

# DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA: PUBLIC SPACE STRATEGIES TO ADVANCE RACIAL EQUITY

JUNE 2025



The Public Space Strategies to Advance Racial Equity Project is funded in part by the Transportation Land-Use Connections (TLC) program of the National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board (TPB) at the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (COG). The TLC program supports local jurisdictions in promoting mixed-use, walkable communities and a variety of transportation alternatives.

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**SECTION 1**  
**INTRODUCTION +**  
**EXISTING CONDITIONS**



# PURPOSE

**Develop a vision that integrates racial equity in the public space design of Okie Street NE and Martin Luther King Jr. Avenue SE, improving the pedestrian experience along these two retail streets and strengthening their sense of place.**

The Public Space Strategies to Advance Racial Equity project, funded by the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (COG) through the 2025 Transportation Land-Use Connections program (TLC), focuses on transforming public spaces in Ivy City and Anacostia. Led by the DC Office of Planning (OP) in collaboration with DC Department of Transportation (DDOT), DC Department of Energy and Environment (DOEE), DC Small and Local Business Development (DSLBD), SmithGroup, and EAccess, this initiative aims to create inclusive public spaces that foster racial equity, support long-standing community members, and ensure equitable access to urban amenities.

# APPROACH

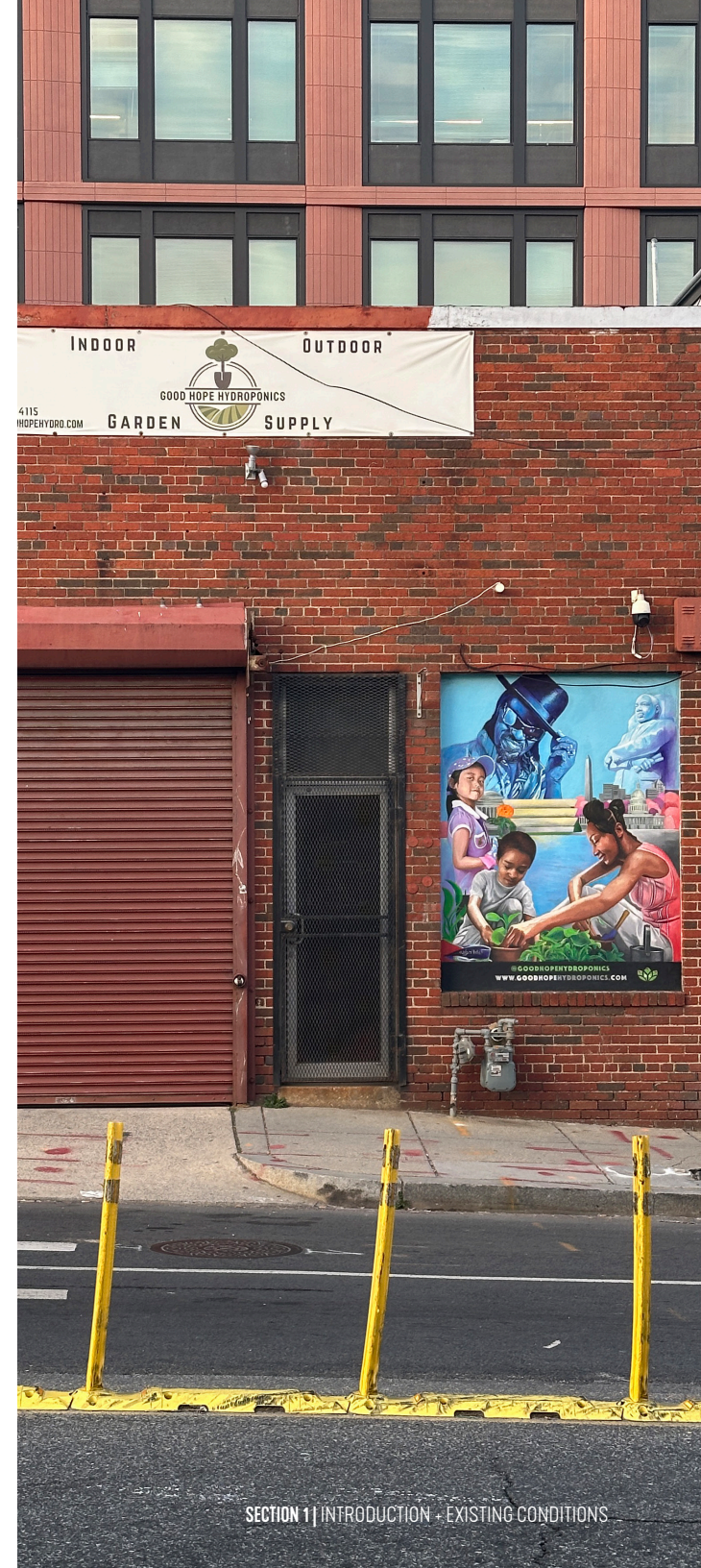
The planning process builds on previous plans for these areas. The following five-step approach established a clear baseline, integrated government stakeholder input, and leveraged existing District plans to shape innovative, practical recommendations.

## STEP 1 | FOUNDATIONS

The project began with a collaborative kick-off to ground all stakeholders in the project's purpose and objectives. SmithGroup facilitated guided site tours with representatives from COG, OP, DDOT, DOEE, and DSLBD to experience firsthand the public spaces along both corridors. These tours highlighted current conditions, community dynamics, and challenges in each area. Following the tours, additional fieldwork was conducted to gather photographic documentation and assess baseline conditions, including:

- Sidewalk and public right-of-way conditions
- Transit accessibility
- Pedestrian traffic patterns
- Public life activities

This assessment established the groundwork for subsequent research, ensuring all strategies are contextually relevant and informed by real-time observations.



## STEP 2 | VISIONING + BASELINE

A planning workshop defined what racial equity in public space could look like for these neighborhoods. The workshop was structured to:

- Build a shared vision of racially equitable public spaces;
- Identify characteristics of effective public spaces in historically underserved communities; and
- Achieve consensus on the most pressing challenges in each study corridor.

Through this process, a clear baseline for racial equity was established — one that considers historical inequities, current socioeconomic dynamics, and the unique cultural identities of each neighborhood.

## STEP 3 | EXPLORATION

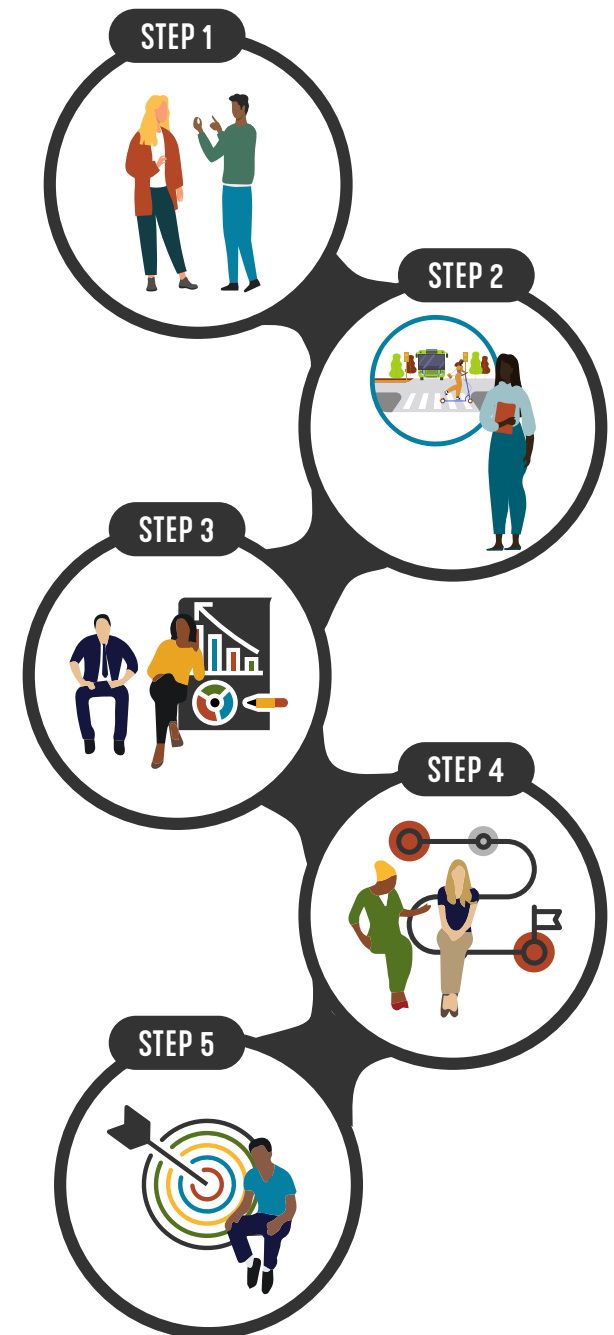
SmithGroup and EAccess conducted research into placemaking, wayfinding models, and funding to identify strategies and recommendations. The team also analyzed existing District plans and policies addressing these areas to ensure alignment with ongoing initiatives and to build upon the work already completed by District agencies and community organizations.

## STEP 4 | RECOMMENDATIONS

Using insights from steps 1-3, the team developed recommendations for advancing racial equity through public space interventions. A second workshop was held to present preliminary design concepts, allowing stakeholders to review the recommendations for alignment with current and upcoming District improvement projects.

## STEP 5 | IMPLEMENTATION

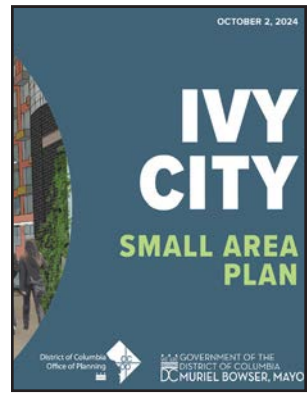
The final phase identified funding models designed to support the long-term sustainability of the recommended interventions, including potential contributions from developers, BIDs, and grant opportunities through COG and other potential funders. This report compiles all research findings, including baseline assessments, models for placemaking and wayfinding, and implementation strategies to advance racial equity in public spaces across both corridors.





## BUILDING ON PRIOR WORK

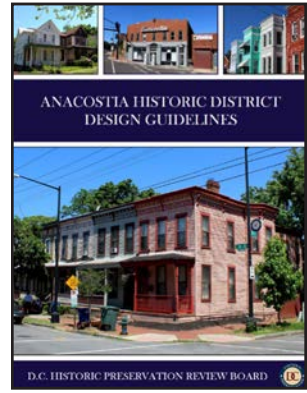
This project is informed by, and builds upon, existing planning work conducted for these communities, further synthesizing data, analysis, and recommendations while outlining actionable strategies that help advance their goals through integrating racially equitable public space strategies.



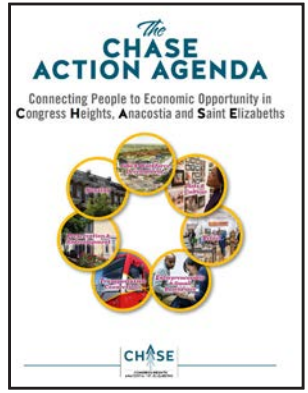
Ivy City Small Area Plan & Public Life Study



New York Avenue NE Vision Framework



Anacostia Design Guidelines



The CHASE Action Agenda: Connecting People to Economic Opportunity in Congress Heights, Anacostia and Saint Elizabeths

**SECTION 2**  
**EQUITABLE PUBLIC**  
**SPACE DESIGN**







## ENVISIONING RACIALLY EQUITABLE PUBLIC SPACE

This statement of racially equitable public space serves as the guiding vision for the project and acts as a reference point for all recommendations, and interventions presented in this document.

**A racially equitable public space is a place where everyone, regardless of race or ethnicity, feels welcome and has equal access to resources and opportunities. These spaces are designed to correct historical economic and environmental injustices and promote inclusivity, ensuring that all community members can participate fully and equally. They prioritize the voices of those most impacted by racial inequities in decision-making, aiming to create an environment where racial identity does not determine one's opportunities or outcomes.**

# CHARACTERISTICS OF EFFECTIVE PUBLIC SPACE

For public spaces to remain active drivers of social and economic vitality, they must embody the following key characteristics:

## ACCESSIBILITY

Designed to be inclusive, safe, and easy to navigate, ensuring equitable access for people of all ages and abilities.

## HEALTH AND WELLBEING

Contributes to physical and mental health by offering opportunities for exercise, relaxation, and access to nature.

## CULTURAL REPRESENTATION

Celebrates and acknowledges the histories and contributions of various racial and ethnic groups.

## MAINTENANCE

Provides adequate maintenance and investment to prevent deteriorating facilities and conditions.

## SAFETY AND COMFORT

All users feel safe and welcome, free from discrimination, surveillance, or policing that disproportionately targets minority groups.

## HOWEVER, TO BE RACIALLY EQUITABLE, PUBLIC SPACES NEED...

### ACCESSIBILITY, BUT MORE IMPORTANTLY BELONGING

Accessibility varies for all. It is essential not only to create accessible and inclusive environments, but to also ensure that all users can fully engage and express their authentic selves in shared spaces while fostering a sense of community.

### MAINTENANCE, BUT MORE IMPORTANTLY COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT

Individuals who care for and have a vested interest in these areas should be the primary beneficiaries of enhancements to the public spaces within their communities. Elevating the voices and agency of historically marginalized racial and socio-economic groups fosters full participation in the development of the community and ensures equitable access to its benefits, promoting racial equity in public spaces.

### REPRESENTATION, BUT MORE IMPORTANTLY DIGNITY

Representation should encompass cultural design elements and the leadership and decision-making processes that influence public spaces. It is essential to identify distinct user groups and to understand how they uniquely engage with and utilize these spaces.

### HEALTH AND WELLBEING, BUT MORE IMPORTANTLY RESILIENCE

Some communities face greater vulnerabilities to health and wellbeing such as climate change and food insecurity. It is vital to adopt an outcome-focused approach and recognize that certain groups may require additional support to achieve equitable levels of opportunity and success in health and wellbeing.

### SAFETY AND COMFORT, BUT MORE IMPORTANTLY JUSTICE

Maintaining public spaces that are safe and welcoming for everyone, free from discrimination, excessive surveillance, or policing that disproportionately affects marginalized communities, requires identifying and addressing systemic inequities. These inequities perpetuate policies, practices, and systems that contribute to disparities and silence the voices of those with limited social and economic power.

# SHARED RECOMMENDATIONS FOR EQUITABLE PUBLIC SPACE DESIGN

The following six themes outline best practices for achieving equitable public space design on both Okie Street NE and Martin Luther King Jr. Avenue SE.



To ensure equitable access to high-quality public spaces, land use strategies will intentionally respond to patterns of movement, access, and interaction while addressing historical land use inequities.

**WHY IT MATTERS:** The configuration of buildings, their uses, and their level of public engagement determine the flow of activity in public space. Transportation options determine how people can access and move through these spaces. Successful public space requires that land use plans—including the layout of buildings, public facilities, and transportation networks—align with the needs of the communities they serve. New land use policies work to address and reduce existing land use patterns that are harmful and disproportionately impact vulnerable populations.

## SHARED RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Community engagement as a requirement
2. Rethinking land use patterns
3. Reducing surface parking and underutilized spaces
4. Sustainable and inclusive development incentives



Public spaces should prioritize environmental sustainability and address the disproportionate environmental risks faced by communities of color.

**WHY IT MATTERS:** Lower income communities of color are disproportionately exposed to greater environmental risk factors such as urban heat island, poor air quality, flooding and limited access to green space. Urban heat island mitigation strategies—such as increasing green spaces, tree canopy coverage, green infrastructure, and green roofs—enhance air quality and reduce heat-related health risks, which disproportionately affect marginalized communities.

## SHARED RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Urban heat island mitigation
2. Air quality and climate resilience
3. Public health integration

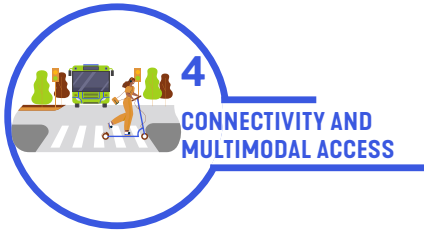


Creating safe, walkable, and engaging streetscapes can foster community interaction, support local businesses, and promote racial equity.

**WHY IT MATTERS:** Activating streetscapes and frontages can advance racial equity and foster inclusive public spaces. Prioritizing walkability, safety, and accessibility ensures that streets serve all users, not just drivers. This report recommends wider sidewalks, transparent storefronts, and vibrant facades to encourage social interaction, support local businesses, and create a stronger sense of community. Reducing car dominance and enhancing street-level amenities—including seating, signage, and waste management—promotes a feeling of safety and belonging. When public spaces reflect diverse cultural expression and support civic engagement, they become vibrant, equitable environments where everyone feels welcome and connected.

## SHARED RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Improving walkability and safety
2. Enhancing street frontages and activation
3. Retail and commercial street engagement



Equitable public spaces should offer safe, efficient, and accessible transportation options for all users, reducing reliance on cars and encouraging diverse mobility options.

**WHY IT MATTERS:** Transportation networks should align with land use patterns, community amenities, and services to reduce pedestrian-vehicle conflicts, lower emissions, and create safer, more inclusive streets for all users. As services such as rideshare and goods delivery increasingly occur within public spaces, it is important to prioritize pedestrians, reduce car dominance, and design streetscapes that offer moments for pause, transition, and social connection. Enhancements should foster climate resilience with shade structures, weather protection, and pedestrian-only areas, while wayfinding strategies should improve navigation and connectivity.

**SHARED RECOMMENDATIONS:**

1. Transit infrastructure improvements
2. Climate adaptation in the public realm
3. Pedestrian-only spaces and safer intersections



Public spaces should reflect the unique cultural identities of the communities they serve, fostering feelings of belonging and inclusivity through intentional design.

**WHY IT MATTERS:** Public spaces are most successful when they reflect the culture, history, and identity of the communities they serve. Culturally responsive placemaking can transform underused areas into vibrant community assets by incorporating public art, wayfinding, signage, and branding that reflect the local spirit. These elements create a strong sense of place and serve practical functions. Lighting, decorative bollards, and well-designed fencing can enhance safety while contributing to the space's character. When design responds to the cultural needs and uses of surrounding demographics, it supports connection, invites interaction, and activates the public realm.

**SHARED RECOMMENDATIONS:**

1. Vacant lot activation
2. Public art and cultural branding
3. Public safety and inclusive programming



Public space interventions should foster economic opportunity, support local businesses, and protect residents from displacement.

**WHY IT MATTERS:** Public space improvements and enhanced urban design support increased activity which can boost the usability of a space. However, these benefits can also have unintended consequences such as displacement due to rising property values, pushing out long-standing residents and businesses that have historically shaped the community. To advance racial equity, economic gains from public space enhancements should be coupled with targeted investments to support the communities these spaces are meant to serve—especially neighborhoods historically underinvested in due to systemic injustice.

**SHARED RECOMMENDATIONS:**

1. Job creation and workforce development
2. Small business and entrepreneurial support
3. Rental assessments for commercial stability
4. Support for unhoused and unemployed individuals



MALCOLM X CELEBRATION

ANACOSTIA PARK  
SUN. MAY 19



JUNKYARD BAND  
REALITY PLEASE  
THE JAZZ FUNKERS  
NO DRUGS



FRIDAY MAR. 20  
ADMISSION \$8.00  
CHUCK BROWN  
SOUL LIVE!  
SEARCHER

LONG FENCE

K. STADIUM  
JUNE 18  
RARE ESSENCE  
LITTLE BENNY  
MASSTERS  
BEKA  
FOANEY

ONE  
CHAPTER  
WED. FEB.  
TROUBLE  
PUNK  
PETHOR  
AYE  
RAYOS  
D.C. SCORPI

# CROSS-CUTTING KEY FINDINGS

During the analysis of existing conditions, several common themes emerged across both corridors. These overarching findings informed a series of recommendations intended to enhance racial equity in public spaces. Additionally, corridor-specific recommendations were formulated in alignment with these broader findings.

## LAND USE AND ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT:

- Both corridors face challenges related to underutilized land, particularly large surface parking lots.
- Need for inclusive development strategies that support small businesses and protect against displacement.

## ENVIRONMENTAL RESILIENCE AND SUSTAINABILITY:

- Lack of adequate tree canopy coverage and green infrastructure along both corridors exacerbates urban heat island effects and poor air quality.

## PEDESTRIAN ACCESSIBILITY AND STREETScape ACTIVATION:

- Pedestrian infrastructure is insufficient in both corridors, with narrow sidewalks and poor pedestrian safety measures.
- Elements such as lighting, public seating, and interactive design elements, are essential for enhancing walkability and safety.

## CULTURAL IDENTITY AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT:

- Both corridors lack design features such as public art, gateway treatments, and culturally responsive placemaking that reflect the unique histories of their respective communities.
- Engaging residents in public art and gateway design helps ensure that placemaking elements reflect community identity and reinforces a sense of pride.

## CONNECTIVITY AND MULTIMODAL TRANSPORTATION:

- Both corridors lack adequate infrastructure for multimodal transit, including bike lanes, pedestrian pathways, and micromobility options.
- Enhancements to public transit stops, improved crosswalks, and traffic calming measures are necessary to improve connectivity and safety.

SECTION 3  
**Martin Luther King Jr. Avenue SE**

EXISTING CONDITIONS  
RECOMMENDATIONS





ANACOSTIA

DARIUS  
@DUNE\_ENTT  
2024



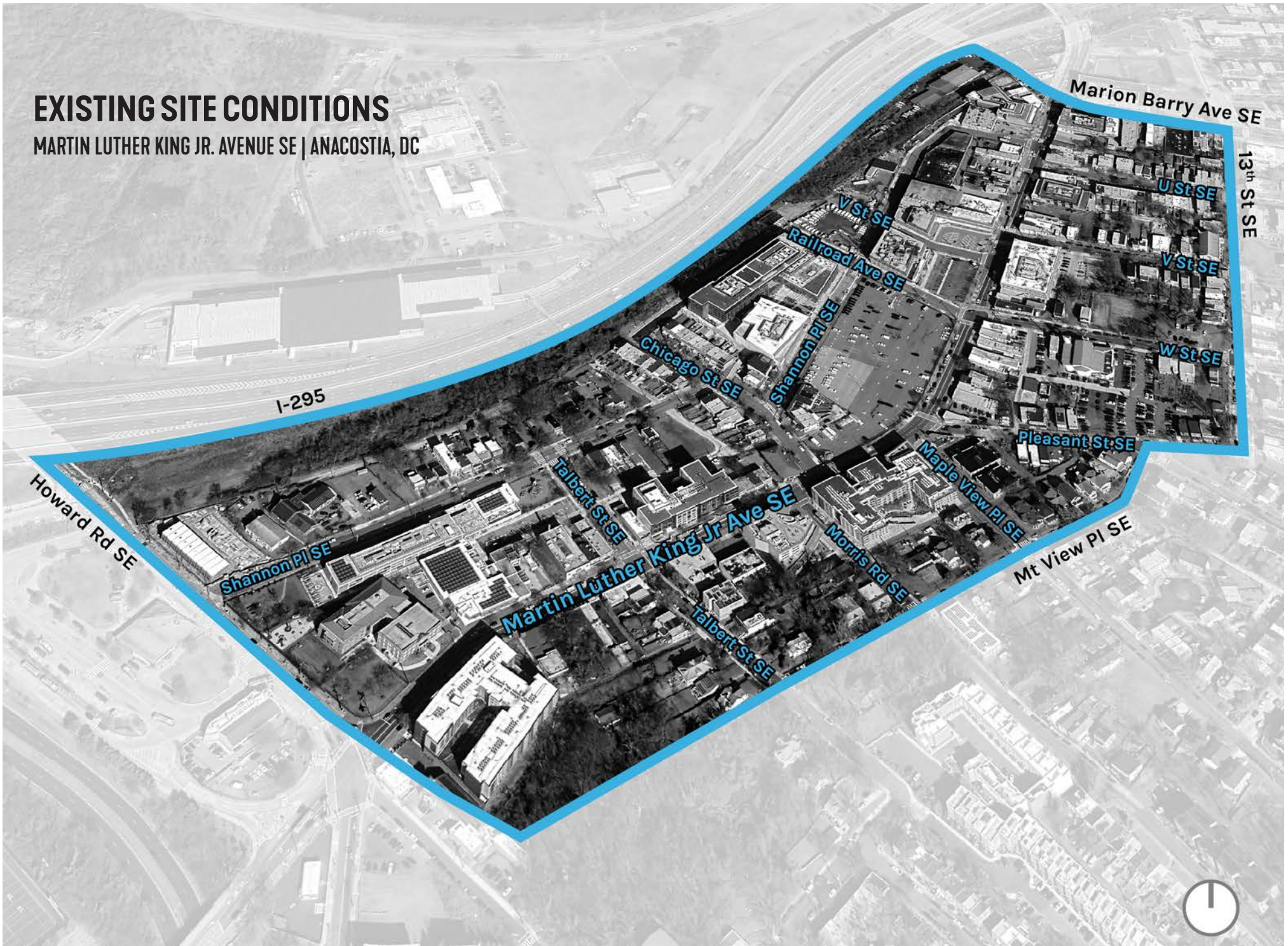
## MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. AVENUE SE

### SUMMARY

Martin Luther King Jr. Avenue SE is a corridor with strong community character, cultural significance, and existing infrastructure that fosters a sense of place. With investments already supporting its identity – such as continuous sidewalks, public art installations, and efficient transit access – this area serves as a cultural and commercial anchor for Anacostia. However, challenges remain around safety, connectivity, and underutilized spaces. Enhancing public space elements through equitable design strategies can reinforce its role as a community hub while improving access, environmental resilience, and economic opportunities.

# EXISTING SITE CONDITIONS

MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. AVENUE SE | ANACOSTIA, DC





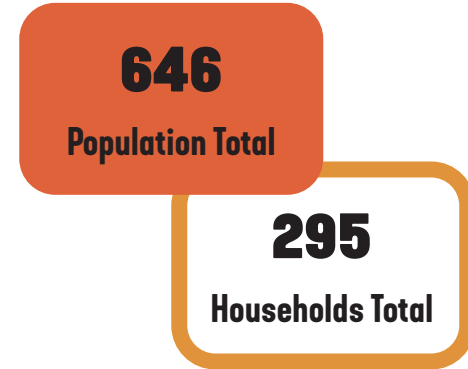
## DEMOGRAPHICS

### MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. AVENUE SE | ANACOSTIA, DC

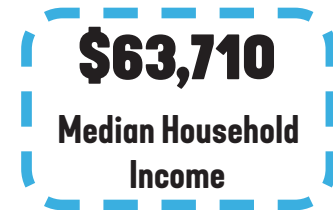
Martin Luther King Jr. Avenue SE is known for its retail opportunities, transit accessibility, and well-preserved historic character. The following demographic data is taken from blocks within Census Tracts 74.01, 74.07, and 75.03. Out of the total population of 650, 85% of residents identify as Black, speaking to the Anacostia neighborhood’s well-preserved Black identity. Residents in the corridor span a wide range of ages, creating representation across multiple generations and representing the neighborhood’s long-lasting sense of community.

Just over 50% of the 295 households in the area surrounding Martin Luther King Jr. Avenue SE are renters. The median household income is \$63,710, 40% less than the District-wide median household income of \$105,897. About 90% of residents in the area have at least a high school diploma, compared to about 93% of District residents who have at least a high school diploma. The area’s Total Crime Index is 243, and the Personal Crime Index is 476. In comparison, the District has a Total Crime Index of 177 and a Personal Crime Index of 215.

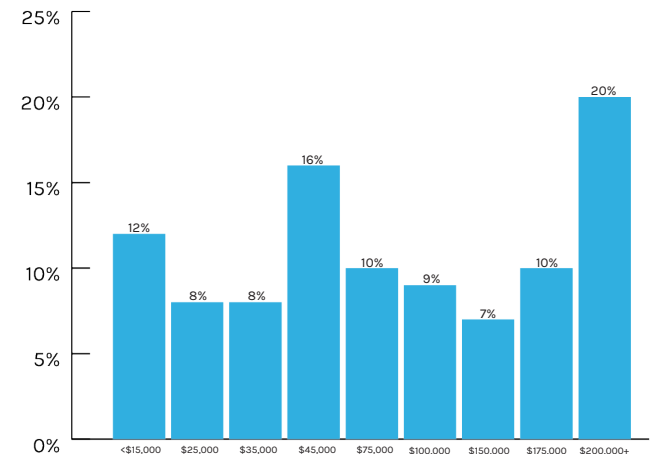
### Population



Source: 2023 American Community Survey Estimates

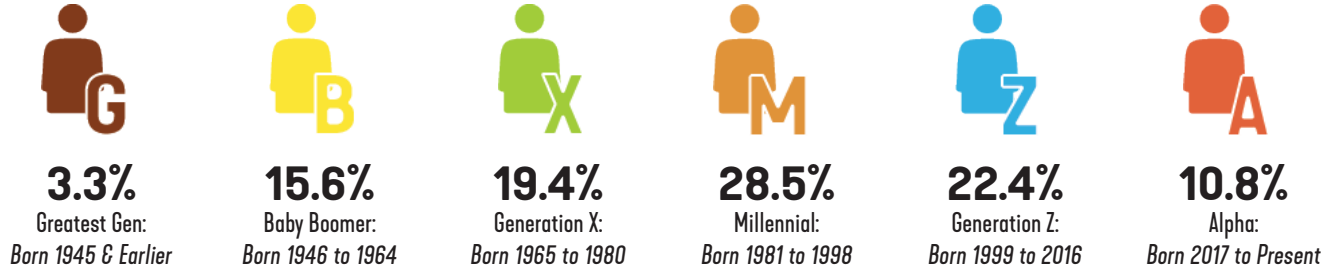


### Household Income\*

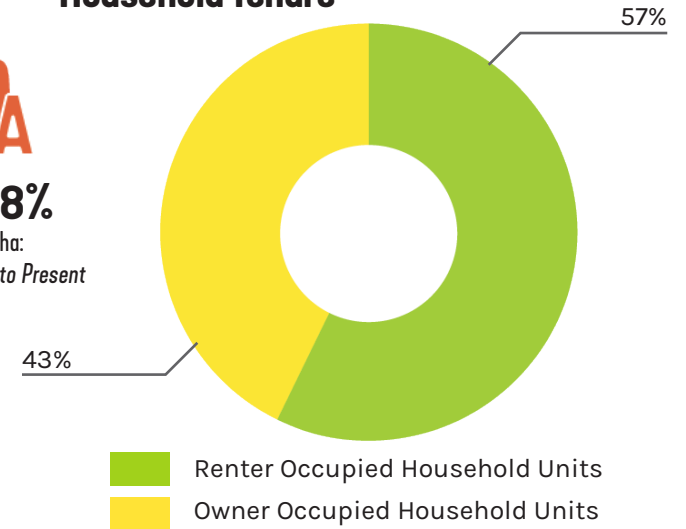


\*Source: 2020 Decennial Census

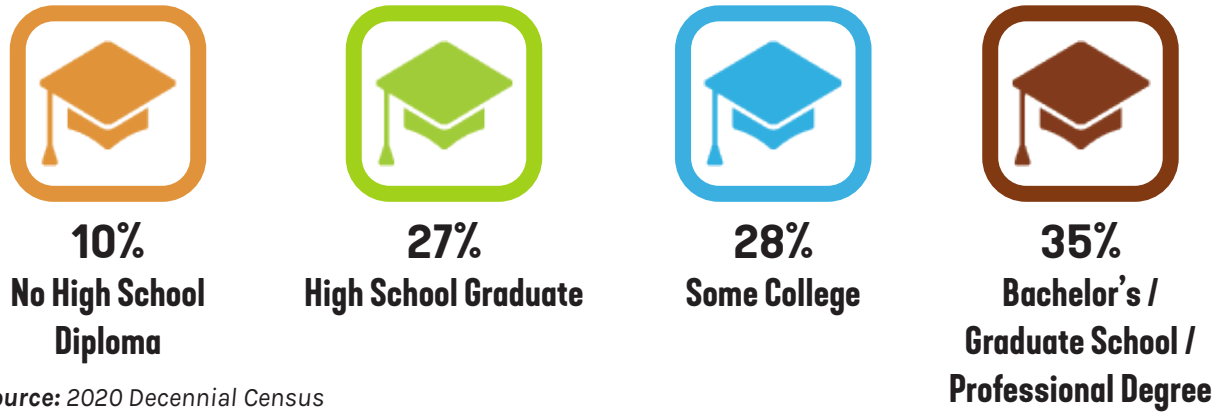
## Population by Generation



## Household Tenure\*

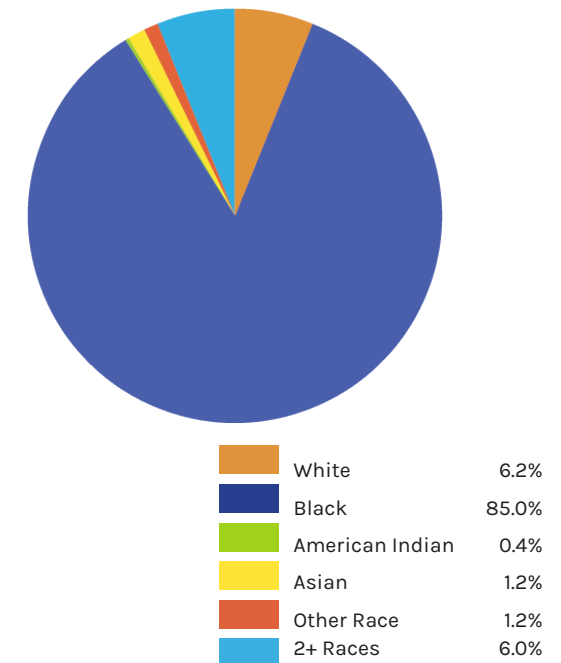


## Education\*



\*Source: 2020 Decennial Census

## Population by Race\*



## Crime Index



# URBAN DESIGN & PUBLIC SPACE ELEMENTS

## MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. AVENUE SE

As outlined in the Historic Preservation Review Board’s Anacostia Historic District Design Guidelines, the corridor contains significant urban design and public space elements that contribute to the sense of neighborhood identity. Efforts to preserve the area’s history, like historic trail signage, brick pavers, and small-scale storefronts, create a neighborhood main street experience unique to Anacostia. There is also significant emphasis on public art and expression, establishing a sense of community in numerous pockets throughout the area. New, higher-density residential and mixed-use development is emerging near the Anacostia Metro Station, at the intersection of Howard Rd. SE.



*Institutional building uses*



*Anacostia Historic Trail Signage*



*Street art*



*Community empowerment*



*Historic storefronts*



*Murals*



*Smaller scale frontages*



*Larger scale mixed-use buildings*



*Adaptive reuse*

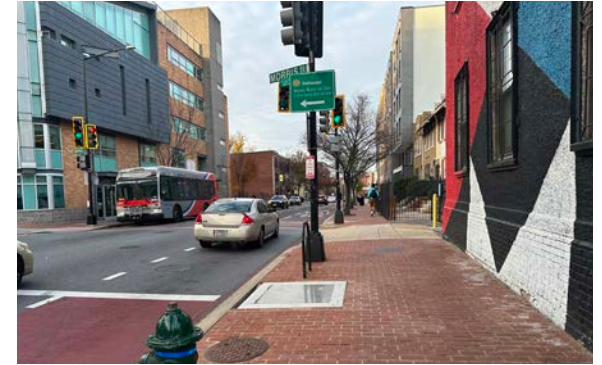
# PEDESTRIAN EXPERIENCE

## MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. AVENUE SE

Frequent traffic from both passenger cars and buses traveling to the nearby Anacostia Metro Station make the street noisy for pedestrians. Despite the high traffic, the corridor has many crosswalks and consistent sidewalks that make the street traversable for pedestrians. However, features such as wide major intersections, fencing, and empty lots make the pedestrian experience uncomfortable.



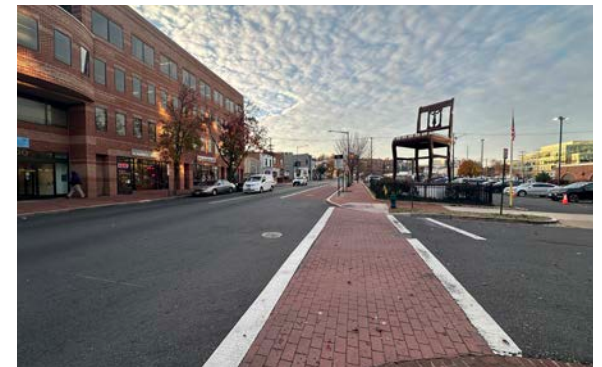
Uncomfortable intersections



Sidewalk proximity to street



Brick pavement



Wide crossings



Empty lots



Fencing



## KEY FINDINGS | MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. AVENUE SE

### COMMUNITY IDENTITY & CULTURAL RELEVANCE:

- Strong sense of place supported by the presence of the Anacostia Business Improvement District (BID).
- Abundant culturally relevant public art reflects the community's history and values.

### INFRASTRUCTURE AND ACCESSIBILITY:

- Continuous sidewalks support pedestrian movement but need widening and enhancement at key intersections.
- Effective transit flow accommodates buses, personal vehicles, and pedestrian activity.
- Transit stops lack sufficient amenities such as shelters and seating.

### SAFETY AND CONNECTIVITY:

- High pedestrian-vehicular conflict zones at the north and south ends of the corridor.
- Opportunities to improve evening safety with artful lighting and clear gateway treatments.
- Underutilized spaces could be activated for community gathering and evening use.

### ENVIRONMENTAL RESILIENCE:

- Need for additional tree canopy and green infrastructure to improve air quality and mitigate urban heat islands.
- Vacant lots and large parking parcels present opportunities for green infrastructure or community use.

### ECONOMIC AND BUSINESS SUPPORT:

- Need to continue supporting Black-owned businesses through targeted incentives.
- Consider rooftop or balcony spaces as opportunities for commercial or social activation in new developments.



enlightened:  
ESSENTIALS

1916

WE ACT RADIO

GOLGO  
Museum & Café  
CHECK IT ENTERPRISES

CEASE  
FIRE

Rena's  
Flowers and Gifts  
FOR MERRY & W FLOWERS

1201

# OVERALL RECOMMENDATIONS | MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. AVENUE SE



## LAND USE PLANNING AND COMMUNITY-CENTERED GROWTH

- Maintain and strengthen the existing community character and support local businesses by implementing pop-up programs, establishing public space identity, and investing in small businesses through grants.
- Maximize underutilized spaces along the corridor by transforming vacant lots and large parking areas into mixed-use developments, consistent with the District's Comprehensive Plan.

## ENVIRONMENTAL RESILIENCE

- Increase tree canopy coverage along the corridor and incorporate green infrastructure to improve air quality, mitigate urban heat island effects, and promote climate resilience.
- Integrate rooftop gardens, balconies, and green roofs into new developments to enhance environmental sustainability and increase available access to open space.

## ACTIVATED STREETSCAPES AND FRONTAGES

- Improve pedestrian safety and accessibility at key intersections.
- Increase seating, create opportunities for social gathering, and embrace public art to activate the public realm.
- Improve transit stops with sheltered seating and lighting to encourage safe and comfortable use, especially during evening hours.

## CONNECTIVITY AND MULTIMODAL ACCESS

- Improve connectivity to Anacostia Park and nearby historic sites by increasing and enhancing pedestrian access and reducing vehicular-pedestrian conflicts at key intersections.
- Support future greenway and trail efforts to increase non-motorized transportation infrastructure such as the Shepherd Branch Trail project.
- Introduce gateway treatments and wayfinding signage that highlight important cultural and historic landmarks.

## CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE PLACEMAKING

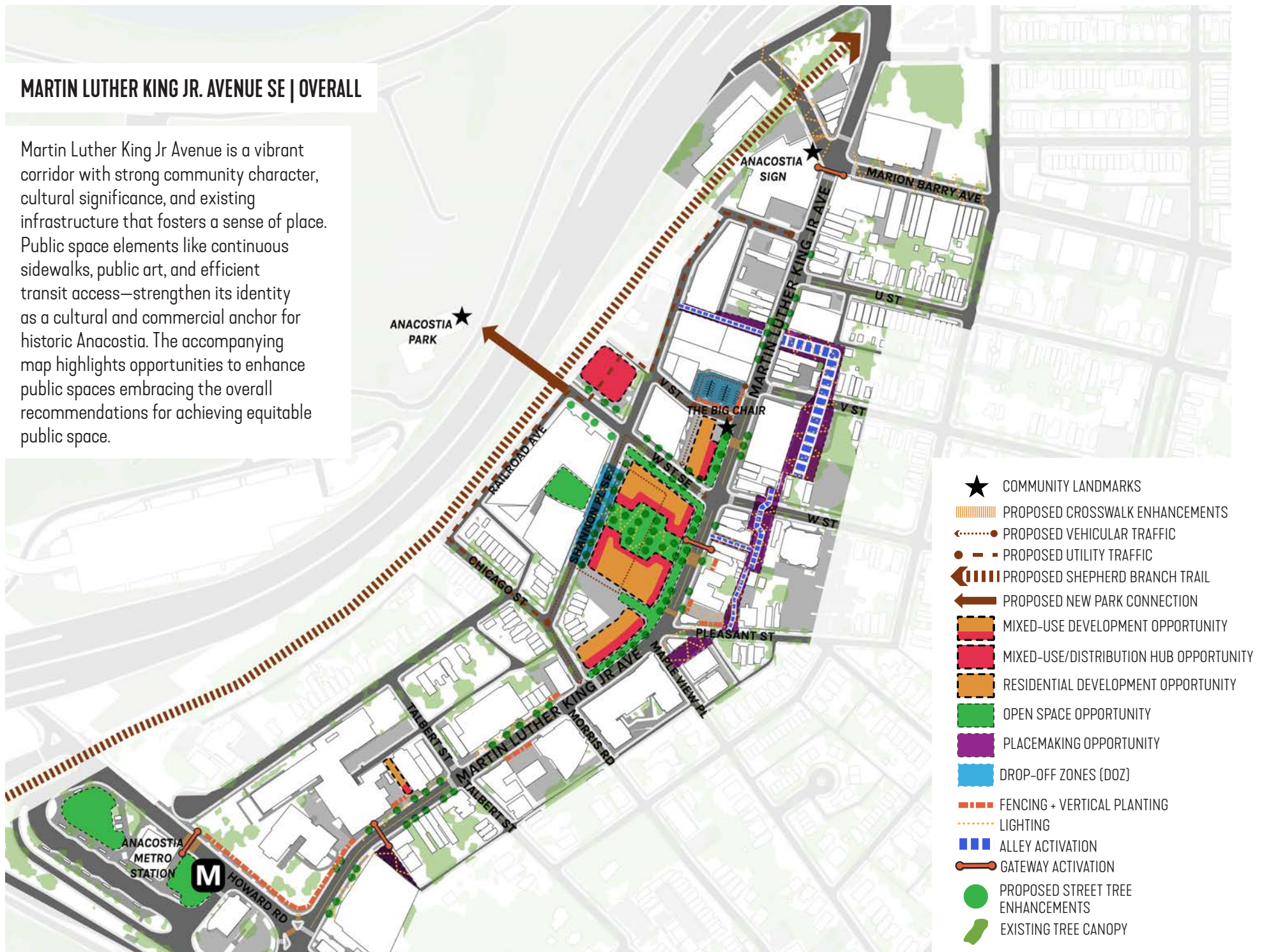
- Implement artful lighting and community-driven public art installations to enhance nighttime activation and promote cultural pride.
- Develop guidelines for fencing and public/private boundaries to foster openness and improve site engagement.

## ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT

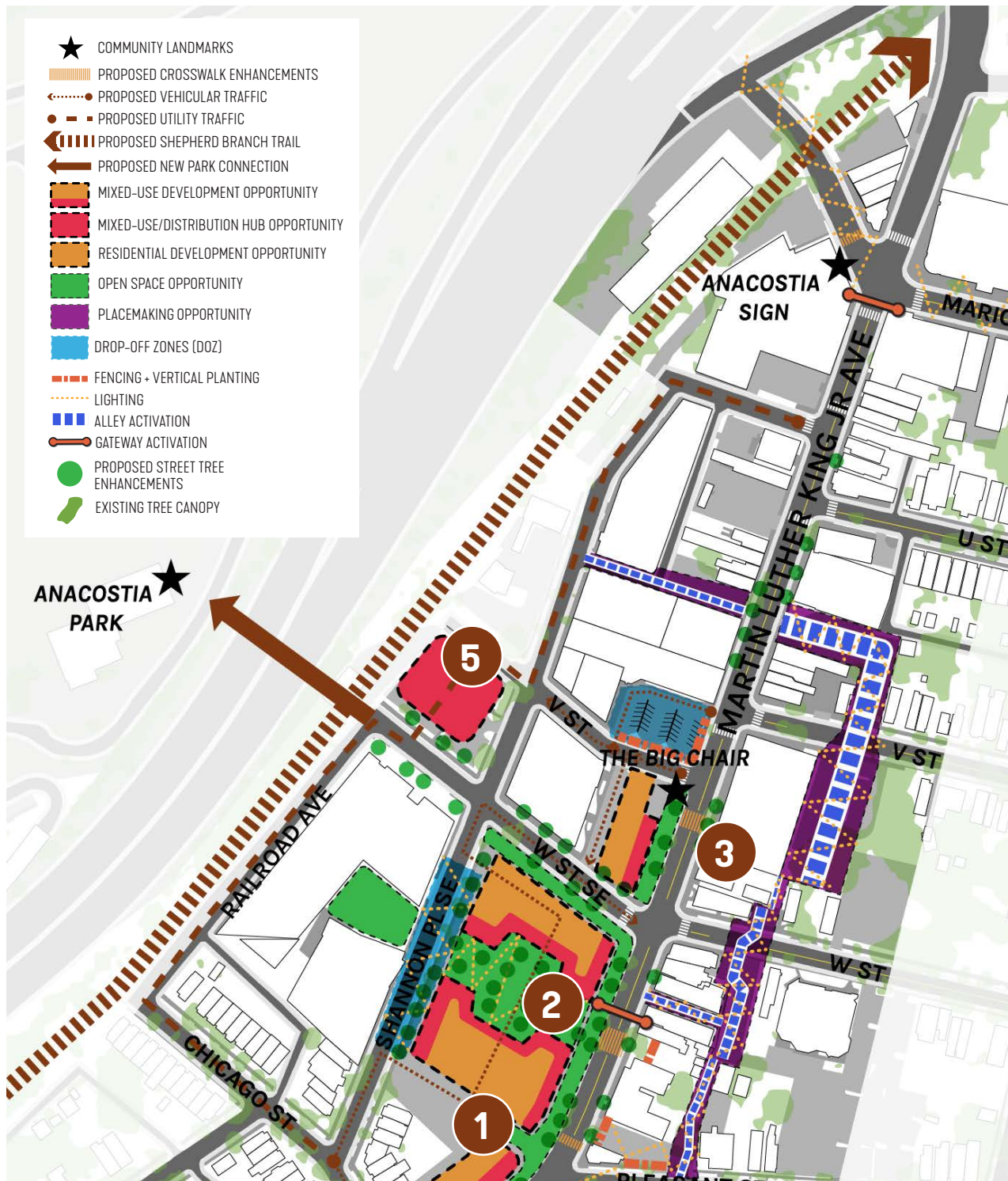
- Leverage new development to generate job opportunities, workforce training programs, and affordable commercial spaces that support small businesses and local entrepreneurship through co-learning spaces, community kitchens, and other collaborative areas, while also relocating various city operations to these sites.
- Encourage mixed-use development, per the District's Comprehensive Plan that allows for a variety of retail, office, and residential uses to promote economic resilience.

## MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. AVENUE SE | OVERALL

Martin Luther King Jr Avenue is a vibrant corridor with strong community character, cultural significance, and existing infrastructure that fosters a sense of place. Public space elements like continuous sidewalks, public art, and efficient transit access—strengthen its identity as a cultural and commercial anchor for historic Anacostia. The accompanying map highlights opportunities to enhance public spaces embracing the overall recommendations for achieving equitable public space.



- ★ COMMUNITY LANDMARKS
- ▤ PROPOSED CROSSWALK ENHANCEMENTS
- ⋯ PROPOSED VEHICULAR TRAFFIC
- ⋯ PROPOSED UTILITY TRAFFIC
- PROPOSED SHEPHERD BRANCH TRAIL
- PROPOSED NEW PARK CONNECTION
- ▭ MIXED-USE DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITY
- ▭ MIXED-USE/DISTRIBUTION HUB OPPORTUNITY
- ▭ RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITY
- ▭ OPEN SPACE OPPORTUNITY
- ▭ PLACEMAKING OPPORTUNITY
- ▭ DROP-OFF ZONES (DOZ)
- ▭ FENCING + VERTICAL PLANTING
- ⋯ LIGHTING
- ▭ ALLEY ACTIVATION
- ▭ GATEWAY ACTIVATION
- PROPOSED STREET TREE ENHANCEMENTS
- ▭ EXISTING TREE CANOPY



# RECOMMENDATIONS

## MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. AVENUE SE | NORTH

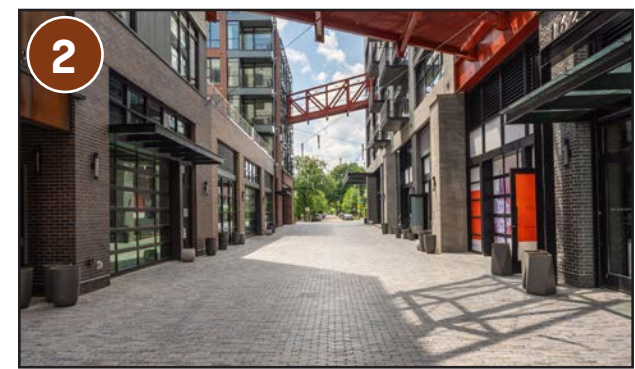
### LAND USE:

- 1 Redevelop large surface parking lot located at W Street and MLK Avenue with neighborhood-serving retail, mixed-use multifamily residential, and integrated underground parking.
- 2 Establish a public plaza linking Shannon Place and Martin Luther King Jr. Avenue SE, incorporating native vegetation and shade trees for comfort.
- 3 Preserve, celebrate, and enhance historic landmarks like the Big Chair.



Mixed-use development with public plaza

Photo Credit: SmithGroup



Mixed use development with pedestrian promenade | Eckington NE DC

Photo Credit: 1625 Eckington

## MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. AVENUE SE | SOUTH

- 4 Encourage diverse housing options above retail and on active corners at Chicago Street
- 5 Study micro-distribution hubs within mixed-use developments as a way to facilitate e-commerce at the neighborhood scale.

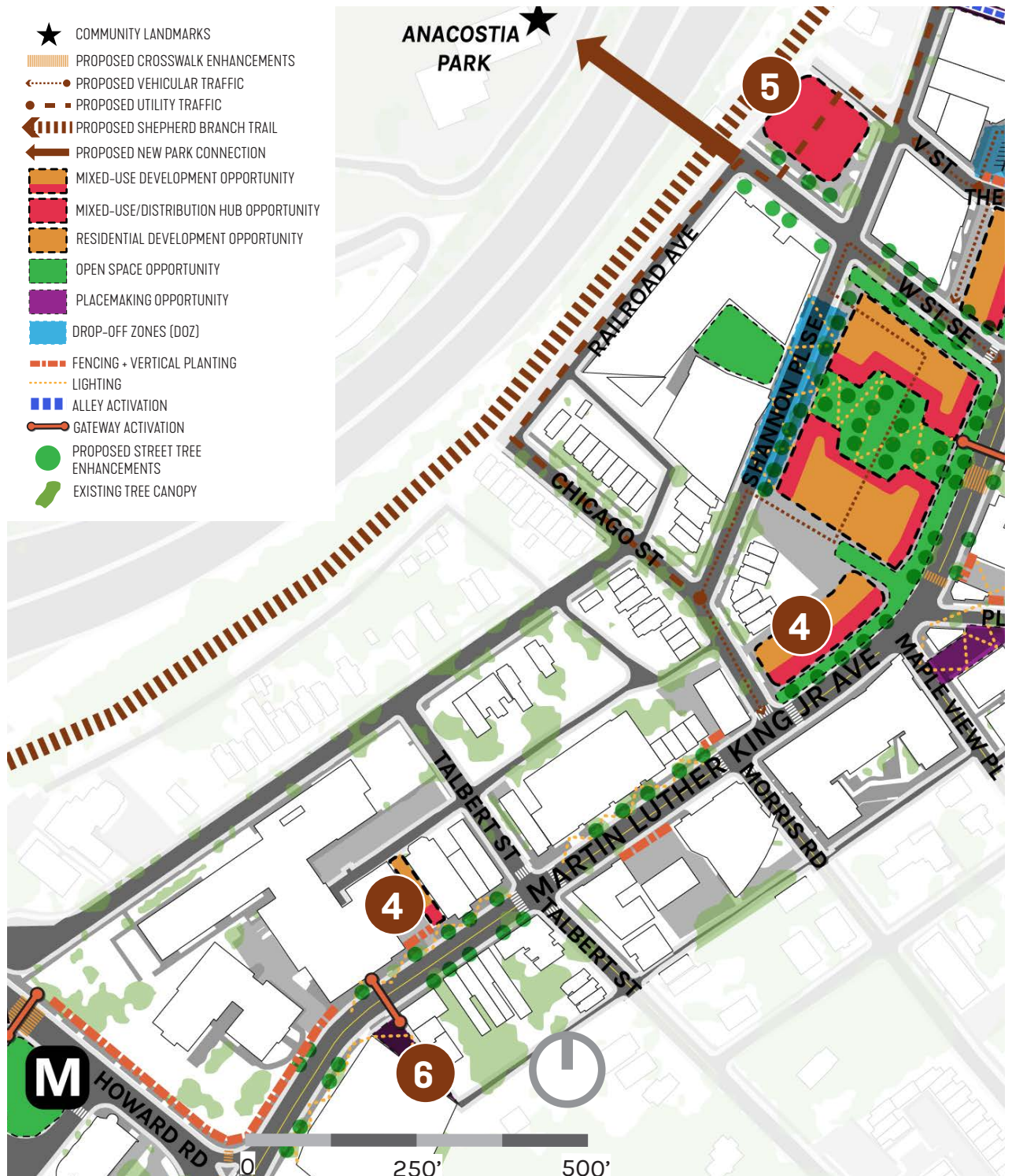
**Note:** *Micro Distribution Hubs refer to a distribution typology where e-commerce and online order fulfillment facilities are smaller and more localized to be closer to the customer base. Micro-hubs help reduce traffic congestion from delivery trucks, shorten lead times on package arrival, and provide jobs to community members through last-mile delivery services and facility staffing.*

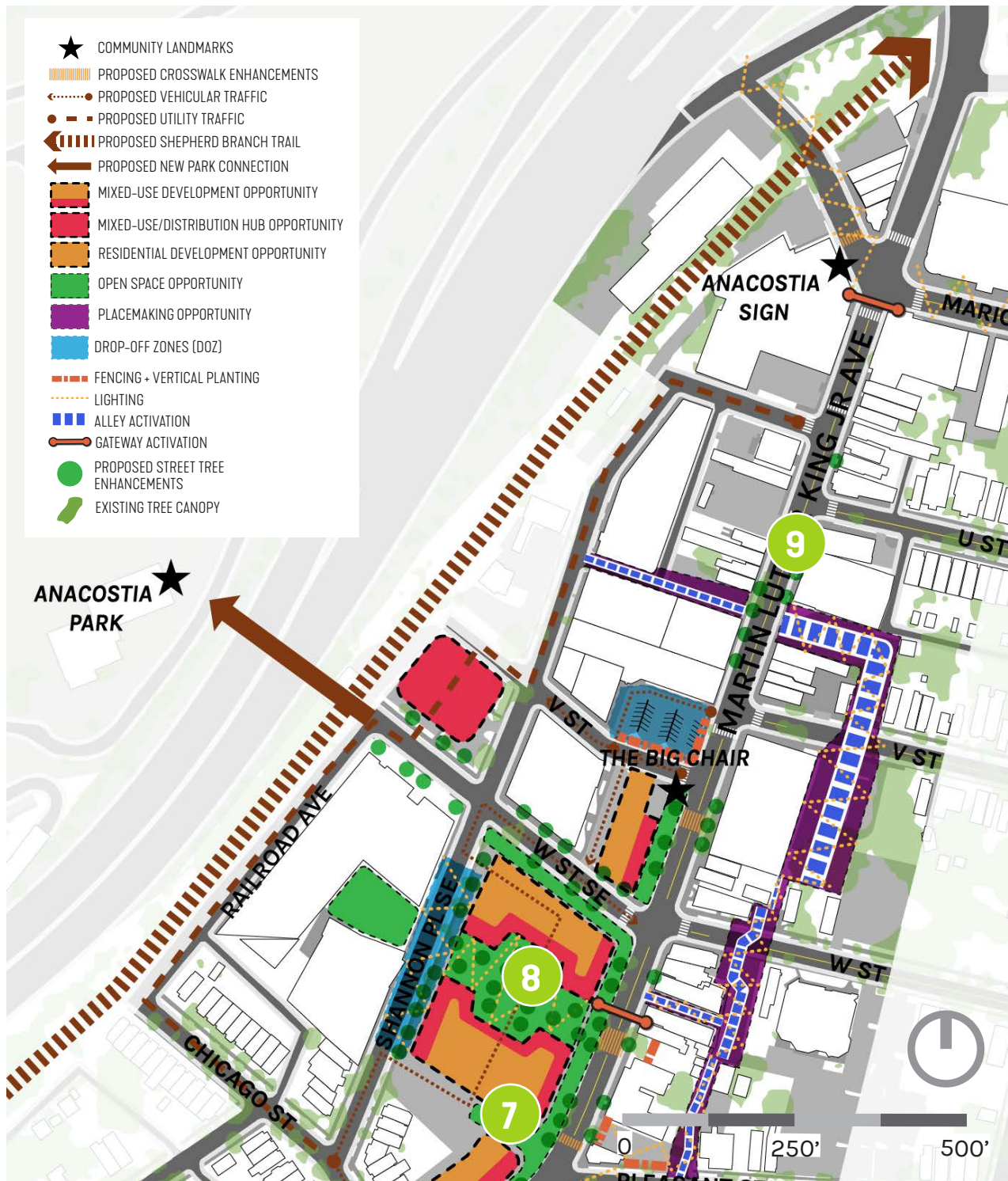
- 6 Activate vacant lots with small-business events and seating areas to support local businesses.



Four-story multifamily housing with a variety of massing and building material providing visual interest

Photo Credit: SmithGroup



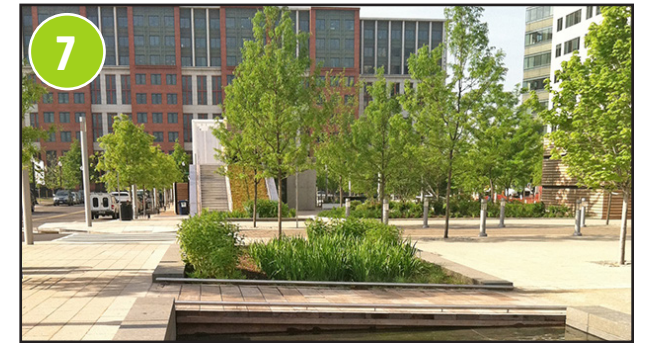


# RECOMMENDATIONS

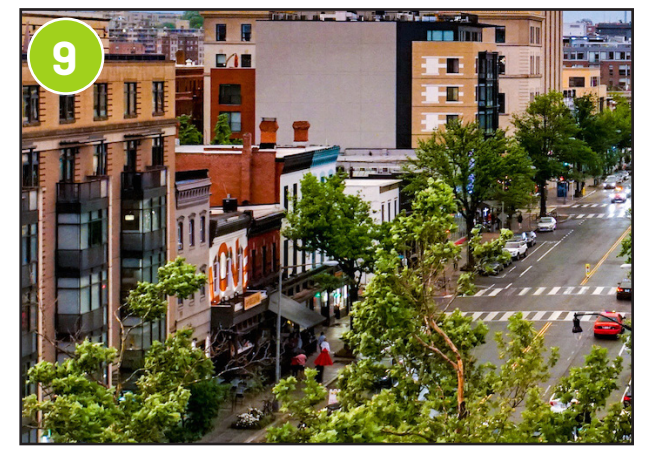
## MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. AVENUE SE | NORTH

### ENVIRONMENTAL:

- 7 Integrate green stormwater infrastructure, including green roofs and bioretention features, in new developments.
- 8 Preserve and enhance tree canopy along the corridor and in public spaces to mitigate heat island effects and improve air quality.
- 9 Establish a street tree preservation and beautification program with property owners.



Bioretention streetscape and public space surrounded by mixed use development | Canal Park Navy Yard NW DC Photo Credit: Greater Greater Washington



Preserved tree lined corridor with mixed use development | 14th Street NW DC Photo Credit: Washingtonian

# MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. AVENUE SE | SOUTH

- 10 Implement green beautification guidelines for plant selection and landscape enhancements that reinforce community identity.
- 11 Encourage decorative fencing to screen empty lots with semi-private visibility and vertical greening elements, such as native climbing vines.



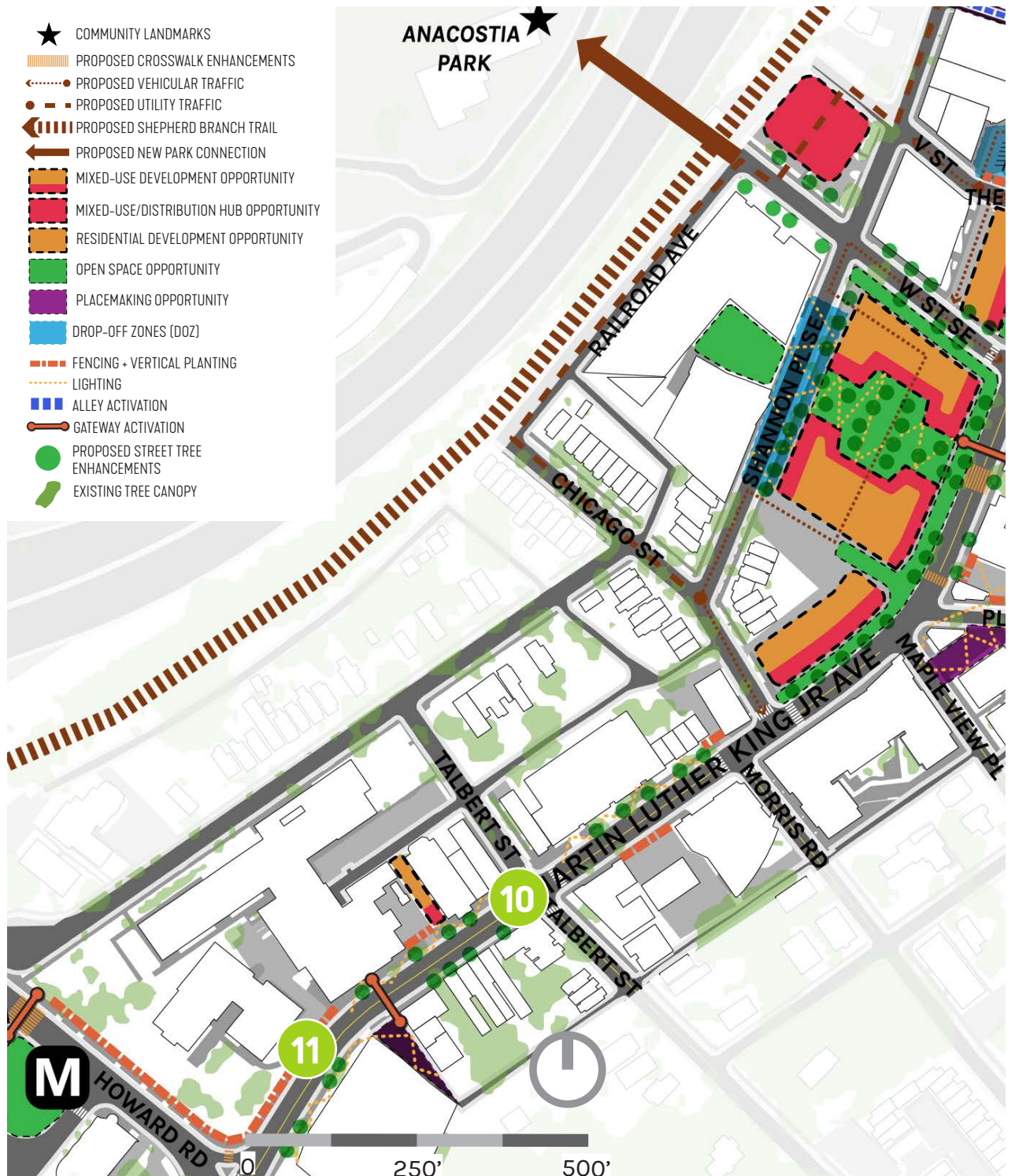
Green infrastructure and with raised planters in a public plaza

Photo Credit: SmithGroup



Decorative fencing for public playground.

Photo Credit: CLD Systems





# RECOMMENDATIONS

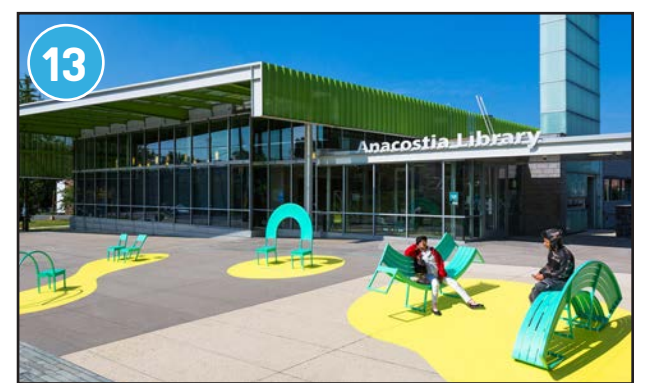
## MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. AVENUE SE | NORTH

### ACTIVATED STREETSCAPE:

- 12** Improve streetscapes with consistent sidewalk materials along Martin Luther King Jr. Avenue SE and ensure public spaces align with existing design standards.
- 13** Add pedestrian amenities, including lighting, shaded seating, shade, and sidewalk enhancements.



Public plaza with shade trees, picnic tables, and pervious pavers. Photo Credit: SmithGroup



Modular play structures at the entrance to Anacostia Library Photo Credit: WTOP

## MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. AVENUE SE | SOUTH

- 14 Activate alleys with public seating, artistic lighting installations, and pavement art to support pop-up uses and safety.
- 15 Allow businesses to utilize alleys for additional dining areas or movable seating.
- 16 Implement unified street lighting along Martin Luther King Jr. Avenue SE for a cohesive urban identity.



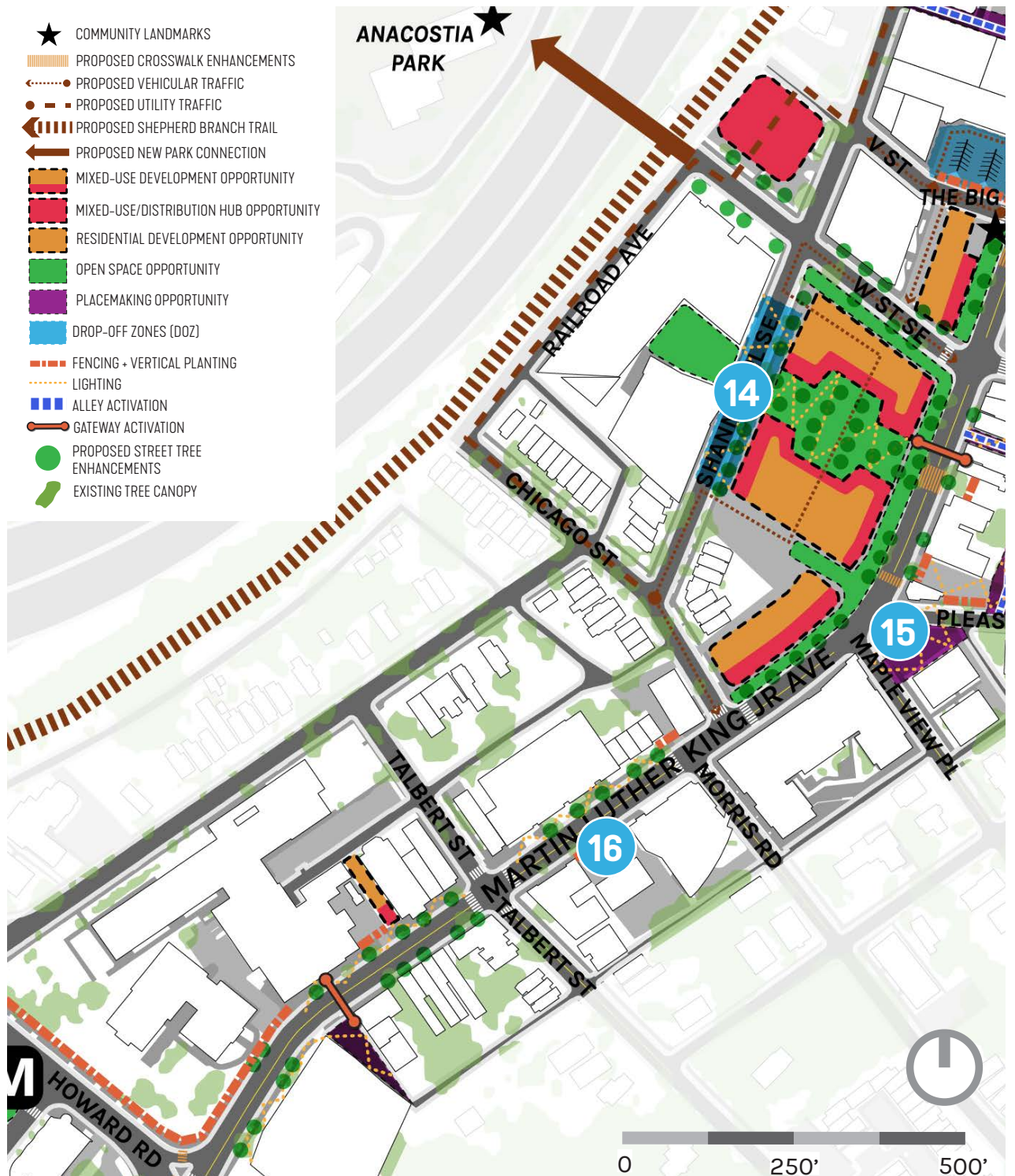
Street activation through artistic lighting installation

Photo Credit: SmithGroup



Business activating an alleyway with art | Blagdan Alley NW DC

Photo Credit: Washingtonian



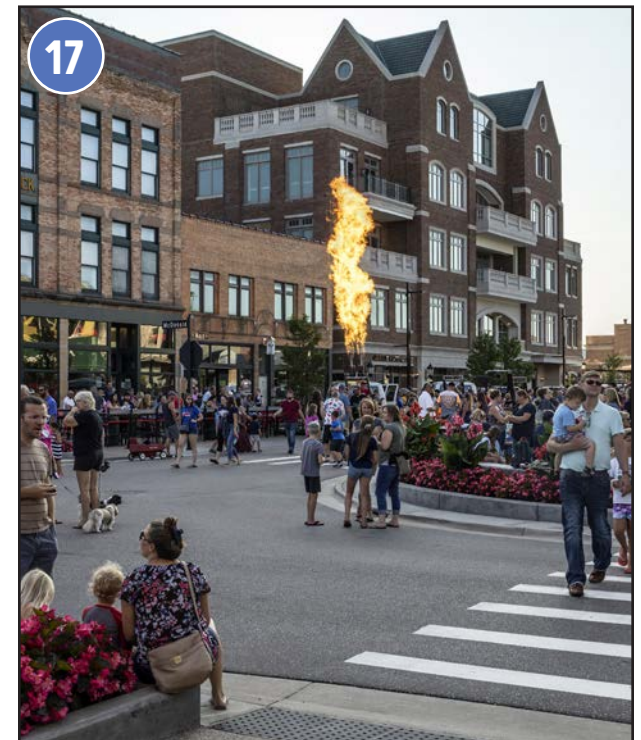


# RECOMMENDATIONS

## MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. AVENUE SE | NORTH

### CONNECTIVITY:

- 17 Enhance pedestrian safety with bulb-outs, neckdowns, speed humps or tables, and raised crosswalks to slow traffic.
- 18 Improve and increase opportunities for pedestrian access and signage to Anacostia Park.
- 19 Establish more pedestrian bridge connections to Anacostia Park and future Poplar Point development for enhanced accessibility.



Bulb-out with green infrastructure creating a safe pedestrian crossing

Photo Credit: SmithGroup

## MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. AVENUE SE | SOUTH

- 20 Support the future development of the Shepherd Branch Trail to promote connectivity in the area.
- 21 Improve pedestrian crossings across Howard Road to the Anacostia Metro station.
- 22 Maintain and increase enforcement of dedicated bus lanes to support transit users.



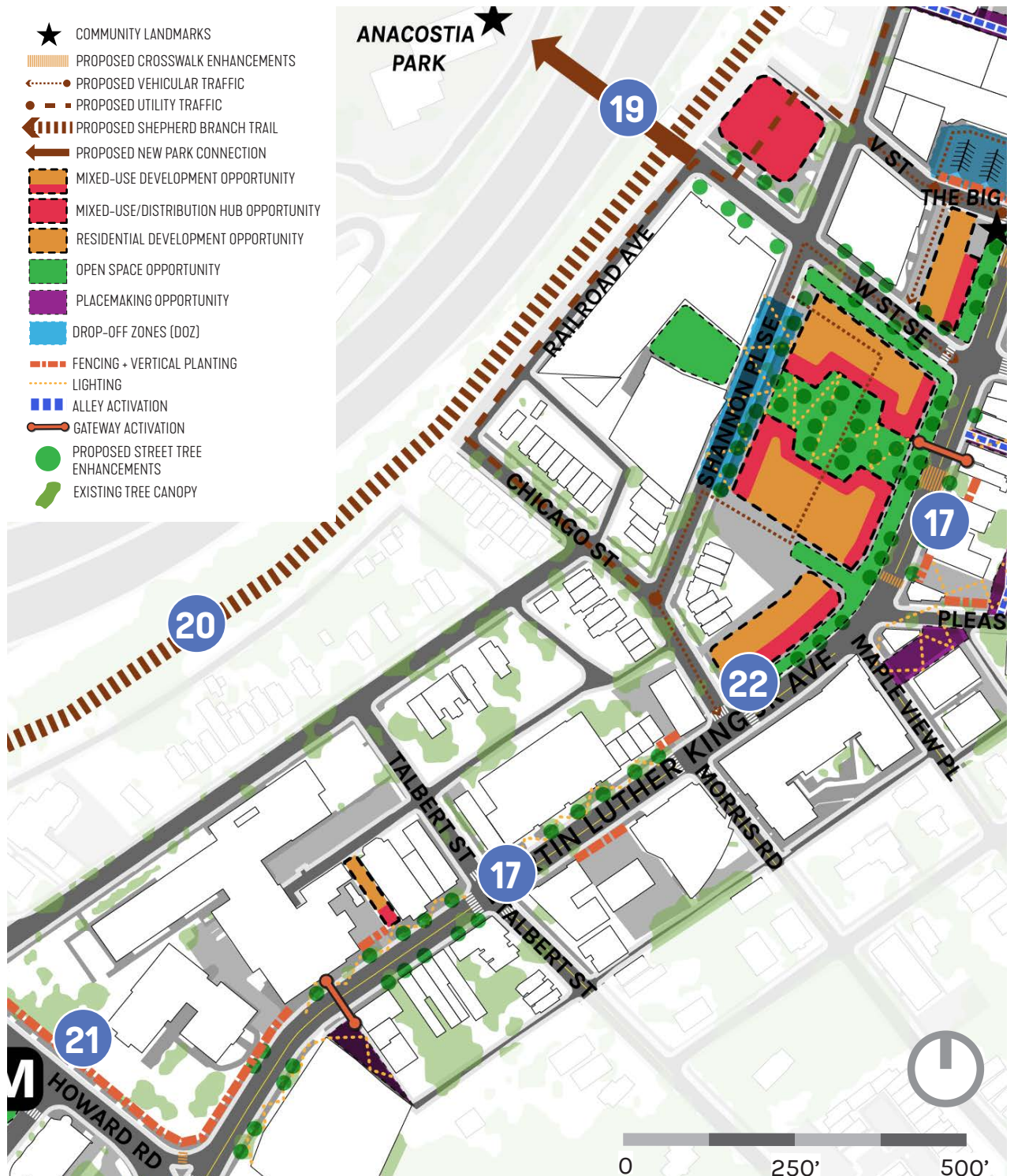
Cyclists utilizing an active trail

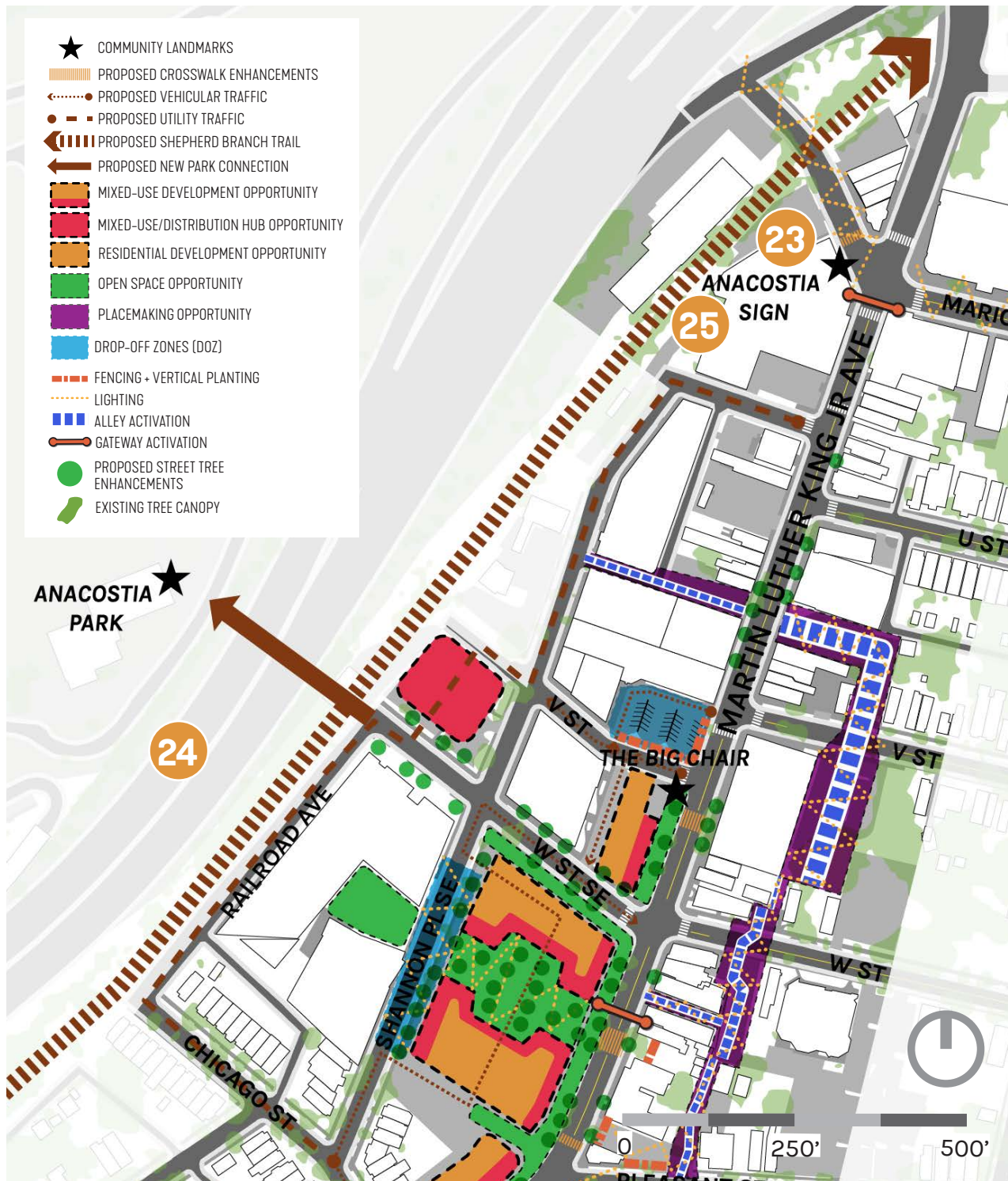
Photo Credit: SmithGroup



Dedicated bus lane separating transit users from passenger vehicles

Photo Credit: NYC DOT Street Design Manual



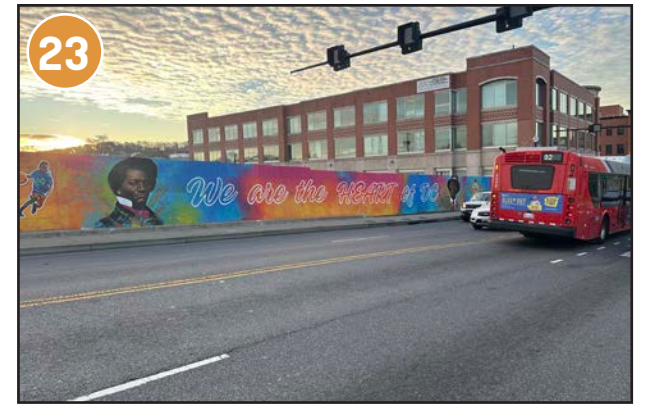


# RECOMMENDATIONS

## MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. AVENUE SE | NORTH

### PLACEMAKING:

- 23** Celebrate key entry points with a gateway at Martin Luther King Jr. Avenue SE & Marion Barry Avenue.
- 24** Enhance connections to historic sites through improved signage and wayfinding.
- 25** Maintain the Anacostia sign at the corner as a cultural marker.



Prideful mural art celebrating local history

Photo Credit: SmithGroup



Pedestrian bridge connection at Anacostia.

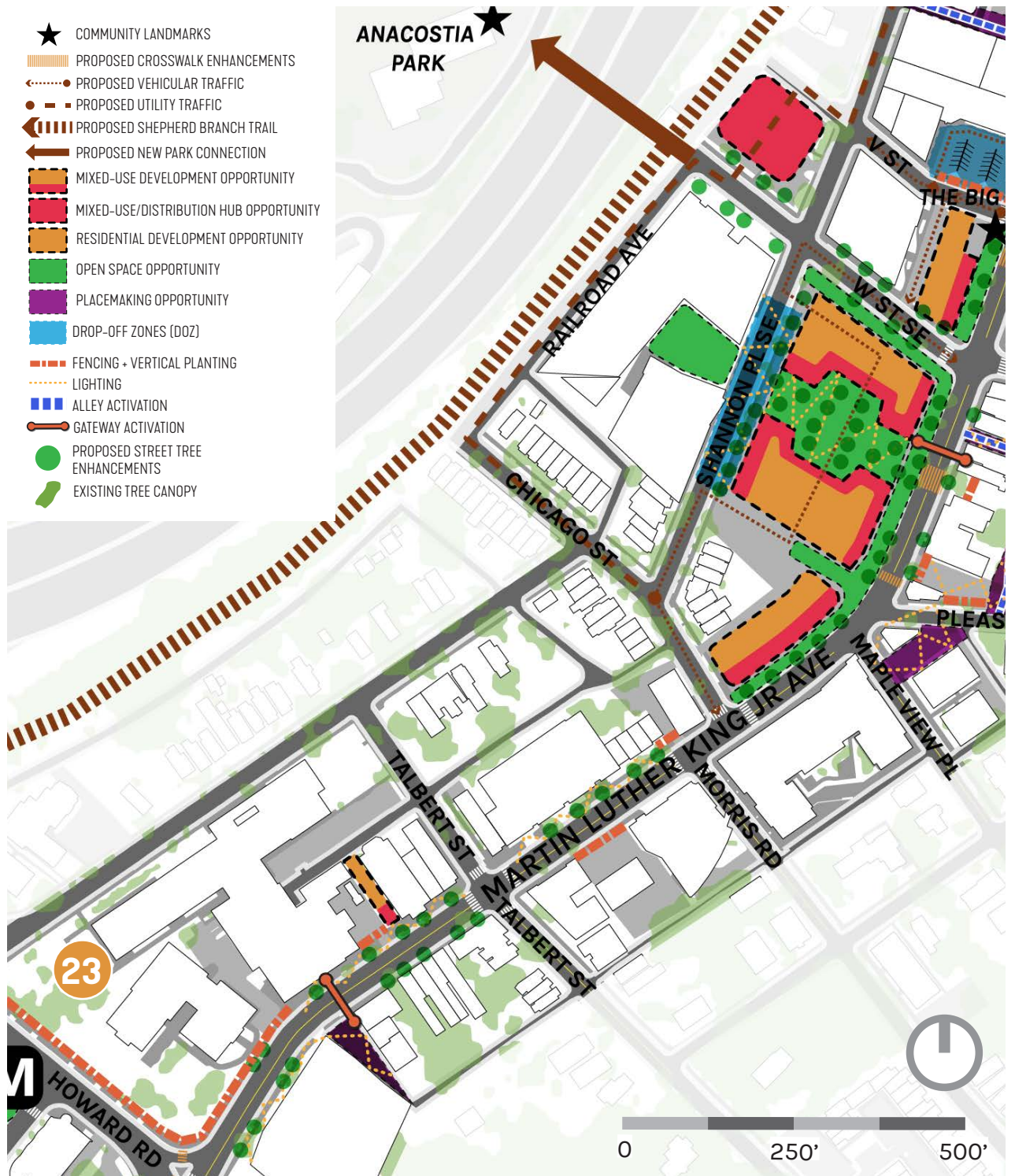
Photo Credit: NPS

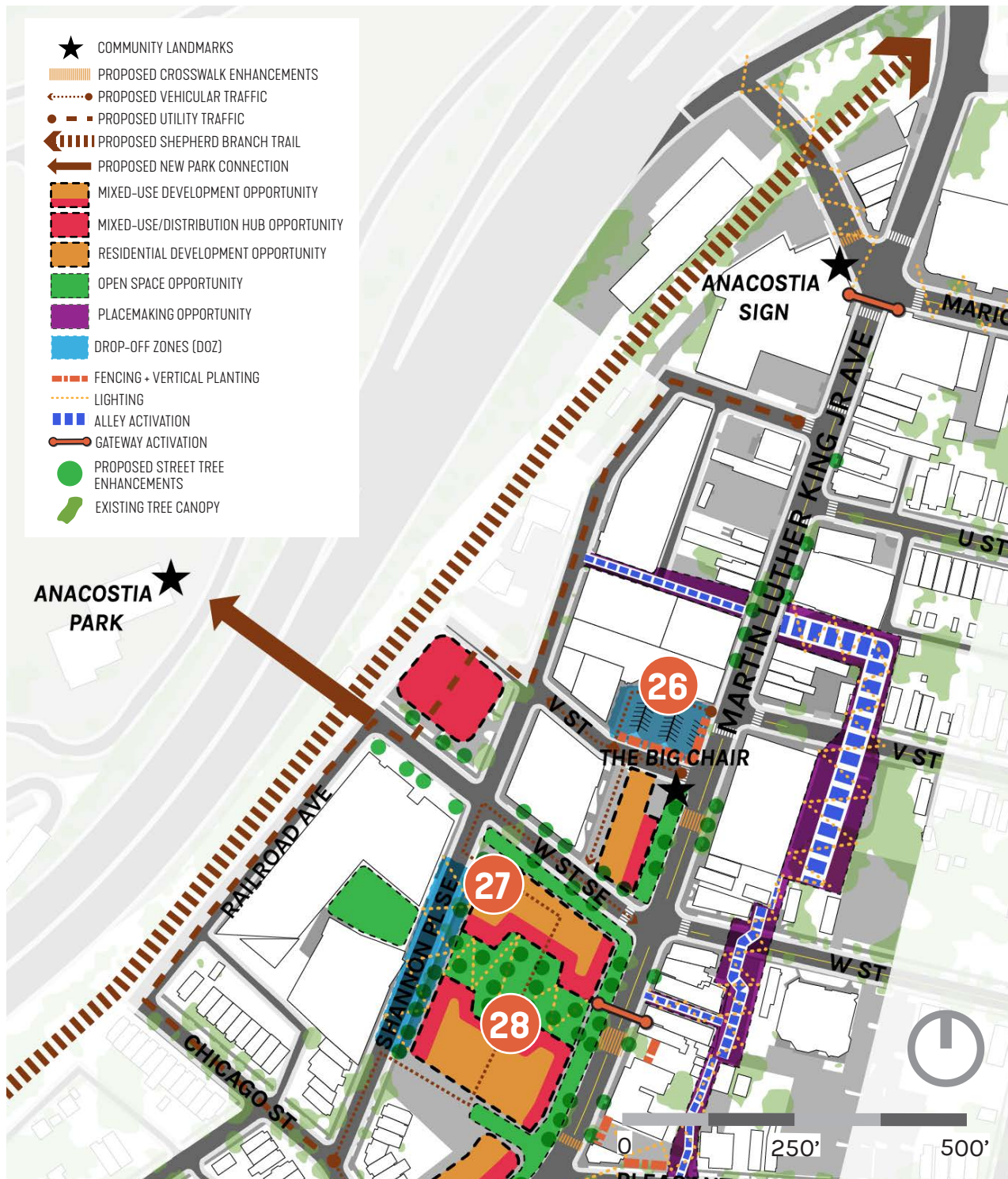
# MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. AVENUE SE | SOUTH



Historic Anacostia Sign | Anacostia SE DC

Photo Credit: SmithGroup



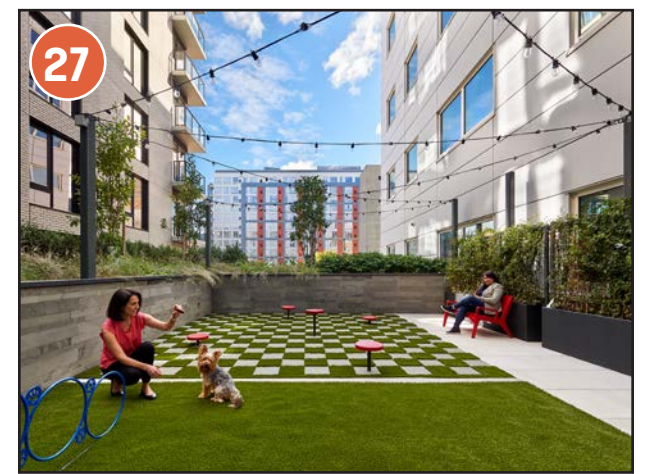


# RECOMMENDATIONS

## MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. AVENUE SE | NORTH

### ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT:

- 26** Maintain designated drop-off and short-term parking, including ADA-accessible spaces, to support local businesses.
- 27** Place public parking in structured garages integrated with new developments, and include green roofs where appropriate.
- 28** Consider underground parking solutions that also serve as stormwater management facilities.



Parking garage green roof

Photo Credit: SmithGroup

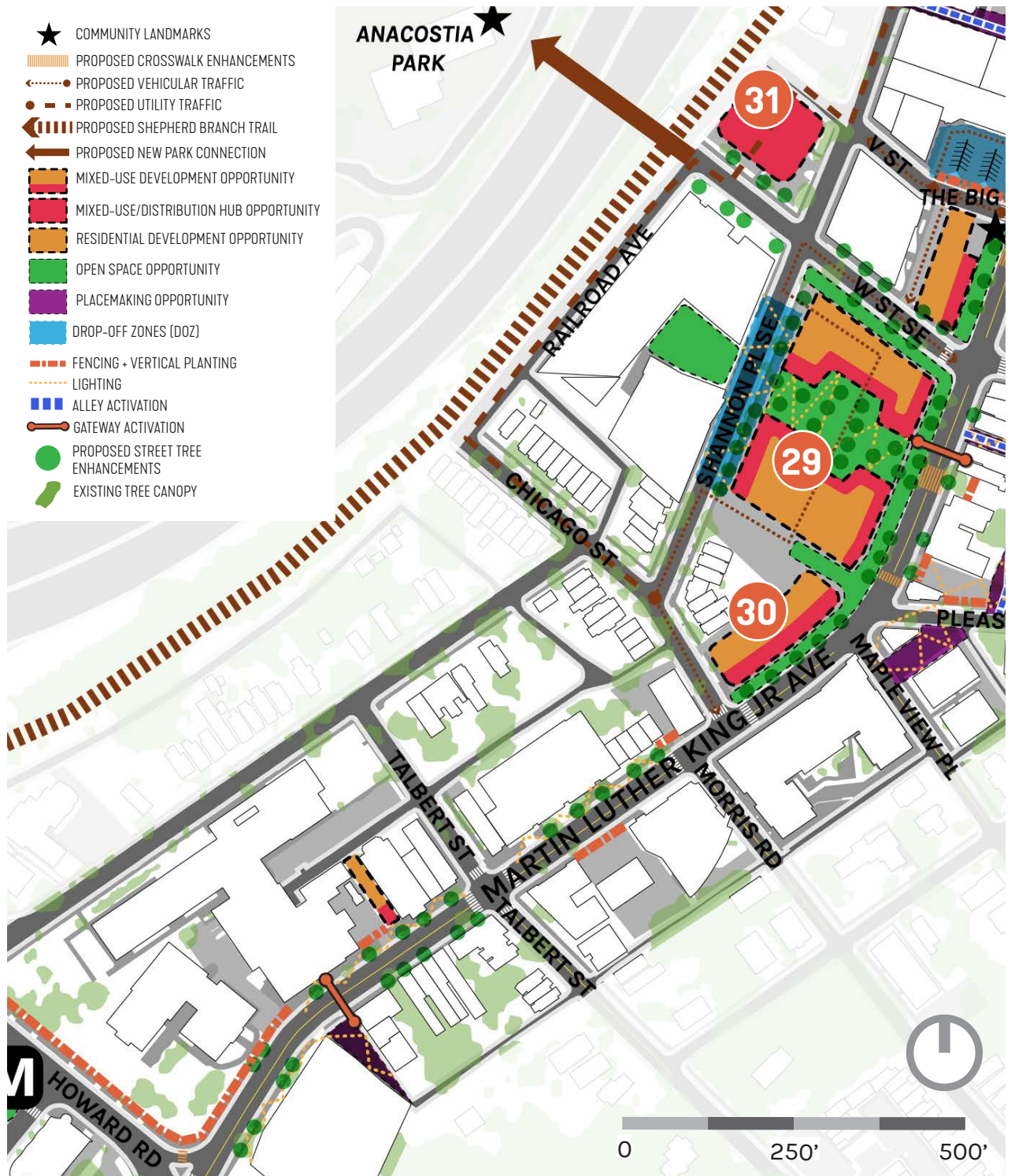
## MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. AVENUE SE | SOUTH

- 29 Ensure sufficient on- and off-street parking to accommodate future growth while balancing multimodal priorities.
- 30 Allow parking areas to have secure access with proper signage and lighting.
- 31 Study the feasibility of a distribution hub for large deliveries with last-mile delivery solutions to create jobs and reduce vehicle emissions.



Safe and accessible main street parking.

Photo Credit: SmithGroup



SECTION 4  
**Okie Street NE**

EXISTING CONDITIONS  
RECOMMENDATIONS



IVY  
CITY

NON-INSULATING





## OKIE STREET NE

### SUMMARY

The industrial aesthetic of Okie Street NE provides visual character and appeal to the corridor, offering a solid foundation for creating vibrant public spaces that blend industrial use with neighborhood flair. While the area’s land use patterns currently prioritize utility operations and vehicle movement—reflected in the wide roads, narrow sidewalks, and frequent curb cuts that limit walkability and social interaction—the existing infrastructure has the potential to support a more dynamic and engaging pedestrian environment. Ground-floor retail and residential uses are currently limited, however, there are opportunities to reimagine Okie Street as a mixed-use, pedestrian-friendly destination that promotes inclusivity and connectivity while embracing its industrial use.

# EXISTING SITE CONDITIONS

OKIE STREET NE | IVY CITY, DC





## DEMOGRAPHICS

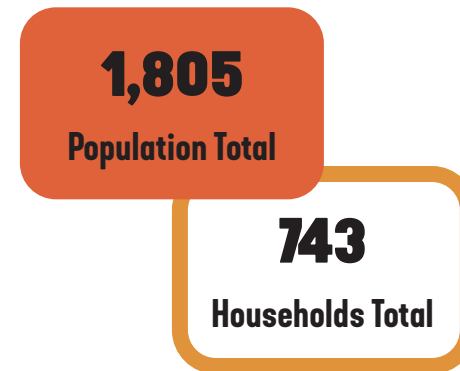
### OKIE STREET NE | IVY CITY, DC

Over the past ten years, the land uses on Okie Street NE have been transitioning from primarily industrial to a mix of industrial, retail, and residential uses. The following demographic data represents Census Tract 88.03 - Block Group 1, which extends from Mt Olivet Rd. NE to the west, Montana Avenue NE to the east, and encompasses Okie Street NE in the middle. Over 75% of the 1,800 residents in this area identify as Black, and nearly 80% of the population are between the ages of 25 and 60, showing a strong workforce community.

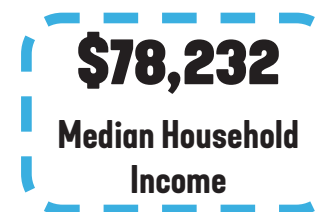
Just over 80% of the 743 households in the area surrounding Okie Street NE are renters. The median household income is \$78,232, 26% less than the District-wide median household income of \$105,897. Ninety-Three percent of people in the area have at least a high school diploma, and 37% of people have a bachelor's degree or higher. The area's Total Crime Index is 328, and the Personal Crime Index is 701. In comparison, the District has a Total Crime Index is 177 and a Personal Crime Index is 215.

Due to recent developments such as the Hecht Warehouse project, the demographic composition of the area is undergoing changes. This relatively small but significant demographic shift has the potential to distort Census block data.

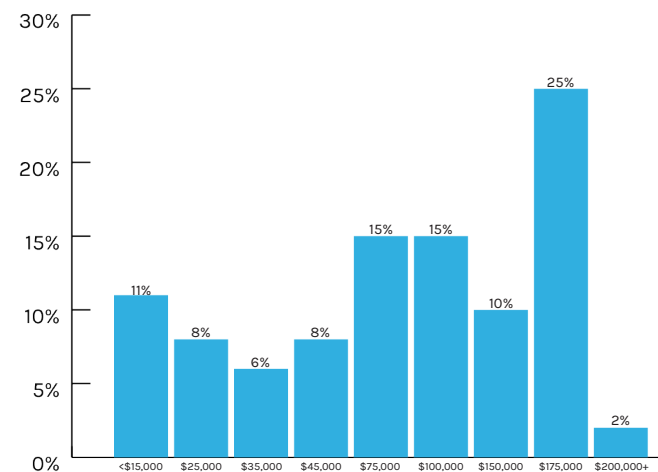
### Population



Source: 2023 American Community Survey Estimates

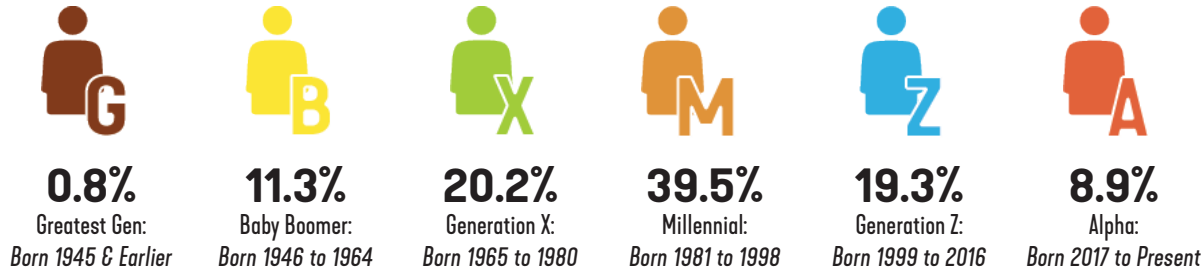


### Household Income\*

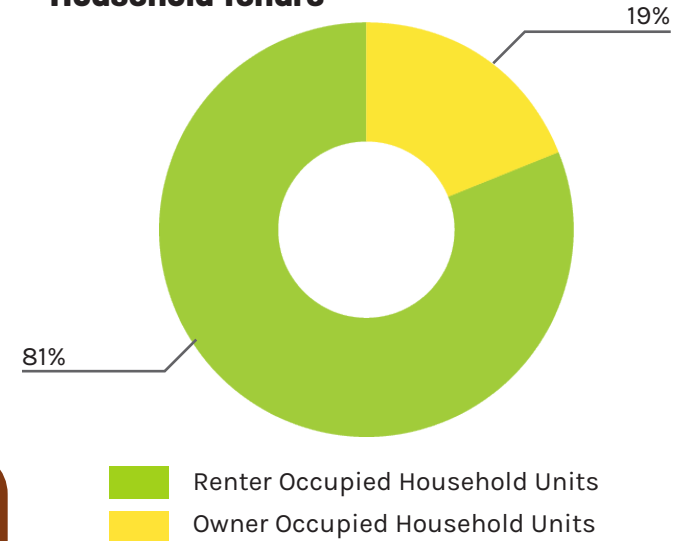


\*Source: 2020 Decennial Census

## Population by Generation

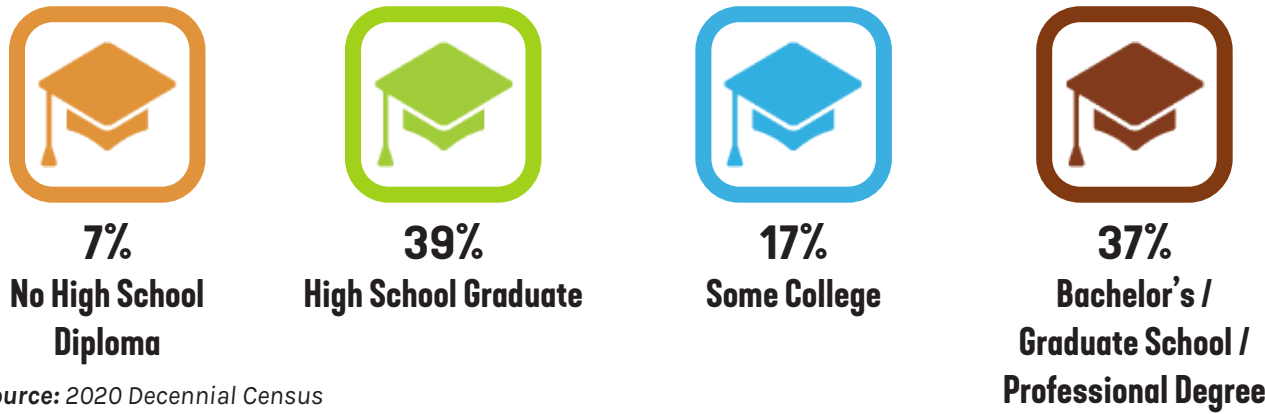


## Household Tenure\*



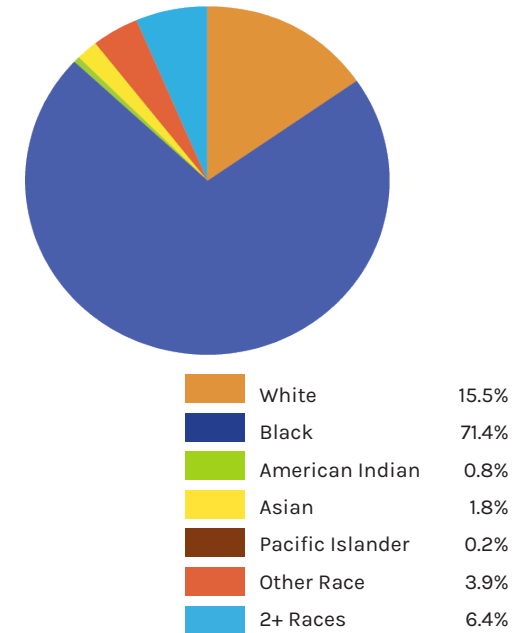
\*Source: 2020 Decennial Census

## Education\*



\*Source: 2020 Decennial Census

## Population by Race\*



## Crime Index



Source: 2023 American Community Survey Estimates

# PEDESTRIAN EXPERIENCE

## OKIE STREET NE

The pedestrian environment along Okie Street NE varies in quality between the east and west sides of the corridor. West of Fenwick Street NE, Okie Street features very narrow sidewalks and areas with obstructions and debris that restrict accessibility. Additionally, there is no sidewalk on the south side of Okie Street west of OceanPro. In this segment, curb space is frequently occupied by parked vehicles and service trucks. The intersection of Okie Street and Fenwick Street NE is notably busy, with high pedestrian activity, service vehicles, buses, cars, and bicycles. Currently, this intersection is controlled by a single stop sign on Okie Street and lacks marked crosswalks on Fenwick Street, which can pose challenges for pedestrian crossings during peak traffic periods. East of Fenwick Street NE, multiple curb cuts and inconsistent sidewalk widths along Okie Street present accessibility challenges, particularly for individuals using wheelchairs, strollers, or other mobility devices. These conditions highlight opportunities for enhancing access and connectivity along the corridor.



Open service garages



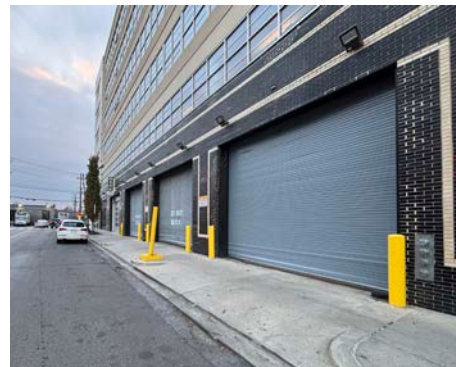
Excessive litter and broken glass



Underutilized and blank frontages



Sidewalks designed with obstructions



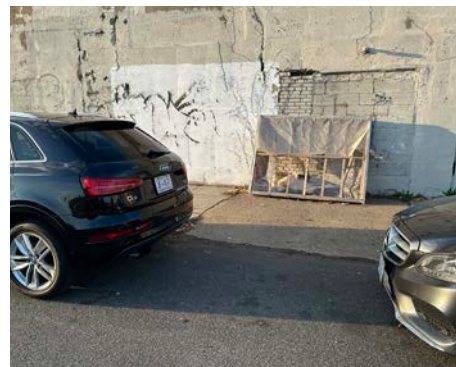
Excessive driveways and curb cuts



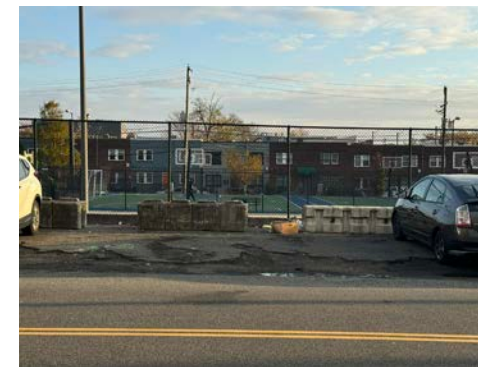
Grates, gates, and car-oriented design



Missing crosswalk on Fenwick Street



Waste disposal creating obstructions



Makeshift parking in lieu of sidewalk

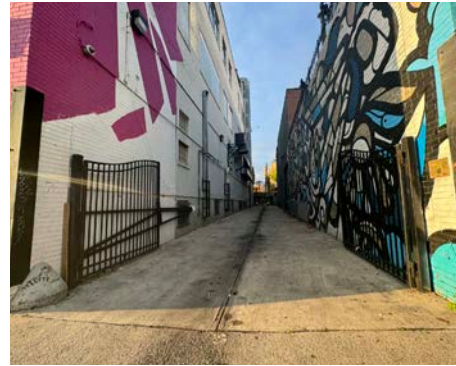
# URBAN DESIGN & PUBLIC SPACE ELEMENTS

## OKIE STREET NE

The current urban design features along Okie Street NE include elements that aim to foster a sense of place. Notable features such as public space, signage, murals, and adaptive reuse of existing buildings contribute to visual interest and neighborhood character. These elements are primarily associated with recent development. Given the concentration of industrial uses in the area, there is potential to enhance visual continuity between these newer developments and the adjacent residential neighborhoods to the southwest—presenting an opportunity to improve connectivity through future design interventions.



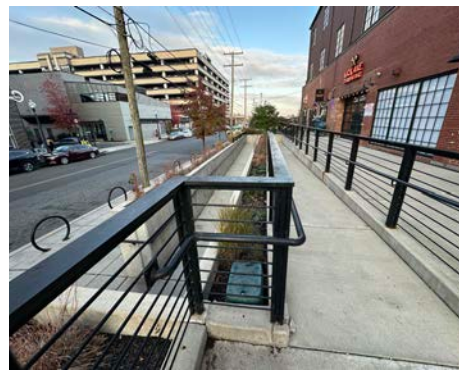
Hecht Warehouse



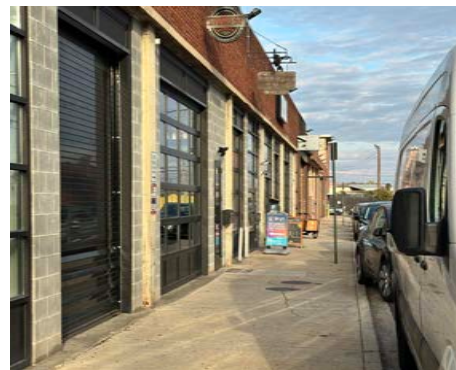
Underutilized alley with mural design



Parking garage



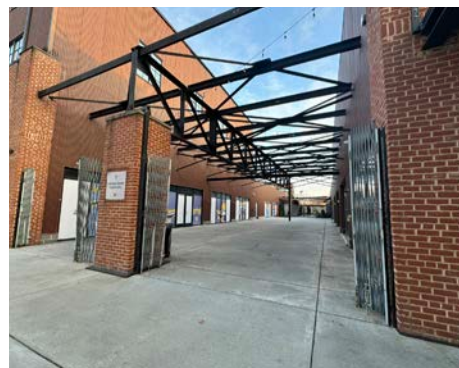
Businesses above sidewalk grade



Businesses utilizing garages



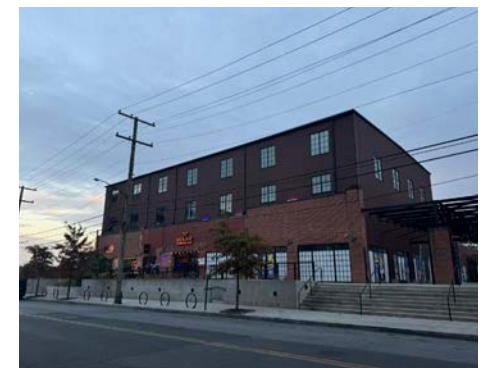
Sidewalk signage



Underutilized plaza space



Unwelcoming fencing surrounding industry



Grade separated uses



## KEY FINDINGS | OKIE STREET NE

### INDUSTRIAL CHARACTER AND LAND USE:

- Dominated by industrial land use with limited residential development.
- Primarily services, utility vehicles, and industrial operations, creating a challenging environment for pedestrians.

### INFRASTRUCTURE CHALLENGES:

- Very wide roads with narrow sidewalks hinder pedestrian accessibility.
- Numerous curb cuts accommodate public works vehicles, but create barriers to pedestrian engagement.
- Lack of active ground-floor retail limits pedestrian interaction and social opportunities.

### PEDESTRIAN SPACE UNDERUTILIZATION:

- Existing pedestrian gathering spaces are underutilized due to lack of activation, programming, or amenities.
- Sidewalks and available open space could be reimagined for more pedestrian-friendly uses.

### ENVIRONMENTAL AND VISUAL IMPROVEMENTS:

- Current tree canopy does not provide adequate shade or stormwater management benefits.
- Streetscape enhancements like paving changes, café seating, and façade improvements are needed for a more engaging pedestrian experience.

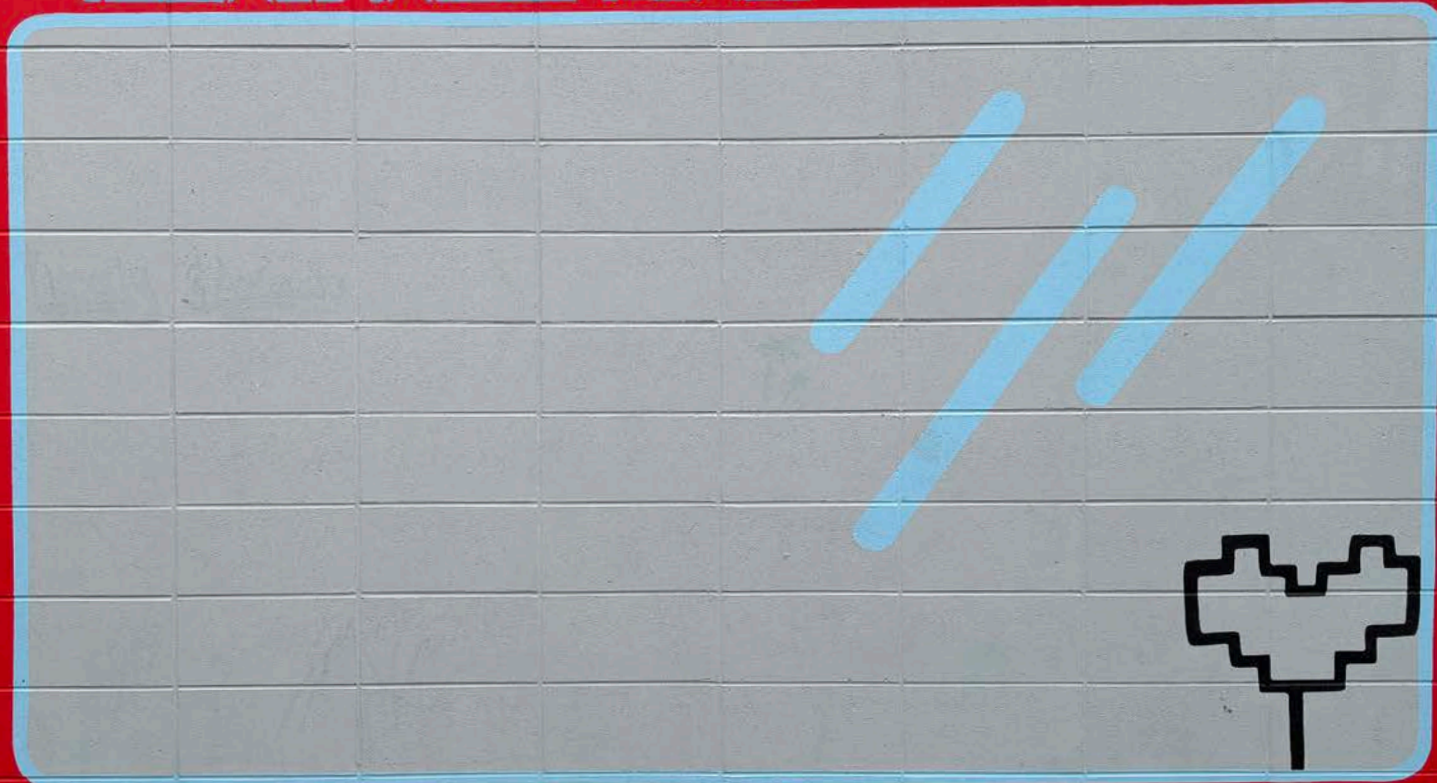
### CONNECTIVITY AND SAFETY:

- The intersection of Fenwick Street NE and Okie Street NE offers opportunities for enhancement, particularly regarding traffic management and pedestrian safety. Implementing a four-way stop and clearly designated crosswalks could facilitate safer pedestrian movement.
- Improved lighting and gateway treatments could enhance wayfinding and safety and create a stronger sense of place.

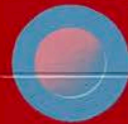
### POTENTIAL FOR MIXED-USE DEVELOPMENT:

- Opportunities for increased residential development alongside industrial operations.

PLAY ALL DAY



THE LANE



# OVERALL RECOMMENDATIONS | OKIE STREET NE



## LAND USE PLANNING AND COMMUNITY-CENTERED GROWTH:

- Explore mixed-use Production, Distribution, and Repair (PDR) land uses that allows for increased residential development and community-focused commercial spaces, and co-location of municipal facilities.
- Maximize underutilized spaces by repurposing parking lots and large parcels for new development, community amenities, or green spaces without reducing essential parking capacity.

## ENVIRONMENTAL RESILIENCE:

- Increase tree canopy coverage with species that provide meaningful shade and stormwater management benefits.
- Incorporate green infrastructure into streetscapes, parking areas, and open spaces to reduce heat island effects and improve environmental health.

## ACTIVATED STREETSAPES AND FRONTAGES:

- Widen sidewalks and improve pedestrian crossings, particularly at the intersection of Okie Street NE and Fenwick Street NE, to reduce pedestrian-vehicle conflicts.
- Activate ground-floor spaces by encouraging retail, cafés, or pop-up markets to foster community engagement.
- Implement facade improvements and introduce café seating areas to create a more inviting and vibrant public realm.

## CONNECTIVITY AND MULTIMODAL ACCESS:

- Reduce on-street parking where feasible to accommodate multimodal transit options, including bike lanes and micromobility infrastructure.
- Introduce a network of clear wayfinding signs and gateway treatments to create a stronger sense of identity for the corridor.
- Improve lighting and crosswalk design to enhance pedestrian safety and support evening activation.

## CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE PLACEMAKING:

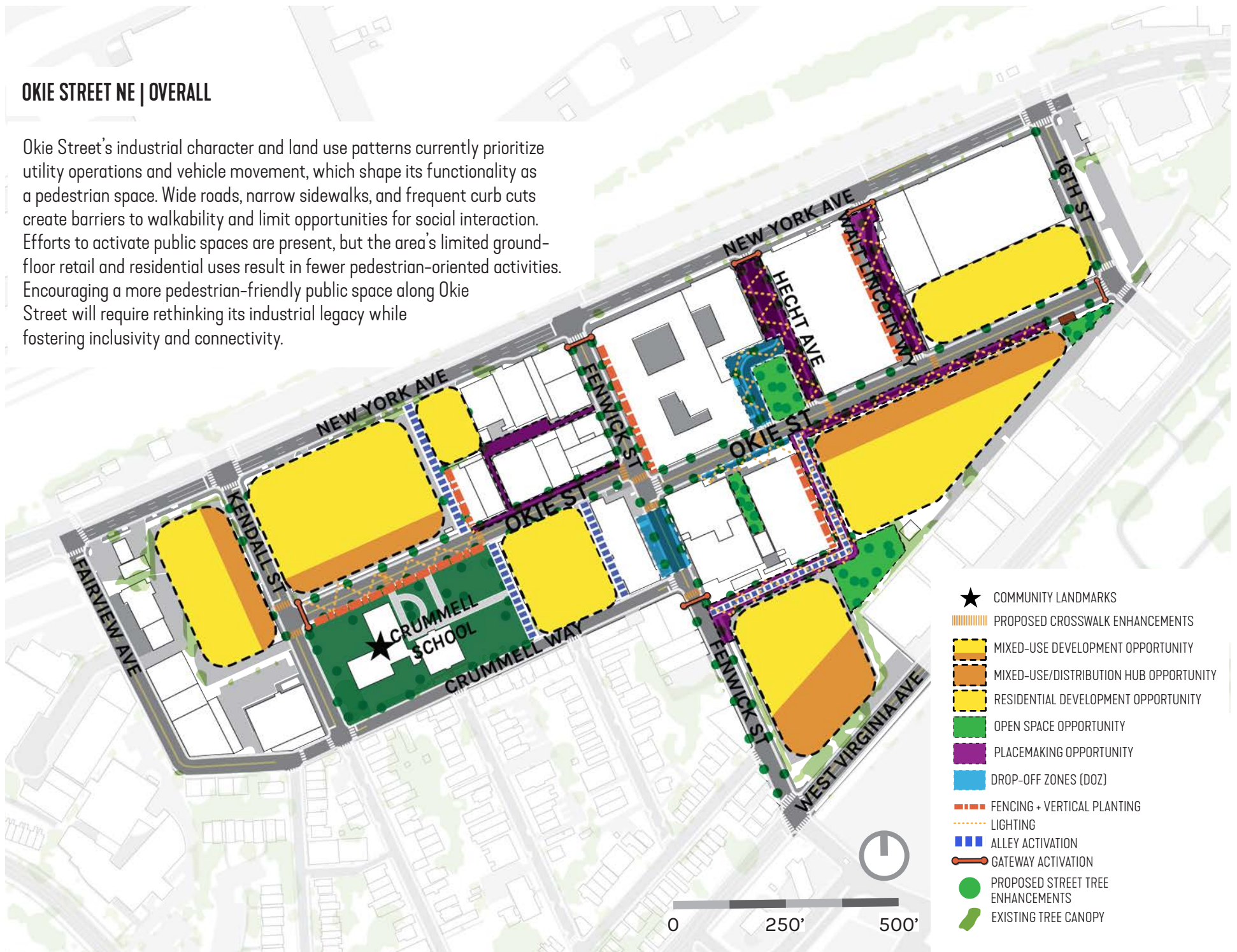
- Develop a distinct corridor identity through branded signage, public art, and culturally relevant design elements.
- Create community gathering spaces that reflect the cultural history and identity of surrounding neighborhoods, promoting inclusivity and belonging.

## ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT:

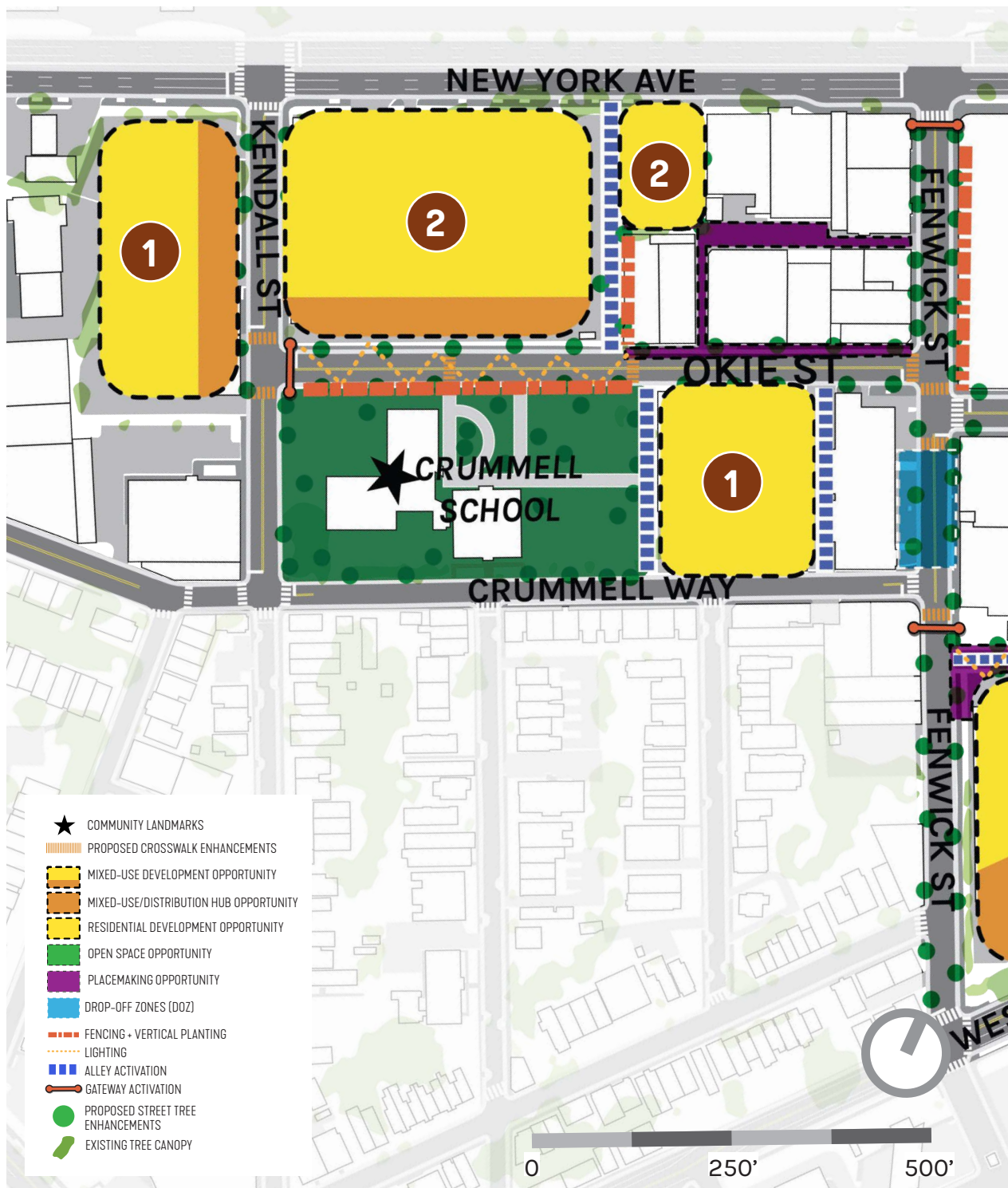
- Incentivize small business development by offering affordable commercial space within redeveloped buildings.
- Support workforce training programs focused on industries relevant to the area's industrial legacy while transitioning to new economic opportunities, such as creative manufacturing or green industries.

## OKIE STREET NE | OVERALL

Okie Street’s industrial character and land use patterns currently prioritize utility operations and vehicle movement, which shape its functionality as a pedestrian space. Wide roads, narrow sidewalks, and frequent curb cuts create barriers to walkability and limit opportunities for social interaction. Efforts to activate public spaces are present, but the area’s limited ground-floor retail and residential uses result in fewer pedestrian-oriented activities. Encouraging a more pedestrian-friendly public space along Okie Street will require rethinking its industrial legacy while fostering inclusivity and connectivity.



- ★ COMMUNITY LANDMARKS
- ▨ PROPOSED CROSSWALK ENHANCEMENTS
- ▨ MIXED-USE DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITY
- ▨ MIXED-USE/DISTRIBUTION HUB OPPORTUNITY
- ▨ RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITY
- ▨ OPEN SPACE OPPORTUNITY
- ▨ PLACEMAKING OPPORTUNITY
- ▨ DROP-OFF ZONES (DOZ)
- ▨ FENCING + VERTICAL PLANTING
- ▨ LIGHTING
- ▨ ALLEY ACTIVATION
- ▨ GATEWAY ACTIVATION
- PROPOSED STREET TREE ENHANCEMENTS
- ▨ EXISTING TREE CANOPY



# RECOMMENDATIONS

## OKIE STREET NE | WEST

### LAND USE:

- 1** Redevelop underutilized properties or PDR parcels into mixed-use developments that prioritize residential uses.
- 2** Explore the conversion of structured or surface lots used for service vehicles, in coordination with managing agencies, into mixed-use developments with integrated parking.
- 3** Explore alternative uses for the existing former childcare/play space at Okie St NE and Hecht Ave NE as a new community gathering space.
- 4** Explore opportunities to integrate local-serving job training centers, commercial kitchens, cultural centers, and government services within new mixed-use developments to support employment and economic growth.



Adaptive reuse of industrial buildings for commercial development

Photo Credit: HCS

# OKIE STREET NE | EAST



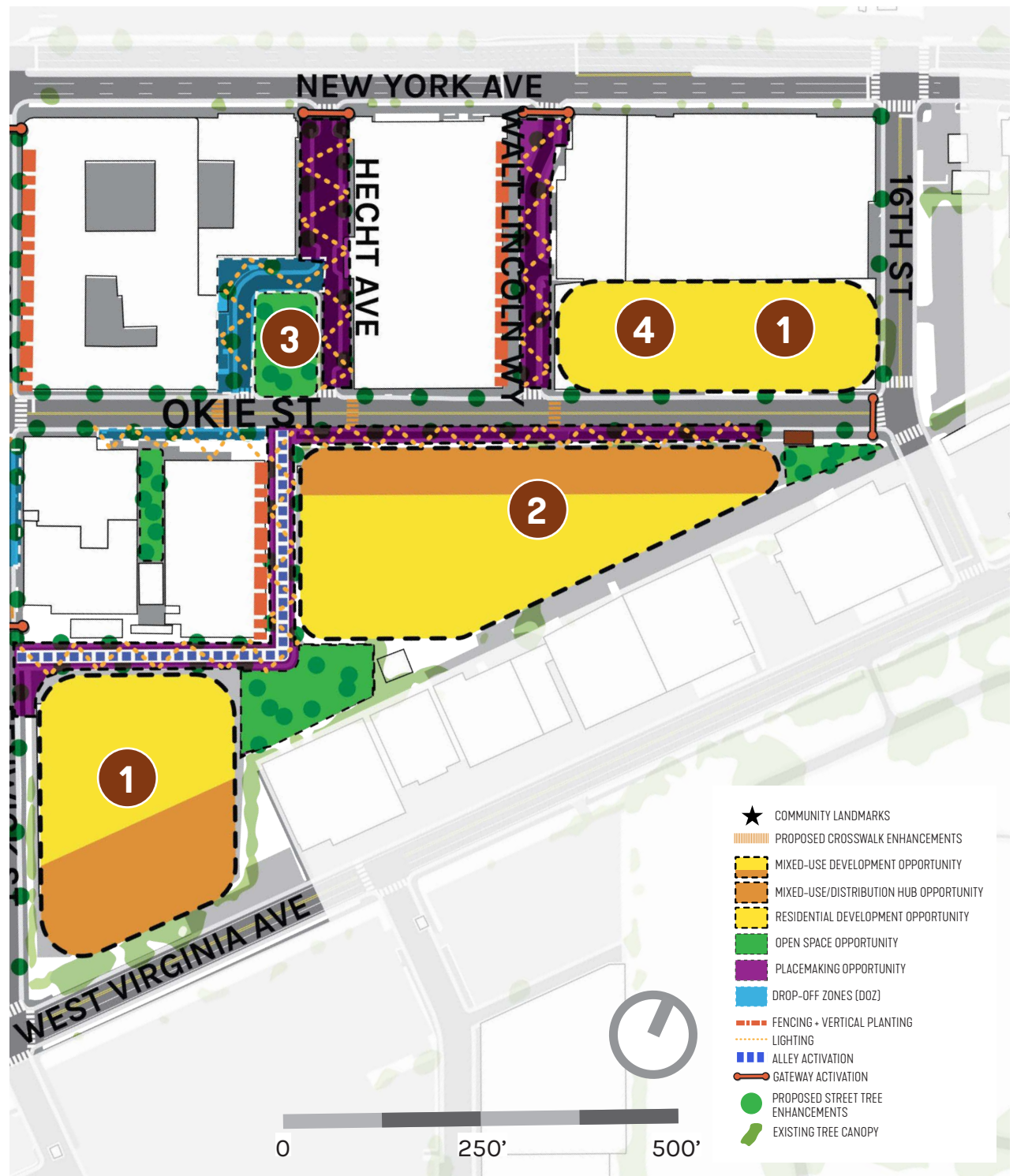
Mixed-use development Edgewood, DC

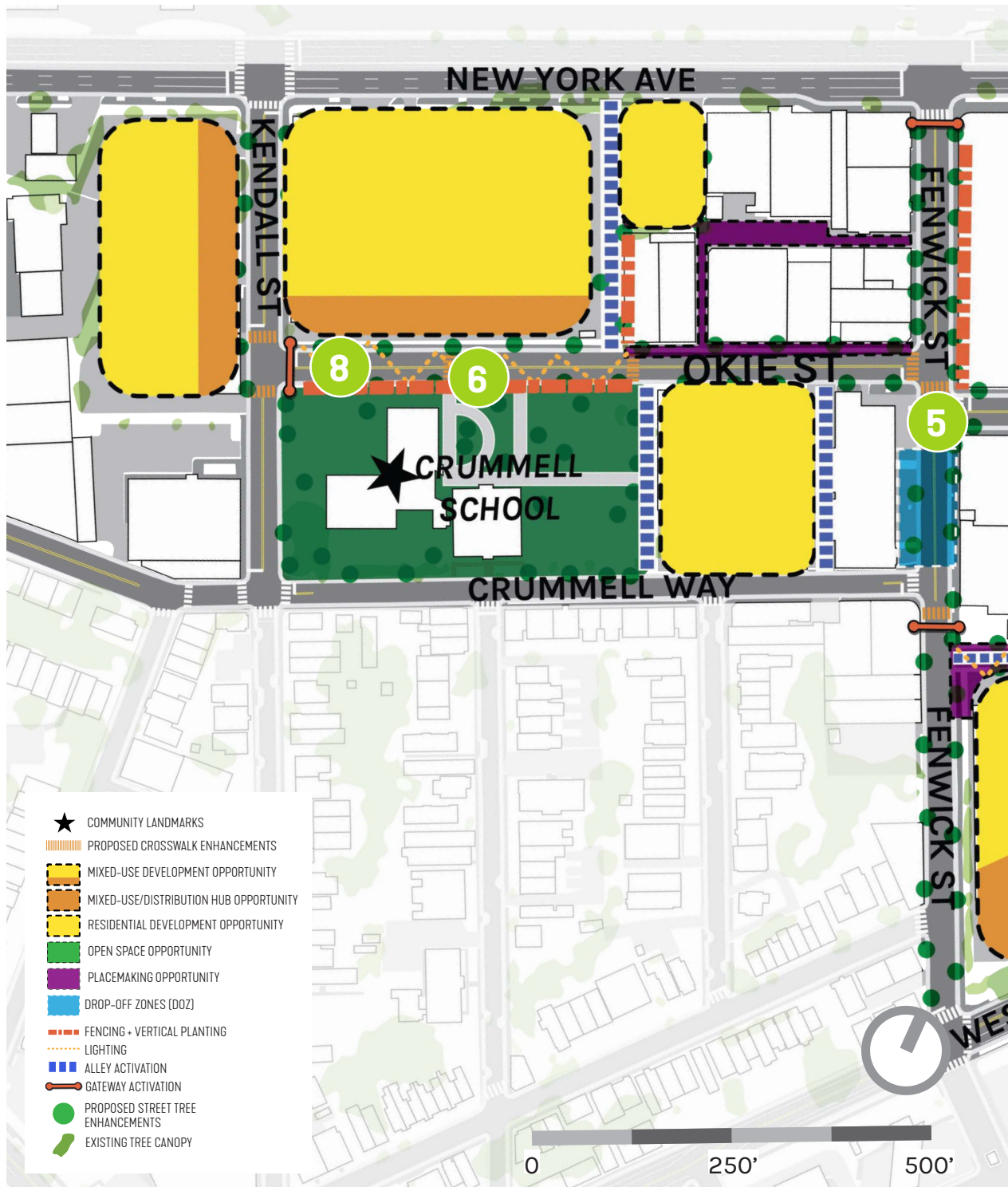
Photo Credit: Apartments.com



Collaborative cooking and learning in a commercial test kitchen

Photo Credit: DC Central Kitchen





# RECOMMENDATIONS

## OKIE STREET NE | WEST

### ENVIRONMENTAL:

- 5** Expand tree canopy using native species resilient to urban conditions.
- 6** Integrate green infrastructure, including green roofs, bioretention, vegetative walls, and permeable surfaces, to reduce the urban heat island effect.



Green infrastructure along a walkable streetscape

Photo Credit: SmithGroup



Park space incorporating stormwater management features

Photo Credit: SmithGroup

# OKIE STREET NE | EAST

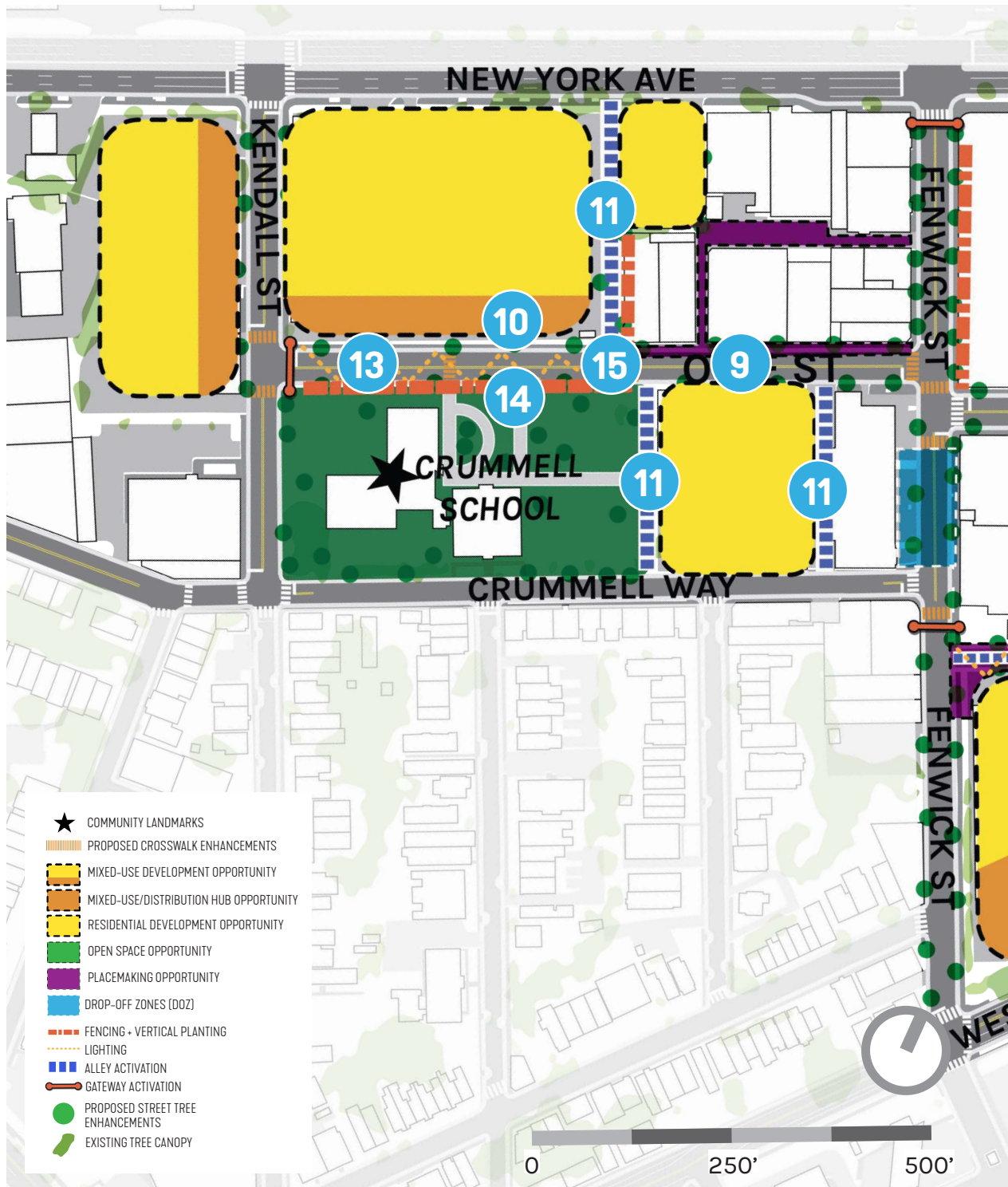
- 7 Create small parks and green spaces integrating stormwater management features.
- 8 Use public art and decorative fencing (potentially with native vegetation) to soften blank walls and necessary barriers.



Decorative art fencing that provides visual appeal and increased security

Photo Credit: Bard School





# RECOMMENDATIONS

## OKIE STREET NE | WEST

### ACTIVATED STREETScape:

- 9** Increase sidewalk widths along Okie Street NE and key commercial corridors.
- 10** Reduce traffic speeds and driving lane widths to improve pedestrian comfort and safety.
- 11** Activate alleys as public pathways that support placemaking and outdoor business use.
- 12** Improve existing plazas with seating, greenery, and lighting.
- 13** Implement decorative lighting installations, such as string lights, to enhance public spaces and alleys.
- 14** Remove illegal parking, add sidewalks, and add on-street parking on the south side of Okie Street NE.
- 15** Break up large blocks with mid-block connections to improve pedestrian flow.



Activated alleyway supporting outdoor restaurant dining

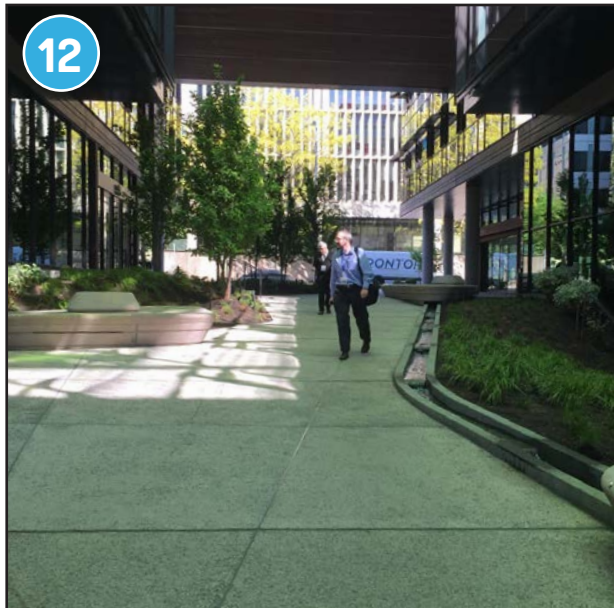
Photo Credit: SmithGroup

# OKIE STREET NE | EAST



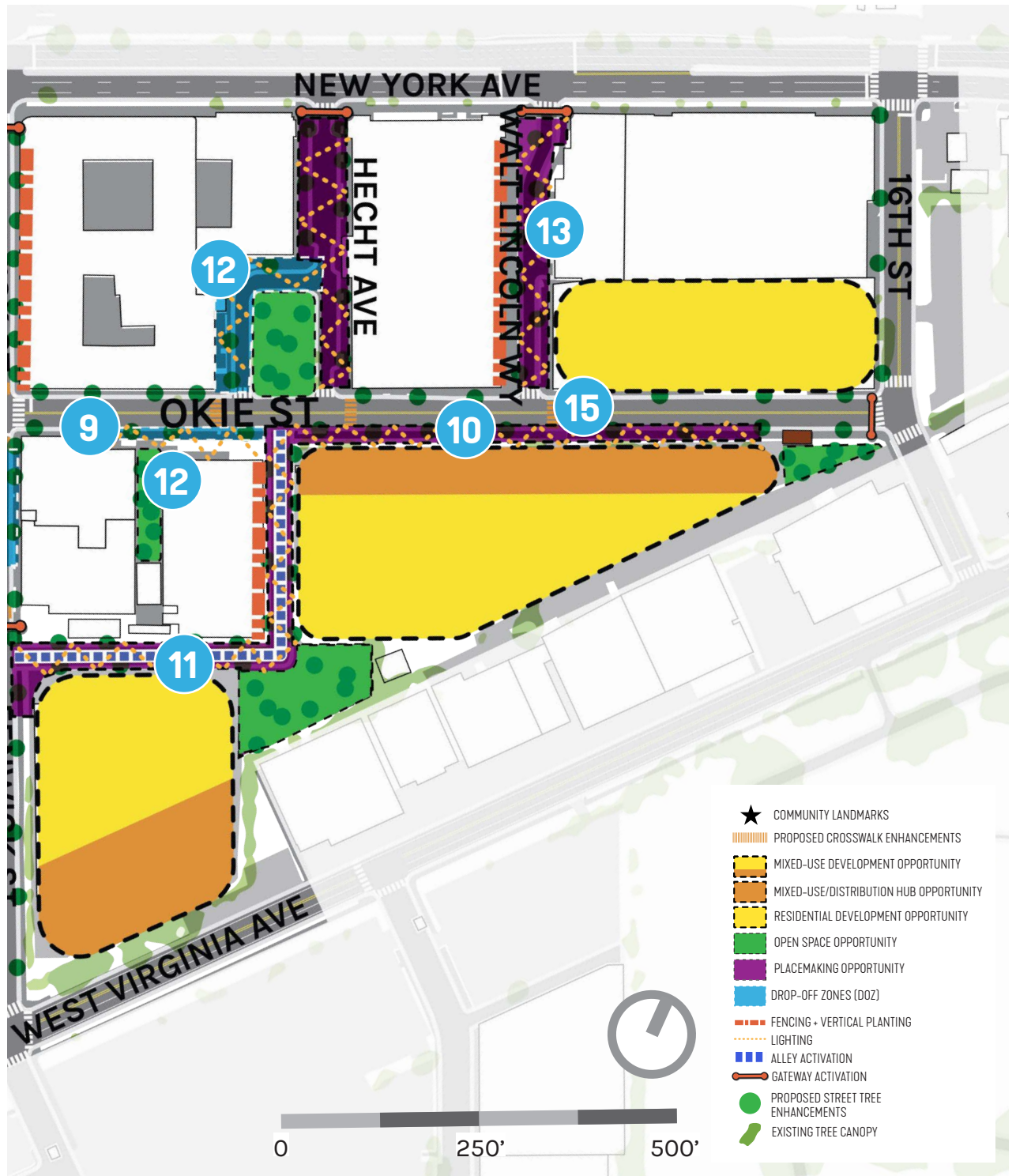
Decorative art installation that accommodates public gathering

Photo Credit: PPS.org

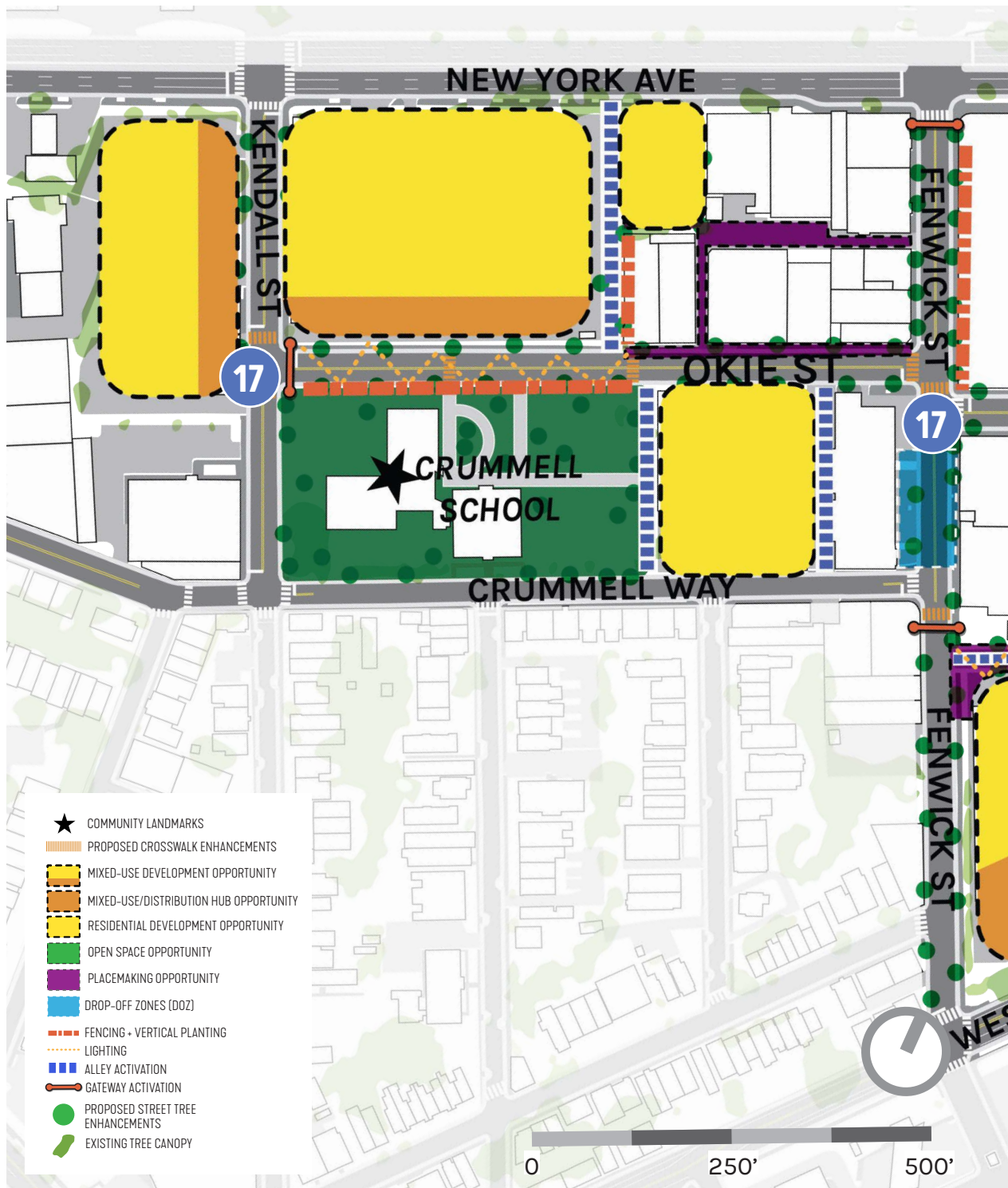


Plaza space between buildings

Photo Credit: SmithGroup



- ★ COMMUNITY LANDMARKS
- PROPOSED CROSSWALK ENHANCEMENTS
- MIXED-USE DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITY
- MIXED-USE/DISTRIBUTION HUB OPPORTUNITY
- RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITY
- OPEN SPACE OPPORTUNITY
- PLACEMAKING OPPORTUNITY
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- PROPOSED STREET TREE ENHANCEMENTS
- EXISTING TREE CANOPY

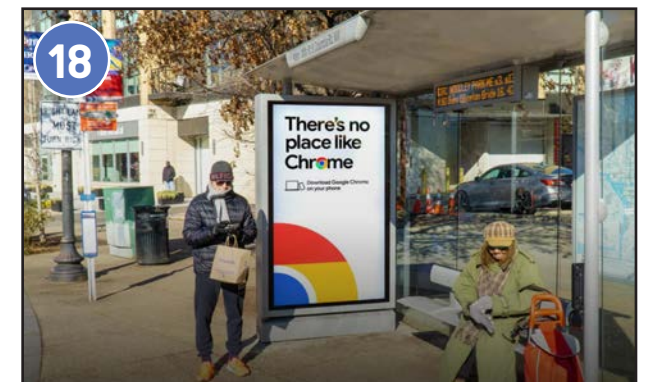


# RECOMMENDATIONS

## OKIE STREET NE | WEST

### CONNECTIVITY:

- 16** Discourage truck through traffic on Okie Street NE.
- 17** Study traffic calming at key intersections, including Okie & Kendall, Okie & Fenwick, Okie & Hecht, and Okie & 16th improve pedestrian safety.
- 18** Install enhanced amenities with space for bus transition and idling.
- 19** Establish drop-off zones for rideshare, deliveries, and pedestrian pick-ups in key areas.
- 20** Implement a micro-distribution hub to support last-mile e-commerce delivery and economic diversity.



Bus shelter

Photo Credit: clearchanneloutdoor.com

# OKIE STREET NE | EAST



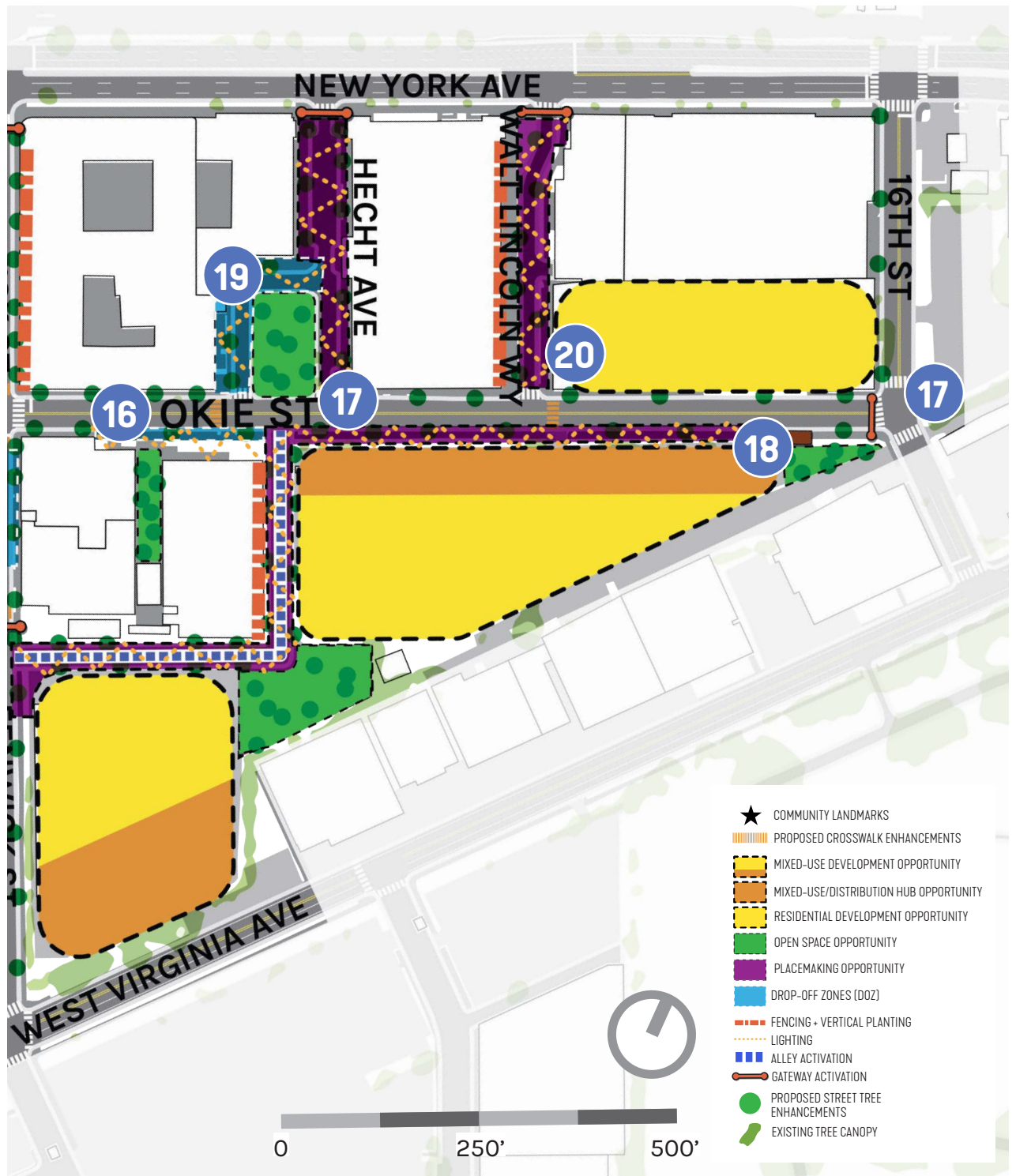
Examples of traffic calming at an intersection

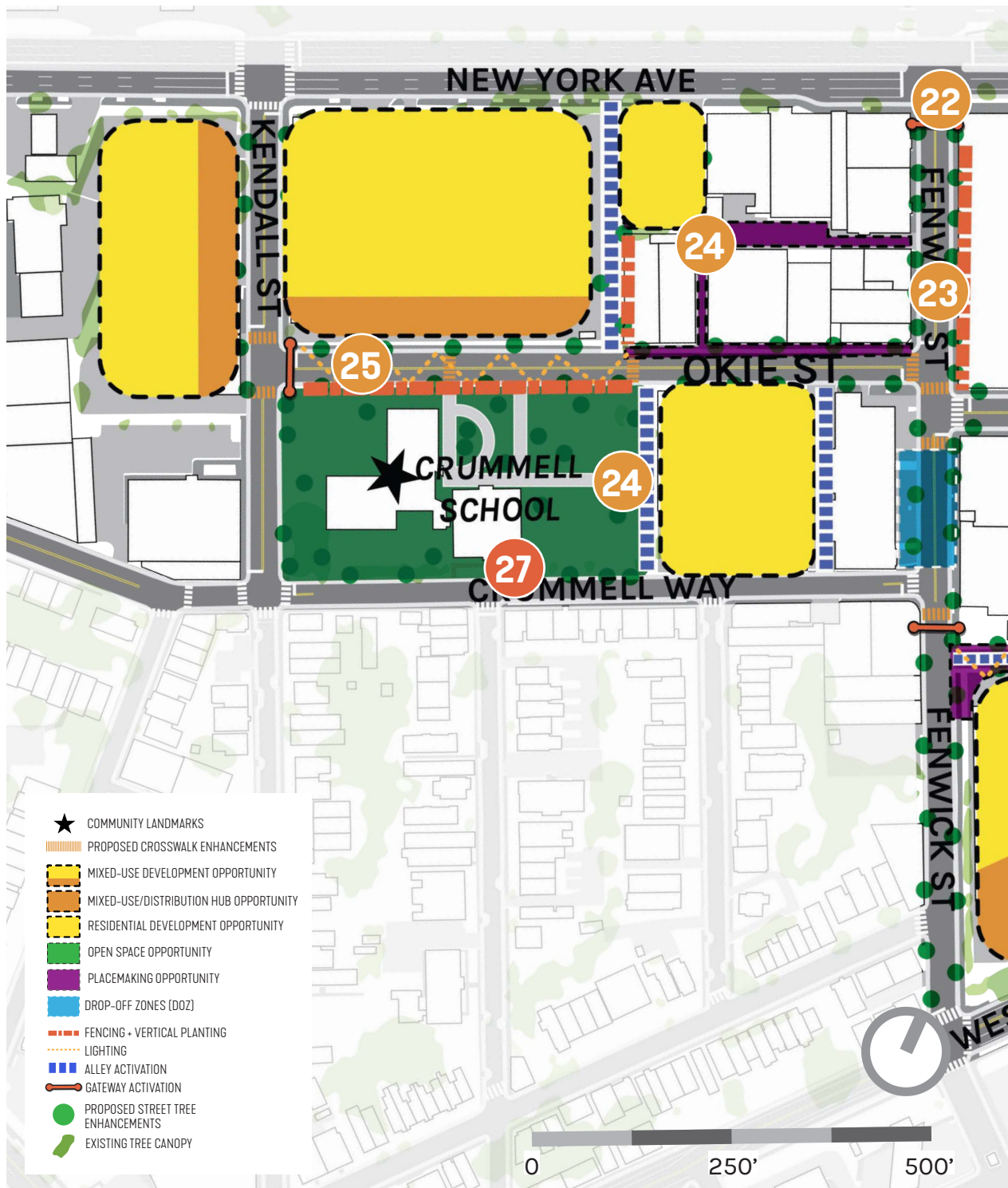
Photo Credit: SmithGroup



Rideshare drop-off and pick-up zone separated from vehicular traffic flow

Photo Credit: Curbed NY





# RECOMMENDATIONS

OKIE STREET NE | WEST

## PLACEMAKING:

- 22** Develop a unified gateway design to strengthen community identity.
- 23** Implement wayfinding signage consistent with other placemaking efforts.
- 24** Use public art and placemaking strategies to activate underutilized spaces.
- 25** Enhance signage and lighting to improve connections to cultural and historic assets.



Large mural and iconic signage activating an adaptive reuse building | Union Market NE DC

Photo Credit: Greater Greater Washington



Lighting enhancing connection to cultural assets

Photo Credit: SmithGroup

# OKIE STREET NE | EAST

## ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT:

- 26 Encourage businesses to engage with the public realm by integrating outdoor seating and retail activation.
- 27 Improve connectivity between the Crummell School planned play space and Okie Street NE to support community use.
- 28 Support small business activation in plazas and alleys through flexible outdoor spaces.



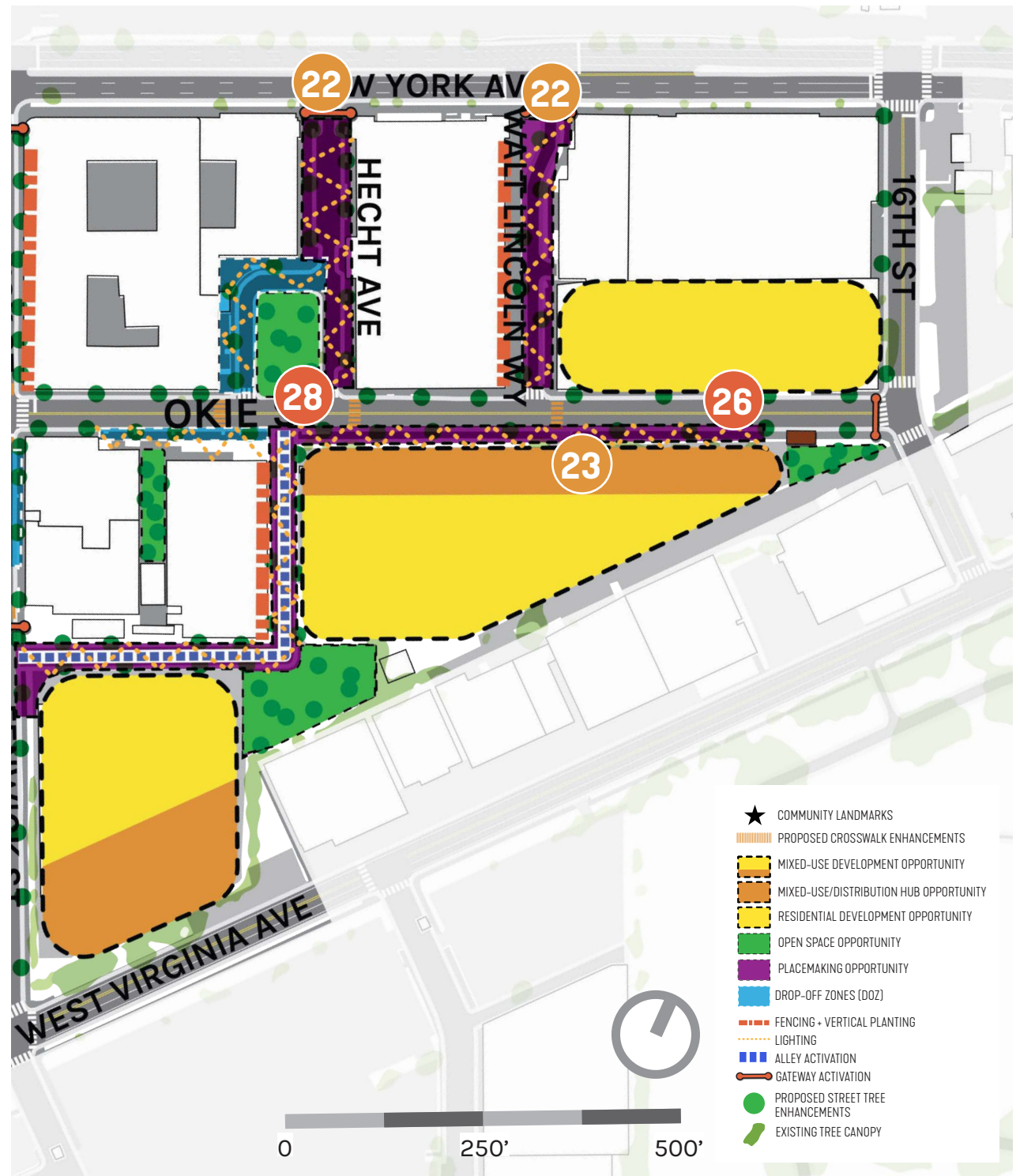
Flexible outdoor space allowing business patronage, gathering, and entertainment

Photo Credit: SmithGroup



Food truck parking integrated into public space with seating

Photo Credit: SmithGroup



**SECTION 5  
FUNDING +  
IMPLEMENTATION**





enlightened

enlightened.

Capital One café

Capital One café

Marion Barry St  
1200

NO  
TURN  
ON RED  
ARROW

ONLY

NO  
TURN  
ON RED  
ARROW

NO  
TURN  
ON RED  
ARROW

END  
ROAD WORK

SPEED  
LIMIT  
15

ROAD  
WORK  
AHEAD

SCHOOL BUS

# FUNDING + IMPLEMENTATION

To support the successful realization of the recommendations outlined in this document, strategies for identifying and securing funding opportunities were explored. These strategies will assist decision-makers, stakeholders, and community leaders to begin the process of aligning financial resources with project goals.

This section outlines a diverse range of funding strategies, from leveraging federal and state grants to securing private sector investments and philanthropic support. It highlights the importance of innovative funding mechanisms—such as community-led financing, and participatory budgeting—that empower local communities to maintain control over development initiatives. Combining traditional funding sources with innovative, community-driven solutions offers an opportunity to begin implementing transformative projects that prioritize equity, inclusivity, and long-term resilience.

## FUNDING STRATEGIES

### Aligning with Public Sector Programs

- Leverage federal and state infrastructure and transportation grant programs (e.g., BUILD, CMAQ, Reconnecting Communities) to finance capital improvements, particularly related to Environmental Resilience, Activated Streetscape and Connectivity recommendations.
- Utilize local funding sources such as Great Streets, the Neighborhood Prosperity Fund, and the Streets for People Program (DSLBD) to support targeted interventions related to recommendations for Activated Frontages, Placemaking, and Economic Empowerment.

### Cultivating Private Sector Participation

- Encourage private investment in mixed-use and micro-distribution developments that create jobs and activate the public realm per Land Use and Economic Empowerment recommendations.
- Incentivize business improvement districts (BIDs), developers, and anchor businesses to contribute to street-level enhancements through Community Benefits Agreements and BID assessments drawing from recommendations for Environmental Resilience, Activated Streetscapes, and Placemaking.

### Mobilizing Philanthropy and Nonprofit Capital

- Target foundations that support equitable cities, public art, and economic mobility (e.g., Kresge Foundation, Bloomberg Philanthropies) to realize recommendations related to Land Use, Placemaking, and Economic Empowerment.

- Apply for arts and place-based resilience funding through initiatives like the National Endowment for the Arts “Our Town” program and The Knight Foundation which can support recommendations related to Placemaking and Economic Empowerment.

### Empowering Community-Led Mechanisms

- Expand participatory budgeting processes to give residents control over select infrastructure investments to increase Environmental Resilience and Economic Empowerment and achieve Connectivity recommendations.
- Support the establishment of land trusts and cooperative models to prevent displacement and ensure long-term community benefit per recommendations related to Land Use and Economic Empowerment.
- Pilot crowdfunding and community bonds for neighborhood-scale green space and cultural projects.

### Advancing Green Infrastructure & Resilience

- Pursue local funding programs available through agencies such as DOEE and DDOT, for climate resilience, urban greening, and low-impact development to support the recommendations under Environmental Resilience.

Drawing from multiple sectors, below is a list of funding sources that could support implementation of public space recommendations for both corridors.

## FUNDING SOURCES

### Federal Grants & Programs

- RAISE (USDOT)
- Safe Streets for All (SS4A)
- Congestion Mitigation & Air Quality Program (FHWA)
- Reconnecting Communities Pilot Program
- Strengthening Mobility and Revolutionizing Transportation (SMART) Grants
- Community Development Block Grants (CDBG)
- Environmental Justice (EJ) Grants
- Urban and Community Forestry Program
- Low-Income Housing and New Markets Tax Credits (NMTC)

### District and Local Funding

- Transportation Infrastructure Funds (DDOT)
- DC Commission on the Arts and Humanities Public Art Building Communities (PABC)
- DC Commission on the Arts and Humanities East Arts Grant Program
- Great Streets Grant Program
- DSLBD's Streets for People Grant
- DC Green Infrastructure Incentives (DOEE)
- Neighborhood Prosperity Fund
- Industrial Business Zone & Workforce Development Incentives

### Private Sector Opportunities

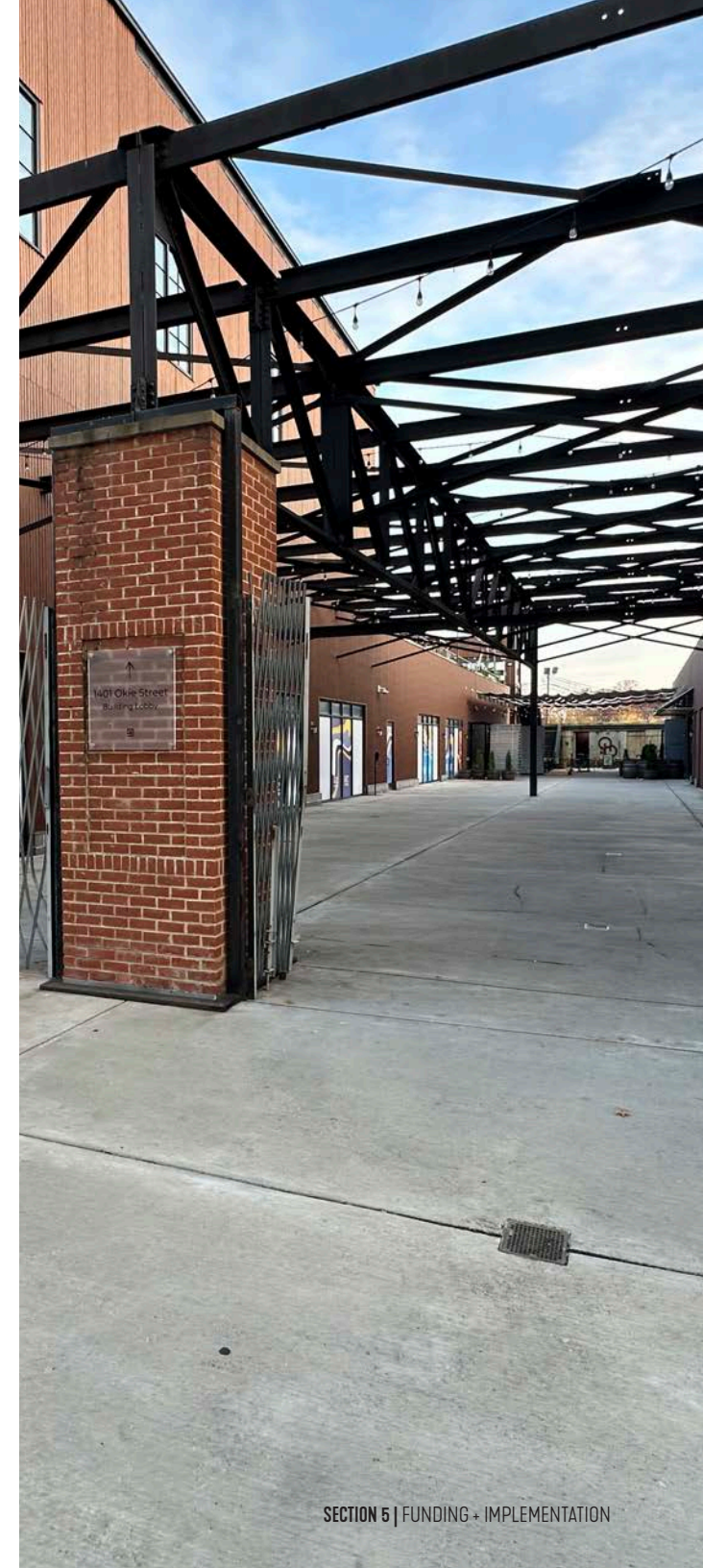
- Corporate Naming Rights and Social Impact Investment Funds
- Public-Private Partnerships for mixed-use and retail development
- Retail-led placemaking and activation incentives

### Philanthropy and Nonprofits

- Kresge Foundation Equitable Urban Development Grants
- Bloomberg Asphalt Art Initiative
- National Endowment for the Arts "Our Town" Grant
- The Knight Foundation Smart Cities & Public Space Funds
- Local community foundations and impact investors (e.g. LISC, Industrial Bank)

### Alternative and Community-Controlled Models

- Crowdfunding
- Cooperative Development Funds
- Community Land Banking models





Implementation will require a multi-stakeholder approach of government, private, nonprofit, and community partners. Partnerships can be tailored to each recommendation as appropriate.

## POTENTIAL PARTNERSHIPS

### Government Agencies

- District Department of Transportation (DDOT) – Capital project delivery, streetscape improvements, multimodal infrastructure
- DC Department of Energy & Environment (DOEE) – Green infrastructure, air quality, and climate resilience
- Deputy Mayor for Planning and Economic Development (DMPED) – Real Estate and development coordination
- DC Office of Planning (OP) – Land use alignment, design review, and plan integration
- Department of Small and Local Business Development (DSLBD) – Grant administration and small business support
- WMATA – Transit improvements, site partnerships, and TOD
- US Department of Transportation
- Federal Transit Authority

### Quasi-Governmental + Regional Agency Partners

- Anacostia BID – Public space maintenance, branding, advocacy, and implementation
- COG – Technical assistance and regional transportation funding
- DC Housing Finance Agency – Affordable housing and commercial development financing

### Private + Institutional Partners

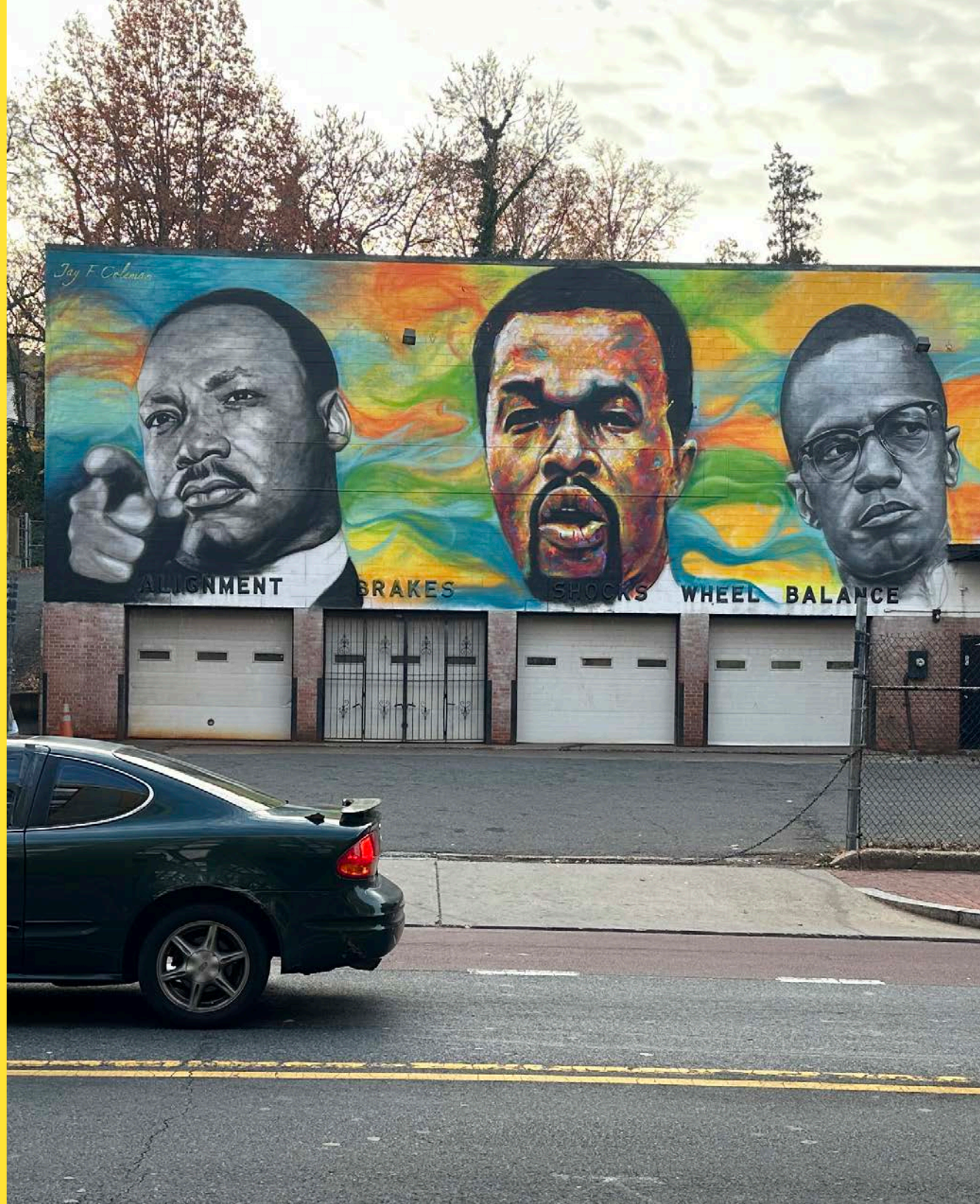
- Anchor Institutions – Schools, faith-based groups, and cultural institutions for programming and site stewardship
- Developers and Brokers – Mixed-use development and placemaking activation
- Employers and Logistics Partners – Distribution hub and workforce pipeline coordination.

### Community-Based Organizations

- Local nonprofits – Cultural programming, small business support, youth engagement
- Community Land Trusts + Resident Cooperatives – Ownership models for housing and commercial space
- Artists and Creative Collectives – Murals, cultural branding, and artful infrastructure

# APPENDIX

## EXISTING CONDITIONS

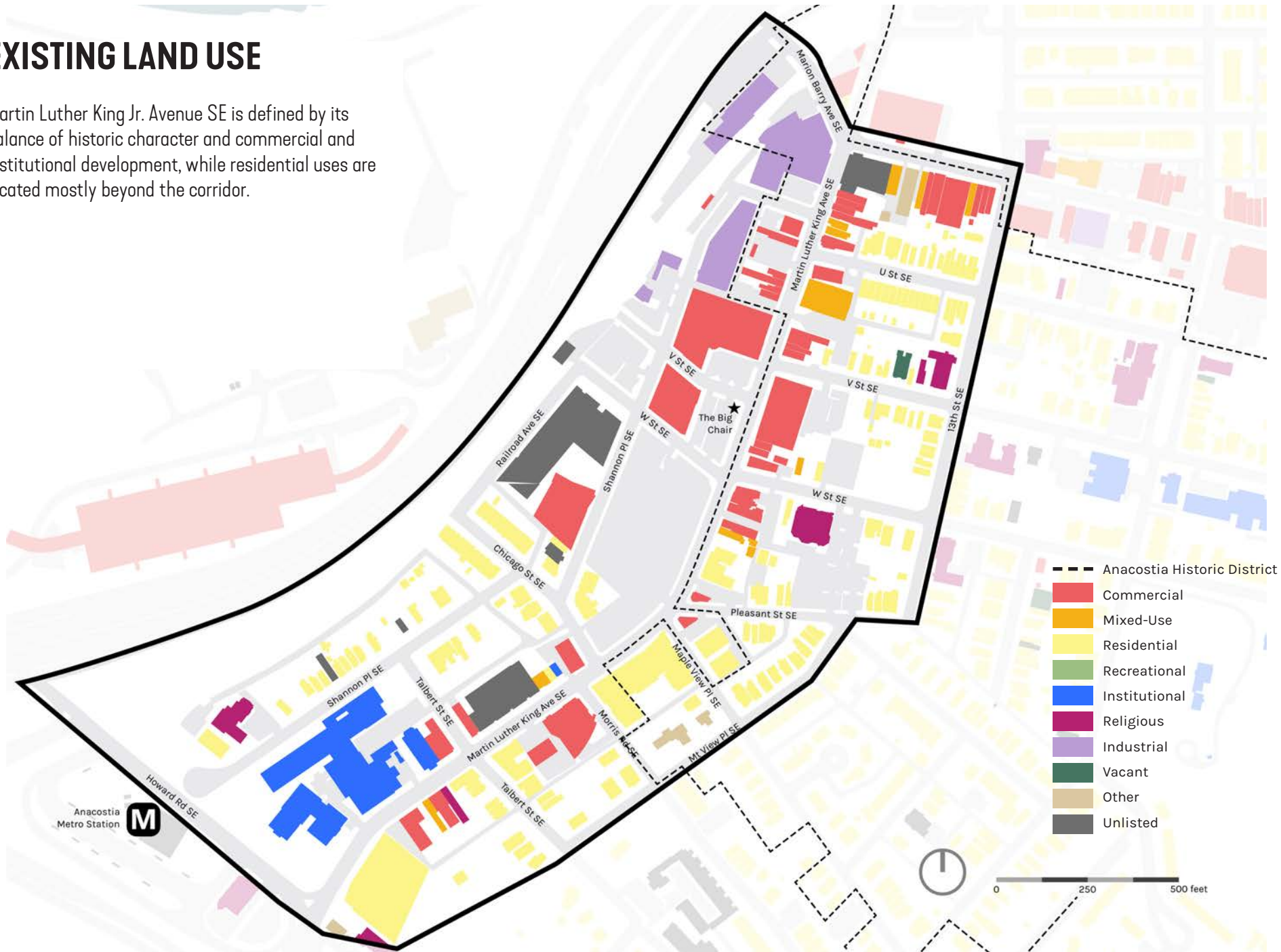


# EXISTING CONDITIONS

ANACOSTIA | SE DC  
MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. AVENUE

# EXISTING LAND USE

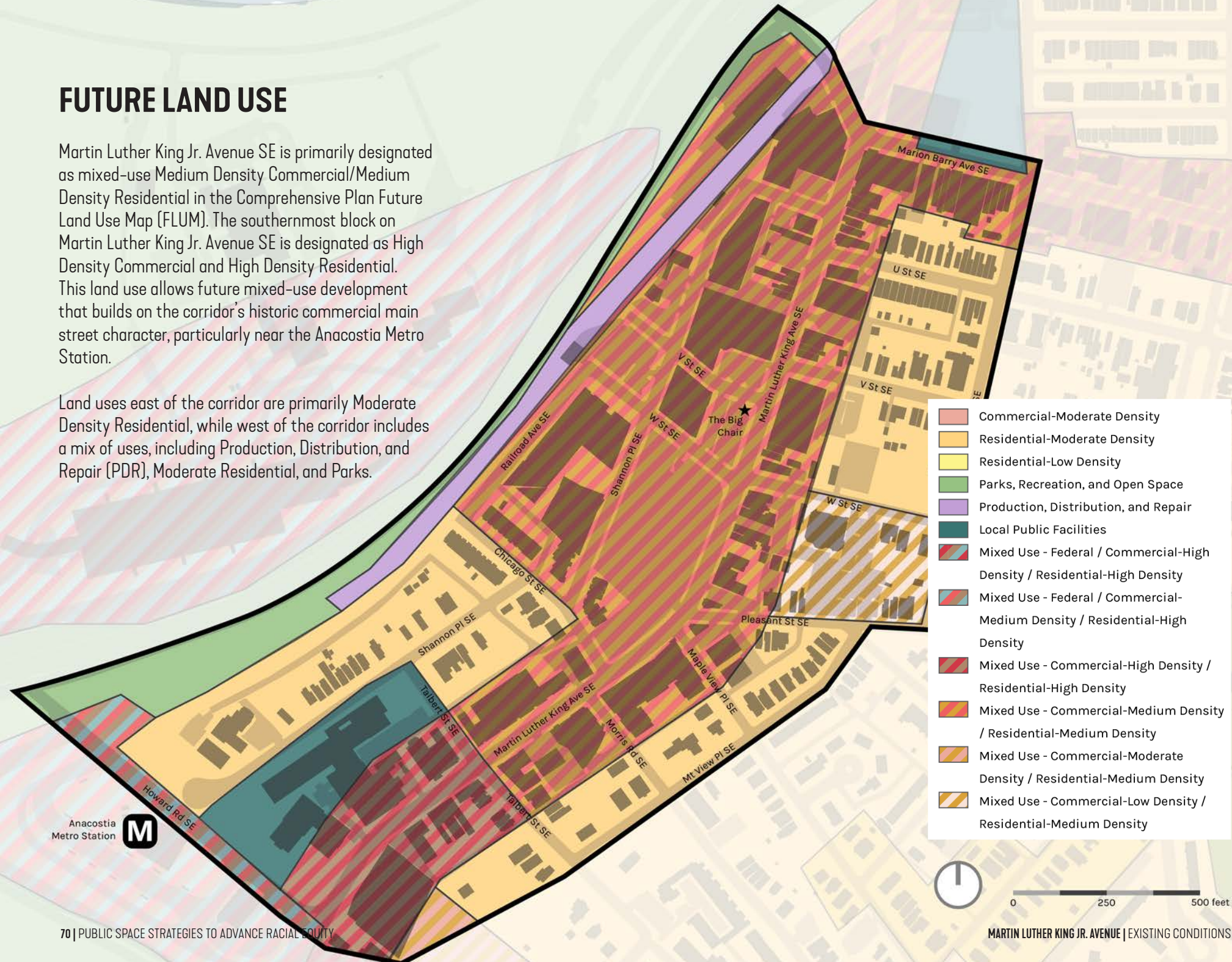
Martin Luther King Jr. Avenue SE is defined by its balance of historic character and commercial and institutional development, while residential uses are located mostly beyond the corridor.



# FUTURE LAND USE

Martin Luther King Jr. Avenue SE is primarily designated as mixed-use Medium Density Commercial/Medium Density Residential in the Comprehensive Plan Future Land Use Map (FLUM). The southernmost block on Martin Luther King Jr. Avenue SE is designated as High Density Commercial and High Density Residential. This land use allows future mixed-use development that builds on the corridor's historic commercial main street character, particularly near the Anacostia Metro Station.

Land uses east of the corridor are primarily Moderate Density Residential, while west of the corridor includes a mix of uses, including Production, Distribution, and Repair (PDR), Moderate Residential, and Parks.



- Commercial-Moderate Density
- Residential-Moderate Density
- Residential-Low Density
- Parks, Recreation, and Open Space
- Production, Distribution, and Repair
- Local Public Facilities
- Mixed Use - Federal / Commercial-High Density / Residential-High Density
- Mixed Use - Federal / Commercial-Medium Density / Residential-High Density
- Mixed Use - Commercial-High Density / Residential-High Density
- Mixed Use - Commercial-Medium Density / Residential-Medium Density
- Mixed Use - Commercial-Moderate Density / Residential-Medium Density
- Mixed Use - Commercial-Low Density / Residential-Medium Density

Anacostia Metro Station **M**



0 250 500 feet

# KEY LAND USES

Government-owned land, government agencies, and social services are numerous along the corridor. The institutional uses include a unique mix of commercial development that contributes to the area's cultural identity. These uses create a sense of community that future public realm design can reinforce.

Social Security Administration

DC Dept of Health - Vital Records

Office of Lottery & Gaming

Savoy Elementary School

MPD Cadet Corps Training Facility

Thurgood Marshall Academy

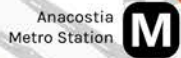
DC Dept of Housing and Community Development

DHCD - Housing Resource Center

Go-Go Museum & Cafe

Anacostia Service Center

- Institutional Use
- Commercial Use
- Mixed-Use
- Government Owned Land

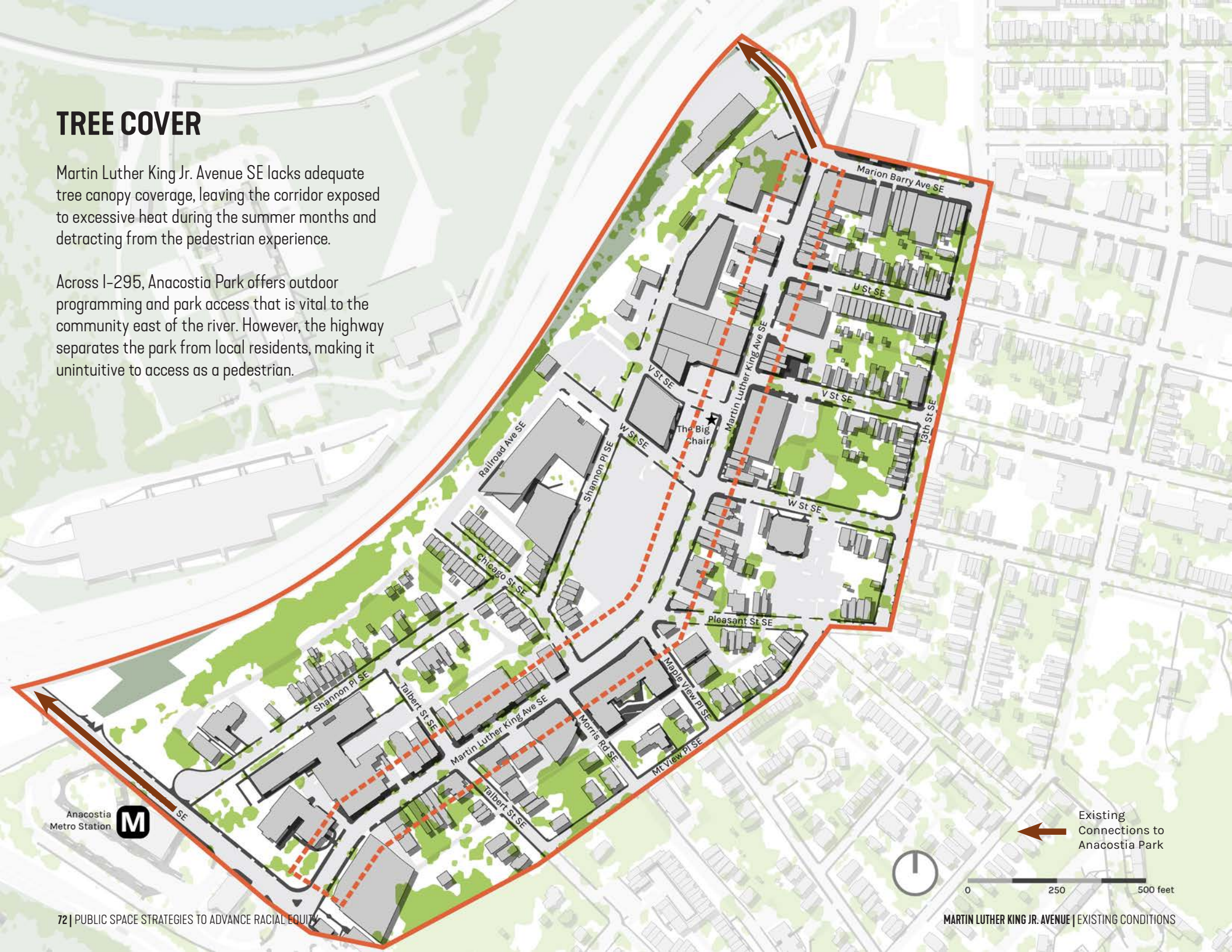


0 250 500 feet

# TREE COVER

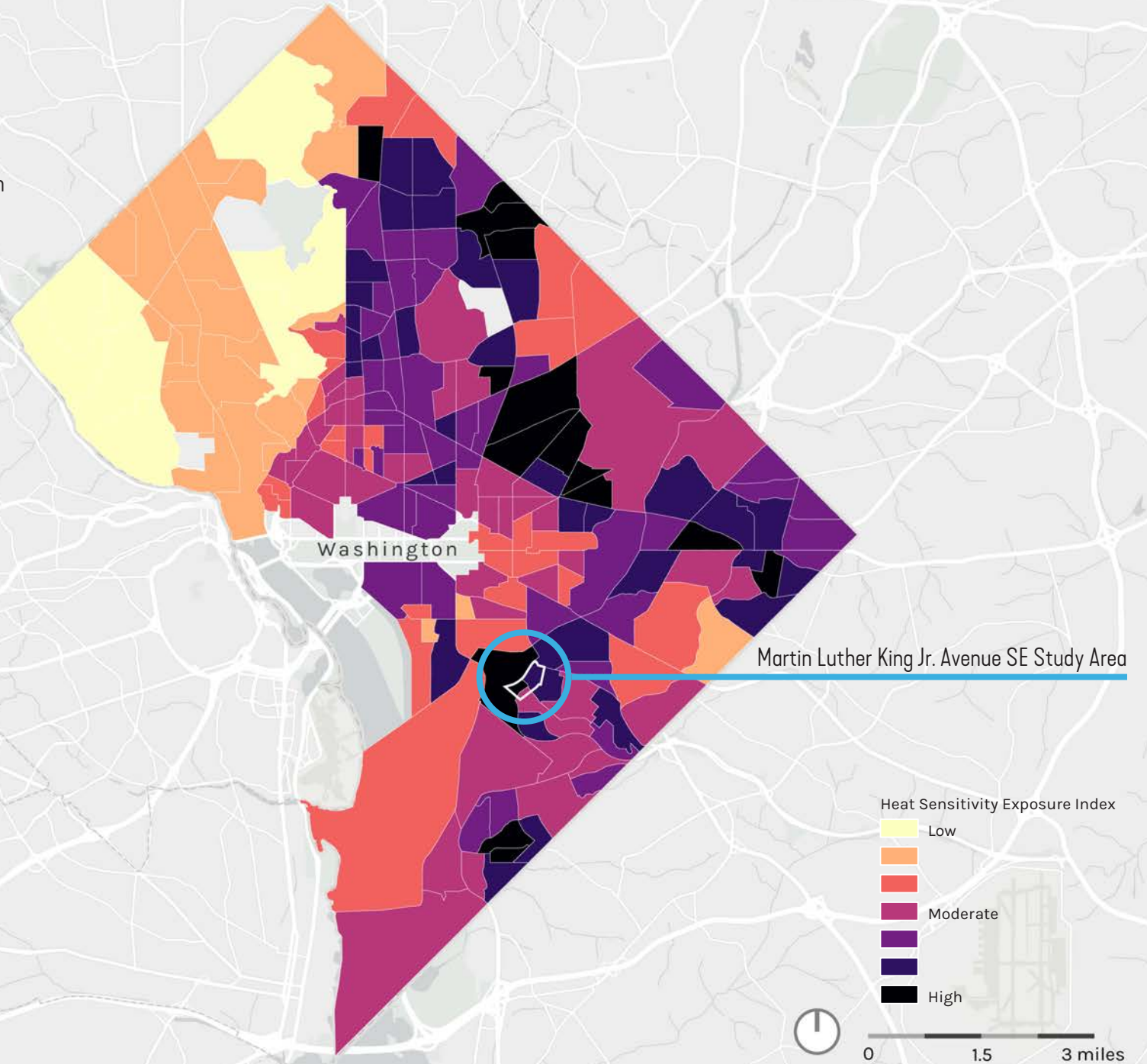
Martin Luther King Jr. Avenue SE lacks adequate tree canopy coverage, leaving the corridor exposed to excessive heat during the summer months and detracting from the pedestrian experience.

Across I-295, Anacostia Park offers outdoor programming and park access that is vital to the community east of the river. However, the highway separates the park from local residents, making it unintuitive to access as a pedestrian.



# HEAT

Excessive impervious surfaces and limited tree coverage contribute to moderately high temperatures on Martin Luther King Jr. Avenue SE. Temperatures are highest near the expansive parking lots at the center of the corridor. These high temperatures create an uncomfortable pedestrian experience and make summertime pedestrian movement increasingly uncomfortable as heat rises. Tree coverage beyond the corridor keeps the neighborhood relatively cool.



# VEHICULAR CIRCULATION

The corridor experiences high traffic due in part from vehicles using local roads to avoid the nearby I-295 highway. Each end of the corridor at Marion Barry Avenue and Howard Rd. see additional heavy traffic, where wide crossings make passage uncomfortable for pedestrians.



Anacostia Metro Station **M**

↔ Vehicular Circulation



0 250 500 feet

# PARKING

Parking is a defining condition of the public realm, despite the corridor's accessibility to public transit. Massive private parking lots at the center of the corridor account for about 20% of block frontage, interrupting the urban fabric and reinforcing car dependency for visitors and residents in the area.



Anacostia Metro Station **M**

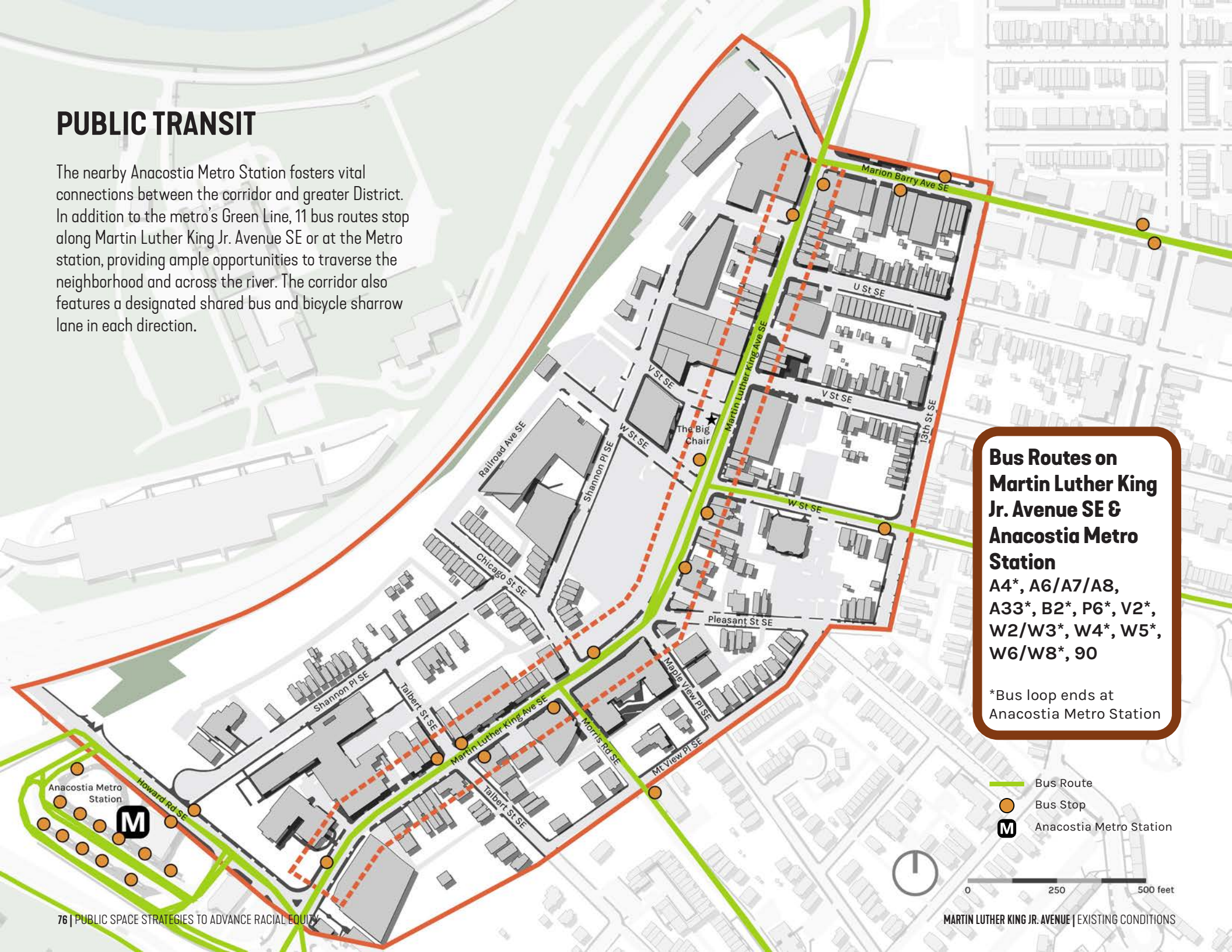
Alleys and Parking



0 250 500 feet



# PUBLIC TRANSIT

The nearby Anacostia Metro Station fosters vital connections between the corridor and greater District. In addition to the metro's Green Line, 11 bus routes stop along Martin Luther King Jr. Avenue SE or at the Metro station, providing ample opportunities to traverse the neighborhood and across the river. The corridor also features a designated shared bus and bicycle sharrow lane in each direction.



**Bus Routes on  
Martin Luther King  
Jr. Avenue SE &  
Anacostia Metro  
Station**  
A4\*, A6/A7/A8,  
A33\*, B2\*, P6\*, V2\*,  
W2/W3\*, W4\*, W5\*,  
W6/W8\*, 90

\*Bus loop ends at  
Anacostia Metro Station

-  Bus Route
-  Bus Stop
-  Anacostia Metro Station



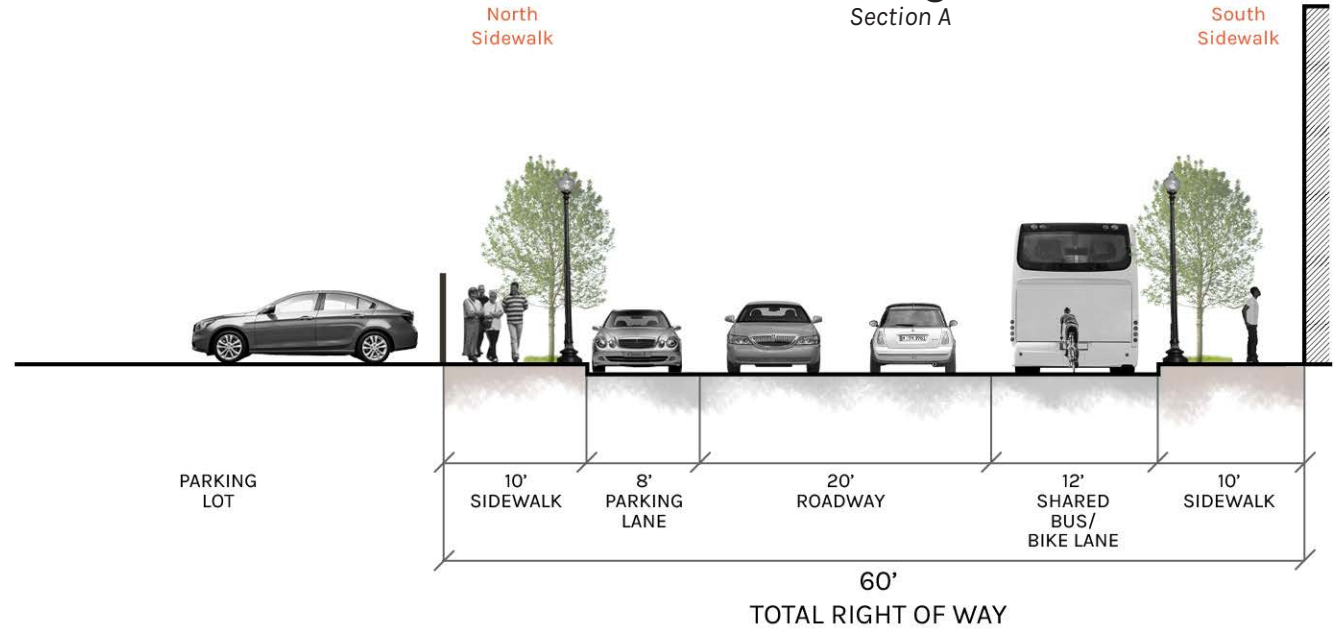
0 250 500 feet

# STREET SECTIONS

The following sections present the current street configuration for Martin Luther King Jr. Avenue, highlighting the existing pedestrian experience.

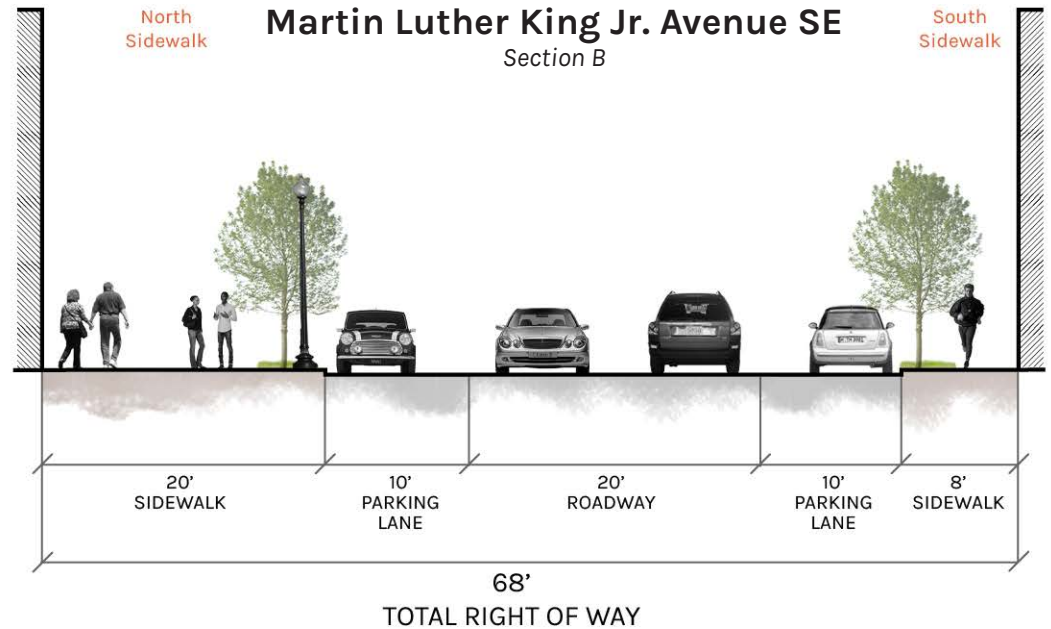
## Martin Luther King Jr. Avenue SE

Section A



## Martin Luther King Jr. Avenue SE

Section B



Key Plan

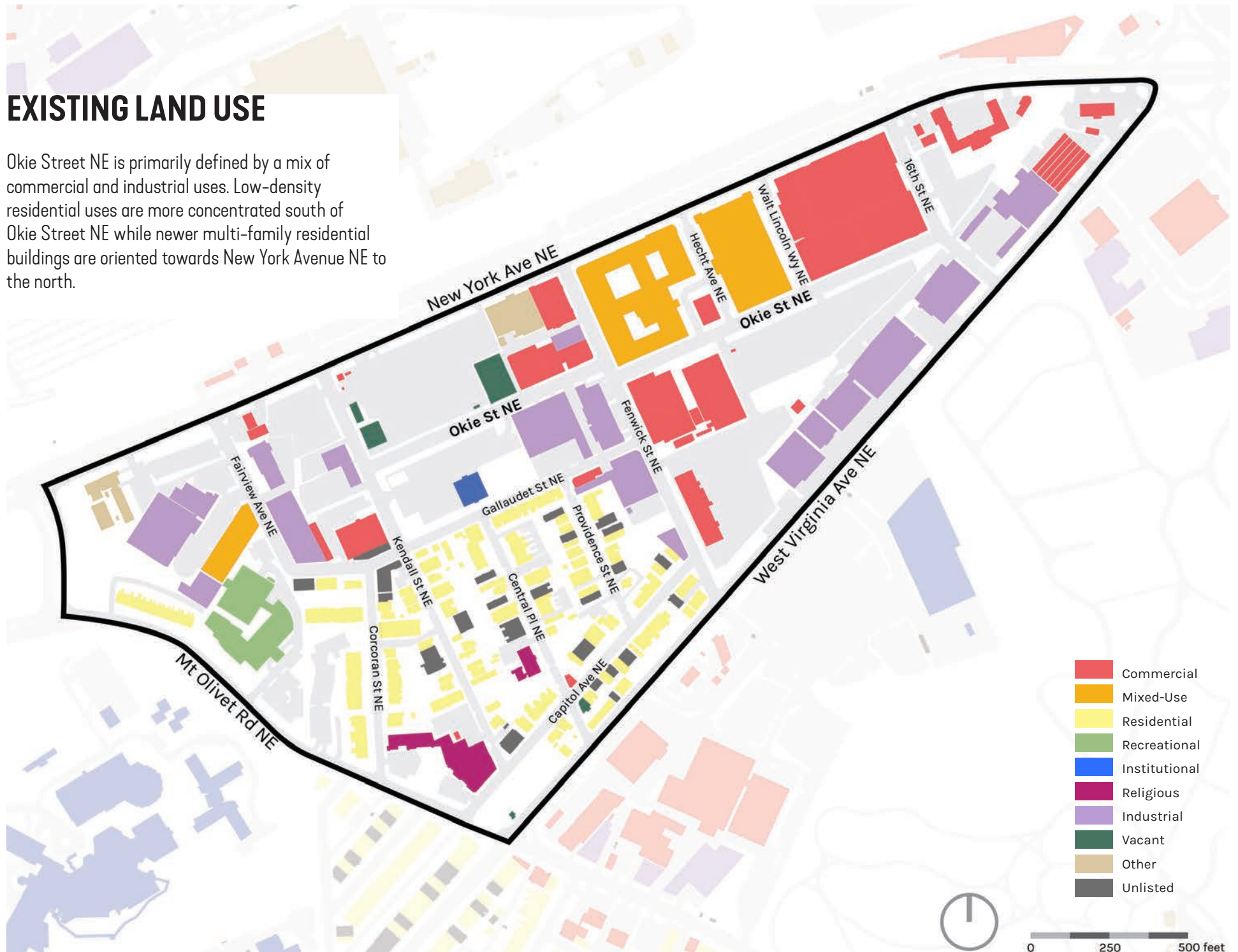


# EXISTING CONDITIONS

IVY CITY | NE DC  
OKIE STREET

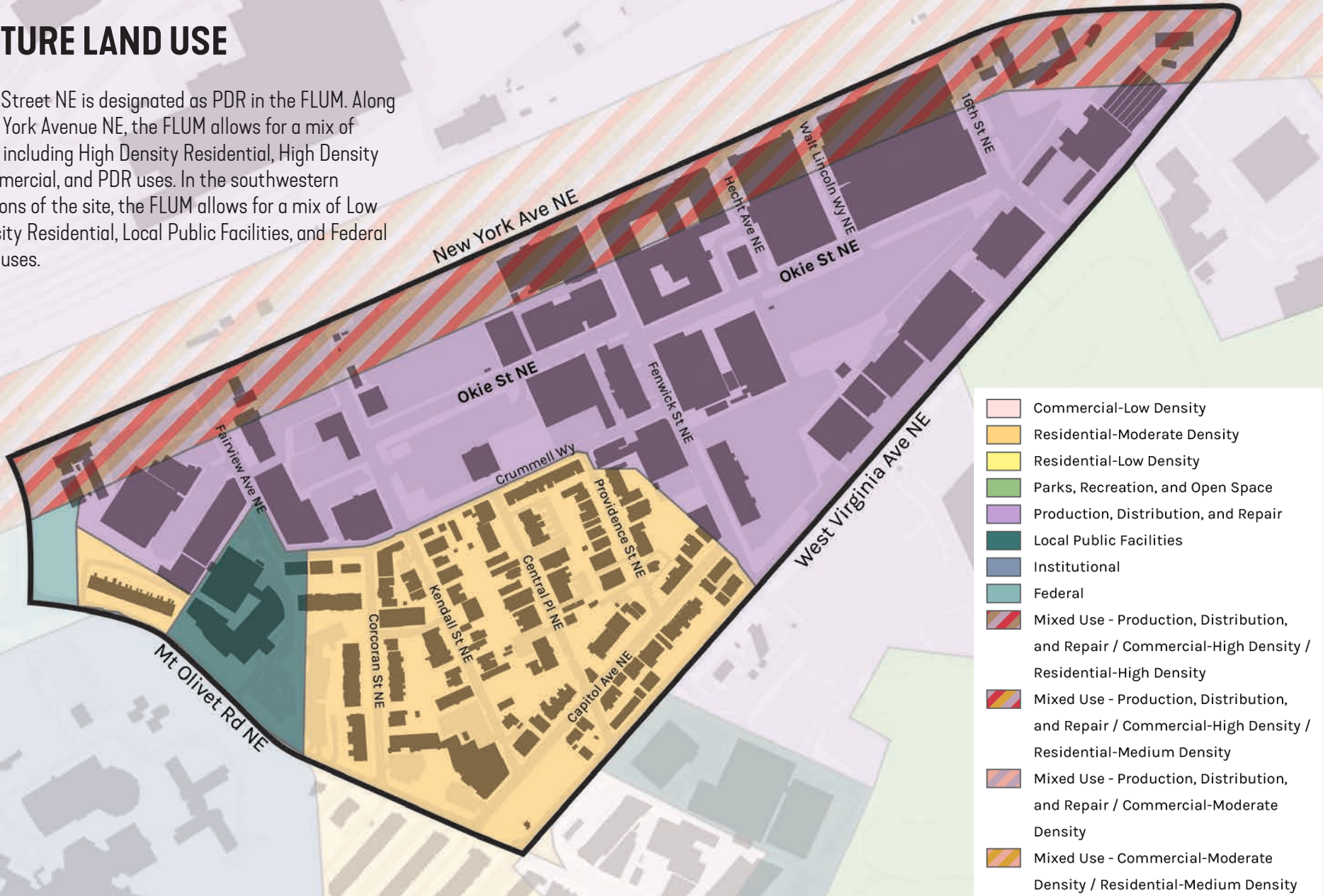
# EXISTING LAND USE

Okie Street NE is primarily defined by a mix of commercial and industrial uses. Low-density residential uses are more concentrated south of Okie Street NE while newer multi-family residential buildings are oriented towards New York Avenue NE to the north.



# FUTURE LAND USE

Okie Street NE is designated as PDR in the FLUM. Along New York Avenue NE, the FLUM allows for a mix of uses including High Density Residential, High Density Commercial, and PDR uses. In the southwestern portions of the site, the FLUM allows for a mix of Low Density Residential, Local Public Facilities, and Federal land uses.



- Commercial-Low Density
- Residential-Moderate Density
- Residential-Low Density
- Parks, Recreation, and Open Space
- Production, Distribution, and Repair
- Local Public Facilities
- Institutional
- Federal
- Mixed Use - Production, Distribution, and Repair / Commercial-High Density / Residential-High Density
- Mixed Use - Production, Distribution, and Repair / Commercial-High Density / Residential-Medium Density
- Mixed Use - Production, Distribution, and Repair / Commercial-Moderate Density
- Mixed Use - Commercial-Moderate Density / Residential-Medium Density



# KEY LAND USES

Industrial uses, including a District-owned maintenance yard, present challenges to public space improvements along Okie Street NE and the surrounding neighborhood. Increasing public space safety and comfort will require coordination among private and public property owners to unlock Okie Street NE's potential as a pedestrian-oriented retail street.

Men's Shelter

Future Ivy City Community Center

Youth Services Juvenile Detention Center

Lewis Crowe Park

Hecht Warehouse Apartments

Dept of Public Works Maintenance Yard

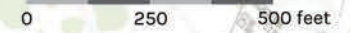
- Industrial Use
- Government Owned Land



0 250 500 feet

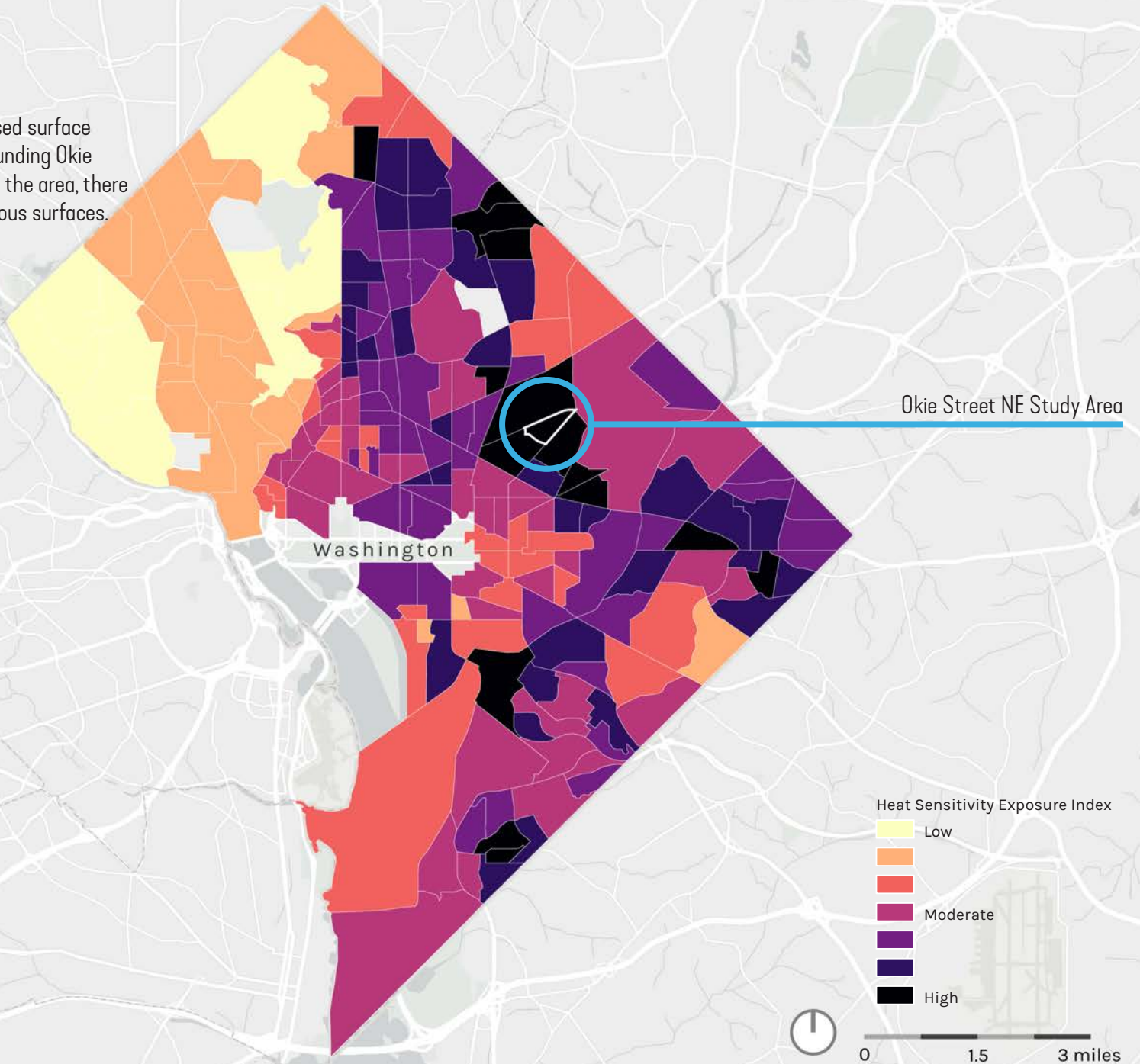
# TREE COVER

Okie Street NE possesses very little tree cover, offering minimal shade and comfort to the pedestrian experience.



# HEAT

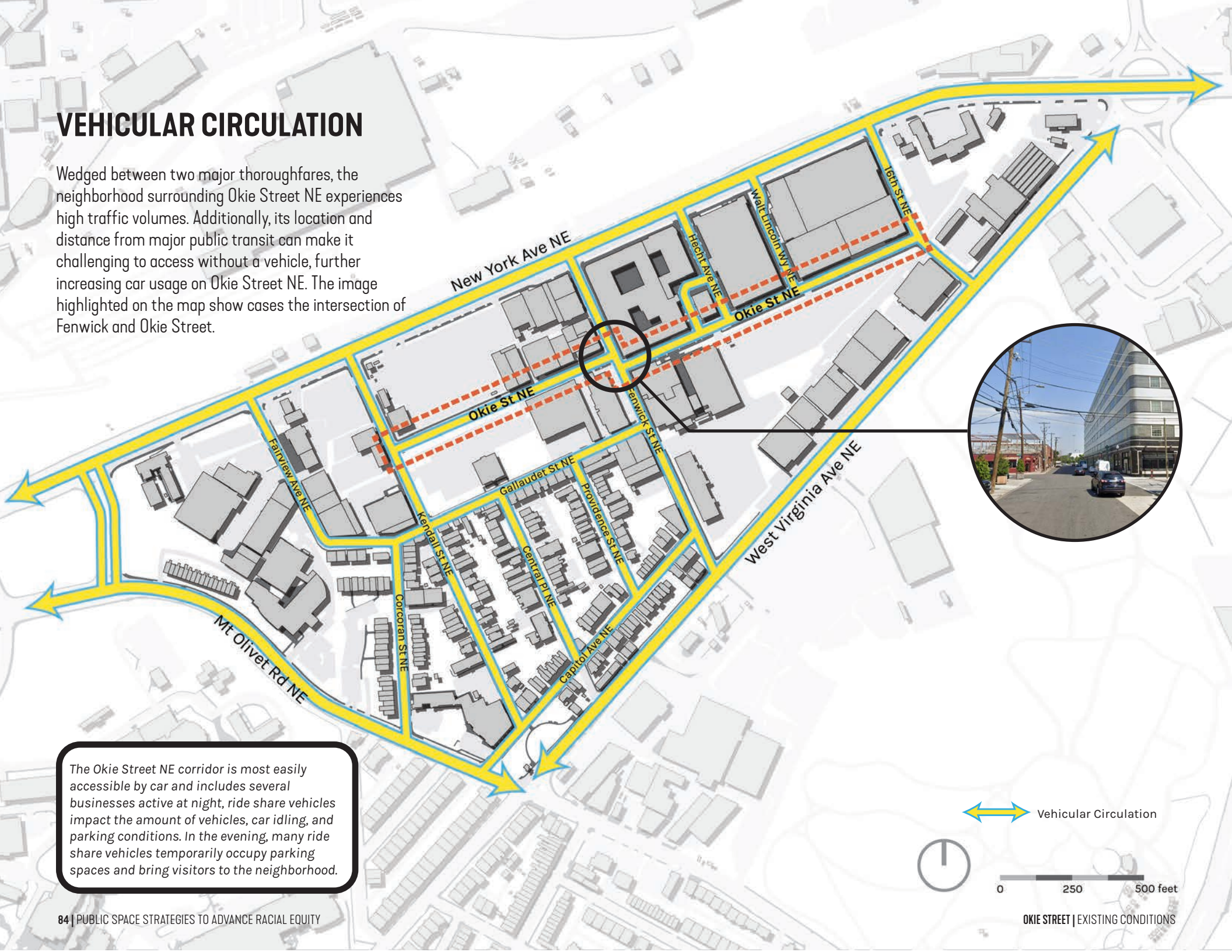
Industrial land uses contribute to increased surface temperatures in the neighborhood surrounding Okie Street NE. With minimal tree coverage in the area, there are few opportunities for cooling impervious surfaces.



# VEHICULAR CIRCULATION

Wedged between two major thoroughfares, the neighborhood surrounding Okie Street NE experiences high traffic volumes. Additionally, its location and distance from major public transit can make it challenging to access without a vehicle, further increasing car usage on Okie Street NE. The image highlighted on the map shows the intersection of Fenwick and Okie Street.

The Okie Street NE corridor is most easily accessible by car and includes several businesses active at night, ride share vehicles impact the amount of vehicles, car idling, and parking conditions. In the evening, many ride share vehicles temporarily occupy parking spaces and bring visitors to the neighborhood.



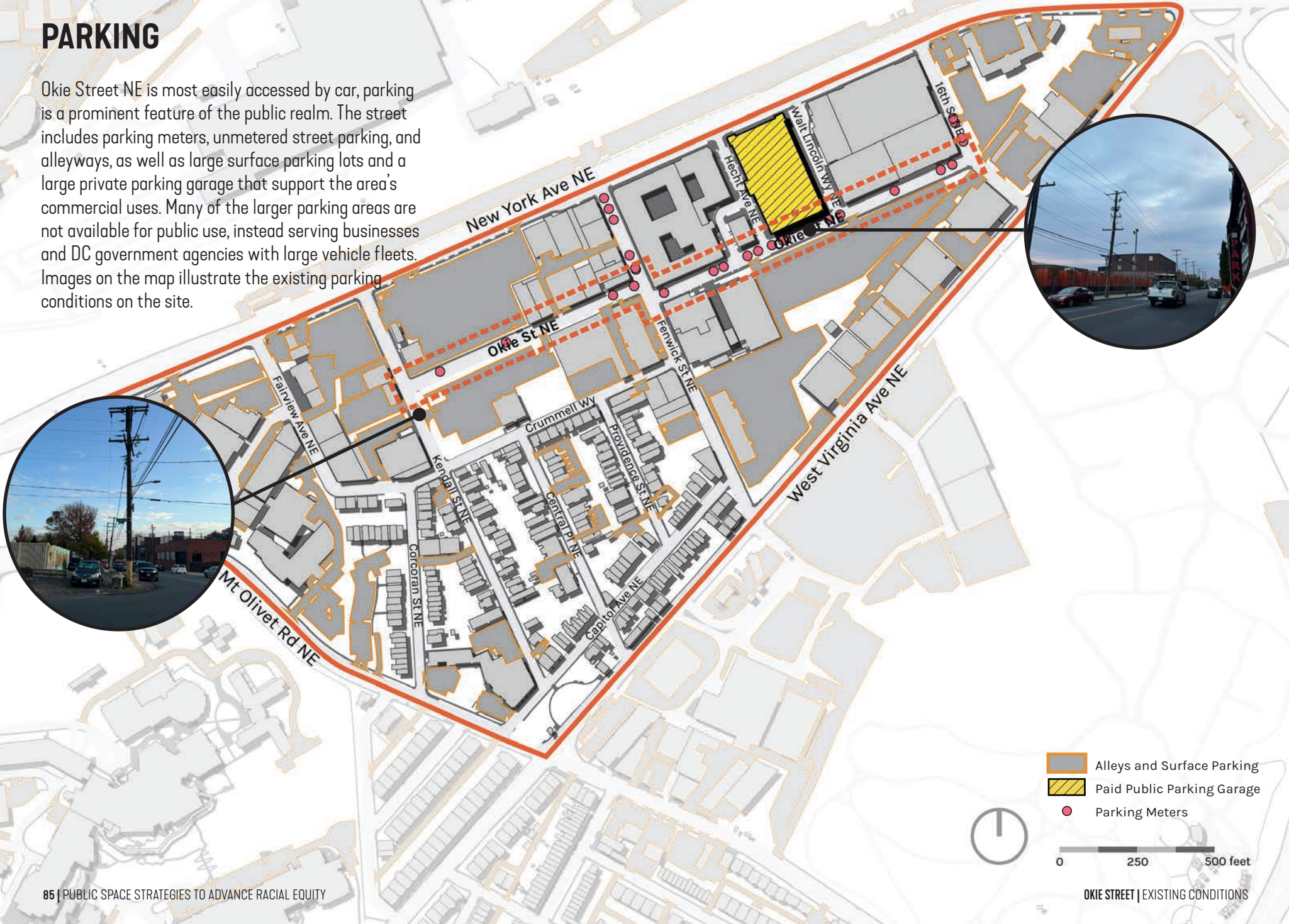
↔ Vehicular Circulation



0 250 500 feet

# PARKING

Okie Street NE is most easily accessed by car, parking is a prominent feature of the public realm. The street includes parking meters, unmetered street parking, and alleyways, as well as large surface parking lots and a large private parking garage that support the area's commercial uses. Many of the larger parking areas are not available for public use, instead serving businesses and DC government agencies with large vehicle fleets. Images on the map illustrate the existing parking conditions on the site.



- Alleys and Surface Parking
- Paid Public Parking Garage
- Parking Meters

0 250 500 feet

# PUBLIC TRANSIT

Limited public transit options in the neighborhood currently result in a greater reliance on car travel and reduce walkability along Okie Street NE. To address this gap, the Hecht Warehouse Apartment complex provides a shuttle service to the NoMA-Gallaudet U Metro Station, offering a valuable connection to the broader transit network. Additionally, Capital Bike Share stations located near the Hecht, along West Virginia Ave, and at Mt. Olivet Rd, along with newer bike infrastructure, are expanding multimodal transit options in the area.

**Metro Station Access**  
 \*30 minute walk to Rhode Island Avenue Metro Station  
 \*30 minute walk to NoMa-Gallaudet U Metro Station

### Key Bus Routes






#### D4

- Ends of the Line: Okie & 16th, Franklin Square
- Frequency: Varies from every 16 to 35 minutes weekdays

#### E2

- Ends of the Line: Okie & 16th, Fort Totten
- Frequency: Varies from every 20 to 40 minutes weekdays

\*10 minute walk to Route D8 which stops at Rhode Island Avenue Metro Station

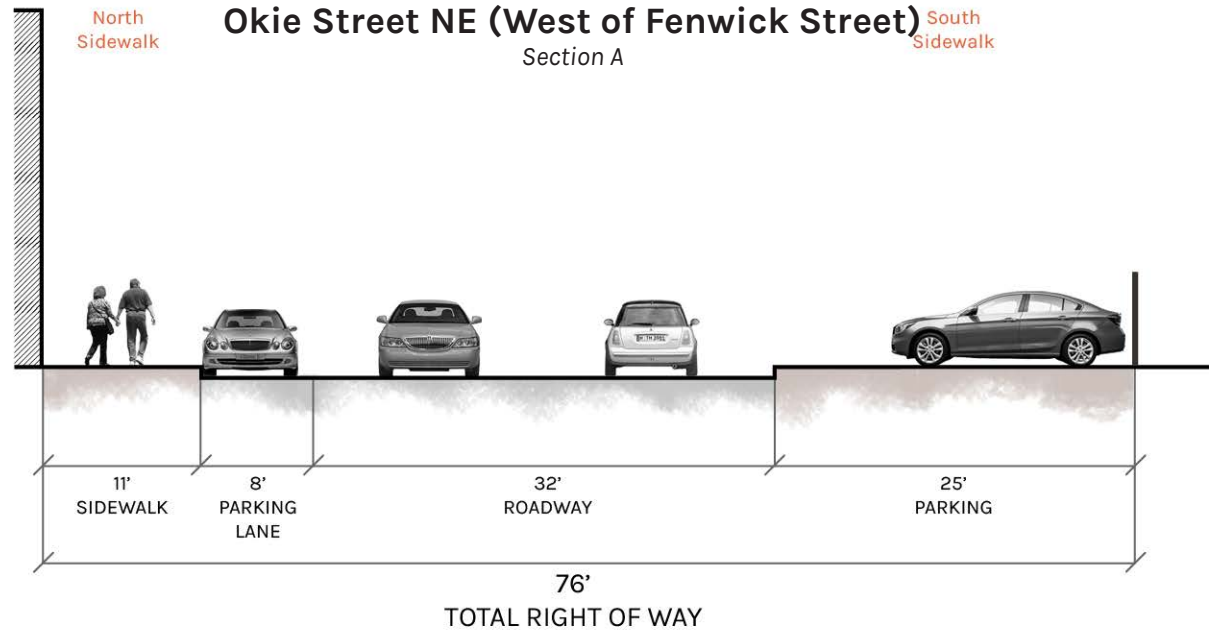
-  D4 Bus Route
-  E2 Bus Route
-  Other Bus Routes
-  Bus Stop on Okie Street NE
-  Bus Stop



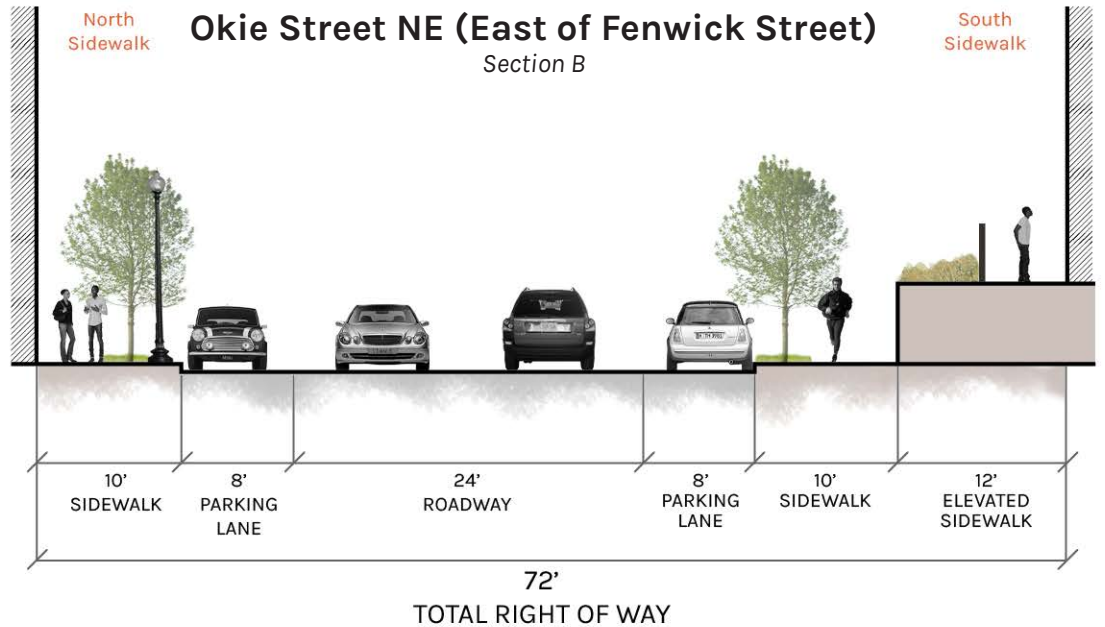
OKIE STREET | EXISTING CONDITIONS

# STREET SECTIONS

The following sections present the current street configuration for the east and west sides of Okie Street, highlighting the existing pedestrian experience.



Key Plan



DC Office of Planning  
899 N Capitol Street NE, Suite 7100  
Washington, DC 20002  
[planning.dc.gov](http://planning.dc.gov)

District of Columbia  
Office of Planning

