



## Executive Director's Recommendation

Commission Meeting: January 9, 2014

---

<b>PROJECT</b> <b>10th Street SW Programmatic Concept and Interim Banneker Connection Concept</b> 10th Street SW and Banneker Park	<b>NCPC FILE NUMBER</b> 7551
	<b>NCPC MAP FILE NUMBER</b> 24.13(60.00)43892
<b>SUBMITTED BY</b> National Capital Planning Commission	<b>APPLICANT'S REQUEST</b> Approval of comments on concept design
<b>REVIEW AUTHORITY</b> Approval 40 U.S.C. § 8722(b)(1) and (d)	<b>PROPOSED ACTION</b> Approve comments as requested
	<b>ACTION ITEM TYPE</b> Staff Presentation

---

### PROJECT SUMMARY

The 10<sup>th</sup> Street and Interim Banneker Connection Concepts include near-and long-term concepts that advance the objectives in the SW Ecodistrict Plan and several precedent planning projects for the Southwest Rectangle. The objectives include:

- Design 10<sup>th</sup> Street as a walkable, vibrant mixed-use cultural corridor;
- Create a setting along the corridor and at Banneker Park befitting a national cultural destination, to serve as an extension of the National Mall;
- Program the corridor for daily activity and for special exhibitions and events;
- Design the corridor to serve as the energy and water management spine of the Ecodistrict;
- Use the lower level of 10<sup>th</sup> Street to accommodate energy, water, and parking infrastructure;
- Showcase state-of-the-art urban design and environmental practices to increase public awareness.

The purpose of this work is to:

- Establish a cross-section dimension for the 10th Street right of way that identifies sidewalks, stormwater management areas, streetscape elements, bicycle and vehicular lane locations, and on-street parking.

- 
- Prepare conceptual designs and identify programmatic opportunities for phased near- and long-term streetscape improvements.
  - Design a safe, functional and aesthetically pleasing pedestrian connection that links Banneker Overlook with the waterfront.

## KEY INFORMATION

- The programmatic concept for 10<sup>th</sup> Street will help to inform future redevelopment activity throughout the 10<sup>th</sup> Street Corridor including: GSA's Federal Triangle South project and JBG's new proposed office building at L'Enfant Plaza.
- The concept will be further defined as property along 10<sup>th</sup> Street redevelops and as funding sources are determined.
- The interim connection at Banneker Park will be funded by the developers for the Wharf project on the waterfront as part of their planned-unit-development approval. Construction of this connection is anticipated to occur in conjunction with phase 1 of the Wharf project. The National Park Service (NPS) will lead the design, environmental and historic review process for this concept.
- NCPC collaborated with federal and local partners to prepare the concepts and coordinated with the DC Department of Transportation (DDOT) and NPS. NCPC has hosted public meetings and has sought input from the public and other stakeholders during the development of these concepts.
- The SW Ecodistrict Task Force reviewed and accepted the concepts on November 14<sup>th</sup> and agreed to forward it to the Commission.
- The National Capital Planning Commission released the proposed concepts for public comment from December 5<sup>th</sup> -31<sup>st</sup> of 2013. Staff has documented and used the comments to inform development of the proposed concepts.
- Additional analysis with regard to environmental review and historic designation eligibility will be completed as these concepts are further refined into preliminary and final development plans.

---

## RECOMMENDATION

The Commission:

**Comments favorably** on the Concepts Plans for the 10<sup>th</sup> Street Programmatic Concept and the Interim Banneker Connection Concept pursuant to 40 U.S.C. § 8722(b)(1) and (d) and;

**Directs** staff to:

- (1) Advise applicants to use these concepts as a guide when programming, planning, and designing future development proposals in the study area.
- (2) Use the concepts to:
  - Guide input on federal, local, and private planning studies and reports prepared for properties in the study area.
  - Develop or amend future NCPC planning studies and reports, including the *Comprehensive Plan for the National Capital: Federal Elements* and the *Federal Capital Improvements Program*.

**PROJECT REVIEW TIMELINE**

<b>Previous actions</b>	<b>June 6, 2013</b> – Information Presentation
<b>Remaining actions</b> (anticipated)	– Interim Banneker Connection – Preliminary and Final Review – 10 <sup>th</sup> Street SW Concept – to be determined

Prepared by Diane Sullivan  
12/26/13

---

## Table of Contents

---

I. Project Description .....	6
Site.....	6
Background.....	6
Proposal.....	9
II. Project Analysis/Conformance .....	21
Executive Summary .....	21
Comprehensive Plan for the National Capital .....	21
SW Ecodistrict Plan.....	23
Monumental Core Framework Plan .....	23
Extending the Legacy: Planning America’s Capital for the 21 <sup>st</sup> Century.....	24
CapitalSpace.....	25
National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).....	25
National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) .....	25
III. Consultation .....	26
Stakeholder Coordination.....	26
Coordinating Committee.....	27
U.S. Commission of Fine Arts .....	28

---

## Figures and Maps

---

Figure 1: The 10th Street and Banneker Connection Study Area .....	6
Figure 2: Existing Conditions 10 <sup>th</sup> Street (left) and the goat path at Banneker Park (right).....	7
Figure 3: The SW Ecodistrict Vision .....	8
Figure 4: Rendering of 10 <sup>th</sup> Street from the SW Ecodistrict Plan .....	8
Figure 5: Example of near-term improvements.....	9
Figure 6: The proposed right-of-way for 10 <sup>th</sup> Street .....	10
Figure 7: Over half of 10 <sup>th</sup> Street is an elevated structure.....	11
Figure 8:Cisterns under 10 <sup>th</sup> Street .....	11

---

Figure 9: Festival Programming. ....	12
Figure 10: Design Framework: Unified connection with episodic features. ....	12
Figure 11: Three different approaches – Hardscape, Softscape, and Waterscape. ....	13
Figure 12: 10 <sup>th</sup> Street SW: The Ground Plane ....	14
Figure 13: 10 <sup>th</sup> Street SW: The Tree Canopy ....	15
Figure 14: 10 <sup>th</sup> Street SW: Flexible Event Programming. ....	15
Figure 15: A sketch of 10 <sup>th</sup> Street looking south from Virginia Avenue.....	15
Figure 16: Precedent projects from Washington, DC, Chicago, and Portland.....	16
Figure 17: Implementation of 10 <sup>th</sup> Street will likely occur in phases. ....	16
Figure 18: Existing access from Banneker Park to the waterfront.....	17
Figure 19: The 80’ wide view corridor from the Overlook at Banneker Park. ....	18
Figure 20: Plan of Dan Kiley’s Landscape for Banneker Park ....	19
Figure 21: Proposed interim connection at Banneker Park.....	20
Figure 22: A rendering of the interim staircase at Banneker Park.....	20

---

## I. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

### Site

The study area for the 10<sup>th</sup> Street SW programmatic concept consists of 10<sup>th</sup> Street SW from Independence Avenue to Banneker Park. The study area for the interim connection at Banneker Park consists of a small area just south of the freeway, the west side of Banneker Park, and the pedestrian path along the east side of the site as shown in Figure 1. 10<sup>th</sup> Street is under the jurisdictional control of the District of Columbia. The National Park Service owns and maintains Banneker Park.

Both sites are part of the SW Ecodistrict Plan Study Area.

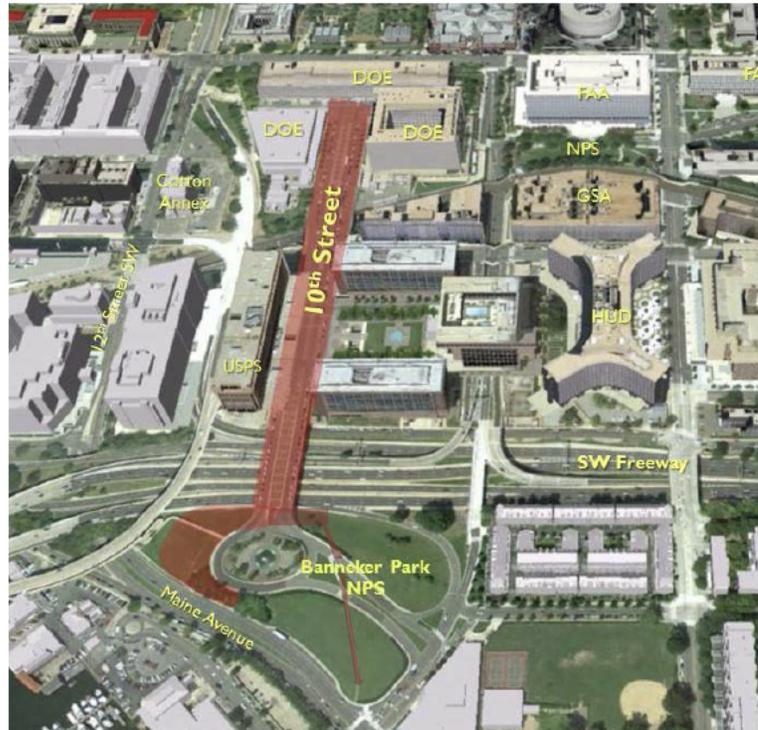


Figure 1: The 10th Street and Banneker Connection Study Area

### Background

Once home to 400 acres of small businesses and rowhouses, this area of Southwest DC was razed by one of the nation's most ambitious urban renewal programs in the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. As part of urban renewal, the Southwest Freeway was built and divided the area into a federal office precinct to the north and a residential neighborhood to the south. To alleviate the physical barrier of the freeway, 10<sup>th</sup> Street (later renamed L'Enfant Promenade) was constructed.

Today 10th Street is approximately a half mile long and 150' wide (though at times the distance between building face to building face can be upwards of 225'). While a small portion of the street sits on solid ground towards Independence Avenue, the majority of the street is a bridge structure elevated over an active rail line, freeway, associated ramps and access roads. It is flanked by large federal and private office buildings with large setbacks and no ground floor uses. The streetscape is barren with little vegetation and minimal amenities to serve the daily needs and comfort of pedestrians. Together, the building forms, infrastructure, and minimal public realm make the area feel isolated and undesirable for improvement or investment.

10<sup>th</sup> Street terminates in a circular overlook designed by Dan Kiley which is part of Reservation 717. In 1971 the name of the reservation was changed from the 10<sup>th</sup> Street Overlook to Benjamin Banneker Park in memory of Benjamin Banneker.

Banneker Park is an eight-acre elevated site that sits 45 feet above Maine Avenue. It overlooks the Washington Channel with sweeping vistas to East Potomac Park, the Potomac River, and beyond. The park contains a plaza (the Overlook) that sits atop a large, barren, sloping lawn containing vehicular access ramps and interpretive signage commemorating the contributions of Benjamin Banneker. At the center of the Overlook are a green granite fountain and a tree-lined plaza, part of the historic Dan Kiley Landscape. A low wall surrounds the space, and acts as a retaining wall on the south side which features a steep decline to Maine Avenue. Direct pedestrian and bike access to the waterfront is very difficult and most people resort to a steep goat path on the side of the retaining wall.



Figure 2: Existing Conditions 10<sup>th</sup> Street (left) and the goat path at Banneker Park (right)

### ***Purpose***

NCPC's 1997 Legacy Plan recognized the significance of the 10<sup>th</sup> Street and Banneker Park corridor as a nationally significant connection from the National Mall to the waterfront. Most recently the National Capital Planning Commission accepted the SW Ecodistrict Plan which transforms this area south of the Mall into a vibrant and highly sustainable mixed-use neighborhood home to both federal agencies and new businesses and residents.

The SW Ecodistrict Plan envisions 10<sup>th</sup> Street as the spine of the ecodistrict where district energy and water systems are located and a green promenade carries residents and visitors between the Smithsonian Museums and the southwest waterfront. It also envisions new museum(s)/memorials anchored at Banneker Park. It includes guidance for programming special exhibits and events and for showcasing state-of-the art urban design and environmental practices

Today, a combination of proposed development, new federal planning initiatives, and market/economic forces is bringing significant change to the area. The Wharf, a multi-billion dollar waterfront development project will break ground in 2014; L'Enfant Plaza is expanding and recently completed renovations to the underground shopping center; sponsors are now considering the area for museum and memorial development; and the National Park Service is making improvements to the National Mall. In addition, the federal government is re-examining its property to meet aggressive sustainability targets, create a more efficient workplace for a modern federal workforce, and reduce its operating costs which together could change the land use in the area. Finally, the Smithsonian Institution is undertaking a master plan for their buildings along Independence Avenue including the Smithsonian Castle – the gateway to 10<sup>th</sup> Street.



Figure 3: The SW Ecodistrict Vision

The purpose of this project is to develop near- and long-term concepts that advance the 10th Street Corridor and Banneker Park objectives in the SW Ecodistrict Plan by:



Figure 4: Rendering of 10th Street from the SW Ecodistrict Plan

- Establishing a cross-section dimension for the 10th Street right of way that identifies sidewalks, stormwater management areas, streetscape elements, bicycle and vehicular lane locations, and on-street parking. This will help to inform GSA's Federal Triangle South project and the public realm in front of JBG's new proposed office building at L'Enfant Plaza.
- Preparing conceptual designs and identifying programmatic opportunities for phased near- and long-term streetscape improvements.
- Designing a safe, functional and aesthetically pleasing pedestrian connection that links Banneker Overlook and The Wharf. This connection will be funded by PN Hoffman as part of their planned unit development approval for the Wharf Project.

## **Proposal**

The SW Ecodistrict Task Force has spent the last year analyzing the infrastructure challenges associated with 10<sup>th</sup> Street; developing a list of short-term improvements for both 10<sup>th</sup> Street and the connection at Banneker Park; and developing a long-term programmatic concept that can inform future redevelopment.

### ***10<sup>th</sup> Street Near-term Improvements***

The opportunity to implement long-term improvements to 10<sup>th</sup> Street will not be available until major redevelopment occurs along the street. In the meantime the SW Ecodistrict Task Force is proposing several near-term low cost improvements that could enhance the pedestrian experience and emphasize the connection between the Mall and the waterfront. The near-term improvements are organized around improving the entry to 10<sup>th</sup> Street, initiating programming, and improving wayfinding. They include:

- Enhancing the Independence Ave/10<sup>th</sup> Street intersection with defined crosswalks;
- Creating opportunities for tactical urbanism (inexpensive short-term actions to attract people and provide comfortable, usable spaces);
- Creating areas for festival programming;
- Using street art, lighting and music to enhance the street;
- Enhancing crosswalks, wayfinding signs, and creating bike lanes.



*Figure 5: Example of short-term improvements*

### ***10<sup>th</sup> Street Long-term Programmatic Concept***

The purpose of the long-term programmatic concept is to provide a cohesive vision for the redevelopment of 10<sup>th</sup> Street which is likely to occur in phases over several years. Four primary factors shaped the design of the programmatic concept: street alignment, existing structural conditions, stormwater management, and program needs.

**Design Factors:**

1. Street Alignment. Initial designs considered several street alignments with various right-of way (ROW) widths that would accommodate daily uses and future event programs. The SW Ecodistrict Plan proposed three possible alignments including:
  - *A boulevard symmetrical design with a central median: A boulevard with a large park-like median that prioritizes pedestrian activity along the primary central view corridor.*
  - *An asymmetric design with a pedestrian-way: An asymmetric corridor that prioritizes the pedestrian-way along the primary view corridor and off-sets the roadway as a secondary corridor.*
  - *A symmetrical design with a smaller ROW: A center roadway flanked by wide sidewalks, giving equal weight to motorized vehicles and pedestrians, reflects the section of a typical downtown city street.*

The SW Ecodistrict Task Force selected the boulevard design since it aligns the view corridor between the Smithsonian Castle and Banneker Park and offers the most flexibility for programming. The concept also maintains the width of 10<sup>th</sup> Street at 150 feet (the same as it is today) but reconfigures it to provide more generous median and bike lanes. Low traffic projections on 10<sup>th</sup> Street allow for one traffic lane in each direction. While the right-of-way width will remain the same, it is likely that when land along 10<sup>th</sup> Street redevelops, the new buildings will build to the property line. The result will be a street that feels more intimate than what exists today.

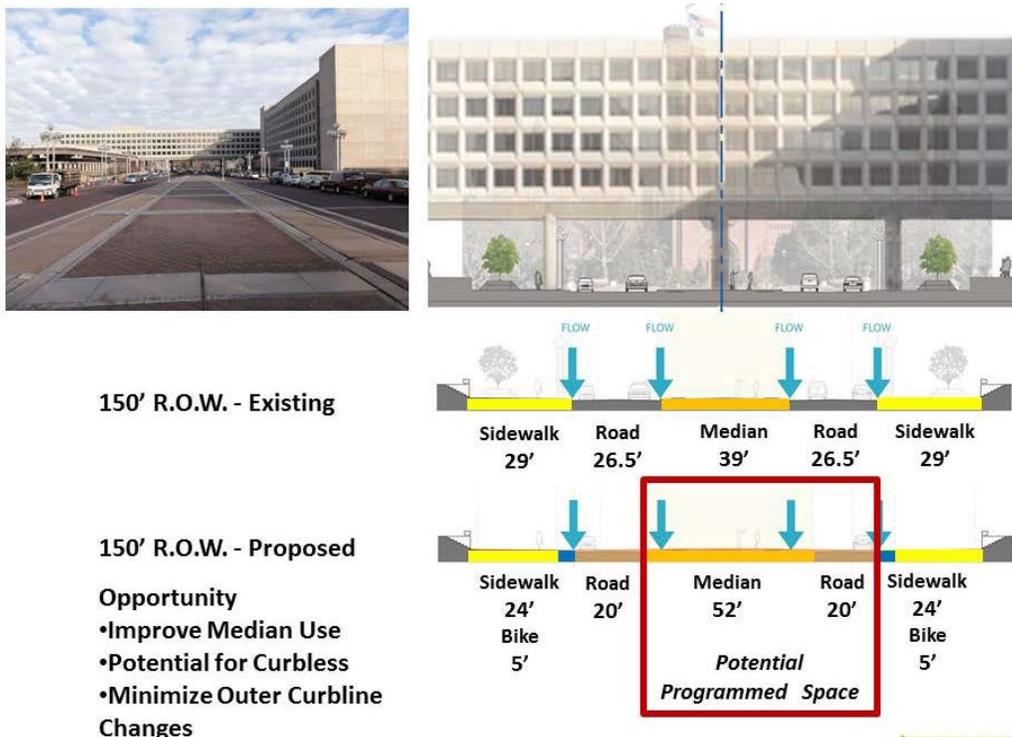


Figure 6: The proposed right-of-way for 10<sup>th</sup> Street is the same as it is today but it has a different configuration

2. Existing Structural Conditions. The complicated structure of 10<sup>th</sup> Street limits the amount of landscaping, stormwater retention, and tree planting opportunities on the street. The area between Maryland Avenue and Independence Avenue is located on ground, providing the most opportunity for landscaping and tree plantings. Between Maryland Avenue and the Freeway, 10<sup>th</sup> Street is a bridge structure with access roads and parking underneath. The SW Ecodistrict Plan envisions this area under the bridge structure housing cisterns for stormwater capture. While the bridge conditions will limit the size of the tree wells to support large trees, construction of the cistern will provide opportunity to build tree wells that will support larger trees.

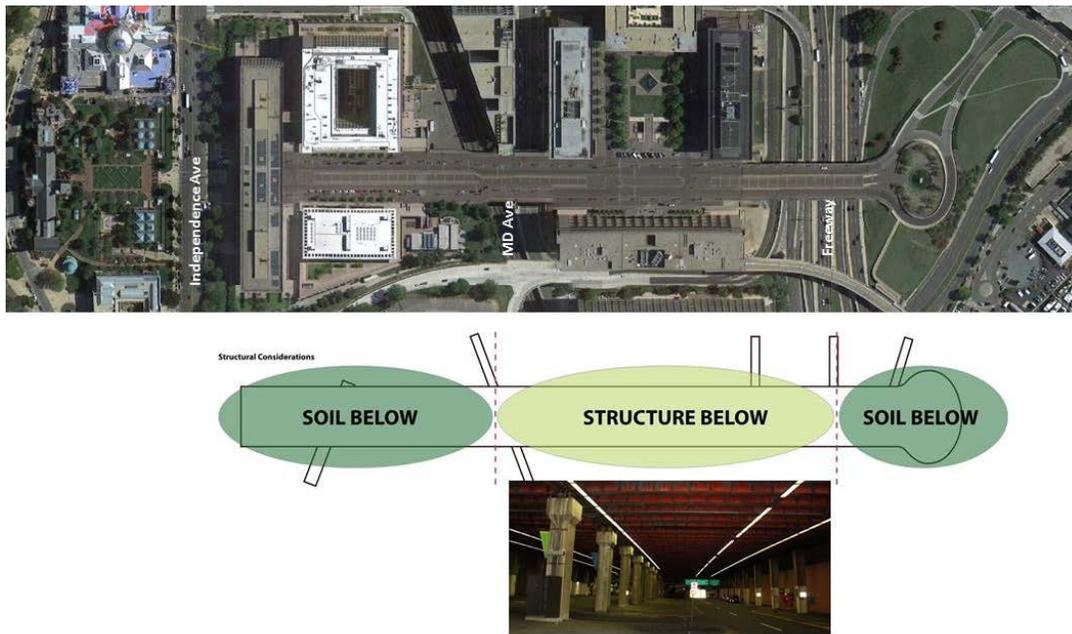


Figure 7: Over half of 10<sup>th</sup> Street is an elevated structure

3. Stormwater Management. The concept design of 10<sup>th</sup> Street includes stormwater management above and under the street. The design was informed by the amount of stormwater that needs to be collected and reused to meet the goals of the SW Ecodistrict Plan. The concept strikes a balance in treating some of the water in bioswales above ground and treating some of the stormwater under 10<sup>th</sup> Street. An analysis of the proposed stormwater system has shown that the proposed cisterns are financially and technologically feasible.



Figure 8: Cisterns under 10<sup>th</sup> Street

4. Event Programs. Programming also influenced the design of 10<sup>th</sup> Street. One of the goals of the SW Ecodistrict Plan is to move events from Pennsylvania Avenue and the National Mall to 10<sup>th</sup> Street. This will relieve pressure to overuse these places, as well help maintain the Mall's turf. Information about the festivals' size, duration, and required facilities and utilities provided by the National Park Service (NPS) was used to evaluate different street configurations. The symmetrical center median allows for the closing of traffic on one side of the median for larger festival events while maintaining two- directional traffic and emergency access on the other side.

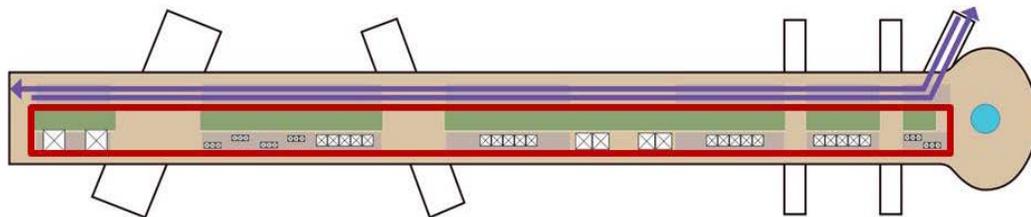


Figure 9: The red outline shows how one lane of traffic could be closed for festival use.

### Design Framework:

The overall framework of the concept design is based on a unified connection from the Mall to the waterfront with episodic features along the way as shown in figure 10.

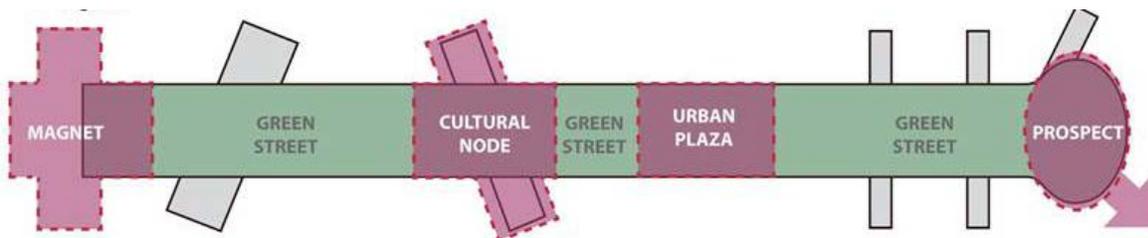


Figure 10: Design Framework: Unified connection with episodic features.

Early design work considered three approaches based on the design factors and the framework above. These included the hardscape, softscape, and waterscape characters described below:

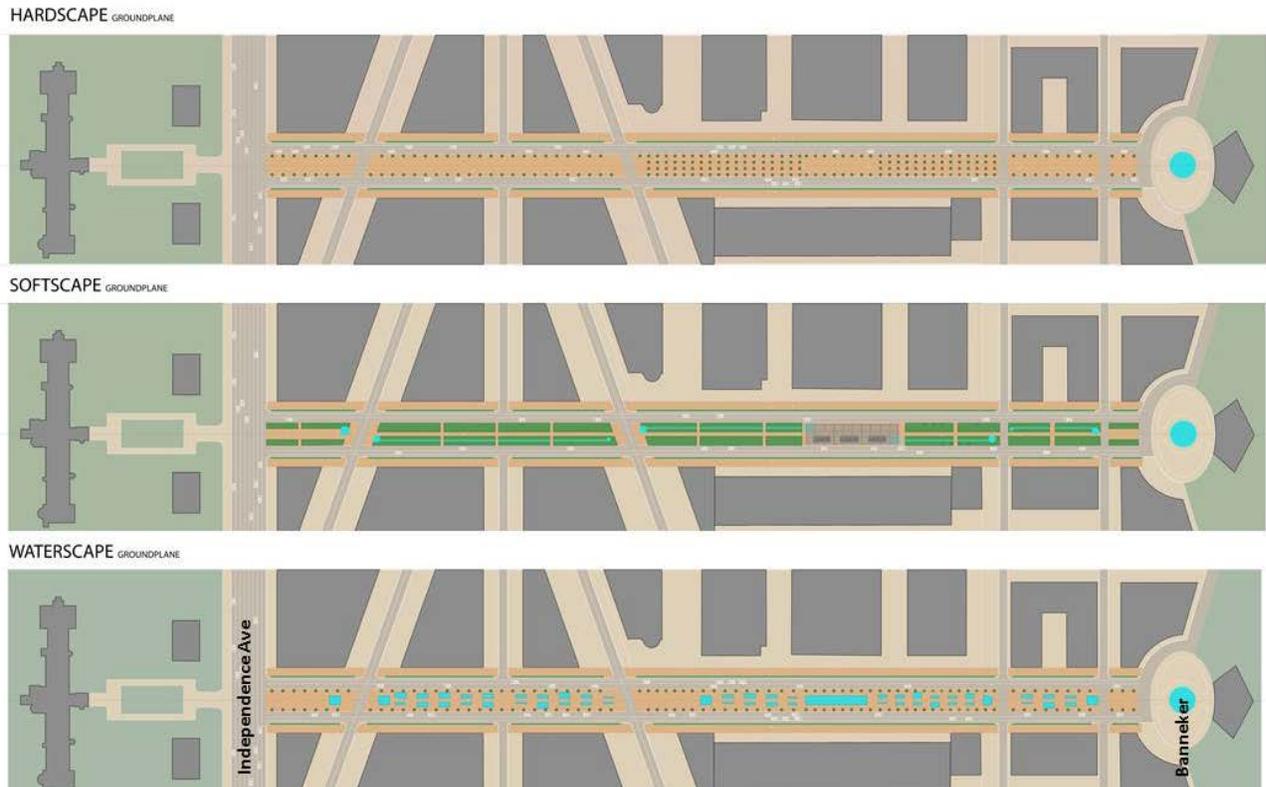


Figure 11: Three different approaches for 10<sup>th</sup> Street – Hardscape, Softscape, and Waterscape.

Approach	Characteristics
<p><b>Hardscape:</b> places an emphasis on a strong linear axis to the Smithsonian Castle with a formal, hard, and permeable surface treatment along the street.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Trees flush with pavement.</li> <li>• Most flexible for programming median.</li> <li>• Could accommodate the most extensive. “curbless” median of the three options.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Softscape:</b> proposes a more naturalistic approach by integrating more passive green space along the median.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reinforces the “continuation of the Mall”</li> <li>• Creates passive opportunities.</li> <li>• Could integrate linear stormwater features.</li> <li>• Could accommodate some programming.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Waterscape:</b> uses stormwater capture and reuse as the major theme along the median of the street.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Brings water to the surface to reinforce the Ecodistrict experience.</li> <li>• Could accommodate some programming.</li> </ul>

## Proposed Concept: “An Urban Garden Promenade”

To capitalize on the benefits all of three approaches, the proposed concept is a hybrid that includes elements of the hardscape, softscape, and waterscape approaches above. The resulting concept is an “urban garden promenade” that functions more as a park/public space than it does a street. The promenade will serve as an extension of the National Mall, providing park space and accommodating both small and mid-sized events, while also providing vehicular and bicycle access.

At Independence Avenue and 10<sup>th</sup> Street it is envisioned that a large water feature and tall trees would attract people to the entrance of the promenade. From Virginia to Maryland, where most of the street is on ground, the design is that of a linear garden with the largest of the trees on 10<sup>th</sup> Street and the most amount of landscaping. Small scale water features and bioswales would occur throughout this section. The intersection of Maryland Avenue and 10<sup>th</sup> Street provides an opportunity for a cultural node to be further defined in coordination with the possible decking of Maryland Avenue. After Maryland Avenue, 10<sup>th</sup> Street becomes a bridge and the landscaping and vegetation are less of a defining feature. It is through this section that the opportunity for a major public plaza exists with public art and another significant water feature. The space should be flexible enough to entertain major festivals. Once over the freeway, the design of 10<sup>th</sup> Street will start to transition to Banneker Park and the waterfront with smaller cascading water features and landscaping.

While the intent of this project is not to prescribe specific details about materials and street furniture, the final concept provides guidance regarding overall character. The urban garden promenade is to be both unique with differentiating features from other parks in DC while also carrying through certain elements of the monumental core and the National Mall. These particular elements (whether it be a material or particular piece of street furniture) will be determined in later phases.

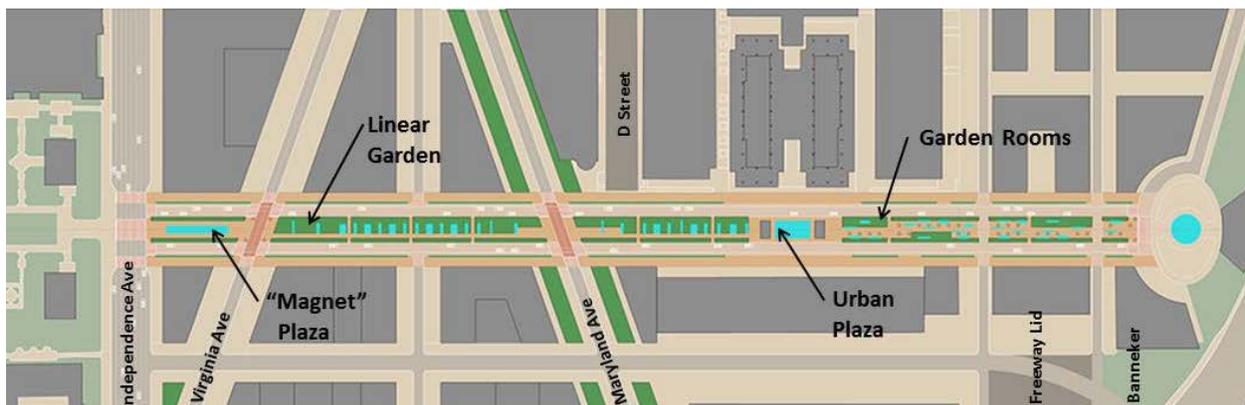


Figure 12: 10<sup>th</sup> Street SW: The ground plane shows the linear garden between Independence and Maryland Avenues, the urban plaza at the L’Enfant Complex and the series of garden rooms leading to Banneker Park.

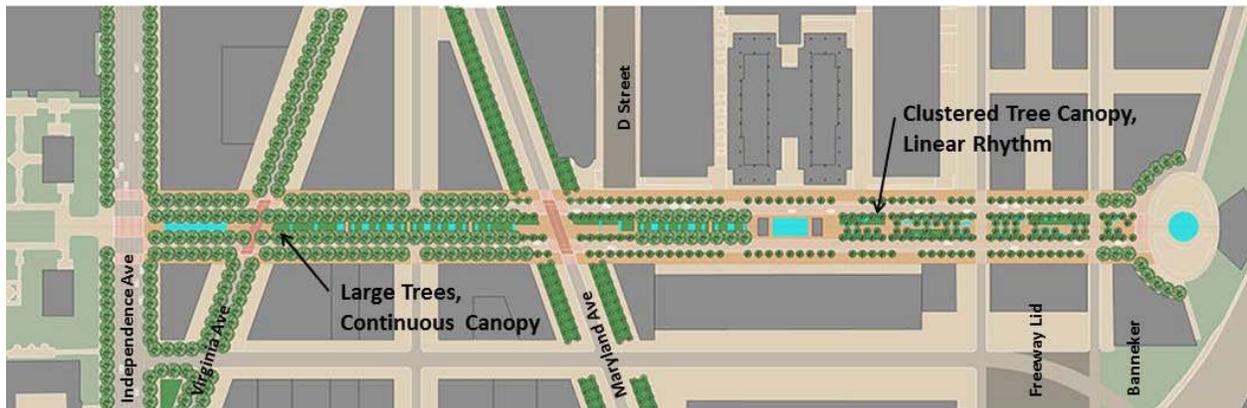


Figure 13: 10<sup>th</sup> Street SW: The tree canopy is more extensive at Independence Avenue and opens up gradually towards L'Enfant Plaza.

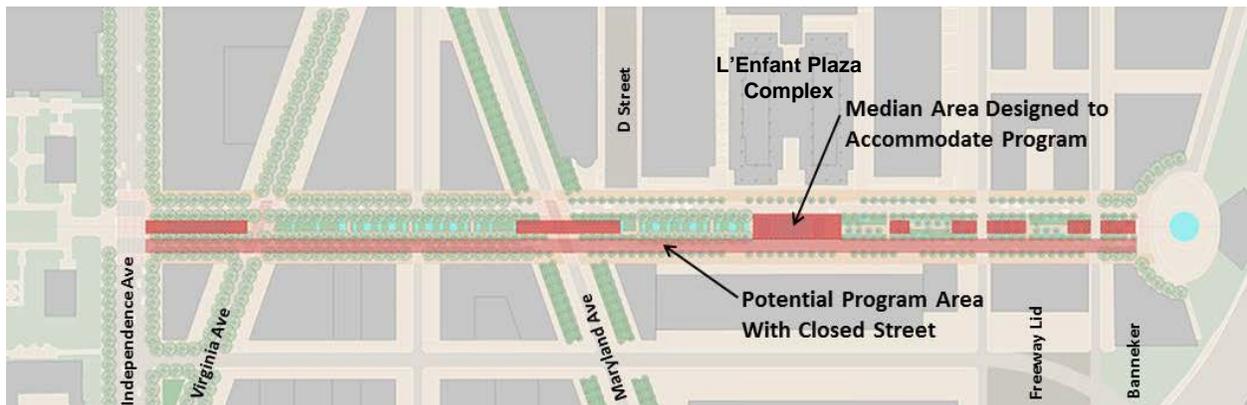


Figure 14: 10<sup>th</sup> Street SW: One side of the median can be closed to traffic at any time to accommodate larger events. The plaza in front of the L'Enfant Complex will also be able to accommodate additional event programming.

A sketch of Virginia Avenue and 10<sup>th</sup> Street looking south shows the water features, bioswales and large tree canopy that characterizes this section of the street. Active ground floor uses are also critical in making the promenade a success.



Figure 15: A sketch of 10<sup>th</sup> Street looking south from Virginia Avenue.

Inspiration for the project's episodic features can be drawn from several precedent projects as shown in Figure 16 below.

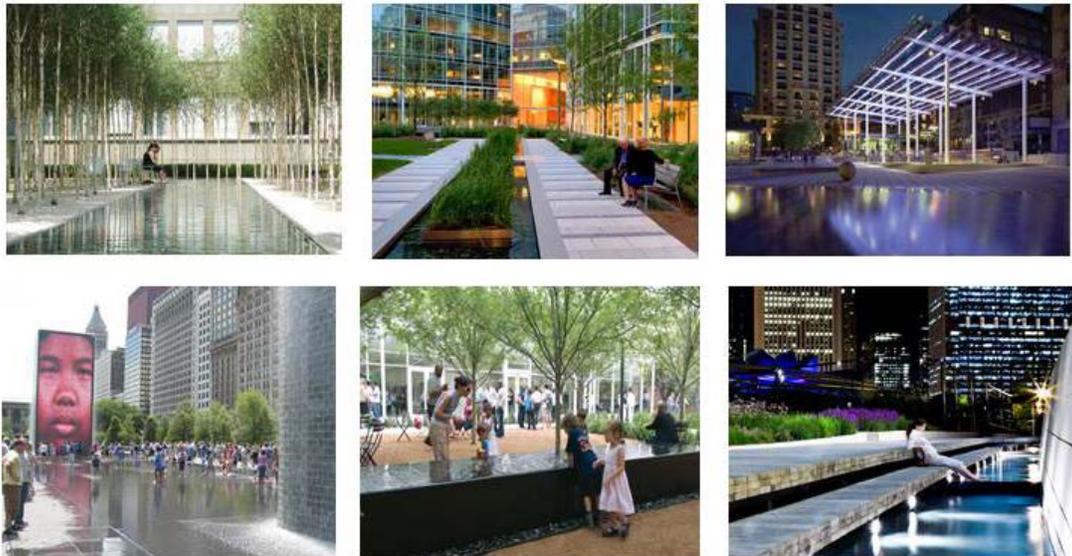


Figure 16: Precedent projects from Washington, DC, Chicago, and Portland.

## Implementation

Ideally, the 10<sup>th</sup> Street streetscape should be design and constructed as one cohesive project. However, due to complex existing conditions, it is likely that the project may be constructed over a period of several years. This makes it all the more important to prepare comprehensive design and construction plans that can be implemented in phases. This will ensure a beautifully designed and cohesive street that will meet the objectives of the SW Ecodistrict Plan.

The area between Independence and Maryland Avenue will likely redevelop in conjunction with GSA's Federal Triangle South project. The intersection of Maryland Ave and 10<sup>th</sup> Street will likely be improved in conjunction with the establishment of Maryland Avenue, once the CSX rail tracks are decked. The area between Maryland Avenue and the Freeway, in front of L'Enfant Plaza, will likely be constructed concurrent with JBG's proposed office building to be located in the center court of the L'Enfant Plaza complex. Improvements to the section over the freeway will likely be coordinated with the development of the air rights over the freeway. Finally, the connection from Banneker Park to the waterfront will be built in coordination with the Wharf development project on the waterfront as further described in the next section of this report).

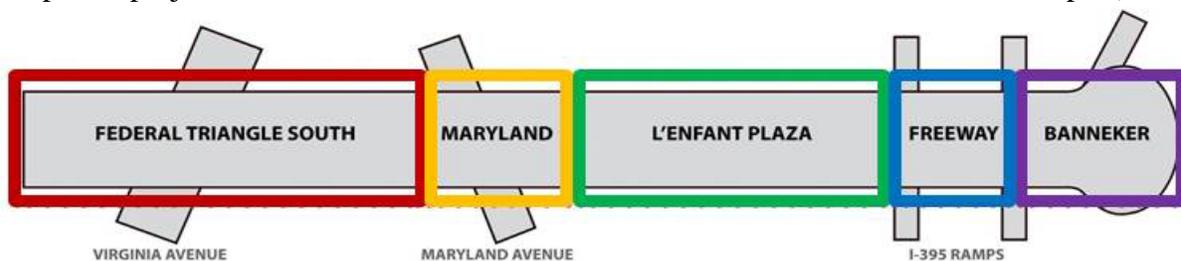


Figure 17: Implementation of 10<sup>th</sup> Street will likely occur in phases.

### *Interim Banneker Connection*

The purpose of the interim Banneker connection is to provide a safe, functional and aesthetically pleasing pedestrian connection that links Banneker Overlook with The Wharf. The developers of the Wharf project are required to build this connection as part of the approval of their planned unit development proposal. Five factors influenced the design of the interim connection: existing access and circulation; its temporary status; the protected view corridor to the river from Banneker; and historic preservation.

#### **Design Factors:**

##### **(1) Existing Access and Circulation**

There are currently two ways for pedestrians to get down to Maine Avenue from Banneker Overlook: a path on the east side of the Overlook and a paved ramp to the west. ADA access is provided by the ramp which is also used by bicyclists. Bicyclists also ride down the grassy terrain. Early analysis of the steep topography showed that it is not possible to provide universal access for pedestrians, wheelchairs and bicycles in one location. Therefore the proposed concept separates pedestrian access from ADA and bicycle access.



Figure 18: Existing access from Banneker Park to the waterfront.

##### **(2) Temporary Status**

This project is considered temporary. Banneker Park is identified in the *Memorials and Museums Master Plan* as a prime candidate site for a national museum or memorial. Until there is a museum or memorial sponsor, it is unclear how the site might be master

planned. The purpose of this project is to provide a connection until there is a final plan for the site. Recognizing that museum and memorial sponsorships can take years, it is likely the interim connection could have a life span of 10-15 years.

**(3) View Corridor**

During the development of the SW Ecodistrict Plan, NCPC coordinated with the development team of the Wharf project to protect an 80' view corridor from the Overlook to the river. Once the Wharf development is constructed, this will be the only place from the Overlook where the river will be visible. The location of the proposed stairway down to Maine Avenue is influenced by this view corridor.



*Figure 19: The 80' wide view corridor from the Overlook at Banneker Park.*

**(4) Historic Preservation**

Banneker Park designed by Dan Kiley is approaching its 50 year eligibility to be placed on the National Register. While its eligibility has yet to be confirmed, the concept design for the interim connection assumes that the site is eligible and minimizes any changes to the existing structures on the site such as the fountain plaza or the retaining walls.

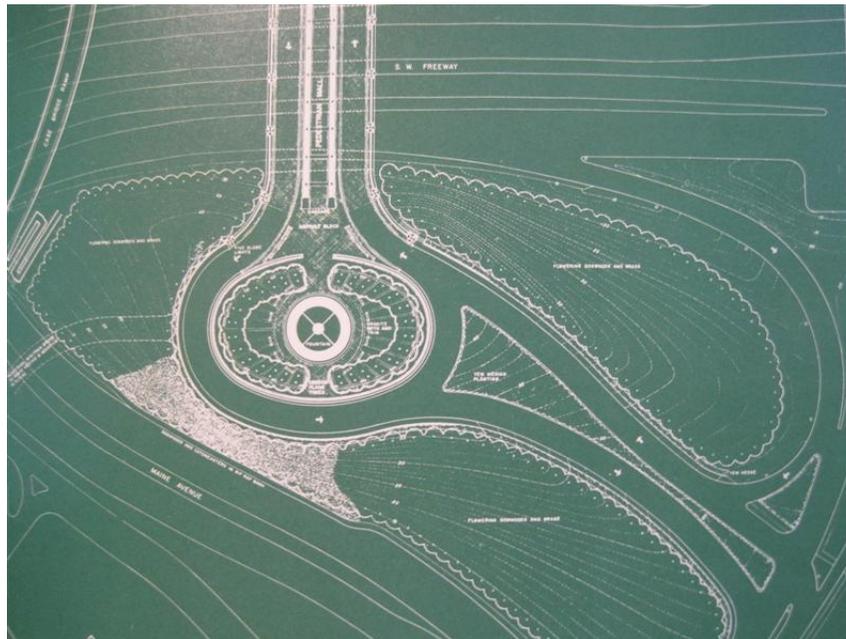


Figure 20: Plan of Dan Kiley's Landscape for Banneker Park

### **Proposed Concept:**

The proposed concept for the interim connection includes upgrading existing paths and crosswalks and creating terraced steps and landscape around the west side of the existing walled structure. The steps are located to take advantage of the protected view corridor of the river. Figure 21 shows the location of the improved paths and crosswalks. ADA access is accommodated by the existing asphalt path that connects with the intersection of 7<sup>th</sup> Street and Maine Avenue. Bicyclists can also use this path in addition to new bike lanes on the street around the circle. A runnel along the new staircase will also allow bicyclists to walk their bikes up the stairs.

The proposed steps will be terraced to allow for resting and viewing areas. Further study is necessary to determine if small retaining walls are needed to stabilize the steep terrain. The concept proposes using landscaping and green walls to soften the existing structure and to minimize visual impacts.

Similar to the proposed character of 10<sup>th</sup> Street, the elements and materials used for the interim connection should strike a balance between those used throughout the monumental core and city's streetscape palette in Southwest. Since the project is temporary, the overall design intent is simple with clean lines and enhanced vegetation.

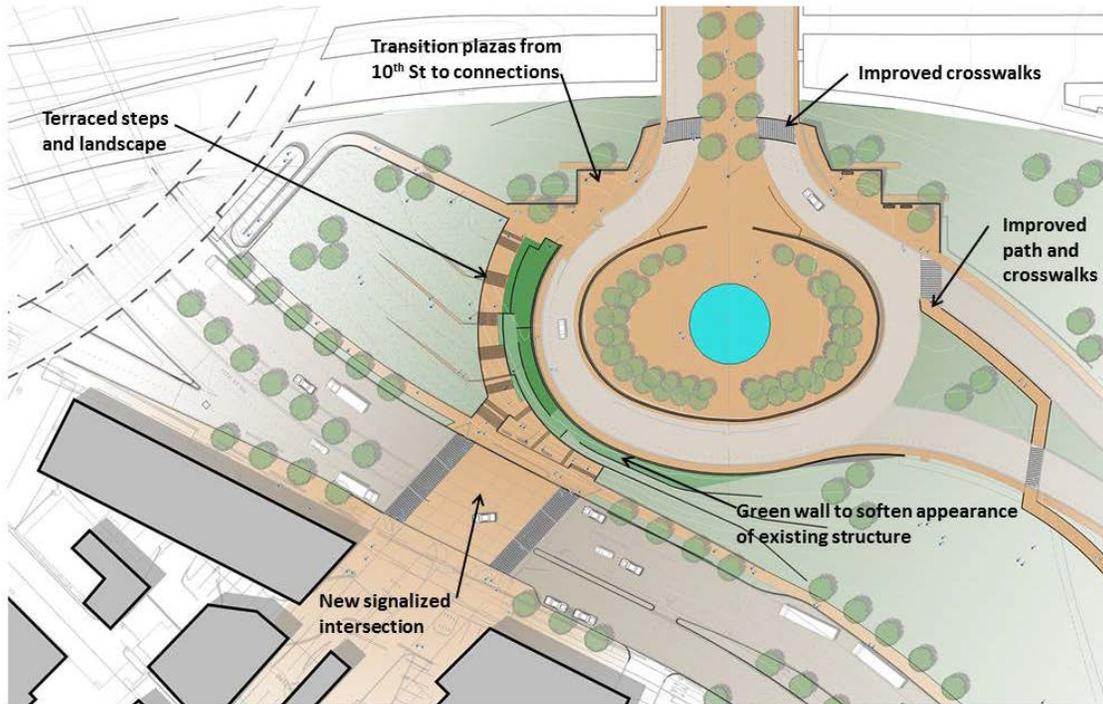


Figure 21: Proposed interim connection at Banneker Park.



Figure 22: A rendering of the interim staircase looking up towards Banneker from the new intersection at Maine Avenue.

### **Implementation:**

Unlike the programmatic concept for 10<sup>th</sup> Street which is not funded at this time, the interim connection at Banneker Park will be funded by the developers of the Wharf project. It is slated to be built in coordination with Phase 1 of the project. NPS will lead the design, environmental and historic review process for this concept.

## **II. PROJECT ANALYSIS/CONFORMANCE**

### **Executive Summary**

This project is the direct result of the *SW Ecodistrict Plan* and all of the federal initiatives and precedent planning projects that influenced the *SW Ecodistrict Plan*. The concepts build on federal and local plans and policies to extend the civic qualities of the National Mall to Banneker Park and the waterfront and showcase best practices in sustainability. A summary of how the concepts further these plans and policies is provided in this section.

### **Comprehensive Plan for the National Capital**

The concepts build on the policies contained in both the Federal Elements and District of Columbia Elements, striving to advance goals in a way that meets the community's collective aspirations. Although the District Elements do not apply to federal lands, it is important to understand how it guides development of nearby private property and how it may affect conveyed lands under the city's jurisdiction. The DC Land Use and Central Washington Elements include general and site specific policies to enhance the livability of federally dominated precincts in the Southwest Rectangle.

The concepts comply with the *Federal Elements of the Comprehensive Plan*, and illustrate best practices for a number of the Elements.

### ***Transportation***

The *Transportation Element* encourages use of a variety of transportation modes to improve regional mobility and improve the environment. The concepts build on the following *Comprehensive Plan* policy

- Encourage ridesharing, biking, walking, and other non-single-occupant vehicle modes of transportation for federal commuters.

The concepts will substantially improve mobility to, from, and within the area and enhance intermodal connectivity for pedestrians and bicyclists.

---

### ***Parks and Open Space***

The Parks and Open Space Element protects the region's open space, conserving habitat and recreational opportunities. The concepts build on the following *Comprehensive Plan* policies:

- Plan, complete and maintain connection between public parks and open space.
- Use monumental parks and landscapes to provide settings for public buildings, monuments, and memorials, and to create special environments for limited activities.
- Site memorials in monumental and designed landscape parks in compliance with the *Memorials and Museums Master Plan*.
- Avoid physical barriers to the waterfront, and long, unbroken stretches of buildings or walls along waterfronts.

The concepts significantly improve the connection from the National Mall to the waterfront and strengthen the civic realm by improving the setting for new public spaces and cultural destinations. The proposed character for 10<sup>th</sup> Street is an urban garden promenade that transitions from the character of the monumental core and the National Mall to Banneker Park and down to the waterfront. The temporary nature of the connection recognizes that a future museum or memorial may be proposed for the site.

### ***Federal Environment***

The *Federal Environment Element* encourages agencies to “preserve, protect and enhance” the mid-Atlantic ecosystem of the National Capital Region. The concepts build on the following *Comprehensive Plan* policies:

- Use pervious surfaces and retention ponds to reduce stormwater runoff and impacts on off-site water quality.
- Encourage the use of innovative and environmentally friendly “Best Management Practices” in site and building design and construction practice, such as green roofs, rain gardens, and permeable surface walkways, to reduce erosion and avoid pollution of surface waters.
- Require wastewater reduction through conservation and reuse in all new federal buildings and major federal renovation projects.
- Promote water conservation programs and the use of new water-saving technologies that conserve and monitor water consumption in all federal facilities.
- Encourage the implementation of water reclamation programs at federal facilities for landscape irrigation purposes and other appropriate uses.
- Incorporate new trees and vegetation to moderate temperatures, minimize energy consumption, and mitigate stormwater runoff.
- Encourage the use of native plant species, where appropriate.

The programmatic concept of 10<sup>th</sup> Street is designed to accommodate the district water system as recommended in the *SW Ecodistrict Plan*. The system captures and reuses all of the rainwater from the 10<sup>th</sup> Street corridor via large systems under 10<sup>th</sup> Street. The stormwater is treated for

---

reuse as greywater and is proposed to be injected into the ground water system where it is also treated through a natural biological process. This would allow the buildings in the ecodistrict to use well water for potable water use and replenish the balance. The system results in an ecodistrict that captures, manages and uses all of its water from within the district itself (as opposed to relying on the regional water system). This far exceeds the stormwater requirements in Executive Order 13514 Federal Leadership in Environmental, Economic and Energy Efficiency.

### **SW Ecodistrict Plan**

The SW Ecodistrict Plan is a comprehensive effort to transform a 15-block federal precinct just south of the National Mall into a showcase of sustainable urban development. One of the critical recommendations of the plan is to provide a significant civic connection from the National Mall to the waterfront that also exemplifies the sustainable goals of the ecodistrict. The plan envisions 10<sup>th</sup> Street as a walkable vibrant mixed use corridor that showcases state-of-the art urban design and environmental practices. The objectives include:

- Design 10<sup>th</sup> Street as a walkable, vibrant mixed-use cultural corridor;
- Create a setting along the corridor and at Banneker Park befitting a national cultural destination, to serve as an extension of the National Mall;
- Program the corridor for daily activity and for special exhibitions and events;
- Design the corridor to serve as the energy and water management spine of the Ecodistrict;
- Use the lower level of 10<sup>th</sup> Street to accommodate energy, water, and parking infrastructure;
- Showcase state-of-the-art urban design and environmental practices to increase public awareness.

The concepts focus on the next level of detailed planning necessary to move the SW Ecodistrict's recommendations toward implementation.

### **Monumental Core Framework Plan**

As its cornerstone strategy, the Framework Plan's goal for this area is to extend the civic qualities of the National Mall, connect the Mall to the waterfront, retain federal headquarters and improve the federal workplace, and restore the urban fabric in a manner that enhances the sustainability of the monumental core. The Framework proposes to redefine 10<sup>th</sup> Street, SW into a dynamic, mixed-use cultural corridor and improve the setting of Banneker Park to create a nationally significant cultural destination.

The 10<sup>th</sup> Street and Interim Banneker Connection concepts advance the *Framework Plan's* proposal for the Southwest Rectangle which also provided the foundation for the SW Ecodistrict Plan.

### **The Memorials and Museums Master Plan**

The *Memorials and Museums Master Plan* (2M) guides the location and development of future commemorative works and cultural facilities, and calls for a "Reserve" on the National Mall to protect it from overbuilding, as legislated by Congress in the amended *Commemorative Works Act*. The 2M Plan identifies 20 prime sites, those of the highest order appropriate for pre-eminent commemorative works or cultural facilities of national importance. Banneker Park at the terminus of 10<sup>th</sup> Street is designated as one of these prime sites. Although directly adjacent to the National Mall and Smithsonian Institution, sponsors of museums/memorials have passed over Banneker Park because of the area's isolated conditions, inadequate public-realm, and poor visitation potential. However, museum and memorial sponsors are now expressing an interest in the site as planned and proposed redevelopment in the immediate area is on the horizon.

The concepts for 10<sup>th</sup> Street and the Interim Banneker Connection are a critical step toward strengthening the area's public realm, connecting the National Mall and the waterfront, and improving the setting for new public spaces and cultural destinations.

### **Extending the Legacy: Planning America's Capital for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century**

The *Extending the Legacy plan* aligns L'Enfant Plan with modern smart growth and sustainable planning principles. It calls for unifying Washington's monumental core with the local city; encouraging a mix of federal and private activity in all quadrants of the city; protecting the historic landscape of the National Mall from future building; reintegrating the rivers into public life; and using public buildings and other facilities to stimulate economic development.

In Southwest, *Legacy*-related strategies focus on the 10<sup>th</sup> Street corridor and Maryland Avenue, calling for the repair of the urban fabric by restoring the street grid, building over highways, and redeveloping superblocks for a more livable and sustainable community. The concepts provide specific design strategies to realize the vision of the *Legacy Plan*, including:

- Use the city's physical framework of major axes, street grid, prominent termini, reservations, and scenic overlooks to site cultural facilities.
- Use reciprocal views along corridors to create focal points that establish symbolic connections extend the civic character of the National Mall into the Study Area.
- Design buildings and landscape elements to define public spaces, frame vistas, establish pedestrian orientation and ordered movement through the Study Area.
- Enhance avenues, streets, and public spaces with fountains, public art, and landscape and

other pedestrian amenities.

- Improve street tree canopy to strengthen axial views and extend the park-like character of the National Mall into the Study Area.

### **CapitalSpace**

The CapitalSpace Initiative envisions a beautiful, high-quality, unified park system for the nation's capital centered around six Big Ideas. The proposed concepts for 10<sup>th</sup> Street and the interim connection at Banneker Park support the Initiative's idea to enhance urban natural areas and better connect residents to encourage urban stewardship for natural resource.

### **National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)**

Throughout the preparation of the 10<sup>th</sup> Street and Interim Banneker Connection Concepts, NCPC: (1) sought information from individuals, organizations, and interested federal, state, and local agencies to identify concerns; and (2) documented the existing environmental, historic, and cultural conditions and current planning activities. This information provides the foundation for good decision making, and is compiled in an Existing Conditions Technical Report that will be useful to the National Park Service and the District Department of Transportation. The NPS will be taking the lead to move the Interim Banneker Connection Concept forward. The District Department of Transportation in conjunction with the Federal Highways Administration will also need to perform an environmental review for 10<sup>th</sup> Street when the concept moves forward in the future.

The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), 42 U.S.C. et seq., requires federal agencies to consider potential environmental impacts of major federal actions. Consideration of environmental impacts must be evaluated prior to decision making and project implementation. While NCPC's policy requires an environmental review to inform its analysis of project proposals for Master Plans, Site Proposals for Commemorative Work, and Preliminary Plans, and Final Plans, it is not required for Concept Plans.

### **National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA)**

The National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA), Law 16 U.S.C. §470, establishes programs and policies for preserving historic properties throughout the nation. Section 106 of NHPA requires all federal agencies to consider the effects of its decisions on historic properties and to seek input of the public as well as consulting parties on projects that may affect historic properties. NCPC requires compliance with Section 106 of NHPA to inform its analysis of project proposals prior to the Commission's approval of Final Site and Building Plans. Section 106 consultation is not required for Concept Plans as the Commission provides comments and does not take a formal action.

Early meetings with the DC State Historic Preservation Office (DCSHPO) have indicated that a determination of eligibility (DOE) that addresses 10<sup>th</sup> Street and Banneker together and in

context of one another will be needed. Since a combined DOE is unlikely to be initiated until funding is identified for 10<sup>th</sup> Street or a master plan is initiated for Banneker Park, the DCSHPO has indicated that they may consider a DOE that focuses on the Banneker site for the purposes of the temporary connection. The NPS and the DCSHPO are currently coordinating on this issue, and intend to resolve how the DOE will be handled prior to submitting the project for the Commission's preliminary and final approval.

### III. CONSULTATION

#### **Stakeholder Coordination**

The 10<sup>th</sup> Street and Interim Banneker Connection Concepts have been developed as part of the SW Ecodistrict Task Force partnership led by the National Capital Planning Commission. The Task Force includes 17 federal and local agencies including:

- National Capital Planning Commission, Chairman and Presidential Appointee\*
- District Office of Planning, Director\*
- District of Columbia Deputy Mayor for Planning and Economic Development, Deputy Mayor
- District of Columbia Department of the Environment, Director
- District of Columbia Department of Transportation, Director
- Federal Aviation Administration, Director of Facilities
- National Park Service, Associate Deputy Regional Director for Lands, Resources, and Planning\*
- Smithsonian Institution, Director of Facilities
- U.S. Commission of Fine Arts, Secretary
- U.S. Congress, Architect of the Capitol
- U.S. Department of Agriculture, Director of Facilities
- U.S. Department of Education
- U.S. Department of Energy, Director of Facilities
- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Assistant Administrator, Office of Administration and Resource Management
- U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, Director of Facilities
- U.S. General Services Administration, Public Buildings Deputy Administrator
- U.S. General Services Administration, Director of Planning and Design
- U.S. Postal Service, Director of Facilities

*\* Task Force representative also serves as NCPC Commissioner.*

The Task Force met three times over the last year to define the project's scope, assess alternatives, and select a preferred concept. The Commission was kept informed of the Task Force's work and the status of the project in 12 Executive Director's reports between January and December of 2013.

**Task Force Meetings**

Date	Location	Meeting topic
12/5/2012	NCPC	Final plan and next steps for the SW Ecodistrict
5/1/2013	NCPC	Review concept alternatives for 10 <sup>th</sup> Street/Banneker Connection
11/14/2013	ZGF	Review developed concept

Each of the agencies above also appointed a staff person to the SW Ecodistrict working group which produced work for the Task Force to review. The working group participated in six workshops over the past year.

**Working Group Meetings**

Date	Location	Meeting topic
12/6/2012	NCPC	Project kick-off
1/16/2013	ZGF	Precedents and ROW; all circulation within 100' view corridor
2/27/2013	ZGF	Median + programming; stair within throat, ramp to west
3/19/2013	ZGF	Programming, stormwater, and tree canopy; stair within throat, ramp to west
4/26/2013	ZGF	3 Concepts; stair within throat, ramp to west
9/13/2013	ZGF	Developed concepts; utilize ramp to east, stair wraps around Banneker then down to Maine Avenue

Public input was obtained through NCPC's website and two public meetings. The comments have come from a variety of stakeholders, including federal, local, and private sector employees; nearby residents; and visitors to Washington.

**Public Meetings**

Date	Location
5/21/2013	NCPC
11/14/2013	NCPC

**Coordinating Committee**

The Coordinating Committee reviewed the proposal at its December 18, 2013 meeting. The Committee forwarded the proposed comments on concept design to the Commission with the statement that the proposal has been coordinated with all participating agencies with the exception of the District of Columbia State Historic Preservation Office (DC SHPO). The participating agencies were: NCPC; the District of Columbia Office of Planning; the District of Columbia State Historic Preservation Office; the District Department of Transportation; the General Services Administration and the National Park Service. The DC SHPO recognized that this project is a concept proposal and stated that it has not received a formal submission under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. The DC SHPO stated that further

consultation will be necessary on the project once formal Section 106 consultation is initiated at the time the project advances beyond the concept stage.

**U.S. Commission of Fine Arts**

The U.S. Commission of Fine Arts is represented on the Task Force and has provided ongoing guidance on the development of the concepts and the recommendations. Two information presentations were given to the Commission: one on June 20, 2013 and the other on November 21, 2013.