

# REIMAGINING FRIENDSHIP HEIGHTS

Washington, DC



Technical Assistance Panel Report | APRIL 19-23, 2021

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ON THE COVER: Mixed-use development along Wisconsin Avenue, NW Washington, DC. Source: ULI Washington.



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ULI Washington Chair  
Executive Vice President  
Mid-City

#### **Liz Price**

Executive Director  
ULI Washington



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## Technical Assistance Panel Leadership

### **Sukirti Ghosh**

TAP Committee Co-Chair  
Senior Associate & Urban Designer  
Rhodeside & Harwell, Inc.

### **Stephanie Pankiewicz**

TAP Committee Co-Chair  
Partner  
LandDesign



## Technical Assistance Panel and Project Staff

### Panel Co-Chairs

#### **Katie Bucklew**

Vice President, Avalon Bay Communities, Inc.

#### **Bob Peck**

Principal, Gensler

### Panel Members

#### **Erwin Andres**

Principal & Vice President, Gorove/Slade

#### **Christian Calleri**

Senior Associate, Perkins Eastman

#### **Doug Carter**

Principal-in-Charge, DCS Design

#### **Caroline Flax**

Associate, The Meridian Group

#### **William Rich, CRE**

President, Delta Associates

#### **Vandana Sareen**

Senior Project Manager, Just-A-Start

#### **LaToya Thomas**

Principal & Founder, Brick & Story

#### **Alison Williams**

Partner, Of Place

#### **Bob Youngentob**

President, EYA

#### **David Zaidain**

Practice Area Leader, Gensler

### Panel Advisor

#### **Hillary Allard Goldfarb**

Senior Vice President & Regional Development Officer, Rockefeller Group

### ULI Washington Project Staff

#### **Liz Price**

Executive Director, ULI Washington

#### **Georgia Gempler**

Senior Associate, Advisory Services, ULI

#### **Kaushambi Shah**

Urban Designer and Report Writer

## Acknowledgments

ULI Washington is grateful to the District of Columbia Office of Planning (OP), Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) and Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (MWCOC) for sponsoring this Technical Assistance Panel for Friendship Heights, Washington DC.

Special thanks to Erkin Ozberk (OP) and Steven Segerlin (WMATA) for their support during the TAP. ULI Washington would also like to thank: Director Andrew Trueblood, Anita Cozart, Melissa Bird, and Ryan Hand (OP); Nina Albert, Jim Hamre, Rosalyn Doggett, and Roy Kienitz (WMATA); and Paul Desjardin (MWCOC).



Retail in Friendship Heights DC, along Wisconsin Avenue at the intersection of Harrison Street.



Retail in Friendship Heights DC, along Wisconsin Avenue at the intersection of Ingomar Street looking north.



Retail in Friendship Heights DC, along Wisconsin Avenue at the intersection of Ingomar Street looking south.



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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

From April 19th to 23rd, 2021, a multidisciplinary Technical Assistance Panel (TAP) of ULI Washington members met virtually to evaluate the current conditions in Friendship Heights and envision its future. The TAP was co-sponsored by Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA), District of Columbia Office of Planning (OP) and Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (MWCOC).

Friendship Heights is a cross-jurisdictional neighborhood located at the intersection of Wisconsin Avenue NW and Western Avenue NW along the border between Washington, DC and Montgomery County, Maryland. The TAP study area (outlined in blue) is about 65 acres, and bounded by Garrison Street NW to the south, Western Avenue NW (border with Maryland) to the north (including the bus loop just north of Western Avenue);

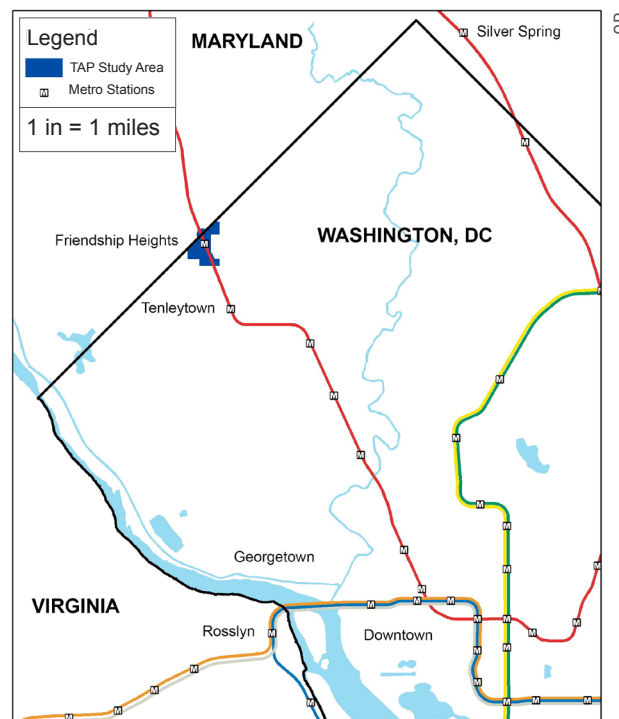
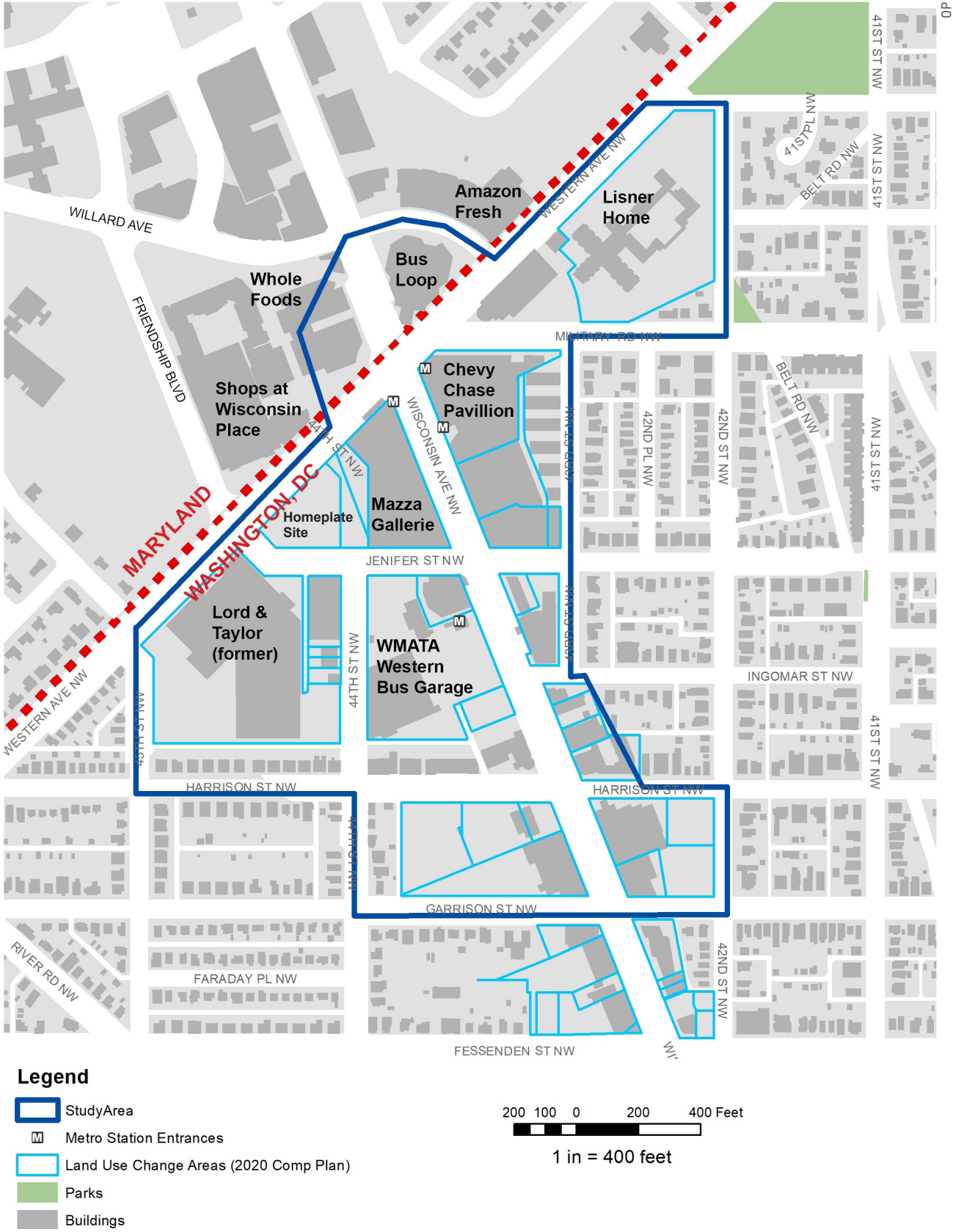


Image showing aerial map of the DMV region at large, highlighting Friendship Heights.



TAP BRIEFING BOOK

TAP Study Area in Friendship Heights DC.



Map showing key buildings, Metro portals, parks and potential land use change areas as per the 2020 Comprehensive Plan, within the study area in Friendship Heights Area in Friendship Heights DC.

and 42nd Street NW to the east and 45th Street NW to the west. While the TAP recommendations focus on the DC side of Friendship Heights and WMATA's assets, the panel considered the conditions in the broader submarket (shaded in light blue) in developing its recommendations.

Prior to the TAP, panelists had the opportunity to tour the neighborhood in person and virtually. During the TAP, panelists interviewed more than 60 stakeholders including residents, civic leaders, elected officials, housing advocates, property owners, developers, retail brokers, and representatives from DC and Montgomery County government agencies.

The panel's analysis and recommendations address key development issues facing Friendship Heights including:

- The future of retail in the area
- Market demand, particularly for expanded housing at all income levels
- Redevelopment options for WMATA's Western Bus Garage
- Design considerations including building heights, floor area ratios, and density transitions
- Public realm improvements including streetscape, roadways, open space
- Placemaking and reimagining the identity of the area
- Transit access improvements to existing Metro and bus facilities
- Coordination of public and private sector activity to foster a cohesive approach to redevelopment
- Coordination of development activities across jurisdictions
- The District's COVID-19 economic and social recovery goals

Friendship Heights DC is at a critical crossroad, and numerous public and private decisions in the coming months will significantly shape the neighborhood's future. Specifically:

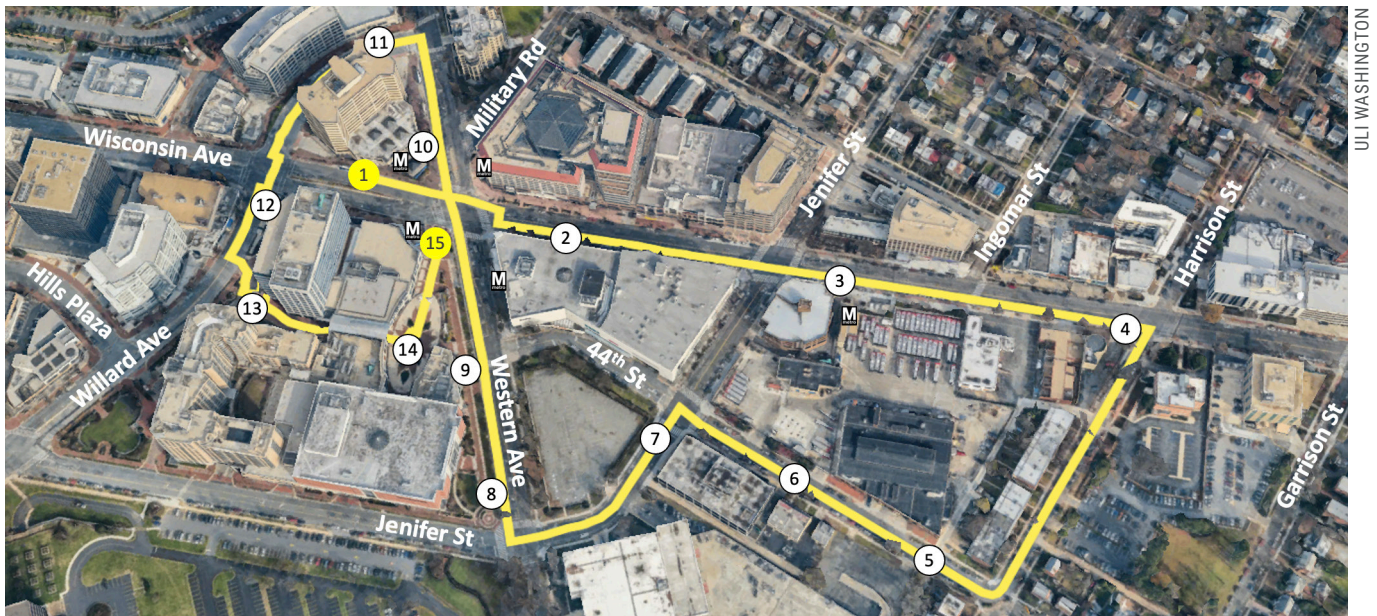
1. The District of Columbia has amended its 2006 Comprehensive Plan with proposed future land use changes for Friendship Heights. The approved Comprehensive Plan update will enable increased density and building heights up to 130 feet. (Source: <http://chairmanmendelson.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/B24-1-Comp-Plan-COMMITTEE-PRINT-FINAL.pdf>).
2. Once a high-end regional shopping destination, the steady retail decline of Friendship Heights DC has resulted in nearly 550,000 SF of vacant commercial space. Two key retail properties – Mazza Gallerie and Lord & Taylor – are being marketed for redevelopment and will significantly impact the future of the neighborhood.
3. WMATA's Western Bus Garage, located on Wisconsin Avenue, is slated for reconstruction and modernization to support WMATA's current and future bus transit needs. The redevelopment of this key location will significantly shape the future of Friendship Heights.
4. There is now a unique opportunity to create mixed income housing opportunities that advance Mayor Bowser's affordable housing goals for Ward 3.

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### Vision: Reimagining Friendship Heights from a Regional Shopping District to a Vibrant, Connected, Inclusive Neighborhood

Public agencies, the private sector, and community leaders have a unique opportunity to work together to shape the future of this neighborhood. Competition from new commercial centers and online shopping have diminished Friendship Heights' appeal as a regional retail destination.





The tour route for the Technical Assistance Panel in the study area.

By building on its strengths – excellent transit access, proximity to regional highways, strong schools and surrounding neighborhoods – Friendship Heights has an opportunity to become a vibrant neighborhood with new mixed-income housing and neighborhood-serving retail. Moreover, stakeholders from all sectors expressed a desire for change and a willingness to work together to create an inclusive community in Friendship Heights.

To achieve the overarching vision of a vibrant and inclusive neighborhood in Friendship Heights, the panel identified the following priorities:

- **Place:** activating streets and public places.
- **Circulation:** facilitating better bus, bike, pedestrian, and car circulation with improved access/visibility to Metro.
- **Development:** creating mixed-use opportunities for new housing, retail and office.
- **Equity:** creating opportunities for affordable housing and support for locally-owned businesses.

### Key recommendations include:

1. Replacing and redeveloping WMATA's Western Bus Garage:
  - a. Relocating the garage to the Lord & Taylor site and maximizing mixed-use development on the existing site (panel's preferred option), or
  - b. Reconstructing the garage on the existing site as part of a mixed-use development.
2. Adding a mix of housing types that are attractive to families of all sizes (couples, young families, empty nesters) including:
  - a. New mixed-income rental housing, focusing on a substantial number of family-sized units.
  - b. Affordable products built in a variety of forms and tenure (multifamily, condominium, single-family) that target seniors and families.
3. Increasing building height and density consistent with the updated Comprehensive Plan Amendments:



View along Willard Avenue, looking towards Wisconsin Avenue.



View along Western Avenue, looking towards Wisconsin Avenue.



View along Jenifer Street looking towards Wisconsin Avenue.

- a. Target new building heights up to 130 feet adjacent to transit and highly trafficked roads like Wisconsin and Western Avenues. Redevelopment of Mazza Gallerie and Western Bus Garage sites should leverage these new heights and densities to maximize housing opportunities, Metro riders and tax revenue.
  - b. Provide for buildings to step down in height as they connect to the surrounding single-family neighborhoods.
4. Creating a “pedestrian retail circulation ring” that connects retail in Friendship Heights DC to existing pedestrian-oriented retail in Friendship Heights MD, including:
  - a. Attract new DC retail anchors to draw foot traffic.
  - b. Consolidate retail within the “ring” to create identity and critical mass of retail offerings.
  - c. Foster ground floor vibrancy on neighborhood scaled, intimate retail streets off of Wisconsin Avenue and Western Avenue.
5. Improving the Metro bus loop at its current location at the intersection of Wisconsin and Western Avenues or a new location at the Homeplate site with an iconic station presence or curbside options.
6. Improving visibility of and access to all Metrorail entrances, enhancing pedestrian and bicycle access and infrastructure, streetscape improvements and wayfinding.
7. Creating flexible and activated public spaces with possible civic anchors that foster community building.



8. Jumpstarting stakeholder and community engagement across jurisdictional boundaries including the formation of a neighborhood alliance or improvement district.
9. Addressing the unique market and entitlement uncertainties of initial development sites (i.e., Mazza Gallerie) to incentivize first movers to leverage the

additional height and density approved in the Comp Plan and deliver signature development at the gateway to the neighborhood (and the District) consistent with the City's vision.



# SCOPE & BACKGROUND

## The Challenge & Opportunity

Friendship Heights today lacks an identity or strong sense of place. Once a leading regional destination for luxury retail, Friendship Heights has experienced a major disruption in its market position as anchor retailers – primarily department stores – have closed permanently or moved to other areas. The retail decline that began a decade ago with increased competition from newer luxury retail developments like CityCenterDC and burgeoning neighborhood developments like Bethesda Row in Bethesda, MD has been exacerbated by the expansion of online shopping. The COVID-19 pandemic spurred corporate bankruptcies and downsizing that required the consolidation and closure of stores, accelerating the retail decline in Friendship Heights. These broader factors led to the closures of longstanding retailers including Lord & Taylor and Nieman Marcus as well as other businesses including AMC Theater, Nordstrom Rack and Starbucks. The result is over 550,000 square feet (SF) of vacant retail space in a three-block radius on the DC side of Friendship Heights. Ownership changes are underway on several key parcels including for the former Mazza Gallerie and Lord & Taylor sites.

While the high retail vacancies have hastened the neighborhood's decline, they have also created redevelopment opportunities that can help the neighborhood evolve and meet current market demand. Similarly, WMATA's intent to replace the aging Western Bus Garage creates an opportunity to enliven a strategic parcel along Wisconsin Avenue. The current facility houses a bus maintenance facility and parking for 117 buses and creates a "blank wall" along a prime corridor with no public access from the surrounding neighborhood. This is a significantly underutilized urban parcel that does not contribute to a vibrant streetscape or attract new retailers, employers, residents or outside consumers.

The policy and entitlement context are also changing rapidly. The amendments to DC's Comprehensive Plan that were pending Council approval during the TAP were approved on May 18, 2021. The amendments enable increased height and density in Friendship Heights. (Source: <http://chairmanmendelson.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/5.4.21-Amendment-to-B24-1-1.pdf>)

According to the local stakeholders, no one is satisfied with the status quo in Friendship Heights. Given the current

market conditions, the panel concluded that there is a unique opportunity to:

- Re-evaluate the existing land use mix.
- Increase the production and diversity of housing options and help achieve Mayor Bowser's housing goals outlined in the [2019 Housing Framework for Equity and Growth report](#). (Source: Housing Equity Report 10-15-19 (dc.gov))
- Improve transit access and pedestrian and bicycle circulation to promote safety and urban vitality.
- Redevelop WMATA's Western Bus Garage as part of a larger mixed-use development.

## TAP Questions

The Panel was asked to address the following questions about the future of Friendship Heights:

1. What is the future of retail in Friendship Heights? Is Friendship Heights still a relevant retail destination? What other uses (office, medical, entertainment, local services, civic, or other amenities) could the area

support if not a regional retail destination?

2. What can be done to generate affordable housing including as many family-sized units as possible?
3. How can redevelopment in Friendship Heights help to advance the District's goals related to economic and social recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic?
4. How can changes to the land use mix in Friendship Heights grow Metrorail and Metrobus ridership and best leverage its transit assets?
5. How can the building heights and floor area ratios in Friendship Heights DC better leverage the high-density commercial land use designation and align with those permitted across the Maryland line?
6. How can new development incorporate design techniques that provide transitions (gentle density) from higher density mixed-use development to missing middle building typologies to existing smaller-scale residential?
7. Where and how best can a new Metro bus maintenance facility be incorporated in the neighborhood? Can it play a role in transitioning density?
8. What type of streetscape, open space, or placemaking improvements will enhance the character and perception of the area to visitors versus residents and improve access to the Metro entrances and bus facilities within the site area?
  - a. What roadway changes are needed to improve connectivity, access, and safety?
  - b. What improvements to the bus loop located at 2045 Wisconsin Avenue could improve the customer experience and further support revitalization of the area?
9. How can the private and public large-site property owners at Friendship Heights collaborate to reposition their sites to create a cohesive approach to redevelopment, including a welcoming public realm at the building and block level?

## Zoning Analysis

At present, it seems that the heights allowed by existing zoning are more of a constraint on development that would meet market demand than are the FAR limits. However, updated zoning would be welcomed by nearly all current and prospective property owners.

### Existing Zoning (Prior to Comprehensive Plan Amendments):

The land bordered by Western Avenue NW, Jenifer Street NW, and Wisconsin Avenue NW is currently zoned MU-7 which provides for the following:

- Matter of Right
  - » Maximum Floor Area Ratio: 4.80 w/IZ (1.5 Non-Residential)
  - » Maximum Height: 65 feet
- Planned Unit Development
  - » Maximum Floor Area Ratio: 5.76 w/IZ (3.35 Non-Residential)
  - » Maximum Height: 90 feet

### Future Zoning based on Comprehensive Plan Amendments:

As per the Approved Comprehensive Plan, zone MU-10, can facilitate the following:

- Matter of Right (after a map amendment process that would need to comply with the proposed Enhanced IZ or IZ Plus policy)
  - » Maximum Floor Area Ratio: 7.2 w/IZ (3.0 Non-Residential)
  - » Maximum Height: 100 feet
- Planned Unit Development
  - » Maximum Floor Area Ratio: 8.64 w/IZ (4.02 Non-Residential)
  - » Maximum Height: 110 feet

In addition, an MU-9 Planned Unit Development would be considered for OP support subject to the provision of residential as follows:

- » Maximum Floor Area Ratio: 9.36 FAR w/IZ
- » Maximum Height: 130 feet

## Stakeholder Engagement

ULI Washington was engaged by the DC Office of Planning, WMATA and MWCOG to provide recommendations about future development in Friendship Heights DC. Over the course of the week-long virtual TAP, panelists toured the site and surrounding area in person and virtually. Through

virtual meetings they received a sponsor briefing, and participated in a series of stakeholder interviews including 12 focus groups, in which they interviewed 63 individuals representing:

1. District government agencies:
  - Office of the Deputy Mayor for Planning and Economic Development
  - District Department of Transportation
  - District Department of Parks & Recreation
  - District of Columbia Office of Planning
  - District Department of Housing and Community Development
  - DC Housing Finance Agency
2. WMATA
  - Office of Capital Planning
  - Office of Real Estate & Parking
  - Bus Maintenance
  - Bus Transportation
3. Affordable housing advocates, developers and policy experts including:
  - DC Grassroots Planning Coalition
  - Washington Legal Clinic
  - Washington Housing Conservancy
  - Enterprise Community Partners
  - Empower DC
  - DC Fiscal Policy Institute
4. Community representatives from
  - Village of Friendship Heights
  - Advisory Neighborhood Commissioners 3E
  - Office of Ward 3 Councilmember Mary Cheh
  - Tenleytown Main Street
5. Montgomery County
  - The Maryland-National Capital Park & Planning Commission
  - Montgomery County Economic Development Corporation
6. Private Sector stakeholders, including property owners, developers' representatives and retail experts
  - Akridge
  - Boston Properties
  - CBRE
  - Clarion Partners
  - DC Economic Partnership
  - Donohoe Development Company
  - Equity Residential
  - Federal Realty
  - Georgetown University Urban Planning Program
  - Zuckerman Gravely Development
  - Grosvenor Americas
  - Lerch Early Brewer
  - Lisner Home
  - Nuveen
  - Somerset Development
  - Stonebridge
  - The Urban Partnership LLC
  - WashREIT
  - Willard Retail



### Stakeholder Consensus

At the outset of the TAP, panelists learned that residents, property owners and government officials agree that Friendship Heights is no longer and not likely to serve as a regional shopping destination. It is currently a “tweener” between Bethesda and Tenleytown/Georgetown and lacks a strong sense of place or unique identity. No stakeholder was happy or satisfied with the status quo. There is a strong consensus that the area needs to change to attract investment, businesses and future residents, and there was agreement that a new identity for Friendship Heights must incorporate not only the commercial corridor, but also the neighborhoods and families who live there.

Additionally, there was significant acknowledgement by most stakeholders that Friendship Heights has largely been a wealthy, white enclave of DC and does not reflect the diversity of the city (in race, age, or economics) in its neighborhoods or retail. For Friendship Heights to evolve, it must revisit who it welcomes into its borders – both to live and to play. There must be opportunities for residents from all walks of life to be able to see themselves as visitors and as full-time residents in Friendship Heights, and this must be achieved in both neighborhood branding and in housing and retail opportunities.

### Existing Conditions

Repositioning Friendship Heights as a vibrant, mixed income neighborhood will require addressing some of the area’s existing challenges: large super blocks, inactive streetscape, inadequate bicycle and pedestrian access, poor wayfinding, and a lack of civic and cultural facilities, parks or public gathering spaces. Future development should also provide a more thoughtful transition and infill strategy between the commercial core and surrounding neighborhoods.



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Vacant retail along Wisconsin Avenue.



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Vacant retail along Wisconsin Avenue.



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Vacant retail along Wisconsin Avenue.





The vacant Lord & Taylor department store along Jenifer Street.



Metro access along Wisconsin Avenue.



Vacant parking lot adjoining Mazza Gallerie.



Metro access along Western Avenue.



The Western Bus Garage along 44th Street.



Automobiles and bus traffic along Wisconsin Avenue.



### Strengths

1. Excellent transit access: Red Line Metro station with five entrances and extensive WMATA and Montgomery County bus service.
2. Vehicular access: visibility from Wisconsin Avenue, proximity to regional highways, abundant parking.
3. Strong adjacent neighborhoods: middle and high-income communities with excellent public schools and community facilities.
4. Development opportunities: vacancy and transitions in ownership create opportunity for repositioning and redevelopment; market demand for mixed-income housing opportunities.

### Weaknesses

1. Uninviting streetscape and impenetrable superblocks. Challenging pedestrian and vehicular circulation.
2. Poor visibility of Metro entrances and bus loop.
3. Outdated retail footprints and configurations and lack of foot traffic.
4. Few community facilities like parks, gathering spaces or civic uses.



A lack of sense of place along Wisconsin Avenue.



Vacant retail along Wisconsin Avenue.



Uninviting streetscape along Wisconsin Avenue.



Uninviting streetscape along Wisconsin Avenue.



# RECOMMENDATIONS

## Market Conditions & Land Use

### Demographics

Panel members analyzed market conditions and demographics in the study area:

- Median household income in the Friendship Heights DC study area is \$168,417, well above the city-wide median of \$86,420 but comparable to Bethesda (\$164,142). Within a half-mile radius of the Friendship Heights Metro station, median household income is \$129,749.
- The residential population is much smaller than competing commercial corridors – with **only 540 residents in the Friendship Heights DC study area** (average household size of 2.41) and **5,400 in Friendship Heights MD** (average household size of

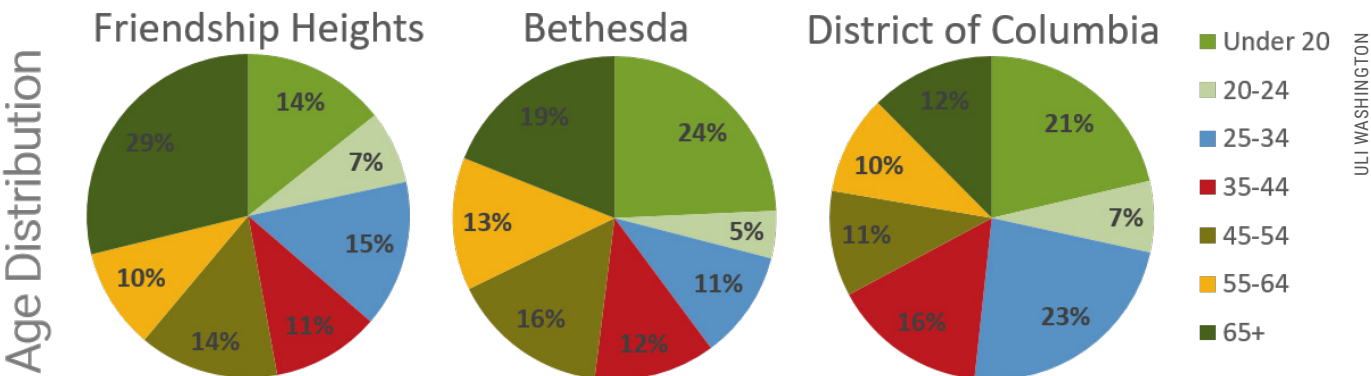
1.88) compared to about 63,200 in Bethesda (average household size of 2.41). Within a half mile of the Metro station, there are just under 9,000 residents and about 4,400 households, of which 45% are families. Meanwhile, the average household size is 2.03.

- There is a higher share of seniors in the Friendship Heights DC/MD area – 29% of residents are age 65 or over, compared to 19% in Bethesda and 12% in the District of Columbia as a whole. In just the Friendship Heights DC study area, 22% of residents are age 65 or over, but an equal share of residents is under age 20, slightly higher than the city-wide average.

### Office

The office market has been impacted regionally by the COVID-19 pandemic, and future space needs of tenants

Area	Age Cohort						
	<20	20-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+
Friendship Heights DC	22%	3%	10%	16%	15%	13%	22%
Friendship Heights DC/MD	14%	7%	15%	11%	14%	10%	29%
½ Mi. Radius from Metro	15%	6%	16%	13%	11%	13%	25%
District of Columbia	21%	7%	23%	16%	11%	10%	12%



Population by age in Friendship Heights, Bethesda and District of Columbia.



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Office buildings along Wisconsin Avenue.



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Office buildings along Wisconsin Avenue.

are uncertain at this time. **Friendship Heights has a considerably smaller office market (3.4M SF combined in DC and MD) than Bethesda (12.1M SF). Vacancy in Friendship Heights (18.1%) is higher than the overall District of Columbia market (13.8%), Bethesda (15.9%), or the metro area average (15.7%).** Major office tenants in Friendship Heights include Geico, Microsoft, Wedding Wire, and WTOP radio. Over 10% of the office inventory is medical office space, mostly in older Class B products on the MD side of Friendship Heights.

Office can play an important role in driving daytime traffic to Friendship Heights and creating a vibrant mixed-use neighborhood. However, given the existing stock and current vacancy in the market, the panel believes that office use will not drive the first phase of new development. Once new residential and retail development supports and strengthens the existing office market, additional office stock could be built. If an anchor tenant (such as an institution like a university, research or trade organization, or government office relocating to Friendship Heights) were to be secured for an office building, new office space construction could be accelerated, but the panel felt this is not a critical need today.

Medical office users are interested in expanding in Friendship Heights, but a recent proposal to replace retail with medical office uses under a PUD governing Chevy Chase Pavilion faced community objections. Medical office uses are typically parking intensive, and do not drive demand for retail in the same way as traditional office.

Patients typically drive to appointments and leave directly afterward, generating limited cross-shopping opportunities. Medical use is also not an activity-generating ground floor use. Nonetheless, medical office has been a driving component of space on the Maryland side and zoning to allow it should be considered, as it can help establish Friendship Heights as a medical hub for Upper Northwest.

## Retail

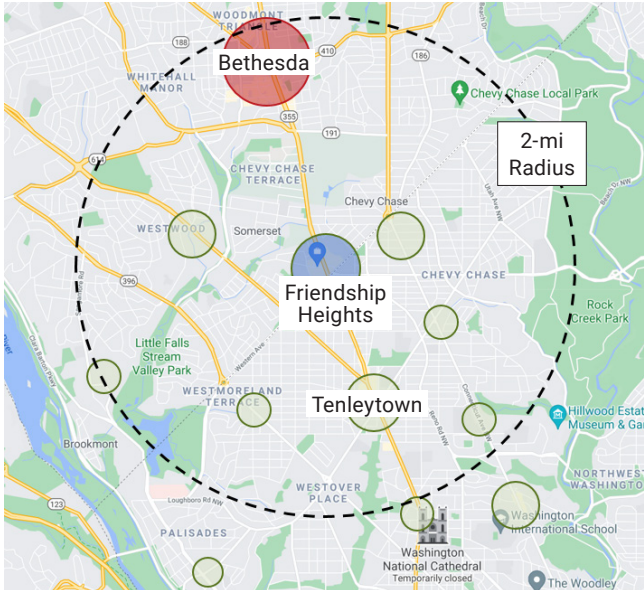
As shopping patterns and retail nodes changed over the course of the last 15 years, several drivers have impacted the Friendship Heights area including (a) the consolidation of luxury retail predominately to super regional locations (Tysons Corner, VA and CityCenterDC) (b) the growth of high street, mixed-use competing neighborhoods that focus on placemaking and branding (Bethesda, MD – 2-miles



VILLAGE OF FRIENDSHIP HEIGHTS

Photo of Friendship Heights from 1970, showing a streetcar stop – current site of the Metro Bus Loop and The Collection.





Illustrative plan showing competing commercial cores, highlighting Bethesda as the regional shopping location.



Vacant storefronts at Mazza Gallerie along Wisconsin Avenue.



Human-scale, pedestrian friendly shopping district in Georgetown, DC.

from Friendship Heights – and Georgetown, DC) and (c) the consolidation of large department stores into high-trafficked malls (Tysons Corner, VA and Montgomery Mall, MD) with easy vehicular access from major interstates.

As retailers continue to reduce the number of storefronts they need in a market to serve the same customer base, Friendship Heights is no longer a preferred location. New, emerging neighborhoods with more vibrant, smaller-scale retail environments (i.e. Bethesda) have attracted a critical mass of quality national and local retailers and become a soft goods destination hub. Careful attention to the quality of the public realm and retail environment will be important to successfully repositioning Friendship Heights and creating a vibrant retail streetscape.



Vacant retail along Wisconsin Avenue.



Human-scale, pedestrian friendly shopping district in Downtown Bethesda, MD.



The panel estimated that Friendship Heights market (inclusive of Maryland) has 1.2 million SF of retail space compared to Bethesda (1.5 million SF) and Georgetown (2.2 million SF). With Lord & Taylor defunct, Mazza Gallerie mostly empty and low occupancy at Chevy Chase Pavilion, **more than 550,000 SF is vacant within Friendship Heights DC alone.** There has been no new retail development in the study area in over a decade. **Retail rents range from \$40 - \$60/SF for well-located space, a 40%+ discount compared to Bethesda Row.**

### Retail Recommendations

As Friendship Heights transitions from a regional destination to more neighborhood-serving retail, the amount and location of retail space needs to be right-sized.

- Friendship Heights DC can absorb a maximum of about 150,000 to 200,000 SF of new retail.
- Retail footprint could include one or two anchors that could be as large as 100,000 SF and/or smaller anchors that are 20,000 to 50,000 SF.
- Remaining space could be comprised of food and beverage establishments (up to 50,000 SF) and service retail (up to 25,000 SF).

Anchors are important drivers of retail activity. Friendship Heights MD has two strong anchors – a grocery store (Whole Foods) and a department store (Bloomingdale's). Amazon is expected to open a new grocery concept, Amazon Fresh, on the site of a former Giant. These stores draw people into the neighborhood who then shop, eat and visit the adjacent stores. Friendship Heights DC is missing a key retail anchor that can pull traffic to the DC side and drive demand for smaller retailers.

While retail and mixed-use are important for the area, the challenges in timing, coordination and sizes could hinder progress. While an anchor will act as a catalyst for smaller retail, a developer is unlikely to speculatively program a large space without a committed anchor, risking structural vacancy and obsolete or unusable space. Existing footprints are generally too small or the wrong shape for larger big box tenants, yet too deep for neighborhood-serving retail (120 feet vs. 60 feet) including dry goods

and restaurants. To achieve the desired results – retail anchors, street vibrancy and density above (residential or office) – the developer needs not only time but flexibility as conversations shift with retail users. With new large-scale



Pearl Street outdoor mall in Boulder, CO.

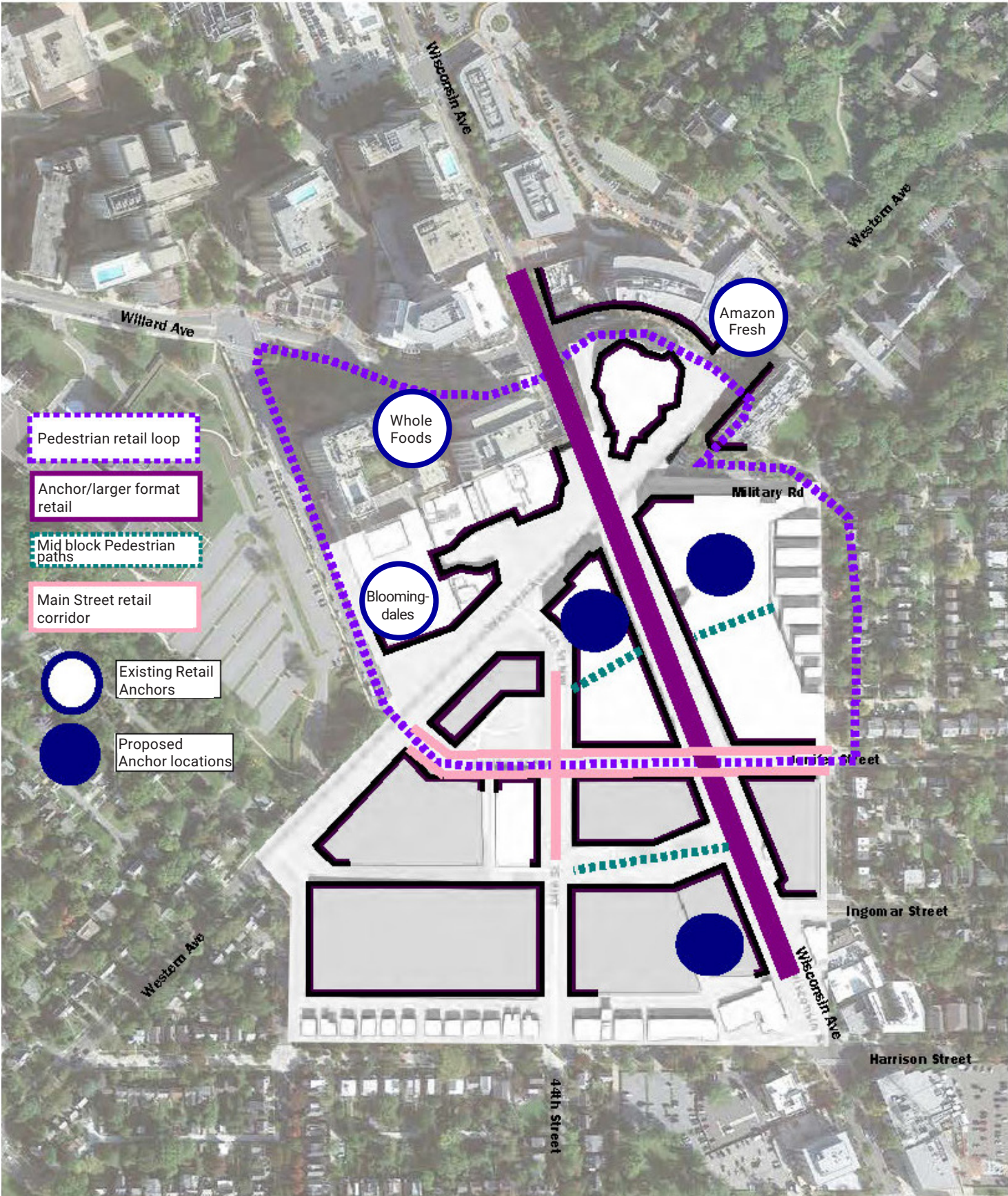


Pearl Street outdoor mall in Boulder, CO.



Outdoor streetside cafe.





Illustrative plan showing the Pedestrian Retail Loop recommended by the panel.

redevelopment, developers have the opportunity to right-size these spaces while creating a vibrant streetscape.

The panel recommends formalizing a “pedestrian retail loop” indicated by the dotted purple line in the diagram above, connecting new retail in Friendship Heights DC to existing ground level retail in Friendship Heights MD. New development along this route would be more intimate in scale than the retail that has characterized Friendship Heights to date. Narrower streets with slower traffic and smaller retail footprints with pedestrian-oriented sidewalks and storefronts would create a more vibrant retail environment.

Jenifer Street and 44th Street could form a potential focal node along this “pedestrian loop,” a Main Street corridor with neighborhood-serving, locally-owned retail. This is represented by a solid pink line in the diagram. Matching the brick paved streetscape that currently exists on the Maryland side would reinforce this pedestrian retail loop.

In addition to this new retail loop, the panel envisions anchors and larger-format retail stores along the Wisconsin Avenue retail corridor depicted by the solid purple line. Existing retail anchors are marked with blue circular icons:

- Whole Foods Market on Willard Avenue
- Bloomingdale’s on Western Avenue
- Amazon Fresh on Western Ave (pending)

Natural locations for future anchors are noted with blue dots:

- Intersection of Wisconsin Avenue and Military Road – Chevy Chase Pavilion
- Intersection of Wisconsin Avenue and Western Avenue – Mazza Gallerie site
- Wisconsin Avenue and Ingomar Street - WMATA Western Bus Garage site

## Residential

### Market Conditions

The rental residential market in Friendship Heights consists of older multifamily buildings that tend to attract older residents. The neighborhood has seen **no new residential development on either side of the jurisdictional boundary line in more than 14 years.**

- Most multifamily housing in Friendship Heights is concentrated on the MD side, and mostly in older buildings.
- There is a high concentration of seniors in the neighborhood, especially on the MD side. Friendship Heights is considered to be a Naturally Occurring Retirement Community (NORC), meaning a community dominated by retirees that was not originally designed to be a senior living development.
- While over 38,000 market-rate multifamily rental units have been built in the District of Columbia from 2010 to 2020, no new units were built in the study area.
- No affordable or Inclusionary Zoning (IZ) units exist in the study area.
- The most recent apartment development, Wisconsin Place, delivered in 2008 in Friendship Heights MD with current rents averaging \$3.20/SF (compared with \$3.60/SF in Bethesda).
- In contrast to Friendship Heights, Tenleytown to the south and Bethesda to the north have had steady multifamily growth and investment.

The for-sale housing market is primarily dominated by single-family homes on the DC side. The neighborhood is desirable for families due to the quality of schools and current housing stock. New development, however, has been limited; the last new condominium that was built in this submarket was Chase Point Condos in 2007. In recent years, three 4-unit flats on Harrison Street have converted to 6, 7 and 8-unit buildings with condos ranging from 800 – 1,400 SF. These were permitted by-right under current zoning, but are replacing more traditionally affordable units. The condos sold for approximately \$600/SF, with low HOA fees.

There is a lack of affordable for-sale housing in this area of the District. The average sale price for detached single-family homes in the 20015 ZIP code (which includes Friendship Heights DC) during the first quarter of 2021 was \$1.56 million. The graph shows resale prices at the Chase Point Condos (which has five dedicated affordable housing units) from 2012 to the first quarter of 2021, and compares it to condominiums in the 20015 ZIP code in DC. While the



20015 ZIP code and DC prices have trended similarly, prices at Chase Point have been much higher than the city-wide and 20015 averages.

### Residential Recommendations

There is significant housing potential in the Friendship Heights submarket based on the area's current strengths:

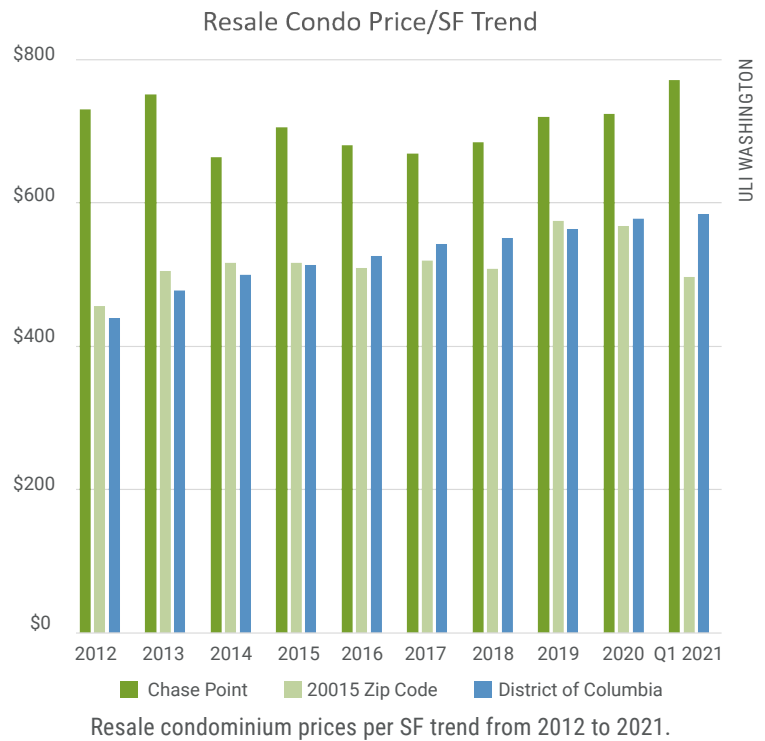
- Extensive transit network
- Good schools
- Existing neighborhood-serving retail in Friendship Heights MD

Housing is certain to be the largest percentage of new development in Friendship Heights. Based on a preliminary massing analysis and assuming maximum height of 130 feet, the panel estimates that the area can generate approximately 2 million SF of new housing development, which equates to more than 2,000 new units.

Early phases of development should cater to mature and family households. Currently the area is unlikely to attract younger renters or buyers due to competition from other neighborhoods with more bars, restaurants and active nightlife such as 14th Street, Union Market and the DC waterfront. As the neighborhood attracts new retail and amenities it could attract a younger demographic to the area.

Housing should include a mix of housing types, sizes and amenities:

- Multifamily high-rises along major transportation corridors like Wisconsin Avenue.
- Mid-rise development as one starts to step down and away from major transportation corridors.
- Forms of housing that transition to lower density like low-rise and mid-rise densities adjacent to existing single-family homes.
- Due to the target market, unit sizes will likely have to be larger to accommodate empty nesters and families.
- Amenities in the new residential and the public realm should meet the needs of families and seniors.



### Rental Housing

The panel recommends developing more rental housing in this market, a component of which should be units designed for families that want to live in this neighborhood but are priced out of the single-family homes or prefer renting and/or apartment lifestyles. Newly built apartments in Friendship Heights will likely be priced at a discount to Bethesda (\$3.60/SF) initially. Weaker market conditions in the sub-market and larger unit sizes to fit the market demand will depress rents in the near term. According to the panel, **achievable rents (\$3.35/SF+) suggest perceived owner land values at present may be higher than real underlying values in the study area.**

In other words, current landowners may have artificially high expectations of land values that are not supported by current projected rent levels; a land residual analysis based on current costs, current rents and operating expenses would result in actual land values that are lower than owners and neighbors may assume. **This mistaken perception could limit potential new development until either rents rise, or land owners reduce their expectations.** On the other hand, lower land values in the short run may mean a lower subsidy is required to support affordable housing development.

Rents will not likely rise until some catalytic new development takes place, offering a better pedestrian retail environment and improving the perception of Friendship Heights as a desirable place to live. The WMATA site is likely the most logical place for the catalyst to occur given its size, single control, and its quasi-governmental ownership. Mazza Gallerie is also likely to be an early mover given that it has recently been acquired by Tishman Speyer.

### For-Sale Housing

Given the aging population there is likely significant demand for new condos targeting aging boomers. While the Bethesda market became over-saturated with high-end condominiums, phased construction of new condominium product properly priced and positioned would likely draw seniors out of their existing single-family homes and provide resale opportunities for new young families to purchase in the neighborhood. The panel cautioned that condominium buildings tend to be smaller scale (50-100 units) and will contribute modestly to overall residential growth.

There will likely be significant demand for new “missing middle” housing in the form of family-oriented two-over-two condos and townhomes in the transition areas between the more dense development and the existing single-family neighborhood. This type of housing would be similar to

the townhomes on 33rd Street behind Chevy Chase Pavilion. This same transitional use might be appropriate on the Lord & Taylor site where it abuts the single-family neighborhoods. New for-sale housing at existing market

values would add further support to higher rent levels and to the demand for new neighborhood-serving retail as it has in other redeveloping submarkets. Newly built condominiums in Friendship Heights could potentially achieve pricing at \$850/SF or above if targeted towards empty nesters. Townhomes would likely be priced well above \$1 million.

The stick-built housing forms of missing middle housing also provide excellent opportunities for more moderately priced options given their lower construction costs. These options can provide a transition from the high density multifamily to the existing single-family housing stock. Future zoning changes to allow greater low-density in the adjoining single-family neighborhoods should be considered in order to increase the supply of lower scale missing middle housing options nearby the urban core and transportation facilities. The Zoning Text Amendment (ZTA) now being considered in Montgomery County for its more urban single-family zones are a good model for increasing the supply of attainable housing targeted at families.

### Affordable Housing

Consistent with the need for new housing in Friendship Heights, there is significant potential for affordable housing, which would help achieve Mayor Bowser’s affordable housing goals for DC. **Importantly, most residents as well as commercial property owners in the Friendship Heights community seem to recognize the timing is right for new development and significant investments in affordable housing.** Continued meaningful community engagement is needed to foster an equitable and inclusive development vision.

Similar to the market-rate units, the affordable housing units should be in a variety of building forms that target seniors and families. The following should be represented in new affordable housing products:

- High-rise, mid-rise, missing middle forms – e.g., low-rise condominiums, townhomes, and duplex homes
- For-sale and rental options
- Larger family-oriented units
- Senior housing

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Townhomes along 43rd Street.



FARRAGUTFUL

The Bonifant, a housing development in Silver Spring, MD built with subsidies.



EVA

The Lindley, a mixed-income housing development in Chevy Chase, MD.

- Mixed income with workforce components, similar to the 200-unit Lindley model built by the Housing Opportunities Commission in Chevy Chase, MD (60% market-rate, 20% workforce and 20% median income targeted units).
- Services should meet the needs of new residents – such as a senior center, library, or day care– and help build equity and community.

The panel noted that there is no District-owned land in Friendship Heights today that can be leveraged, by writing down land values, to provide deeper subsidy and higher percentages of affordable housing. Accordingly, significant subsidies and incentives may be required to achieve affordable housing in new development above the required Inclusionary Zoning (IZ) levels. Expanded IZ (IZ+) increases the affordable housing requirement to as much as 20%. (Source: <https://planning.dc.gov/inclusionaryzoning>)

The following subsidy strategies could maximize production of affordable housing:

- Long term tax abatements
- Tax increment financing
- DC Housing Production Trust Fund: One of the largest in the country, Mayor Bowser recently proposed investing an additional \$400 million in the trust fund.

- Bond issuance for both equity and debt financing: A recent \$100 million bond issuance by Montgomery County is supported by housing trust fund dollars to fund the interest on the bonds. The bond proceeds have been invested as equity in new mixed income projects owned by the Housing Opportunity Commission (HOC). Upon stabilization, project refinancing will repay the equity and allow the development profit to create an evergreen opportunity.
- Purchase of private land with federal American Rescue Plan dollars to convert it to public ownership.

### Development and Timing Challenges

Simply increasing density in Friendship Heights will not stimulate high-rise construction under existing conditions. Existing and projected rent levels may only support stick built mid-rise construction until the market stabilizes and new retail amenities are brought back into the neighborhood. Rents have been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic with double-digit annual decreases recorded in early 2021; however, rents are expected to begin to recover later in the year. Larger average unit sizes in Friendship Heights will result in higher-priced apartments on a per-unit basis than in other city neighborhoods, but the rent per SF will be lower.



Apartment absorption also was negatively impacted earlier in the pandemic, although a recent uptick in leasing activity has been spurred by the region's gradual re-opening and lower rents. Absorption of apartments in Friendship Heights will likely be slower than in other areas of the city due to higher rents from larger average unit sizes and closer to 10-12 units per month compared to the long-term average of 15 units per month for all apartments.

Near-term development plans have also been impacted by zoning uncertainty. Current zoning constrains what can be built on the site in the near-term without going through an arduous and lengthy PUD or similar process. Zoning changes that could accompany adoption of changes to the Comprehensive Land Use Plan and map (underway now) could be beneficial but the uncertainty of when they will be fully adopted could be a disincentive to near term developers to plan for more optimal uses, heights and density that could be allowed later. In short, entitlement uncertainty could result in projects that move forward under existing heights and density limits (i.e., stick built vs concrete).

The opportunity costs to the City if that happens are significant in terms of housing units not built, especially affordable and workforce units, new tax revenue, etc. The panel encourages the District to **engage directly with the private stakeholders as soon as possible** to understand their plans and timeline and, if needed, to use available tools (Affordable Housing in High-Needs Areas, TIF, PILOT, etc.) **to align early phases of development with the City's vision for Friendship Heights and maximize the development potential of the area.**

Mazza Gallerie will likely be the first test case for development in Friendship Heights as it was recently acquired by Tishman Speyer, is mostly vacant, and the developer is incentivized to redevelop the property and create income and value as soon as possible. It is prominently located at the entrance to the neighborhood (and the District) on Wisconsin and Western Avenues and directly above the Metro station. Given its location and visibility it is critical that the redevelopment leverage

the increased height and density approved in the Comprehensive Plan. It would be a tremendous missed opportunity if it were to proceed under the current M7 zoning.

Several factors could impact the development plans at Mazza Gallerie and all stakeholders are encouraged to engage to mitigate the risks outlined below to achieve the best outcome.

- Current zoning does not allow the increased height and density approved in the Comprehensive Plan. The time and risk associated with a PUD or other routes to update zoning (through small area plan and map amendment) need to be addressed to incentivize the developer to maximize the development potential of the site.
- Given current market conditions, a larger building envelope would likely require phasing rather than a single build-out, adding time, complexity and risk to the project. Current rents may also not support concrete construction.
- The site has unique structural realities that need to be addressed including an existing underground garage (which may need to be retained) and Metro facilities as well as an operating tenant (TJ Maxx).
- No new development in the area has occurred in more than 10 years. During stakeholder interviews, the panel confirmed that the perception of community opposition to discretionary review processes in Ward 3 is affecting the economic calculus of developers to advance by-right projects.

There was general consensus amongst stakeholders that Mazza Gallerie presents an important opportunity to redefine the neighborhood. **To achieve the highest and best use of the site, it is critical for the public sector and community leaders to signal their support for rezoning the site and to work collaboratively with the developer to address the unique challenges and risks associated with being a "first mover/loss leader."**

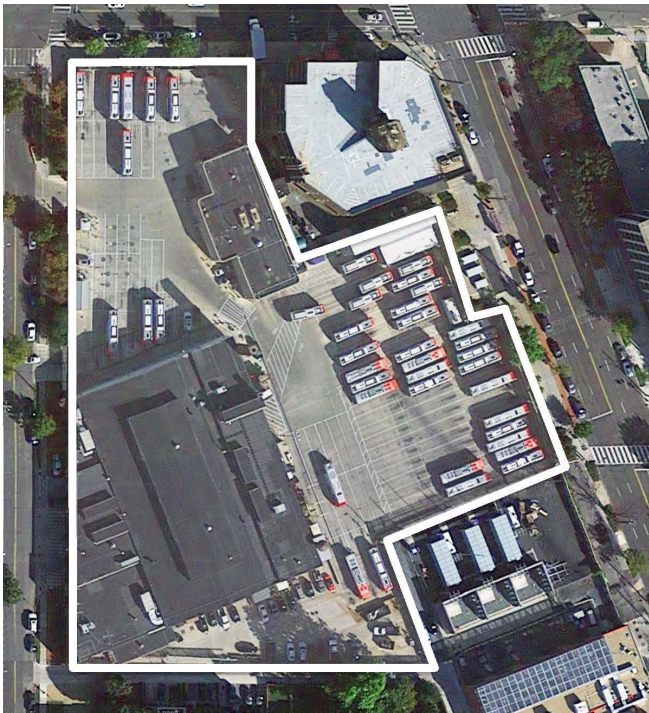
## WMATA Western Bus Garage

### Existing Conditions & Future Needs

The current WMATA Western Bus Garage occupies prime land in Friendship Heights with significant frontage along Wisconsin Avenue. The garage was built in 1936 and has been nominated to the DC Inventory of Historic Sites.

Existing conditions and functions include:

- 3.77 acres site on a superblock bounded by Wisconsin Avenue, Jenifer Street, 44th Street and Harrison Street.
- Open-air parking lot for 117 buses occupies the north and east side of the lot.
- Garage with 14 maintenance bays fronts directly onto 44th Street, mid-block facing the Lord & Taylor parking lot.
- Only light maintenance performed on-site (i.e., oil changes, refueling, and washing).
- Current facilities cannot accommodate new fuels (electric, CNG) or anticipated growth in WMATA's articulated bus fleet.



Aerial view of the WMATA Western Bus Garage.

- 281 spaces leased in Mazza Gallerie for employee parking.

The volume of bus traffic does not usually create traffic issues in the neighborhood. Peak bus traffic exiting the parking is very early in the morning when drivers begin their routes. Bus traffic entering the facility is highest very late at night when service ends. During the day, buses arrive and leave sporadically for maintenance.

WMATA plans to replace the Western Bus garage in 2025 when the Bladensburg and Northern garages are rebuilt. The replacement must meet the following requirements:

- 140 bus parking spaces (40-foot length)
- 281 employee parking spaces
- Minimize grade changes for buses
- Extra wide column spacing to support bus turning movements (60 - 80 feet)
- Accommodate articulated buses as well as electric charging

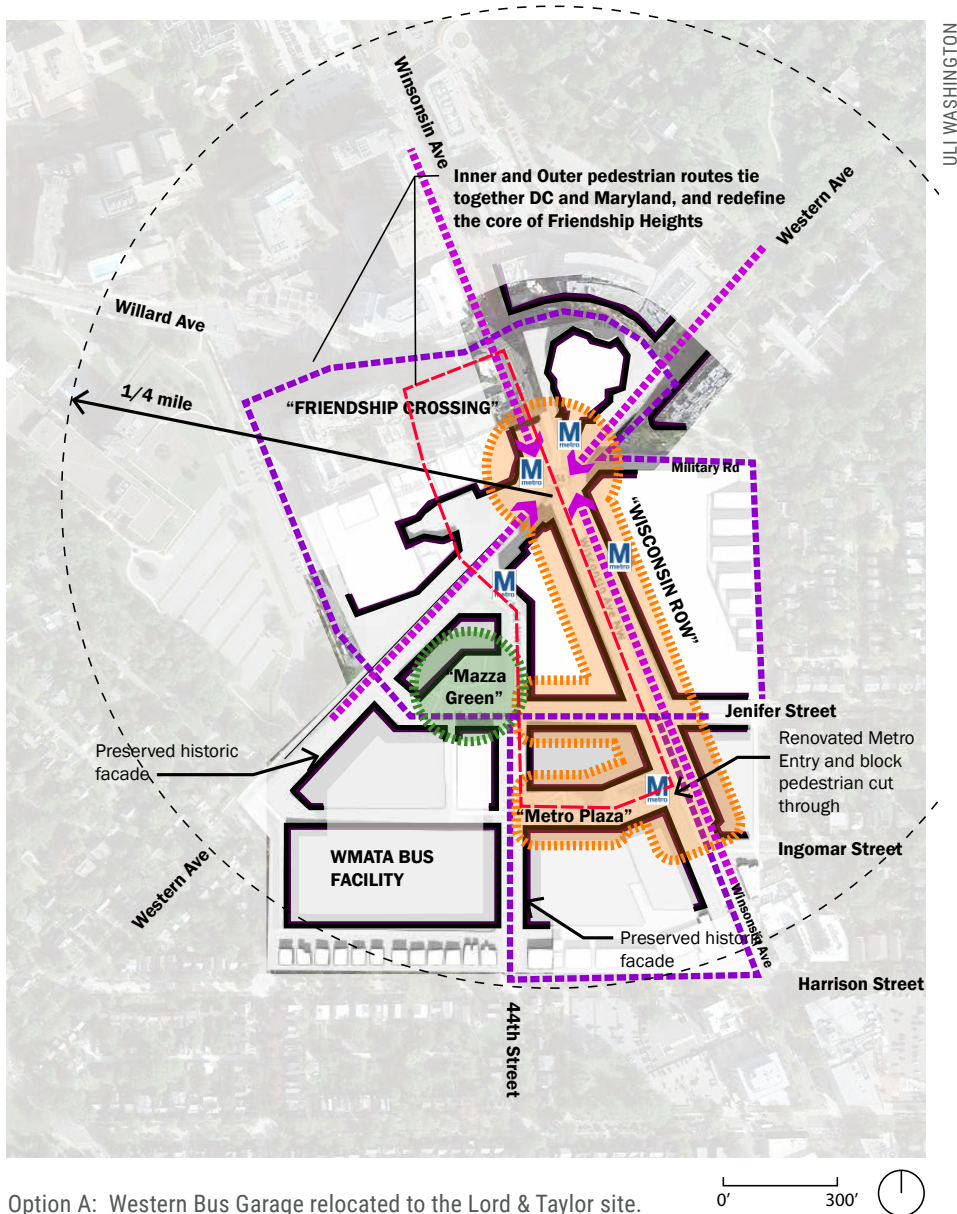
### Framework Options

The panel recommended four framework options to achieve WMATA's goals.

#### Panel's Preferred Option: Option A – Relocation of Western Bus Garage to the Lord & Taylor site

In Option A, the panel's preferred option, the entire Western Bus Garage would be moved across 44th Street to the now vacant Lord & Taylor site. Considering the Lord & Taylor block is an approximately 6.3 acres, bus parking and maintenance garage could be built on half of the site with the remainder available for mixed-use residential. This would free up the existing bus garage site fronting Wisconsin Avenue for optimum mixed-use residential and retail development.

A 3-level deck bus garage could park 150 buses in the east-west direction between Western Avenue and 44th Street as shown in the diagram. Grade changes between 44th Street and Western Avenue could accommodate one level of the parking deck below grade, with two additional levels above. In order to reduce the scale of the building, the panel suggests WMATA consider putting one deck below grade



Option A: Western Bus Garage relocated to the Lord & Taylor site.

– with employee parking below grade and the bus parking at grade and above. Another option is above grade parking structures faced by residential development like in Bethesda Row, with development above.

Along the northern part of the Lord & Taylor site abutting Western Avenue, Jenifer Street and 44th Street, retail at the ground level is recommended with residential use above. At the ground level, retail should include uses that draw pedestrians – restaurants, markets and bookstores. Other neighborhood services like day cares and banks would also be appropriate at the ground level. Future developers are

encouraged to incorporate the preserved historic Lord & Taylor façade on Western Avenue into the new design.

Once vacated, the current Western Bus Garage site should incorporate large-scale mixed-use residential with ground floor retail along Wisconsin Avenue, Jenifer Street and 44th Street. Additionally, the site could:

- **Expand the Metro entrance** to include both stairs and escalators and **create a new public space, “Metro Plaza,”** anchoring the new development.
- Include a pedestrian path through Metro Plaza linking Wisconsin Avenue to 44th Street.
- **Enliven the streetscape** along Wisconsin Avenue – represented with dotted orange line on the diagram.
- **Integrate the retail pedestrian loop** on Jenifer Street and 44th Street described above.

### Option A - Pros

- The new site could be built while the current facility operates resulting in no loss of service or capacity during construction or relocation.
- Buses can access the new garage directly from Western Avenue minimizing impacts to the neighborhood.
- Moving the bus garage to the Lord & Taylor site frees up prime land on the current WMATA site for new mixed-use development along Wisconsin Avenue;





Long superblock along Wisconsin Avenue between Western Avenue and Jenifer Street.

and Jenifer and 44th Streets can be redefined as a neighborhood serving retail corridor.

- Building one deck of employee parking below grade reduces the overall footprint of the facility and increases the private development opportunity on the remaining portion of the site.
- A two-story above ground garage adjacent to the single-family residential neighborhood minimizes height impacts on the low-rise neighborhood and creates a buffer between the existing low-rise residential and new higher density development.

#### Option A – Cons

- WMATA does not own the Lord & Taylor site. Site negotiations and acquisition could be time consuming and costly. (However, a land swap for a developable parcel on the WMATA site might be a way to acquire a portion of the Lord & Taylor site).
- Ventilating below grade parking adds a cost premium (the cost is higher for bus than employee parking).

#### Option B – Redeveloping Bus Garage on current site

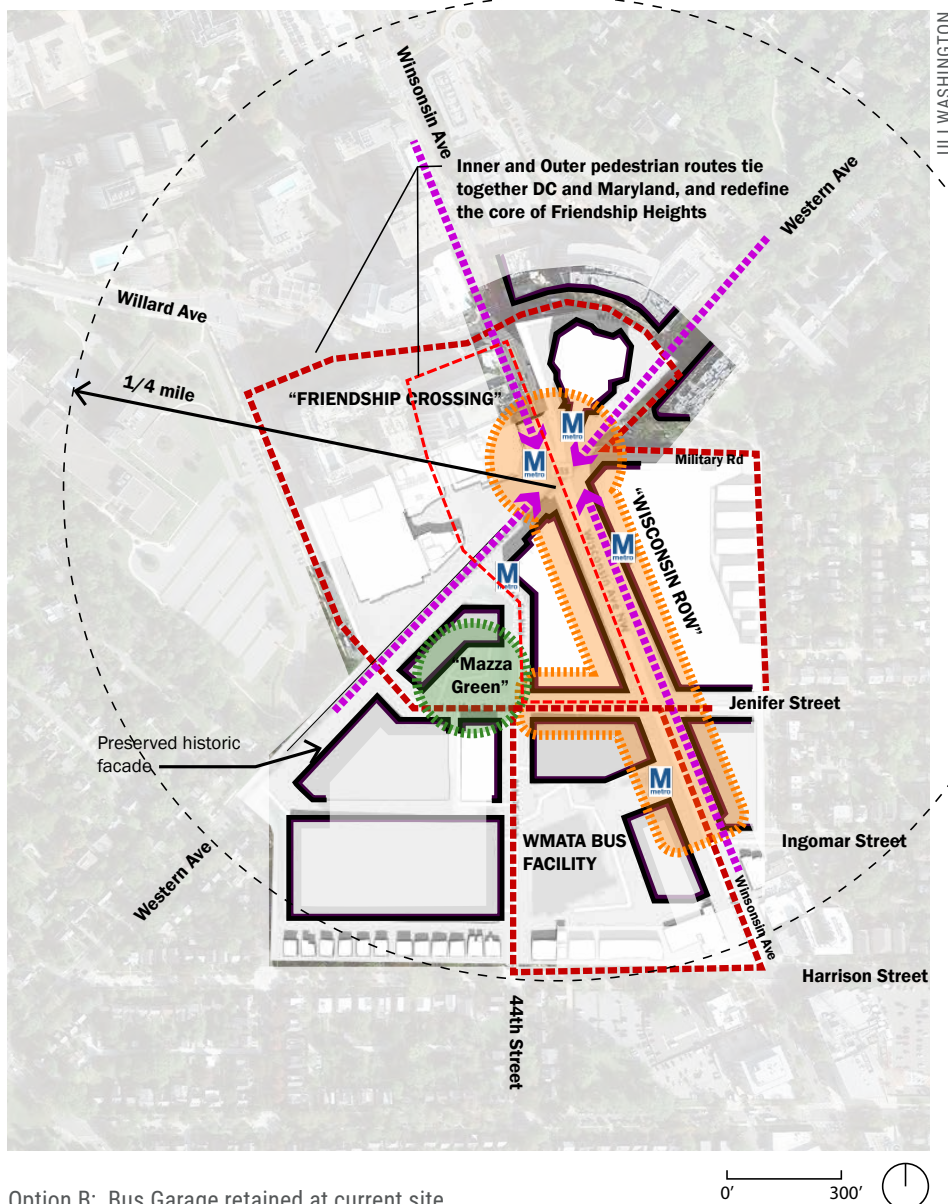
Given the challenge and uncertainty of gaining control of the Lord & Taylor site, a new bus garage facility could be developed on the current site combined with mixed-use development. The redeveloped bus facility would still need to meet future bus needs, including articulated buses and potential changes in fuel technologies.

Although there are unique architectural and engineering challenges and cost premiums, mixed-use housing could be developed above a new garage facility. The bus operations would have to be moved off site during redevelopment, increasing the cost to WMATA. The existing parking lot on the Homeplate site could be a viable option for the phasing of bus operations during construction.

Given the Bus turning radius, the future fleet would most likely need at least the same footprint as the existing scenario. However, WMATA should perform feasibility studies to determine the land area needed for buses in the future. In this scenario, employee parking would be moved off-site to increase bus parking capacity.

#### Option B – Pros

- Speed and certainty of development due to site control.
- Mixed-use housing above the garage would add value to the site and support the broader revitalization of the neighborhood.



Option B: Bus Garage retained at current site.

### Option B – Cons

- Buses would need to access the facility from Jenifer Street, which would create a less-desirable ground floor environment.
- Alternative access points to the garage could be explored, although the goal of creating a better pedestrian-friendly environment along Wisconsin Avenue may pose challenges.
- Structural and financial challenges to building office or residential uses above a bus garage and accommodating the bus movements below would have to be addressed.

- Less mixed-use development could be accommodated on the site and land value would be reduced.
- Bus operations would need to move to an interim location during redevelopment adding to the overall cost.

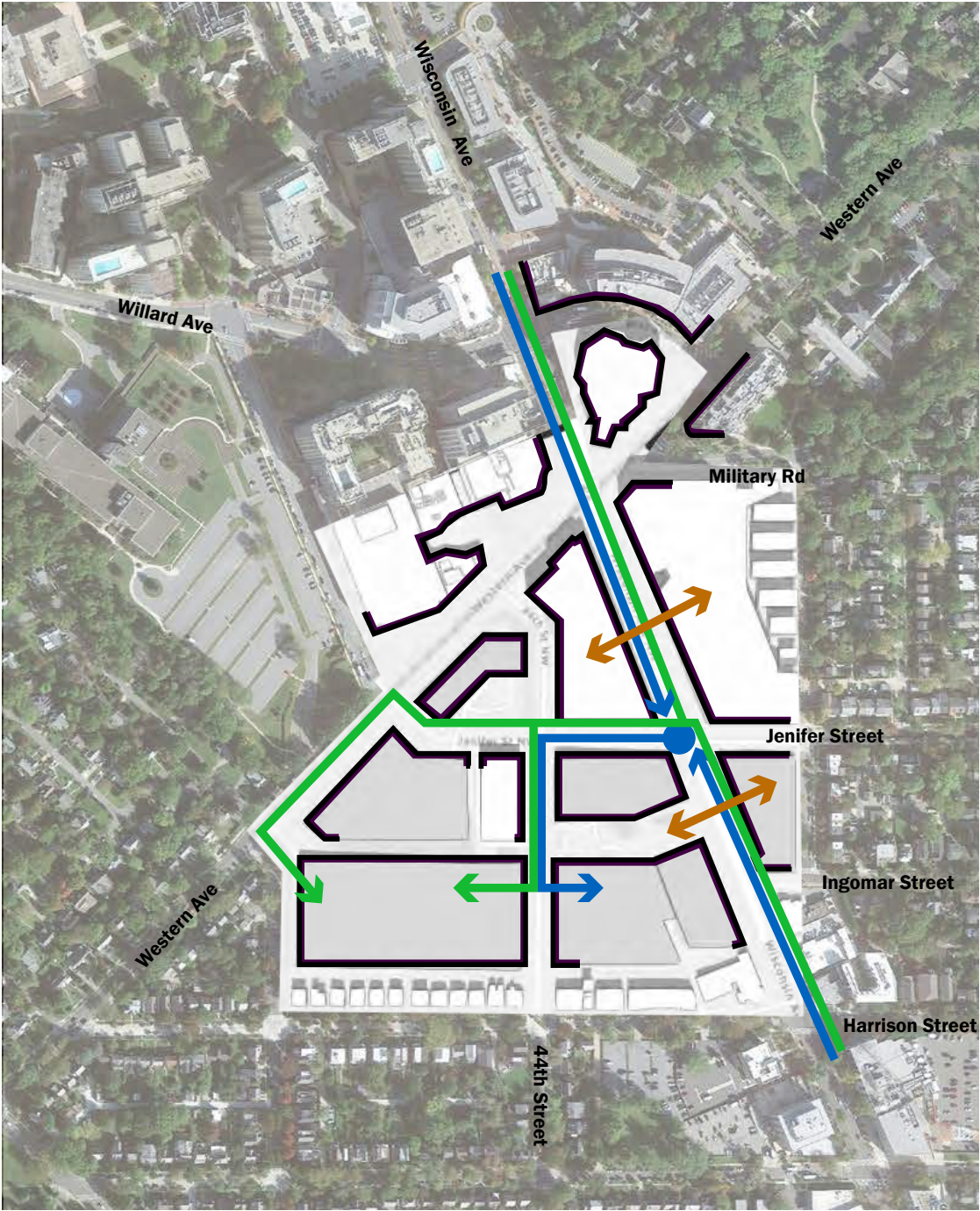
### Bus Routing

The panel recommended two bus routing options for access to the existing WMATA Western Bus Garage. In the diagram on the following page, blue lines indicate existing bus routing for the existing bus maintenance facility (Option B), and the green lines indicate proposed bus routing for the potential relocated bus maintenance facility at the Lord & Taylor site (Option A). For Option A, buses could access the potential new garage along Western Avenue, which could geometrically support the required bus turning maneuvers.

### Option C – Hybrid Approach

The hybrid approach consists of combining Options A and B where only the bus and employee parking is moved to the Lord & Taylor site, while bus maintenance functions are retained at the existing site. Moving the parking off-site would free up most of the existing site, but there would





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- M** Improved Metrorail South Portal
- Orange arrow: Potential New Mid-block Pedestrian Crossing
- Blue arrow: Existing Bus Routing for Existing Bus Maintenance Facility
- Green arrow: Proposed Bus Routing for Potential Relocated Bus Maintenance Facility

Illustrative plan showing potential bus garage routing and pedestrian circulation.

still be a need for circulation for the maintenance facility because the entrance to the historic façade facility on Jenifer Street is a one-way exit.

### Option C – Pros

- A long-term ground lease with Lord & Taylor would likely be more feasible for just a parking structure versus acquisition of the entire site. A possible land swap for a developable parcel on the WMATA site might be another possible way to acquire a portion of the Lord & Taylor site.
- Splitting the bus maintenance and bus parking on two different sites would help reduce costs and be easier for WMATA to lay out than having transit operations on multiple grades on a single site. A new bus parking facility could be accommodated wholly above grade dramatically reducing the cost of an alternative below grade facility. (Montgomery County recently built a new “ride-on bus” above grade facility at the Shady Grove Metro station). Utilizing circulation within the new garage and the surrounding streets combined with limited circulation in and out of the existing renovated maintenance garage would leave greater land area for new development.
- A new bus parking facility could be constructed without impacting current operations and modernization of the maintenance facility could be phased within the existing facility.
- Without the need to park buses on the WMATA property, two large development opportunities exist. Both the frontage on Jenifer Street and the Wisconsin Avenue frontage would facilitate significant development parcels for new high-rise multifamily. Retail on the Jenifer Street frontage would support the panel’s recommendation of a new neighborhood serving retail ring along Jenifer Street. By locating the new parking facility on Lord & Taylor directly across from the existing bus maintenance garage, the remaining Lord & Taylor frontage on Jenifer Street and Western Avenue and the rear of the site along the existing single-family neighborhood would be available

for new residential development, and further support the retail concept along Jenifer Street.

### Option C – Cons

- Requires site acquisition of a portion of the Lord & Taylor site.
- Some inefficiencies as buses make non-revenue moves between sites, and crews move between sites as well.

### Option D – Relocation of Bus Garage outside of Friendship Heights

WMATA has operational reasons for maintaining a Friendship Heights location, but if another site became available or if operational needs change, relocating or downsizing the facility would allow the District to maximize the development potential of the area in terms of new housing, particularly affordable housing, and net new tax revenue. WMATA has conducted extensive searches over the last two decades for an alternative site but none has been identified that works operationally.

## Summary of Pros & Cons

The panel believes that Option A is the best scenario. The trade-offs between engineering and development, and the goals and objectives are not always consistent. Thus, the options discussed above merit further design studies by WMATA, and it will be important to conduct cost analysis before taking any action. It is also important to consider the space requirements and ventilation needs of the bus facility in the future, when the transition to natural gas and electric engines occurs.

## Near-term Phasing

For all of the options above, the panel recommends a possible partnership between WMATA and the owner of the Boeysmonger/Michael’s site to catalyze development on Jenifer Street with new neighborhood-serving retail. This could be done in an initial development phase, creating pedestrian-oriented retail along Jenifer Street, before the bus garage development plans are finalized.



## WMATA Bus Loop

The bus loop at the intersection of Wisconsin Avenue and Western Avenue is well utilized. There are 17 bus routes (not including private shuttles) operating between both Montgomery County and DC including WMATA and Montgomery County Ride On buses. According to WMATA, the bus loop needs to be revisited for the following reasons:

- Poor customer experience in the existing bus loop environment
- Congested bus parking and difficulty maneuvering require double the number of bus bays
- Poor ventilation with sprinklers that are frequently set off

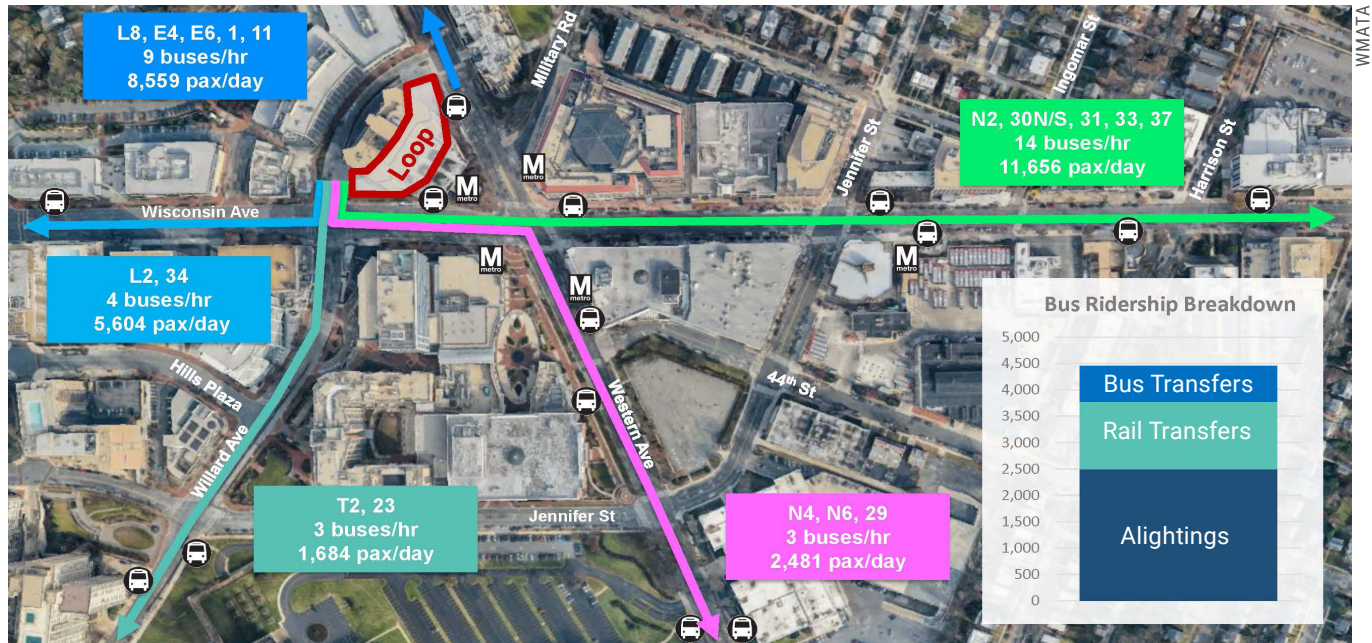
- Cars blocking on-street bus bays impact the reliability of buses

Potential opportunities for improving the bus loop operations include:

### Option 1 - Renovate existing bus loop

The existing bus loop, marked "A" on the diagram, can be turned into a signature transit amenity, an enlivened space with better turning maneuvers for the buses. Option 1 has been further sub-divided into two options:

- Option 1A – Improve conditions of existing loop, including better lighting, signage and potential daylighting.

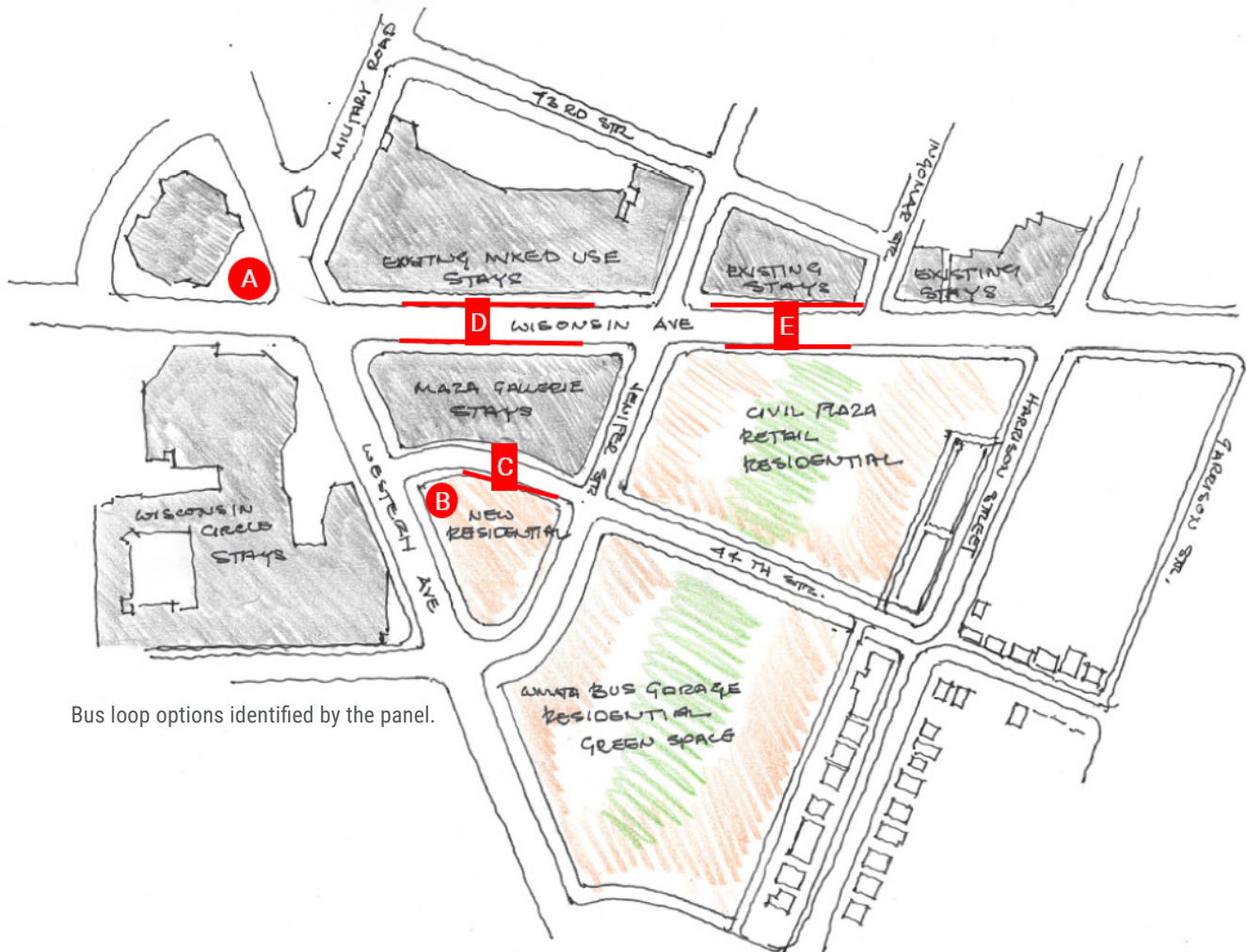


Major metro bus routes in Friendship Heights.



Existing bus loop at the intersection of Wisconsin Avenue and Western Avenue.





Bus loop options identified by the panel.



Median along Wisconsin Circle.



Busbahnhof Poppenbüttel.

- Option 1B – Moving the loop to the street around the building.

Option 1B: The panel considered moving the buses out from under the building and focusing the bus layby and loading activities on the streets around the building at 2 Wisconsin Circle. While some buses park here, the

current configuration of the street and sidewalk cannot accommodate bus loading on the northern edge of the building. However, if the entire footprint around the building were considered and the center median on Wisconsin Circle reconfigured, part of the right of way could be converted into a curbside bus loading zone. By doing this, a bus



loop is established, and the existing bus loop under the building could be abandoned and reconfigured with public space improvements (art/hardscape plaza, etc.) and retail kiosks to create a more welcoming Metro entrance and bus transfer site.

### Option 1 – Pros

#### Option 1A

- An improved bus loop would create a more comfortable and vibrant transit station at minimal cost and service disruption.

#### Option 1B

- Moving buses to the street will create better maneuverability and a better rider experience.
- Curbside bus bays keep the heavy transportation infrastructure separate from the pedestrian network and connected to the main transportation corridors of Western Avenue and Wisconsin Avenue.

### Option 1 – Cons

#### Option 1A

- Given the structural constraints of the bus loop, minimal operational improvements can be achieved.

#### Option 1B

- There are curbside bus areas currently on Western Avenue and Wisconsin Avenue. Adding curbside areas on Wisconsin Circle may require reducing the number of travel lanes and reconfiguring the median/sidewalks.

### Option 2 – New Stand-Alone Bus Transfer Station

Consider relocating the bus loop to a stand-alone facility, potentially at the Homeplate site, and creating a signature public amenity adjacent to a new park or plaza. The new bus station is marked as “B” on the diagram.

### Option 2 – Pros

- By creating a stand-alone facility, the bus station would be more visible and could be celebrated as a civic amenity with architectural gestures that enhance the experience from a ridership or consumer perspective.



Central bus station in Tilburg, Netherlands.

- A bus depot generates a high volume of pedestrian activity that can support local retail.
- Coupling a new bus facility with public improvements at the Homeplate site such as a park or public facility could increase opportunities for funding.
- The location provides better access to the highest ridership, east-west lines on Western Avenue.

### Option 2 – Cons

- Bus facility takes up valuable ground floor frontage.
- WMATA does not currently own the Homeplate site. Land would need to be purchased from the private owner for bus facilities and/or park on the site.
- Regular bus traffic may interfere with enjoyment of a possible park.
- Riders making the transfer from the Mazza Gallerie Metro entrance would have to cross 44th Street if that street remains open to traffic or the pedestrian tunnel would need to be extended at significant cost.
- Bus traffic and reduced retail frontage would conflict with the goal of creating a vibrant neighborhood-serving retail loop.

### Option 3 – New Curbside Bus Transfer Station

Consider curbside bus stops at the following locations in the diagram:

- “C” – along 44th Street between Jenifer Street and Western Avenue
- “D” – along Wisconsin Avenue between Jenifer Street and Military Road
- “E” – along Wisconsin Avenue between Jenifer Street and Ingomar Street

These options take advantage of curbside opportunities to allow for bus stops, amenities as well as additional space for layover, thereby providing more flexibility for bus operations.

### Option 3 – Pros

- Using existing right of way minimizes costs if land does not need to be acquired.
- Decentralized, curbside transfer stations minimize bus turning movements and increases efficiency.
- An on-street bus depot generates pedestrian activity that can support adjacent retail.

### Option 3 – Cons

- Decentralized approach can be confusing to riders who cannot see all bus options in one location.
- Riders may have to cross intersections to reach buses.
- Could conflict with on-street retail opportunities that include café seating.



Curbside bus facility for the LA Metro Orange Line.

The panel recommends pursuing Option 2 or Option 3, but believes Option 1B could serve WMATA and the neighborhood as well.

## Public Realm & Urban Design

### Public Space & Community Building

As shown on the following page, the following are existing community amenities, all currently on the MD side of Friendship Heights:

- Wisconsin Place Community Center
- Friendship Heights Park at the intersection of Willard Avenue and Friendship Boulevard
- Piazza in the shopping plaza along Western Avenue
- Open spaces flanking both sides of Friendship Boulevard at the intersection of Western Avenue

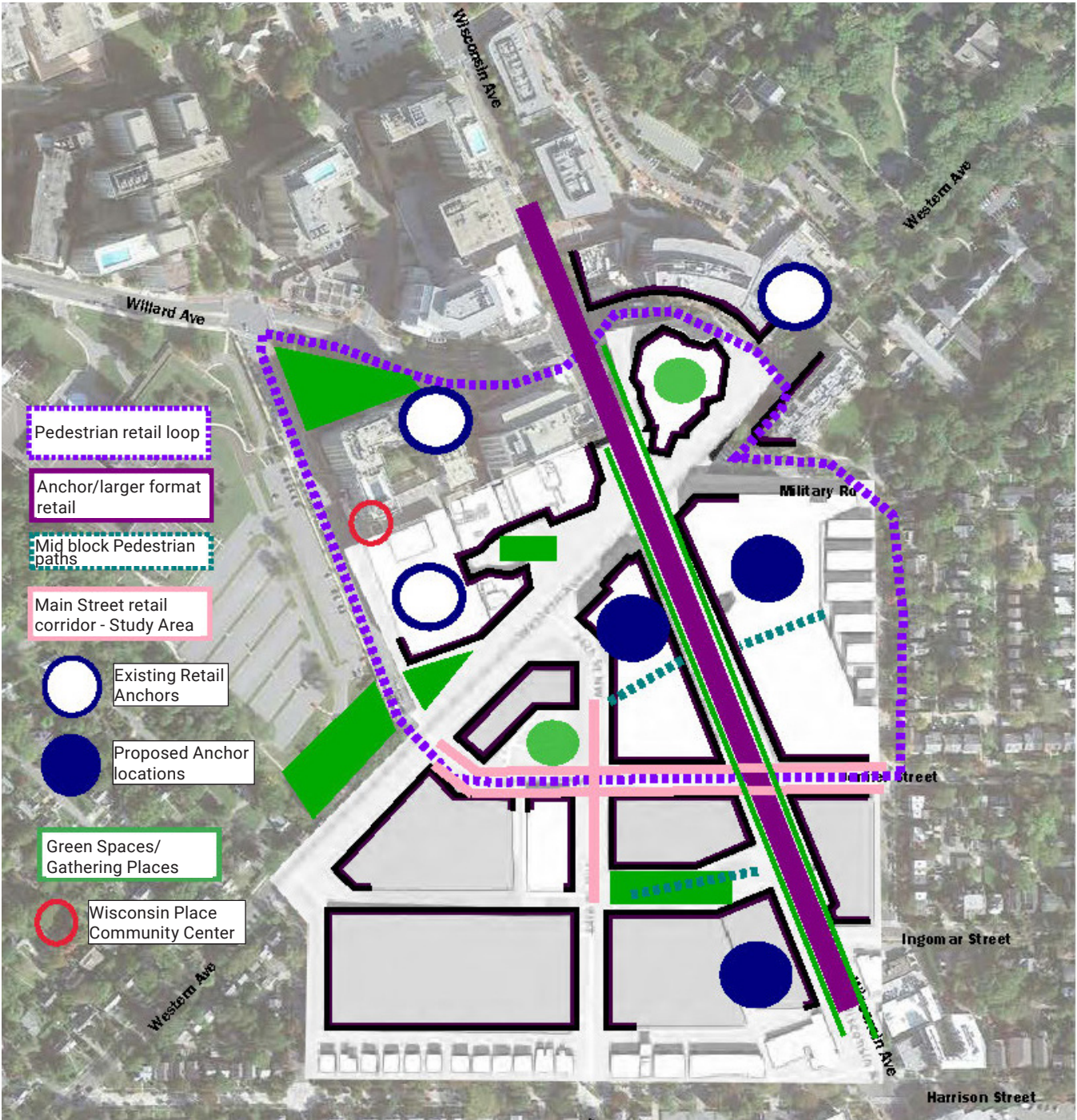
Turning Friendship Heights into a coveted neighborhood also requires flexible and activated public spaces and strategies for community building. An immediate opportunity exists for upgrades to the environment through cohesive wayfinding, comfortable street furniture, landscaped gathering spaces, and regular community events such as book swaps, outdoor movies and concerts, a farmers’ market and other events appropriate for this community.

In the long-term, retail-adjacent public green spaces that include play-based installations will be critical for neighborhood vibrancy. Green spaces activated by food and beverage establishments in conjunction with streetscape guidelines, frictionless sidewalks and pedestrian realms can enhance the area.

The diagram on the following page shows other possibilities:

- Repurposing the open space on the ground floor of 2 Wisconsin Circle, when the bus loop is restructured or relocated.
- Adding a new plaza to celebrate an expanded Metro entrance on the existing WMATA Western Bus garage site when the site is redeveloped.





Existing and recommended public / community spaces in Friendship Heights.



Piazza along Western Avenue surrounded by retail.



Fountain as a congregation hub in the existing piazza along Western Avenue.



- Creating a significant community gathering space “Mazza Green” at the Homeplate site, at the intersection of Jenifer and 44th Streets.
- Improved streetscape along Wisconsin Avenue and the inner and outer pedestrian loops (indicated in dotted blue and purple lines respectively) with features like benches, street lights, bike racks, wayfinding signage, soft landscaping and outdoor café seating on wider sidewalks.

“Friendship Heights can be a community where all age groups can play.”

– The Panel

Friendship Heights DC is also lacking in a civic use like a library, senior center or a recreational facility such as a skate park. The addition of such a use will help spur the type of vibrant neighborhood Friendship Heights can become.

Organization of both short-term public space improvements and long-term maintenance will be essential. With multiple individual property owners across two jurisdictions, each individual owner is unlikely to be incentivized or able to support a large-scale marketing effort, events or public space maintenance on their own. It will be important for the stakeholders to work together as a community to plan, implement and support a revitalized Friendship Heights. (See further discussion in the following section, Community Engagement and Collaboration.)



Street furniture in West Philadelphia, PA.

BEN TRAN, COURTESY UNIVERSITY CITY DISTRICT



Outdoor comfort spaces at the Spruce Street Harbor Park in Philadelphia, PA.

DANIEL LOBO, FLICKR



Family-friendly temporary science experiments at Klyde Warren Park in Dallas, TX.

KJARRETT, FLICKR



Outdoor dining and bar in Redlands, CA.

REDLANDS DAILY FACTS



## Multi Modal Access

### Existing Conditions & Opportunities

There are multiple transportation elements in the Friendship Heights neighborhood. The panel analyzed the existing conditions and opportunities:

#### Existing Conditions

1. Average daily traffic on both Western Avenue (2 lanes) and Wisconsin Avenue (3 lanes) is approximately 23,000 daily vehicles. By comparison, Wisconsin Avenue in Tenleytown carries approximately 48,000 daily vehicles and Connecticut Avenue south of Military Road carries 34,000 daily vehicles.
2. Pedestrian crossings are challenged by superblocks and poor visibility. For example, Wisconsin Avenue blocks are 550 feet and 700 feet long.
3. Bicycle facilities (lanes and bike racks) are limited.
4. While there are five separate entrances to Friendship Heights Metro, most have poor visibility and utilization.
5. Off-street parking is abundant with off-street garages on Jenifer Street and at Mazza Gallerie and Chevy Chase Pavilion; most are paid parking with some validation.
6. Wisconsin Avenue curbside currently serves on-street off-peak parking and bus stops in select locations.

#### Opportunities

The panel recommends the following interventions to improve the transit and pedestrian experience in Friendship Heights:

1. Improve pedestrian safety along Wisconsin Avenue by making crossings safe through appropriate traffic calming measures.
2. Improve bicycle access and facilities
  - a. Add bicycle racks and appropriate signage.
  - b. Relocate and expand Capital Bikeshare in the new "Mazza Green" or Homeplate park and new bus loop areas.
  - c. Implement micro-mobility zones adjacent to bicycle areas. (Micro-mobility zones are areas that can accommodate Capital Bikeshare, scooter and moped parking corrals, and electric bicycles).
  - d. Extend on-street bike lane along 44th Street south of River Road.
  - e. Promote existing east-west bicycle connection along Jenifer Street to the east of 41st Street.
3. Enhance multi-modal access on Wisconsin Avenue
  - a. Restrict on-street parking to create flexibility for bus layovers, parklets, pick up/drop off for ride-share, bicycle facilities.
  - b. Investigate feasibility for separated bicycle facility.
  - c. Investigate feasibility of reducing to 4 lanes (volumes similar to Western Avenue).
4. Improve transit visibility and usage
  - a. Implement strategy to create bolder presence and wayfinding for all Metrorail portals.
  - b. Augment existing elevator at Friendship Heights Metro southern portal near Ingomar Street with escalators/steps and signature entrance to increase visibility and capacity.



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Wide and difficult pedestrian crossings along intersection of Wisconsin Avenue and Western Avenue.



ULI WASHINGTON

Bicycle facilities along Western Avenue are limited.



ULI WASHINGTON

Existing access to the Friendship Heights metro station along Western Avenue.



ULI WASHINGTON

Existing access to the Friendship Heights metro station along Western Avenue.



ULI WASHINGTON

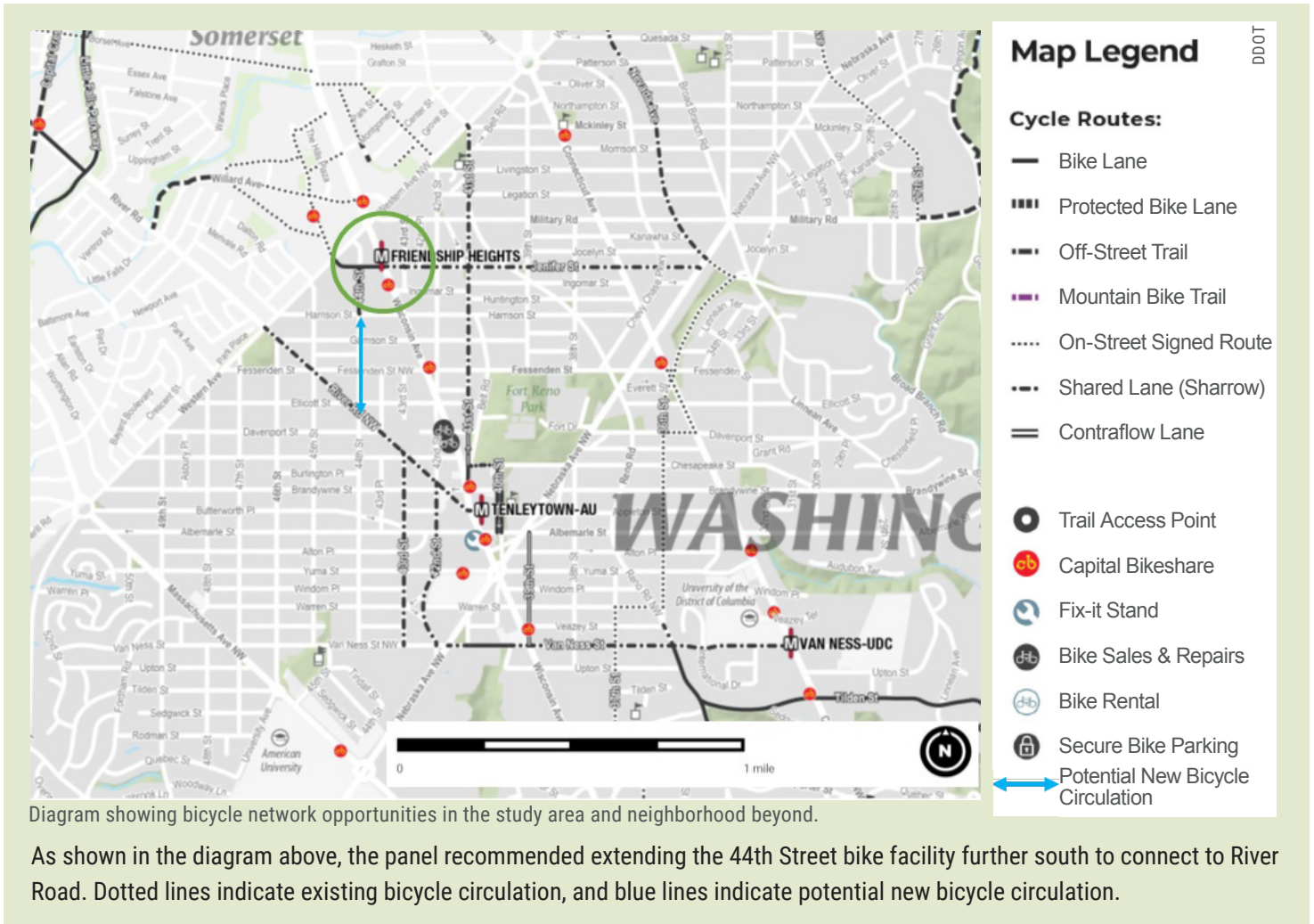
Bus stop along Western Avenue.



ULI WASHINGTON

Off-street parking along Jenifer Street.





Above: Existing bike lane along Jenifer Street. Right: Existing signage for bicycles along Jenifer Street.





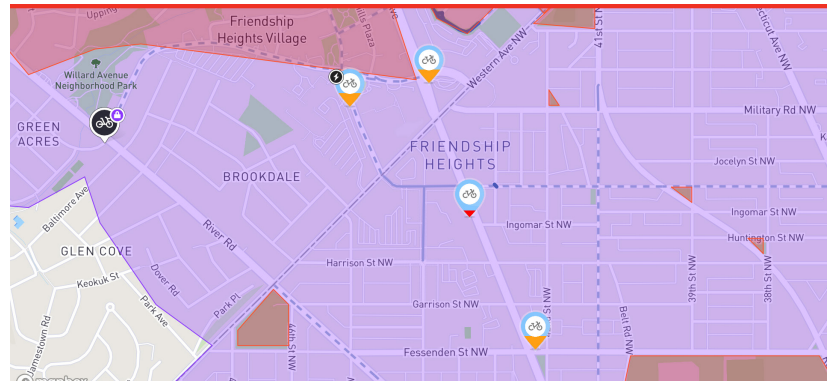


ULI WASHINGTON



Existing bicycle locker along Wisconsin Avenue.

ULI WASHINGTON



Location of Capital Bikeshare facilities in close proximity to the study area.

CAPITAL BIKESHARE



Parking area for micro-mobility users.

WIKIMEDIA COMMONS



Bike lane along a highway in Markham, Ontario.

RAYSONHO



Bicycle parking plaza in Copenhagen.

LEIF JORGENSEN, WIKIMEDIA COMMONS



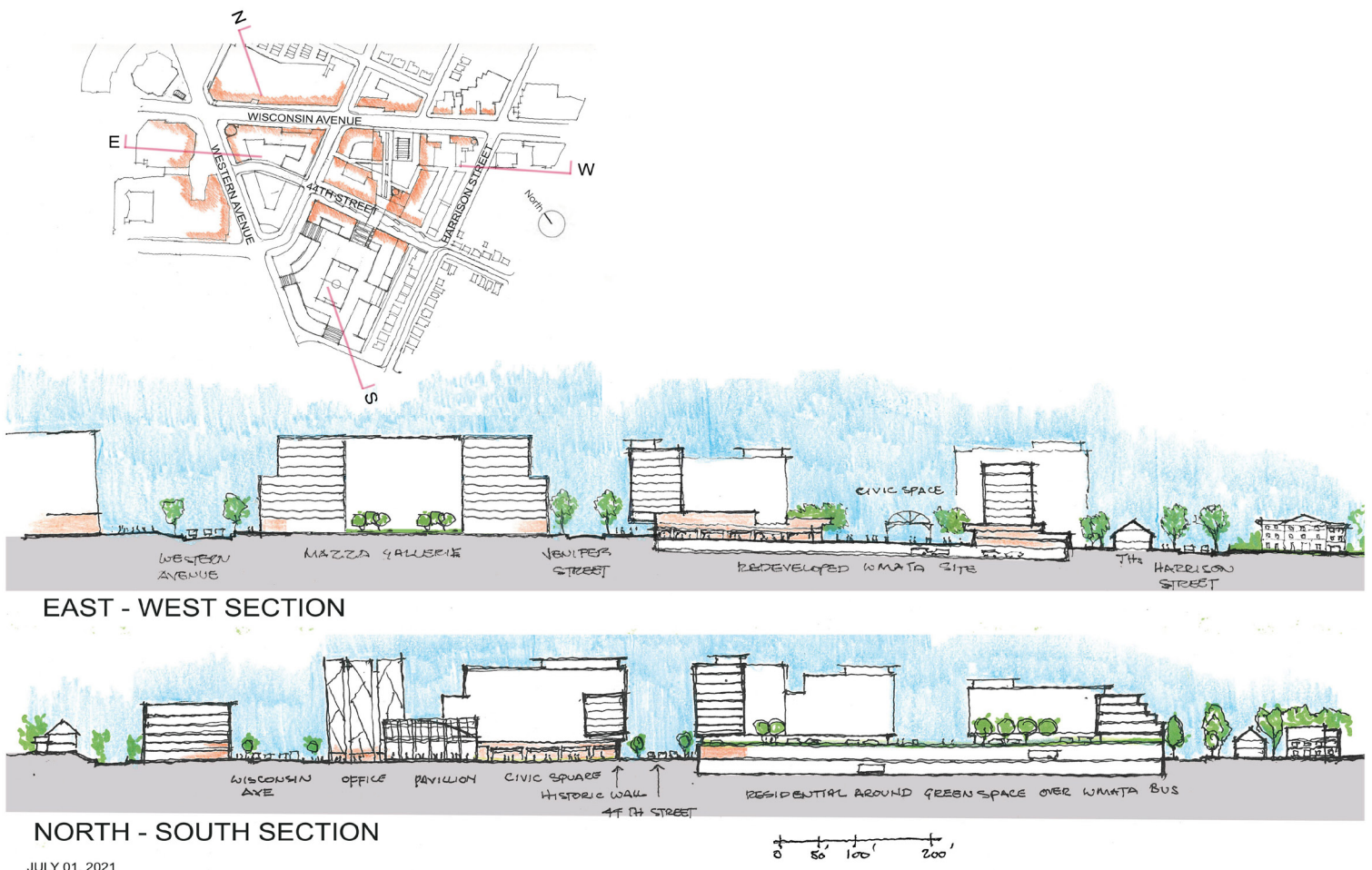
The panel's transportation recommendations are just an initial step in evaluating options for future infrastructure development. Further feasibility studies and design work are needed to evaluate the future of the bus loop, and pedestrian and bicycle improvements.

## Urban Design

The panel is optimistic about the future of Friendship Heights due to its excellent Metro access and the opportunity to coordinate with Maryland to re-create a vibrant neighborhood. To create an environment and infrastructure that facilitates reimagining Friendship Heights, development controls are vital to encouraging

robust transit-oriented development. While existing zoning only allows for buildings up to 65 feet matter of right, the panel recommends the following:

- Change zoning consistent with the recently approved Comprehensive Plan to target tallest buildings (up to 130 feet) adjacent to transit.
- Highest density should be concentrated around Metro and highly trafficked roads like Wisconsin Avenue and Western Avenue with Mazza Gallerie redevelopment being a prime early opportunity.
- Buildings should step down from the core to moderate height and density that connects to the surrounding single-family neighborhoods.



Site sections showing recommendations for densification and heights in Friendship Heights.

The north-south site section above shows potential development and suggested height transitions from Wisconsin Place in Friendship Heights MD to Harrison Street in Friendship Heights DC. In this representation, some developments are cresting along Western Avenue and Jennifer Street with residential use. Along Harrison Street, which has low-rise residential forms, new buildings are stepped back from the street.

The east-west section above shows high-rise mixed-use development on either side of 44th Street and a building along Western Avenue, stepping down towards the residential neighborhood. This building form helps create a street wall at an intimate height for the pedestrian, with significant development above.



# COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND COLLABORATION



TAP panelists and sponsors tour the study area.

This TAP presents a unique opportunity to reimagine the narrative and identity of Friendship Heights as a neighborhood; redefine a new “sense of place”; determine how to support and retain current residents and visitors; and how to attract new residents, shoppers, workers, and visitors.

There is also an opportunity to determine how to inspire all the stakeholders – community, property owners, and agency partners – to develop an authentic vision that is transformative, inclusive, and resilient. This new vision can offer a framework for how Friendship Heights can evolve into a community that is diverse socially, economically, and racially, so that everyone can begin to see themselves in Friendship Heights and find opportunities to live, work, and play. A new vision also offers the opportunity to explore how the existing residential and retail community can welcome and make space for a diverse array of new

resident, businesses, and visitors over time. In this process, it will be very important to be forthcoming about what is working and what is not working; making space for change and acknowledging that what Friendship Heights may look like in 5, 10 and 20 years from now will evolve. It will also be important to act in a way to foster collective prosperity for current as well as future residents, visitors and employees in Friendship Heights.

## Public Sector Coordination

Friendship Heights is a border community and there is a significant opportunity to engage across jurisdictions from both the public and private sector. The following could foster cross-jurisdictional collaboration between public sectors:

- Continue and increase DC/MD interagency dialogue: the TAP generated coordination calls between DC and

Montgomery County planning agencies.

- Build relationships and partnerships for joint planning and problem solving with other communities surrounding Friendship Heights.
- Learn from similar efforts that have been used in other border areas like Silver Spring and Takoma Park.

## Friendship Heights Alliance

There are a large number of commercial property owners and large-scale retailers in the community that are very interested in seeing the retail landscape in Friendship Heights improve. The panel recommends creating a Friendship Heights Alliance comprised initially of DC and Montgomery County business and commercial property owners. As a result of the Friendship Heights TAP, such an alliance has already been formed and begun meeting informally to discuss challenges in the area and opportunities for collaboration and improvement.

An Alliance could be modeled on a regional precedent such as the Tysons Partnership or Main Street Takoma, and could be the first step towards the creation of a formal Business Improvement District (BID) in Friendship Heights. In the long run, the Alliance could also expand to include community leaders and residents.

## Tysons Partnership

The Tysons Partnership is a dynamic collaborative of Tysons stakeholders working together to accelerate the transformation of Tysons into a vibrant urban destination. The Tysons Partnership is governed by a Board of Directors comprising over 50 members. The Board provides fiduciary oversight to assure legal, ethical, and prudent operation. The Board also defines Partnership policy, direction, goals, and budgets. The Partnership offers multiple membership programs, including Board and General membership levels. All members have access to the Partnership's events and core programs, including Member Councils. Membership is open to all Tysons stakeholders, including property owners, businesses/employers, and residential organizations. Members of Tysons Partnership engage with state and local government, landowners, and other stakeholders to ensure that the overarching goals and objectives of the Comprehensive Plan for Tysons are achieved. (Source: <https://www.tysonspartnership.org>)

## Takoma Main Street

The Takoma Main Street is partially funded by member dues which are voluntary, a contract with the City, and by additional funding from grants as they are a 501c(3) organization. Moreover, being designated as a "Main Street" often opens access to grants that prioritize the Main Street. (Source: <https://www.mainstreet.org>)

The panel also sees an opportunity to leverage the expertise of the property owners who are currently in the neighborhood. Several are already active in other BIDs, recognizing the value of bringing businesses together to create a dialogue, and are able to envision what is possible for the Friendship Heights community.

Additionally, the Alliance could partner with nearby Tenleytown Main Street or Chevy Chase Main Street for early-stage guidance. Ultimately, the Friendship Heights Alliance would convene regular meetings of business and commercial property owners and establish and fund a small budget with contributions going towards small studies, marketing, activations, etc.



The panel also believes that this business-focused stakeholder group can effectively engage with the business community, residential community and the public sector. Thus, they foresee that the Friendship Heights Alliance can enhance the relationship between the business owners, the Advisory Neighborhood Commission (ANC) and local residents. This body can engage with the District Office of Planning and other relevant agencies on future planning efforts.

## Engaging Local Residents and the Broader Community

The panel believes it is important to engage with the broader community of Friendship Heights. Intentional and effective community engagement involves community-building over time and must be cultivated within the community among a large and diverse group of residents. It is important to build trust between neighbors, the business community, and the public sector.

The panel recommends the following community engagement approaches for Friendship Heights:

- Acknowledge the good, bad, and ugly of Friendship Heights' history, such as the Belmont Plan. Recognize the history of Friendship Heights where racism and exclusionary land use practices such as racial covenants were common. These practices prevented people of color and lower income groups from being able to live in Friendship Heights.
- Bring to light neighborhood views of current challenges and opportunities. The panel recommends encouraging transparency and honesty, taking into account the neighborhood's history, and starting to have an honest dialogue around about what can be done going forward.
- Collaborate to shape and build consensus among stakeholders for a future vision of place. It will be important to make Friendship Heights truly welcoming for people from all walks of life.
- Build energy and momentum around future change.
- Define what it means for Friendship Heights to be a

## The Belmont Plan

The Belmont property was a subdivided strip of land on the western side of Chevy Chase, Maryland, along Wisconsin Avenue. In 1906, four Black businessmen (Alexander L. Satterwhite, James L. Neill, Michel O. Dumas, and Charles S. Cuney) secretly acquired the parking lots around Saks Fifth Avenue and the neighboring storefronts between Friendship Heights and Chevy Chase. They had plans to create an exclusive suburb – the Belmont Plan. However, unlike all other developments in the area, it would be open to African Americans.

Once in their hands, the four men who called themselves the Belmont Syndicate proudly advertised the choice properties in both Black and White area newspapers. They sold lots to a cross-section of Black Washingtonians, from janitors to esteemed ministers and even single professional women. When White neighbors learned of the plan, they threatened violence in the papers, tried to buy off the developers, and had the salesman arrested on flimsy charges.

(Source: Historic Chevy Chase DC; <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qq8sNOU2UA0>)

neighborhood that welcomes change in its various forms – whether new housing, new retail or new people.

The panel identified several possible early-stage engagement activities for Friendship Heights:

- Community Conversation Series – opportunities to educate, build a dialogue, and foster relationship-building in the community. Possible topics could include:
  - History of Friendship Heights
  - Changing Nature of Retail
  - Housing and Equity
  - Placemaking – What should be the identity of Friendship Heights? How can it be a welcoming place for all?

- Community Needs Survey: With the vision of creating a “sense of place” in Friendship Heights and identifying the short-term and long-term uses that can activate the neighborhood in a different and intentional way, the panel recommends developing a survey for residents to determine the most meaningful changes and encourage a sense of ownership.
- Community-designed “activations”: Activations can occupy space and encourage people to visit and linger, rather than pass through the neighborhood. This is an opportunity to leverage underutilized sites, such as the Homeplate site or Chevy Chase Pavilion, highlight streetscapes in a creative way, and activate the recommended retail pedestrian loop.
- Continue the dialogue between TAP-convened stakeholder groups and the District Office of Planning, especially:
  - Diverse perspectives in the housing advocacy space – considering that demographically, Friendship Heights will undergo a change over time based on race, income and housing mix.
  - Neighborhood-adjacent partners, such as Tenleytown Main Street.
  - Other organizations who support small-scale local and minority-run retail businesses, such as the Washington Area Community Investment Fund (WACIF).

### Washington Area Community Investment Fund

Established in 1987, the Washington Area Community Investment Fund’s mission is to increase equity and economic opportunity in underserved communities in the Washington, DC area by investing knowledge, social, and financial capital in low- and moderate-income entrepreneurs. Their mission is driven by three strategic pillars: inclusive entrepreneurship, community wealth building, and equitable economic development, and is fulfilled by providing access to capital products and services, and capacity building technical assistance to low- and moderate-income entrepreneurs.



## CONCLUSION & NEXT STEPS

Friendship Heights is at a very important inflection point. With its recent and dramatic retail decline and key parcels (Mazza Gallerie, Lord & Taylor, WMATA Bus Garage) ripe for redevelopment, the time is right to **reimagine Friendship Heights and reposition it for the future.**

Building on its excellent transit and vehicular access, strong adjacent neighborhoods and demographics, Friendship Heights could become a vibrant mixed-use residential neighborhood with housing opportunities for a wide spectrum of incomes and family sizes.

The panel's key recommendations are as follows:

1. Promoting new mixed-use development in the neighborhood.
2. Adding a mix of housing types including new rental housing and for-sale affordable housing.
3. Redeveloping WMATA's Western Bus Garage site, either by moving the garage to the Lord & Taylor site or by developing above a reconstructed garage on the current site.
4. Improving or relocating the Metro bus loop at the intersection of Wisconsin Avenue and Western Avenue.
5. Exploring near-term incentives to leverage the Comprehensive Plan-approved increase in height and density.
6. Expanding the bicycle and micro-mobility infrastructure in the neighborhood.
7. Improving all Friendship Heights Metrorail portals and wayfinding.
8. Rightsizing the retail footprint, including new anchor tenants and a more intimate, human scale shopping environment.
9. Creating a "pedestrian ring" connecting retail in Friendship Heights DC to existing pedestrian-oriented retail in Friendship Heights MD.
10. Adding flexible and activated public spaces and implementing strategies for community building.
11. Jumpstarting stakeholder and community engagement across jurisdictional boundaries, and the broader community beyond the Friendship Heights neighborhood.

The panel recommended a series of immediate, short-term, and medium-term, opportunities for action in Friendship Heights as follows:

- Immediate opportunities include creation of a Friendship Heights Alliance of MD and DC property owners to coordinate development activities and promote neighborhood investments as well as public sector engagement with the Mazza Gallerie owners to achieve a signature development that leverages the increased height and density in the FLUM and sets the tone for future development.
- Short-term opportunities should focus on pedestrian and transportation improvements, establishing zoning, height, and density guidelines for future development, DC agencies engaging with new owners regarding housing assistance plans, and exploring funding programs to jumpstart land acquisition.
- Medium-term opportunities should focus on implementing alternatives for the Western Bus Garage, exploring housing incentives for housing development above the existing or new bus garage facility, evaluating bus loop options, outreach to local businesses for retail opportunities, and development of permanent public amenities in Friendship Heights.

The panel greatly appreciated the opportunity to study and analyze issues in Friendship Heights, form recommendations and present their ideas before an engaged audience.

Opportunities for Action		
Immediately	Short Term	Medium Term
› Establish Friendship Heights Alliance (DC& MD)	› Improvements to pedestrian retail loop	› Decide better alternative for bus garage
› Foster cross-jurisdictional planning	› Improve bus facilities	› If L&T – begin planning for garage with development above, focus on housing incentives
› Begin community engagement	› Create bus/bike lanes	› If not L&T – redevelop on site, housing above
› Activate streets for pedestrians	› Establish appropriate zoning/height density based on market needs	› Relocate or split bus loop facilities
› Pop-up activities in underutilized public or private spaces	› DC to engage with new owners re: housing plans & assistance	› Outreach to local businesses for retail opportunities
› Public private partnership to achieve signature development at Mazza Gallerie site	› Explore American Rescue Plan funding to jumpstart land acquisition	› Develop public and/or community facilities

ULI WASHINGTON

Immediate, short-term, and medium-term opportunities for action in Friendship Heights.



## ABOUT THE PANEL



**Bob Peck**  
**Panel Co-Chair**  
**Gensler**  
**Washington DC**

Robert A. Peck is a Principal and senior workplace strategist at Gensler, a global architecture and design firm. He is co-leader of the firm's Government and Defense industry practice. Bob helps public and private sector clients get the maximum performance out of their workplaces, whether a leased space, a building or an entire portfolio. An experienced commercial real estate, nonprofit and public sector executive, he is a nationally recognized advocate for high-quality design, active work environments, smart growth and sustainable building. Bob's expertise includes leading complex real estate portfolio strategy and public-private development projects.

For five years in the Clinton Administration and nearly three in the Obama Administration, Bob was Commissioner of GSA's Public Buildings Service. With an annual budget of more than \$9 billion and a workforce of 7,000, PBS conducts nationwide asset and property management, design and construction, leasing, and disposals for 375 million square feet of space accommodating more than 1.1 million federal workers. He is known for being instrumental in launching the Design Excellence program, instituting real estate metrics and contemporary workplace design and creating a Green Proving Ground sustainability program.

In the Federal government, Bob has also worked at the Office of Management and Budget, the National Endowment for the Arts, the White House and the Federal Communications Commission. On Capitol Hill, he was associate counsel to the Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works and chief of staff to the late U.S. Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan (D-NY). He was a Special Forces officer in the U.S. Army Reserve. In the private sector, Bob has been a land use attorney, a real estate investment executive, and a commercial real estate broker. He was also the full-time president of the 125-year old Greater Washington Board of Trade and vice president for public affairs at the American Institute of Architects. He received his B.A. cum laude with distinction in economics from the University of Pennsylvania, and his J.D. from Yale Law School. He

was a visiting Loeb Fellow at Harvard University's Graduate School of Design and a visiting lecturer at Yale College. The American Institute of Architects and American Society of Landscape Architects have both named him an honorary member. He has received the annual achievement awards of the Washington regional Coalition for Smarter Growth and the DC Building Industry Association. In 2011, he won the Henry Hope Reed Award from the Driehaus Foundation and the University of Notre Dame and in 2012 the Thomas Jefferson Award for Public Architecture from the American Institute of Architects. He lives in Chevy Chase, DC, with his wife, Lynn Palmer, a DC public high school French teacher. Their two children attended DC Public Schools and have graduated from college.



**Katie Bucklew**  
**Panel Co-Chair**  
**Avalon Bay Communities, Inc.**  
**Arlington VA**

Katie Bucklew, Vice President of Mixed Use, joined AVB in 2019. Katie is responsible for identifying, structuring and closing new mixed-use opportunities with key retail, office, industrial and hotel owners across the country utilizing regional development support in the analysis and execution of all mixed-use transactions.

Prior to AvalonBay, Katie spent over 13 years with EDENS, a retail owner, operator and developer of retail centers focused on high density, high income markets throughout the East Coast and Texas. She held numerous high-profile roles in EDENS giving her a broad perspective of the retail real estate industry including managing over \$300M of (re)development activity, leading an \$861M public company acquisition, directing the daily activities of and executing strategic plans for a 35-center portfolio comprised of more than four million square feet and \$1B in asset value as well as leasing 11 retail centers totaling over 1.2 million square feet.

Katie holds a Masters of Business Administration from The Wharton School, a Masters of Accounting from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill's Kenan-Flagler Business School, and a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration from the University of North

Carolina at Chapel Hill's Kenan-Flagler Business School. As a dedicated contributor to the community of real estate professionals, Katie is a member of ICSC, Women in Retail Real Estate and The Urban Land Institute. She is an active leader in the Urban Land Institute (ULI) sitting on the ULI Washington Governance Board (2017-present), ULI Washington Advisory Board (2016-present), ULI Washington Women's Leadership Initiative committee (2013 – present) and ULI Urban Mixed Use Blue National Product Council (2012-present, Vice Chair 2017-present). Katie is also a board member of Ivymount Foundation, an organization that supports the education, training and outreach of people with autism and special needs.



**Erwin Andres, PE**  
**Gorove/Slade**  
**Washington DC**

Erwin's diverse experience bridges the disciplines of civil engineering design, urban transportation planning, traffic engineering, land development, environmental analysis,

and transportation systems design.

Erwin has directed transportation impact studies, traffic circulation and transit studies, parking studies, and multi-modal studies for master plans, business districts and new real estate development projects of all types and sizes. He has evaluated alternative public transportation modal options. He is familiar with roadway classification and its application to transportation planning. He has performed traffic impact assessments for residential, office, shopping and convention centers, and institutional complexes. He has been responsible for the transportation and parking components for academic, government, and corporate campuses.



**Christian Calleri**  
**Perkins Eastman**  
**Washington DC**

With over twenty years of experience as an architect, Christian Calleri's passion for public spaces and public architecture has enabled him to deliver a wide range of ser-

vices for federal, institutional, commercial, urban design and restoration projects. Over the course of his career, he has provided architectural and interior design, programming, technical detailing and construction administration for both, large and small scale projects. Many of his large-scale projects, including McMillan and RIA, will be well known to

the local development community. Given the history of these projects, it is safe to say Christian is well aware of the political minefield that can await large scale development in Washington, DC.

In addition to his work as an architect and an urban designer, Christian has also been a long-time lecturer at the University of Maryland School of Architecture, Planning, and Preservation. He has taught various urban design classes, history classes, and is currently the instructor for the architectural theory class.



**Douglas Carter**  
**DCS Design**  
**Tysons, VA**

Douglas Carter, a founding principal and President of Davis Carter Scott (DCS Design), graduated from the Leeds School of Architecture and Town Planning in

England. Then, off to Germany for five years, helping his firm win many major design competitions such as the Olympic Village for the Munich Olympic Games and the Cologne University Medical Center. It was that research which led him to America, and (together with Robert Davis) the founding of DCS Design.

Doug's ability to analyze and quickly conceptualize a design that responds to the needs, budget and aesthetics of each individual client has led the firm into many diverse project types from hospitals, jails, schools, corporate office, hotels, residential and more. This diversity of experience has allowed the firm to specialize in major mixed-use projects around the country and internationally. His commitment to design excellence, and above all sustainable and ecologically sound architecture, has attained much recognition over the years with local, national, and international design awards.

He is the recipient of the Virginia AIA Honor award, guest lecturer at the University of Virginia, serves on several design review boards and the Washington Airports Task Force Board of Directors. His work has been featured in Architectural Record, Building Design, Design and Construction, Urban Design Institute Publications, Newsweek, Time as well as numerous local business publications. If he's not glued to the drafting board designing, his favorite pastime is sailing on Chesapeake Bay.





**Caroline Flax**  
**The Meridian Group**  
**Washington DC**

Caroline is an associate at The Meridian Group where she focuses on development projects, specifically The Boro and Anthem Row.

Prior to joining The Meridian Group, Caroline was with Washington REIT, where she worked in office and retail asset management for portfolios across the DC metropolitan area. She also assisted in underwriting potential acquisitions and development opportunities. Caroline also currently serves as the co-chair of the ULI Young Leader's Group Mentorship Program. Caroline received a B.S. with honors in Urban and Regional Studies from Cornell University, where she wrote her honors thesis on transit-oriented development near Metro stations.



**William Rich, CRE**  
**Delta Associates**  
**Washington DC**

William Rich is the President of Delta Associates, where he oversees all operations. Delta, which has provided services to the commercial real estate industry for

over 40 years, offers consulting, research and advisory services for all property types through the United States, including market feasibility, highest and best use, market entry strategies, asset performance enhancement, market due diligence, white papers on special topics, RFP negotiation, valuation analysis, and litigation support. Delta also offers subscription publications for selected metro areas in the Mid-Atlantic for the apartment, condominium, office, retail, and housing markets.

William has been with Delta Associates since 2002 and has extensive consulting experience covering all aspects of commercial real estate across the country. His consulting clients have included real estate developers and investors, nonprofits, and government agencies. He is a regular presenter at Delta's top annual events, including TrendLines®, which provides an overview and forecast for the commercial real estate market and local and national economy, and Delta's Washington/Baltimore Multifamily Market Overview and Awards for Excellence.

William is a Counselor of Real Estate (CRE), a member of the National Association of Realtors, and is a member of the Urban Land Institute

(ULI). He also serves on the Board of Directors of the Washington DC Economic Partnership (WDCEP) and the Southwest DC Community Center and is an advisor to the Southwest DC Business Improvement District (SWBID).



**Vandana Sareen**  
**Just-A-Start**  
**Cambridge, MA.**

Vandana Sareen is an urban planner in the real estate multi-family housing industry, a collaborator with interdisciplinary teams who imagine affordable housing futures and

orchestrate multiple tasks and activities to make them a reality.

She is a Senior Project Manager in the Real Estate department of Just-A-Start, a non-profit organization, with a mission to promote equity by creating access to stable housing and building pathways to economic opportunity. Vandana has 20 years of experience developing and financing affordable and mixed income multifamily projects in the private, public, and nonprofit sectors. Her real estate development experience includes structuring and underwriting as well as management and implementation of complex large scale urban revitalization, mixed-finance affordable housing developments from inception to completion, lease up and stabilization. She has coordinated the production of over 1800+ units, amounting to over USD250+MM utilizing conventional and/or FHA loans, HUD Section 8, HOPE VI and other public housing capital funds, tax credits, tax-exempt bond financing in several states in the US.

She holds a Master's in City Planning from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and a Bachelor's degree in Planning from School of Planning & Architecture, New Delhi. She is a WELL certified professional who likes to integrate wellness and health into her projects, developing quality healthy affordable homes and communities. She believes that smart inexpensive decisions in design and development ensure that living and working environments serve the whole individual.



## LaToya Thomas

**Brick & Story  
Washington DC**

LaToya Thomas is the Principal & Founder of Brick & Story, a consultancy practice focused on telling the stories of the built environment and, in turn, using those stories

to push for positive action in communities. In finding creative ways to tell these stories, Brick & Story provides engagement and creative storytelling strategy and implementation services to government agencies, for- and non-profit organizations, and individuals working or participating in the built environment.

In her nearly 15 years of experience working in the built environment, LaToya has developed a particular unique focus in the areas of affordable housing, urban revitalization, and community development. She has a strong commitment to creating opportunities for marginalized populations - particularly those in urban areas. Her career has merged her knowledge of urban planning and policy with her talents as a strategic business developer, marketer, facilitator, and consensus-builder.

LaToya obtained both a Master of Regional Planning and a Bachelor of Science in Urban and Regional Studies with a Concentration in Architecture from Cornell University in Ithaca, NY. Related affiliations include: The Aspen Institute's Weave: The Social Fabric Project (DC Cohort/Partner), ULI Washington's Women's Leadership Initiative Steering Committee, Housing Association of Nonprofit Developers (Program Committee), Wacif's Ascend Accelerator Program Graduate (2019), and Next American City Vanguard, Class of 2012.



## Alison Williams

**Of Place  
Chevy Chase, MD.**

Alison Williams is a Partner at Of Place and is responsible for development and operations. Alison takes a holistic approach to placemaking with a focus on retail design

and interface with the architectural teams to ensure that the assets are best positioned to optimally perform during lease up and operations.

Prior to joining Of Place, Alison was a member of the development team with Federal Realty Investment Trust. During her tenure at Federal, Alison participated in the development efforts for some of the company's most notable mixed-use projects including Assembly Row in Somerville, MA, Pike & Rose in North Bethesda, MD and Pike 7 in Tysons, VA. Alison's areas of focus included entitlement strategy and

execution, financial underwriting, acquisitions and project management. In addition to her tenure with Federal, Alison served in a variety of roles including management consulting, investment banking with Eastdil Secured, and advisory development services with Bozzuto. Alison has her M.B.A. from University of Virginia's Darden School of Business and her B.S. in Business Administration with concentrations in Finance and Real Estate from American University.



## Bob Youngentob

**EYA  
Bethesda, MD.**

Bob Youngentob is CEO of EYA, LLC and one of the founding partners. His responsibilities include product and site visioning, investor relations, investment committee leadership,

and strategy, particularly in acquisition and development. Bob has over 30 years of real estate experience.

Bob currently serves on the Board of Advisors for The Universities at Shady Grove and the Terwillinger Center of the Urban Land Institute. He is a former chair of the Washington DCDC District Council of the Urban Land Institute and currently is chair of its Governance Committee. Bob has served on multiple private school boards including The Maret School and Green Acres.

He has been a guest lecturer on real estate at the Harvard Business School, Georgetown University, University of Maryland and Johns Hopkins University, and has spoken at numerous conferences sponsored by the Urban Land Institute and Builder Magazine. In 2016, Bob was inducted into the W.H. Marvin Hall of Fame for Design Excellence. In 1996, he was recognized as an Entrepreneur of The Year by Ernst and Young. Bob grew up in the Washington DC area, graduated from Lehigh University, and earned an MBA from the Harvard Business School.



## David Zaidain

**Gensler  
Washington DC**

David knows cities and transportation. A planner with vast experience in high profile urban design, development, and infrastructure projects, David's range of expertise

lends itself perfectly to the complex demands of aviation projects.

With a background in both real estate and planning, he brings a holistic view to his work. David thinks with an entire region in mind when he



approaches projects, with the goal of improving the human experience for everyone from residents to visitors. His work on major transportation hubs that oftentimes serve as the beating heart for major metropolitan areas speaks for itself.

David's approach has been well-balanced throughout his entire career, ranging from his decade tenure at the National Capital Planning Commission to leading the Washington Union Station expansion while at Amtrak. From the public sector to the private sector, from governmental planning policy to project management, he knows how to be flexible and address multiple needs at once. Also a musician and filmmaker with credits in both fields, David's passions show through in everything he does.

## ULI Project Staff



**Hilary Allard Goldfarb**  
Panel Advisor  
Rockefeller Group  
Washington, DC

Insert thumbnail photo of Hillary – xxxxx.jpg  
Hilary Allard Goldfarb is Senior Vice President for Rockefeller Group. Ms.

Goldfarb leads the company's Mid-Atlantic Region, based in Washington, DC, with primary responsibility for growing the company's development portfolio through the sourcing of multifamily, office and mixed-use projects, adding to the company's current development pipeline of approximately 17 million square feet.

Ms. Goldfarb was previously Senior Vice President, Bozzuto Development Company, where she directed the development process for multifamily and mixed-use projects throughout the Baltimore-Washington region. Prior to joining Bozzuto, Ms. Goldfarb was Development Director at ProMark Real Estate, where she led development services for the company's commercial portfolio, including negotiating entitlements and financing, securing public approvals and performing due diligence on acquisitions in Washington, DCDC and Maryland. She also spent four years at the Corcoran Gallery of Art in Washington, DC, during a capital campaign to build a Frank Gehry-

designed expansion, and has worked on economic development initiatives.

Ms. Goldfarb has a Master's degree in Urban Planning from Harvard's Graduate School of Design and a bachelor's degree from Princeton University.



**Liz Price**  
ULI Washington  
Washington, DC

Liz Price is Executive Director of ULI Washington, the second largest U.S. District Council of the Urban Land Institute. Together with 2,200 members representing

all facets of the regional real estate industry, she works to shape the built environment for transformative impact in the region.

Previously at Hoffman & Associates she was Director of Public Private Partnerships at The Wharf, a \$2.5 B, 3 M sf mixed-use waterfront redevelopment in Washington, DC. She was instrumental in launching the region's first water taxi service, a free shuttle service to Metro, and secured \$3 M in grants for pedestrian and transit improvements.

As President of the NoMa Business Improvement District, she helped guide public and private investments in the rapidly growing neighborhood, securing over \$10 M in tax incentives and infrastructure upgrades and creating a \$50 M public park funding strategy. As Vice President at the Anacostia Waterfront Corporation, she led the City's national search for a development partner for the Southwest Waterfront and oversaw the Small Area Planning process for the area while at the National Capital Revitalization Corporation. While at HUD, she served on the management team of HOPE VI, a \$4 B public housing revitalization program.

Liz is a graduate of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and has a Master's in Public and International Affairs from Princeton University. She is member of Leadership Greater Washington and was

recognized by the Washington Business Journal's Women Who Mean Business award in 2011.



## Georgia Gempler

**ULI Washington  
Washington, DC**

Georgia is a Senior Associate of Advisory Services at the Urban Land Institute (ULI). The mission of ULI is to provide leadership in the responsible use of land

and in creating and sustaining thriving communities worldwide. Since 1947, ULI has been conducting Panels that provide strategic advice to communities and organizations on real estate, planning, urban design and public policy subjects.

Georgia is from Yakima, Washington, and before joining ULI worked for an agriculture trade association coordinating trainings and researching training law, H-2A housing and food safety law for agricultural workers. In 2018, she was a Fulbright ETA in northeastern Brazil. Georgia has also worked at several adult basic education and community-building nonprofits in the Twin Cities, and as an immigration paralegal.

Georgia earned her B.A. in Latin American Studies from Macalester College in St. Paul, MN, specializing in Geography and Portuguese. At Macalester, she completed a thesis on community identity and informal space in Latin American cities, and focused on urban geography while studying abroad in Brazil. Georgia is passionate about community building, storytelling, placemaking, equitable development, and improving the nonprofit sector.



## Kaushambi Shah

**Free Lance Urban Designer &  
Report Writer  
Rockville, MD**

Kaushambi Shah is an 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 DC, 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 from the University of Mumbai, India and a Masters in Urban Design from the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor. She has served as a TAP report writer for multiple ULI Washington TAPs, including: "Research Boulevard: It's Not an Office Park!", "What's Next For Westfields?", "Creating an Eastern Gateway in Falls Church", "The Exchange: Transforming the Virtual Circle and Reconnecting the Neighborhoods", "Rockville Town Center: Strengthening Its Vitality" and "Westphalia: Reimagining Opportunity, Break the Cycle!".





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ULI Washington  
2001 L St NW #200  
Washington, DC 20036

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