

## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** District of Columbia Zoning Commission\

**FROM:** Maxine Brown-Roberts, Development Review Specialist  
JL Joel Lawson, Associate Director, Development Review

**DATE:** November 10, 2025

**SUBJECT:** Zoning Commission Case 12-08 E - OP Setdown Report - Proposed Text Amendment to Subtitle K §605.1, Front Setback (Square 58685, Lot 854) St. Elizabeths East, Parcel 18

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### **I. RECOMMENDATION**

The Office of Planning (OP), on behalf of the District of Columbia Public Libraries (DCPL), submits the following zoning text amendment petition to amend Subtitle K § 605.1, Front Setback, to preclude the required 10-foot front setback along 13<sup>th</sup> Street from applying to Parcel 18 (Square 58685, Lot 854) (StE-18 zone). **OP recommends that the Zoning Commission:**

1. Take emergency action to adopt the proposed text amendment authorized by D.C. Official Code 2-505(c);
2. Set the petition down for a public hearing; and
3. Authorize an immediate publication of the proposed rulemaking for the petition.

**Emergency action is requested** pursuant to D.C. Official Code 2-505(c), which states that:

*Notwithstanding any other provision of this section, if, in an emergency, as determined by the Mayor or an independent agency, the adoption of a rule is necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health, safety, welfare, or morals, the Mayor or such independent agency may adopt such rules as may be necessary in the circumstances, and such rule may become effective immediately.*

The request for emergency action to amend the Regulations to not require the ten-foot setback would allow the permitting process to proceed. A new library to replace an existing one, which is considered operationally deficient, is funded, fully designed, and in the permitting stage but did not take into account a front setback requirement in the zoning. Construction is anticipated to begin at the end of 2025 to allow coordination with the construction of 13th Street by DMPED, coordination with WMATA, coordination of geothermal wells for the first DCPL net-zero energy library and to allow the neighbors to get their new and expanded library by the second quarter of 2027.

### **II. PROPOSED TEXT AMENDMENT**

OP recommends that the Zoning Commission set down for public hearing a text amendment to the text of the Zoning Regulations as follows: (text to be deleted is marked in **~~bold and strikethrough~~**;

## **Proposed Amendment to Subtitle K, SPECIAL PURPOSE ZONES, DEFINITIONS, RULES OF MEASUREMENT, AND USE CATEGORIES**

**Subsection 605.1, FRONT SETBACKS (StE), of Chapter 6, ST. ELIZABETHS EAST CAMPUS ZONES StE-1 to StE-19, of Subtitle K, SPECIAL PURPOSE ZONES, is proposed to be amended to read as follows:**

**605.1** Buildings within the StE-17 ~~and StE-18~~ zones shall be setback not less than ten feet (10 ft.) from the property line that abuts Alabama Avenue and 13th Street.

### **III. BACKGROUND**

DCPL operates twenty-six (26) libraries throughout the District. DCPL's [Next Libris: Library Facilities Master Plan](#), 2021-2030, informs DCPL's decisions to grow equitably and protect and adapt its buildings for future generations of District residents. Recommendations in the Plan included funding for several new libraries within the City including Chevy Chase, Congress Heights, Deanwood, Edgewood/Eckington, Rosedale and Shepherd Park libraries. An update to the 2020 Master Plan, Next Libris Facilities Master Plan Update, Winter 2025 was recently undertaken and published. It takes into account revised demographic data, the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on library usage, and the city-wide impact of the modernized Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial Library.

The recommendation to build a replacement for the Parklands-Turner Library, currently located at 1547 Alabama Avenue, SE at the St. Elizabeths Campus, was retained in the updated Plan. The new library will address operational deficiencies resulting from the small size of the current library. The Plan notes that a site was selected for replacing the small Parklands-Turner Library with a full-service library in Congress Heights, and the project is in the design phase. Further, the Plan notes that the update does not change the original plan's stated goal of contributing to the success of the District's Comprehensive Plan and housing production goals.

The new DC public library will be located on the southwest portion of Parcel 18 of the St. Elizabeth East Campus (see Attachment 1 - St. Elizabeths Master Plan and Design Guidelines - Parcel Map), which fronts on Alabama Avenue and 13<sup>th</sup> Street, SE and is adjacent to the Congress Heights Metro Station and transit parking lot (Square 58685, Lot 854 and zoned StE-18). The portion of 13<sup>th</sup> Street that will connect to Alabama Avenue on the St. Elizabeths Campus has not been constructed at this time but has been designed and will be constructed in the near future by DMPED to serve the new library. The library will be built directly above the Metro Station.

DCPL is currently in the permitting process at the Department of Buildings (DoB) for the new, one-story, public library. While reviewing the construction documents, it was discovered that the proposal inadvertently did not take into account the requirements of Subtitle K § 605.1, which requires that the building be set back at least ten feet (10 ft.) from 13<sup>th</sup> Street, S.E. At this juncture of the permitting process, in order to meet this requirement, the building would require a significant redesign, which, because of the constraints on the site, could result in a smaller building footprint and not being able to accommodate all the programs and services that are now planned with significant input from the community. The proposed text amendment would eliminate the requirement, to allow the permitting process to proceed and not affect the planned 2027 delivery date.

#### IV. ANALYSIS

The, [St. Elizabeths East Master Plan and Design Guidelines, June 4, 2012](#) (Master Plan) designates the property as Parcel 18, and within the Congress Heights Transit Center and recommends:

*Future development on Parcel 18 will have to conform to these guidelines as well as coordination with WMATA on planning efforts being conducted at the Congress Heights Metrorail station.*

##### *Parcel 18*

*Parcel 18 is located at the southeastern corner of the East Campus. Its eastern side faces Alabama Avenue and its western boundary is adjacent to the Washington Hebrew Congregation Cemetery. The parcel currently houses the entrance to the Congress Heights Metrorail station as well as the Metro bus transfer facility, and is part of the Congress Heights Transportation Sector.”*

*While the East Campus Master Plan does not propose a vision for Parcel 18, any future development will be guided by the zoning for the site which will be based on the recommendations of the Master Plan. Further, development of the station area should reflect Master Plan’s recommendations for a mix of uses, public realm and placemaking recommendations found in Chapter Two. Redevelopment of the station area will be lead by Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) in coordination with the District.*

13<sup>th</sup> Street, on which Parcel 18 fronts, is classified as a “retail street” in the Master Plan (pages 51-54) and recommends a 17.5 foot area behind the curb consisting of the Furniture Zone, Pedestrian Zone and Café Zone. The Master Plan also shows the proposed right-of-way and setbacks recommended for 13<sup>th</sup> Street adjacent to Parcel 18 (Attachment 2 - 13<sup>th</sup> Street Section). However, it does not seem to identify a setback between the building and the right-of-way. Following the Master Plan, the Zoning Regulations at Subtitle K § 605.1, required a minimum 10-foot setback between the lot line and the building. No specific reason was stated for this required setback but it seems to have been in keeping with the designation of 13<sup>th</sup> Street as a retail street and Café Zone.

The placement of the building on the site is further constrained by a number of WMATA requirements including the need to accommodate a vent shaft, a below grade Metro tunnel, metro entrance and elevator (Figure 1).

Figure 1



These restrictions all place significant limits on the building location, design and footprint. Providing the 10-foot setback would create additional friction points with WMATA operations and facilities. DCPL has expended a significant amount of time working with a design that fits into the site context and resulted in the building being placed near the lot line along 13<sup>th</sup> Street. The design team also focused on aligning the zoning and community goals on this complex site resulting in a layout that promotes pedestrian flow around and through the building, promotes safety with open space near transit areas for better visibility and away from 13<sup>th</sup> Street by strategically places open plazas on the north and south sides for easy metro access.

OP coordinated with the Department of Transportation (DDOT) and they support the proposed design with the tapered encroachment into the setback along 13<sup>th</sup> Street, as the building has no active entrances into the library along the 13<sup>th</sup> Street façade. The proposed amendment would only be applicable to that portion of 13<sup>th</sup> Street which abuts Parcel 18.

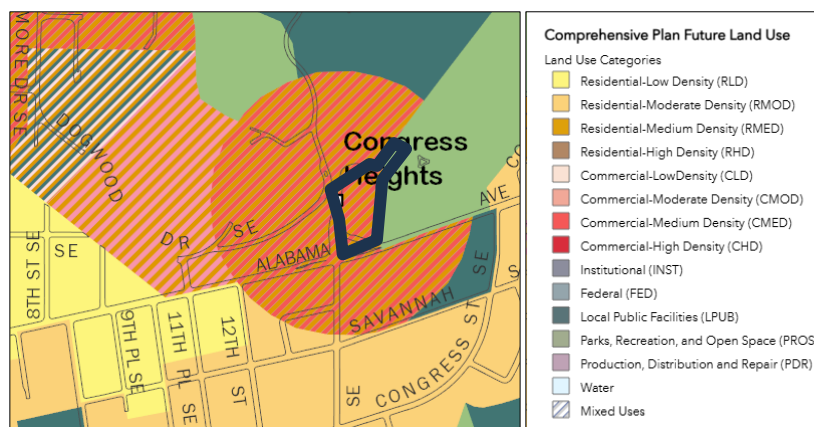
## V. PLANNING CONTEXT

### COMPREHENSIVE PLAN MAPS

As described in the Chapter 2, Framework Element, Section 226, *Guidelines for Using the Generalized Policy Map and the Future Land Use Map*, the maps are intended to provide generalized guidelines for development decisions. They are to be interpreted broadly and are not parcel-specific like zoning maps; i.e. the maps, in and of themselves, do not establish detailed requirements or permissions for a development's physical characteristics including building massing or density; uses; or support systems such as parking and loading. They are to be interpreted in conjunction with relevant written goals, policies and action items in the Comprehensive Plan text, and further balanced against policies or objectives contained in relevant Small Area Plans and other citywide or area plans.

#### Generalized Future Land Use Map (FLUM)

The Future Land Use Map (FLUM) indicates that the site is appropriate for a mix of Medium Density Residential and Medium Commercial.



**Mixed Use Categories:** The Future Land Use Map indicates areas where the mixing of two or more land uses is encouraged. The particular combination of uses desired in a given area is depicted in striped patterns, with stripe colors corresponding to the categories defined on the previous pages. The Mixed Use category generally applies in the following three circumstances:

- Established, pedestrian-oriented commercial areas which also include substantial amounts of housing, typically on the upper stories of buildings with ground floor retail or office uses;

- b. *Commercial corridors or districts which may not contain substantial amounts of housing today, but where more housing is desired in the future. The pattern envisioned for such areas is typically one of pedestrian-oriented streets, with ground floor retail or office uses and upper story housing; and*
- c. *Large sites (generally greater than 10 acres in size), where opportunities for multiple uses exist but a plan dictating the precise location of these uses has yet to be prepared. 225.18*

*The general density and intensity of development within a given Mixed Use area is determined by the specific mix of uses shown. If the desired outcome is to emphasize one use over the other (for example, ground floor retail with three stories of housing above), the Future Land Use Map may note the dominant use by showing it at a slightly higher density than the other use in the mix ... 225.19*

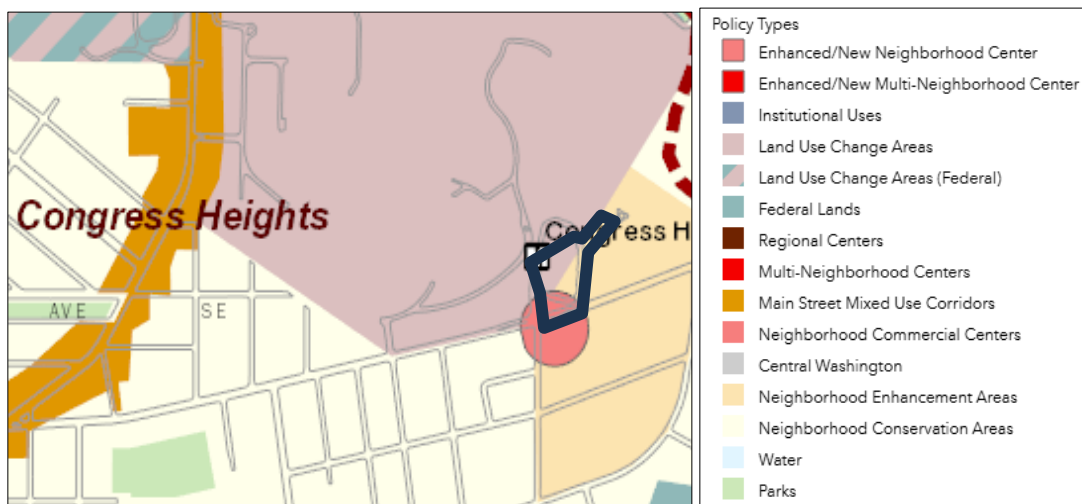
*A variety of zoning designations are used in Mixed Use areas, depending on the combination of uses, densities, and intensities. ... 225.21*

**Medium Density Residential:** *This designation is used to define neighborhoods or areas generally, but not exclusively, suited for mid-rise apartment buildings. The Medium Density Residential designation also may apply to taller residential buildings surrounded by large areas of permanent open space. Pockets of low and moderate density housing may exist within these areas. Density typically ranges from 1.8 to 4.0 FAR, although greater density may be possible when complying with Inclusionary Zoning or when approved through a Planned Unit Development. The RA-3 Zone District is consistent with the Medium Density Residential category, and other zones may also apply. 227.7*

**Medium Density Commercial:** *This designation is used to define shopping and service areas that are somewhat greater in scale and intensity than the Moderate Density Commercial areas. Retail, office, and service businesses are the predominant uses, although residential uses are common. Areas with this designation generally draw from a citywide market area. Buildings are larger and/or taller than those in Moderate Density Commercial areas. Density typically ranges between a FAR of 4.0 and 6.0, with greater density possible when complying with Inclusionary Zoning or when approved through a Planned Unit Development. The MU-8 and MU-10 Zone Districts are consistent with the Medium Density category, and other zones may also apply. 227.12*

The proposed text amendment would related to the library, a local public facility use, not be inconsistent with the Mixed Use Category of the FLUM and land use recommendations for the site which includes Moderate Density Residential and Low Density Commercial.

### **Generalized Policy Map**



**Neighborhood Enhancement Areas** *Neighborhood Enhancement Areas are neighborhoods with substantial amounts of vacant and underutilized land. They include areas that are primarily residential in character, as well as mixed-use and industrial areas. Many of these areas are characterized by a patchwork of existing*



*homes and individual vacant lots, some privately owned and others owned by the public sector or non-profit developers. These areas present opportunities for compatible infill development, including new single-family homes, townhomes, other density housing types, mixed-use buildings, and, where appropriate, light industrial facilities. Land uses that reflect the historical mixture and diversity of each community and promote inclusivity should be encouraged. 225.6*

**Multi-Neighborhood Centers:** *Multi-Neighborhood Centers contain many of the same activities as Neighborhood Commercial Centers, but in greater depth and variety. The area served by a Multi-Neighborhood Center is typically one to three miles. These centers are generally found at major intersections and along key transit routes. These centers might include supermarkets, general merchandise stores, drug stores, restaurants, specialty shops, apparel stores, and a variety of service-oriented businesses. These centers also may include residential and office space for small businesses, although their primary function remains retail trade. 225.17*

**Future Planning Analysis Area:** *As further discussed in Sections 2503.2 and 2503.3 of the Implementation Element, areas of large tracts or corridors where future analysis anticipated to ensure adequate planning for equitable development. Boundaries shown are for illustrative purposes. Final boundaries will be determined as part of the future planning analysis process for each area. Planning analyses generally establish guiding documents. Such analysis should precede any zoning change in this area. The planning process should evaluate current infrastructure and utility capacity against full buildout and projected population and employment growth. Planning should also focus on issues most relevant to the community that can be effectively addressed through a planning process. Individual planning analyses may study smaller areas than the Analysis Area. For the purposes of determining whether a planning analysis is needed before a zoning change, the boundaries of the Future Planning Analysis Areas shall be considered as drawn. The evaluation of current infrastructure and utility capacity should specify the physical or operational capacity both inside the boundaries and any relevant District-wide infrastructure available.*

**Land Use Change Areas:** *Areas where change to a different land use from what exist today is anticipated. The guiding philosophy in the Land Use Change Areas is to encourage and facilitate new development and promote the adaptive reuse of existing structures. Many of these areas have the capacity to become mixed-use communities containing housing, retail shops, services, workplaces, parks, and civic facilities. The Comprehensive Plan's Area Elements provide additional policies to guide development and redevelopment within the Land Use Change Areas, including the desired mix of uses in each area.*

St. Elizabeths East campus is within the boundary of the Congress Heights Future Planning Analysis Area which is being implemented through the [Congress Heights Small Area Plan](#), (SAP) September 19, 2022. The SAP acknowledged the St. Elizabeths East Master Plan and Design Guidelines and states that, “it builds on the policies developed in the 2012 St. Elizabeths East Master Plan.” The proposed text amendment would be not inconsistent with the Generalized Policy Map recommendation for the site as it would facilitate the library at the transit center and serve residents of the surrounding neighborhoods.

## **VI. COMPREHENSIVE PLAN POLICIES THROUGH A RACIAL EQUITY LENS**

Subtitle X § 1300.2 of Title 11 requires that the Zoning Commission determine that a proposed petition for a text amendment to the Zoning Regulations “is not inconsistent with the Comprehensive Plan and other adopted public policies and active programs related to the subject text.” The direction to consider equity “as part of its Comprehensive Plan consistency analysis” indicates that the equity analysis is intended to be based on the policies of the Comprehensive Plan and part of the Commission’s consideration of whether a proposed zoning action is “not inconsistent” with the Comprehensive Plan.

The Comp Plan Framework Element also states that equity is achieved by targeted actions and investments to create equitable opportunities. (10-A DCMR § 213.6.) Further, “*equitable development is a participatory approach for meeting the needs of underserved communities through policies, programs and/or practices [and] holistically considers land use, transportation, housing, environmental, and cultural conditions, and creates access to education, services, healthcare, technology, workforce development, and employment opportunities.*”

Ultimately, a racial equity analysis is a tool for identifying and addressing structural inequalities and ensuring that all members of the community, regardless of race or ethnicity, can benefit. The Commission requires an analysis of the proposed zoning action through the equity lens, utilizing disaggregated race and ethnicity data. On balance, the proposed text amendment would not be inconsistent with the Comprehensive Plan.

## **PART 1: COMPREHENSIVE PLAN POLICIES**

### **Citywide Elements:**

The following policies will potentially be advanced by the requested text amendment. Please refer to Attachment 3 at the end of this report for the full text of the relevant policies.

#### ***Chapter 3 – Land Use Element***

- ***Policy LU-1.3.1: Reuse of Large Publicly Owned Sites***
- ***Policy LU-1.3.5: Public Benefit Uses on Large Sites***
- ***Policy LU-1.3.6: New Neighborhoods and the Urban***
- ***Policy LU-1.4.9: Public Facilities***

The St. Elizabeths East campus is identified as a large site that is publicly owned, is being developed as a new neighborhood with a mix of uses, and also to house uses that will be beneficial to the surrounding neighborhoods. The campus currently houses several public facilities and the proposed library would be another.

#### ***Chapter 11 - Community Services and Facilities Element***

*The Community Services and Facilities Element contains policies and actions for public facilities that provide health services, as well as community facilities that include **libraries**, police stations, fire stations, and other municipal facilities such as maintenance yards. A well-balanced and adequate public facility system is a key part of Washington, DC’s drive to sustain and enhance the quality of life for its residents and to deliver services on an equitable and inclusive basis, supporting growth and prosperity, resilience, public health and safety, civic gathering, learning, and cultural production and expression. 1100.1*

- ***Policy CSF-1.1.2: Adequate Facilities***
- ***Policy CSF-1.1.8: Public Facilities, Equity, and Economic Development***
- ***Policy CSF-3.1.1: State-of-the-Art Public Library System***
- ***Policy CSF-3.1.2: Libraries as Civic Infrastructure***
- ***Policy CSF-3.1.4: Tailoring Libraries to the Neighborhoods They Serve***
- ***Action CSF-3.1.B: Branch Libraries***
- ***Action CSF-3.1.F: Facilities Master Plan***
- ***Policy CSF-3.2.1: Location of Branch Libraries***

- ***Policy CSF-3.2.3: Libraries and Neighborhood Identity***
- ***Policy CSF-3.2.4: Libraries as Neighborhood Anchors***

The proposed text amendment would facilitate the construction of a funded and designed new library that would contribute and support the revitalization of the St. Elizabeths East campus and would provide services to an underserved area. The library would support equity goals by serving residents of all ages, intellectual development, economic background and would be tailored to the meet neighborhood needs. The library would have a clearly designed and visible entrance with an open, inviting, and attractive façade.

### ***Far Southeast/Southwest Area Element***

#### ***FSS-2.2 St. Elizabeths Campus 1812***

- ***Policy FSS-2.2.1: St. Elizabeths East Campus***
- ***Policy FSS-2.2.2: Relationship to Nearby Uses***
- ***Policy FSS-2.2.3: Development Density***
- ***Policy FSS-2.4.1: Congress Heights Metro Station***
- ***Action FSS-2.4.A: Congress Heights Gateway***

The Far Southeast/Southwest Area Element recommends the development of the St. Elizabeths East campus with a mix of uses including local public facilities, and that it be coordinated with the Congress Heights Metro planning. The proposed library has been coordinated with WMATA to accommodate both their below and above grade elements some of which constrains the size and design of the proposed library. The siting of the new building partially within the setback area allows the public library to accommodate the constraints on the site as well as meet the requirements of the library.

## **PART 2: COMMUNITY OUTREACH AND ENGAGEMENT**

DCPL states that they have undertaken substantial and extensive community outreach during the development of the DCPL's *Next Libris, Facilities Master Plan, 2021-2030*, and the *Next Libris Facilities Master Plan Update, Winter2025*, and through the design process. Community outreach has included four rounds of community engagement (including workshops, focus groups, online surveys, etc.), and coming in contact with 450 stakeholders and neighbors. Below is a timeline of community outreach to date:

<b>Community Engagement</b>	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Date</b>
<b>Round 1</b>	Public Survey	April 24, 2023 and April 27, 2023
	Community Ambassadors Focus group (including ANC 8C and 8E Commissioners)	April 24, 2023
	Senior Focus group:	May 11, 2023
	Intercept Interviews	May 11, 2023 & May 12, 2023
	Youth Focus group	May 12, 2023
	Public Workshop 1	May 13, 2023 & May 15, 2023
<b>Round 2</b>	Public Workshop 2	June 10, 2023 & June 15, 2023
	Parklands-Turner Staff Focus Group	June 15, 2023



Community Engagement	Activity	Date
<b>Round 3</b>	Teen Council Focus Group	July 12, 2023
	Business Owners Focus Group (Sycamore & Oak)	July 26, 2023
	Covenant House Focus Group	July 31, 2023
	Community Engagement Public Workshop 3	October 7, 2023
<b>Round 4</b>	Community Design Reveal Gallery	July 17, 2024

The property is within ANC 8C and across from ANC 8E, and DCPL states that both ANCs have been part of this community outreach effort.

### *Summary of Context Analysis*

The proposal text amendment would eliminate the front yard setback requirement and allow the library to continue through the permitting process and to meet the projected library opening in 2027. The proposal would not be inconsistent with the Comprehensive Plan maps, Citywide policies and in particular policies for libraries and for this public use on the St. Elizabeths East campus to serve a wider community at this location as well as its accessibility via Metrorail and Metrobus.

## **PART 3: DISAGGREGATED DATA REGARDING RACE AND ETHNICITY**

Part 3 of the Racial Equity Tool asks for disaggregated data to assist the Commission in its evaluation of zoning actions through a racial equity lens for the planning area. The data source used below is the 2012-2016 and 2018-2023 American Community Survey 5 Year Estimates by Planning Area available via the OP State Data Center ([ACS DATA](#)). The subject property is in the Far Southeast/Southwest Planning Area (“planning area”) as mapped in Chapter 18 of the Comprehensive Plan. Each table below compares data for the Far Southeast/Southwest Planning Area with District-wide data.

### *Population by Race or Ethnicity*

**Table 1: Population/Race or Ethnicity Districtwide and in the Far Southeast/Southwest Planning Area (2012-2016 and 2019-2023)**

Race or Ethnicity	District-wide 2012-16	District-wide Percent	Planning Area 2012-16	Planning Area Percent	District-wide 2019-23	District-wide Percent	Planning Area 2019-23	Planning Area Percent
Total Population	659,009	100%	73,882	11.21%	672,079	100%	71,223	10.60%
White alone	266,035	40.4%	3,934	5.32%	262,549	39.1%	4,109	5.8%
Black or African American	318,598	48.3%	67,562	91.44%	290,772	44.3%	61,919	86.9%
Indian and Alaskan Native	2,174	0.3%	78	0.10%	2,044	0.3%	112	0.2%
Asian alone	24,036	3.6%	197	0.27%	27,465	4.1%	373	0.5%

Race or Ethnicity	District-wide 2012-16	District-wide Percent	Planning Area 2012-16	Planning Area Percent	District-wide 2019-23	District-wide Percent	Planning Area 2019-23	Planning Area Percent
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander alone	271	0.04%	13	0.0%	378	0.1%	11	0.00%
Some other Race	29,650	4.5%	1,139	1.54%	32,338	4.8%	1,258	1.8%
Two or more Races	18,245	2.8%	958	1.3%	56,533	8.4%	3,432	4.8%
Hispanic or Latino	69,106	10.5%	1,807	2.44%	77,760	11.6%	2,768	3.9%

Table 1 shows that in the 2012-2016 period, the Far Southeast/Southwest Planning Area had a population of 73,882, or about 11.2% of the District's total population. However, in the 2019-2023 time period the Planning Area experienced a decrease in population and a decrease in the percentage of the District's population from 11.2% to 10.60%.

In the 2012-2016 period, Black residents made up the largest portion of the population, at 91% of the area's residents, which was substantively higher than the District-wide total of 48.3%. In the 2019-2023 period, Black residents continued to make up the largest portion of the population but both the total population and the percentage decreased, to 86.9%.

### *Median Income*

**Table 2: Median Income**

Median Income	Districtwide 2012-2016	Districtwide (2019-2023)	Planning Area 2012-2016	Planning Area (2019-2023)
<b>Median Household Income</b>	\$72,935	106,287	30,991	45,303
<b>White alone</b>	\$119,564	166,774	78,612	164,951
<b>Black or African American alone</b>	\$40,560	60,446	29,425	43,314
<b>American Indian and Alaskan Native alone</b>	\$51,306	63,617	31,070	0
<b>Asian alone</b>	\$91,453	121,619	60,324	0
<b>Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander alone</b>	NA	NA	87,500	0
<b>Some other races</b>	\$48,047	74,754	30,766	15,855
<b>Two or more races</b>	\$83,243	116,869	37,532	54,319
<b>Hispanic or Latino</b>	\$60,848	106,435	32,266	102,414

The median income of the Far Southeast/Southwest Planning Area was significantly lower than that of the District in both the 2012-2016 and 2019-2023 time periods. While the planning area saw an increase between the time periods, this was significantly lower than the increase Districtwide. The Black or African American population had one of the lowest median incomes of all segments of the population in the 2012-2016 time periods (\$29,425) but saw an increase to \$43,314, in the 2019-2023 time period. Although all groups had increases in median income, the income of Whites nearly doubled while that of Hispanic/Latino residents increased threefold.

### *Median Age*

**Table 3: Median Age**

<b>Median Age</b>	<b>Districtwide 2012-2016</b>	<b>Districtwide (2019-2023)</b>	<b>Planning Area 2012-2016</b>	<b>Planning Area (2019-2023)</b>
Total Median Age	38.7	34.9	38.2	33.2
White	40.4	35.3	39.6	36.8
Black or African American	33.4	37.1	39.1	33.2
Indian and Alaskan Native	32.2	34.9	35.4	NA
Asian	36.5	35.2	37.8	47.1
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	30.8	20.9	NA	NA
Some other races	28	28.7	31.9	18.3
Two or more races	19.8	30	20.1	20.4
Hispanic or Latino	28.4	32.2	33.7	30.6

The median age Districtwide decreased from 38.7 years to 34.9 years in between the two time periods. The median age in the Planning Area decreased from 38.2 years to 33.2 years.

### *General Characteristics*

**Table 4: General Characteristics of the District and Far Southeast/Southwest Planning Area**

<b>Characteristic</b>	<b>Districtwide 2012-2016</b>	<b>Districtwide (2019-2023)</b>	<b>Planning Area 2012-2016</b>	<b>Planning Area (2019-2023)</b>
<b>Unemployment Rate</b>	8.7%	6.5%	22.8%	16.7%
<b>Cost Burdened Households<sup>1</sup></b>	38.6%	34%	56.1%	52%
<b>Poverty Rate</b>	17.9%	14.5%	38.2%	29.7%

In 2012-2016, the unemployment rate in the Planning Area was at 22.8%, which was more than twice the rate of the District at 8.7%. Although the rate of both the District and the Planning Area fell in 2019-2023, the Planning Area's unemployment rate remained over twice that of the District's.

The cost burden for housing in the Planning Area was significantly higher than that of the District as a whole in both time periods, and only dropped slightly between the two time periods, and it remains the case for more than 50% of households in the planning area.

The unemployment rate and housing cost burden rates may be reflected in the poverty rate in that in both time periods, the poverty rate of the Planning Area was approximately 15% to 21% points higher than that of the District, although the poverty rate decreased between the two time periods by an amount greater than that of the rest of the District as a whole – from about 38% to about 30%.

### *Vulnerable or Special Populations*

**Table 5: Vulnerable or Special Populations.**

<b>Special Populations</b>	<b>Districtwide 2012-2016</b>	<b>Districtwide 2019-2023</b>	<b>Planning Area 2012-2016</b>	<b>Planning Area 2019-2023</b>
<b>Persons 65 or Older</b>	34.2%	32.3%	49.8%	49.7%

<sup>1</sup> Percentage of households spending 30% or more of their income on housing

Special Populations	Districtwide 2012-2016	Districtwide 2019-2023	Planning Area 2012-2016	Planning Area 2019-2023
Persons Under 18 Years	4.5%	4.5%	7.8%	6.7%
Disability Rate	11.3%	11%	17.9%	17.9%

Relative to the District, the Planning Area had a higher percentage of persons with disabilities.

### *Housing Tenure*

**Table 6A - Owner Occupied Households**

Owner Occupancy	Districtwide 2012-2016	Districtwide (2019-2023)	Planning Area 2012-2016	Planning Area (2019-2023)
Total Owner Occupied	40.7%	41.1%	18.8%	22.3%
White alone	47.8%	48%	17.5%	35.1%
Black or African American alone	35.9%	34.9%	19.0%	21.6%
American Indian and Alaskan Native alone	32.8%	19.6%	0.0%	41.9%
Asian alone	39.4%	41.4%	9.0%	5.3%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander alone	9.1%	31.8%	0.0%	0.0%
Some other races	17.5%	28.7%	9.5%	22.2%
Two or more races	32.7%	41.3%	22.6%	21.9%
Hispanic or Latino	30.9%	36.4%	18.4%	33.8%

Between 2012-2016 and 2019-2023, the percentage of owner occupancy in the District rose only slightly - 40.7% to 41.1% while in the Far Southeast and Southwest Planning Area there was a more significant increase from 18% to 22.3%. Rates of homeownership increased for all racial groups, except Asians Alone, but remained lower than the District as a whole for most groups.

Collectively, the data indicates that the services that a public library can provide would be beneficial to residents of the area. Public libraries can offer a wide range of print and online resources in a welcoming, public space, offer training and continuous education opportunities and career development, and promote digital inclusion through free internet access and training. All of these would be particularly helpful to lower income or vulnerable populations.

## **PART 4: ZONING COMMISSION EVALUATION FACTORS**

*When considering the following themes/questions based on Comprehensive Plan policies related to racial equity, what are the anticipated positive and negative impacts and/or outcomes of the zoning action? Note: Additional themes may also apply.*

Factor	Question	OP Response
Direct Displacement	Will the zoning action result in displacement of tenants or residents?	The text amendment would facilitate a new public library on a vacant site, so would not result in direct displacement of tenants or residents there is currently no residential use on this site and none is proposed.

Factor	Question	OP Response
<b>Indirect Displacement</b>	What examples of indirect displacement might result from the zoning action?	OP does not anticipate any indirect displacement to occur from this text amendment. The proposed amendment allow for a new library to better serve the community and be at a location that is more accessible to a larger portion of the community.
<b>Housing</b>	Will the action result in changes to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Market Rate Housing</li> <li>▪ Affordable Housing</li> <li>▪ Replacement Housing</li> </ul>	The text amendment should not have any impact on housing, although amending the provision would allow a library that is more accessible to both the market rate and affordable housing at St. Elizabeths as well as in the surrounding community.
<b>Physical</b>	Will the action result in changes to the physical environment such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Public Space Improvements</li> <li>▪ Infrastructure Improvements</li> <li>▪ Arts and Culture</li> <li>▪ Environmental Changes</li> <li>▪ Streetscape Improvements</li> </ul>	The proposed text amendment would facilitate the construction of a new public library that will include improvements to the 13 <sup>th</sup> Street right-of-way and public space, pedestrian connection to the Metro Station and buses. The library would facilitate arts and cultural events and information.
<b>Access to Opportunity</b>	Is there a change in access to opportunity? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Job Training/Creation</li> <li>▪ Healthcare</li> <li>▪ Addition of Retail/Access to New Services</li> </ul>	The proposed text amendment to facilitate improved library services to this community. Given the limited scope of the amendment, OP does not anticipate the text amendment would have a significant impact on access to jobs, healthcare or retail uses. It may assist in the provision of job training opportunities for residents, and to attract additional people to this area, who could support other local businesses.
<b>Community</b>	How did community outreach and engagement inform/change the zoning action? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ (e.g., did the architectural plans change, or were other substantive changes made to the zoning action in response to community input/priorities etc.?)</li> </ul>	DCPL has met with various members and groups within the community who have been an integral part of the building design and services to be provided by the library.

## VII. OTHER PLANNING DOCUMENTS

### Saint Elizabeths East Redevelopment Framework Plan

*The Saint Elizabeths East Redevelopment Framework Plan*, adopted by Council on December 16, 2008 is designed to guide future redevelopment of the East Campus and establishes development principles for its eventual build-out. The Framework Plan serves as a supplement to the



Comprehensive Plan and provides guiding principles for development of the campus. The proposed library would be consistent with the recommendations of the Framework Plan.

### **The Saint Elizabeths East Master Plan and Design Guidelines**

*The Saint Elizabeths East Master Plan and Design Guidelines* was a requirement of the *Saint Elizabeths East Redevelopment Framework Plan* to fulfilling the goals of the Framework Plan which recommended that “*Implementation of this Framework Plan will require the development of a more detailed master plan for the campus.*” The Saint Elizabeths East Master Plan and Design Guidelines, June 4, 2012 serves as supplemental guidance to the Comprehensive Plan and the Framework Plan and outlines specific goals.

The Master Plan provides a land use framework and vision for the redevelopment of the campus to accommodate important public services and neighborhood needs. Along with the reuse of the historic buildings, new buildings are envisioned to accommodate a mix of uses including housing, offices, retail, institutional, and innovation uses. The proposed library be consistent with the recommendations of the Master Plan.

### **Congress Heights Small Area Plan**

The Congress Heights Small Area Plan (SAP) approved on September 19, 2022, [Congress Height SAP](#), was a result of a recommendation of the Generalized Policy Map which recommended delineated the Congress Heights area as a future planning analysis area which includes the St. Elizabeths East campus. The SAP identified St. Elizabeths East and states that, “*Development on the East Campus is currently underway, guided by the 2012 St. Elizabeths East Master Plan and Design Guidelines, and will include a regional hospital, a new full-service library, and space for nonprofit services.*” No other recommendation was provided.

## **VIII. SUMMARY OF PLANNING CONTEXT ANALYSIS AND RECOMMENDATION**

The proposed text amendment would not be inconsistent with the recommendations of the FLUM and Generalized Policy Maps, and would not be inconsistent with many of the policies and recommendations of the Citywide Elements and the Far Southeast/Southwest Policy Area for local public facilities and in particular a library on the St. Elizabeths East campus. On balance, the proposed text amendment is also not inconsistent with the Comprehensive Plan when viewed through a racial equity lens. The Master Plans for libraries also identifies the location for a new library for the proposed location. Therefore, OP recommends that the Zoning Commission the set down and grant emergency action for the proposed map amendment.

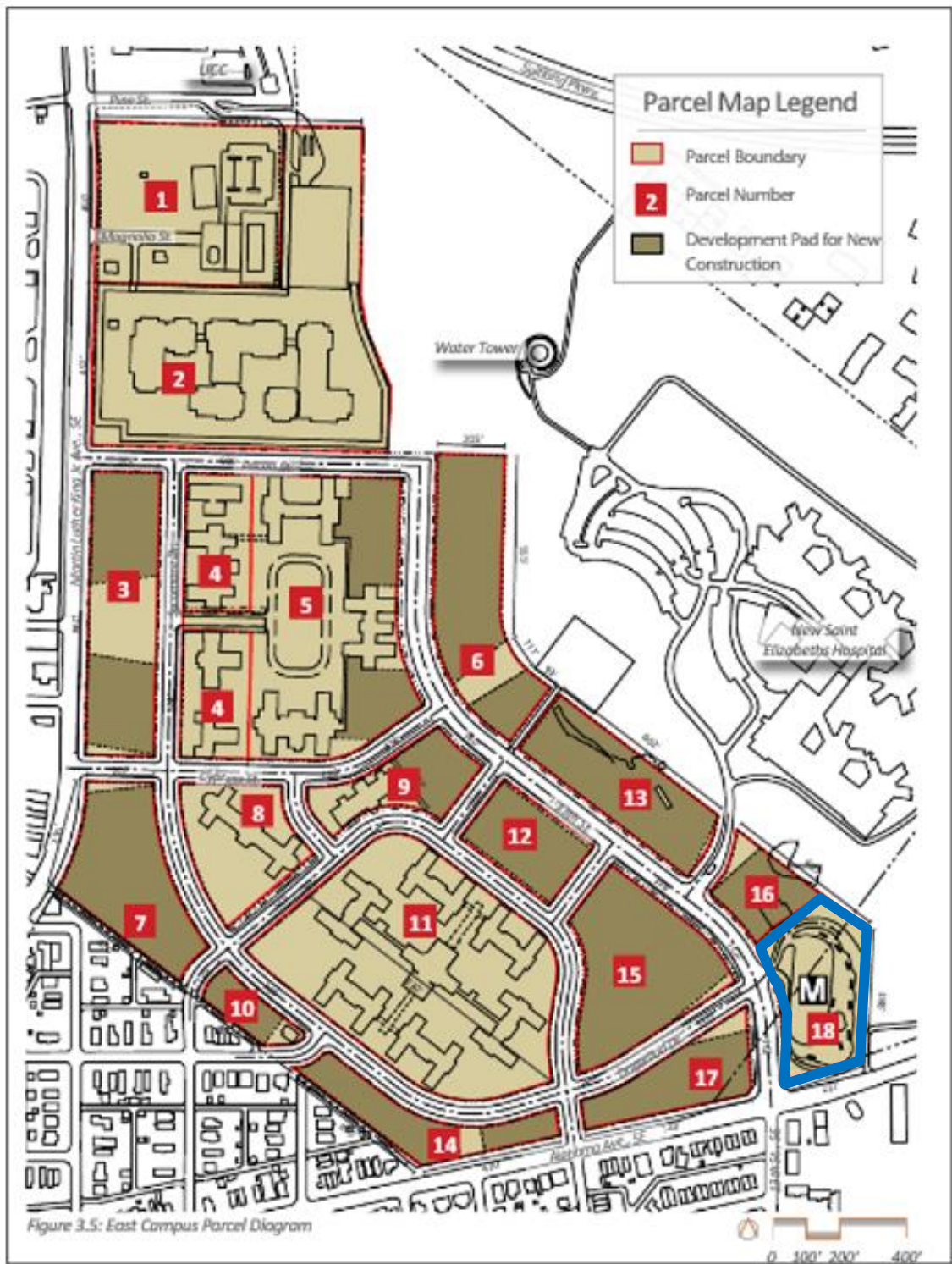
## **IX. ANC**

The property is within ANC-8C and across from ANC-8E. DCPL states that both ANC’s have been part of their community outreach.

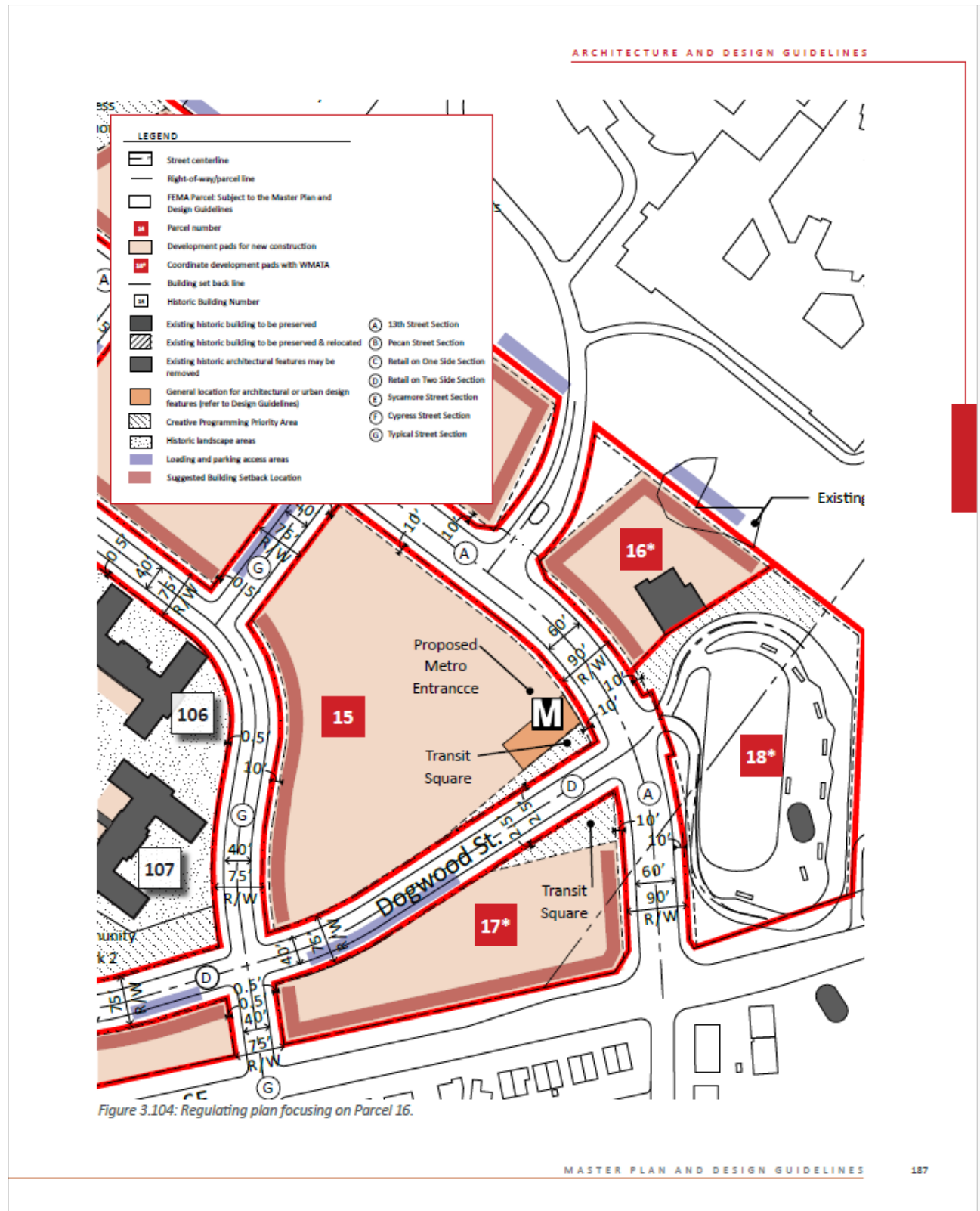
## **X. ATTACHMENTS**

Attachment 1 – The Saint Elizabeths East Master Pan and Design Guidelines – Parcel Map  
Attachment 2 - 13<sup>th</sup> Street Section  
Attachment 3 - Comprehensive Plan Elements

## ATTACHMENT 1 – The Saint Elizabeths East Master Plan and Design Guidelines – Parcel Map



## ATTACHMENT 2 - 13<sup>th</sup> Street Section



## **ATTACHMENT 3 - Comprehensive Plan Elements**

### **Citywide Elements:**

#### **Chapter 3 – Land Use Element**

**Policy LU-1.3.1: Reuse of Large Publicly Owned Sites** *Recognize the potential for and encourage the reuse of large, governmentowned properties to supply needed community services and facilities; provide significant deeply affordable housing and desired housing types such as family housing; create education and employment opportunities; remove barriers between neighborhoods; enhance equity, including racial equity, and inclusion; provide large and significant new parks, including wildlife habitats; enhance waterfront access; improve resilience; and enhance Washington, DC's neighborhoods. 306.6*

**Policy LU-1.3.5: Public Benefit Uses on Large Sites** *Given the significant leverage the District has in redeveloping properties that it owns, include appropriate public benefit uses on such sites if and when they are reused, and involve the public in identifying benefits. Examples of such uses are housing, especially deeply affordable housing, and housing serving families, older adults, and vulnerable populations; new parks and open spaces; health care and civic facilities; public educational facilities and other public facilities; and uses providing employment opportunities for District residents. 306.11*

**Policy LU-1.3.6: New Neighborhoods and the Urban Fabric** *On those large sites that are redeveloped as new neighborhoods (such as Reservation 13), integrate new development into the fabric of the District to the greatest extent feasible. Incorporate extensions of the street grid, public access and circulation improvements, and new public open spaces. Establish a compatible relationship between new structures and uses and the existing neighborhood fabric. Such sites should not be developed as self-contained communities, isolated or gated from their surroundings, and they should enhance community resilience, equitable development, and promote inclusion. 306.12*

**Policy LU-1.4.9: Public Facilities** *Encourage the siting (or retention and modernization) of public facilities, such as schools, libraries, and government offices, near transit stations and along transit corridors. Such facilities should be a focus for community activities and enhance neighborhood identity. 307.17*

#### **Chapter 11 - Community Services and Facilities Element**

**Policy CSF-1.1.2: Adequate Facilities** *Construct, rehabilitate, and maintain the facilities necessary for the efficient delivery of public services to current and future District residents. 1103.13*

**Policy CSF-1.1.8: Public Facilities, Equity, and Economic Development** *Locate new public facilities to best serve all District residents and to support economic development and neighborhood revitalization efforts, with a focus on underserved areas and areas of growth. 1103.19*

**Policy CSF-3.1.1: State-of-the-Art Public Library System** *Ensure that the District has a state-of-the-art Central Library and branch libraries that meet the information and lifelong learning needs of District residents. 1111.5*



**Policy CSF-3.1.2: Libraries as Civic Infrastructure** Recognize libraries as valuable public infrastructure that support residents of all ages through intellectual development, workforce development, and cultural activation, programming, and exchange. 1111.6

**Policy CSF-3.1.4: Tailoring Libraries to the Neighborhoods They Serve** Encourage library functions, services, and spaces to be tailored in accordance with each neighborhood's needs. 1111.8

**Action CSF-3.1.B: Branch Libraries** Complete the remaining modernization of Washington, DC's branch libraries. Each neighborhood library should provide a safe and inviting space with services and programs tailored to meet the needs of local residents. Each branch library should be designed to be flexible to provide a variety of offerings and have a clearly visible entrance and an open, inviting, and attractive facade. 1111.12

**Action CSF-3.1.F: Facilities Master Plan** Develop a Facilities Master Plan to inform future decisions on the libraries' physical campuses and so that libraries are planned and designed to maximize their value to the community. 1111.16

**Policy CSF-3.2.1: Location of Branch Libraries** Locate branch libraries in a systematic way to maximize access for the greatest number of Washington, DC residents, including future residents who will reside in planned new neighborhoods. This approach may result in the development of new libraries in growing population centers within the District. Coordinate the location of future branch libraries with Districtwide cross-systems public facilities planning. 1112.2

**Policy CSF-3.2.3: Libraries and Neighborhood Identity** Neighborhood libraries should be vital centers of community learning and interaction. Library meeting space, conference space, and study space should support the role of the library as a neighborhood anchor. The services and programs offered at each library should enhance community identity and civic pride and create a safe place for all residents and families. 1112.4.

**Policy CSF-3.2.4: Libraries as Neighborhood Anchors** Encourage library modernization and new construction to support corridor reinvestment efforts, create spaces for arts and culture, bring together multigenerational communities, provide job training and literacy programs, promote high-quality civic design, and create partnerships that connect library improvements to new housing and mixed-use projects. 1112.5

## **Far Southeast/Southwest Area Element**

### **FSS-2.2 St. Elizabeths Campus 181**

**Policy FSS-2.2.1: St. Elizabeths East Campus** Redevelop the East Campus of St. Elizabeths Hospital as a new community containing a mix of uses, including mixed-density housing, retail shops, offices, a comprehensive behavioral health care facility, a new hospital, entertainment uses, urban farms (including on rooftops), and parks and open space. Mixed-use development, including retail and service uses, should be promoted along Martin Luther King, Jr. Avenue SE, facing the street and open to the public. Other uses such as satellite college campuses, civic uses, and local public facilities should be incorporated. 1812.9

**Policy FSS-2.2.2: Relationship to Nearby Uses** Ensure that future development on St. Elizabeths enhance the surrounding neighborhood. It is particularly important that the site's reuse is coordinated with planning for the nearby Anacostia and Congress Heights Metro stations, Poplar



*Point, Barry Farm, and the Martin Luther King, Jr. Avenue SE/Malcolm X shopping district. 1812.10*

***Policy FSS-2.2.3: Development Density*** *Provide development densities and intensities on the site that are compatible with adjacent residential neighborhoods and promote new economic development of the site, with moderate to medium-density residential and commercial on most of the site, and higher densities clustered in the area closest to Martin Luther King, Jr. Avenue SE and the Congress Heights Metro station. Areas for high density should include the North Campus subarea and the area surrounding the ravine, taking advantage of the steep topography to accommodate additional height and density without negatively impacting viewsheds. 1812.11*

***Policy FSS-2.4.1: Congress Heights Metro Station Mixed Use*** *Encourage reuse of the Congress Heights Metro station site and its vicinity with mixed-use, medium-density residential and commercial development using PUDs that promote new economic development. Development on the site should be cognizant of the adjacent lower-density neighborhood to the west and south, and provide a connection to the future development on the St. Elizabeths Campus. 1814.6*

***Action FSS-2.4.A: Congress Heights Gateway*** *Create a stronger sense of identity and a gateway for the Congress Heights neighborhood. Strongly encourage WMATA to make its land available for joint development around the Congress Heights Metro station. 1814.7*