parks Foundation

June 13-14, 2019

Urban Land Institute
Washington

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- Robin-Eve Jasper, President, NoMa Business Improvement District and NoMa Parks Foundation
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Executive Summary

Transforming the Virtual Circle

On June 13-14, 2019, a panel of ULI Washington members set out to address several challenges at the "Virtual Circle" intersection in Washington D.C. The Virtual Circle is located in Northeast Washington D.C., one block east of North Capitol Street NE at the intersection of New York Avenue NE and Florida Avenue NE.

The Technical Assistance Panel, or TAP, was jointly sponsored by the NoMa Business Improvement District (NoMa BID) and the NoMa Parks Foundation. The TAP's goal was to make recommendations for open space, safety and improvements at the Virtual Circle based on District of Columbia Department of Transportation's (DDOT) "Concept 6", which was one out of six options DDOT created during a study in 2013. The FY20 District of Columbia budget includes $35 million for improvements to this circle.

Prior to brainstorming design recommendations, the TAP team toured the Virtual Circle and the surroundings, was briefed by the NoMa BID and DDOT, and interviewed members of multiple stakeholder organizations including the Eckington Civic Association, NoMa/H Street Civic Association, Advisory Neighborhood Commission 6C + ANC 5E (Sylvia), North Capitol Main Street, Pathways to Housing D.C., Gallaudet University, JBG Smith, Edens, D.C. Office of Planning, General Services Administration, and local business owners from the surrounding neighborhoods.

Over the course of the TAP, Panelists aimed to:

- Enhance the open spaces as delineated in DDOT's Concept 6 plan.
- Improve safety and the experience for all users – pedestrians, bicyclists, drivers and green space users.
- Improve the economic vitality in the study area and surrounding neighborhoods.

- Improve existing conditions in the surrounding neighborhoods in terms of access to local businesses, educational institutions, human services organizations, and affordable housing.

Panelists grouped their analysis and recommendations under four categories: framing principles, neighborhood context and economic development, safety and connectivity, and open space design. The Panel noted that many successful hubs serve as a place of exchange (whether commercial, informational, or social) and improved linkages between the growing NoMa and Eckington communities are important objectives. They coined the term "Exchange" as an example of potential branding (particularly considering the "x" formed by New York and Florida Avenues). They also proposed next-steps and short-term priorities towards the progress of the design process.

Photo showing the TAP team touring the study area. Image source: ULI Washington. Photo showing the TAP team brainstorming solutions. Image source: ULI Washington.

Photos showing stakeholder interviews conducted during the TAP. Image source: ULI Washington.

Background & Scope

Summary of the Problem

Aerial map showing existing conditions at the Virtual Circle intersection Image source: Sponsor briefing materials.

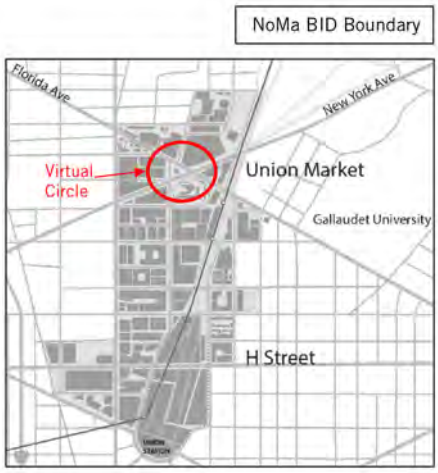
The “Virtual Circle “ is located in Northeast Washington D.C., one block east of North Capitol Street NE at the intersection of New York Avenue NE and Florida Avenue NE. New York Avenue is also U.S. Route 50, part of the U.S. highway system. It carries over 50,000 vehicles per day. Florida Avenue was originally known as Boundary Street, the northern boundary of the L’Enfant planned city and carries over 20,000 vehicles per day. Eckington Place NE and First Street NE provide north-south connectivity into the Virtual Circle and each carries about 10,000 vehicles per day. The Virtual Circle contains five intersections including the following streets - New York Avenue NE, Florida Avenue NE, First Street NE, Eckington Place NE, and O Street NE. It is a virtually indecipherable tangle that (mis)manages traffic from the two major arterials, New York Avenue NE and Florida Avenue NE, and other contributing roads. Significantly, despite receiving cars, pedestrians, and bicycles from all of these important roads, the

From top left: photo showing traffic along First Street NE going south; photo showing traffic along First Street NE and New York Avenue NE at the Virtual Circle; photo showing traffic along Florida Avenue NE and First Street NE; and photo showing Wendy's fast food restaurant at the center of the study area. Images source: ULI Washington.

Virtual Circle includes only 13 pedestrian crosswalks and no bicycle facilities. At the center of this site stands a Wendy's fast food restaurant, whose placement has earned the Virtual Circle its other nickname, "Dave Thomas Circle."

In the early 2000s, the intersection was very dangerous, experiencing many significant vehicle crashes. DDOT decided to find a way to diminish the number and severity of crashes at the intersections. The Virtual Circle was created in 2010. The 2010 improvements converted portions of Florida Avenue NE and First Street NE to one-way flow and prohibited all left turns from New York Avenue NE. All traffic other than through traffic along New York Avenue flows in a counterclockwise direction along the one-way streets. The circulatory traffic pattern is virtually the same as at the District's more iconic circles, yet there is no circular element to the intersection design, leading to the Virtual Circle moniker. The result was the diffused series of intersections we see today. The severity of crashes decreased, but the frustration and total number of accidents at this location soared (from 76 accidents in 2009 to over 170 in 2015). Prior to the project that established the Virtual Circle, the District Department of Transportation (DDOT) studied other interventions to address the challenging conditions at the site. The more significant infrastructure modifications studied were rejected as not feasible. As one neighborhood resident put it, "it was better before." Today, area residents feel less safe at the Virtual Circle than they do in other areas of NoMa (North of Massachusetts Avenue).

In 2013, DDOT kicked off a study called the Florida Avenue Multimodal Transportation Study. It evaluated "safety, streetscape, and operational enhancements" on Florida Avenue from North Capitol Street to Benning



Map showing NoMa Business Improvement District boundary. Image source: Sponsor briefing materials.

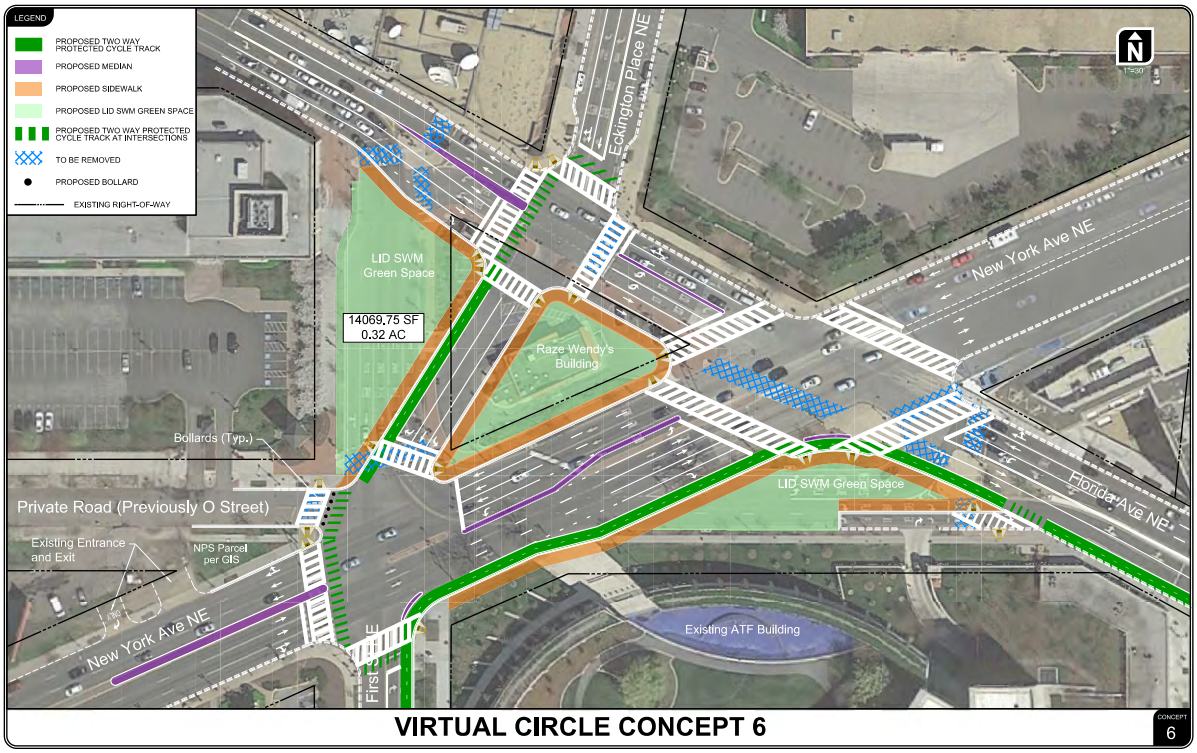


Image showing Virtual Circle Concept 6. Image source: DDOT.

Road. The study recommended wider sidewalks, a bike lane, curb extensions, and improved crosswalks on Florida Avenue NE. After much encouragement from the NoMa BID, the Eckington Civic Association, and local Advisory Neighborhood Commissions, DDOT also evaluated how the Virtual Circle could be improved. They came up with six options that would reconfigure the intersection and add new pedestrian space. A public meeting was held and DDOT ultimately selected "Concept 6."

In mid-March 2019, Mayor Bowser released her Fiscal Year 2020 budget. In the Mayor's budget is $35 million for redesign and redevelopment of the Virtual Circle. The money is intended to cover acquisition costs of the Wendy's parcel, design, engineering, and construction work necessary to reconfigure the circle. DDOT has been given a mandate to complete this project in the year 2022.

The design for "Concept 6" will have 12 pedestrian crosswalks at 3 intersections (2 fewer than the current configuration). Significantly, it will also generate more than 40,000 square feet of new open space, presenting a unique opportunity for the area. The Wendy's site has already been recognized for its centrality and character as a potentially monumental gateway to downtown D.C. The need to establish additional green and park spaces in the NoMa neighborhood is also well-established and the conditions and community aspirations are documented in the NoMa Public Realm Design Plan. The current project to reconfigure the Virtual Circle is a chance to enhance the open space network in the neighborhood and create a more connected network of parks in NoMa. It is also an opportunity to improve safety and the pedestrian and cyclist experience at this location. The sponsors requested assistance from the Panel in addressing the following questions:

Questions to be Answered by the Panel

1. OPEN SPACE DESIGN – How should the open spaces created by the new design be planned to work together and welcome residents and visitors? What design elements can be applied to optimize space activation and aesthetics? What are the preferred uses on the new or reshaped land created by the reconfiguration?

2. DESIRED EXPERIENCE – What is the desired experience for each type of user entering the Virtual Circle (pedestrians, cyclists, drivers, and green space visitors)? What impacts may their improved safety and enjoyment have on the surrounding area?

3. SAFETY – What existing conditions are the most likely causes of safety issues, particularly for the intersection's most vulnerable users? What operational design interventions, within the scope of the proposed reconfiguration, can be made to curtail these risks?

4. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IMPACTS – What design or infrastructure improvements could improve the economic vitality of the surrounding areas?

5. NEIGHBORHOOD CONTEXT – How could local conditions, such as access to nearby educational institutions, business vitality, access to services provided by addiction and outreach organizations, and housing affordability be impacted by the reconfiguration?

Existing Conditions & Recommendations

Framing Principles

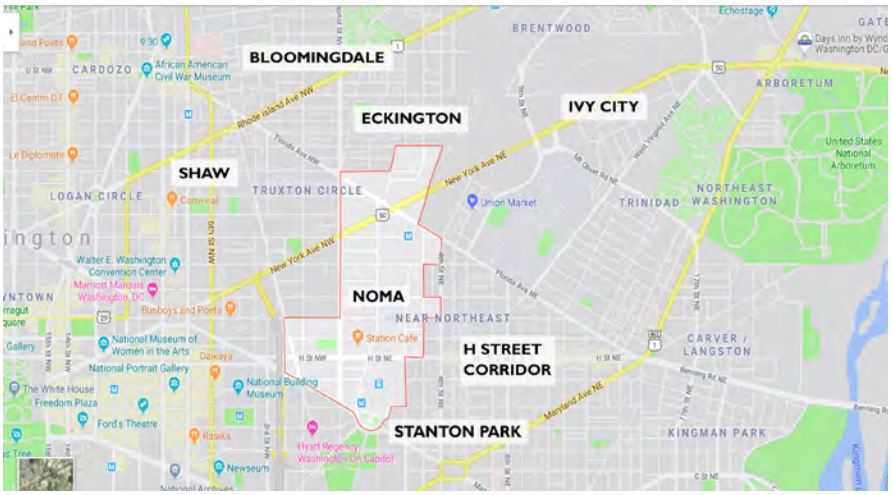
At the outset of the TAP, Panelists pointed out that for generations the Virtual Circle intersection has been about moving traffic, primarily in the east-west direction. It has been about getting through the intersection efficiently and as safely as possible. Over time, things have changed considerably. Though moving traffic is still an ongoing major concern, vibrancy of surrounding neighborhoods is evidence that other priorities are emerging. The Panel set out to reconcile these in a way that accommodates some new ideas. Before brainstorming solutions, they laid out some basic goals – to prioritize non-motorized modes of transportation focusing on cyclists and pedestrians, to maximize economic opportunities for existing as well as future businesses and residents in the neighborhoods, to allow for adaptation and continued evolution of the neighborhood with respect to new technologies, patterns of behavior and lifestyle changes that may occur in the future.

Due to tragic fatalities, lack of safety has elevated the intersection design issue to the forefront. The TAP is timely, as there is a sense of urgency to arrive at a better solution; and the opportunity is right now - to take action and innovate.

The Panel enumerated seven framing principles and values to guide the design process:

- Safety First – Enhancing the safety of all user groups at this intersection is a priority.
- Connectivity to and through – Connectivity is equally important at the intersection, as well as through the intersection. The Panel acknowledged the vibrancy of the Eckington neighborhood to the north, its potential, as well as the surrounding neighborhoods to the east and west of NoMa.

> *"When I came into this assignment, I thought this was an east-west problem. But now, I fully appreciate the north-south nature of this challenge."*
>
> – Patrick L. Phillips, Panel Chair



Map showing NoMa map with surrounding neighborhoods. Image source: Google maps.

- Three open spaces, but seen as a whole – With the demolition of Wendy's there are three open spaces created after the reconfiguration of the intersection as per DDOT's Concept 6 plan. The Panel anticipates these to be used in different ways by a variety of users. However, Panelists want them to be perceived as a whole, unified in terms of their design vocabulary, connectivity and balance of uses.

- High impact efforts in the short-term, but think long-term – Panelists stressed the importance of near-term impact with visible changes even before construction kicks-off for the redesigned intersection. The BID, as well as other stakeholders, should communicate about the upcoming changes so neighborhoods know what to expect and buy into the concepts for upcoming changes at the intersection. Furthermore Panelists pointed out, long-term impacts in the neighborhood should facilitate flexibility in the future to incorporate market changes. The Panel recommends a new name for the intersection – "The Exchange" to speak to the fact that this is where multiple neighborhoods and people connect.

- As NoMa continues to grow, resources will grow – The Panel recognizes the primacy of the NoMa BID in its role as chief promoter, programmer, and marketer of the area, and its special emphasis and growing capabilities in public space management. Additional growth and development will continue to reinforce this role and will help provide the financial resources to deliver these services.

- Design for all – The NoMa neighborhood and surroundings consist of a diverse set of user groups and constituencies. Panelists acknowledged that while it is challenging to design for a wide range of user groups within this area, design for all is an important principle to guide the design process.

- Balancing things that move with things that hold still – Panelists pointed out the importance of considering "things that move" (notably traffic traveling by all modes) with "things that hold still" (notably placemaking opportunities for both publicly owned spaces and private sector development).

Photo showing a scooter user at the intersection of Florida Avenue NE and New York Avenue NE. Image source: ULI Washington.

Photo showing a pedestrian at the intersection of Florida Avenue NE and New York Avenue NE. Image source: ULI Washington.

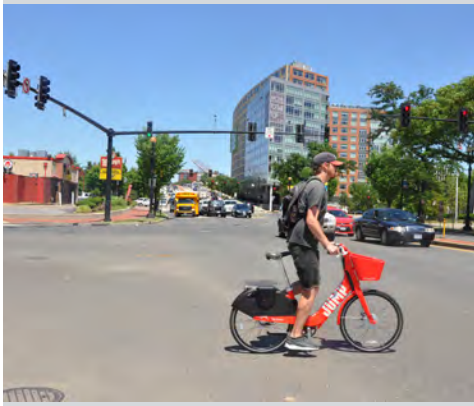


Photo showing a bicyclist crossing New York Avenue NE. Image source: ULI Washington.

Neighborhood Context / Economic Development

In order to develop recommendations for the future of the study area, Panelists experienced the Virtual Circle intersections and surrounding neighborhoods through a walking tour to gain first-hand experience. They acknowledged the complexities and potential conflicts at the intersection due to the high volume of traffic that result in accidents between pedestrians and automobiles, noise, congestion and hostile behavior between different user groups. The Panel pointed out that the existing infrastructure moves the traffic but with severe constraints and delays.

Panelists pointed out that the streets, blocks, infrastructure and neighborhoods are already in place. They focused on how humans interact with sidewalks,

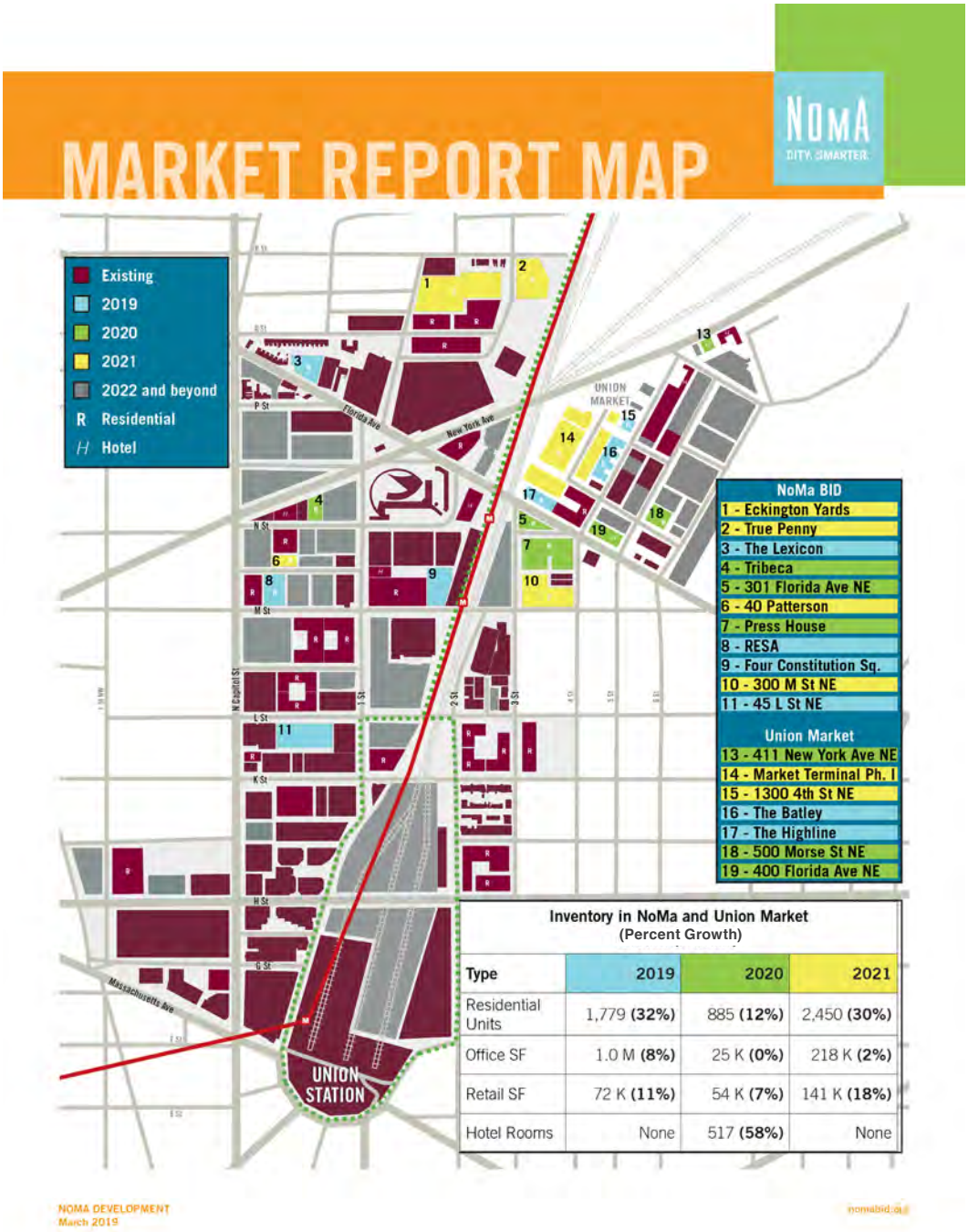


Image showing existing development and near-term development pipeline map of NoMa. Image source: Sponsor briefing material.

bike paths, and multimodal transportation. They applauded NoMa for good sidewalks, housing diversity, office and hospitality, in-line and anchor retail, and future development, all signaling a vibrant future for the neighborhood. The Panel pointed out that there is tremendous local strength in the study area with schools, workplaces, places to get services and buy goods, and everything residents need for their daily lives in a vibrant urban environment. The conflict arises when these user groups compete with regional traffic. This intersection also serves as a major thoroughfare for cross-city and city-to-suburb vehicular traffic. The current alignment of the intersection and pass-through traffic trying to move through the area is quickly creating hazards for local pedestrian users, including children headed to school.

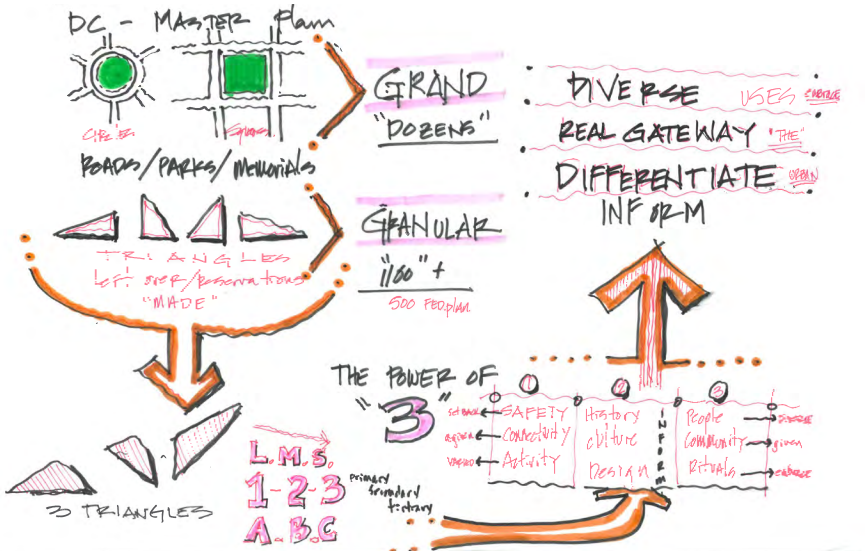
Photo showing regional traffic passing through New York Avenue NE, looking east. Image source: ULI Washington.

The Panel recognized that NoMa, Eckington and Union Market collectively form a vibrant growing neighborhood setting. The NoMa market area has about 46,800 residents and within the NoMa BID boundaries there are about 60,000 workers, over 20 million SF of developed space, and over 16 million SF planned space.

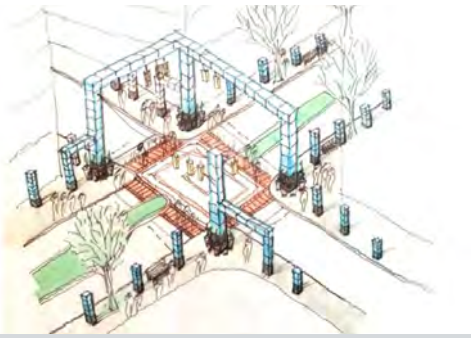
> *"First there are feet on the streets, then heads in beds, and retail follows..."*
>
> – Robin-Eve Jasper, President, NoMa Business Improvement District, quoting Douglas Firstenberg, Constitution Square developer.

There is a major "push and pull" at the intersection due to such diverse multimodal user groups. The Panel noted that many successful hubs serve as a place of exchange (whether commercial, informational, or social) and improved linkages between the growing NoMa and Eckington communities are important objectives. The Panel coined the term Exchange as an example of potential branding (particularly considering the "x" formed by New York and Florida Avenues). The Panel's challenge is to balance this "exchange" between local and regional users passing through the study area, and address safety, connectivity, design and open space amenities which are currently failing to cater to this growing population and development scenario. While the panel suggested this naming convention and it is used throughout the report, the

Multimodal user groups at the intersection of New York Avenue NE and Florida Avenue NE. Image source: ULI Washington.



Sketch diagram showing analysis of elements of the L'Enfant Plan of Washington D.C. and the interpretation of triangles within the study area. Image source: ULI Washington.



Sketch diagram showing identity and rebranding in the Pike & Rose district in North Bethesda, MD. Image source: *Identifying and Branding the Pike District*, Technical Assistance Panel report, page 17, ULI Washington.

Photo showing dynamic lighting in Downtown Houston. Image source: Jon Eisen, The Eisen Group.

Photo showing wayfinding obelisk in Downtown Denver. Image source: Jon Eisen, The Eisen Group.

future identity of the area, and its potential name, will be up to the community to determine in the future.

At a macro level, Panelists acknowledged that this intersection is part of the L'Enfant Plan of Washington D.C. which is filled with grand boulevards, thoroughfares, and dozens of circles and squares. Also a part of this geometry, are thousands of leftover triangles of varying types and sizes which are granular in nature. According to the Panel, it is difficult to assign uses and design for these triangles, of which there are three in the study area as seen in the Concept 6 plan. Applying the "power of 3" to these triangles, they assigned the triangles to form the baseline for design solutions at the Exchange. They further assigned values such as:

1 – Safety, connectivity and activity

2 – History, culture and design

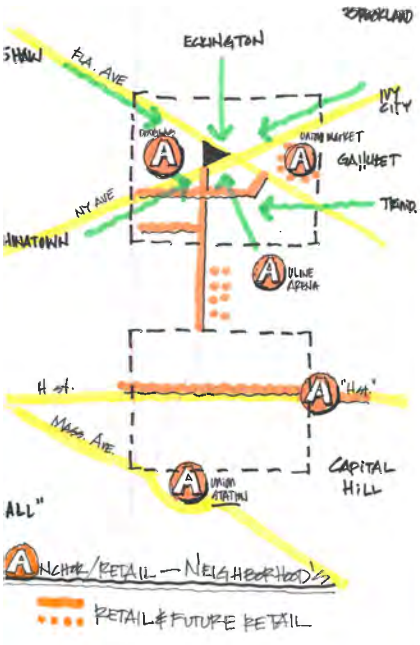
3 – People, community and rituals

These assigned values guided the design process of the Exchange, and helped the Panel to differentiate this particular intersection from others, by using infrastructure and wayfinding to create a brand, identity, public safety, and better circulation. They shared an example in sketch form, the design of a gateway on Rockville Pike near the Pike & Rose District in North Bethesda, MD. They further shared examples of dynamic lighting in Downtown Houston and wayfinding obelisks in Downtown Denver. Panelists felt strongly that such elements on the street add artwork, culture and flavor to a neighborhood or a large site and differentiate a place from others.

Panelists analyzed the road infrastructure in the study area to analyze connectivity within NoMa and to adjacent neighborhoods, and identified primary, secondary and tertiary roads, and the alley system. They pointed out that the train tracks in the neighborhood are a massive barrier, and combined with trusses and bridges, can be intimidating physically and psychologically. They identified two nodes with interesting interstitial spaces, and pointed out how all the surrounding neighborhoods funnel in through and around the Virtual Circle intersection. They further identified a series of retail anchors – like Union Station and possibly a future development of one million square-feet, by Douglas Development which owns two large parcels of land in the study area. They identified the thoroughfares, retail, commercial, mixed-use corridors, future development, and reiterated the vibrancy and strength of the surrounding neighborhoods.

Safety & Connectivity

According to the Panel, as infrastructure helps foster development, there will be more resources to put into additional infrastructure. Thus what one could do today could evolve over time. They introduced the idea that there are some

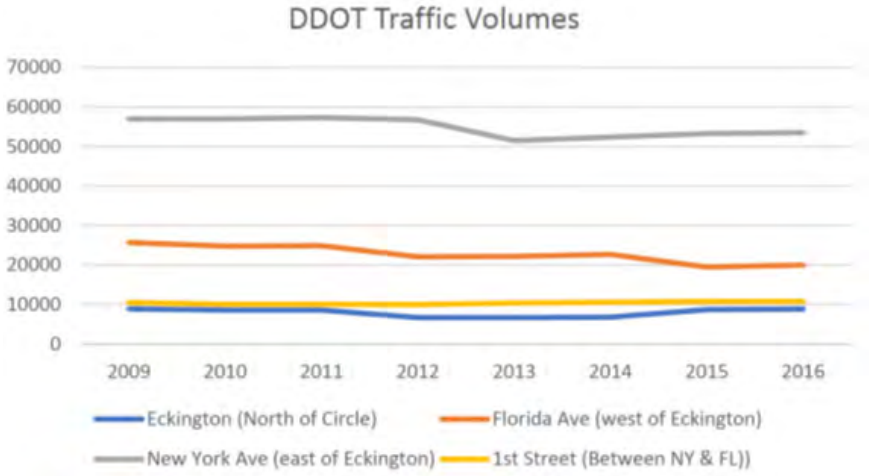


Sketch diagram showing the road system in and around the study area. Image source: ULI Washington.

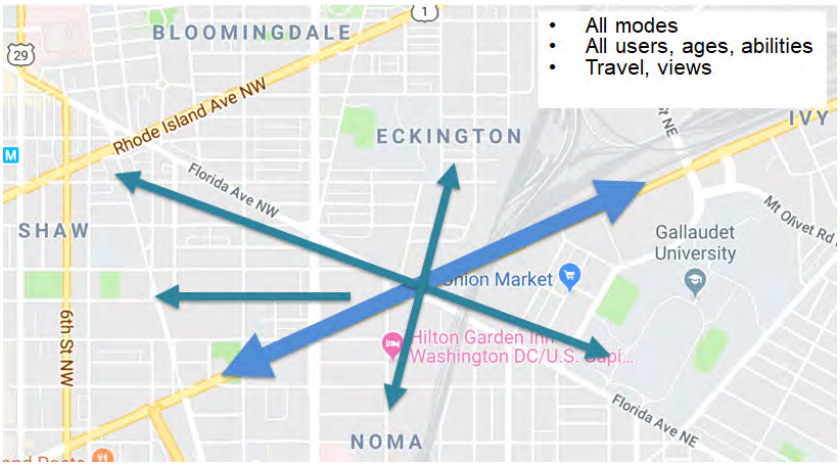
Sketch diagram showing neighborhoods and retail in and around the study area. Image source: ULI Washington.

things that move and some things that hold still. The challenge is integrating these together, often a discussion amongst planners and engineers. While DDOT primarily focuses on things that move, the Panel focused on things that hold still, and strived to integrate them during the design process.

With respect to economic development, Panelists learned that since 2006 about 100,000 residents moved into Washington, D.C. and millions of square feet have been developed, particularly in the rapidly growing NoMa neighborhood. Stakeholders who were interviewed by the Panel were accepting of the growth but were concerned about the traffic that has come to the circle from that development. The Panel learned about the average daily traffic along two key roads in the study area. On New York Avenue NE, there were about 50,000 vehicles a day between 2009 and 2016, and along Florida Avenue NE there were 20,000 vehicles per day during the same time range. While the traffic flows through the circle have been balanced as development occurs, it is important to reflect on latent demand and how traffic will adjust to the changing environment. The latent (pent up) demand will affect how people



Graph showing DDOT average daily traffic volumes along major streets in the study area. Image source: ULI Washington.



Map showing traffic flows to and through the area. Image source: ULI Washington.

will move through the intersection, and the lines on the graph represent drivers who move back and forth through the intersection every day now.

Panelists developed a conceptual diagram describing some of the competing objectives for making connections through or within the Exchange.

- The heaviest traffic flows are along New York Avenue NE, connecting L'Enfant's Washington to the south and west with the rest of the District and region to the northeast.
- North-south connections for shorter trips between the Eckington and NoMa neighborhoods have been increasingly important as both communities experience redevelopment at higher intensities.
- Panelists heard from DC planners about a more conceptual level of bicycle connectivity running generally southeast to northwest, connecting Gallaudet University and Union Market with the robust grid of bicycle-friendly east-west streets to the west of North Capitol Street, particularly in the vicinity of Q and R Streets.
- And finally, the viewshed from the Exchange westward along O Street NE is an important element of visual connectivity within the L'Enfant plan which is no longer needed for motor vehicle traffic but maintenance of the viewshed along O Street NE is required as a condition of public street abandonment.

Design of the Exchange should follow the District's policies to implement complete streets, recognizing that a complete street is one which safely accommodates people of all ages and abilities using all modes. Yet the quality of service provided to each mode should be designed in a context-sensitive manner to reflect the varied function of each mode within the Exchange.

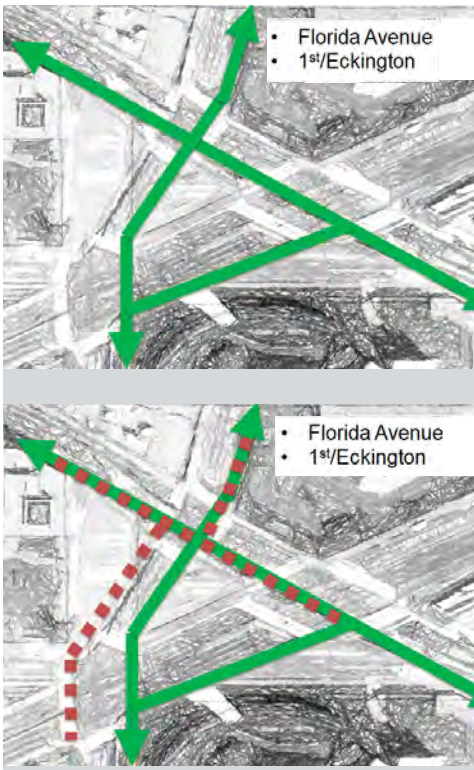
The Panel's suggested revisions to the design reflect the desire to facilitate shorter trips across New York Avenue NE, particularly by walking and bicycling.

The green arrows on the following page show a suggested cycle-track network within the Exchange, consisting of three main components:

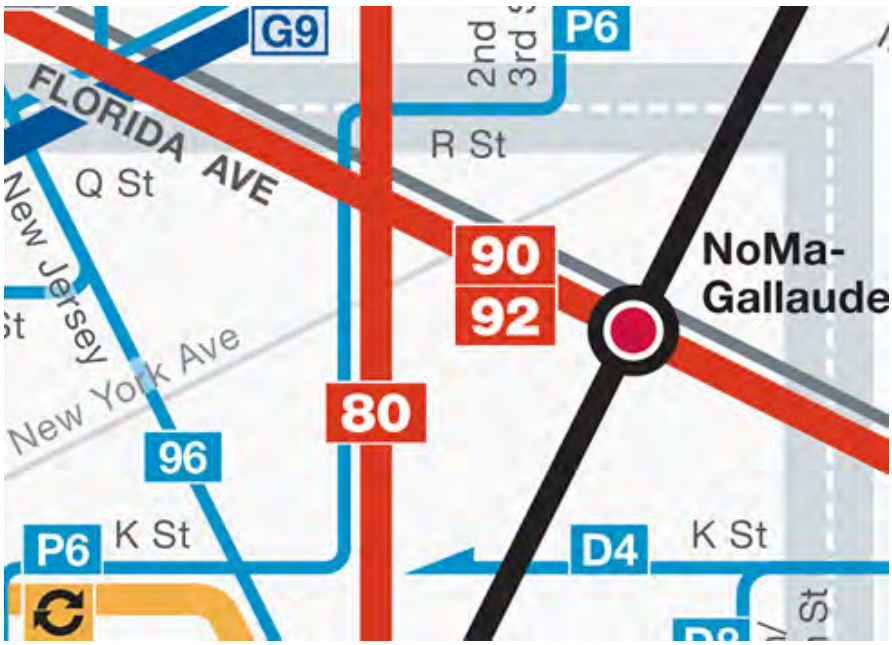
- A Florida Avenue cycle track along its southwestern side would extend the cycle track already being implemented to the southwest to travel through the Exchange, with the goal of future planning efforts to extend cycle-track connectivity towards Q and R Streets west of North Capitol Street NE.
- A First Street/Eckington Place cycle track along its eastern side (rather than the west side suggested in Concept 6) would extend the cycle track within NoMa north across New York Avenue NE, converting the bicycle lanes striped along Eckington Place north of Florida Avenue to a cycle track that will help serve the new Tanner Park to the northeast.
- The Concept 6 cycle-track connection between the first two components described above along the south side of New York Avenue NE helps provide bicycle network connectivity and activation for the easternmost of the three public spaces.

The red dashed lines show where the cycle-track concept reflects a change to Concept 6 as noted above. It's notable that shifting the Eckington Place cycle-track to the east side of the street will require a new pedestrian signal phase crossing New York Avenue on the east leg which will require more signal cycle time than the Concept 6 plan to retain a focus on crossing the west leg. However, the extent of additional green time needed for the east leg crossing is expected to be relatively small; roughly the amount of time that would be dedicated to the northbound right/westbound left overlap signal phase.

From a transit perspective, having buses at this intersection is very important. As per the WMATA map, New York Avenue NE does not have any bus service



Maps showing existing and proposed cycle track networking. Image source: ULI Washington.



Map showing transit services in the study area. Image source: WMATA.

lines; Florida Avenue NE is the primary transit corridor with bus lines 90 and 92 serving the NoMa-Gallaudet U Metrorail station, and North Capitol Street has the bus line 80. DDOT has initiated a Bus Priority Master Plan which may consider a range of treatments including transit-only lanes, queue jumpers, and transit signal priority. The Panel does not see evidence that fully dedicated bus lanes are warranted on most of the streets in the Exchange, nor does the Panel forsee the Exchange as a transit hub, given its proximity to the NoMa-Gallaudet Metrorail station. However, the Panel does recommend improving existing bus stop facilities near the Exchange and supporting transit signal priority in and around the Exchange. In any event, coordination between the Exchange design and the Bus Priority Master Plan will be needed.

Planners see opportunity in the study area to repurpose two of the Concept 6 exclusive right-turn lanes into non-motorized space: on southeastbound Florida Avenue NE approaching First Street NE and on northeastbound New York Avenue NE approaching Florida Avenue NE. Another recommendation by the Panel is to implement transportation demand management, including signal priority for buses to mitigate clogged roads during peak traffic periods. This would help manage automobiles better, and then pedestrians and bicyclists can be given priority.

Panelists introduced the idea of the “Eckington Dilemma”. They explained that while there are many complaints about the Virtual Circle because of its lack of legibility (a concern common to all “indirect turn” intersection configurations), the current one-way circulatory pattern reduced the number of conflicting movements that were contributing to the high number of crashes with fatalities or injuries. The balance between one-way and two-way streets at the Exchange is generally a tradeoff between providing motor vehicle mobility (which one-way streets generally facilitate) as contrasted with multimodal accessibility and developing a sense of place (which two-way streets generally facilitate).

Map showing potential 2-way traffic lanes on Eckington Place NE. Image source: ULI Washington.

The changes to Concept 6 previously described, completion of continuous cycle-tracks and removal of two exclusive right turn lanes, shift the balance of the Exchange slightly towards less auto mobility and greater multimodal accessibility than contemplated in Concept 6. From an accessibility/placemaking perspective, converting the block of Eckington Place from one-way southbound as in Concept 6 to a two-way street would likely be desirable, particularly during off-peak periods. From a mobility perspective, the one-way block in Concept 6 is likely more efficient, at least during peak periods. This tradeoff is operational in nature; the current conditions demonstrate that it's not practical to expect traffic to flow freely during peak periods, yet manage congestion so that the pedestrian and bicycle facilities are not blocked by motor vehicle queues. In summary, the Panel urged the community to quantify and evaluate those tradeoffs of mobility, accessibility, safety, and placemaking for each mode of travel in considering a two-way Eckington Place through the Exchange.

To enhance multimodal operations, the Panel recommended leading pedestrian phases and full crossings with generous timing, so pedestrians don't get stranded on the median for long spells. Keeping the safety first principle in mind, they recommended automobile speed management. Along New York Avenue NE, where high volumes of traffic travel downhill from the bridge, drivers tend to speed as if they were on a freeway, and then suddenly hit the busy and congested Virtual Circle intersection. It is important to remind drivers of this stretch, so they adjust their speed accordingly. Similar behavior is also observed in the reverse direction when automobiles coming from downtown D.C., having spent a lot of time sitting in traffic, suddenly come through the intersection, and zoom through uphill through the bridge. Panelists shared an example from Wisconsin DOT, whereby one can "trick" the automobile drivers by painting converging chevrons which are spaced closer together as a driver travels further along on the road. This makes the automobile drivers feel they are going too fast, and makes them slow down. With regards to enforcement, putting up speed cameras and collecting fines is not enough and other measures must be taken to remind drivers to slow down. However, this is one space in the city where drivers must negotiate the change in context from the freeway to urban space, and hence the Virtual Circle intersection seems a logical place for speed cameras. Moreover, the Panel recommended that placing them in both directions, especially up the bridge, will give automobile drivers incentive to slow down.

Panelists recommended strategies for curb space management. During off-peak hours, they recommended lane repurposing, especially on New York Avenue NE, to accommodate parking and also the potential for bringing food trucks to the area during lunchtime (11 a.m. to 1 p.m.) to invite pedestrian activity that would promote traffic calming. Panelists recommended that a pilot study of these ideas be conducted to see if they have long-term potential. Several ideas could be tested to see if this initiative might invite more pedestrian activity, and if it promotes traffic calming through the intersection.

Pedestrians at the crosswalk on New York Avenue NE. Image source: ULI Washington.

Photo showing New York Avenue going uphill. Image source: ULI Washington.

Photo showing chevron pattern painted on the roadway, to promote speed management amongst automobile drivers by Wisconsin DOT. Image source: *https://www.forconstructionpros.com/pavement-maintenance/marking-striping/article/10117519/striping-for-safety.*

Panelists stressed the importance of fostering innovation. Their goal is to have solutions which work for 20-25 years, and facilitate changes after that time span. The city has been doing a lot for travel demand management and parking management at specific sites as well as city-wide, and these technologies are able to help drive price and travel behavior. It will be necessary to continue and improve these measures. The ongoing popularity of bike sharing and rapid adoption of new multimodal technologies such as e-scooters necessitate considering how to leverage innovation to accommodate bike/scooter storage in public space. From a traveler information perspective, the Panel shared two examples for innovation: first, the Solar Roadways project by Indiegogo, a pilot study, where the pavement pattern is made of solar panels and crosswalks change color when pedestrians walk on it. This could offer a very interesting experience to pedestrians instead of static wayfinding signs on the side of the road. Secondly, they shared a representative image of a video of what it might be like after 20 years when nothing is static any more in terms of signs, and everything has to be viewed via Google glasses. Through such examples, they stressed the importance of facilitating technology adaptation and flexibility, as features that get implemented today might change drastically over time.

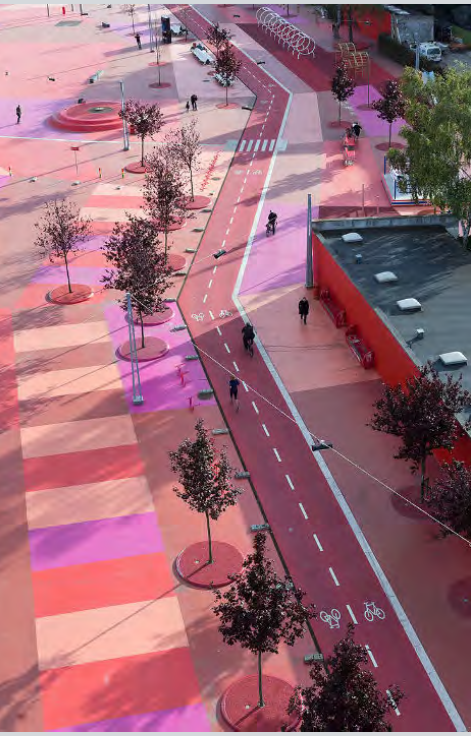


Photo showing a new colorful Superkilen Park in Copenhagen, Denmark. Image source: *http://blog.colourstudio.com/2012/11/superkilen-park-blaze-of-color.html.*

Open Space Design

Desired Experience

As more open space is created through the configuration of the circle, there is a latent demand for a great open space, and that will attract people. Panelists focused on desired user experiences in the study area, and elaborated on the need to design for a safely connected, interesting, dynamic, playful and engaging environment for all users. They recommended changing priority for the user type depending on the day of the week and time, where activities may change on weekends and weekday evenings. They stressed the need for an evolving perception of the intersection, and a change in its identity. This is a timely opportunity to brand the study area and make it an iconic landmark for users entering as well as exiting. Moreover, it will be important to implement the vision starting with small interventions and programming.

Design Vision

While walking through the study area, the Panel felt unsafe due to intense traffic conditions, and yelling between automobile drivers and pedestrians. It is their utmost priority to make it safe for all, during the day as well as night time. They stressed the importance of making the study area well connected to the surrounding neighborhoods, playful and engaging through the use of lighting, colors, activities, streetscape and art. They elaborated on the need for horizontal as well as vertical connectivity, where not only are the three open space parcels in Concept 6 connected physically at the street level, but

Photo showing various artistic gestures on NoMa on buildings and compound walls. Image source: ULI Washington.

vertical connectivity is established through streetscape, water features or art elements that are of varying heights in these open spaces. This way the three open spaces can be experienced differently from various vantage points and at different scales, when users are arriving downhill from the bridge or from different directions. Furthermore, they mentioned the need to build in flexibility depending on the time of day as well as seasons. Panelists acknowledged NoMa's artistic character, and recommended that a special identity be created in the study area linking it to NoMa's art inclined identity.

Potential Programming: Active, Intermediate & Passive

Panelists recommended potential programming for the three open spaces delineated in Concept 6 plan to be distinct from each other – active, intermediate and passive. They assigned the active space category to the open space parcel abutting Florida Avenue NE and First Street NE, and recommended designing it like a platform where the following could occur - farmer's market, concerts, festivals, art shows, neighborhood and community events, seasonal uses like ice sculptures and kiosks as well as pop-ups. Besides programming activities to make it an active open space, they recommended using color and texture to demarcate it as a special space using repetition of design elements, for example – painted crosswalks. On event days, traffic could be temporarily re-routed by closing off First Street NE, and provide more seamless open space connections for pedestrians. On non-event days, it would be equally important to make this space inviting for pedestrians. On the triangle between O Street NE and New York Avenue NE, they recommended a bike share station to support bicycling in the study area. Along O Street NE which will be blocked off from automobiles with bollards, they recommended seating with tables and chairs to foster passive recreation. They shared examples of the Columbia Heights Farmers Market in Washington D.C, and a

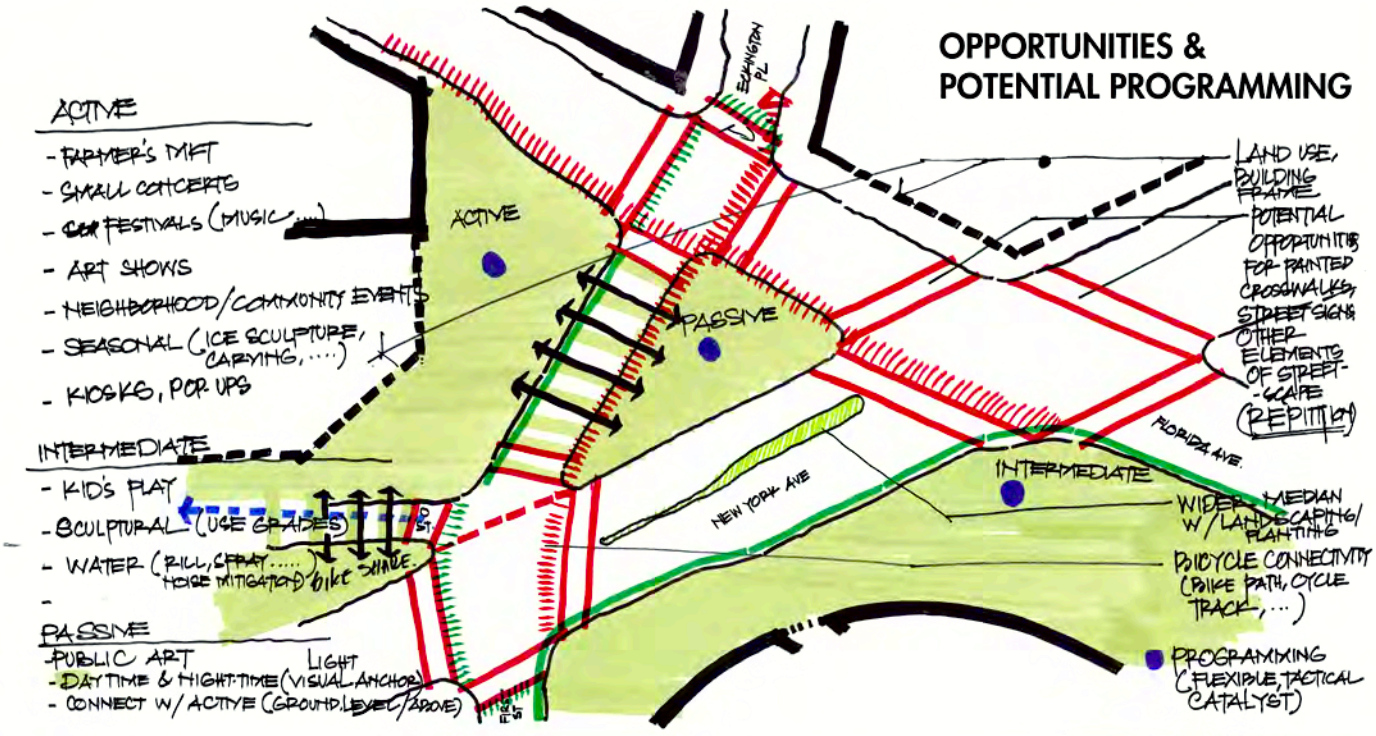


Image showing hand sketched concept plan for active, passive and intermediate spaces and their programming in the three open spaces in study area. Image source: ULI Washington.

temporary beer garden and pizza party at The Oval in Philadelphia. One of the stakeholders recommended an asphalt pump track in the open space in front of ATF. According to him, pump tracks can provide active recreation for kids and adults of all age groups and can fit into triangular as well as trapezoidal spaces,

Photo showing Columbia Heights Farmer's Market in Washington D.C. Image source: *https://washington.org/visit-dc/washington-dc-farmers-markets.*

Photo showing temporary beer garden and pizza party at The Oval in Philadelphia PA. Image source: *https://www.uwishunu.com/2014/07/weekend-picks-visit-philly-beer-garden-series-and-pizza-party-at-the-oval-franklin-flea-outdoor-summer-market-university-city-dining-days-old-city-restaurant-week-and-more/.*

Photo showing children on pump track in Leavenworth, WA. Image source: *https://velosolutions.com/pump-track/en/leavenworth/.*

and on sites as small as 5,000 square feet. A landscape of small undulating hills can provide an attractive and sculptural element to this area.

Panelists envisioned the central open space surrounded by New York Avenue NE, First Street NE and Florida Avenue NE, and the current site for the Wendy's restaurant, as passive open space. They visualized this to showcase vertical elements in the form of distinctive public art that does not block views, and embraces that corner. In fact this would be a good location for a landmark memorial, and could be landscaped, with activities continuing into this space from the adjoining active space. They shared two examples - Bruce Ramus' *Helix Tree* in Australia, which lit up in response to people singing. Light became a medium for congregation and collective public participation; and The Pier 4 Plaza in Boston, MA which connects to the Boston Harbor Walk and the Institute of Contemporary Art in the Innovation District of the Seaport area of Boston. Inspired by the layered history of the site, the Plaza celebrates the linear movement of the historical railway tracks and new fiber optic and electrical linkages that define this landscape. The fluid and linear paving patterns highlight the flow of information and circuitry moving below the site.

Photo showing Bruce Ramus' helix tree, which lit up in response to people singing at Federal Square during the Light in Winter program, 2013, Brisbane, Australia. Image source: *https://washington.org/visit-dc/washington-dc-farmers-markets.*

Panelists visualized the open space adjoining the ATF (Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives) building as intermediate space. They recommended a wider median with landscaping along New York Avenue NE, and using the open space parcel to program activities such as small-scale movie screenings and concerts. Architectural elements of the building could be used to project a seasonal light show exhibit along the building perimeter, and the open space could be used as a viewing gallery and gathering space. Vertical elements such as a stage, stepped-down amphitheater and trellis to shade could facilitate such activities, and combat the noise and visual effects of the surrounding vehicular traffic. They shared examples from Vivid Sydney - a dynamic festival of light, music and ideas at the heritage customs house (one amongst multiple venues) in Sydney, Australia.

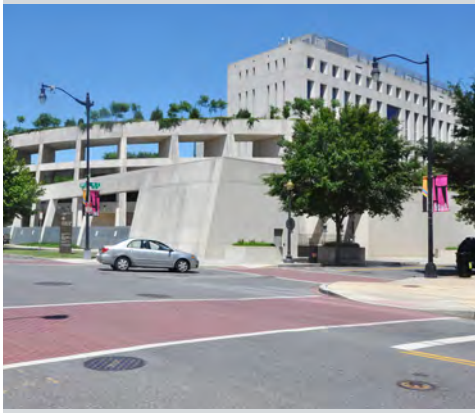


Photo showing the ATF (Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives) building. Image source: ULI Washington.

Design Elements

Panelists recommended that all crosswalks at the Exchange, be designed with distinctive paving material, possibly even using a certain color or texture representative of the BID. They stressed the importance of consistency in streetscape elements like wayfinding signage, bollards, furniture, lighting, vegetation, water features, and others – throughout the study area. They shared examples of plazas designed with lighting, colors, texture and changes in seating levels in the form of an amphitheater. The first example is designed by Daan Roosegaarde. He designed a glowing bike path in the Dutch town of Eindhoven, to pay homage to its most famous resident, Vincent Van Gogh. The glowing bike path that relies on solar-powered LED lights, interprets his classic painting Starry Night. The second example is designed by !melk

Photo showing a dynamic festival of light, music and ideas at the heritage customs house in Sydney, Australia. Image source: *http://photozou.jp/photo/show/304374/256554304.*

Image showing a variety of design elements for the design of the three open spaces in the study area. Image source: ULI Washington.

landscape architecture & urban design. It is called The Park in Las Vegas, which is an immersive, outdoor destination for dining and entertainment. The Park celebrates the context of the Mojave region and reinstates what Las Vegas once was - an oasis in the desert. Design elements mitigate these extremes to create the most enjoyable urban experience possible. Panelists shared images of the iconic shade structures, which are set amongst water features and desert plantings with drought resistant trees that help temper the Las Vegas heat.

The Exchange: Concept Design Sketch & Short-term Actions

The Panel prepared an illustrative sketch plan, reflective of the framing principles they laid down at the beginning of the TAP. Through this sketch plan, they offer conceptual ideas for the future design of the Exchange. Bike paths are represented in green color. The first open space parcel abutting First Street NE and O Street NE is demarcated for active uses, and they recommended using special pavers, trees and trellises so there is provision of shade for events like the farmers market. This section of First Street NE should also be paved, so during events when the street is temporarily closed to traffic, the two open space parcels are connected seamlessly to facilitate pedestrian life, and activities from the active zone can spill over. For the second open space parcel, which is the central open space (where Wendy's will be razed), they demarcated it for passive use. They recommended winding pathways in this open space, to offer softness in contrast to the adjoining hard-lined New York Avenue roadway. They suggested that paving pattern from

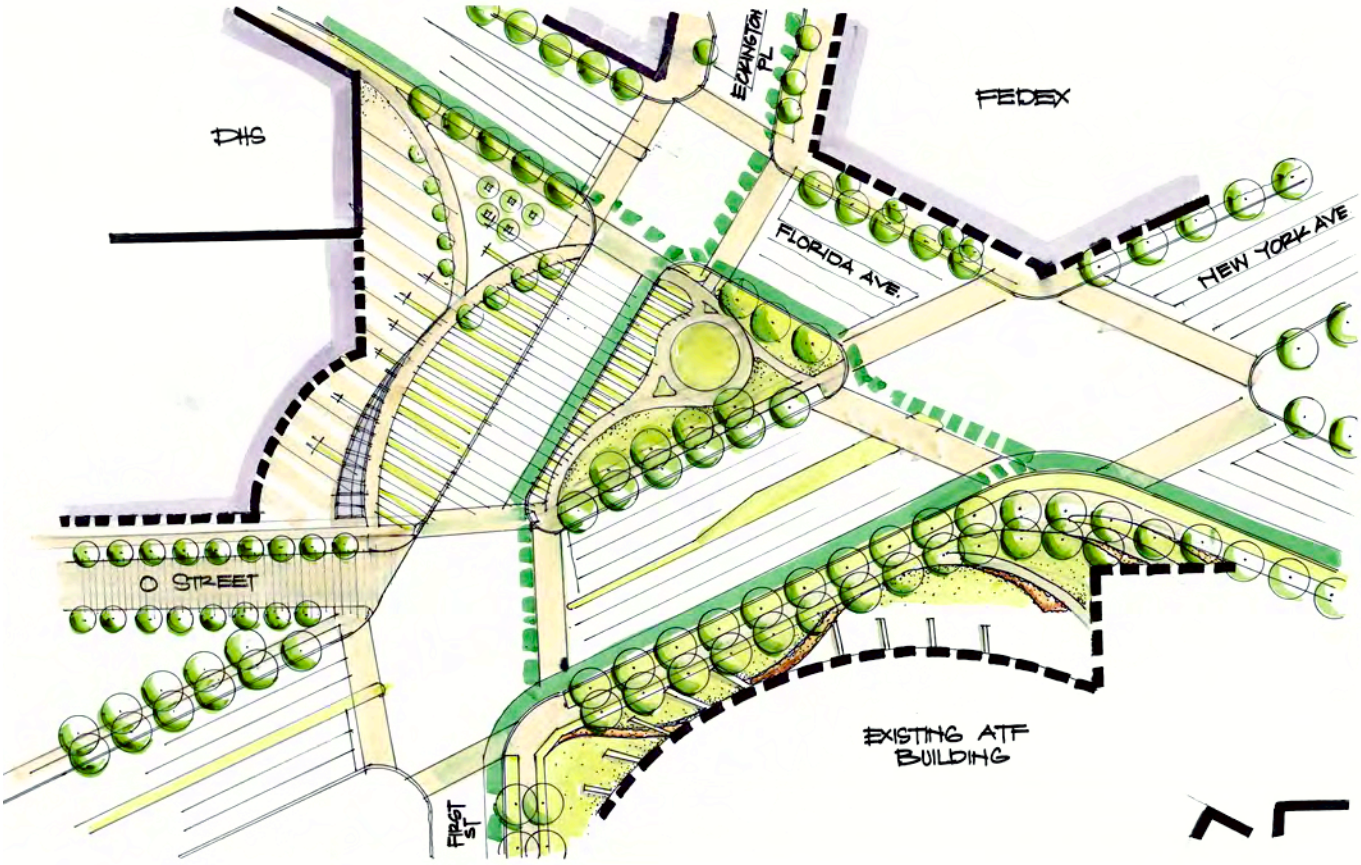


Image showing the concept sketch plan for the Exchange. Image source: ULI Washington.

the active zone also continue into this open space, at least into a portion of it, so the two spaces appear and can operate as a whole. According to them, this central open space would be ideal for vertical elements like a landmark memorial, water feature or public art. Panelists assigned the third open parcel abutting New York Avenue NE and Florida Avenue NE, adjoining the ATF building, for intermediate uses. They suggested adding soft curves to the hardscape and softscape landscape elements, in tune with the architectural features of the curvilinear building. They recommended lighting the columns and buttresses as special light and/or sound shows on event days, seasonal celebrations and maybe even weekday evenings for drivers, pedestrians and those spending time in the open spaces to enjoy. Moreover, activities could be programmed in consultation with the ATF building management to open up the space for small-scale concerts or markets on weekends, and after hours on week days.

Through the design process, the Panel thinks it is very important to change the perception of all user groups who pass through the Exchange. Drivers, pedestrians and bicyclists passing through should look forward to going through the Exchange rather than thinking of it as drudgery; and vibrancy of the neighborhood should lure visitors and residents to revisit, and spend more time at the Exchange. Thus, with a combination of softscape and

Image showing architectural features and curvilinear shape of the ATF building at the intersection of First Street NE and N Street NE. Image source: ULI Washington.

hardscape elements - seating, wayfinding, lighting, shade structures, grass, trees and plantings, water features, public art, programmed activities and traffic management, the Exchange can be designed to be an inviting, safe and vibrant hub in the NoMa neighborhood for all user groups.

Next Steps & Short-term Priorities

Panelists further laid out the next steps and short-term priorities towards the progress of the design process of the Exchange:

Key Adjustments to Concept 6

According to the Panel, the following changes to Concept 6 are worthy of consideration:

1. Bicycle track connections between Eckington Place NE and First Street NE, continuity to Florida Avenue NE;
2. Removing two exclusive right turn lanes to reduce pedestrian crosswalk distances and repurpose the space for non-auto accommodations;
3. Consider making Eckington Place NE a two-way street to provide better connectivity in the neighborhood. The Panel also acknowledged that additional crosswalks, as mentioned by multiple stakeholders and which may hamper vehicular flow, are important for pedestrian safety at the Exchange.

Towards promoting better connectivity in the neighborhood, Panelists recommended considering making Eckington Place NE a two-way street. They acknowledged that adding to automobile connectivity would come at the cost of pedestrian and bicyclist safety, but thought this was a trade-off worthy of consideration.

Branding and Communications Program

Panelists think now is a good time and opportunity for branding and communications. They recommended renaming the “Dave Thomas Circle” or “Virtual Circle” to – “The Exchange”. According to them, “The Exchange” connotes value of transfer or movement of people, between and into the neighborhoods, and dynamism that the Panel seeks to achieve in the study area. While this naming convention was recommended by the Panel, the final decision about a name and brand will be up to the community as the project

evolves. Branding takes effort and requires dollars to be spent to change the public perception of a place; and just like other major capital improvement projects have succeeded in changing public perception, now is the time to start making changes at the Virtual Circle. Along with the name change, they recommended creating a graphic identity and kicking-off a public engagement campaign with wide use of social media.

Tactical pre-construction initiatives

According to the Panel, a few tactical improvements could be made during the pre-construction time frame. These could be temporary and experimental in nature in the form of - pop-ups and food trucks which add to the vibrancy of a neighborhood, and off-peak parking which would make it safer for pedestrians and bicyclists. They recommended establishing the O Street mews between the study area and North Capitol Street NE, and take advantage of that passageway, which might ultimately get built upon. In the current scenario it could be a pedestrian path with seating to add to NoMa's identity.

Conclusion

At the onset of the TAP, Panelists acknowledged the well-thought out Concept 6 Plan by DDOT, and the three open space parcels added to the public realm within the study area. They are optimistic about the future of the Virtual Circle, and transforming it into a vibrant and safe place for all – The Exchange. They laid down the following guiding principles for the design process - safety first; connectivity to and through; three open spaces, but seen as a whole; high impact efforts in the short-term, but think long-term; as NoMa continues to grow, resources will grow; design for all; balancing things that move with things that hold still.

Over the course of the TAP, Panelists toured the study area, analyzed the existing conditions, interviewed and heard a wide range of stakeholders, and recommended changes with respect to - neighborhood context and economic development, safety and connectivity, and open space design.

On an end note, they stressed the importance of changing the perception of the Virtual Circle amongst various user groups, and the time to act is now. Jeff Marootian, the Director of DDOT endorsed the Panel's thinking with regards to taking actions in the near future.

> *"Nothing is more powerful than an idea whose time has come…"*
>
> – Jeff Marootian, Director of the District Department of Transportation

During the process of transforming the study area into "The Exchange", they recommended the following be implemented in the short-term scenario - a few key adjustments to Concept 6, a branding and communications program and tactical pre-construction activities.

The Panel greatly appreciated the opportunity to study and make recommendations for transformation of the Virtual Circle intersection.

Panelist Bios

Patrick L. Phillips, Panel Chair

Former Global CEO, ULI

Washington, DC

From 2009 to early 2018, Patrick L. Phillips served as the Global Chief Executive Officer of the Urban Land Institute (ULI). ULI, which currently has more than 200 employees and a budget of nearly $75 million, is headquartered in Washington, D.C., and has offices throughout the world. As Global CEO, Phillips worked with ULI's member leaders to lead all aspects of ULI's strategy, mission delivery, resource allocation, and fiscal performance. Phillips, a longtime member of ULI, has had a career in the economic analysis of real estate and land use that spans more than 30 years. Prior to taking the position as the top staff executive at ULI, he was President and Chief Executive Officer of ERA AECOM (formerly Economics Research Associates). In that role, he coordinated all aspects of ERA's organization, strategy, business development, and service delivery. His own consulting practice focused specifically on the intersection of private investment and public policy. To further expand ERA's reach and impact, Phillips guided the successful sale of the company in 2007 to AECOM, a globally renowned provider of professional technical and management support services to a broad range of industries, including land use, transportation, environmental and energy. His work at ERA AECOM focused on development strategy, development economics and feasibility analysis, and transaction-related services for real estate investors and developers, public agencies, financial institutions, universities, and non-profit

organizations. This involved all major categories of urban land use, with an emphasis on the market, economic, and financial aspects of a new generation of downtown and suburban mixed-use projects. Under Phillip's direction, ERA provided consulting services for such notable development projects as Mockingbird Station in Dallas, Atlantic Station in Atlanta, and the repositioning of Kansas City's Country Club Plaza; as well as public planning projects for the Hudson Yards in New York City and Houston's Buffalo Bayou. Phillips has often advised public agencies and non-profit organizations on issues related to public-private partnerships for economic development. He is a frequent speaker on urban development issues, and is the author or co-author of eight books and numerous articles. In 2005, Phillips led a nationally prominent economic development team as part of the ULI advisory services panel making recommendations on post-Katrina rebuilding efforts in New Orleans. Patrick teaches at Harvard's Graduate School of Design Executive Education Program and at the Carey Business School of Johns Hopkins University. His academic training includes a graduate degree in public management and finance from Syracuse University's Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs.

Suzie Battista

Urban Designer/Landscape Architect, Fairfax County Department of Planning and Development
Fairfax, VA

Suzie Battista, AICP, has twelve years of experience in local government. She is currently a Program Manager with Fairfax County's Department of Planning and Development. Suzie has extensive experience in all stages of development review with focuses on urban design and implementation. She has worked on many large- and small-scale projects across the County, from the redevelopment of TOD areas such as Tysons and Reston to site-specific placemaking efforts. Prior to joining Fairfax County in 2007, Suzie spent some years in the private sector doing land planning and landscape architecture work. She is a Connecticut native with a Bachelor's degree in Landscape Architecture from Penn State and a Master's degree in Urban and Regional Planning from Virginia Tech.

Jon Eisen

Managing Principal, The Eisen Group
Washington, D.C.

A native of Washington, D.C., Jon Eisen enjoys the history of his hometown, as well as the constantly evolving cities where he does his work. Across the United States, Eisen has contributed more than 60 mixed-use projects. Trained as an architect and urban planner, Jon works with private developers, universities and municipal officials to create special – and successful – great

places. He is currently leading the planning, architecture and strategy for developments in Maryland, Virginia, D.C., Pennsylvania, Delaware, Florida, Washington, North Carolina, Oregon, New Jersey, Kansas and Colorado. National Harbor, Crown Farm, Crystal City Revitalization, Reston Town Center Phase II, Bethesda Row, Park Potomac, Crocker Park and The Village of Valley Forge all bear his handiwork.

At TEG, Jon Eisen has had a hand in more than 20 million square feet of mixed-use planning, architecture and development consulting. Earlier in his career, Jon worked on such large-scale projects as the U.S. Holocaust Museum in Washington D.C., Mizner Park in Boca Raton, Colorado Center in Denver and Channelside in Tampa, Florida. He also provides counsel to developers, land owners, universities, cities and towns, providing them with market analyses and clear-headed thinking about development possibilities in their sites and municipalities. Washington, D.C. officials recently engaged Jon to scrutinize and recommend improvements to its aging commercial districts across the entire city.

Jon Eisen speaks regularly at local and national industry conferences and before government gatherings. He sits on a National Council with the Urban Land Institute and is on the board and teaches for the College of Architecture and Real Estate at the University of Maryland. Whenever he travels, he continues to study and photograph the physical elements of municipal life that contribute to urban vitality. As managing principal of TEG, Jon leads the company, particularly in the planning, entitlements, market analysis, architecture, development consulting and sustainability. From his long experience, Jon has gained considerable expertise in creating great places. Jon has just recently co-authored the “ULI Retail Development Handbook” and has been published numerous times in industry publications.

Sukirti Ghosh

Urban Designer, Rhodeside & Harwell
Alexandria, VA

In a career that spans continents, sectors, and diverse contexts and scales of design, Sukirti’s work is driven and united by his passion for urban life, “people places,” and research-informed design. Trained as an architect in his native India, Sukirti has since devoted his career to planning and urban design, as both a public sector planner and private sector consultant. His work is grounded in his belief that learning is a lifelong endeavor, and that a successful planning and design process must begin with understanding—and learning from—the people and particular context of each place. He has managed diverse and award-winning projects, ranging from citywide comprehensive plans, downtown and corridor plans, and transit-oriented development strategies, to design guidelines, streetscape master plans, site

redevelopment, and architectural design. In particular, much of his work has explored the intersection between physical design interventions and economic development strategies for rejuvenating cities, towns and urban districts.

With an educational background in both architecture and planning, Sukirti excels at making connections between micro-level design details and broader, multidisciplinary considerations at the neighborhood, city and regional scales. He is also noted for his creativity and ability to express ideas through graphics. Whether he is preparing sketches and 3D visualizations to communicate urban design visions, or producing oil paintings, watercolor renderings and graphic designs in his spare time, his graphics are infused with a visual artist's perspective. A regular participant in design competitions, Sukirti has received a number of honors in such competitions in recent years.

Dan Hardy

Principal, Renaissance Planning Group
Arlington, VA

Dan Hardy is a Principal with Renaissance Planning Group in the firm's Arlington, Virginia office. Dan has over 30 years of practice in transportation planning and engineering in both public and private sectors, with a focus on developing transportation solutions that balance transportation and land use options to optimize multimodal travel demand and transportation network services in a wide range of urban and suburban contexts.

Prior to joining Renaissance Planning Group, he served as the Transportation Planning Chief for the Montgomery County (MD) Planning Department. His primary area of focus is developing and implementing context-sensitive and multimodal growth management approaches for congested communities. He has served as the Transportation Planning Council Chair for the Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE) and also served as the inaugural chair for ITE's Sustainability Task Force. He is currently the co-chair for the Sustainability Measurement Subcommittee within the Transportation Research Board's Transportation and Sustainability Committee.

Rob Mandle

Chief Operating Officer, Crystal City BID
Arlington, VA

Rob's background in urban planning and economics combined with his passion for placemaking and collaboratively building communities for people, not just buildings, drives his perspective and vision. Since 2007, Rob has played a leading role in the successful transformation of Crystal City into a vibrant downtown community that is attracting residents, new businesses,

and a wave of new investment by the private sector. Rob's unique perspective on how the Crystal City area fits within the greater regional context has established the framework for a larger, unified submarket - including Pentagon City and Potomac Yard-Arlington - that when taken together makes the largest walkable downtown in Virginia and similar in scale to the downtowns of Indianapolis, Austin, and San Diego. Most recently, Rob's work championing a new pedestrian connection to the airport, CC2DCA, helped propel a unique, differentiating idea into one of the top transportation investments included in the Commonwealth's winning Amazon proposal.

Outside of Crystal City, Rob has repeatedly demonstrated a knack for quickly learning what makes neighborhoods tick and developing a vision for community action that embraces creativity, efficiency, and partnership building in order to proactively make change, not just advocate for it. In his two years in Norfolk, Virginia, Rob founded a Civic Association and led the reengagement of a prominent downtown professional group's membership. Upon moving to the Petworth neighborhood in the District of Columbia, Rob launched a farmers market, led numerous community enhancement efforts, co-founded a community-based volunteer organization, and was elected to the Advisory Neighborhood Commission. As an engaged citizen and ANC Commissioner, Rob moved forward new bicycle lanes and traffic calming measures, supported community organizations, and advocated for economic development efforts along Georgia Avenue.

Rob earned a graduate degree in Urban and Regional Planning at Virginia Tech's regional campus in Old Town Alexandria. Specializing in Physical Planning and Community Design, Rob focused on how the relationship between the built environment and public space defined the public realm and an area's sense of place and identity. Rob is also a graduate of Bowdoin College of Brunswick, Maine having earned a degree in Economics and Environmental Studies. Rob resides with his family in the Petworth neighborhood of Washington, D.C.

Paola Moya

CEO/Creative Director, Moya Design Partners
Washington, D.C.

A visionary leader driven by innovative designs, social causes, and thoughtful placemaking, Paola Moya is CEO and creative director of Moya Design Partners, a boutique architecture, interiors, and visual design firm. With 15 years of business leadership and design experience, Paola defines the company's strategic direction, oversees operations, manages a staff of 20, cultivates clients, and brings projects to life. Honored with prestigious design and professional awards, Paola was recently featured as a top immigrant business leader that has shaped D.C. (Washington Business Journal). She

volunteers/pursues projects that address homelessness, domestic violence, and empowering women on a local level.

Before forming her own company, Paola led her previous firm, Marshall Moya Design, towards a successful expansion into new architectural markets outside the D.C. Metropolitan region, diversified the firm's portfolio, cultivated strategic relationships, and elevated its profile in the architecture and design world. Under Paola's leadership, the firm won some of the most influential and renowned projects in the city.

Kaushambi Shah

Urban Designer and Report Writer
Rockville, MD

Kaushambi Shah is a LEED accredited Urban Designer/Planner with a background in Architecture. She has 12 years of experience in the private sector, including design and planning in the domestic as well as international realm. Besides working on projects in U.S. cities like Philadelphia, Washington D.C., Baltimore, Boston, Fairfax and smaller towns in New York, she has also worked on projects in India, China, Saudi Arabia and Abu Dhabi. Her project experiences range from design of Entertainment Cities, Mixed Use Town Centers, Campus Plans and Redevelopment, Resort Communities, Residential Communities, Waterfront Developments and Transit Oriented Development.

She has a Bachelor's in Architecture form the University of Mumbai, India and a Masters in Urban Design from the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor. She is a member of the American Planning Association and Urban Land Institute, and an enthusiastic supporter of the Urban Plan program by ULI, and has served as a TAP report writer for previous ULI Washington TAPs, including: "Research Boulevard: It's Not An Office Park!", "What's Next For Westfields?" and "Creating an Eastern Gateway in Falls Church.

Tanya Stern

Deputy Planning Director, Montgomery County Planning Department
Silver Spring, MD

Tanya Stern is Deputy Planning Director at the Montgomery County (MD) Planning Department where she oversees four divisions providing countywide policy development and data analysis for zoning, growth management, transportation planning, historic preservation and housing; real estate and economic analysis and population forecasting; and department-wide services including human resources, budgeting, communications, GIS and information technology. She also is serving as an advisor for Montgomery County's General Plan Update, launching in 2019. Ms. Stern served for 14

years in the Government of the District of Columbia, including eight years at the D.C. Office of Planning (OP), most recently as the Deputy Director for Planning, Engagement and Design. Ms. Stern oversaw OP's Neighborhood Planning and Design divisions and served as Project Director to launch D.C.'s Comprehensive Plan Amendment Cycle. She also led the creation of new planning policies to integrate resilience throughout D.C.'s Comprehensive Plan as well as updates to the Plan's land use, urban design and geographic area planning policies. Ms. Stern's District government experience also included serving as OP's Chief of Staff and in agency program and performance management and budget development roles in the Executive Office of the Mayor and other agencies. Additionally, she has 11 years of non-profit sector experience. Ms. Stern holds a master's degree in city planning from the University of Pennsylvania and is certified through the American Institute of Certified Planners and as a Certified Public Manager. Ms. Stern is currently the co-chair of the Urban Land Institute Washington District Council's Placemaking Initiative Council and co-chair of ULI Washington's Initiative Council Steering Committee.

Dawn Volz

Planner/Landscape Architect, Dewberry

Rockville, MD

Dawn Volz is a member of the Planning and Landscape Architecture team for the Dewberry Rockville office. Dewberry is a multi-disciplinary consulting firm specializing in Civil Engineering, Land Planning, Landscape Architecture and Surveying. Her involvement spans all stages, from concept and feasibility through entitlement and final design/construction phases. As a designer with nearly 15 years of experience, she has worked on a variety of projects, including Urban and Mixed-Use Planning, Adaptive Reuse and Infill, Site Planning, Green Roof design and Public Space Place-Making. She enjoys the challenges that each new design opportunity brings and strives to create balanced spaces that are thoughtfully designed, aesthetically pleasing, functional and sustainable.

Ms. Volz received her Bachelor of Landscape Architecture degree from Penn State and has been an active ULI member for 5 years where she has been involved with the Young Leaders Group (YLG) as well as the Women's Leadership Initiative (WLI) as a Steering Committee member.

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