



The Southwest Rectangle can be a vibrant mixed-use precinct that extends the cultural and pedestrian-friendly qualities of the National Mall along 10th Street, SW and Maryland Avenue, SW.

Southwest Rectangle



Aerial of the Southwest Rectangle

Objectives and Strategies

Southwest Rectangle Objective:

Transform the Southwest Rectangle precinct into a distinguished workplace and a cultural hub that is an exciting and welcoming visitor destination. Improve connections between the Smithsonian Castle and the Southwest waterfront and between the U.S. Capitol and the Jefferson Memorial.

Primary Strategies

- **Establish** 10th Street, SW and Overlook as a lively mixed-use corridor and premier cultural destination to connect the National Mall and the Southwest Waterfront.
- **Establish** Maryland Avenue, SW as a grand urban boulevard to link the U.S. Capitol to the Jefferson Memorial.
- **Create** new places for museums, residences, offices, and shops to increase the mix of uses within the precinct.
- Bridge the Potomac River and restore the street grid to improve mobility.

The Mixed Legacy of Urban Renewal

For generations, African Americans and newly arrived immigrants filled the housing of Southwest Washington to work at the nearby shipping wharves and military arsenals. The substandard living conditions were viewed as a national embarrassment, and by the 1930s there were widespread calls for radical improvements.

During the 1940s and early 1950s, planners and private developers prepared a range of proposals to improve the area. All these plans envisioned 10th Street as an esplanade to connect the core of the city, the waterfront, and the Southwest and Southeast neighborhoods. The Zeckendorf Plan, which was largely implemented, called for 10th Street to be flanked by large, modern government buildings and terminate in a circular overlook for motorists and pedestrians.

In the 1950s, the broader area of Southwest Washington was the focus of one of the nation's most ambitious urban renewal efforts: more than 23,500 residents were displaced and more than 400 acres of row houses and small businesses were demolished. The new Southwest Freeway divided the area: on the north were imposing office buildings largely occupied by federal agencies, and on the south was a new residential neighborhood.

The 1960s and early 1970s saw the construction of several large federal buildings creating an enclave referred to as the Southwest Federal Center, built in the austere International Style favored at the time. The Forrestal Building, one of the largest structures to be built, spans 10th Street, effectively separating the National Mall and the core of the city from the waterfront.

Today the Southwest Federal Center is a major federal employment area. The area contains 12 million square feet of federal office space and accommodates approximately 70,000 federal workers. The area is also home to six federal agency headquarters. About half of the parcels are federally owned, and many of the privately owned parcels are leased to federal agencies or contractors. Renewed interest in this area can be seen in the recent construction of the Portals complex, planning for the Eisenhower Memorial, the modernization of the Nassif Building, and the city's redevelopment of the Southwest waterfront.

An Unwelcoming Federal Enclave

The unwelcome consequences of urban renewal can be seen throughout the precinct. Railway and highway infrastructure, a complex layering of roads and building entrances, and mammoth, single-use buildings have effectively isolated a portion of this precinct south of the Mall from the rest of the city. The area is dominated by superblock buildings and lacks street life, retail activity, and green space. In addition, the steep slope and roadway configuration at the 10th Street Overlook make it difficult to reach the waterfront.

Urban renewal, hailed as cutting-edge by many at the time, reflected Modernist design principles that have proven to undermine vibrant urban life. Many buildings do not fully use the full capacity of their site and do not provide accessible uses at the ground-floor, creating a hostile pedestrian environment. The absence of urban vitality has resulted in disinvestment and neglect.

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Southwest Urban Renewal Area, ca. 1955



Existing rail line within the Maryland Avenue right-of-way looking west

As envisioned by mid-century planners, an extremely wide 10th Street and the Forrestal building are the centerpiece of the area. However, the vast street lacks human scale and interest and is configured in a way that creates massive unused plazas and discourages movement. The imposing Forrestal building blocks views between the Smithsonian Castle and the Overlook site. In addition, the building has eliminated a segment of Virginia Avenue and its views to the Washington Monument.

The noisy Southeast-Southwest Freeway and its ramps are physical and psychological barriers between the city and the river. The rail line slices through the precinct, obliterating use of Maryland and Virginia Avenues and their views to the U.S. Capitol and the Washington Monument. These infrastructure barriers interrupt the streets and impede mobility. Motorists are overwhelmed by the freeway, pedestrians rarely stand a chance, and views to the monumental landscape have been lost.



6th Street, SW, looking south

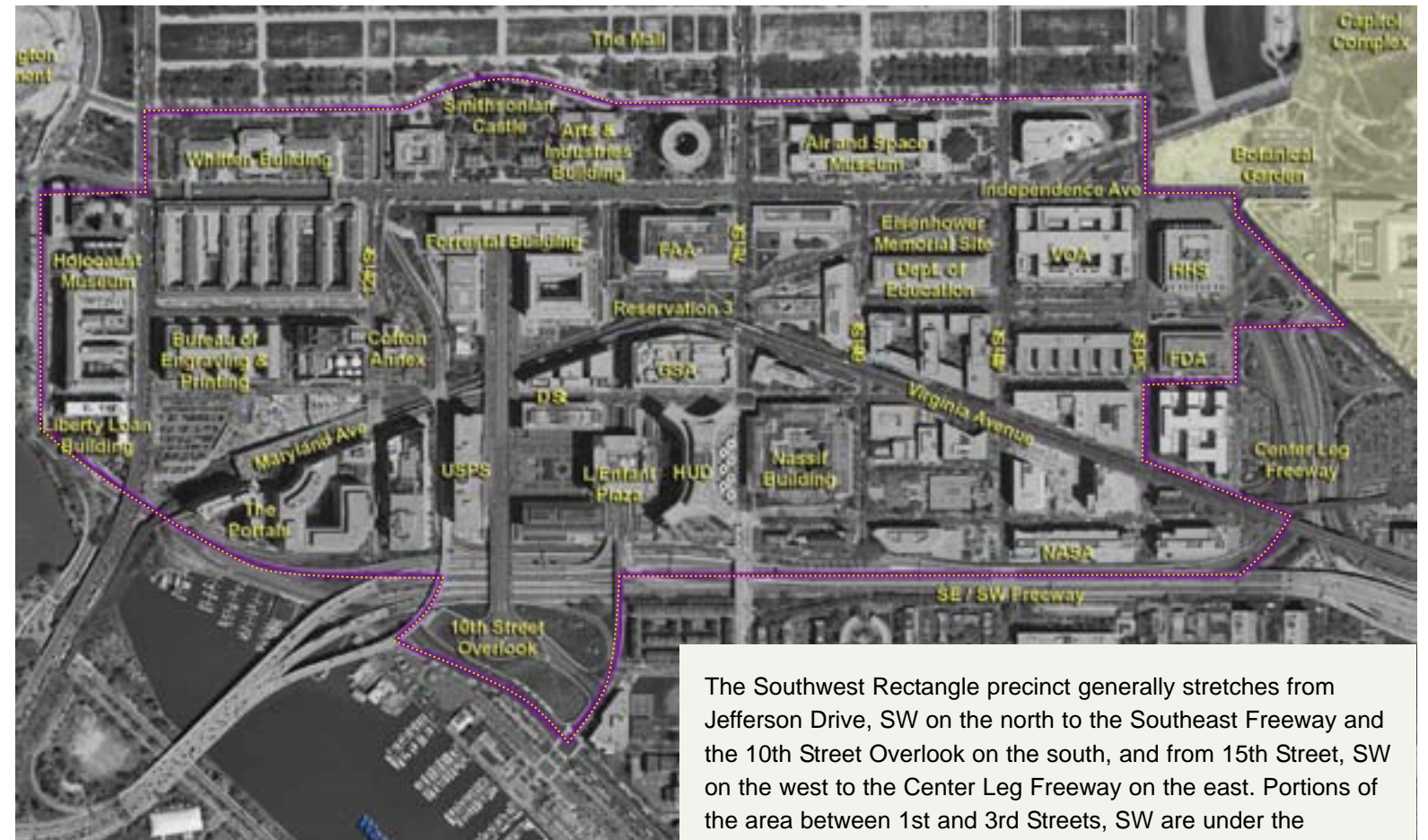


9th Street, SW ramps at I-395 Tunnel

Superblock-sized buildings, dull facades, absence of street-level public uses, and inadequate streetscapes create psychological barriers to pedestrian movement.



10th Street, SW looking south



The Southwest Rectangle precinct generally stretches from Jefferson Drive, SW on the north to the Southeast Freeway and the 10th Street Overlook on the south, and from 15th Street, SW on the west to the Center Leg Freeway on the east. Portions of the area between 1st and 3rd Streets, SW are under the jurisdiction of the Architect of the Capitol.

Opportunities to Correct Past Development Errors

The Southwest Federal Center can be reborn as a vibrant urban community solidly connecting the core of the city, the National Mall, and the riverfront. The cornerstones to achieving this vision include rebuilding 10th Street, SW as a lively mixed-use corridor from the Smithsonian Castle to the Overlook, establishing Maryland Avenue as a grand boulevard linking the U.S. Capitol and the Jefferson Memorial, and restoring the historic street grid shattered by mid-century urban renewal.

This transformed precinct would offer walkable, tree-lined streets built on a human scale, green open spaces recovered from intrusive rail and highway infrastructure, and cultural and commemorative destinations attracting both Washington tourists and local residents. With open views to the monumental core and the waterfront and space for new federal offices, shops, and housing, this area would meld the buzz of a vibrant big city with the beauty of a world-class national capital.

Courtesy of the District of Columbia Government, copyright Pictometry International



Looking north along 10th Street, SW towards the Smithsonian Castle



Potential view of 10th Street looking north from Maryland Avenue

Tenth Street

Without eliminating owned or leased federal office space, 10th Street could be rebuilt as a mixed-use cultural corridor from the Smithsonian Castle to the Overlook, capitalizing on views to the maritime activity on the river. Anchored by museum sites, and edged with offices, restaurants, shops, museums, and open space, it would be enlivened with day and evening activities. The street would be a destination of presence and standing, an appropriate setting for national commemoration and culture.

Over the long term, rebuilding the Department of Energy's Forrestal complex to remove the building span that crosses 10th Street and fully developing the six-block area is the linchpin to reconnecting the Mall to the waterfront and creating a walkable and engaging place. Covering a little less than 20 acres, this redevelopment would permit an increase in building area, establish reciprocal views between the Smithsonian Castle and the Overlook, strengthen views to the Washington Monument, and restore the street grid. This redevelopment, coupled with decking the highway tunnel immediately to the west, would provide greater area for federal offices and provide additional space for cultural, hospitality, residential, and retail uses. The federal employees could be accommodated in the redeveloped buildings or in nearby new development.

The plan proposes narrowing and beautifying 10th Street to enhance the pedestrian experience and restore the human scale to more closely reflect L'Enfant's originally intended width of 90 feet. Some portions of buildings along the corridor, such as the U.S. Postal Service headquarters, could be enhanced or redeveloped to increase the mix of uses including street-level, publicly accessible attractions and amenities. Commemorative works could dot the parks and plazas along the corridor. A premier museum at the site of the 10th Street Overlook, visible from the Mall, would draw pedestrians along the corridor toward the water. With only a half mile separating the Smithsonian Castle from the waterfront, 10th Street would serve as an inviting, walkable link between these two premier features of Washington city life.

10th Street could be a gateway to Washington's waterfront without the span of the Forrestal building



View of 10th Street, SW looking south toward the Overlook

TENTH STREET RE-IMAGINED

Depending on where a visitor begins his stroll along the new 10th Street, SW, he could be at the front door to the National Mall or the gateway to Washington's Southwest waterfront. Either way, this vibrant, half-mile corridor would offer a memorable urban experience.

Heading south from the National Mall, Smithsonian Castle, and the splendid End Haunt Garden, our visitor would be drawn across Independence Avenue by the highly visible, architecturally prominent museum on the high ground of the 10th Street Overlook. Walking along the refurbished street, the visitor would enjoy views to the Washington Monument, the U.S. Capitol, a new memorial in the reclaimed Reservation 113, and to Maryland Avenue, now restored to mirror the elegance of Pennsylvania Avenue to the north.

In addition to the major cultural facility that anchors 10th Street at Independence Avenue, the visitor would encounter a varied mix of shops, cafes, residential buildings, and offices as he makes his way along the street. Intimate plazas, ample seating, street trees, and landscaping help maintain the human scale.

Reaching the 10th Street Overlook, our visitor recognizes he has arrived at one of the great civic spaces in the nation's capital. With commanding views out over the waterfront and back to monumental Washington, the Overlook is defined by a major museum, a nationally significant memorial, and open space showcasing the Banneker fountain and public art. The area is animated by the surrounding big-city activity of 10th Street and the bustle of the Southwest waterfront below.

Descending the grand staircase to the lively marina, open-air market, piers, and restaurants at the water's edge, the visitor may decide to continue on to East Potomac Park. He would cross the Washington Channel by footbridge or water taxi to discover a remarkably beautiful and natural setting with wetlands, wildlife, picnic spots, and waterfront walking paths.

For our visitor, this walk from the National Mall to the waterfront has demonstrated why Washington is considered one of the great cities of the world.



An active and inviting streetscape along 10th Street, SW

10th Street could rank as one of the world's great urban spaces



Washington, DC



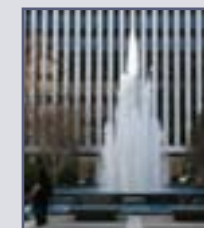
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Tokyo, Japan



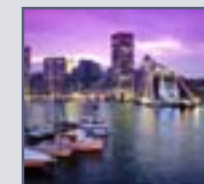
Paris, France



Washington, DC



Rome, Italy



Baltimore, MD



Smithsonian Castle

12th Street

9th Street

L'Enfant Plaza

F Street

Banneker Fountain

10th Street Overlook

Maine Avenue



View of East Potomac Park from 10th Street Overlook

The 10th Street Overlook will offer dramatic views over the rejuvenated Southwest waterfront to East Potomac Park with its new canal.

Tenth Street Overlook

A key feature of the Framework Plan is the development of the 10th Street Overlook. Rather than a single stand-alone museum at this site, the plan envisions a concentration of buildings with a mix of uses to create a vibrant day and evening destination. Within this cluster, a pre-eminent cultural building, designed to acknowledge its relationship to the Smithsonian Castle, could be the beacon to draw activity along the corridor. This development would create a prominent civic space containing the Banneker fountain and would flank a grand staircase leading to the waterfront. The topography allows the civic plaza to sit atop a pedestal, affording impressive views of the riverfront and East Potomac Park, elevating the significance of the cultural activity within the plaza. A grand staircase could create a memorable pedestrian connection between a nationally significant cultural facility at the Overlook and the lively urban waterfront now being planned by the city.

The Southwest Freeway, immediately north of the Overlook could be decked and, when the interstate bridges are rebuilt in the future, they could be realigned to make room for additional building area. Combined, the Overlook and the new air-rights development cover approximately 18 acres. This area may accommodate a mix of office, cultural, entertainment, hospitality, and residential uses that would create a quality work place and a vibrant visitor destination that would strengthen the walkable connections to the waterfront. This development would also create opportunities for street-level activities on the north side of Maine Avenue, across from the waterfront development.

This transformation would raise the stature and prominence of the Overlook site to attract a nationally significant cultural institution. An iconic cultural facility would naturally extend the cultural and commemorative opportunities that are currently confined to the National Mall to the corridor and the Overlook site.



Bird's eye view of 10th Street Overlook



Current view of East Potomac Park from the 10th Street Overlook

Maryland Avenue, SW

Maryland Avenue's prominence as a symbolically important street could be restored by improving the mix of activities, strengthening symbolic views, and enhancing the series of public spaces that punctuate the corridor. By decking the rail line, a park and scenic overlook could be built at the southwest terminus of the avenue. The patch of neglected and compromised green space on the 8th Street axis at the intersection of Maryland and Virginia Avenues, known as Reservation 113, could be remade as a pedestrian-friendly park or commemorative site. This series of open spaces along the Avenue will complement the proposed Eisenhower Presidential Memorial planned at Maryland and Independence Avenues.

The rail line that slices through the Southwest Rectangle could be covered to reclaim the street grid and to restore Maryland Avenue as a grand urban boulevard, focused on the U.S. Capitol. Rerouting freight rail traffic away from the monumental core would also increase the capacity of the passenger line, helping to reduce regional and local rail traffic congestion.

To address safety issues associated with freight rail in the city, in 2007 NCPC and the District Department of Transportation conducted a freight rail realignment feasibility study that identified several possible alternative corridors for movement of freight rail through the region. The identified alternatives include tunneling under the Potomac River and through the District, and bypassing the District altogether and rerouting freight rail service through Virginia and/or Maryland. Further analysis of these and other alternatives will require a multi-jurisdictional approach and extensive public input to determine the environmental impacts, public and private benefits, projected costs, and funding sources.

While freight rail service through the city complicates some initiatives, the broad goals of the Framework Plan and reclaiming Maryland Avenue could still be realized if it remains. Realigning the existing infrastructure could make it less intrusive. Along Maryland Avenue, these changes include slightly lowering and shifting the tracks south of their current location, and decking the trench to reestablish the avenue. At Reservation 113, the tracks would emerge to cross 7th Street on a new elevated trestle. Along Virginia Avenue, the Virginia Railway Express (VRE) station would be improved to accommodate two-way traffic.

This new alignment would re-establish the importance of Maryland Avenue as a L'Enfant street connecting the U.S. Capitol and the Jefferson Memorial. These improvements would provide an opportunity to:

- Re-establish five blocks of Maryland Avenue between 9th and 14th Streets and the historic urban street grid, improving connections and mobility, and establishing symbolic views and a commemorative corridor.
- Establish Reservation 113 between 7th and 9th Streets as the great civic space originally intended by L'Enfant.
- Create a scenic overlook and pedestrian plaza at the western terminus of Maryland Avenue above the current tunnel entrance at 14th Street to establish views to the Tidal Basin and provide pedestrian access down to 14th Street and Maine Avenue.
- Increase passenger rail capacity by building a double-loaded platform for northbound and southbound trains at the VRE station.
- Increase security within the nation's capital.
- Construct a sleek, elevated trestle and improve the streetscape along Virginia Avenue.

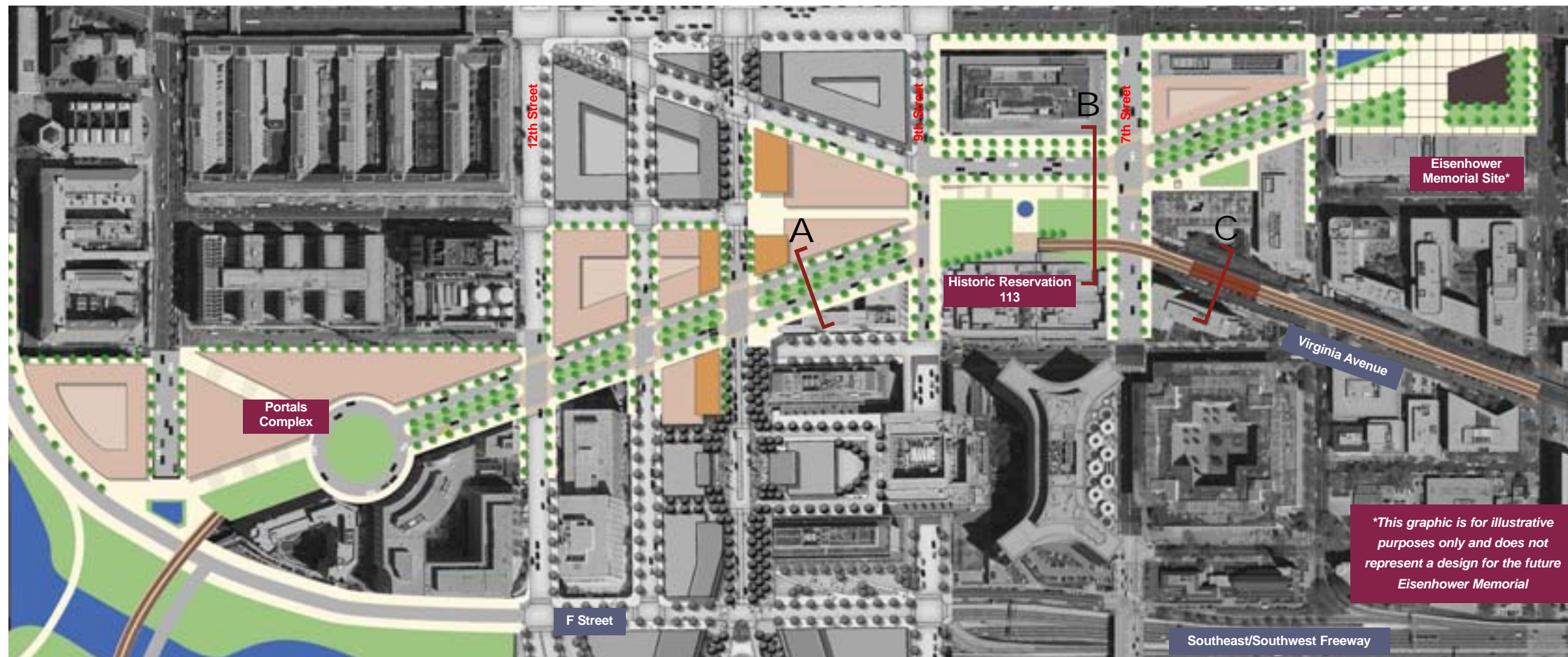


Restoring Reservation 113

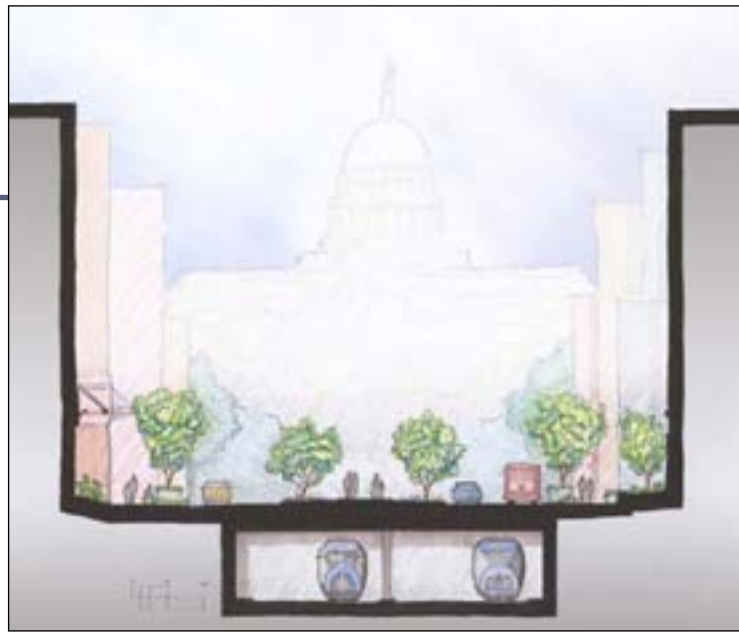
Covering slightly more than one acre today, Reservation 113 has been marginalized by rail, road, and building construction over the years. The National Capital Framework Plan proposes to reclaim it as an important component in the Southwest Rectangle's public realm.

Because the street grid in the area has been shattered, the federal office buildings bordering Reservation 113 do not embrace the open space in a way that encourages vibrant public use. Not one of the several buildings that surround the Reservation has its primary entrance on the open space. Redevelopment of the adjacent Department of Energy complex (Forrestal building) would offer a prime opportunity to reorient the building and establish a strong relationship between structures and open space. Additional infill and redevelopment opportunities exist to the east of Reservation 113 as well. Currently a federal building occupies a portion of the site on the north side of Maryland Avenue, SW between 6th and 7th Streets. The Framework Plan recommends that the triangular remainder of the site be developed as federal office space in order to define the street wall, increase street-level activity, and strengthen views between Reservation 113 and the U.S. Capitol.

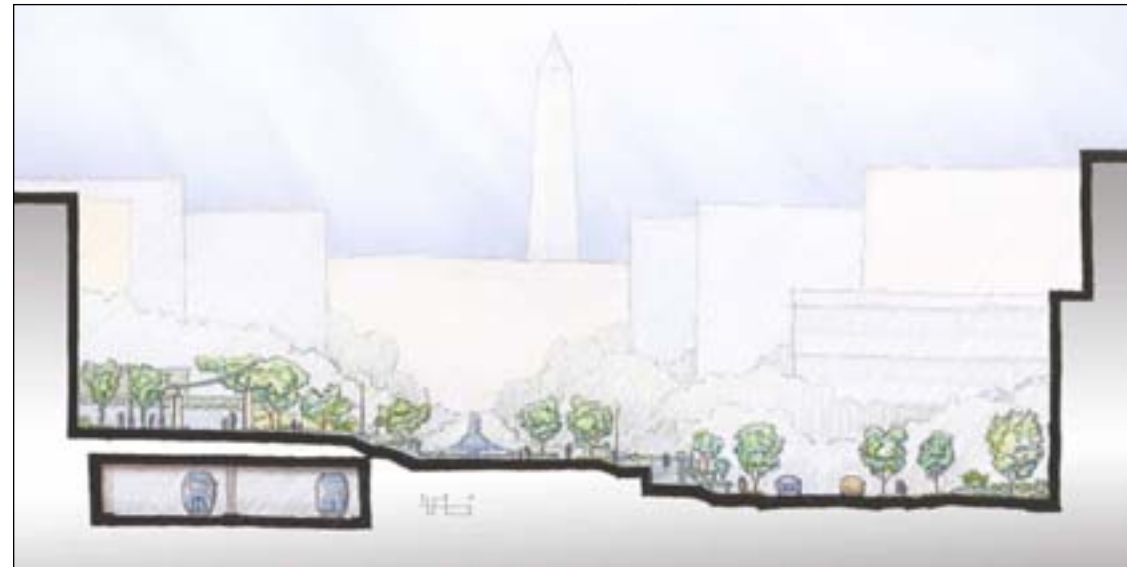
With abundant landscaping and perhaps a fountain, a piece of public art, or even a memorial, Reservation 113 could be a haven for office workers at lunchtime or tourists seeking shade and rest in much the same way that Dupont Circle now is.



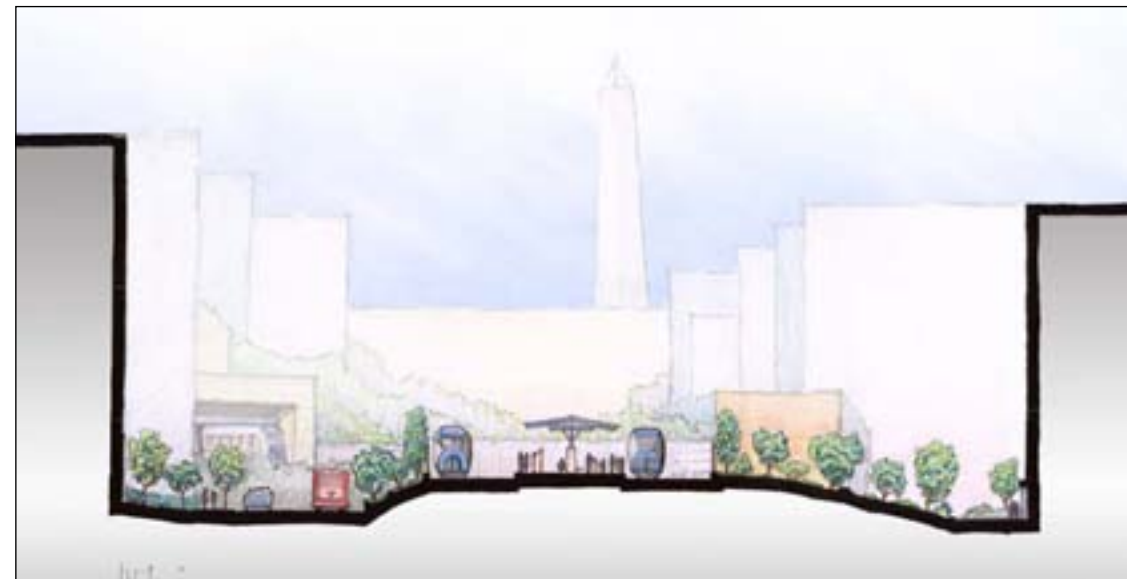
Maryland Avenue can be restored to prominence as an important corridor in Southwest Washington.



A:
View from Maryland Avenue looking northeast towards the U.S. Capitol



B:
View from Virginia Avenue looking northwest towards Reservation 113



C:
View from Virginia Avenue looking northwest at the new VRE station

Existing Railroad Alignment

In Pierre L'Enfant's plan, the area south of the Mall received its full share of grand Washington avenues, impressive civic spaces, and open vistas. However, long before the intrusive highways and superblock buildings were imposed, railroad infrastructure undermined L'Enfant's coherent vision for this part of the city as early as the 1860s.

Responding to the industrial and transportation needs of the Civil War, railroad tracks crossed the Potomac River along what is now known as Long Bridge into the heart of Washington following the expedient path provided by the broad expanses of Maryland and Virginia Avenues, SW. For over 150 years, the tracks have served as key passenger and freight routes along the Eastern Seaboard and, until Union Station was built, a rail spur along 6th Street serviced a passenger rail station located on the Mall near today's National Gallery of Art.

Currently, freight trains traveling the Eastern Seaboard and coal-hauling trains heading to the U.S. Capitol heating plant share the same tracks with passenger trains destined for Union Station. Near the I-395 freeway, the passenger rail traffic peels off to the north towards Union Station, while freight traffic enters the Virginia Avenue tunnel and continues southeast until it crosses the Anacostia River.

Freight rail service passing through the District poses several challenges. To the east of the Southwest Rectangle, a bottleneck is caused by the narrowing of two tracks to one within the low Virginia Avenue tunnel that precludes double stacking rail cars. Further inefficiencies along the passenger route result from both northbound and southbound commuter trains sharing one boarding platform at the VRE station at L'Enfant Plaza. In addition, the movement of freight and hazardous materials poses a significant safety risk to the nearby U.S. Capitol, densely populated residential neighborhoods, and work centers that employ an estimated 100,000 workers.

The rail line also obliterates large stretches of Maryland and Virginia Avenues, SW, hemming in the surrounding streets with looming infrastructure and blocking nearly all views to and from the waterfront and monumental core. Today, railroad tracks intrude on a historically significant patch of open space at the intersection of Maryland and Virginia Avenues that Pierre L'Enfant had originally imagined as a handsome civic space.



New Spaces for Museums, Residences, Offices, and Shops

By reclaiming pockets of land through infill development, reusing existing buildings and redeveloping outdated ones, and creating solid building edges to encourage pedestrian activity, the plan proposes a variety of ways to fill in the gaps of the city fabric.

Redeveloping portions of the southwest precinct and decking over the highway and its access ramps could increase the developable area south of the Mall by close to three million square feet. Without reducing the amount of office space owned by the government, the federally owned sites would be used for federal offices linked with accessible, street-level retail, and portions could also be used to accommodate museums. New buildings over decked highways could be available for mixed-use private development for housing, hotels, shops, and offices.

The Framework Plan identifies potential opportunities for four premier nationally significant museums, on par with those located on the National Mall. New museums could be accommodated at the 10th Street Overlook and in a portion of the redeveloped Forrester complex. In addition, the Liberty Loan building and the Whitten building could also be used for new cultural destinations, provided the current federal tenants could be appropriately relocated. The Liberty Loan building located at the foot of the 14th Street Bridge was designed as a temporary World War I facility to process government war bonds. It occupies one of the potentially most picturesque waterfront spots in the city. The Neo-Classical Whitten building, housing the headquarters of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, was designed in the early 20th century by the Philadelphia firm of Rankin, Kellogg and Crane and is prominently located on the National Mall. Use of these buildings for nationally significant cultural sites would require special congressional appropriations to relocate building tenants to other appropriate locations in the District.

In addition to these four sites for major museums, other properties in the Southwest Rectangle could be re-used or redeveloped to accommodate a variety of activities. The Cotton Annex building at 12th and C Streets could be redeveloped for federal office space and infill development of a nearby parking lot could accommodate federal offices, street-level retail or cultural activities that contribute to the rejuvenation of street life along a re-established Maryland Avenue. The Smithsonian's iconic but now-vacant Arts and Industries building could be rehabilitated as a highly visible cultural or visitor center with day and evening public activities. Infill development at the northeast corner of 7th Street and Maryland Avenue would create new space for federal office development and an interesting mix of other uses, strengthening the street wall along Maryland Avenue in what today is an ill-defined and bland area. Finally, decking over a portion of I-395 (Center Leg Freeway) will allow infill development that improves pedestrian connections and provides expansion opportunities for the U.S. Capitol Complex

Collectively, these new uses would provide the necessary mix of activities to transform the Southwest Rectangle into an attractive place to work, visit, and live. Now widely considered a bleak and forlorn corner of the city, the area south of the Mall could emerge as a popular destination of tree-shaded streets, outdoor dining, cultural attractions, pocket parks, green spaces, and panoramic vistas. Washington visitors could stroll from Smithsonian museums on the Mall to the Southwest Waterfront, stopping along 10th Street for shopping, entertainment, and refreshments. Office workers in the area could step out of their offices for lunch, a walk, or to run daily errands. Local residents could enjoy a new, exciting Washington neighborhood.



What if...

An Alternative Alignment

Virginia Avenue could be reclaimed as an important L'Enfant street reconnecting the Southwest and Southeast portions of the city through an alternative rail alignment. An ambitious effort to more fully restore Virginia Avenue could be accomplished by continuing the passenger rail tunnel from Maryland Avenue under Reservation 113, the Capitol Reflecting Pool, and Louisiana Avenue to Union Station.



Arts and Industries building



Liberty Loan building



Whitten building

PROTECTING MODERN LANDMARKS

The demolition and rebuilding of Southwest Washington in the 1950s and 1960s was the most ambitious, most comprehensive, and most implemented urban renewal plan in the United States. On the doorstep of Congress, it was intended to be a national model. It also represents one of the last collective efforts of the Modernist era of architecture and planning. The works of Bauhaus master Marcel Breuer and I. M. Pei as well as those of Washington's leading Modernist architects shaped an ensemble that reflects the urban design patterns, materials, and iconic architectural forms of the day. With a broad range of building types and land uses, including the federal government precinct, Southwest illustrates the urbanist aspirations of post-war social thinkers, planners, and architects. It also illustrates the post-war expansion of the federal government, reflected both in the growth of cabinet agencies and the resumption of government office construction south of the National Mall.

As monuments to the federal government's determination in solving the social and urban ills, and in projecting the image of a great nation, the buildings are a fitting legacy of those aspirations. But the attendant ills of Urban Renewal itself became apparent, too. In that respect, and in their architectural character, many of the Modern buildings are now historic, representing a past era of planning and design. Sufficient time has passed for them to be considered with contextual perspective. Their significance is now being documented and evaluated by historians, architects, and historic preservationists. The character of their superblock settings within the surrounding L'Enfant city is being assessed. Some of the buildings and sites have been protected with historic designation. Some have been demolished. The superblocks and settings of some have been altered or amended.

Federal government agencies are evaluating their modern building stock, continuing to preserve building exteriors and significant public interior spaces while rehabilitating office interiors to meet current standards. Conservation techniques for modern materials and methods, many of which were still experimental when first used, are being applied. With floor plans and systems that need updating, and with pre-cast concrete as a primary structural and finish material, these now-aging buildings pose challenges to government planners, their federal occupants, and architects and historic preservationists who are interested in preserving their significant qualities while extending their lifespan.



Housing and Urban Development building designed by Marcel Breuer

Restore the Street Grid and Bridge the Potomac River

In addition to redesigning 10th Street as a tree-shaded and lively promenade between the National Mall and the Overlook, and re-establishing Maryland Avenue as an important L'Enfant street, the Framework Plan calls for reconnecting the shattered street grid throughout the precinct. Specifically, the plan proposes to re-establish Virginia Avenue west of Reservation 113 in a way that is friendly to pedestrians and strengthens views to the Washington Monument. Additionally, 7th Street, one of the precinct's few remaining continuous streets, could be redesigned as a human-scale, tree-lined connection between Independence and Maine Avenues.

Decking the Southeast-Southwest Freeway and its access ramps would permit the re-establishment of F, 9th, 11th, and 12th Streets, and provide new space for mixed-use infill development. This decking would allow an increase in housing, offices, and hospitality uses, significant improvement of mobility for pedestrians and motorists, and multiple connections between the Mall and the waterfront. Realigning 15th

Street and connecting it with the re-established F Street would improve access throughout the precinct as well as around the National Mall.

When it is time to replace the three existing bridges: the Arland D. Williams Bridge (14th Street Bridge), the Rochambeau Bridge, and the George Mason Memorial Bridge; consolidating, tunneling, and realigning the bridge infrastructure could have numerous benefits.

This proposed bridge realignment and consolidation would help establish:

- A seamless pedestrian connection between East Potomac Park, the National Mall, and the new Southwest waterfront.
- A new cultural and mixed-use destination at the terminus of 10th Street.
- An overlook park and pedestrian connection between Maryland Avenue and 14th Street.

Two new bridges could replace the three vehicular bridges. One new bridge could serve traffic destined for downtown. A second new bridge could serve traffic headed to other parts of the city and beyond.

The new alignment would require the driver approaching the city from the south to make a decision when on the Virginia side of the Potomac River to either take the new 14th Street Bridge or the new interstate bridge.

The local 14th Street Bridge would emerge from a tunnel at the foot of 14th Street, north of Maine Avenue. This alignment would give cars a direct route from Ohio Drive to 15th Street, a new F Street, and Maine Avenue, or let them merge into the grid of the city north of the Washington Channel along 14th Street.

The I-395 Interstate bridge would travel under the Washington Channel and its northbound lanes would connect to the existing 9th Street tunnel and the existing Southeast-Southwest Freeway (beneath the 10th Street Overlook). The existing 12th Street tunnel would feed into the bridge's southbound lanes. These new connections would require the traffic flow along 9th and 12th Streets to be reversed from their present directions.



Key Improvements Southwest Rectangle

- Establish 10th Street, SW and Overlook as a lively mixed-use and premier cultural destination to connect the National Mall and the Southwest waterfront.
 1. Redevelop the Department of Energy's Forrestal building complex as federal offices and a cultural facility containing ground-floor retail
 2. Redevelop the U.S. Postal Service headquarters as offices with ground-floor shops and cultural uses.
 3. Develop the Overlook as a premier cultural mixed-use destination.
- Establish Maryland Avenue, SW as a grand urban boulevard to link the U.S. Capitol to the Jefferson Memorial.
 4. Develop Reservation 113 as a premier public park.
 5. Deck the rail line to reclaim Maryland Avenue.
 6. Deck the rail line to create an overlook park.
- Create new places for museums, offices, residences, and shops to increase the mix of uses.
 7. Redevelop the Department of Treasury's Liberty Loan building as a premier cultural destination with ground-floor amenities.
 8. Reuse the Department of Agriculture's Whitten building as a premier cultural destination.
 9. Reuse the Arts and Industries building for a cultural destination or other public amenity.
 10. Reuse and infill the Cotton Annex site for federal offices and ground-floor mixed-use.
 11. Deck the freeway to develop a mix of uses (office, residential, retail, and hospitality).
 12. Develop the Federal Aeronautical Administration building yard as federal office with ground-floor retail.
 13. Deck I-395 (Center Leg Freeway) to enhance connectivity and provide future expansion opportunities for the U.S. Capitol Complex.
 14. Encourage mixed-use development over highway and rail line air-rights and within the ground-floors along 10th Street.
- Restore the street grid to improve mobility.
 15. Re-establish C Street between 10th and 12th streets for cars and between 9th and 10th Streets for pedestrians.
 16. Deck the freeway between 7th and 12th Streets to re-establish F Street.
 17. Deck the 9th Street tunnel between Independence Avenue and D Street to re-establish 9th Street.
 18. Deck the freeway tunnel to re-establish 11th and 12th Streets between Independence Avenue and F Street.
 19. Realign 15th Street to connect with a new F Street.



Southwest Rectangle Framework Plan

LEGEND

Vehicular / Pedestrian Circulation Enhancements	Marina Activities
Pedestrian Circulation Enhancements	Infill Development Opportunity Envelope
Rail Corridor	Re-Use Opportunity
Metro Corridor	Development Opportunity Architect of the Capitol
Open Space / Public Realm Enhancement	Plans in Progress
Riparian Edge Enhancement	Memorials and Museums Master Plan Sites
Open Space / Public Realm Enhancements In Progress	Additional Commemorative Opportunity Sites