



Executive Director's Recommendation

Commission Meeting: July 7, 2022

PROJECT Washington Union Station Expansion Project 50 Massachusetts Avenue, NE Washington, DC	NCPC FILE NUMBER 7746 NCPC MAP FILE NUMBER 1.11(38.00)45489
SUBMITTED BY United States Department of Transportation Federal Railroad Administration	APPLICANT'S REQUEST Approval of comments on revised concept plans
REVIEW AUTHORITY Federal Projects in the District per 40 U.S.C. § 8722(b)(1) and (d)	PROPOSED ACTION Approve comments on revised concept plans as requested
	ACTION ITEM TYPE Staff Presentation

PROJECT SUMMARY

The Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) has submitted revised concept plans regarding the Washington Union Station Expansion Project for Commission comment. The Union Station Redevelopment Corporation (USRC), in coordination with the National Railroad Passenger Corporation (Amtrak), has proposed expanding and modernizing the multimodal transportation facilities at Washington Union Station (WUS or Union Station). The historic station, existing parking structure, and bus facilities are located on federal (FRA) land. NCPC's approval authority, pursuant to the Planning Act, is related to the components located on federal land. An adjacent, independent development, called Burnham Place, is proposed within air rights above the tracks. This private development is subject to local zoning. NCPC will have an advisory review of the portion of the project south of H Street as a referral from the District of Columbia Zoning Commission. The Commission is providing comments on the federal project for this review.

The project seeks to expand and modernize the multimodal transportation facilities at Washington Union Station. It considers the expected increase in rail traffic throughout the northeast due to future expansion and growth through 2040. The applicant has indicated that many station facilities are currently at or exceed their capacity, and with additional growth in rail service expected, improvements are necessary to address these issues. The current passenger facilities, including platforms, waiting areas and customer support services are not adequate to serve existing or projected future passenger demand for Amtrak, commuter rail, and other rail services. In addition, the user experience in the platform and waiting areas needs to be modernized.

The Commission reviewed initial concept plans for the project in January 2020 and provided a series of requests to help facilitate future project reviews. These included substantially reducing parking, focusing on the overall urban design quality of the project, and facilitating improved coordination among District agencies, project proponents and the adjacent private air rights owner,

Akridge. The Commission also reviewed staff comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) in July 2020, with a particular focus on parking.

Since that time, the project proponents have worked together to address comments they received through the DEIS process, including those from NCPC. The revised concept has been altered from the previous concept in several significant ways, including:

- The parking program has been reduced nearly 50 percent from the previous concept; this is approximately a 65% reduction from current parking.
- The parking and new pick-up/drop-off area has been relocated underground; and
- The bus facility has been reconfigured in an east-west orientation to align with the new train hall and additional pick-up/drop-off area.

KEY INFORMATION

- Washington Union Station is located in central Washington, DC and is a hub for multimodal transportation in the region, and includes Amtrak, Maryland Area Regional Commuter (MARC), and Virginia Railway Express (VRE) rail service, along with intercity buses, and the busiest Metro station in the WMATA system, serving the Red Line.
- Local bus, tour bus, taxi, rideshare and bicycle services also use the station and the surrounding site. The H Street-Benning Streetcar station is located on the Hopscotch Bridge which passes over the railyard.
- Washington Union Station is the second busiest station in the Amtrak network, with approximately 85-90 trains daily in 2018. This includes the high-speed Acela Express and Northeast Regional service. Amtrak controls the tracks at the station.
- The station sees about 40 million visitors each year. Amtrak, MARC, and VRE operate over 200 daily train movements at the station. The project proponents are anticipating significant growth through 2040.
- The terminal was designed by Daniel Burnham, a member of the McMillan Commission, and completed in 1908. It was placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1969. The station was renovated in 1988 and includes over 150 stores and a food court. Restoration work was also completed in the main hall.
- The site today includes the historic train station, historic concourse, bus facility, and parking garage which are owned by FRA. The Union Station Redevelopment Corporation (USRC) oversees the station operations and maintenance.
- In 1981, Congress passed the Union Station Redevelopment Act in an effort to preserve the historic integrity of the station while advancing its purpose as a regional transportation hub and destination. The act resulted in the founding of USRC in 1983, established to represent the best interests of the station.
- The District Department of Transportation (DDOT) owns and maintains the H Street (Hopscotch) Bridge, which will be reconstructed in the near future.
- The National Park Service maintains jurisdiction of Columbus Circle which is located in front of the historic station.
- WMATA controls the Red Line right of way and the Metro station.

- The air rights located east of the existing parking garage and north of the station are owned by Akridge, a private developer. The air rights were created as a result of the disposition of federally-owned air rights above the railroad infrastructure for development purposes. Akridge won the public auction, and has proposed a mixed-use development named “Burnham Place.” The private air rights have a Union Station North (USN) zoning designation.
- NCPC will review the private air rights development, south of H Street, as a referral from the District of Columbia Zoning Commission, in the future.
- NCPC reviewed concept plans for the project in January 2020 and provided comments to FRA.
- FRA released a Draft Environmental Statement (EIS) pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) in 2020. NCPC is a cooperating agency and provided comments on the DEIS.
- USRC and Amtrak are the project proponents for the expansion project.
- FRA is the lead federal agency leading the Section 106 consultation process pursuant to the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA). A Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) or Programmatic Agreement (PA) will be executed to document the mitigation measures agreed upon during the consultation process resulting from any anticipated adverse effects. NCPC will be a signatory on the agreement document.

RECOMMENDATION

The Commission:

Notes the applicant has worked to revise the project layout and program over the last two years, in consultation with a number of federal and local stakeholders, including the adjacent private air rights owner, per the Commission’s request.

Supports the revised concept, particularly the parking program reduction and relocation, as well as the reconfiguration of the bus facility, along with other improvements to access and urban design.

Commends the applicant for developing a new plan that substantially responds to previous comments regarding parking, urban design, and coordination among necessary stakeholders.

Notes the project will be further refined through continued design development prior to the next submission.

Parking

Notes the parking program has been reduced from 1,575 spaces to around 860 spaces, a nearly 50% percent reduction from the previous concept, and a 65% reduction from current conditions, which total approximately 2,200 spaces.

Notes the proposed new parking entrances and revised vehicular circulation will be analyzed as part of the supplemental environmental analysis.

Requests further details about the design and operation of the proposed vehicular ramp on G Street, and requests the applicant coordinate with adjacent landholders, including the Smithsonian Institution, through the design process.

Bus Facility

Finds the proposed location of the new bus facility allows for a more direct connection to the new train hall and station platforms below, as well as a new passenger pick-up/drop-off area located one level above.

Requests the applicant continue to work with the bus operators and related stakeholders regarding the new bus facility operations as well as opportunities for vehicle charging stations.

Urban Design

Notes the relocation of the bus facility establishes a larger effective setback for any above-track air rights development from the historic train station, as compared to the previous design.

Finds the increased setback may help minimize impacts to the views of the historic train station, particularly as viewed from Columbus Circle, Louisiana Avenue, Delaware Avenue, and First Street, NE.

Requests the applicant provide as part of the next submission, additional details about the operation and maintenance of the new central space, as well as information about how the space will be phased in relationship to the rest of the expansion project.

Requests as part of the next project submission additional details regarding the design of the west ramp, including how it will function for pedestrians and bicyclists, as well as the conditions during which the ramp would operate for vehicular use.

Requests the applicant provide a phasing plan that describes the timing and implementation of each project component, where applicable, as part of the next review.

Other Comments

Advises that, through both architecture and programming, the historic station building should retain its primacy as the symbolic and functional center of the larger multimodal facility and maintain its role as a gateway to the nation's capital.

Supports a contemporary architectural design approach for the expansion project that is distinct but compatible with the historic train station.

Requests the applicant coordinate with the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority regarding the proposed improvements and new entry to the Metrorail station along 1st Street, NE.

Requests the applicant continue to work with District agencies, federal partners, and other stakeholders, including the adjacent private air rights owner, as the project is further refined.

PROJECT REVIEW TIMELINE

Previous actions	January 2020 – initial concept review
	May 2020 – Burnham Place information presentation
	July 2020 – Draft EIS comments information presentation
Remaining actions (anticipated)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Review of preliminary site and building plans- Review of final site and building plans- Review of private development through Zoning Commission referral

PROJECT ANALYSIS

Executive Summary

The Commission reviewed initial concept plans for the project in January 2020, and expressed general support for the project goals and objects, as well as proposed improvements to the track layout and new train hall addition. The Commission also articulated concerns about the proposed amount of parking, as well as the urban design approach. Specific requests included that FRA should substantially reduce the number of parking spaces, and that the applicant look at the quality of the public realm, particular considering the interface with the private air rights development. The Commission requested FRA coordinate with a number of District agencies and the air rights developer to address these concerns.

Since that time, the project proponents have worked together with a number of stakeholders, including the private air rights developer, to address NCPC comments as well as other comments received through the environmental and historic preservation review processes. The revised concept design has been substantially altered in response to those comments. Specifically, the parking program has been reduced about 50 percent, and the parking has been relocated below the tracks, along with a new pick-up and drop-off (PUDO) area. A number of new ramp entrances will help distribute traffic around the site. The bus facility has been reoriented to provide a more direct and seamless connection to the train hall and platforms. Access to the bus facility has been improved from H Street. The above-track level includes another new PUDO area, along with a central open space connecting H Street to the station. The relocation of the parking and bus facility

will allow the entire deck level, above the tracks, to better achieve a improved urban design experience.

Overall, staff finds the revised design is very response to the previous comments and concerns, and recommends the **Commission express support for the revised concept, particular the parking program reduction and relocation, as well as the reconfiguration of the bus facility, along with other improvements to access and urban design.** While the project will continue to be refined as design advances, staff recommends the **Commission also commend the applicant for developing a new plan that substantially responds to previous comments regarding parking, urban design, and coordination among necessary stakeholders.**

Analysis

FRA and the project proponents, including Amtrak and USRC, developed the revised concept, with a more specific focus on enhancing the quality of urban design; improving the passenger and visitor experience; and highlighting civic opportunities of the project in coordination with the air-rights development project. This work continued as a collaboration of stakeholders over the last two years, and has reconfirmed that the project will:

- Preserve the historic station headhouse and passenger concourse
- Address anticipated passenger growth and accessibility
- Modernize rail tracks and platforms for Amtrak, MARC and VRE
- Modernize the bus facility
- Construct a new train hall / primary intermodal connector
- Construct new passenger concourses, platform access, accommodation and amenities
- Expand pick-up and drop-off (PUDO) capacity
- Improve links to Metrorail, streetcar and local buses
- Construct an H Street Concourse linking the District neighborhoods to the east and west
- Be coordinated with the H-Street Bridge replacement project
- Be coordinated with the private air-rights development

For the purposes of the analysis that follows, staff has focused on those aspects of the proposed design that have substantially changed since the previous Commission review. Some components, like the track layout, new concourses, and train hall configuration, are generally unchanged.

Parking

The parking program has been revised and represents a nearly 50% reduction from the previous concept and a 65% reduction from the existing condition. The proposed program includes 230 rental car spaces and 630 parking spaces. The station parking program includes long term parking, short term parking, rental car, station land use (office and retail), and air-rights land use. This program does not include the parking needs of the private air rights development. Additional refinement of the actual parking count will continue as the project moves further into design development.

In addition to the parking reduction, the parking program has been relocated underground to a level beneath the tracks. As such, an above-track garage will no longer be necessary. The parking area will also include a PUDO facility to help distribute access points across the station site. The PUDO area in front of the historic station will remain.

The location of the parking area and PUDO facility requires several ramps for ingress/egress to access those below-grade functions. After reviewing a range of options, along with DDOT comments, the current approach includes ramps at G Street (ingress and egress), First Street (ingress/egress), and East Ramp (egress). Design and refinement of the ramps will continue as the project is further developed. The proposed new parking entrances and revised vehicular circulation will also be analyzed as part of additional environmental analysis. Staff notes the ramp in G Street will require particular attention, and recommends the **Commission request further details about the design and operation of the proposed vehicular ramp on G Street, and requests the applicant coordinate with adjacent landholders, including the Smithsonian Institution, through the design process.**

Bus Facility

The previous concept included an above-track bus facility located in approximately the same location as it is today. The revised concept relocates the bus facility so that it is adjacent to and aligns with the new train hall. The single-level east-to-west layout is located at the H Street deck level. The configuration provides between 38 and 39 bus slips with a combination of angled and sawtooth configurations to accommodate the anticipated growth in intercity and tour/charter bus activity. Access to the facility is provided from H Street, which permits full movement provided for buses out of the facility. Local bus service is not expected to use the facility as these routes will continue to use surrounding streets and stops.

More direct intermodal connections within the station are a benefit of the design. Therefore, staff recommends the **Commission finds the proposed location of the new bus facility allows for a more direct connection to the new train hall and station platforms, as well as PUDO located one level up.** The placement of the facility also emphasizes the equitable standing of this mode of transportation, as well as additional daylighting to improve the user experience.

Finally, according to the applicant, the facility will allow for dynamic slip management, and will allow for electric charging of vehicles in the future. Modernization of the facility will be a benefit, but it will require ongoing coordination with potential operators. As the project is further developed, staff recommends the **Commission requests the applicant continue to work with the bus operators and related stakeholders regarding the new bus facility operations as well as opportunities for vehicle charging stations.**

Urban Design

The relocation of the parking and reconfiguration of the bus facility create a number of improvements and opportunities related to urban design. Most directly, this change frees up the

above-track area (or deck) for a more flexible approach to the design and layout of the area, in coordination with the adjacent private air-rights development.

The current concept indicates a new PUDO facility at the deck level. This provides an additional access point for station users and visitors. A central open space is also indicated linking the PUDO and station with H Street. A series of skylights to the concourse level below are also shown, along with a new headhouse located near H Street. The remainder of the deck includes illustrative building footprints, the design of which would be determined in the future. Portions of this area are owned by the private air rights developer, particularly to the east and north. As such, additional coordination between the project proponents and Akridge will be necessary regarding all these elements.

The relocation of the bus facility establishes a larger effective setback for any above-track air rights development from the historic train station, as compared to the previous design. This setback has been increased 40-45 feet, which can help provide additional visual separation between the future development and the historic train station. As such, staff recommends the **Commission find the increased setback may help minimize impacts to the views of the historic train station, particularly as viewed from Columbus Circle, Louisiana Avenue, Delaware Avenue, and First Street, NE.** The applicant has indicated that they will be preparing additional viewshed analyses as part of the ongoing Section 106 process to better understand these changes.

The new central open space appears to be an improvement from the previous concept. The open space provides both a visual and physical link between H Street and the station. While the details of the design remain to be developed, it will be important to understand how this component will be implemented or phased (if by the air rights developer, USRC or other others) and how public access will be managed. As such staff recommends the **Commission requests the applicant provide as part of the next submission, additional details about the operation and maintenance of the central space, as well as information about how the space will be phased in relationship to the rest of the expansion project.**

Another new project component is the creation of a west ramp connection that leads from the front of the station to H Street. According to the applicant, the ramp would primarily provide pedestrian/bicycle access to H Street, however when operationally necessary, the ramp could be used to move vehicles from H Street to 1st Street. In general, staff supports the use of the ramp as a pedestrian and bicycle connection, though it remains unclear when it might be used for vehicles. As such, staff recommends the **Commission request as part of the next project submission additional details regarding the design of the ramp, including how it will function for pedestrians and bicyclists, as well as information about the conditions during which the ramp would function for vehicular use.**

For these and other components of the project, the sequence of implementation will be helpful in understanding and anticipating impacts to the user experience. As such, staff recommends the **Commission request the applicant provide a phasing plan that describes the timing and implementation of each project component, where applicable, as part of the next review.**

Other Comments

Staff appreciates the revised concepts responsiveness to previous comments. As the project design advances, it may be helpful to remember the central importance of the historic station building, including the train hall, as the focal point of the entire facility. It should retain its role as the primary entrance, and the activity and vibrancy of its public spaces should continue to be enhanced. As such, staff recommends the **Commission advise that through both architecture and programming, the historic station should retain its primacy as the symbolic and functional center of the larger multimodal facility and maintain its role as a gateway to the nation's capital.**

Related to this, staff finds the proposed expansion project architecture should not emulate the historic train station. It should be distinct but respectful and reflect the current era. As such, staff recommends the **Commission express support for a contemporary architectural design approach for the expansion project that is distinct but compatible with the historic train station.**

Finally, as the project advances, additional coordination will be necessary given the complexity of the undertaking, as well as the number of operators within the station itself. As such, staff recommends the Commission:

- **Request the applicant coordinate with the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority regarding the proposed improvements and new entry to the Metrorail station along 1st Street, NE.** WMATA has advised they will be proceeding with the entry project and therefore it is important to coordinate design and construction with the station expansion project.
- **Request the applicant continue to work with District agencies, federal partners, and other stakeholders, including the adjacent private air rights owner as the project is further refined.** Staff finds the collaboration process over the last two years has been very beneficial, and we understand it is expected to continue.

CONFORMANCE TO EXISTING PLANS, POLICIES AND RELATED GUIDANCE

Comprehensive Plan for the National Capital

Staff analyzed the project using guidance in the Comprehensive Plan, particularly those policies related to the Transportation, Urban Design, Federal Environment, and Historic Preservation Elements. Applicable policies include increasing the utilization of passenger rail service in the Northeast Corridor and points south and west to serve Washington's Union Station, and reinforcing its status as a Capital Gateway that announces entry into the capital city. The comments of this report are intended to support conformance with those policies.

National Historic Preservation Act

FRA and NCPC each have a responsibility to comply with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. FRA is serving as lead agency for the Section 106 consultation. FRA anticipates a memorandum of agreement (MOA) or programmatic agreement (PA) will be executed to document the agreed-upon mitigation measures related to adverse effects to historic resources. NCPC will be a signatory to that document after it is developed. FRA anticipates reinitiating the Section 106 process to further evaluate potential adverse effects resulting from implementing the revised alternative.

National Environmental Policy Act

FRA and NCPC each have responsibility to comply with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). FRA is lead federal agency, and NCPC is a cooperating agency. FRA prepared a draft environmental impact statement (DEIS), which was released in 2020. Upon review of the DEIS comments and other agency comments, including NCPC, the applicant developed a revised alternative. FRA has indicated a supplemental EIS may be prepared to evaluate impacts resulting from implementation of the revised alternative.

CONSULTATION

Coordinating Committee

The Committee reviewed the project at their June 15, 2022 meeting and forwarded the proposed comments on concept plans to the Commission with the statement that the proposal has been coordinated with all participating agencies. Participating agencies included the District Office of Planning (DCOP), the District of Columbia State Historic Preservation Officer (DC SHPO), the National Park Service, the Department of Energy and Environment (DOEE), the District Department of Transportation (DDOT), and the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA). WMATA noted that they are moving forward with their 1st Street Entrance project, which expands the entrance and adds several features. WMATA requested continued coordination with the applicant as further design development occurs. The DC SHPO indicated the revised concept a significant improvement and is coordinating subject to completion of Section 106, including the development of a Programmatic Agreement to specify how adverse effects will be avoided, minimized and mitigated as the project is implemented over time. DCOP stated they needed additional time to review, and they will follow up with NCPC staff when they have compiled any further comments.

U.S. Commission of Fine Arts

The U.S. Commission of Fine Arts (CFA) most recently heard an information presentation for the proposed project at their June 16, 2022 meeting. A copy of their comment letter is attached.

ONLINE REFERENCE

The following supporting documents for this project are available online at www.ncpc.gov:

- Submission Package
- Project Summary
- Public Testimony

Prepared by Matthew Flis
06/30/2022

POWERPOINT (ATTACHED)

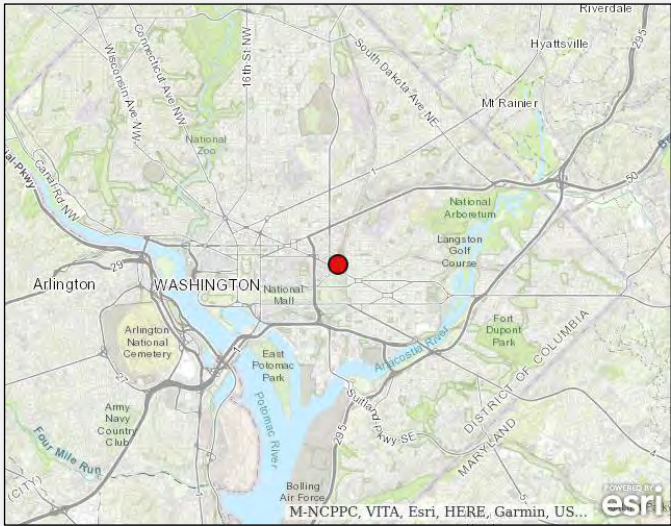
Washington Union Station Expansion Project

50 Massachusetts Avenue, NE, Washington DC

Approval of Comments on Revised Concept Plans

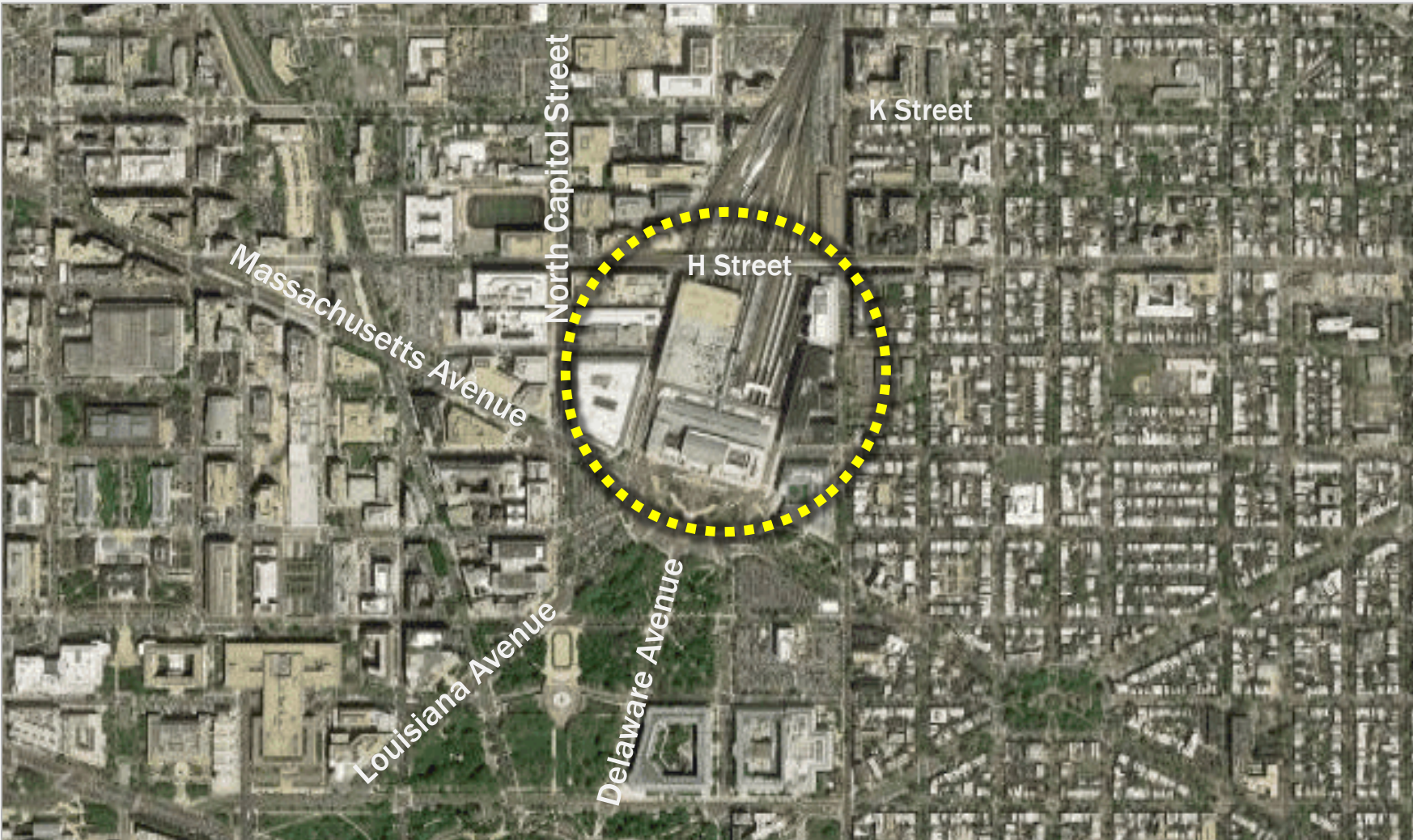
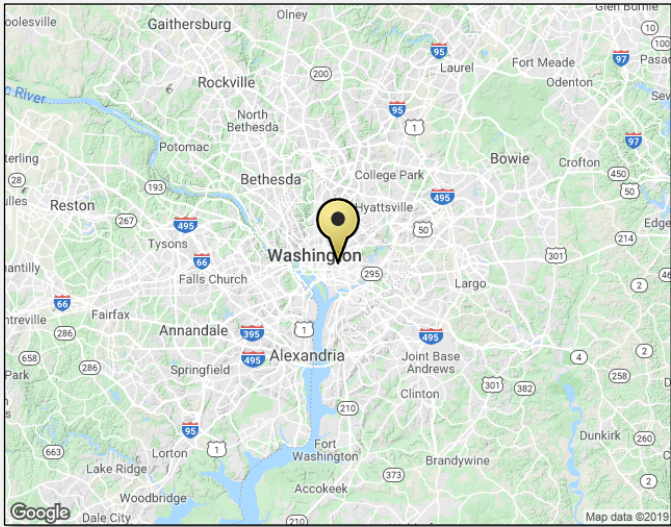
United States Department of Transportation

Site Location



Location Map

Site Location



Location Map

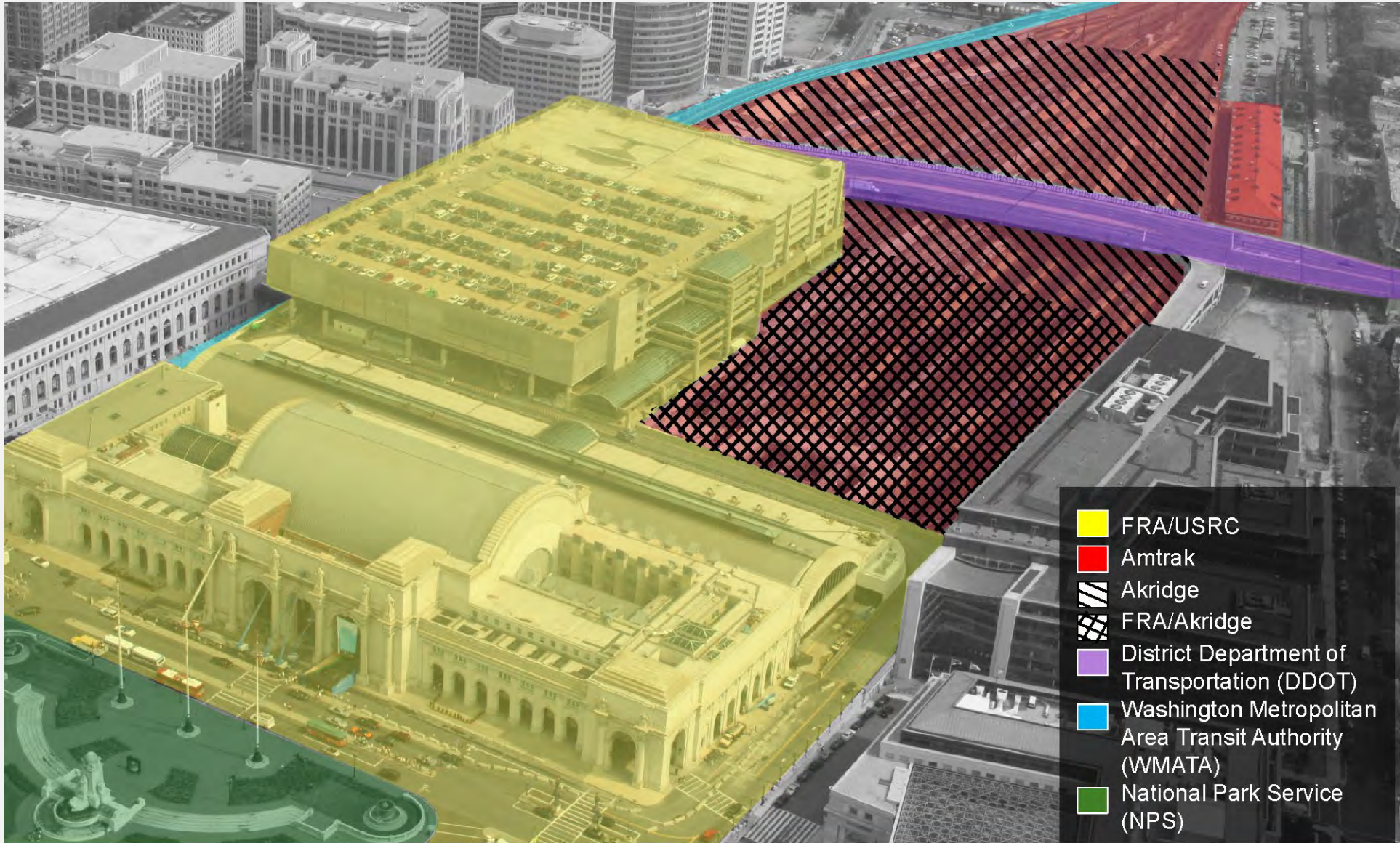
Historic Union Station



Historic Union Station



Station Ownership & Jurisdictions



Project Goals



Railroad Growth
and Capacity



ADA, Safety,
and Security



Intermodal
Travel



Customer
Experience



Neighborhood /
Land Use
Integration



Station's
Economic
Viability



Station
Preservation

Components of Alternatives

ELEMENTS SHARED IN ALL ACTION ALTERNATIVES



ELEMENTS THAT VARY IN ACTION ALTERNATIVES



Preferred Alternative (2020)

- TRAIN HALL
- BUS FACILITY
- PARKING
- FEDERAL AIR RIGHTS SQUARE 172
- POTENTIAL FEDERAL AIR RIGHTS DEVELOPMENT
- PRIVATE AIR RIGHTS DEVELOPABLE AREA
- POTENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

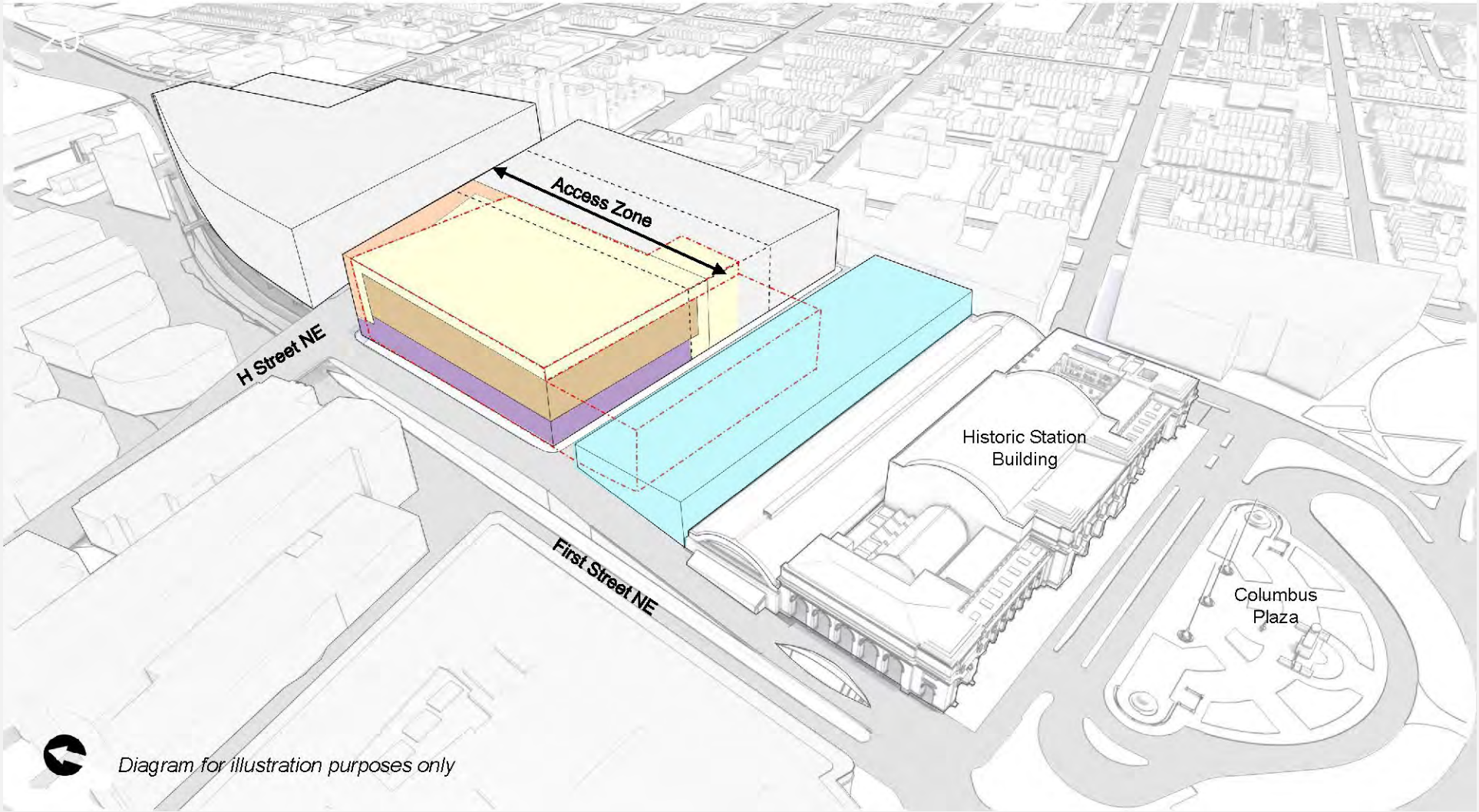


Diagram for illustration purposes only

Commission Comments - 2020

- The transportation components (platforms, concourses, train hall and bus facility)
- Proposed parking
- Urban design considerations
- Coordination

Summary of Project Updates - 2022

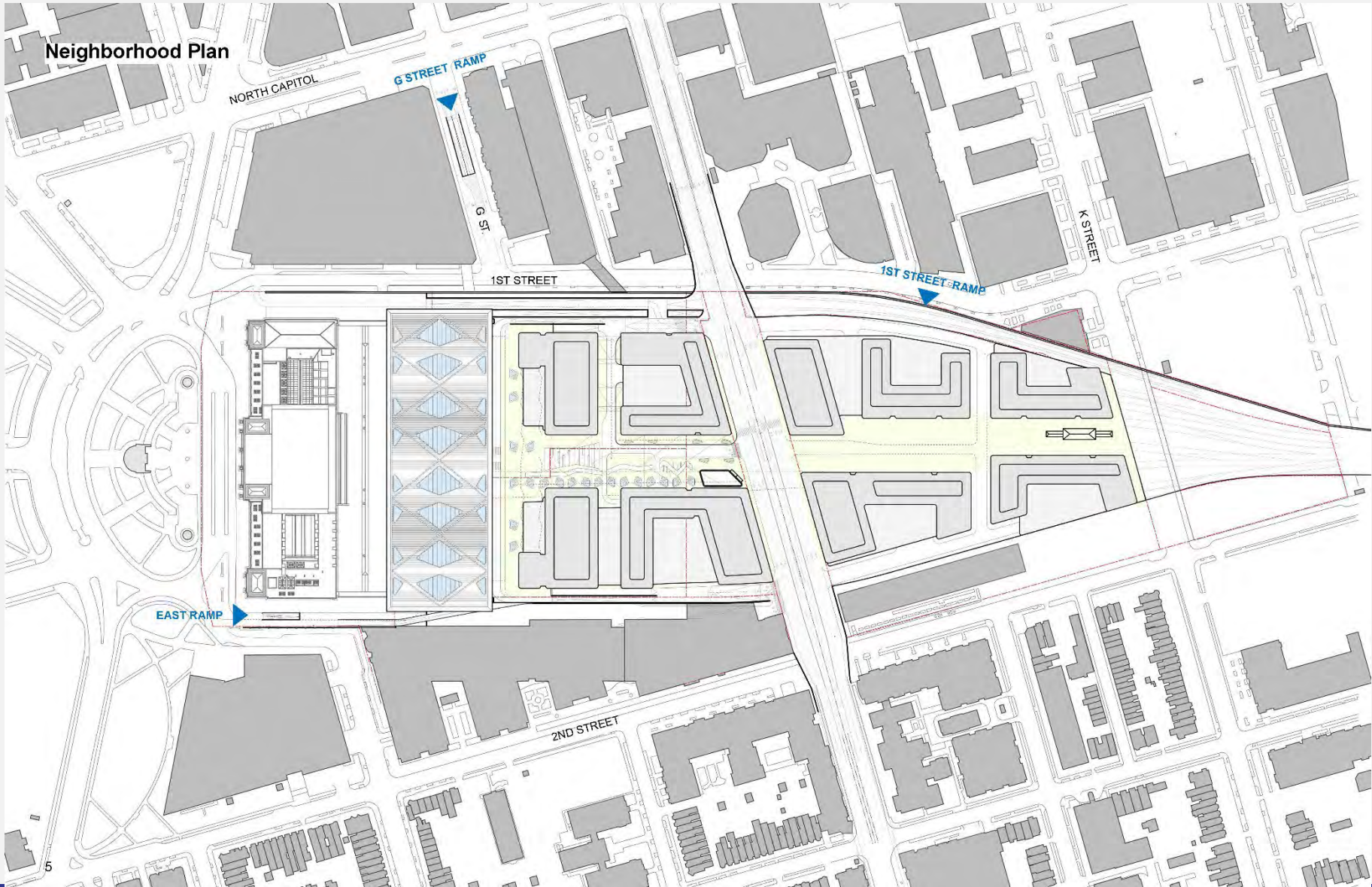
Table 1. Summary of Project Elements

Topic	Potential Revised Preferred Alternative Framework	Future Considerations
Bus Facility	<p>Single level east to west layout submerged into the H Street deck level. Provides more capacity of between 38 and 39 bus slips with a combination of angled and sawtooth configurations. Accommodates anticipated of growth in intercity and tour/charter bus activity consistent with long-term trends.</p> <p>Access to the facility is provided from H Street. Full movement provided for buses out of the facility.</p>	<p>The facility will allow for balancing dynamic management with specific opportunities to use zones, and focused dedication of slips, to respond to operator requests.</p> <p>The facility can be designed to permit electric charging and further coordination with the industry will be important as the alternative fuel framework for bus travel develops.</p>
H Street Planning	<p>Three intersections on H Street including an aligned west intersection, addressing previous concerns about the number of intersections and their lack of alignment.</p> <p>Multimodal access including headhouses north and south of H Street which would provide vertical circulation into the station complex.</p> <p>Bus stop/access at the headhouse and streetcar stop at the center of H Street</p>	<p>Coordination with the DDOT H Street Bridge team will continue throughout Project development.</p>
Parking	<p>Station parking program includes long term parking, short term parking, rental car, station land use (office and retail), and air-rights land use. Considering stakeholder feedback and additional analysis, the parking program was revised and represents a 50% reduction in station parking/rental car from Alternative A-C and a 65% reduction in parking/rental car from the existing condition. Potential needs include 230 rental car spaces and 630 parking spaces.</p> <p>Additional reduction in below ground space to control cost will result in one primary belowground level at B1 with approximately 400 to 550 spaces for parking and rental cars.</p>	<p>FRA and the Project Proponents will continue to refine the below ground space.</p>

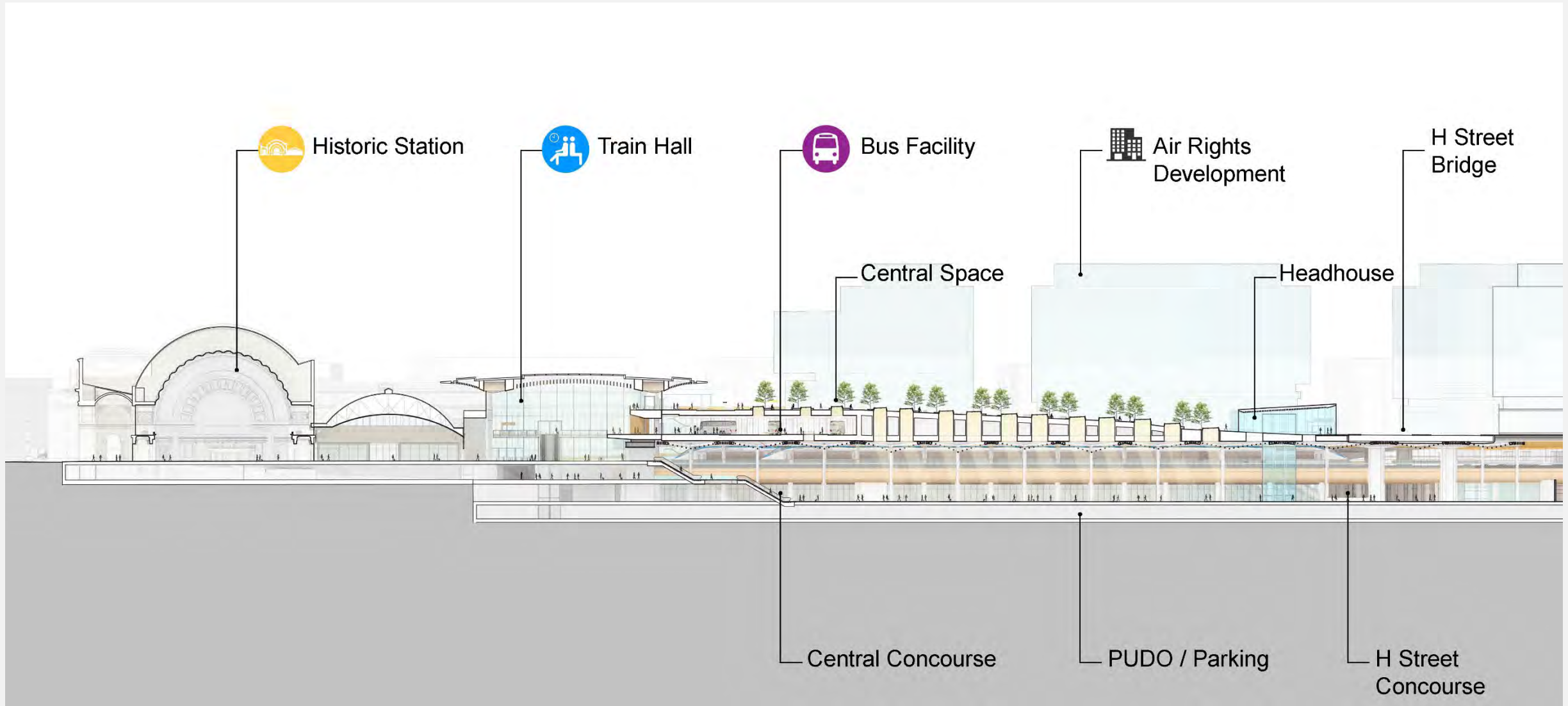
Summary of Project Updates - 2022

Topic	Potential Revised Preferred Alternative Framework	Future Considerations
	<i>Note these figures do not include the in the deck parking proposed by the private development.</i>	
Pedestrian and Bicycle	Bicycle storage and parking opportunities identified in the revised alternative include new storage opportunities at the west edge of the station and within the H Street Concourse. The opportunity for pedestrian/bicycle access from the front of the station to H Street and the air-rights development on both the west and east edges of the station has been identified.	FRA and the Project Proponents will continue to coordinate with DDOT on pedestrian and bicycle commitments.
Pick-up/Drop-off and Ramp Locations	Based on stakeholder feedback, the potential revised Preferred Alternative includes a belowground PUDO facility to reduce pressure on aboveground streets. The Project requires several ramps for ingress/egress to access those below grade functions. After reviewing a range of options and DDOT comments, the current approach to ramp locations is: G Street (ingress and egress), First Street (ingress/egress), East Ramp (egress).	Design of these ramps will continue through the Project development process.
Urban Design and Context	The WUS team developed an approach to Project elements at the H Street deck level that allows for a successful civic space integrated with private air-rights development and the Project. The integrated bus facility permits a strong visual connection between the station and H Street and the overall site design respects the symmetry of the site.	Design of Project facilities at the H Street deck level and design consideration for public spaces will occur in conjunction with design of the private air-rights development.

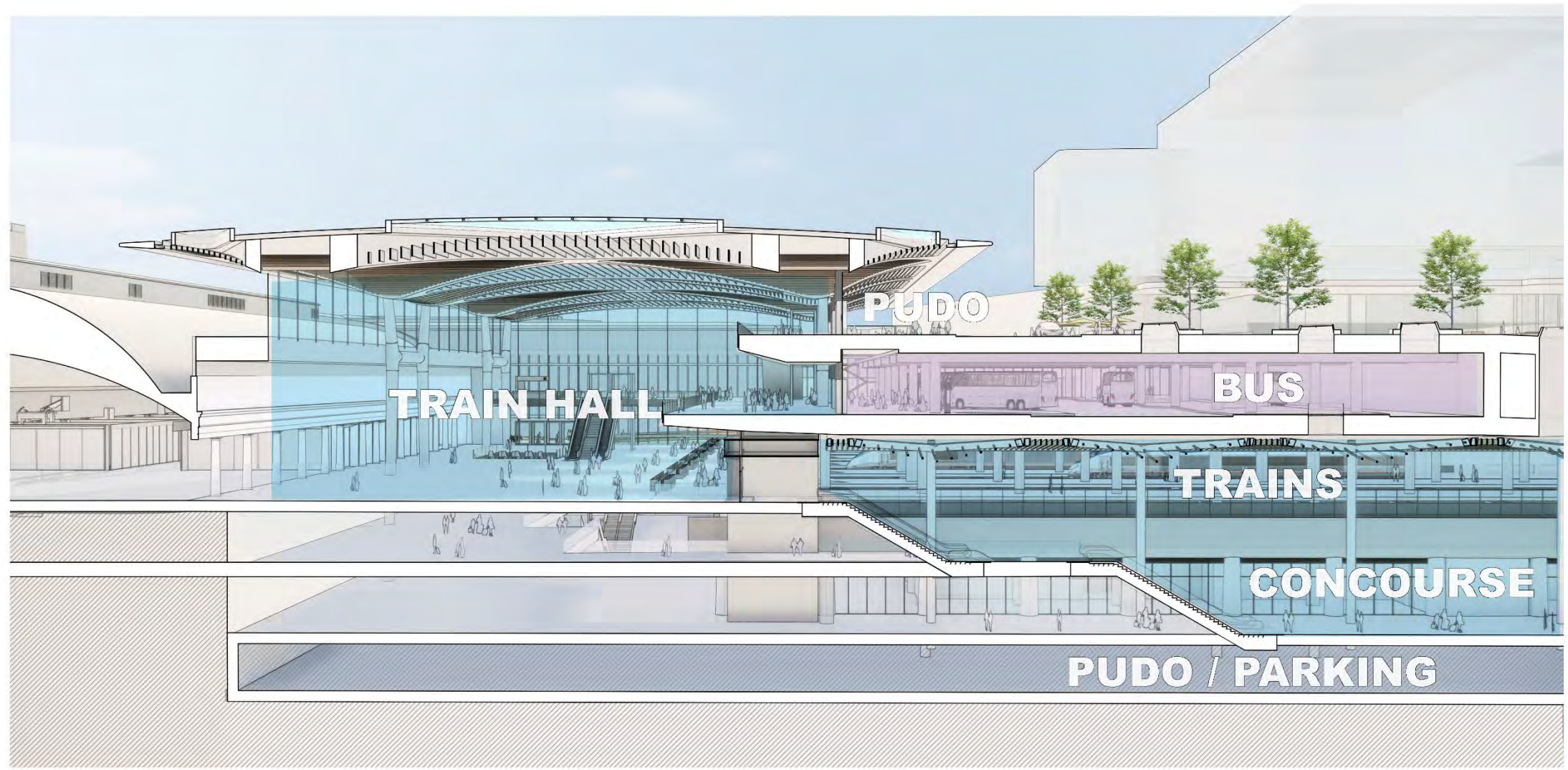
Neighborhood Context (Roof Plan View)



N-S Site Section through Central Concourse

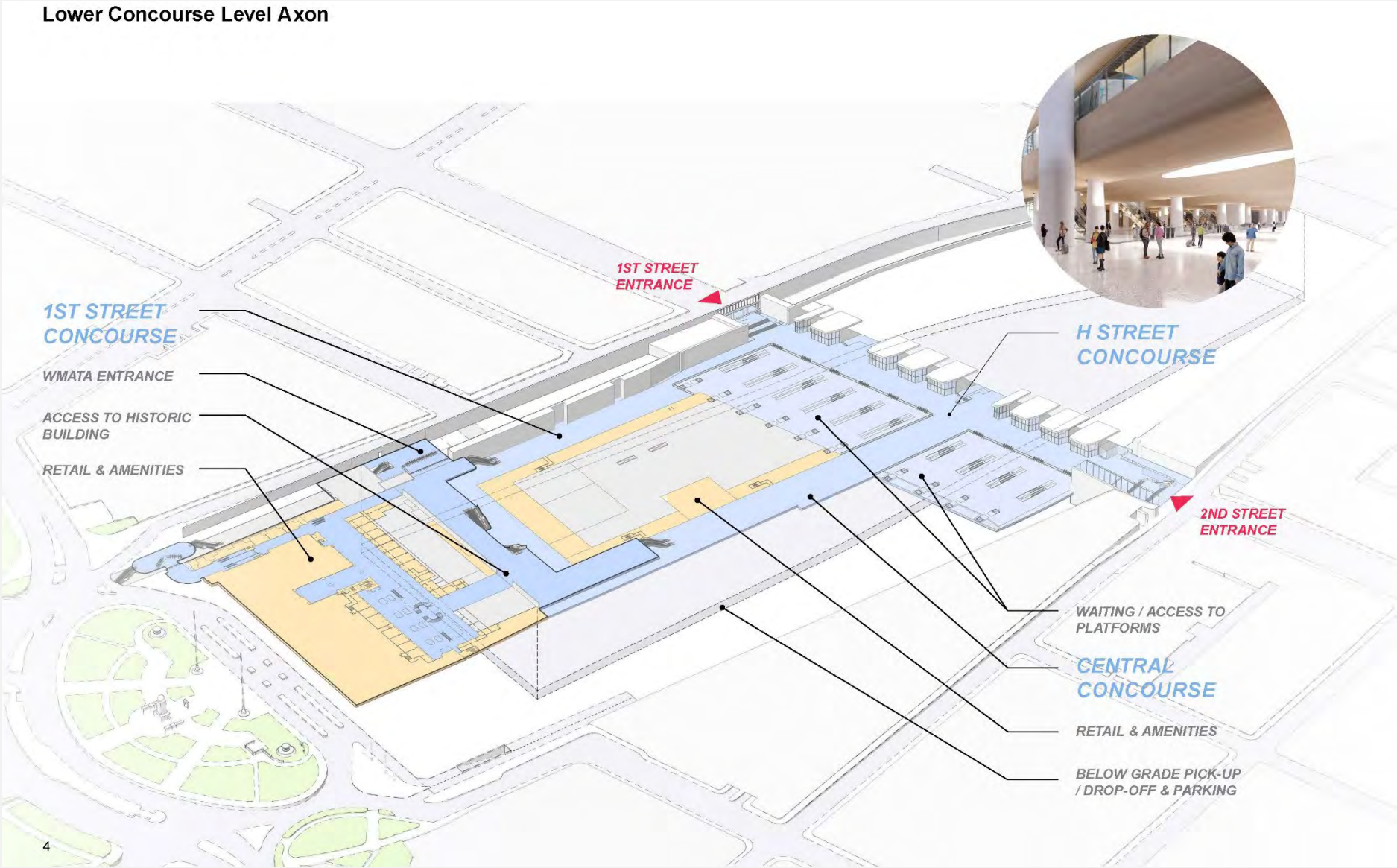


N-S Section through Train Hall

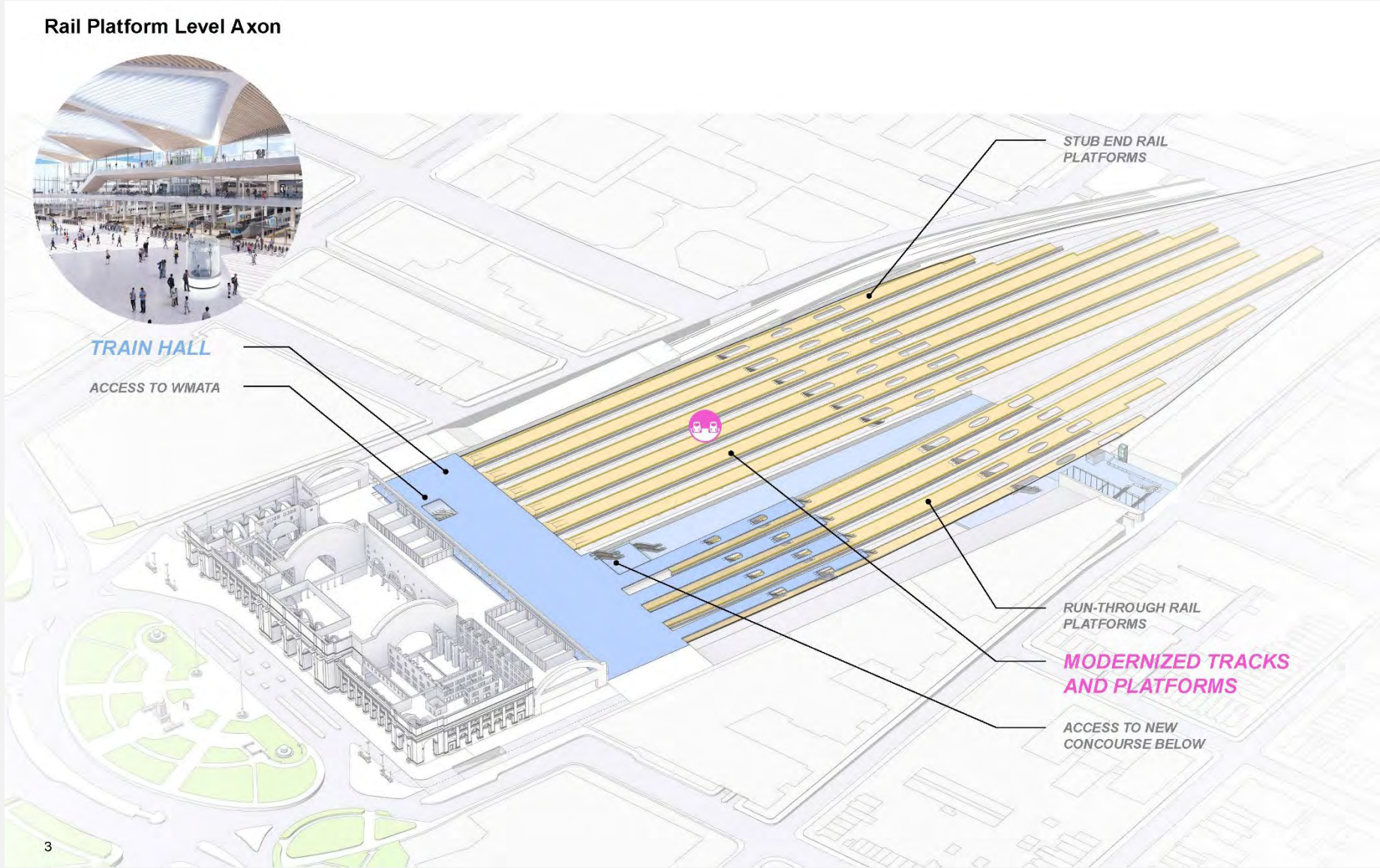


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Lower Concourse Level Axonometric



Rail Platform Axonometric



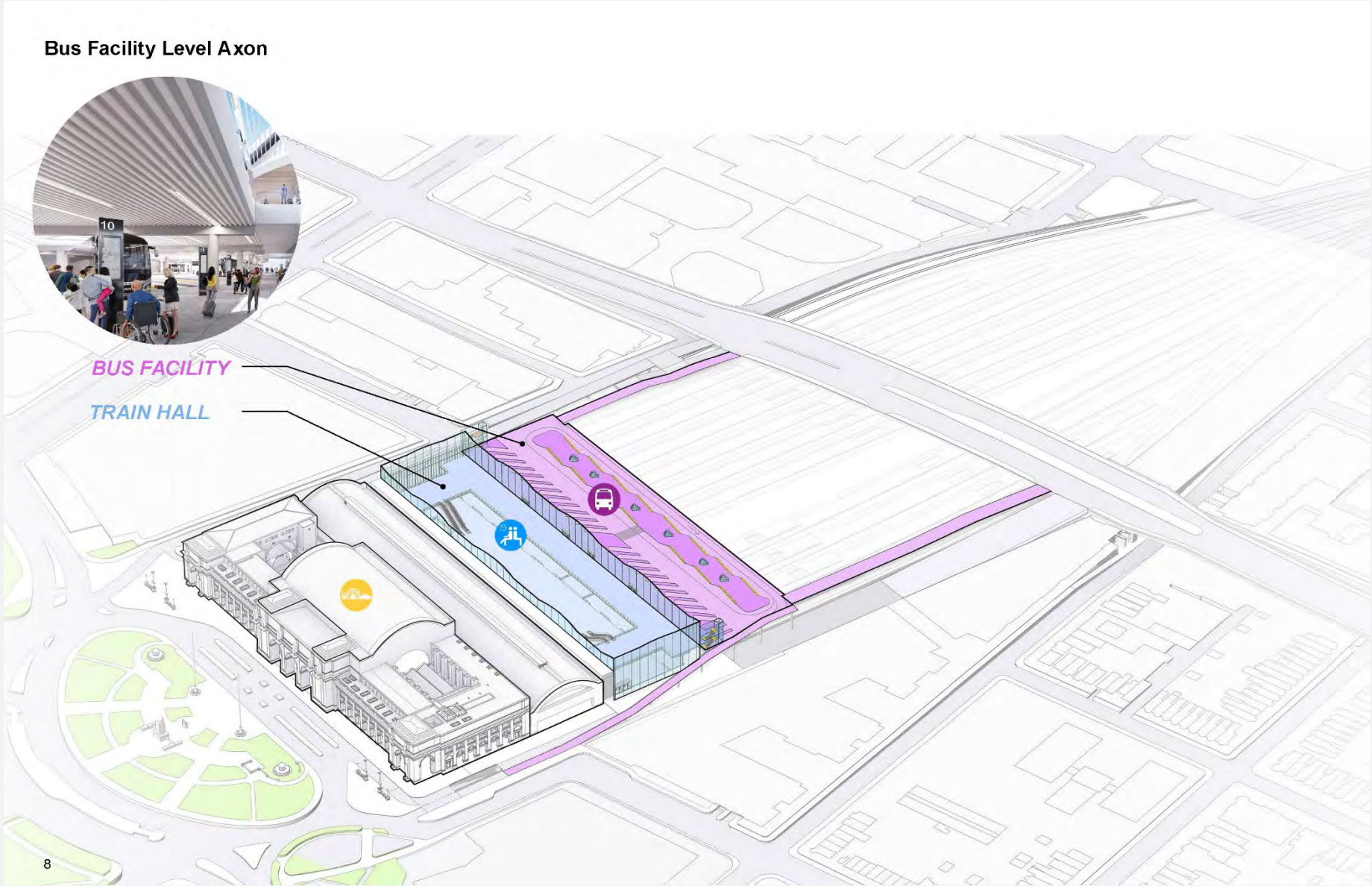
H Street Concourse Rendering



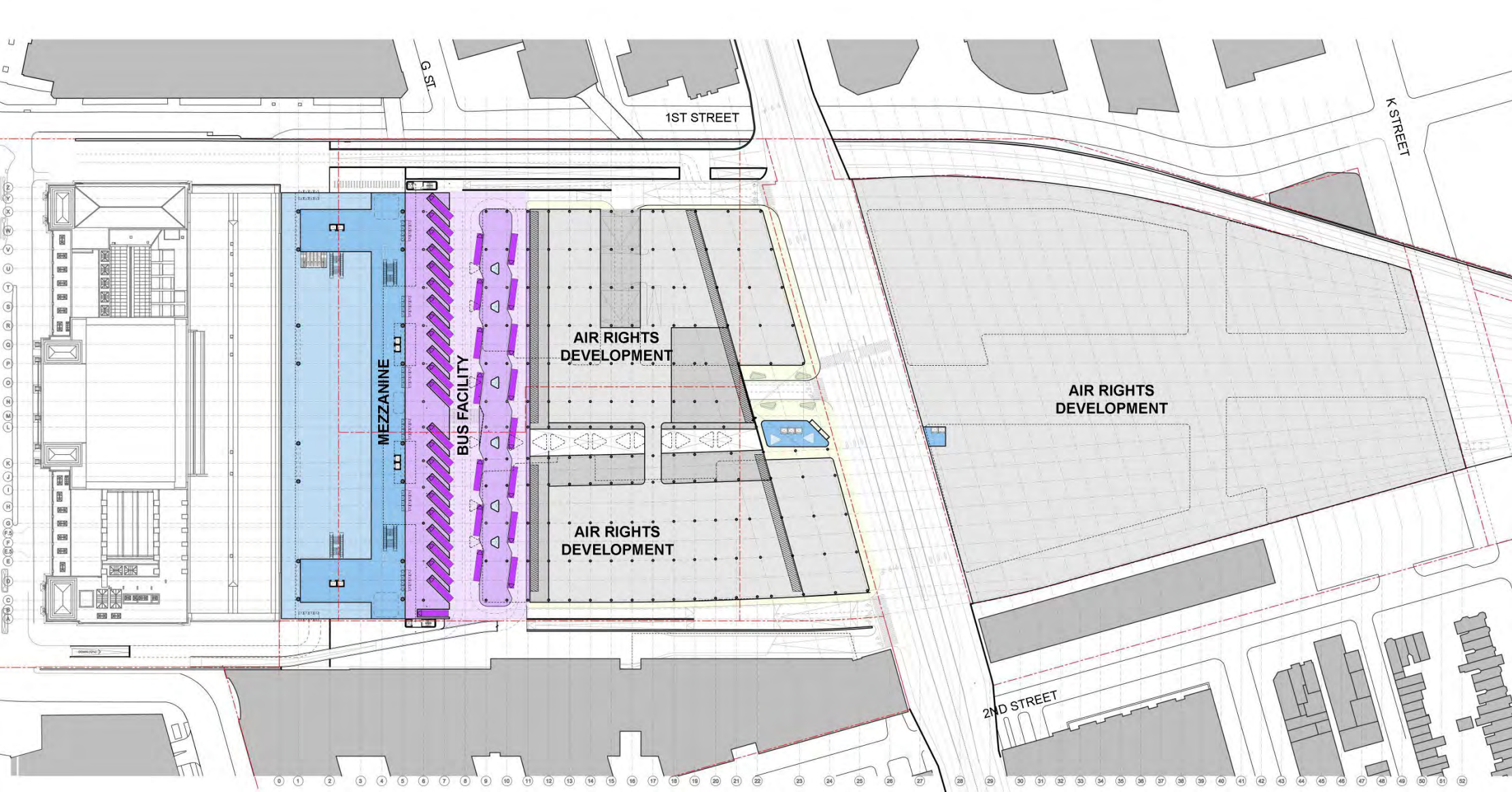
1st Street Entrance Rendering



Bus Facility Level Axonometric



Bus Level Plan View



Bus Hall Facility Rendering



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Train Hall Rendering



Train Hall Mezzanine Rendering



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Pickup-Drop Off Deck Level Axon

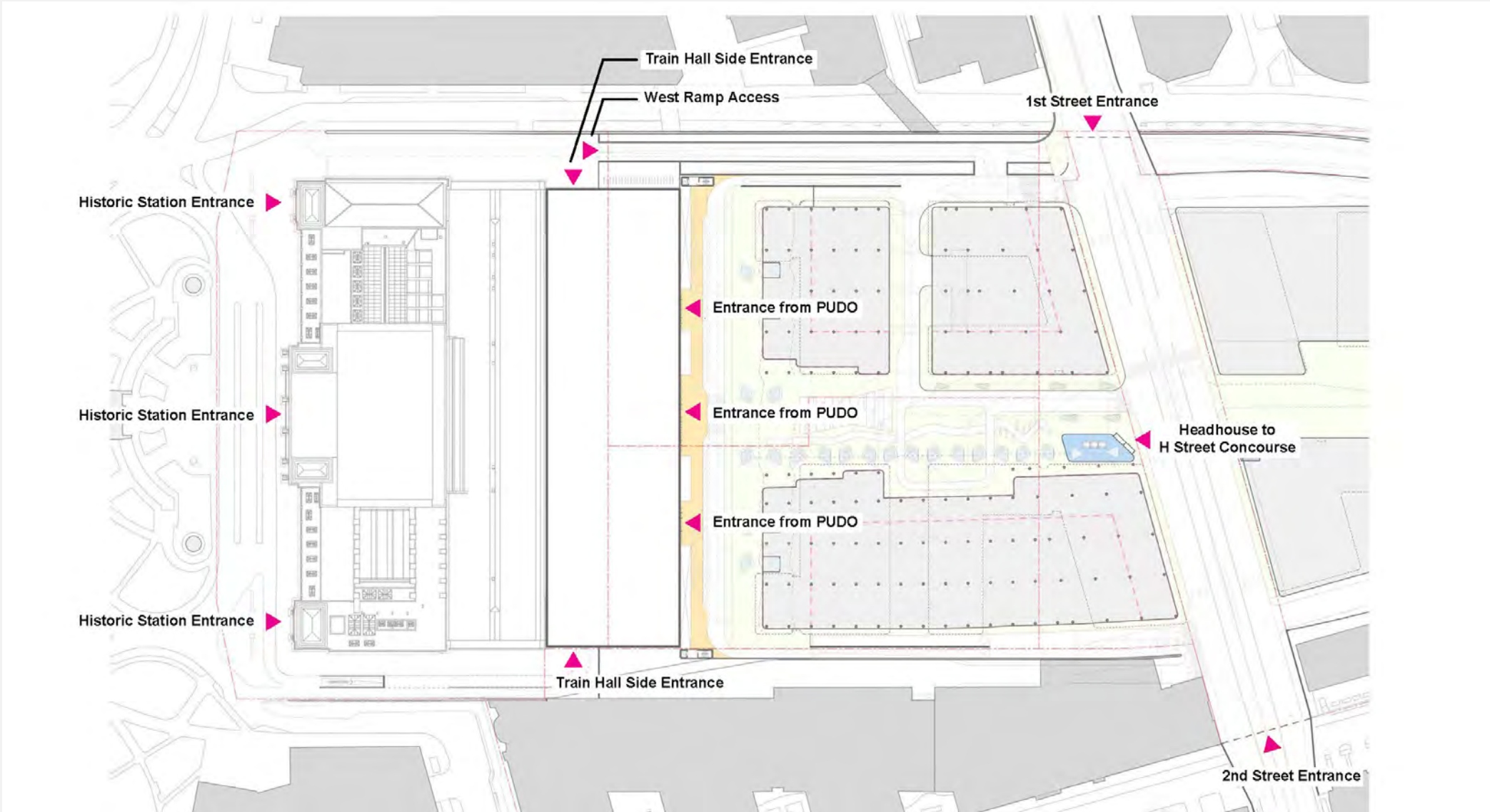


Pickup-Drop Level Rendering

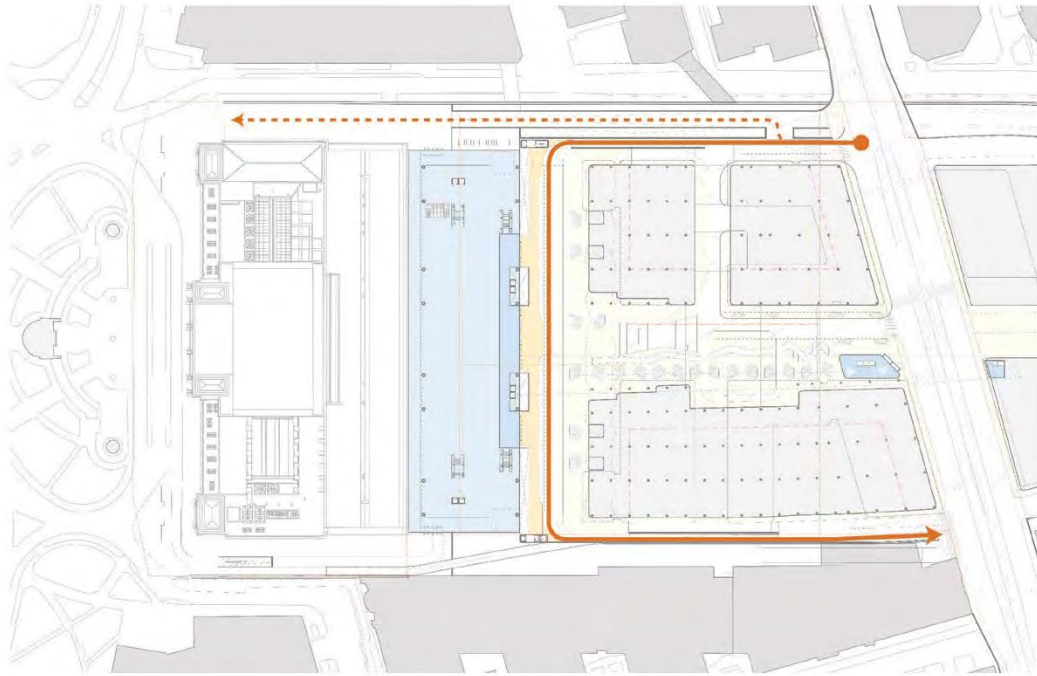


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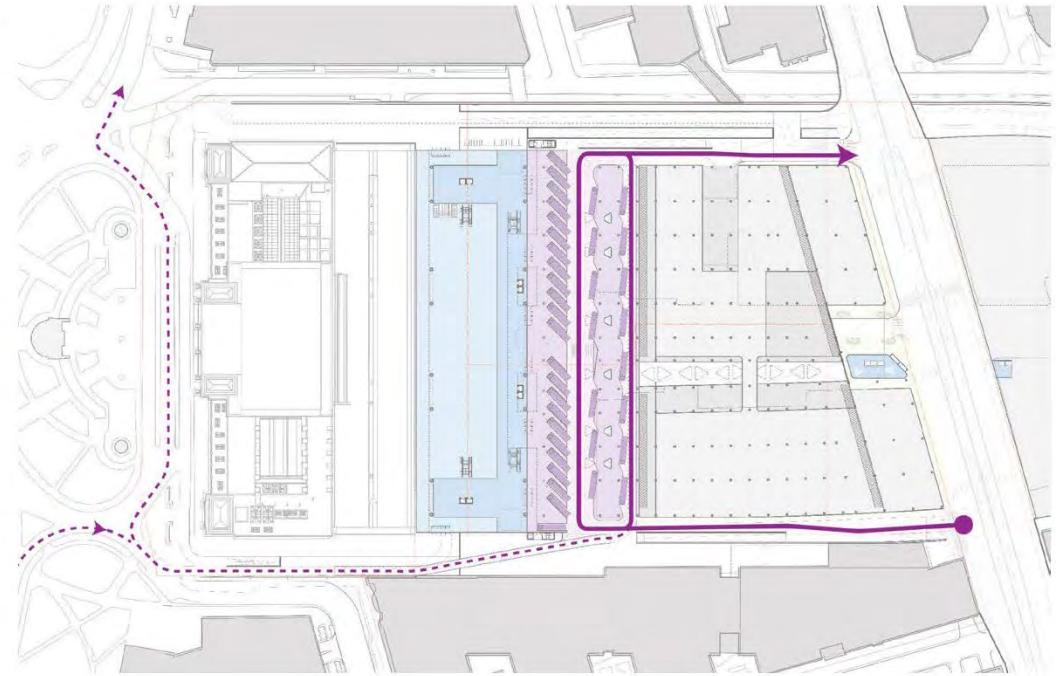
Pedestrian Access Points







Vehicular Circulation



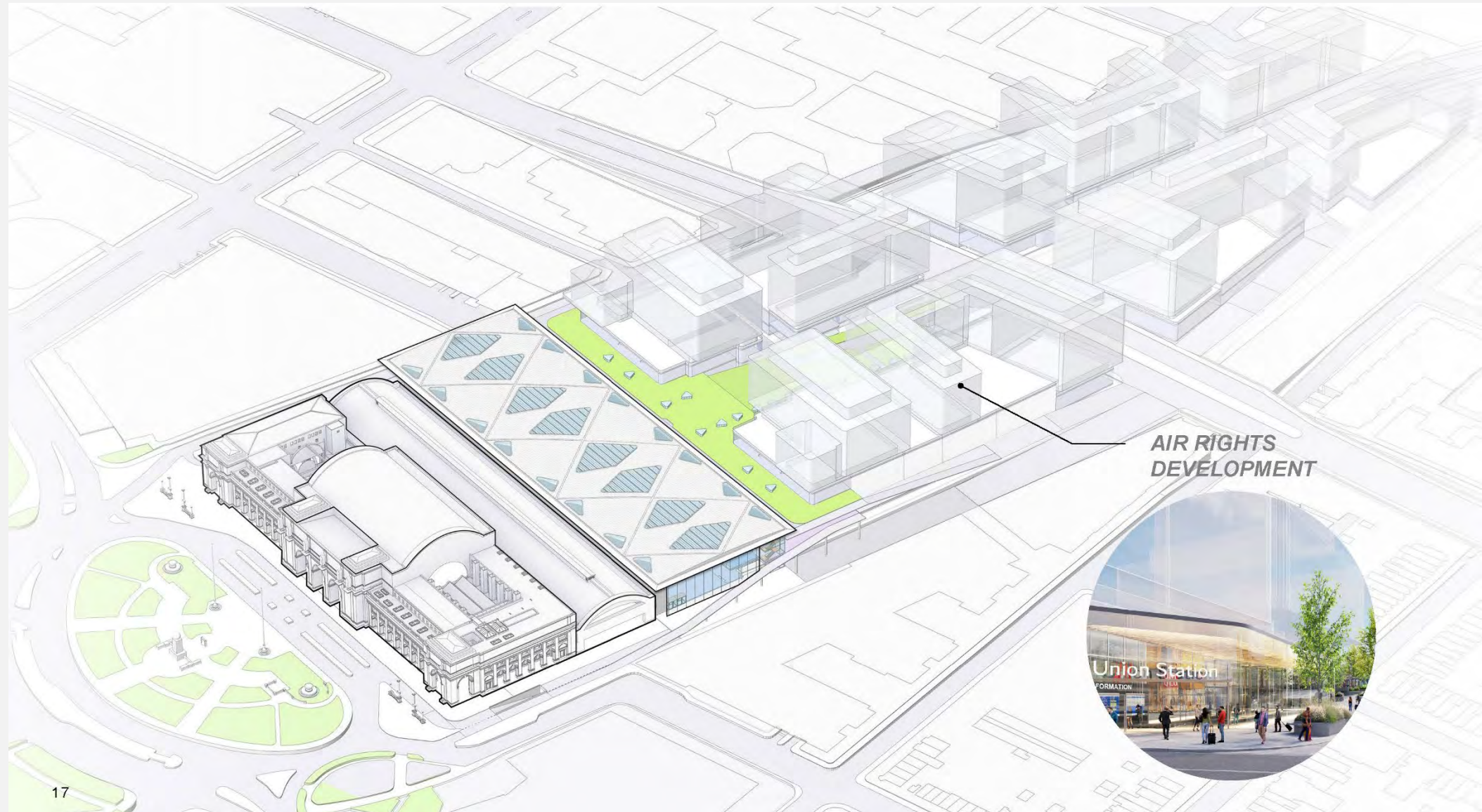
Deck Level



Bus Level

-  Vehicular circulation
-  Vehicular circulation for special operations
-  Bus circulation
-  Bus circulation for special operations

Air Rights Level Axonometric



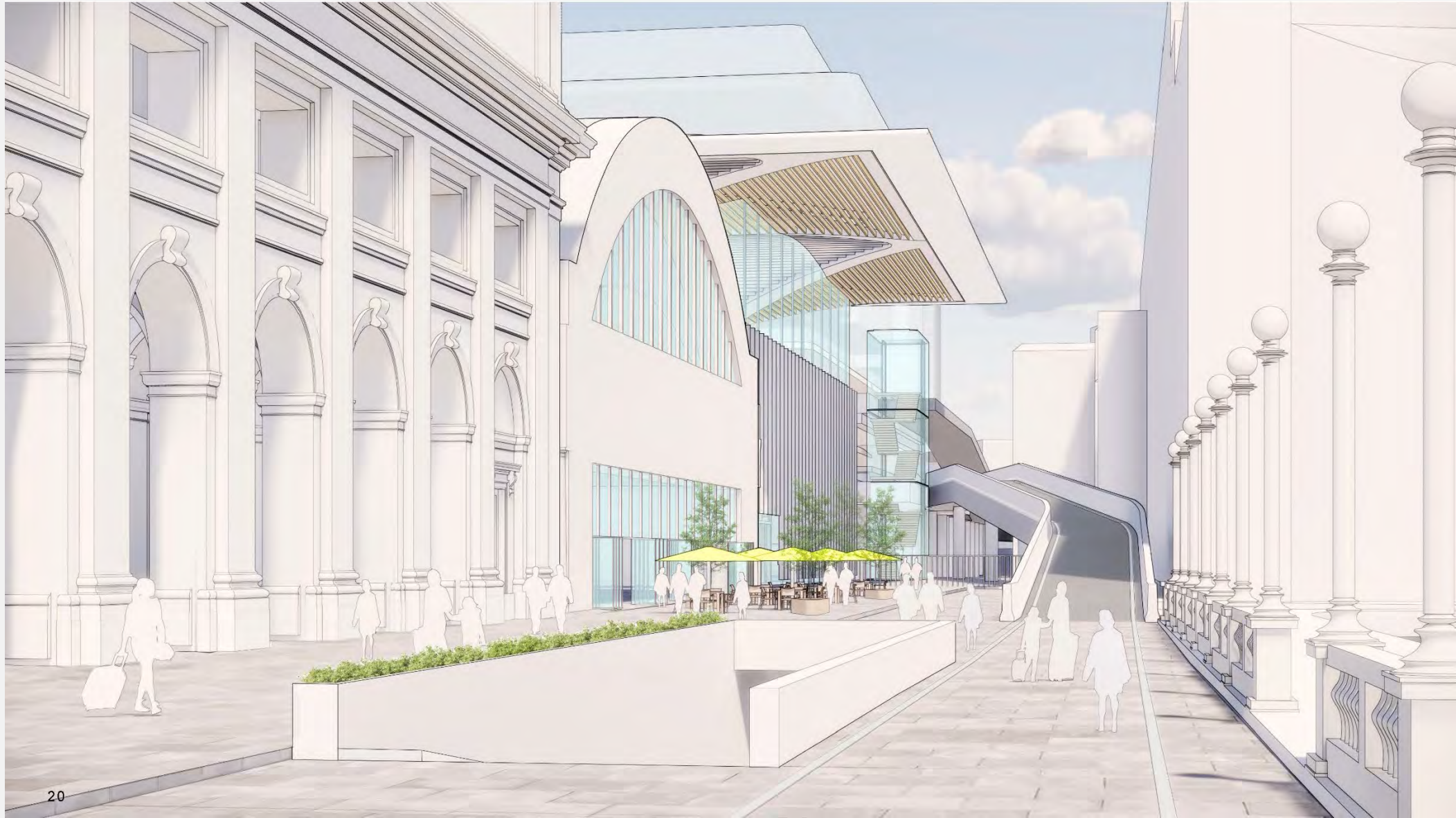
Central Space Rendering



West Ramp Rendering



East Ramp Rendering



Overall Aerial View with Air Rights Massing



21

U.S. COMMISSION OF FINE ARTS

ESTABLISHED BY CONGRESS 17 MAY 1910

401 F STREET NW SUITE 312 WASHINGTON DC 20001-2728 202-504-2200 FAX 202-504-2195 WWW.CFA.GOV

24 June 2022

Dear Mr. Valenstein:

In its public meeting of 16 June conducted by videoconference, the Commission of Fine Arts was pleased to hear an information presentation on updated plans for the renovation and expansion of Washington's Union Station, along with an associated air-rights project, which illustrated the development of initial planning since its last presentation to the Commission in November 2019.

The Commission members commented on the elegant, coherent presentation; they expressed appreciation for the progress on this ambitious project to solve a complex set of intertwined challenges of planning, programmatic use, structural design, and access. Consistent with the Commission's previous advice, the new planning effort has been highly responsive in eliminating extensive structured air-rights parking; incorporating a bus terminal within the new development as a bright and dignified convenience for travelers; developing a civic architectural character for the train hall; and strengthening public connections to the H Street viaduct.

In their discussion of the proposal, the Commission members provided the following comments to be addressed as the design is further developed. They raised an overall concern that the new proposal—particularly the train hall, in its formal and gestural strength—may compete with the historic architecture of Union Station itself; they emphasized that the design of the additions should complement the formal character, progression through, and programmatic uses of the historic station. For the central plaza south of H Street, they recommended further developing this important space to strengthen its civic character; they recommended a more coherent, simplified design with a clear spatial progression to the new train hall and the historic station. They noted that the private air-rights development, Burnham Place, will be a large and momentous intervention in the city; they recommended more regularity and less episodic variety in the design of the buildings as the architecture of this new urban fabric is developed.

The Commission looks forward to review of the concept submission for the project; it is anticipated that the scope of work associated with the additions to the station will be reviewed as a federal government project when submitted and the private-sector Burnham Place by referral from the D.C. government under the Shipstead-Luce Act. As always, the staff is available to assist you.

Sincerely,



Thomas E. Luebke, FAIA
Secretary

David Valenstein, Senior Advisor
Federal Railroad Administration
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590

cc: Nikolas Dando-Haenisch, Grimshaw
Mark Gilliand, Shalom Baranes Associates
Beverley Swaim-Staley, Union Station Redevelopment Corporation
Daniel Sporik, Amtrak
David Tuchmann, Akridge
Everett Lott, D.C. Department of Transportation
David Maloney, D.C. Historic Preservation Office

June 30, 2022

Mr. Marcel Acosta
Executive Director
National Capital Planning Commission
401 9th Street NW, North Lobby, Suite 500
Washington, DC 20004

RE: Washington Union Station Expansion Project – NCPC File Number 7746

Dear Mr. Acosta:

I write to express Akridge's strong support for the Federal Railroad Administration's (FRA) revised concept submission for Union Station's expansion. In the past, we sharply criticized the previous concept proposal as fundamentally flawed. In contrast, we believe the new planning framework includes station components, open spaces and circulation elements in optimal sizes and locations. The new concept achieves its principal transportation and policy goals while facilitating high-quality urban design and opportunities for air rights development.

Relationships between Burnham Place and the Station Expansion

Akridge's air rights development (Burnham Place) is independent from the Station Expansion Project (SEP). NCPC will review and approve the SEP under its National Capital Planning Act Authority to review federal projects. For Burnham Place, NCPC will provide input relative to federal interests upon referral from the District of Columbia Zoning Commission. While their approval processes are distinct, the two projects will be planned and constructed concurrently.

The SEP master plan will determine the framework for development opportunity, open spaces, and circulation routes for Burnham Place—particularly within the south portion of our project between the historic station and H Street NE. To assist the Commission in understanding the urban design and development implications of the revised SEP concept, Akridge created illustrative materials to show what is conceptually possible for Burnham Place within this framework. While the specific building massing, uses and architectural styles depicted in this imagery are not formal proposals, the building sites, roadways, and open spaces shown reflect the parameters set by the SEP.

Collaborative Process

In its July 2020 letter to the FRA, NCPC recognized the need for the FRA and Akridge to align visions "in a manner which is mutually beneficial." The letter stated that "continued conversations and coordination among both owners is critical." I am pleased to report that from Akridge's perspective that mission has been accomplished.

During the past 18 months, our two project teams coordinated intensively and productively. Both teams committed to explore creative ways each project could accomplish its objectives while adhering to technical constraints. We further set out to develop complementary visions which addressed stakeholder feedback and concerns. The revised SEP concept and new Burnham Place planning vision are the products of this process.

Key SEP Changes

We believe three major revisions to the proposed SEP effectively respond to our previous concerns and those of other stakeholders. These include:

- Reducing the station parking program and relocating it below-grade;
- Creating a below-grade Pick-up and Drop-off (PUDO) facility; and
- Reconfiguring the bus facility onto one level adjacent to the Train Hall, below the air rights plaza

These three changes have a transformational impact on urban design potential. The revisions decrease and shift vehicular activity below-grade, opening the station's perimeter for pedestrian- and bicycle-oriented activation. The bus facility location unifies intercity travel services at a Train Hall of grand proportion, while minimizing the visual and acoustic impacts of the buses at grade level. The removal of an above-grade parking garage and reconfiguration of property lines between public and private entities facilitates a two-block long central space, the opportunity for high-quality adjacent development, and buildings and open spaces with appropriate relationships to the historic station building.

Projects in Harmony

As shown in the attached materials, Burnham Place will comprise a dozen buildings flanking both sides of a rebuilt H Street Bridge with parks, plazas and new circulation routes connecting to the station and adjoining neighborhoods. While projects like The Wharf and The Yards center their focus on the waterfront, Burnham Place will define *its* identity in relationship to our region's most important transportation facility and the dynamic neighborhoods surrounding it.

Akridge firmly believes that while the SEP and Burnham Place are independent projects, the two can and must be symbiotic. Urban design, historic preservation and neighborhood connectivity all must be strategically integrated by the two simultaneous undertakings. We think that our aligned planning efforts now underway will ultimately yield built forms and the spaces between them that are optimized and in harmony.

Our vision is that people will come to Union Station and Burnham Place not just when they *have* to travel through the station, but because they *want* to experience a caliber of urban station development normally associated with great European and Asian stations, here in our Nation's Capital. Neighbors, tourists and travelers will explore and experience a remarkable public building with national significance, that is seamlessly connected to unique open spaces with both civic and neighborhood character. We believe that with the revised SEP proposal and complementary Burnham Place planning framework, we are well on our way toward achieving this shared vision.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



David Tuchmann
Senior Vice President

Attachment: Burnham Place Informational Submission

BURNHAM PLACE

A Vision for a Vibrant Air-Rights Neighborhood at Union Station

Informational Submission to the
National Capital Planning Commission

June 30th, 2022

Vision and Site Context

Union Station Expansion and Air-Rights Development



Circa 2002

World Class Transportation Centers and Urban Development

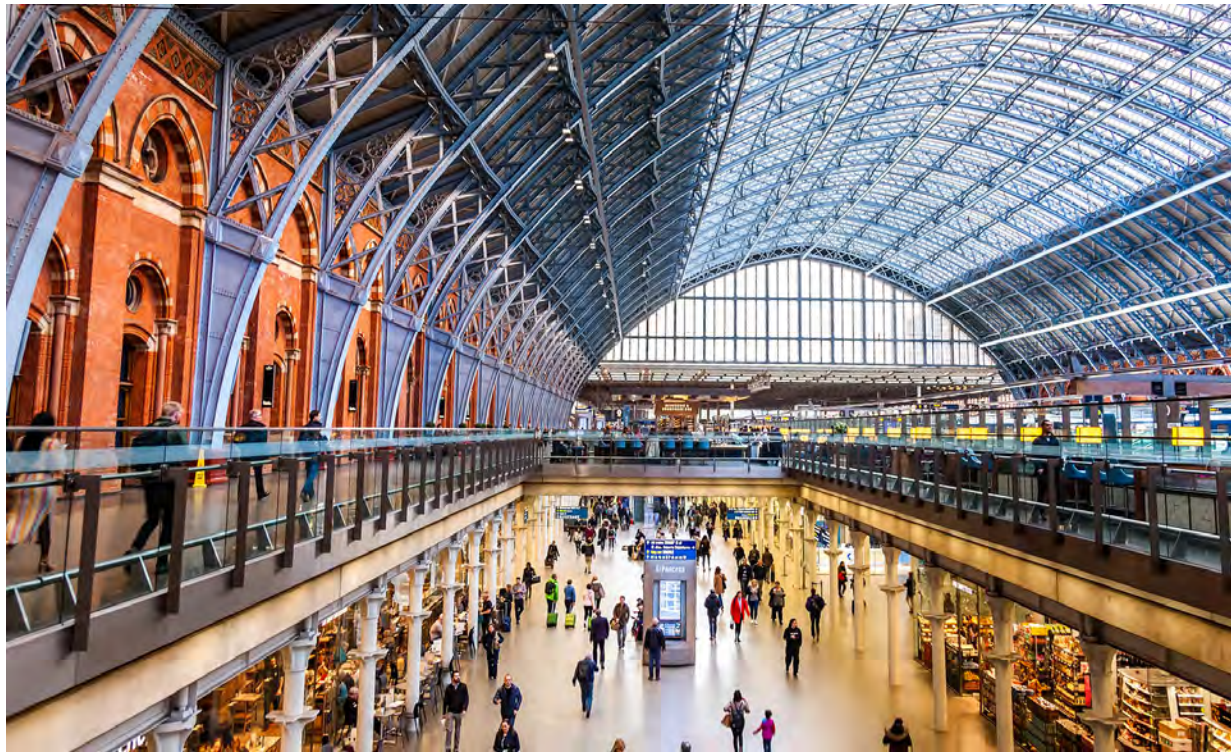
Examples of Integrated Projects



Manhattan West, New York



Broadgate - Exchange House at Liverpool Street Station, London

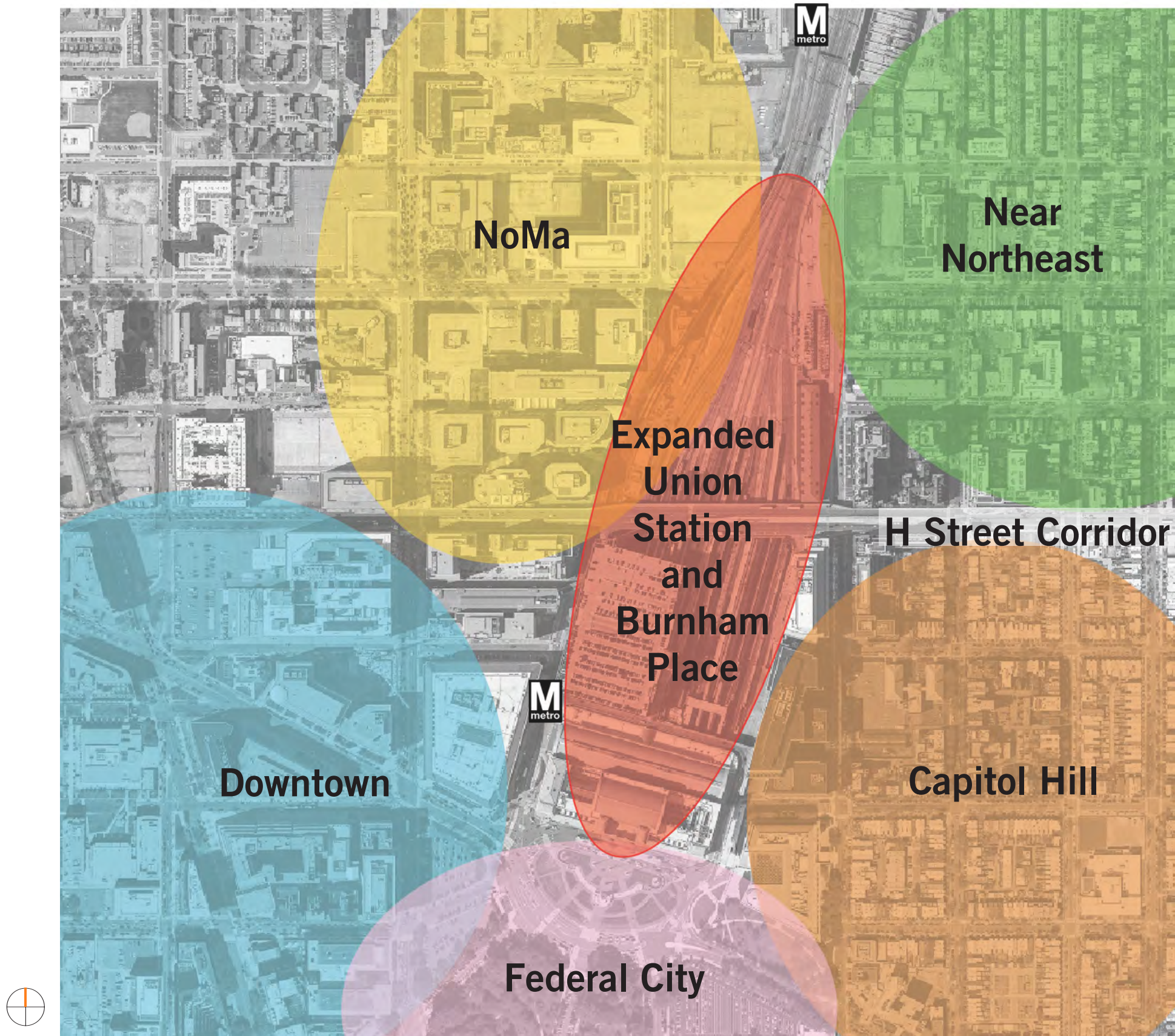


St. Pancras Train Station, London



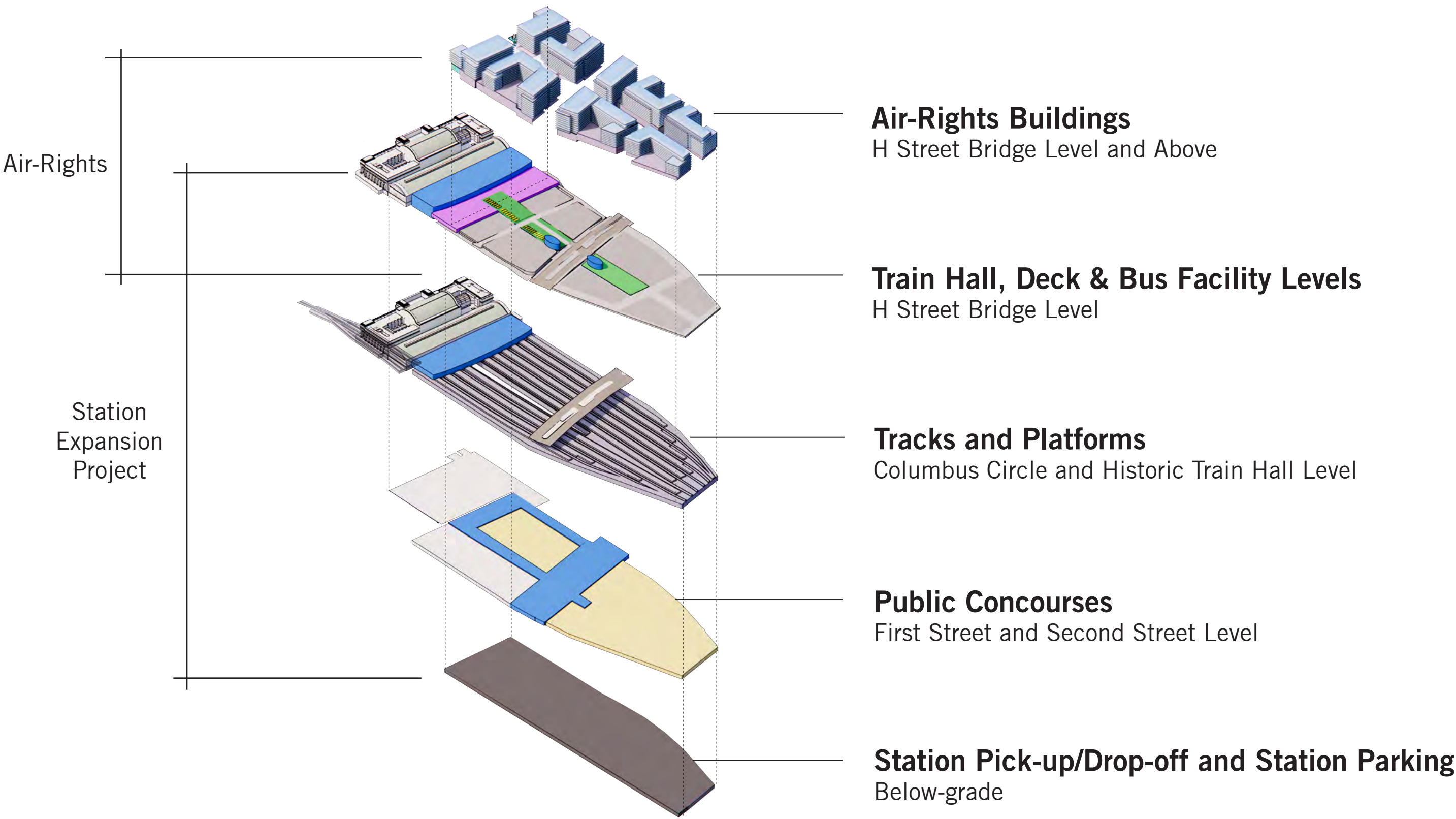
Liverpool Street Station, London

Neighborhood Connections and New Urban Hub



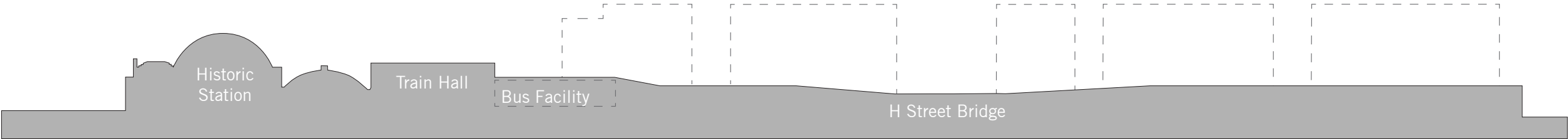
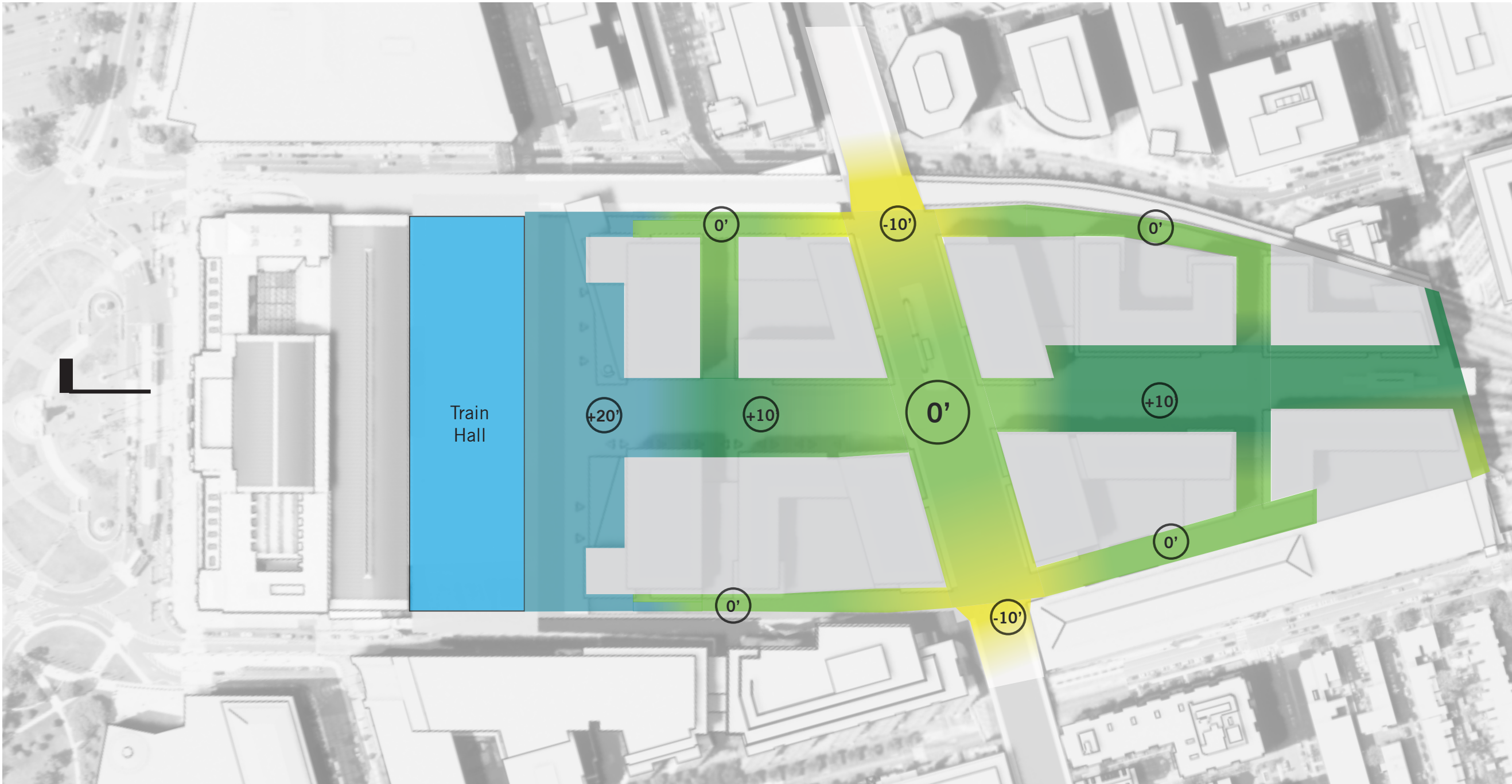
Air-Rights Framework Established by the Station Expansion Project

Integrated Air-Rights and Station Expansion Projects (SEP)

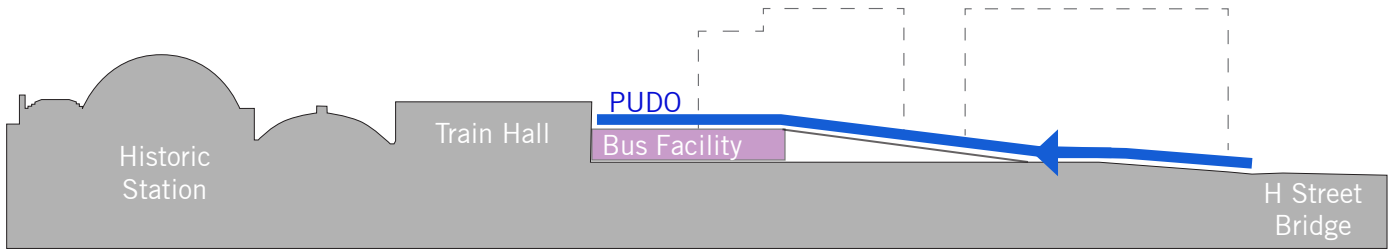
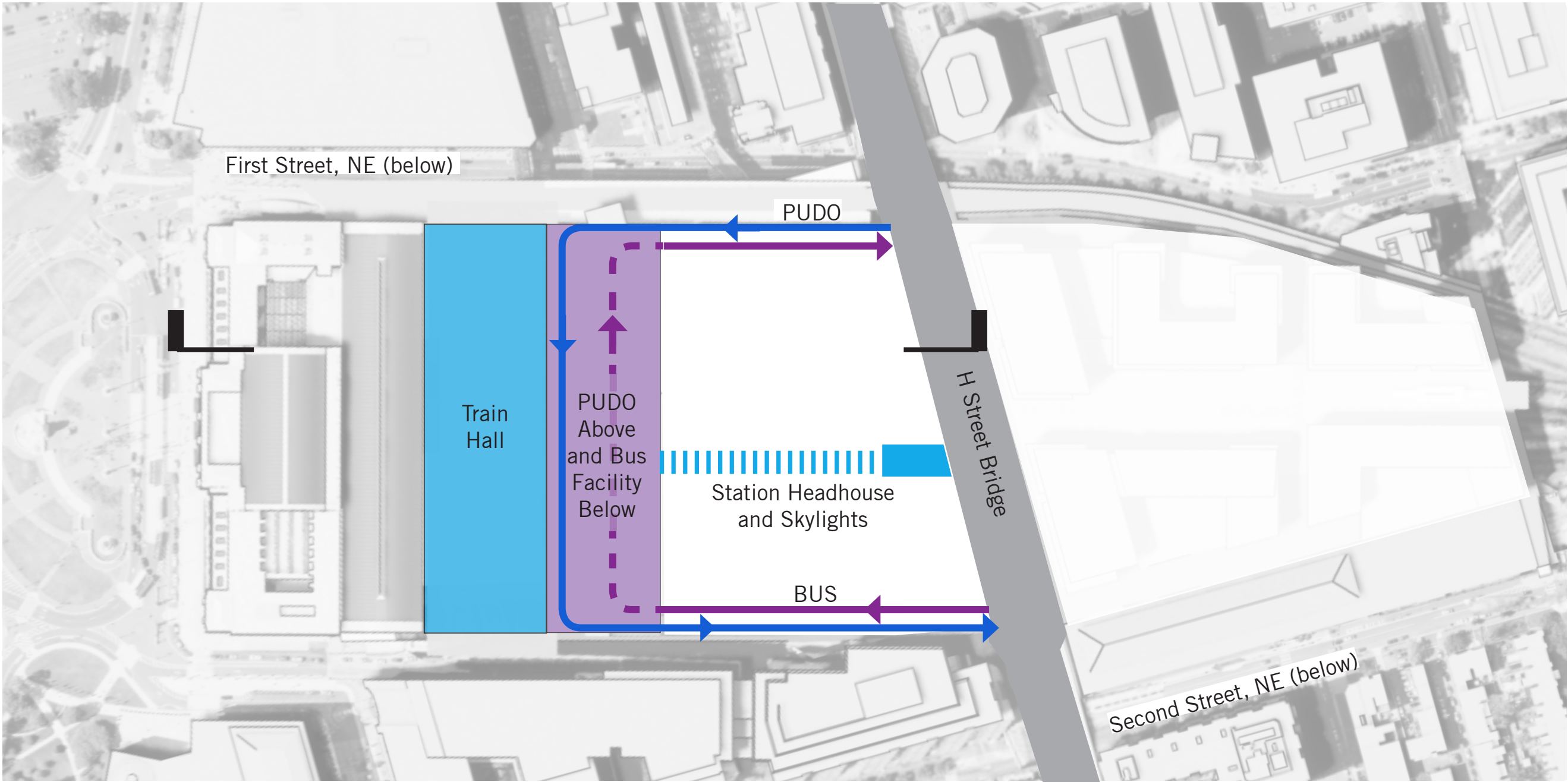


Deck Level Relative Elevations

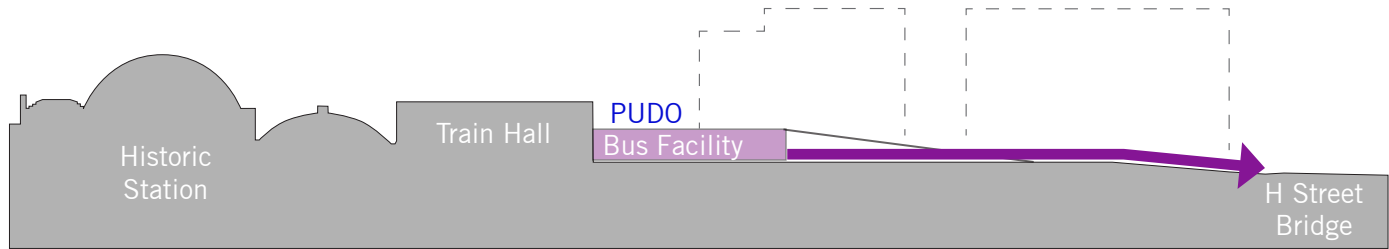
*All elevations are approximate



SEP Program and Circulation Components that Establish the Air-Rights Planning Framework

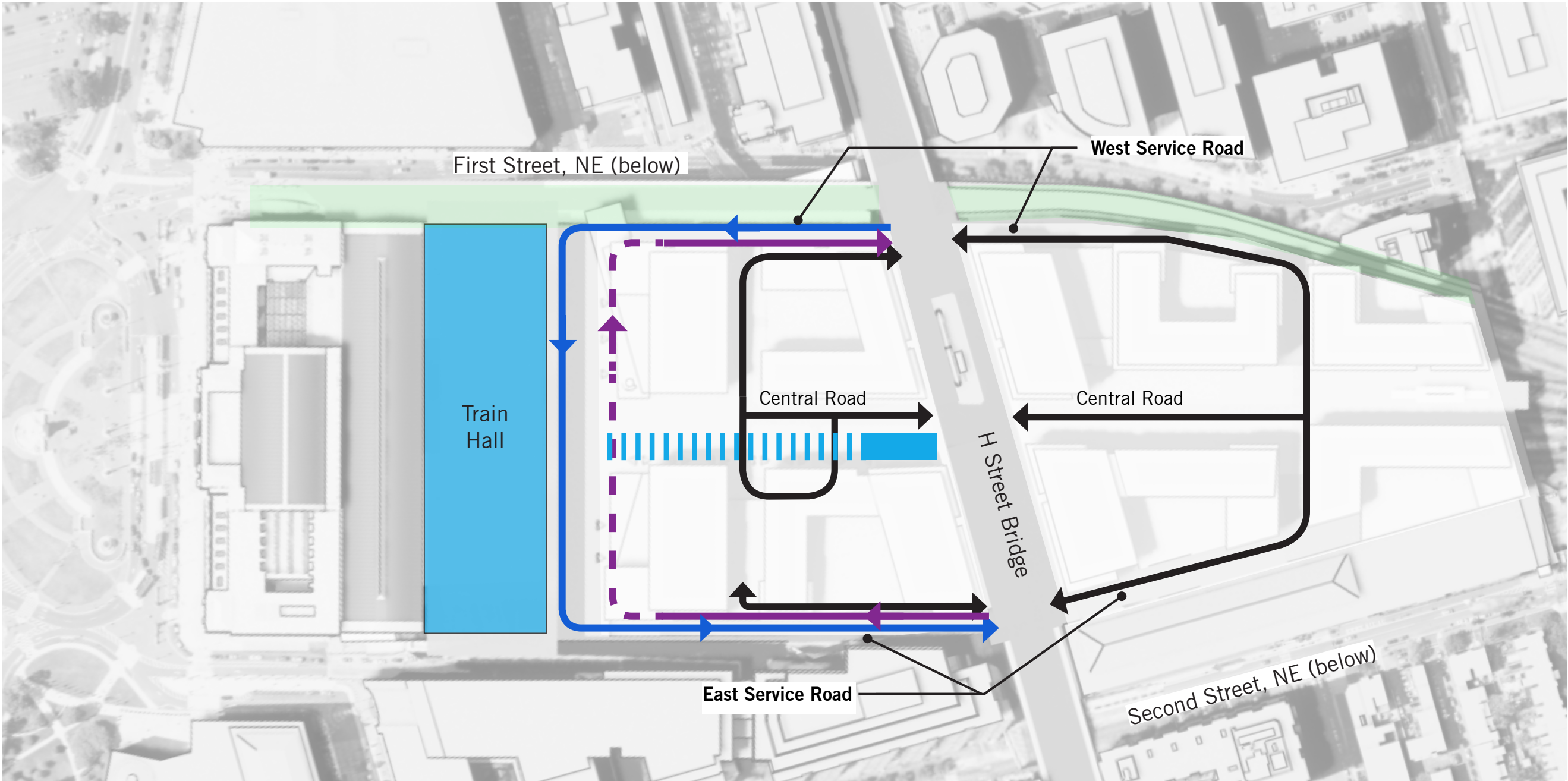


Pick-up/Drop-off (PUDO) Access (ramps up over top of the bus facility)



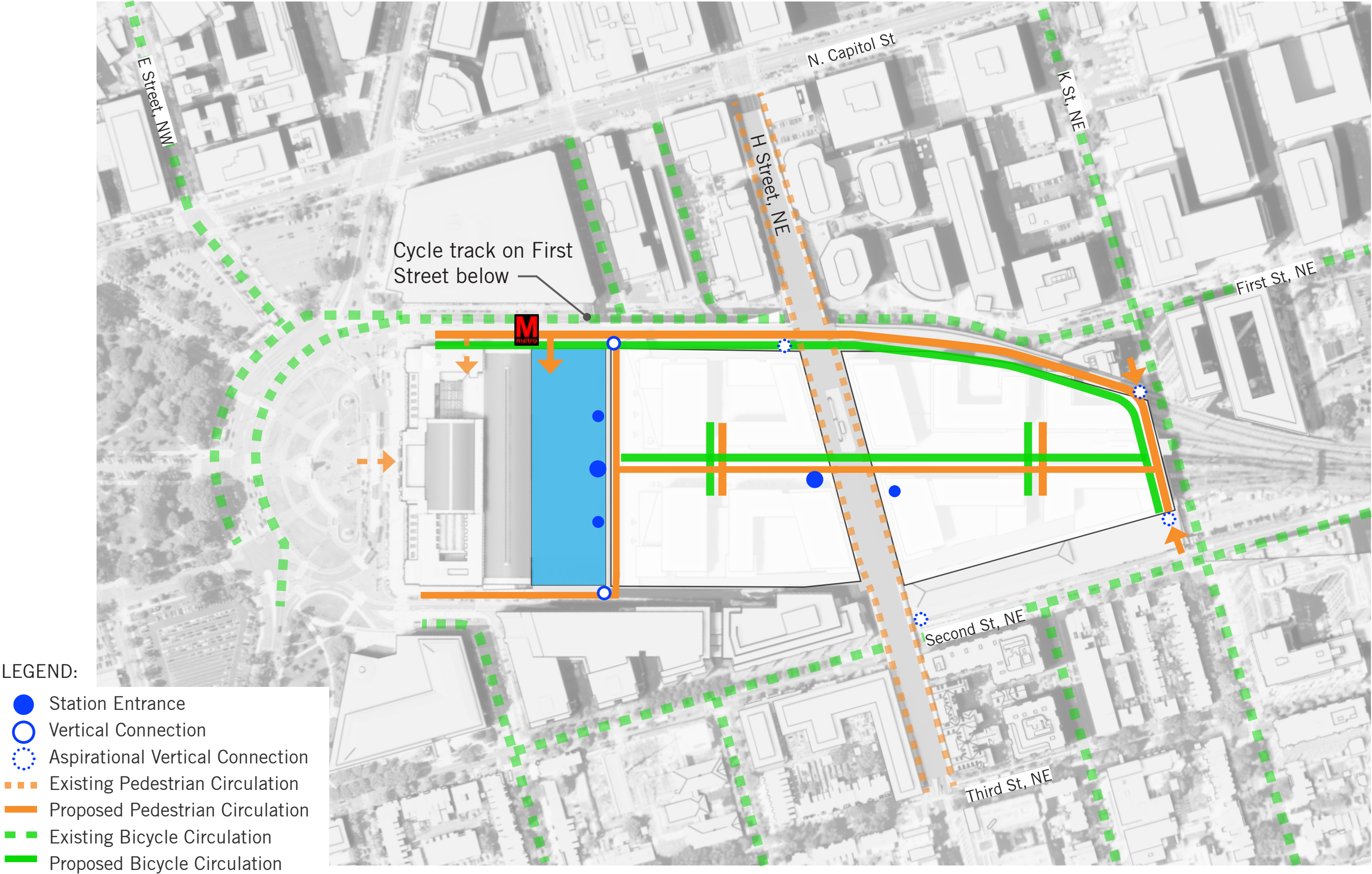
Bus Facility Access

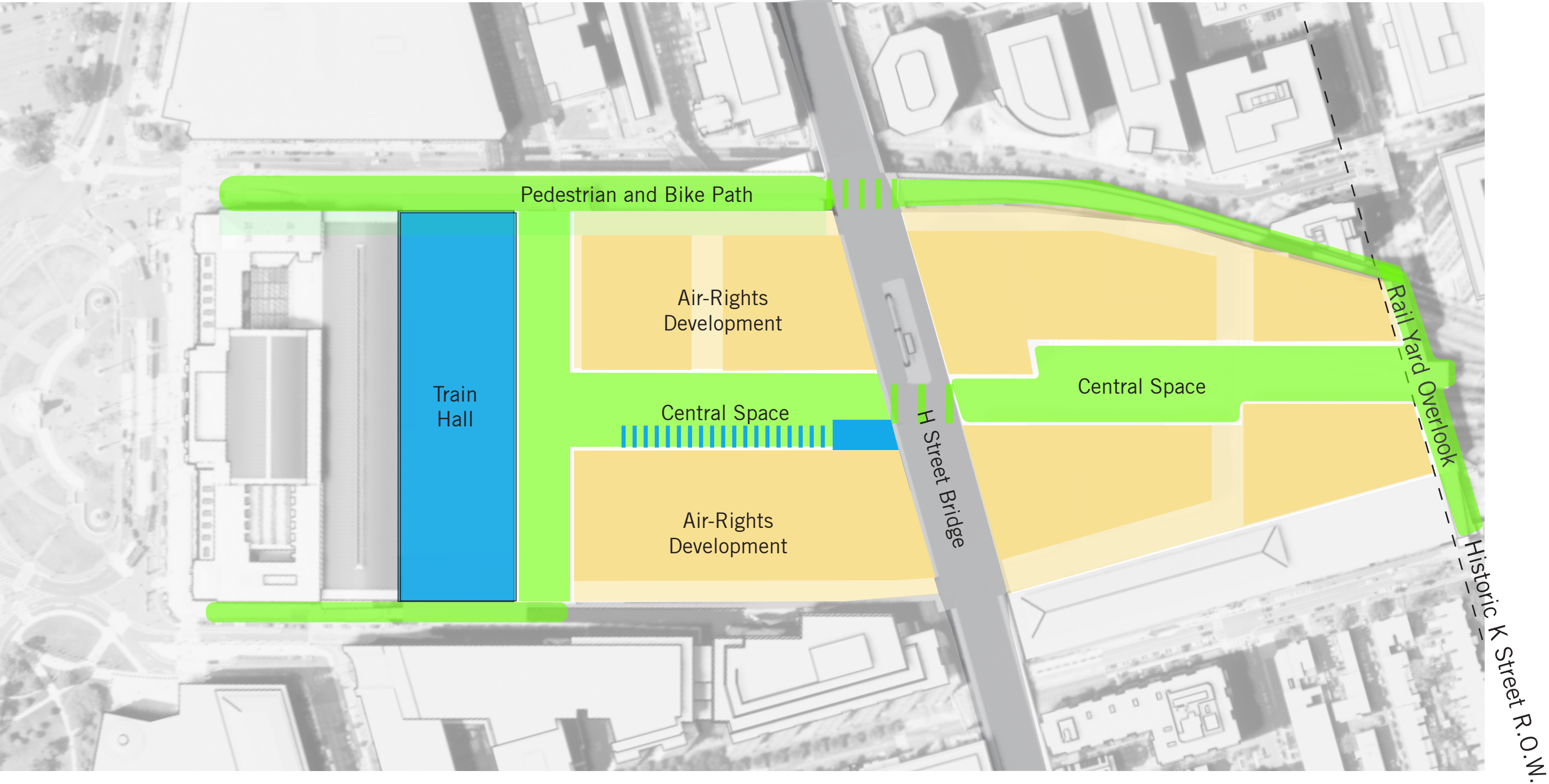
Combined Station and Air-Rights Circulation Network



- LEGEND:
- Station PUDO (Pick-up and Drop-off Circulation)
 - Bus Circulation
 - Air-Rights Circulation

Deck level pedestrian and bicycle connections and circulations



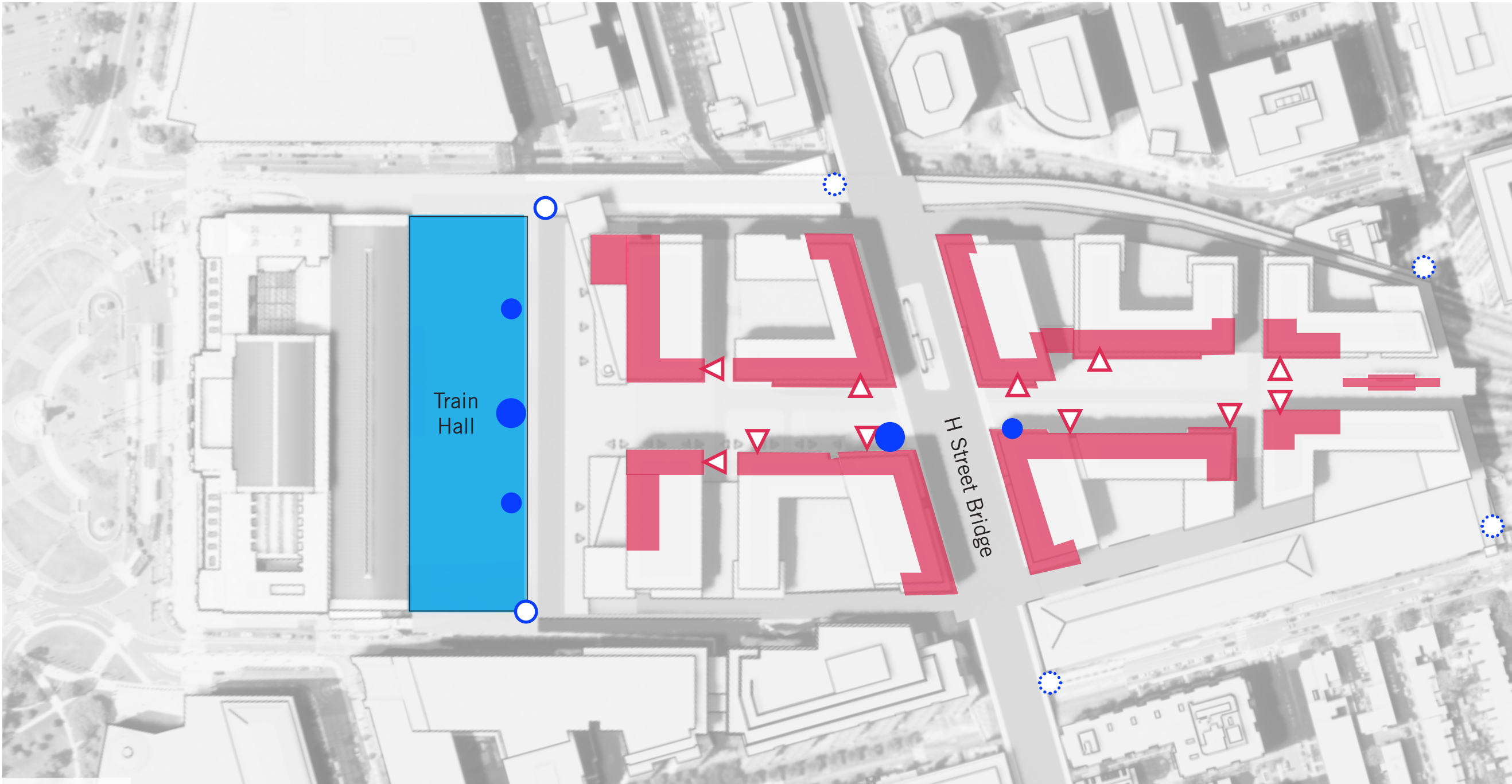









Note: The layout and distribution of air-rights buildings and uses are shown here for illustrative purposes.

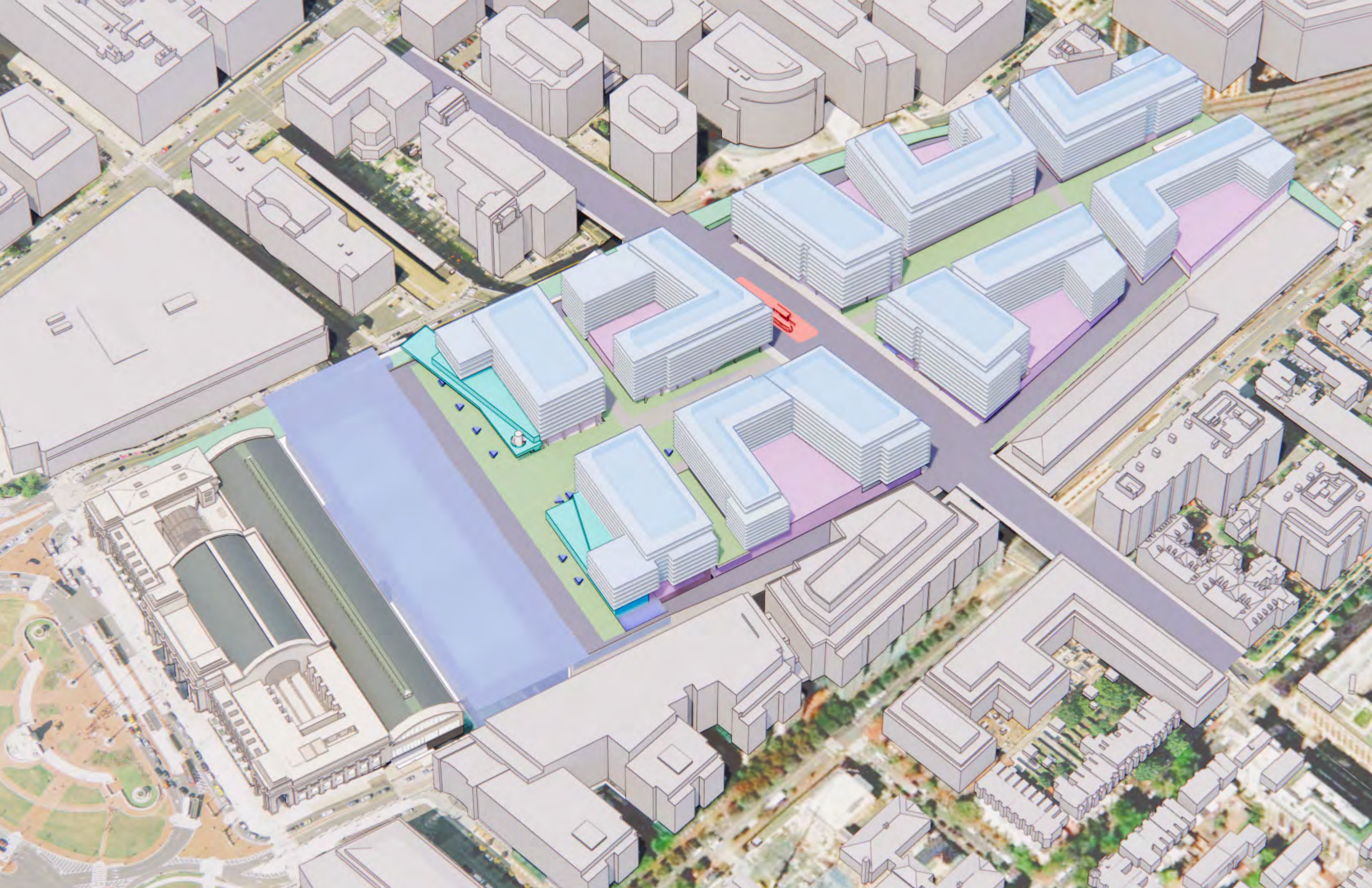
- LEGEND:
- Office
 - Residential
 - Hotel

Entrances and Activated Uses



- LEGEND:
-  Building Lobby
 -  Station Entrance at Air-Rights Level
 -  Activated Edge
 -  Vertical Pedestrian Connection
 -  Aspirational Vertical Connection

Air-Rights Massing for Draft Revised SEP Alternative Context





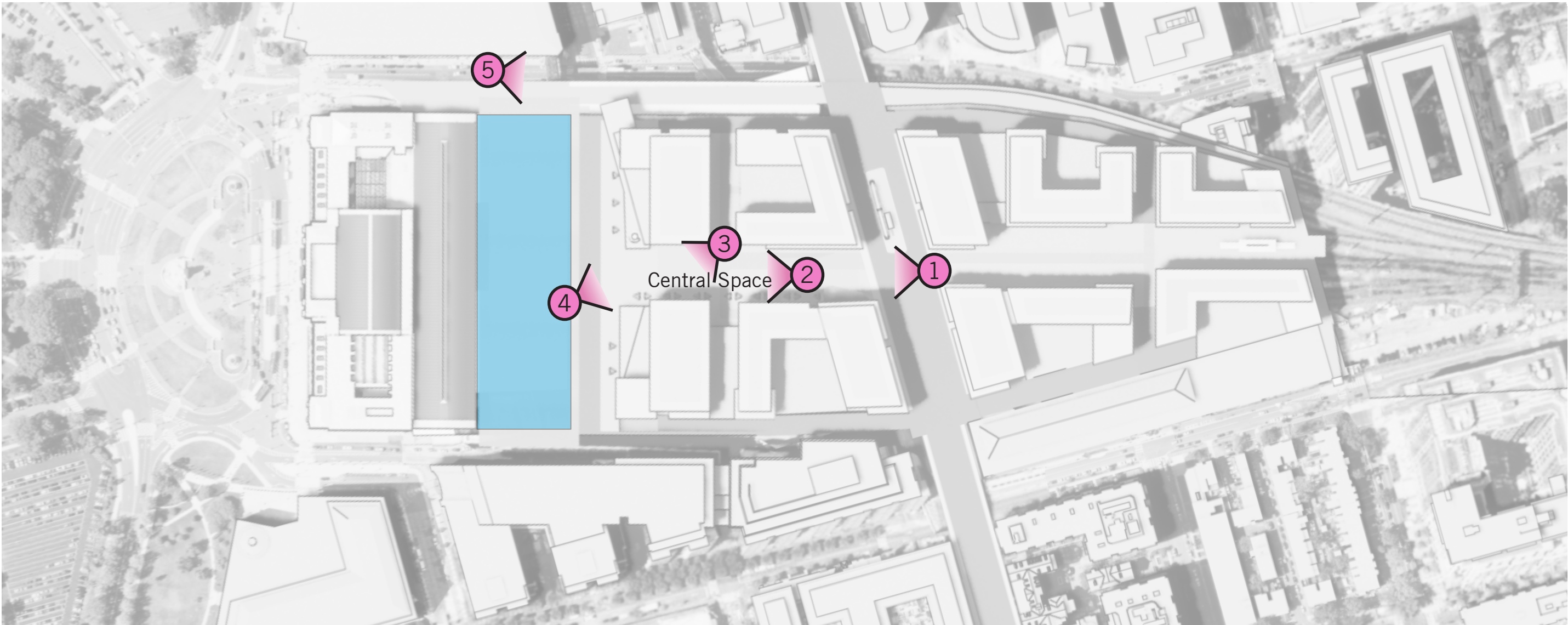
Aerial view looking west along H Street



Aerial view looking south

Preliminary Air-Rights Visualization

Rendering Key Plan (see pages A-21 - A-25)





1. Illustrative view south from H Street



2. Illustrative view within Central Space toward new Train Hall



3. Illustrative view looking south towards new Train Hall



Arts and Cultural Center

4. Illustrative view north through Central Space



5. Illustrative view north along First Street, NE

June 29, 2022

National Capital Planning Commission
401 9th Street, NW
Suite 500N
Washington, DC 20004

Testimony Regarding Washington Union Station Expansion Project
NCPC file number 7746

The Coalition for Smarter Growth is the leading organization in the Washington DC region dedicated to making the case for smart growth. The mission of our 25-year-old organization is to advocate for walkable, bikeable, and transit-oriented communities as the most sustainable and equitable way for the Washington, DC region to grow and provide opportunities for all. We've recently been awarded the Urban Land Institute's Changemaker Award, and have been recognized by the Council of Governments with their Regional Partnership Award and three times by the Washington Business Journal in their Power100 most influential players in the region.

We've partnered with other organizations in advocating for major expansion in frequent intercity rail service, and have long monitored the planning for the future of historic Union Station. When we last commented on the FRA's plans for Union Station in January 2020, we affirmed our strong support for expanding rail service and the station, but shared significant concerns about the proposed retention of thousands of above ground parking spaces which undermined the entire design and facility. Therefore, we are very pleased to see that the proposal for 1600 spaces has been reduced to about 400 to 700. We urge selection of the lower end of the range, since the focus for this downtown station should be on transit, pedestrian and bicycle access, as well as pick-up and drop-off.

We are especially pleased to see the removal of the above ground parking structure and the placement of the parking and much of the pick-up and drop-off at the lowest underground level. This opens up the opportunity for the amazing train concourse with much improved access to the trains, bus station, and pick-up and drop-off. We approve of the effort to bring good natural light into the facility and like the north-south green axis through the Burnham Place development and the integration with the new H Street bridge.

We like the location and design of the single level bus station, and we concur with the vehicle access points. We ask you to ensure that the ramp on G Street is designed to have minimal footprint and impact on the pedestrian environment, and that the vehicle access point from First Street NE does not endanger ped/bike access along the sidewalks and bike trail – it likely requires a signal.

We ask that you ensure that the upper east-west aligned pick-up and drop-off roadway allows for safe ped/bike access across the roadway through well-marked crossings, traffic calming, and

on scene safety monitors. Bicycle access to the station is important and the plan should include a well-located, secure, modern, and easy to use bike station similar to those in Europe that can accommodate thousands of bicycles.

Please ensure that there is good access from both H Street and Columbus Circle to high-frequency local bus service with stops positioned to minimize walking distance into the station.

We ask that you restore seating to both the Main Hall of the historic station and to the new concourses. People need comfortable places to sit while awaiting their trains and buses, and good seating contributes to a positive experience while using transit -- helping rail service compete with driving.

Finally, please ensure that the historic Main Hall remains an active part of the rail service operations. It must not become like a museum. Ideally, with the continued use of Columbus Circle, improved bike/pedestrian and direct bus and Metrorail transit access, as well as the foreseen growth in train ridership we will see full use of both the new and old concourses.

Thank you for your attention to this 100-year plan for our region's premier transportation hub. We are excited by the vision presented to you in this updated plan and urge your approval with appropriate recommendations for the issues we have highlighted.

Stewart Schwartz
Executive Director