

**MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** District of Columbia Zoning Commission

**FROM:** Karen Thomas, Project Manager  
*JLS*  
 Jennifer Steingasser, Deputy Director, Development Review and Historic Preservation

**DATE:** April 18, 2022

**SUBJECT:** OP Setdown Report -Zoning Commission Case No. 22-06 Consolidated Planned Unit Development and Related Map Amendment from MU-12 to MU-9A at 899 Maine Avenue /Square 0390 Lot 0053

**I. RECOMMENDATION**

The Office of Planning (OP) recommends the Commission **set down** the application by 801 Maine Avenue SW PJV, LLC for a Consolidated Planned Unit Development (PUD) with a PUD- related map amendment from MU-12 to MU-9A, to construct a mixed-use project at 899 Maine Avenue SW.

**On balance, the project is generally not inconsistent with the Comprehensive Plan Elements and Map and the Southwest Small Area Plan.**

**II. SUMMARY OF OP COMMENTS**

The following table summarizes OP comments regarding this proposal, including areas where resolution or additional information is required. OP will continue to work with the applicant to adequately address these and other issues raised by the Commission at setdown, prior to a public hearing.

OP Comment	Planning and / or Zoning Rationale
Resolution of items of requested flexibility noted in this report, including exterior details and materials, streetscape design	Flexibility could result in significant changes to approved design particularly in this neighborhood with SAP design concepts and principles.

### III. AREA DESCRIPTION

**Ward, ANC**

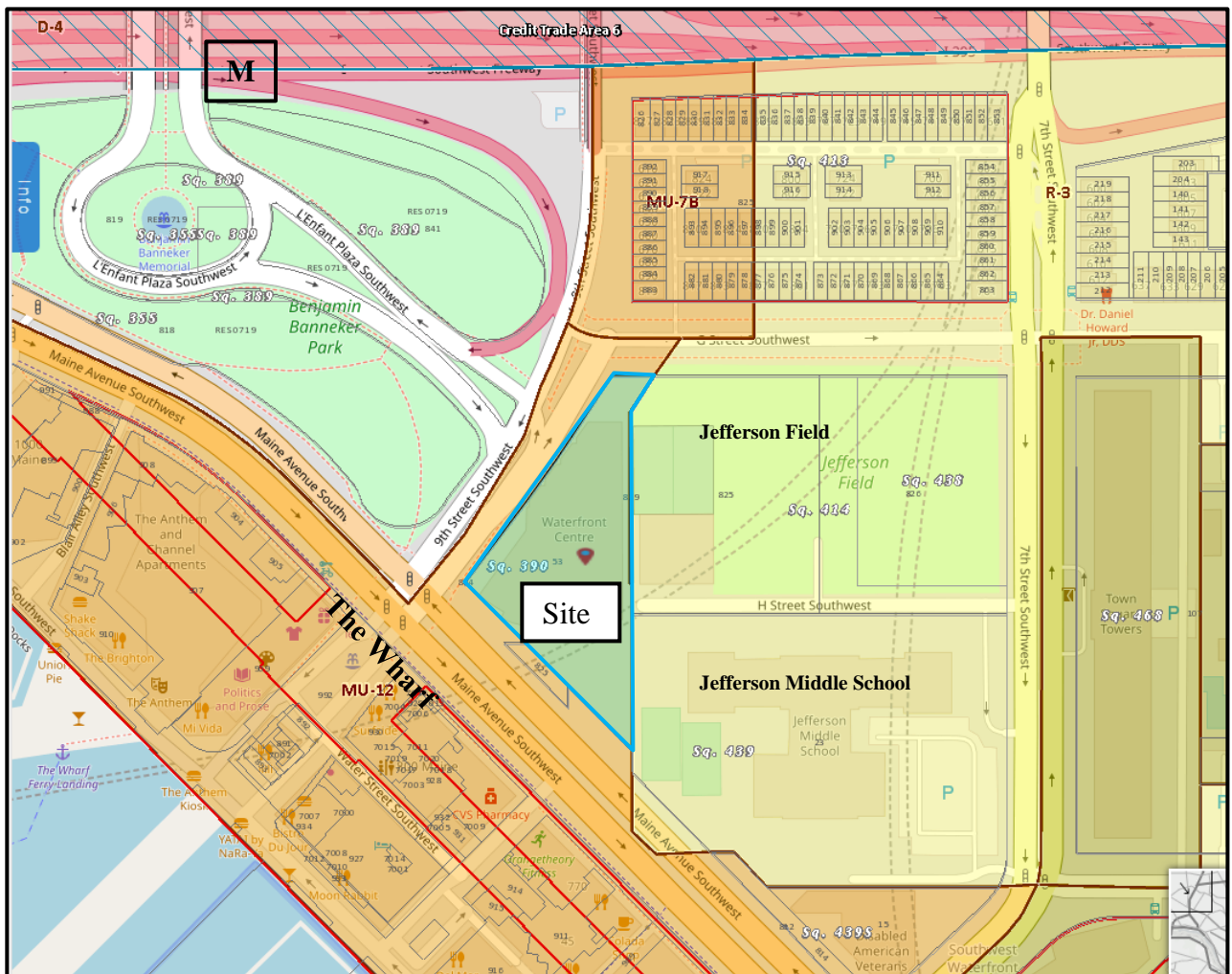
Ward 6; ANC 6D01

**Comprehensive Plan Area**

**Lower Anacostia Waterfront/Near Southwest**

**General Context**

The subject property is located in the Waterfront neighborhood and is surrounded by both residential and non-residential uses. Townhouses line G Street to the north and to the south across Maine Avenue is the recently developed higher density Wharf project. Jefferson Middle School abuts the property to the east. It is within walking distance of two Metro stations (L'Enfant and Waterfront Stations) and metrobus routes and also within walking distance of the District's monumental core to the north of 9<sup>th</sup> Street. Across 9<sup>th</sup> Street is the Benjamin Banneker Park which provides walking access to the Metro and to the Smithsonian Museums north.



**Location and Zoning Map**

**IV. SITE DESCRIPTION**

**Address:** 899 Maine Avenue SW  
**Legal Description:** Square 390, Lot 053  
**Property Size** 57,363 square feet  
**Current Zoning** MU-12  
**Site Characteristics** The property gently slopes from its higher grade at G Street to its lowest point long Maine Avenue. There are two curb cuts to the north of the site at 9<sup>th</sup> Street and at G Street.

**Existing Use of Property**

The property is developed with a four-story office building, which is currently occupied with temporary uses, as stated by the applicant. The underground garage is also now in use for public parking.

**V. PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

**Applicant** 801 Maine Avenue SW, PV, LLC  
**Proposed Zoning** Rezone from MU-12 to MU-9A  
**Proposed Use of Property** Mixed-Use – Residential above commercial/retail uses

The site’s redevelopment would replace an aged office building with a structure envisioned as an anchor for the north side of Maine Avenue’s tree-lined north promenade. The elements of the proposed building’s design including its contemporary brick, terracotta and metal panel elements would continue the character of the developing waterfront. It also creates a focus of prominent at-grade features, including art installations within courtyards and enhanced pedestrian features to accentuate the building’s residential character. The ground floor would be primarily devoted to retail uses. The building would follow the lot’s almost triangular shape as it tapers north towards G Street and neighboring rowhomes. The height would be lowered as it steps down towards the moderately scaled rowhomes, separated from the rowhomes by the rear yard setback (81 feet) and framed against a tree-lined G Street fronting the townhomes.

	<b>Proposal</b>
<b>Building Height (ft.)</b>	130 ft. max (front) steps to 90 ft. rear
<b>GFA (sq. ft.)</b>	Residential 431,818 sq.ft.
	Retail 22,600 sq.ft.
	IZ 15% Res. GFA.
	Total 454,442 sq.ft.
<b>Residential Units</b>	498 (+/- 10%)

The bulk of the massing proposed at a maximum density of **7.92 FAR** would be experienced along the Maine Avenue frontage, consistent in height (130 feet) with the Wharf development. The placement of height and massing on the lot is deliberate as it considers the surrounding context, including that of the lower scaled townhomes, the Jefferson Middle School and the Wharf development immediately opposite. ([See Exhibit 4A - Concept Massing Sheets 15-16](#)).

The sustainable elements of the project will include extensive bio-retention at grade through landscaping and green roofs. Extensive in-house amenities for residents would be available including penthouse habitable space for recreation, a communal pool and other indoor spaces. Parking and loading will be accessed from G Street through a 20-foot wide private alley system along the length of the east side of the building abutting Jefferson field. Parking spaces would be provided at the first level (12 spaces). Additional parking (222 spaces) for residential and other uses would in two levels below grade. Short- and long-term bike parking spaces would be placed at the first level along with drop-off/ pick-up parking spaces. The loading area with two, 30-foot bays and a 20-foot service bay would be provided for on-site loading.

The streetscape is envisioned to complement the nature of the heritage trees which are a prominent neighborhood feature, including art installations that would be visible both day and night to highlight the trees and art in combination.

## VI. PLANNING CONTEXT

The Comprehensive Plan is the centerpiece of plans which guide public policy in the District, including Citywide, Ward-level and Small Area Plan policies. The Framework Element describes the Comprehensive Plan, Generalized Policy Map, and the Future Land Use Map, and describes how the Comprehensive Plan guides development decisions, including the recently introduced equity considerations that must now guide development, as adopted by Council (2021) in the Comprehensive Plan's Framework Element (Chapter 2 Section 213).

*The Generalized Policy Map "tells the story" of how the District is expected to change during the first quarter of the century. It highlights the places where much of the city's future growth and change is expected to occur and sets the stage for the Elements that follow. The Future Land Use Map shows the general character and distribution of recommended and planned uses across the city. Both maps carry the same legal weight as the text of the Comprehensive Plan. 200.5*

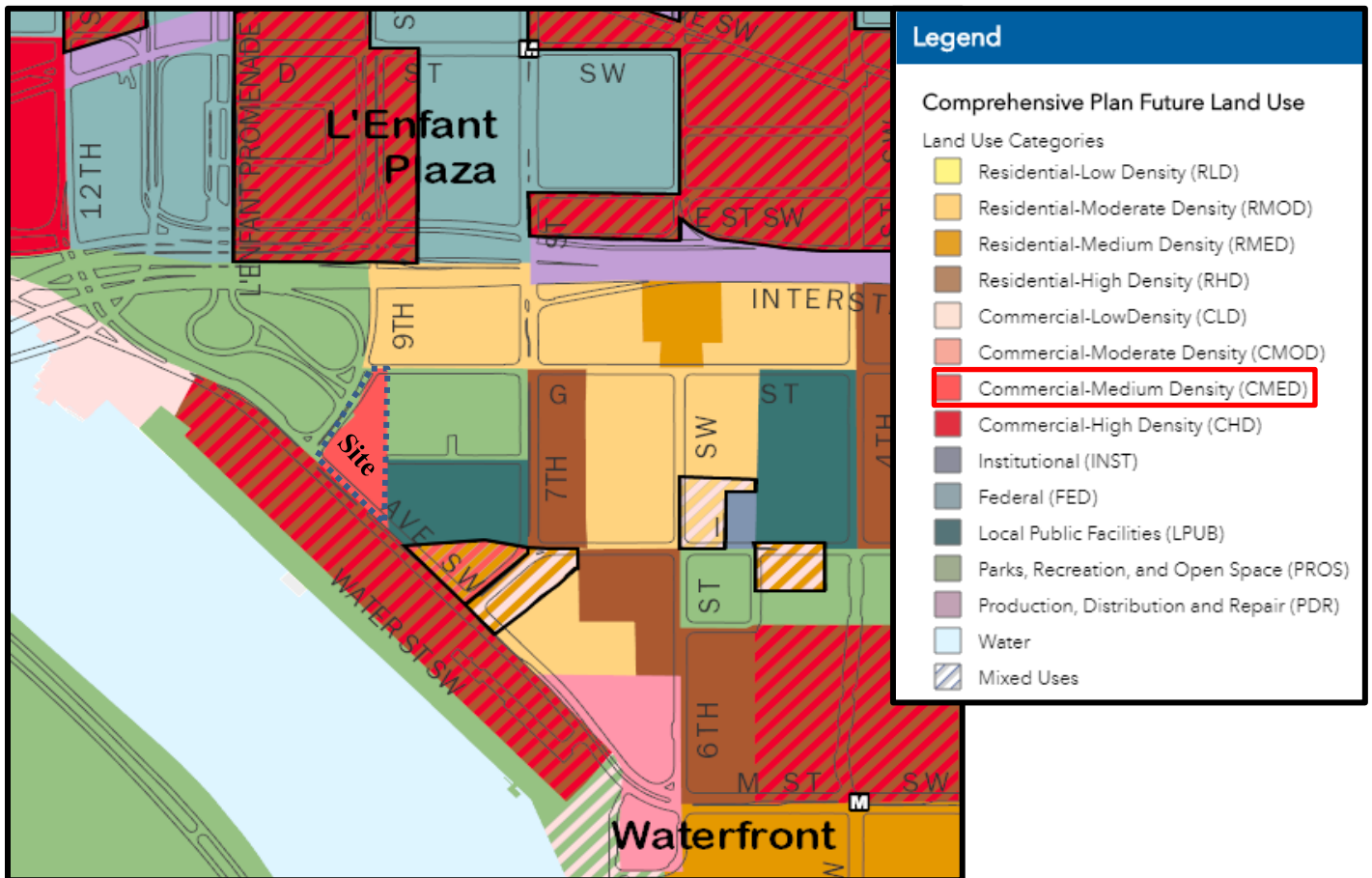
### A. COMPREHENSIVE PLAN MAPS

As described in the Guidelines for Using the Generalized Policy Map and the Future Land Use Map (Chapter 2 Framework Element, Section 226), the maps are intended to provide generalized guidelines for development decisions, are to be interpreted broadly and are not parcel-specific like zoning maps;, 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.

As described below, the proposed PUD and map amendment on balance, **would be not inconsistent** with the map designations.

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

The Future Land Use Map (FLUM) indicates that the site is appropriate for Medium Density Commercial land uses.



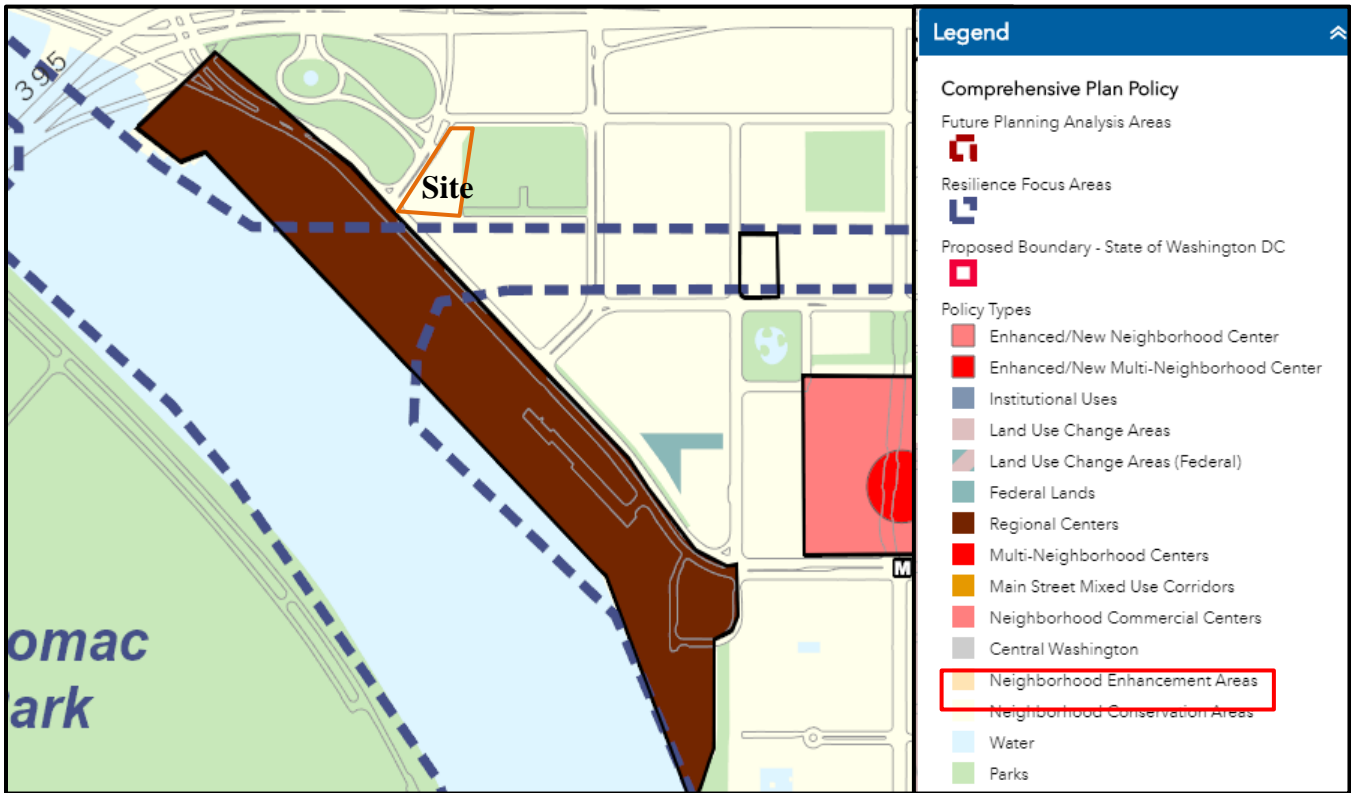
*This designation is used to define shopping and service areas that are somewhat greater in scale and intensity than the Moderate Density Commercial areas. Retail, office, and service businesses are the predominant uses, although residential uses are common. Areas with this designation generally draw 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 designation permits medium density commercial uses with up to 6.0 FAR. However, residential uses are also permitted. The proposed PUD MU-9A zone would provide the density for both commercial and residential use including affordable/IZ units within this section of the Waterfront.



### Generalized Policy Map

The Generalized Policy Map indicates that the property is within a Neighborhood Conservation Area.



*The guiding philosophy in Neighborhood Conservation Areas is to conserve and enhance established neighborhoods, but not preclude development, particularly to address city-wide housing needs. Limited development and redevelopment opportunities do exist within these areas. The diversity of land uses and building types in these areas should be maintained and new development, redevelopment, and alterations should be compatible with the existing scale, natural features, and character of each area. Densities in Neighborhood Conservation Areas are guided by the Future Land Use Map and Comprehensive Plan policies. Approaches to managing context-sensitive growth in Neighborhood Conservation Areas may vary based on neighborhood socio-economic and development characteristics. In areas with access to opportunities, services, and amenities, more levels of housing affordability should be accommodated. Areas facing housing insecurity (see Section 206.4) and displacement should emphasize preserving affordable housing and enhancing neighborhood services, amenities, and access to opportunities. 225.5*

The Comprehensive Plan also states that:

*The Lower Anacostia Waterfront/Near Southwest Planning Area includes a diverse mix of neighborhoods and architecture. New high-rise multi-family buildings dominate the Capitol Riverfront and the Wharf. The Southwest neighborhood is known for its mix of low- and high-density modernist buildings, and other areas*

*closer to Capitol Hill maintain the historic row house blocks amid new construction. Throughout the area is a mix of high rise and affordable housing. 1900.3*

*While densities in new waterfront communities are likely to be higher than those in adjacent communities, they should not be visually overwhelming. This is particularly true where new development sites abut fine-grained row house neighborhoods that have existed for more than a century. Planning for large-scale development should be responsive to local concerns about traffic, crowd-control, displacement, community service impacts, and changing neighborhood character. 1906.3*

The Neighborhood Conservation Area does not preclude development, but density is guided by the FLUM and policies of the written policies of the Area Element, and Small Area Plan. The proposed Map Amendment would allow for new residential development on a site where none currently exists under a density that would not be inconsistent with that of the GPM. The map amendment will allow redevelopment with a mixed-use building that would be consistent with the heights and densities of the FLUM and existing density along Maine Avenue. The additional density would support a range of uses, including multi-family residential for a diversity of residents within a high-opportunity area. Street-level retail would also support a range of transit options, including Metrorail, Circulator and Metrobus and would allow for continued pedestrian improvements along north Maine Avenue. OP believes that on balance, the proposal would be not inconsistent with the GPM.

## **B. COMPREHENSIVE PLAN WRITTEN ELEMENTS**

### **Written Elements** (See [Attachment I](#))

The proposed development is not inconsistent with the following policies of the Citywide Elements of the Comprehensive Plan and the Framework Element:

### **Framework Element**

The Framework Element's *intent is to provide the foundation for the rest of the Comprehensive Plan. 200.6.* The proposed PUD would further the following guidance found within this element under "Managing Growth and Change: Guiding Principles":

*(4) Diversity also means maintaining and enhancing the District's mix of housing types. Housing should be developed for households of different sizes, including growing families as well as singles and couples, and for all income levels.*

*(5) The District needs both residential and non-residential growth to survive. Nonresidential growth benefits residents by creating jobs and opportunities for less affluent households to increase their income.*

*(7) Redevelopment and infill opportunities along corridors and near transit stations will be an important component of reinvigorating and enhancing our neighborhoods. Development on such sites must be designed to respect the integrity of stable neighborhoods and the broader community context, and encourage housing and amenities for low-income households, who rely more on transit. Adequate infrastructure capacity should be ensured as growth occurs.*

*(13) The recent population boom has triggered a crisis of affordability in the city, creating a hardship for many District residents and changing the character of neighborhoods. The preservation of existing affordable housing and the production of new affordable housing, especially for low-income and workforce households, are essential to avoid a deepening of racial and economic divides in the city, and must occur city-wide to achieve fair housing objectives. Affordable renter- and owner-occupied housing production and preservation is central to the idea of growing more inclusively, as is the utilization of tools such as public housing, community land trusts, and limited equity cooperatives that help keep the costs of land affordable, particularly in areas with low homeownership rates and those at risk of cost increases due to housing speculation.*

The Framework Element also states:

*The second way is through a Planned Unit Development (PUD), often for sites that have more than one parcel or building. The goal of a PUD is to permit development flexibility greater than specified by matter-of-right zoning, such as increased building height or density, provided that the project offers a commendable number or quality of public benefits, and protects and advances the public health, safety, welfare, and convenience. These public benefits should be lasting and are developed through discussions between developers, District representatives, Advisory Neighborhood Commissions, civic organizations, and the community. As part of the PUD process, the Zoning Commission may include a zoning map amendment for the purpose of the PUD, which is applicable only for the duration of the PUD, and subject to PUD conditions. The PUD process is not to be used to circumvent the intent and purposes of the Zoning Regulations or result in an action inconsistent with the Comprehensive Plan. In considering whether a PUD is “not inconsistent” with the Comprehensive Plan, it is appropriate to consider the context of the entire site, such as aggregating density on one portion so as to increase open space on another portion — achieving an overall density that is consistent with the Plan.*

*In its decision-making, the Zoning Commission must make a finding of “not inconsistent with the Comprehensive Plan.” To do so, the Zoning Commission must consider the many competing, and sometimes conflicting, policies of the Comprehensive Plan, along with the various uses, development standards and requirements of the zone districts. It is the responsibility of the Zoning Commission to consider and balance those policies relevant and material to the individual case before it in its decision-making, and clearly explain its decision-making rationale.*

*Specific public benefits are determined through each PUD application and should respond to critical issues facing the District as identified in the Comprehensive Plan and through the PUD process itself. In light of the acute need to preserve and build affordable housing, described in Section 206, and to prevent displacement of on-site residents, the following should be considered as high-priority public benefits in the evaluation of residential PUDs:*

- *The production of new affordable housing units above and beyond legal existing requirements... (demonstrated by the applicant’s statement under Exhibit 12);*

### **Chapter 3 Land Use**

The Land Use Chapter provides the general policy guidance on land use issues across the District. It addresses the following:

- Providing adequate housing, particularly affordable housing;
- Conserving, creating, and maintaining inclusive neighborhoods, while allowing new growth that fosters equity, including racial equity, and accessibility;



- Enhancing neighborhood commercial districts and centers;
- Balancing competing demands for finite land resources;
- Directing growth and new development to achieve economic vitality and creating jobs while minimizing adverse impacts on residential areas and open spaces;
- Promoting transit-accessible, sustainable development. <sup>10</sup> DCMR §300.2

The proposed map amendment would allow for the redevelopment of an underused infill site with new, mixed-use development, including multi-family housing, in a manner that reflects the character and scale of the surrounding development. It provides a transition zone between the lower-density townhomes to the north and the MU-12 zoned properties to the south, while furthering a number of specific Land Use Element policies. The height and density afforded under the MU-9 zone would enable the production of new housing and affordable housing in proximity to two Metrorail stations and access to many bus routes, through Metrobus and the Circulator bus. This would also provide the residential support to the Regional Center that has been prescribed by the FLUM for the Wharf destination across Maine Avenue. The project would expand access to affordable housing near to employment, education and services for low-income households as desired for growth through an equity lens (§§§§§ 300.2, 304.4, 307.12, 307.21, 313.12)

#### **Chapter 4 Transportation**

The Transportation Element provides policies and actions to maintain and improve the District's transportation system and enhance the travel choices of current and future residents, visitors and workers. *The overarching goal for transportation in the District is to ... Create a safe, sustainable, equitable, efficient, and multimodal transportation system that meets the access and mobility needs of District residents, the regional workforce, and visitors; supports local and regional economic prosperity; and enhances the quality of life for District residents.*401.1

The redeveloped property would be within walking distance of two Metrorail stations and multiple Metrobus routes. Moreover, the streetscape surrounding the property would likely be enhanced in accordance with current DDOT design standards, ensuring safe pedestrian connections and furthering a number of specified Transportation Element Policies, including for curb cuts, parking access, truck movement, bicycle parking and electric vehicle charging stations as highlighted under the following sections (§§§403.11, 417.18, 430.4)

#### **Chapter 5 Housing**

*The overarching goal for housing is to provide a safe, decent, healthy, and affordable housing supply for current and future residents in all of Washington, DC's neighborhoods by maintaining and developing housing for all incomes and household types. The overall goal for the District of Columbia is that a minimum of one third of all housing produced should be affordable to lower-income households. The short-term goal is to produce 36,000 residential units, 12,000 of which are affordable, between 2019 and 2025.* 501.1

The application proposes redevelopment of the underutilized site with 498 units, including new market-rate and affordable housing options (providing up to 15% under IZ) in a high-opportunity location, proximate to transit options and commercial corridors, thereby supporting the District's equitable housing goals, as well as furthering a number of specified Housing Element policies. (§§§§§ 503.3 503.6, 503.10, 504.15, 504.17, 504.19, 508.9)

### **Chapter 6 Environmental Protection**

*The Environmental Protection Element addresses the protection, restoration, and management of the District's land, air, water, energy, and biologic resources.*

The new building would replace an outdated structure that would not conform to the new code and contemporary environmental requirements. The new design would incorporate new energy-efficient building systems and technologies in furtherance of the District's energy efficiency goals and would comply with the Green Building Act, and further a number of specified Environmental Protection Element policies. The applicant proposes LEED Platinum certification. (§§§§ 605.6, 605.7, 612.4, 615.3.615.4, 622.8) (See Environmental Policies)

### **Chapter 9 Urban Design**

The Urban Design Element addresses the District's physical design and visual qualities.

*The overarching goal for urban design in the District is to enhance the beauty, equity, and livability of Washington, DC by reinforcing its historic design legacy and the identity of its neighborhoods and centers, harmoniously integrating new construction with existing buildings and the natural environment, and improving the vitality, appearance, and function of streets and public spaces.*  
901.1

Proposed design and landscaping features would anchor the entrance to the Southwest neighborhood from the west on Maine Avenue and would complement the newer contemporary designs across the Avenue. It would be well-separated from the lower-scaled urban townhomes along G Street and would signal entry to the neighborhood on approach from the west on Maine Avenue and from the north on 9<sup>th</sup> towards Maine Avenue. The PUD redevelopment under the MU-9A zone would improve this underused infill site with new, mixed-use development, including multi-family affordable housing, in character and scale of the surrounding development, while providing a transition between the moderate and lower-density MU-7 and R-3 zone to the north. It would further a number of specific Land Use Element policies such as enabling the production of new housing and affordable housing in close proximity to a variety of transit options along the corridors of 7<sup>th</sup> Street and Maine Avenue. In addition, the Waterfront neighborhood's new trails and bike paths to other neighborhoods would provide connectivity for residents who may not have access to private vehicles and provide a healthy transportation alternative in the neighborhood.

This would be consistent with the intent of the Urban Design Elements of §§§§ 906.3, 906.9, 909.5, and 909.6.

## **Chapter 14 Arts and Culture**

*The Arts and Culture Element provides policies and actions dedicated to the preservation and promotion of the arts in the District.*

The proposed commemorative works and art installations would be intended to encourage development of an Arts Walk as envisioned under the SAP. It would include on-site artistic amenities in support of the arts typical of the Southwest neighborhood. Residents of the new mixed-use building would also create additional support for existing nearby arts and cultural venues in the Southwest neighborhood as envisioned under §§§§ 1404.10 1404.11, 1403.14, and 1406.5 (See A&C Policies)

## **Analysis Through a Racial Equity Lens**

The Implementation Element calls for “*the Zoning Commission to evaluate all actions through a racial equity lens as part of its Comprehensive Plan consistency analysis. 2501.8*” The direction 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, rather than a separate determination about a zoning action’s equitable impact. Equity is conveyed throughout the Comprehensive Plan, particularly in the context of zoning, where certain priorities stand out. These include affordable housing, displacement, and access to opportunity. Environmental and sustainability considerations are also equally important to equity review.

The Comprehensive Plan recognizes that without increased housing, the imbalance between supply and demand drives up housing prices in a way that creates challenges for many residents, particularly low-income residents. The Comprehensive Plan further recognizes the importance of inclusionary zoning requirements in providing affordable housing opportunities for households of varying income levels.

It is notable that this project would not displace residents. The site is developed with an underutilized former office building and would be redeveloped to provide not only affordable housing units, but also economic and environmental equity for lower-income residents that would not in the past have had access to high land-value development, which usually associates with environmental and health benefits, and overall access to goods and services ([See 2019 Housing Equity report, Page 13](#)). The project intends to dedicate up to 6,000 square feet to a grocery use and additional space for banking at the community’s request.

The Comprehensive Plan’s Lower Anacostia/Near Southwest Element provides demographic data about this Planning Area:

*Since 2000, over four million square feet of office space has been constructed in the Capitol Riverfront/Navy Yard area, and more than 6,000 new residential units have been built, with over 800 set aside as affordable units. Over 6,000 residents now live in the Capitol Riverfront/Navy Yard area, with that number expected to grow to 16,000 by 2020, making this the fastest-growing neighborhood in the District.1900.8*

*Based on land availability, planning policies, and regional growth and development trends, the Lower Anacostia Waterfront/Near Southwest Planning Area will experience significant growth in population, households, and jobs over the coming decades. The population, which was 18,125 in 2017, is expected to grow to 40,200 in 2025,*

48,997 in 2035, and 58,789 in 2045. The number of households is expected to increase from 10,083 to 33,915 in 2045. 1903.4

*About 25 percent of the area's housing stock consists of row houses and townhomes, which is similar to the District-wide level of 26 percent. However, the proportion of single-family detached homes in the Lower Anacostia Waterfront/Near Southwest Planning Area is less than two percent, which is substantially less than the District-wide total of 11.9 percent. 1904.1*

*2019 Housing Equity Report: Where people live and can afford to live matters too. Neighborhoods differ by the diversity and quality of the amenities they provide, ranging from safe streets, to vibrant retail, to green space. When neighborhoods have higher economic opportunities, less economic and racial segregation, and improved built environments, they foster improved physical and mental health for both adults and children.<sup>23, 24, 25</sup> (Page 13)*

Additionally, according to the 2019 Housing Equity Report and the State Data Center, the LAW/NS Planning Area has 6% of the District's affordable housing units, and ANC 6D, where this project would be located, has 6% of the affordable housing. The Planning Area's goal is to create 7,960 new housing units and 850 new affordable housing units, and at the writing of the Equity report there were up to 910 affordable units in the pipeline. This project would significantly support that goal and help exceed the Planning Area's goals. This is commendable, since significant portions of development in the District is ongoing in the high-opportunity Waterfront and Navy Yard (waterfront) neighborhoods.

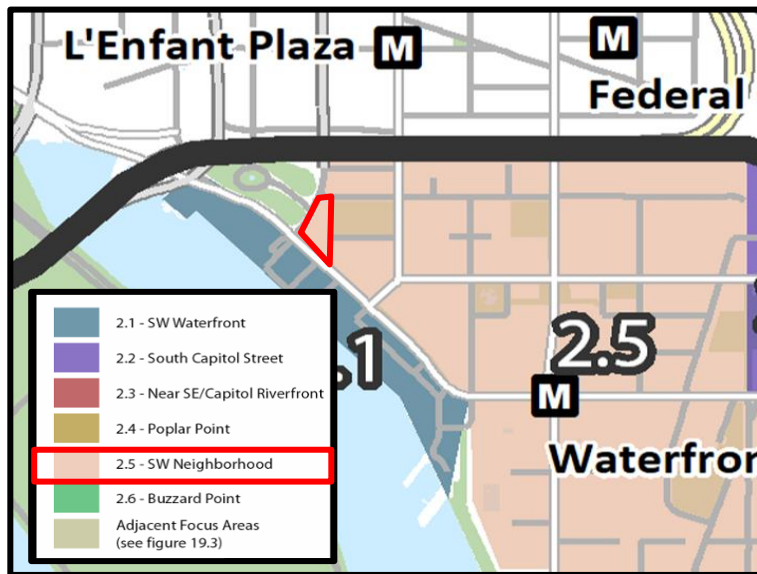
The proposed mixed-use development would provide market-rate and affordable housing under the District's Inclusionary Zoning program. The project would not displace any existing residents since the site was developed for office use. The PUD would provide approximately 498 units of new housing with 15 percent of the residential GFA (64,773 sf) to be set aside as affordable housing, for households earning no more than 50% MFI, which is more than would be required under a matter-of right MU-12 (21,500 sf), or up to three times more than required under the existing zone. It is noted that neither the neighborhood, nor OP was supportive of a stand-alone map amendment of the site as outlined by the Applicant in their supplemental filing under [Exhibit 12](#). (page 2, paragraph 4).

The mixed-use development would also provide ground floor commercial space for a grocery and banking uses desired by the neighborhood. This development's location could bring diverse job opportunities for future employees who may live within the neighborhood or the proposed development.

Environmental and sustainability considerations are also reflected in the location's accessibility as referenced prior, which would allow residents to have access to employment and other services. Further this development would take advantage of improved connectivity and pedestrian experience of the Wharf and other waterfront development for all residents.

As a LEED Platinum project, it would provide additional housing where lower income residents could benefit from the positive health impacts a LEED Platinum project would provide in addition to its proximity to a number of open spaces and parks – which is not always available to such income groups. When evaluated through a racial equity lens, on balance the project would not be inconsistent with the Comprehensive Plan.

**Area Element of the Comprehensive Plan:**



**Lower Anacostia Waterfront and Near Southwest Area Element**

The proposed development is located within the Lower Anacostia Waterfront and Near Southwest Area Element of the Comprehensive Plan, and specifically within the Southwest Neighborhood Policy Focus Area. The proposal would particularly further the following Area Element statements and policy objectives:

***Policy AW-1.1.1: Conservation of Established Waterfront Neighborhoods*** Revitalize and preserve established neighborhoods in the Waterfront Planning Area while promoting infill development to provide new housing opportunities, including accessory dwelling units, to meet a range of affordability levels and housing needs. Continued investment in the existing housing stock and in established local commercial areas should be strongly encouraged. 1907.2

***Policy AW-2.5.2: Southwest Neighborhood Plan*** Implement the policies and recommendations of the Southwest Neighborhood Plan. Use the Southwest Neighborhood Plan as a framework for guiding public investment and evaluating new development per plan recommendations and design guidelines. 1914.5

***Policy AW-2.5.11: Affordable and Family-Sized Housing in Southwest*** Promote a mix of affordable and market rate residential units that better serve community needs in Southwest. Prioritize the creation of a greater number of affordable units than the Inclusionary Zoning requirement or more family-sized units as part of a community benefits agreement for any PUDs and by targets on District-controlled sites that exceed overarching affordable housing requirements. 1914.14

**C. SMALL AREA PLAN - SOUTHWEST PLAN**

The Southwest Small Area Plan is framed around seven core concepts, with a vision and recommendations for each. The core concepts include:

- Model Community
- Green Oasis
- Thriving Town Center
- Modernist Gem
- Arts and Cultural Destination
- Optimized District Parcels

- Vibrant Connections

This project would identify with the design guidelines that were prescribed to enhance the character of the modernist architecture of the neighborhood. The neighborhood character is described within the Plan as having ...*a collection of Modernist Architecture and urban design, unlike any other District neighborhood. Nonetheless, ...Southwest still has the potential to evolve and dynamically change in certain areas, as it has done in recent years.* (Southwest Neighborhood Plan, Page 79). Therefore, a main goal is to “*Ensure that future development is compatible with the existing design of the community.*” The design guidelines (Pages 81-83) are provided as follows:

- Encourage a mix of building heights.
- Achieve design excellence for high quality and timeless development.
- Promote variation in building frontages along streets with continuous massing.
- Enhance green space through landscaped perimeters and internal green or amenity spaces.
- Incorporate sustainable building and site design.
- Ensure parking is not a detractor.
- Maximize transparency and viability of ground floor uses along key commercial corridors.
- Encourage connectivity for pedestrians, bicycles, and vehicular access, including transit where feasible.

An Action item would “*apply the Design Guidelines contained in the Plan (pages 81 -83) to all new development achieved through the Planned Unit Development process.*”

OP supports the proposed design attempts to adhere to these guidelines including;

- The varied height and massing on the site, as it focuses the massing away from the townhomes on G Street towards Maine Avenue where it is more consistent with the Wharf development.
- Use of materials consistent with the newer development patterns on the Wharf buildings.
- The proposal for landscaped and art-infused courtyards for residents and neighbors, which would enhance the pedestrian experience along the perimeter of the site.

With the proposed 498 units, new residents would add support to the emerging “Wharf Town Center” that seems to be evolving in this area along with the other vibrant pockets within the Southwest neighborhood.

## **D. SUMMARY OF PLANNING CONTEXT ANALYSIS**

### Potential Inconsistencies with the Comprehensive Plan

*In its decision-making, the Zoning Commission must make a finding of “not inconsistent with the Comprehensive Plan.” To do so, the Zoning Commission must consider the many competing, and sometimes conflicting, policies of the Comprehensive Plan, along with the various uses, development standards and requirements of the zone districts.... 224.8*

On balance, the proposal would provide affordable housing within a high land-value neighborhood along a redeveloped corridor of the District. This supports the principle of equity as envisioned in the Plan, whereby lower-income households would be able to benefit from living within a neighborhood with ample transit opportunities to employment and education within walking distance. Where there are inconsistencies, including the policy to retain and remodel existing development rather than demolition,



(Action LU-1.2.F § 305.3) in this instance this would not be a preferred alternative since the current structure does not provide the height and density that would be preferred for this location under the guidance of the FLUM and as supported in the Lower Anacostia Waterfront/Far Southwest Element and the Southwest Small Area Plan.

## VII. ZONING ANALYSIS

The site is currently zoned MU-12 the applicant is requesting a PUD-related zoning map amendment to the MU-9A zone, which is not inconsistent with the Comprehensive Plan. Below is a table comparing the existing (MoR) and proposed PUD zone to the proposal.

	<b>Existing Zone MU-12 M-o-R Subtitle G Chapter 5</b>	<b>Proposed Zone MU-9A PUD: Subtitle G Chapter 4</b>	<b>Proposal</b>	<b>Flexibility</b>
<b>Lot Area</b>	57,363 sq.ft.	57,363 sq.ft.	57,363 sq.ft.	Not requested
<b>Height (ft.) G § 503; 403</b>	60 ft.(PUD)	130 ft.	130 ft.	Not requested
<b>Penthouse</b>	1:1 1:1 setback		20 feet	Not requested
<b>FAR G § 502; 402</b>	2.5 3.0 (IZ) Non-residential: 1.0	6.5; 7.8 (IZ) FAR (IZ): 7.8 (447,431sf) FAR (20% PUD increase): 9.36 (536,917 sf)	7.92 FAR (454,442 sf) IZ = 64,773 sf Residential: 43,818 sq.ft. Retail: 22,624 sq.ft.	Not requested
<b>Lot Occupancy G § 504; 404</b>	80 % max.	80% w/IZ max.	82% ground (47,128 sf) 80% level 1 (45, 897 sf) 72% level 2 -10 (41,358 sf) 47% level 11 (26,680 sf) 17% penthouse (9,730 sf) %	Not requested
<b>Rear Yard G § 505.2;405.2</b>	12 ft. min.	2.5" per 1' vertical distance from grade to highest point of parapet wall, but not less than 12'.	27 feet ft. required 81 feet provided	Not requested
<b>Side Yard G§ 506; 406</b>	8 ft. min. if provided	None req'd. but if provided at least 2" wide for each 1' of height of bldg. but no less than 5'	Distance calculated: 18'-8" Side yard provided varies: 18-8" min	Not requested
<b>Parking C § 701.5</b>	<u>Residential:</u> 1/ 3 du. in excess of 4 units. <u>Retail:</u> 1.33 per 1,000 sq. ft. in excess of 3,000 sq. ft.	Res: 165 required Retail: 31 required Total: 197	Res: 214 provided Retail: 20 provided Total: 234 provided	Not requested
<b>Bicycle Parking C § 802</b>	Res LT: 1/3 du's Res ST: 1/20 du's Retail LT: 1/10000sf Retail ST: 1/3,500 sf	Long Term Short term Res: 108 25 Retail 3 7 Total: 111 32	Long Term Short term Residential: 108 25 Retail: 3 7 Total: 111 32	Not requested
<b>Loading C § 901</b>	1 loading & 1 Service for more than 50 units 1 loading for 5,000 to 20,000 sq ft GFA		Residential: 1@30 ft Retail: 1@30 ft	Not requested

	<b>Existing Zone MU-12 M-o-R Subtitle G Chapter 5</b>	<b>Proposed Zone MU-9A PUD: Subtitle G Chapter 4</b>	<b>Proposal</b>	<b>Flexibility</b>
<b>Green Area Ratio</b> G § 507;407	0.20 min.	0.20 min.	≥0.20	Not requested

### VIII. REQUESTED ZONING FLEXIBILITY

The applicant requests the following flexibility through this PUD:

1. PUD-related map amendment from MU-12 to MU-9A.

OP agreed with the proposed amendment to MU-9A as being more appropriate to the density anticipated under the FLUM and as being consistent with the development along Maine Avenue. The Applicant’s Supplemental Statement (Exhibit 12A) reflects OP’s discussions with the Applicant prior to the submission of this application.

2. The Applicant requests flexibility in the following areas to address potential issues during construction, including those that may arise according to opportunities or constraints such as market demand at the time of project buildout Exhibit 3, Page 9:

- # of Dwelling Units.
- Interior Components
- Garage Configuration
- Exterior Materials.
- Exterior Details.
- Signage
- Affordable Units
- Streetscape Design
- Sustainable Features

OP anticipates that some elements of the design may change during further plan development. However, fundamental elements of the project’s design including exterior materials and details, streetscape design, and sustainable features are elements that provided the basis for initial community agreements and which OP believes are complementary to the core concept of the Modernist style noted in the SAP.

OP anticipates these elements be developed to the greatest extent possible prior to a public hearing, with refinements prior to final approval, as modifications to these elements may be considered modifications of significance requiring another public hearing. OP will provide detailed analysis of requested flexibility prior to a public hearing.

### IX. PUD EVALUATION STANDARDS

The Zoning Regulations define a Planned Unit Development (PUD) as “A plan for the development of residential, institutional, and commercial developments, industrial parks, urban renewal projects, or a combination of these, on land of a minimum area in one (1) or more zones irrespective of restrictions imposed by the general provisions of the Zoning Regulations, as more specifically set forth in Subtitle X, Chapter 3.” (Subtitle B-28). The purpose and general standards for a Planned Unit Development are established in Subtitle X 300:

*300.1 The purpose of the planned unit development (PUD) process is to provide for higher quality development through flexibility in building controls, including building height and density, provided that the PUD:*

- (a) Results in a project superior to what would result from the matter-of-right standards;*
- (b) Offers a commendable number or quality of meaningful public benefits; and*
- (c) Protects and advances the public health, safety, welfare, and convenience, and is not inconsistent with the Comprehensive Plan.*

*300.2 While providing for greater flexibility in planning and design than may be possible under conventional zoning procedures, the PUD process shall not be used to circumvent the intent and purposes of the Zoning Regulations, or to result in action that is inconsistent with the Comprehensive Plan.*

### **Public Benefits and Amenities:**

Chapter X Section 305.2 states that *“Public benefits are superior features of a proposed PUD that benefit the surrounding neighborhood or the public in general to a significantly greater extent than would likely result from development of the site under the matter-of-right provisions of this title.”*

Subtitle X § 305.5 provides a summary of categories for PUD benefits and amenities. While the final benefits amenities proffer is typically refined and resolved later in the PUD process, at this point, the applicant has proffered the following (Exhibit 12) for the proposed PUD:

*(a) Superior urban design and architecture*

The project will be evaluated against the Southwest design guidelines. OP’s preliminary review determines on its face that the project is consistent with the Modernist guidelines anticipated by the Small Area Plan discussed prior and will be discussed further should the application be setdown for a public hearing. This is considered a public benefit.

*(b) Superior landscaping, or creation or preservation of open spaces; Streetscape Plans*

The plans (Exhibit 20, pages 59-61) include preliminary landscaping details depicting grade elevation changes, with integrated seating, layered landscaping and tiered planters within the courtyard/building entry area fronting 9<sup>th</sup> Street. It is anticipated that new street trees would be planted along 9<sup>th</sup> Street and G Street to add to the well-known tree canopy of Southwest particularly in the Waterfront neighborhood. See (g) *Other Public Benefits and Amenities.*

*(c) Site planning and efficient and economical land utilization*

The project’s design and massing, as well as the mixed-uses proposed maximizes the efficiency of the site compared to the former single-use federal office, which would not be considered consistent with the desired direction of the FLUM and the Comprehensive Plan’s written elements. The PUD would allow for new housing where none exists and ground floor retail that would include uses requested by the neighborhood, including potentially a bank and a grocery store.

(d) *Housing and Affordable housing*

INCLUSIONARY ZONING SUMMARY<sup>(1)</sup>

	PROPOSED
TOTAL GROSS FLOOR AREA (ALL USES FAR)	454,442SF
TOTAL RESIDENTIAL GROSS FLOOR AREA	431,818 SF
TOTAL GROSS SF DEVOTED TO IZ (15% RESIDENTIAL GROSS)	64, 773 SF

UNIT MIX

	PROPOSED
COUNT <sup>(2)</sup>	498
TYPE	MIX
STUDIO	10-20%
1BR	30-35%
1BR-JR	20-25%
1BR+D	5-10%
2BR	20-30%
3BR	8 UNITS

*(Tables Provided - by the Applicant - Exhibit 4A1 Sheet 11)*

The project would provide up to 498 units (+/- 10%) including a set-aside of 15% of residential GFA devoted to residents at 60% MFI. 60% MFI is considered low to moderate income. The number of units exceed the matter-of-right under the MU-12 zone or under a map amendment alone to MU-8 zone subject to IZ+ regulations. This would have produced approximately between 57,880 GFA (Type I construction) and 64,311 GFA (non-Type I construction). It is noted that the ANC preferred a PUD development to a map amendment.

(e) *Environmental and sustainable benefits*

The Applicant’s initial submission included a project designed to LEED Gold standards. However, the project has been upgraded to LEED Platinum according to the Supplemental Statement – Exhibit 12. OP considers this a public benefit for residents in a high opportunity area, particularly for future lower-income residents. The relevant components of the elements for this designation should be detailed if the application is setdown for a public hearing.

(f) *Other public benefits and project amenities*

**Commemorative Works/ Public Art installations:** This will include “*a series of simple abstract sculptures along Maine Avenue that are symbolic of a tree alley. The design of the sculptures is inspired by the heritage tree form that is well-known throughout Southwest... The art will be integrated with the landscape design, both on the development site and within adjacent public space, to feature seating and lighting elements as a vibrant gateway for day and night. The proposed sculptures will form an artistic node along what could become an Art Walk that is comprised of a series of existing and potential cultural / artistic destinations along I Street and Maine Avenue.* (Exhibit 12A pages 16, 17, 18, 19) (Exhibit 12, Page 4).

OP considers this a desirable public benefit commensurate with the vision under the Southwest Plan.

*(g) Uses of Special Value to the Neighborhood*

**Commercial space devoted to banking and grocery uses:**

The community/ANC is desirous of neighborhood serving retail and commercial uses within the project and have expressed a specific need for a bank branch intended to serve residents in the immediate area. In response, the Applicant agreed to expand the PUD benefits and amenities by committing to lease a portion of the retail/commercial area to a bank branch.

In addition, the ANC is considering a grocery use and if still desired, the Applicant would commit a minimum of 6,000 GFA of the ground floor for a grocery store use and consider including the loading and truck access required to support the use.

In general, OP finds that the benefits have been supplemented since the initial submissions and discussions with OP and are sufficient for submission prior to a public hearing on this case. The applicant is continuing to work closely with the ANC and the Jefferson Middle School PTA to develop additional proffers. OP will provide detailed analysis of the final benefits and amenities proffer prior to a public hearing.

**X. AGENCY REFERRALS**

If this application is set down for a public hearing, the Office of Planning will refer it to the following District agencies for review and comment:

- Department of Energy and the Environment (DOEE)
- Department of Housing & Community Development (DHCD)
- District Department of Transportation (DDOT)
- Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR)
- DC Public Schools (DCPS)
- Fire and Emergency Medical Services Department (FEMS)
- DC Water

**XI. ATTACHMENTS**

- I. Comprehensive Plan – Written Elements

## **Attachment I**

### **COMPREHENSIVE PLAN WRITEN ELEMENTS**

#### ***Policy LU-1.2.4: Urban Mixed-Use Neighborhoods***

*Encourage new mixed-use neighborhoods combining high-density residential, office, retail, cultural, and open space uses in the following areas: .... Near Southwest/Wharf/L'Enfant Plaza Metro Area.*

*The location of these areas is shown in the Central Washington, and Lower Anacostia Waterfront/Near Southwest Area Elements. Land use regulations and design standards for these areas should require that they are developed as attractive pedestrian-oriented neighborhoods, with high quality architecture and public spaces. Housing, especially affordable and deeply affordable housing, is particularly encouraged and must be a vital component of the future land use mix. As areas continue to redevelop, community engagement and actions shall be undertaken to retain existing residents, particularly communities of color and vulnerable populations, and enable them to share in the benefits of area redevelopment while addressing adverse short- and long-term impacts. 305.11*

***Action LU-1.2.F Reuse of Existing Buildings*** *Evaluate opportunities to encourage appropriate use repositioning of existing buildings (for example, from office to mixed housing and retail) to provide varied office and retail space, more housing and especially affordable housing, and a mix of uses that support District goals. 305.23*

#### ***LU-1.4 Transit-Oriented and Corridor Development 307***

*...Fully capitalizing on the investment made in Metrorail requires effective use of the land around transit stations and along transit corridors. While many of the District's 40 Metrorail stations epitomize the concept of a transit village, with pedestrian-oriented commercial and residential development of varying scales, a few do not. Some stations continue to be surrounded by large surface parking lots and auto-oriented commercial land uses. The same is true for those corridors where premium surface transit service has been implemented or proposed. Some commercial buses pass through fairly dense, walkable neighborhoods. Other station areas consist of long, undifferentiated commercial strips with vacant storefronts, little or no housing, and few amenities for pedestrians. 307.2*

***Policy LU-1.4.2: Development Around Metrorail Stations*** *In developments above and around Metrorail stations emphasize land uses and building forms that minimize the need for automobile use and maximize transit ridership while reflecting the design capacity of each station and respecting the character and needs of the surrounding areas. 307.10*

***Policy LU-1.4.3: Housing Around Metrorail Stations*** *Build housing adjacent to Metrorail stations that serves a mix of incomes and household types, including families, older adults, and persons with disabilities, and prioritize affordable and deeply affordable housing production. Leverage the lowered transportation costs offered by proximity to transit to increase affordability for moderate and low-income households. 307.11*

***Policy LU-1.4.6: Development Along Corridors*** *Encourage growth and development along major corridors, particularly priority transit and multimodal corridors. Plan and design development adjacent to Metrorail stations and corridors to respect the character, scale, and integrity of adjacent neighborhoods, using approaches such as building design, transitions, or buffers, while balancing against the District's broader need for housing. 307.14*

***Policy LU-1.4.4: Affordable Rental and For-Sale Multi-family Housing Near Metrorail Stations*** *Explore and implement as appropriate mechanisms, which could include community land trusts, public housing, and shared appreciation models, to encourage permanent affordable rental and for-sale multi-family housing, adjacent to*



*Metrorail stations, given the need for accessible affordable housing and the opportunity for car-free and car-light living in such locations. 307.12*

**Action LU-1.4.B: Zoning Around Transit** *With public input, develop and use zoning incentives to facilitate new and mixed-use development, and particularly the provision of new housing, and new affordable housing in high opportunity areas to address more equitable distribution. 307.20*

**Action LU-1.4.C: Metro Station and Inclusionary Zoning** *Encourage developments in and around Metro station areas to exceed the affordable units required by the Inclusionary Zoning Program, with appropriate bonus density and height allowances. Exceeding targets for affordable housing can refer to exceeding the quantity or depth of affordability otherwise required. 307.21*

*During the coming decades, the District will keep striving for equity across all neighborhoods in terms of access to housing affordable to a range of incomes and household types, job opportunities, economic mobility, energy innovation, and amenities. This does not mean that all neighborhoods should become the same or that a uniform formula should be applied to each community. Rather, it means that each neighborhood should have certain basic assets and amenities (see What Makes a Great Neighborhood). These assets and amenities should be protected and enhanced where they exist today and created or restored where they do not. 310.6*

**Policy LU-2.1.10: Multi-Family Neighborhoods** *Maintain the multi-family residential character of the District's medium- and high-density residential areas. Limit the encroachment of large-scale, incompatible commercial uses into these areas. Make these areas more attractive, pedestrian-friendly, and transit accessible, and explore opportunities for compatible commercial development which provides jobs for nearby residents. 310.17*

**Policy LU-2.1.13: Planned Unit Developments in Neighborhood Commercial Corridors** *Planned unit developments (PUDs) in neighborhood commercial areas shall provide high-quality developments with active ground floor designs that provide for neighborhood commercial uses, vibrant pedestrian spaces and public benefits, such as housing, affordable housing, and affordable commercial space. 310.20*

**Policy LU-2.3.3: Buffering Requirements** *Buffer new commercial development adjacent to residential areas to avoid adverse effects. Buffers may include setbacks, landscaping, fencing, screening, height step-downs, and other architectural and site-planning measures that avoid potential conflicts. 312.5*

**Policy LU-2.4.4: Heights and Densities in Regional Centers** *Provide heights and densities in established and proposed regional centers that provide daytime and residential populations to support successful retail and services, allow for additional housing, and offer employment opportunities. Use buffer areas, siting, massing, design, and other strategies to compatibly transition to adjoining residential neighborhoods. 313.12*

## **Chapter 4 Transportation**

**Policy T-1.1.5: Joint Development** *Maximize ridership potential, housing including affordable housing, and economic development opportunities by fostering transit-supportive commercial and residential joint development projects on WMATA-owned or -controlled land, public land, and private properties adjacent to Metrorail stations. 403.11*

**Policy T-3.3.7: Truck Routing and Parking** *Enhance truck route enforcement to encourage the use of appropriate routes, which will minimize travel on local roads. Delivery vehicles should park in suitable locations for loading and unloading and should not block travel lanes, transit stops, crosswalks, or bike lanes. 417.18*

**Policy T-5.2.2: Charging Infrastructure** *Encourage early deployment of EV charging stations at no charge in appropriate, publicly accessible locations across the District to serve existing neighborhoods. Consider the*

*integration of EV charging stations in new and existing residential and commercial developments. Consideration should also be given to locations where EV charging stations can be retrofitted into parking garages. As EVs become more popular, there will be increased demand for on-street charging stations, which will need to be balanced with other curbside needs and uses. 430.4*

**Action T-5.2.B: EV Supply Equipment** *Encourage the siting of EV supply equipment in curbside public space, multi-dwelling unit garages, commercial facilities and residential areas, where appropriate. 430.7*

## **Chapter 5 Housing**

**Policy H-1.1.1: Private Sector Support** *Encourage or require the private sector to provide both new market rate and affordable housing to meet the needs of present and future District residents at locations consistent with District land use policies and objectives. 503.3*

**Policy H-1.1.4: Mixed-Use Development** *Promote moderate to high-density, mixed-use development that includes affordable housing on commercially zoned land, particularly in neighborhood commercial centers, along Main Street mixed-use corridors and high-capacity surface transit corridors, and around Metrorail stations. 503.6*

**Policy H-1.1.8: Production of Housing in High-Cost Areas** *Encourage development of both market rate and affordable housing in high-cost areas of the District, making these areas more inclusive. Develop new, innovative tools and techniques that support affordable housing in these areas. Doing so increases costs per unit but provides greater benefits in terms of access to opportunity and outcomes. 503.10*

**Policy H-1.2.7: Density Bonuses for Affordable Housing** *Provide zoning incentives, such as through the PUD process, to developers proposing to build affordable housing substantially beyond any underlying requirement. Exceeding targets for affordable housing can refer to exceeding the quantity or depth of affordability otherwise required. The affordable housing proffered shall be considered a high priority public benefit for the purposes of granting density bonuses, especially when the proposal expands the inclusiveness of high-cost areas by adding affordable housing. When density bonuses are granted, flexibility in development standards should be considered to minimize impacts on contributing features and the design character of the neighborhood. 504.15*

**Policy H-1.2.9 Advancing Diversity and Equity of Planning Areas** *Proactively plan and facilitate affordable housing opportunities and make targeted investments that increase demographic diversity and equity across Washington, DC. Achieve a minimum of 15 percent affordable units within each Planning Area by 2050. Provide protected classes (see H-3.2 Housing Access) with a fair opportunity to live in a choice of homes and neighborhoods, including their current homes and neighborhoods. 504.17*

**Policy H-1.2.11 Inclusive Mixed-Income Neighborhoods** *Support mixed-income housing by encouraging affordable housing in high-cost areas and market rate housing in low-income areas. Identify and implement measures that build in long-term affordability, preferably permanent or for the life of the project, to minimize displacement and achieve a balance of housing opportunities across the District. 504.19*  
**Policy H-1.6.5: Net-Zero, Energy Efficient Housing** *Encourage new housing units in the District to be net-zero energy and water efficient. 508.9*

## **Chapter 6 Environmental Protection**

*The Environmental Protection Element addresses the protection, restoration, and management of the District's land, air, water, energy, and biologic resources.*

**Policy E-2.1.2: Tree Requirements in New Development** *Use planning, zoning, and building regulations to promote tree retention and planting, as well as the removal and replacement of dying trees when new development occurs. Tree planting and landscaping required as a condition of permit approval should include provisions for ongoing maintenance. 605.6*

**Policy E-2.1.3: Sustainable Landscaping Practices** Encourage the use of sustainable landscaping practices to beautify the District, enhance streets and public spaces, reduce stormwater runoff, and create a stronger sense of character and identity. District government, private developers, and community institutions should coordinate to significantly increase the use of these practices, including planting and maintaining mostly native trees and other plants on District-owned land outside the right-of-ways in schools, parks, and housing authority lands. 605.7

**Policy E-3.2.2 Net-Zero Buildings** Provide incentives for new buildings to meet net-zero energy design standards, as called for in Clean Energy DC and Sustainable DC 2.0. Establish a path to the phased adoption of net-zero codes between 2022 and 2026. The District's building energy codes should be updated again by 2026 to require that all new buildings achieve net-zero energy use or better. Prior to 2026, the District should provide incentives to projects that voluntarily seek to achieve net-zero energy use. 612.4

**Policy E-4.1.1: Maximizing Permeable Surfaces** Encourage the use of permeable materials for parking lots, driveways, walkways, and other paved surfaces as a way to absorb stormwater and reduce runoff. 615.3

**Policy E-4.1.2: Using Landscaping and Green Roofs to Reduce Runoff** Promote an increase in tree planting and vegetated spaces to reduce stormwater runoff and mitigate the urban heat island, including the expanded use of green roofs in new construction and adaptive reuse, and the application of tree and landscaping standards for parking lots and other large paved surfaces. 615.4

**Policy E-6.1.3: Control of Runoff** Continue to implement water pollution control and management practices aimed at reducing runoff and pollution, including the flow of sediment and nutrients into streams, rivers, and wetlands. 622.8

## **Chapter 9 Urban Design**

**Policy UD-1.4.1: Thoroughfares and Urban Form** Use Washington, DC's major thoroughfares to reinforce the form and identity of the District, connect its neighborhoods, and improve its aesthetic and visual character through context-sensitive landscaping, tree planting, and streetscape design. Special attention should be placed on how public space, building restriction areas, and adjacent buildings contribute to each thoroughfare's character. Focus improvement efforts on thoroughfares with limited amenities. 906.3

**Policy UD-1.4.2: District Gateways** Create more distinctive and memorable gateways at points of entry to the District and in neighborhoods, parks and open spaces, and neighborhood centers. Gateways should provide a sense of transition, orientation, and arrival through improvements in the form of landscaping, art work, commemoration, and roadway design. They should be designed to make a strong and positive visual impact. 906.9

**Policy UD-2.1.6: Minimize Mid-Block Vehicular Curb Cuts** Curb cuts should be avoided on streets with heavy pedestrian usage and minimized on all other streets. Where feasible, alleys should be used in lieu of curb cuts for parking and loading access to buildings. Curb cuts for individual residences should only be allowed if there is a predominant pattern of curb cuts and driveways on the block face. 908.8

**Policy UD-2.2.1: Neighborhood Character and Identity** Strengthen the visual qualities of Washington, DC's neighborhoods as infill development and building renovations occur by encouraging the use of high-quality and high-performance architectural designs and materials. In neighborhoods with diverse housing types, or when introducing more diverse infill housing types, use design measures to create visual and spatial compatibility. 909.5

**Policy UD-2.2.2: Areas of Strong Architectural Character** Preserve the architectural continuity and design integrity of historic districts and other areas of strong architectural character. New development, additions, and

*renovations within such areas do not need to replicate prevailing architectural styles exactly but should be complementary.* 909.6

**Policy UD-2.2.4: Transitions in Building Intensity Design** *transitions between large- and small-scale development. The relationship between taller, more visually prominent buildings and lower, smaller buildings (such as single-family or row houses) can be made more pleasing and gradual through a variety of context-specific design strategies, such as a slender massing of taller elements, stepping back the building at floors above its neighbors' predominant roof line, stepping a building's massing down to meet the roof line of its neighbors, or strategic placement of taller elements to mark corners, vista terminations, or large open-space frontages.* 909.9

**Policy UD-2.2.5: Infill Development** *New construction, infill development, redevelopment, and renovations to existing buildings should respond to and complement the defining visual and spatial qualities of the surrounding neighborhood, particularly regarding building roof lines, setbacks, and landscaping. Avoid overpowering contrasts of scale and height as infill development occurs.* 909.10

**Policy UD 3.2.1: Buildings that Enable Social Interaction** *Residential building design should provide opportunities and spaces for interaction, such as open-air porch entrances, balconies, front stoops, and shared yards. Large multi-family buildings should prioritize individual, ground-level entrances to units that open up to the street in addition to interior access to units through a shared private lobby.* 914.3

**Policy UD 3.2.2: Social and Community Meeting Spaces** *New planned unit developments (PUDs) and other large-scale developments should provide for a mix of social and third spaces—for example, schools, retail stores, cultural and community spaces, and recreational facilities.* 914.4

**Policy UD-4.2.1: Scale and Massing of Large Buildings** *Design the scale, height, volume, and massing of large buildings to avoid monotony and enhance the human scale. Varied roof heights, facade widths, and more expressive massing can provide variety and visual interest. Massing should be articulated with a special emphasis placed on corners, especially along important view corridors or intersections. Patterns of architectural elements, expressive structure, or other design tactics can provide variety and visual interest.* 918.3

**Policy UD-4.2.2: Engaging Ground Floors** *Promote a high standard of storefront design and architectural detail in mixed-use buildings to enhance the pedestrian experience of the street. Promote a high degree of visual interest through syncopated storefronts that vary every 20 to 30 feet, provide direct lines of sight to interior social spaces, provide socially oriented uses along the public street, and use tactile, durable materials at the ground level.* 918.4

**Policy UD-4.2.3: Continuity and Consistency of Building Frontages** *Maintain the established frontage lines of streets by aligning the front walls of new construction with the prevailing facades of adjacent buildings. Avoid placing new construction that extends beyond the existing facade line unless it significantly benefits the public life of the street. Where existing facades are characterized by an established pattern of windows and doors or other elements, new construction should complement the established rhythm.* 918.5

**Policy UD-4.2.4: Creating Engaging Facades** *Design new buildings to respond to the surrounding neighborhood fabric by modulating façade rhythms and using complementary materials, textures, and color, as well as well-designed lighting. Varying design tactics may be used to engage a building with its surroundings. In contexts with smaller lot sizes and multiple closely spaced building entrances, breaking up a building façade in the vertical direction is encouraged, along with strongly defined and differentiated bases, centers, and tops of buildings. In areas lacking a strong building-form pattern, the use of complementary or reinterpreted materials and colors could strengthen architectural identity see Figure 9.19 for recommended façade design strategies).* 918.6

**Policy UD-4.2.5: Interesting Roof Lines** *Design architecturally interesting roof lines to help articulate the massing of buildings and add visual appeal. Along commercial streets, tower elements at corners can help define intersections; in more residential neighborhoods, towers and penthouses can help scale and mass buildings to respond to surrounding building scale and mass.* 918.8

**Policy UD 4.2.6: Active Facades** Prioritize the placement of multiple entrances for new multi-family and mixed-use buildings across the length of a block rather than a single lobby entrance at one location. New residential developments should promote active facades with spaces for social activity, such as porches, stoops, or patios along public streets, to encourage more activity along the sidewalk and increase social interaction in a neighborhood. 918.9

**Policy UD-4.3.4: Rooftop Penthouses** Encourage new buildings to maximize the potential of penthouse regulations that allow for greater design flexibility and architectural expression of rooftops. Use penthouses to create shared recreation spaces for building users, using sculptural roof forms. Pay special attention to setback lines and tower projections in designing rooftop treatments. See Figure 9.23 for examples of dynamic rooftops. 919.10

## **Chapter 14 Arts and Culture**

**Arts and Culture Goal 1401** The overarching goal for arts and culture is to facilitate a cultural environment in Washington, DC that is inclusive, equitable, and accessible. This type of cultural environment will increase artistic opportunities for individual and collective cultural development by supporting cultural programs and learning experiences in the District that inspire a vibrant cultural life for all residents. This element supports physical cultural infrastructure that advances arts and culture through exchanges that elevate art and cultural works beyond passive objects to active exchanges. 1401.1

**Policy AC-1.1.10: Encourage Cultural Space in Planned Unit Developments** Developing long term, low-cost cultural space should be considered an important and desired benefit in discretionary development reviews. Where appropriate, it should be provided in addition to, not instead of, any affordable housing deemed appropriate for the project. 1403.14

**Policy AC-1.2.6: Support Arts and Cultural Clusters** Support existing and emerging clusters of arts and cultural establishments through aligned public and private sector investments. 1404.11

**Policy AC-2.1.1: Emphasizing Public Spaces with Art** Use public art to strengthen and reflect the District's diversity, including its identity as a local cultural and arts center. Public art should accent locations such as Metro stations, sidewalks, streets, parks, and building lobbies. It should be used in coordination with landscaping, lighting, paving, and signage to create gateways for neighborhoods and communities. 1406.5