

HEIGHT MASTER PLAN FOR WASHINGTON, DC

**DRAFT LOCAL INTEREST
FINDINGS & RECOMMENDATIONS**

Public Information Session | September 25

Harriet Tregoning
Director, DC Office of Planning

DC Recommendations

The District concludes that it is necessary and in both the federal and local interest to make reasonable modifications to the Height Act to allow increased height in the District of Columbia.

- Ensure a vibrant, economically healthy, livable Capital City.
- Continue to serve over 630,000 residents as well as to hundreds of thousands of workers and visitors every day.
- Allow the growth that augments a tax base that omits 50% of the District's land.
- Reduce price pressure on housing to retain moderate and middle income residents
- Maintain fiscal stability by attracting and retaining many of the middle class residents that fled the city in the previous four decades, while also diversifying the economy and increasing jobs for District residents.

Federal Interest Principles

- ✓ Maintain the horizontality of the iconic L'Enfant City skyline
- ✓ Ensure the prominence of federal monuments and landmarks by preserving their views and setting,
- ✓ Minimize negative impacts to nationally significant historic resources

Summary

- **Amend the Height Act to create new limits based on the relationship between the street width and building height of 1:1.25 within the L'Enfant City.** This ratio would permit buildings of up to 200 feet on 160-foot wide streets.
- **Allow the District of Columbia to determine building height maximums for areas outside of the L'Enfant City through its Comprehensive Plan and zoning processes.** This enables the District to capture future demand for growth with less distortion of development economics and continues Federal oversight via NCPC's review of the District's Comprehensive Plan and the Federal appointees to the District's Zoning Commission.
- **Include viewshed protection to nationally significant structures such as the U.S. Capitol and the Washington Monument as an accompaniment to both draft recommendations.** E.g., local zoning limits height to 90 feet on 16th Street to reinforce views and prominence of the relatively low-scale White House.

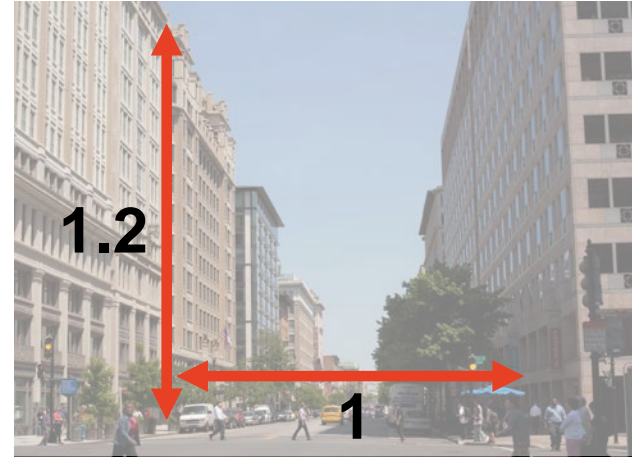
Do we have the capacity to grow?

- Looked at future household and job growth scenarios
- Examined development capacity on existing land
- Concluded that current height limits constrain existing capacity to accommodate this growth over the next three decades and that the District requires additional capacity in the future to meet future demand.

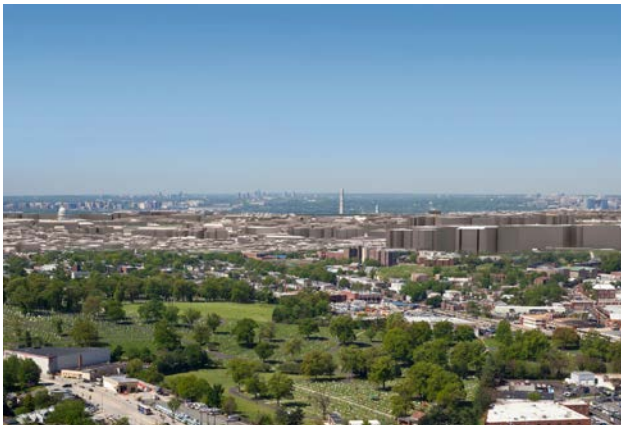
Four Approaches



**Approach 1:
No Change
to the Height Act**



**Approach 2:
Street to Height
Relationship**



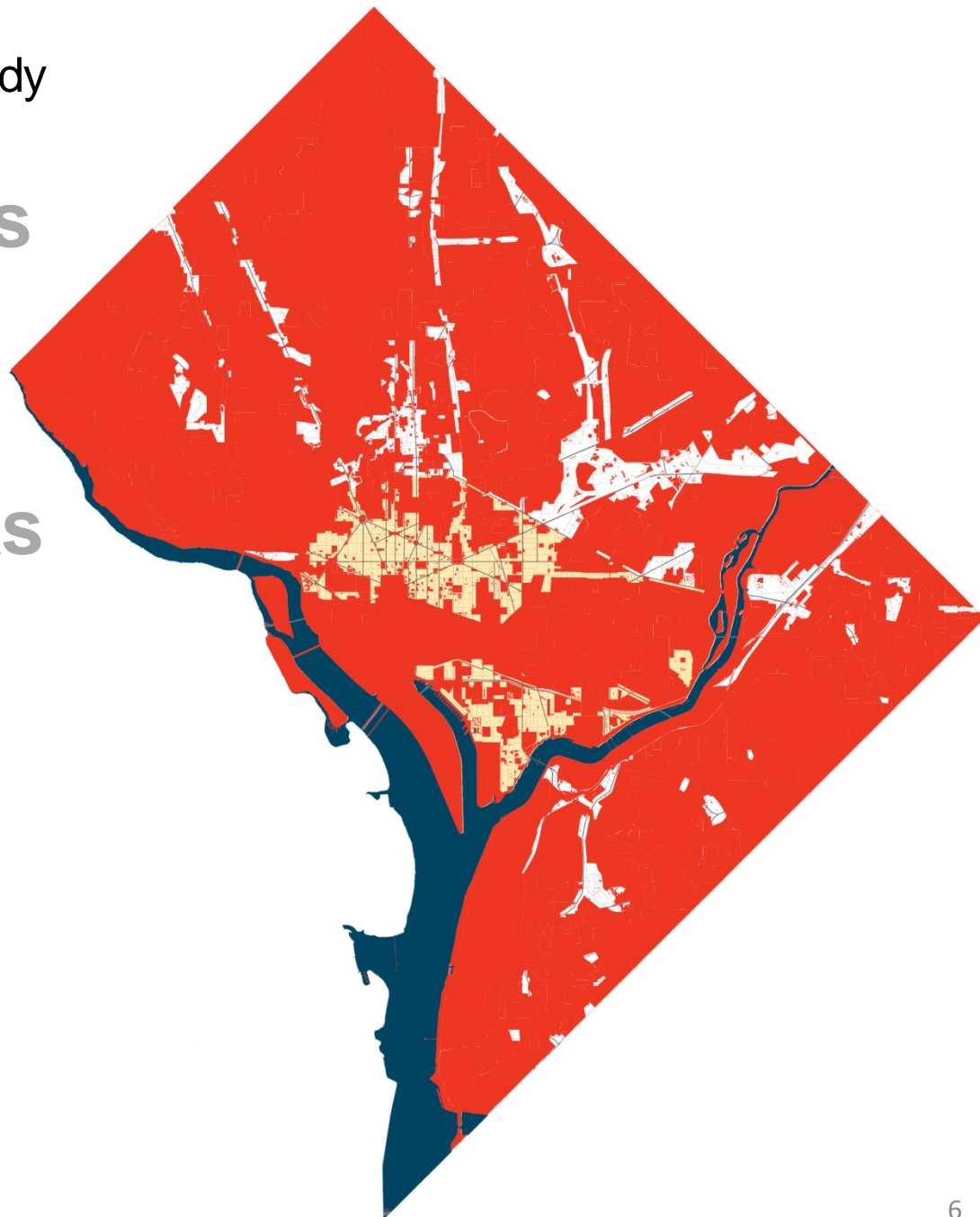
**Approach 3:
Selective Areas**




**Approach 4:
City Wide Increase**

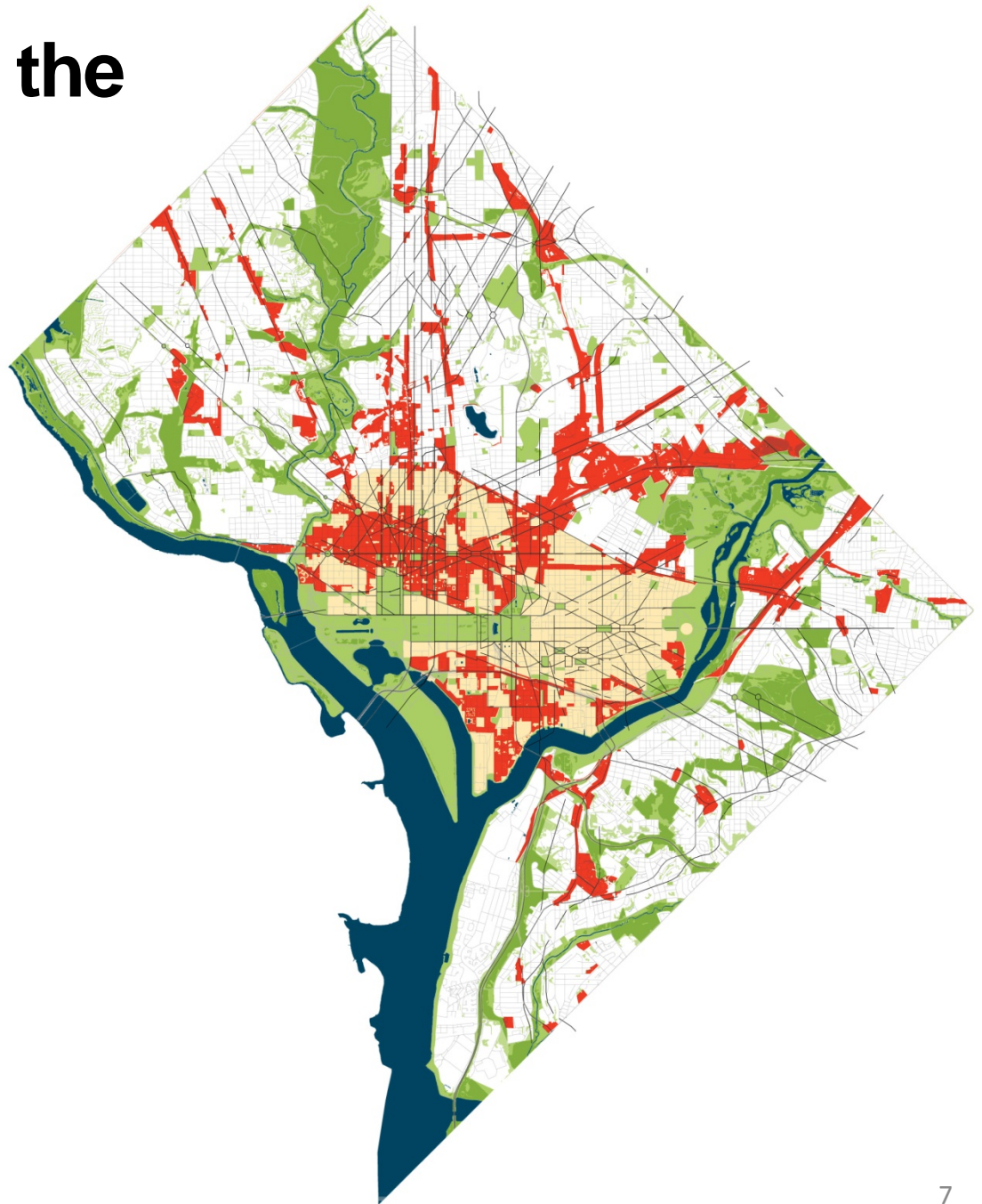
Not included in the Height Study


Federal Properties
Historic Sites
Low Density
Historic Districts
Low Density Areas
Institutional
Public Facilities



 Areas not included
in the Height Study

Areas included in the Modeling Study



 Areas included
in the Height Study

Consider the Visual Impacts at Various Scales

The City



L'Enfant City



L'Enfant Streets




Consider Viewshed Protection

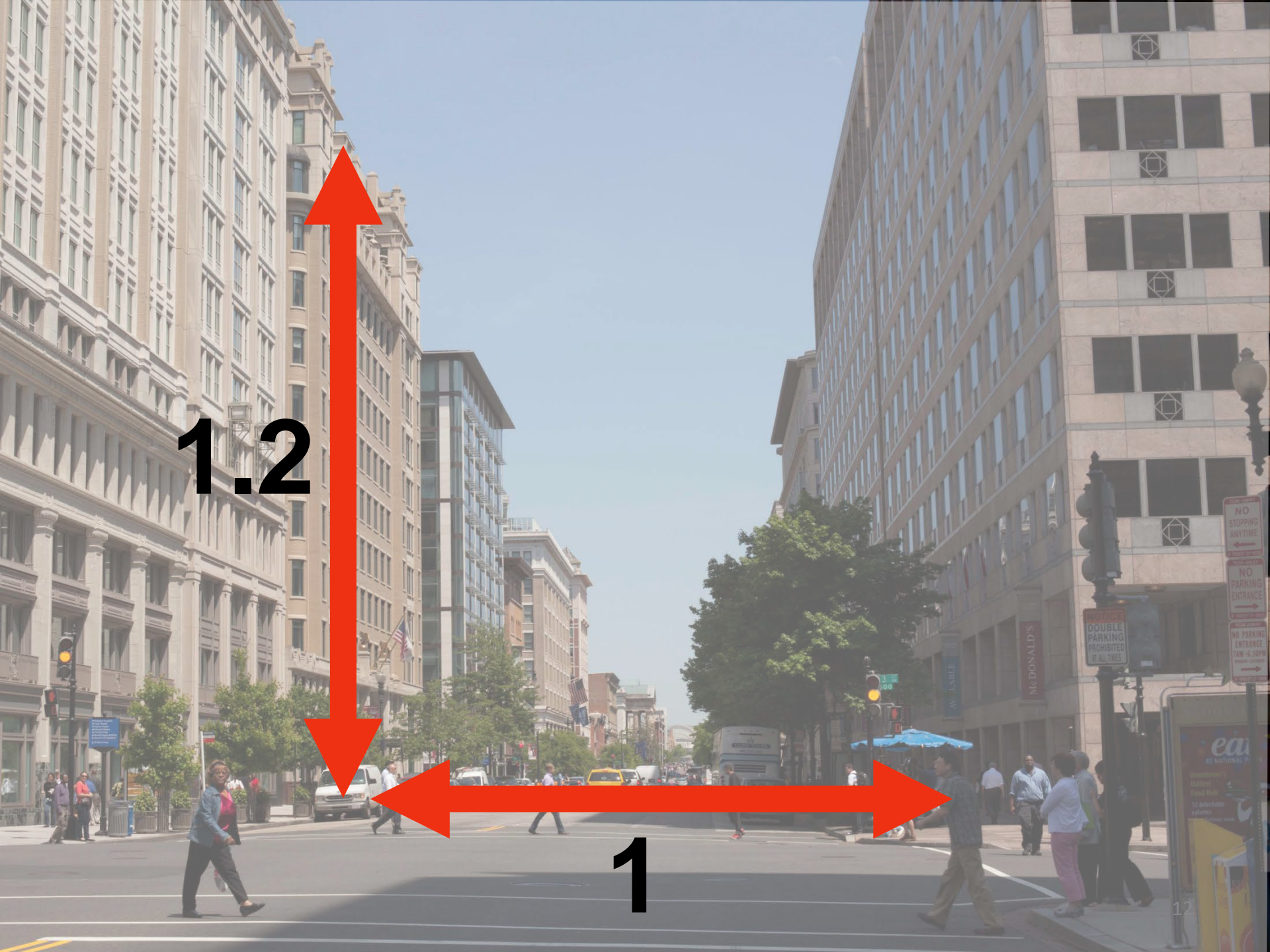


Reinforce the relationship between the street network and the building height





F Street, NW
Street Width = 100'
Building Height = 120'

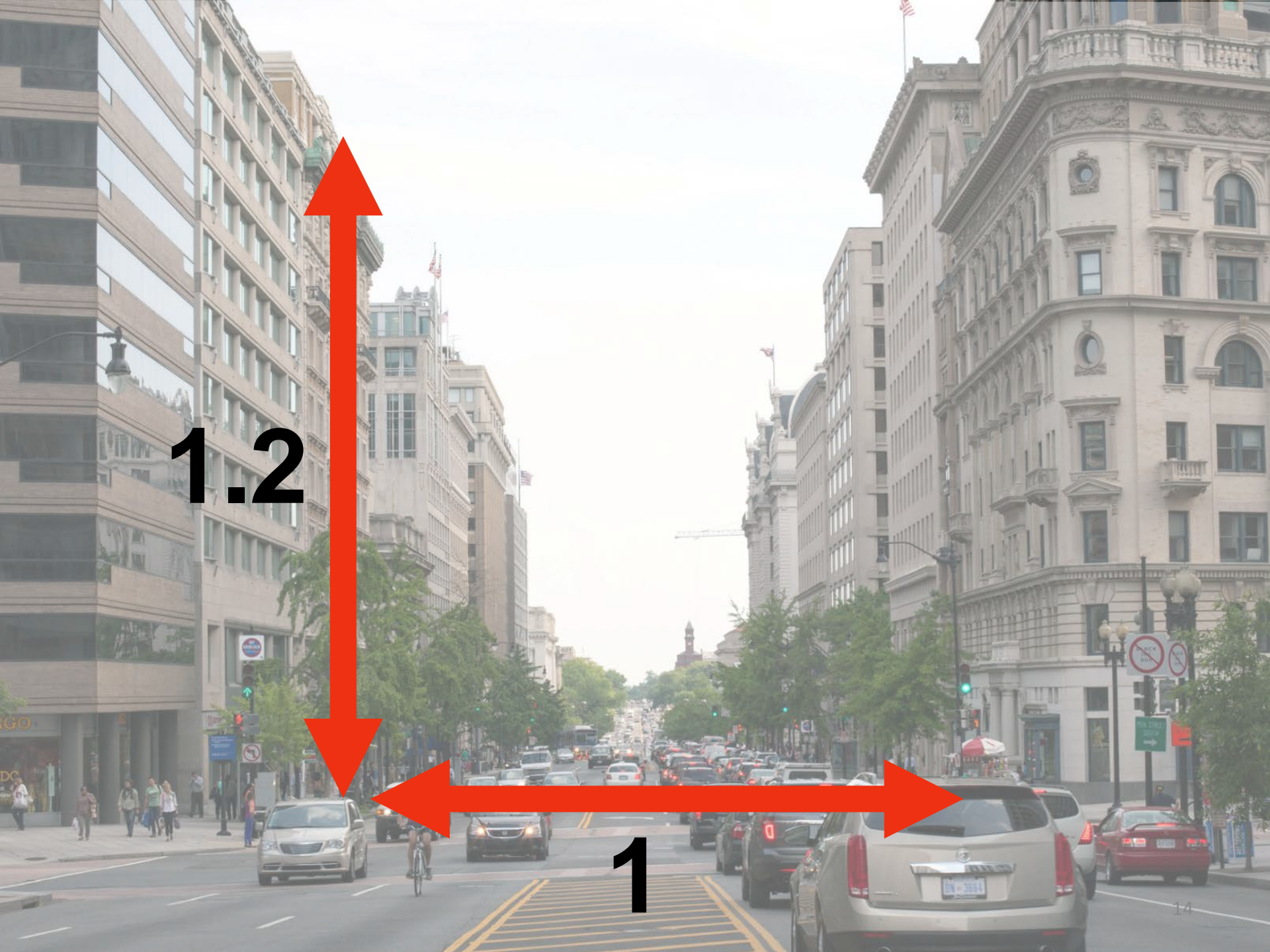


1.2

1



14th Street, NW
Street Width = 110'
Building Height = 130'



1.2

1



North Capitol Street
Street Width = 130'
Building Height = 90'



0.7

1

Approach 2: Building Height / Street Width Relationship

What if the relationship between
height and width increased to

160'

Street Width: 130'

Street to Width ratio = 1 : 1.2



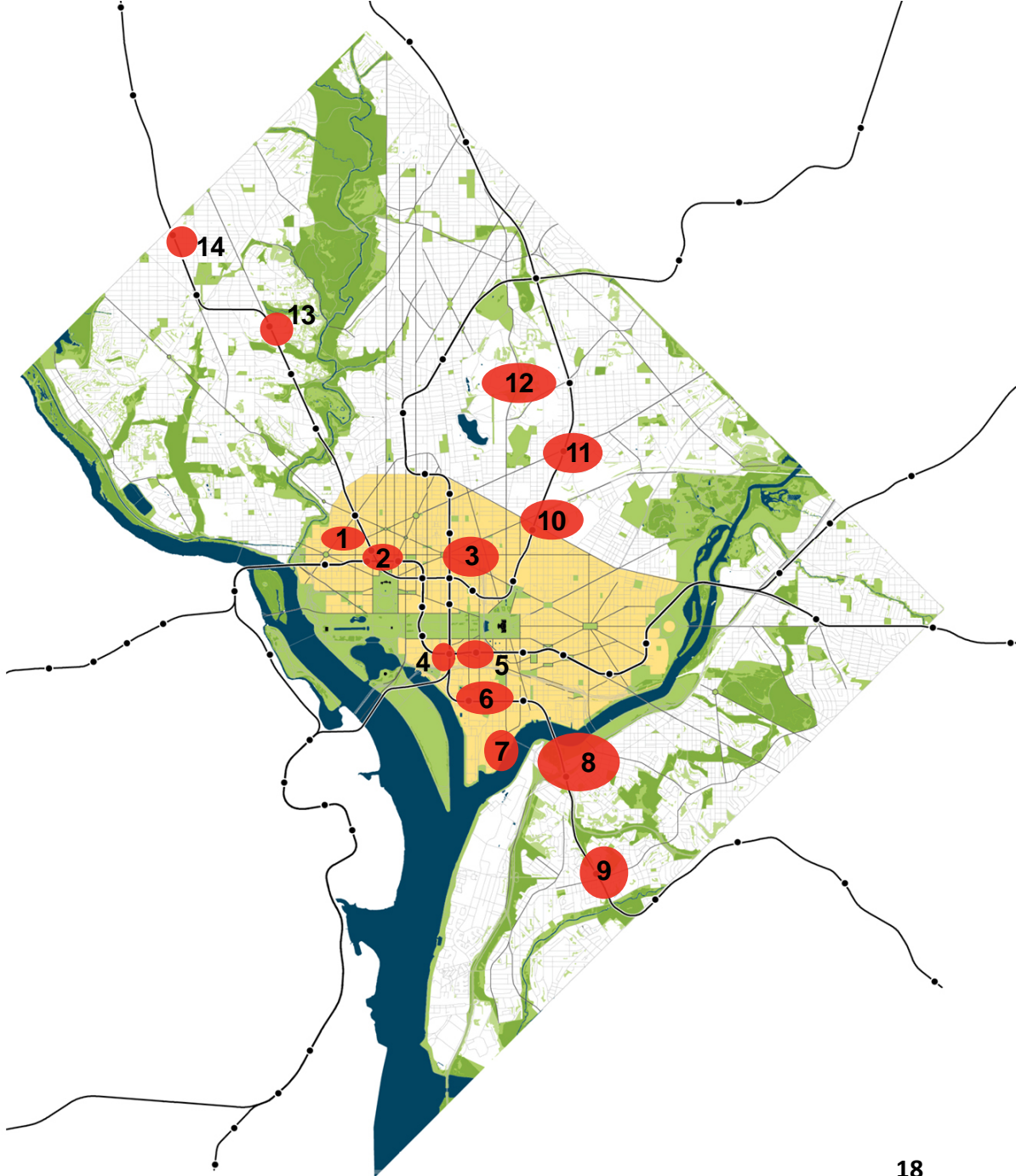
Raise Height Cap in Selected Areas

- **High and medium density**
- **Transit based**
- **Development potential**

Illustrative Areas

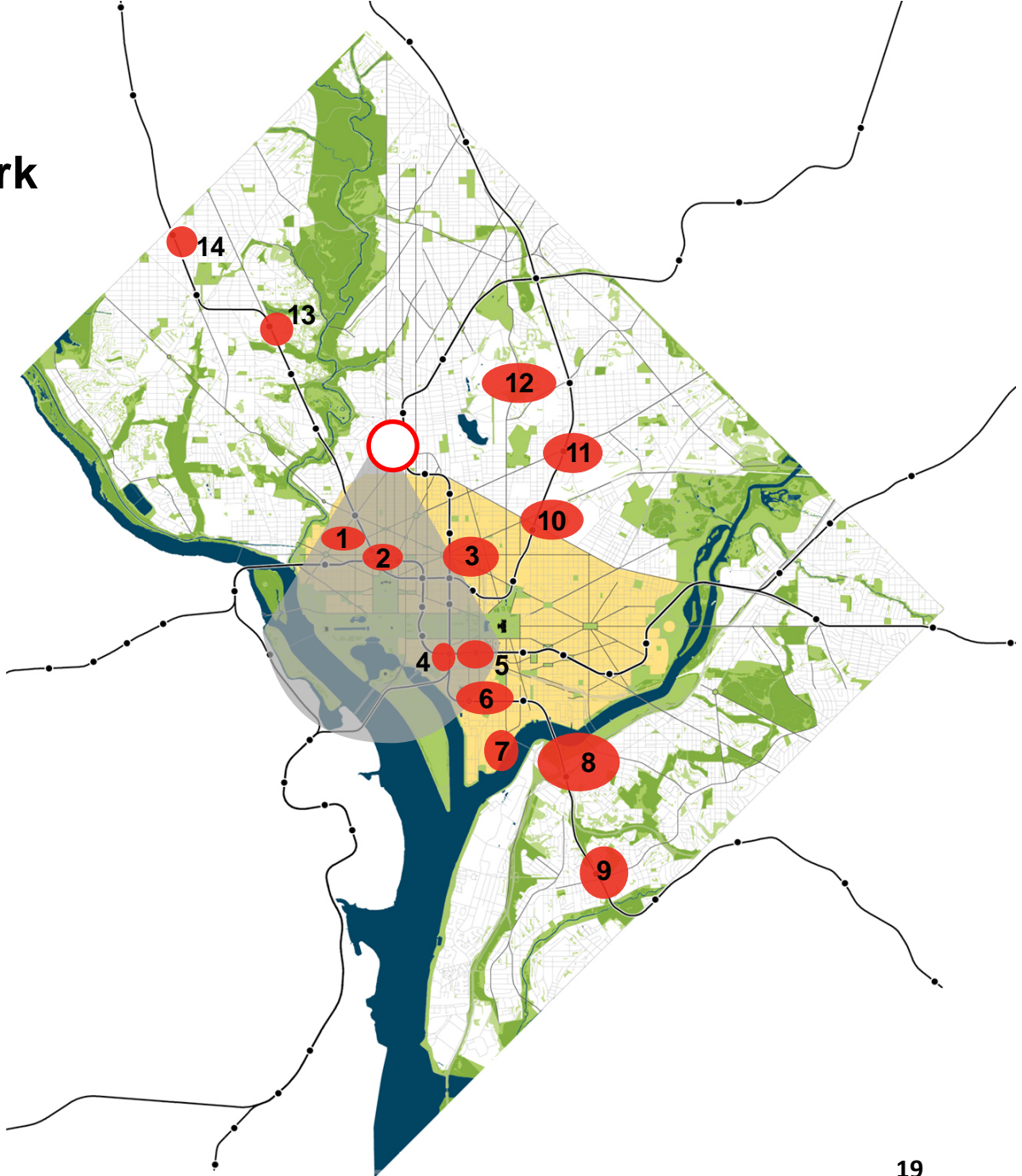


1. M Street and 22nd Street, NW
2. Farragut
3. K Street and 5th Street, NW
4. L'Enfant Plaza
5. Federal Center, SW
6. Waterfront Station
7. Buzzard Point
8. Poplar Point (2 Sites)
9. Congress Heights
10. Florida Avenue Market
11. Rhode Island Avenue, NE
12. Old Soldier's Home
13. Intelstat
14. Friendship Heights



View from Meridian Hill Park

- Illustrative Areas** ●
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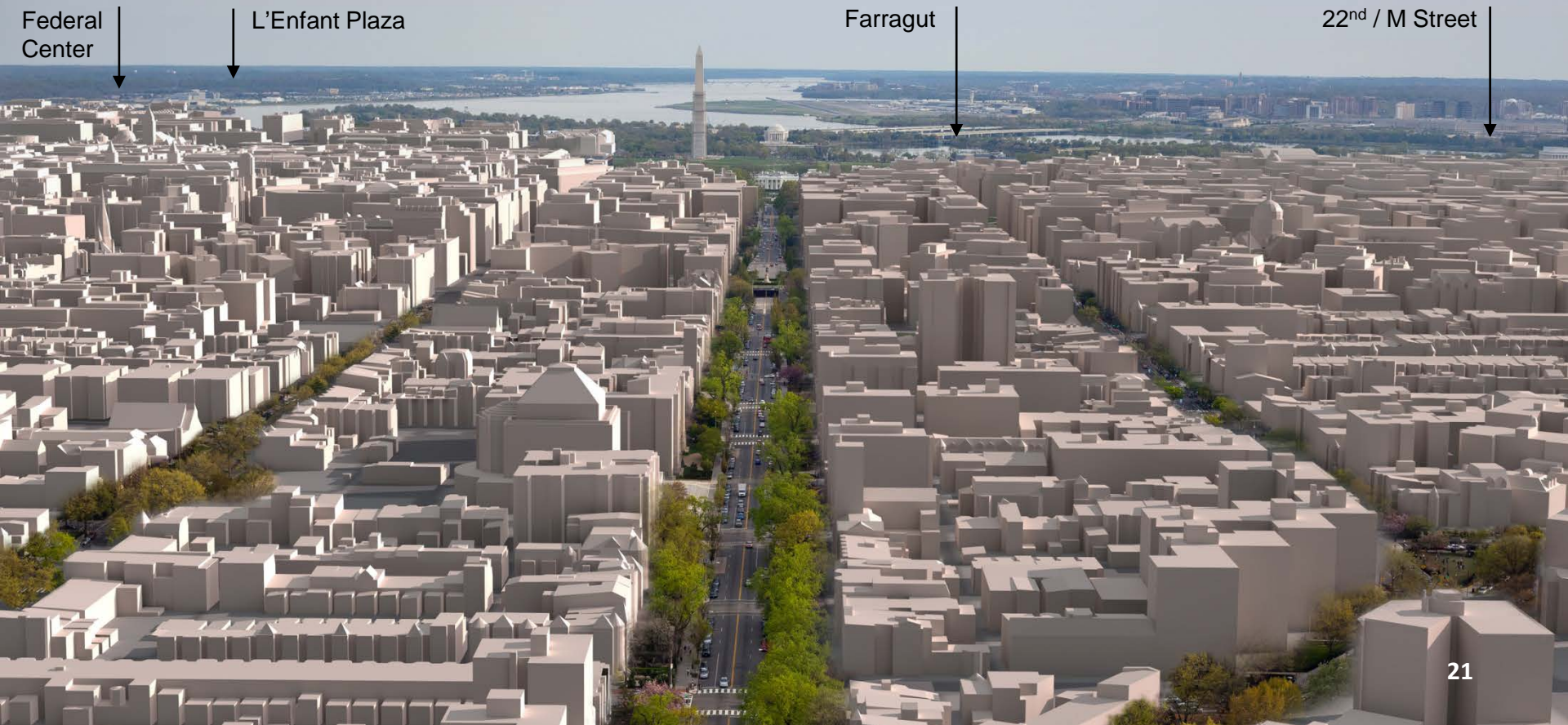
Meridian Hill Park: Existing Conditions



Approach 3C: Illustrative Clusters

**Meridian Hill Park:
What if the building height
in the clusters increased to**

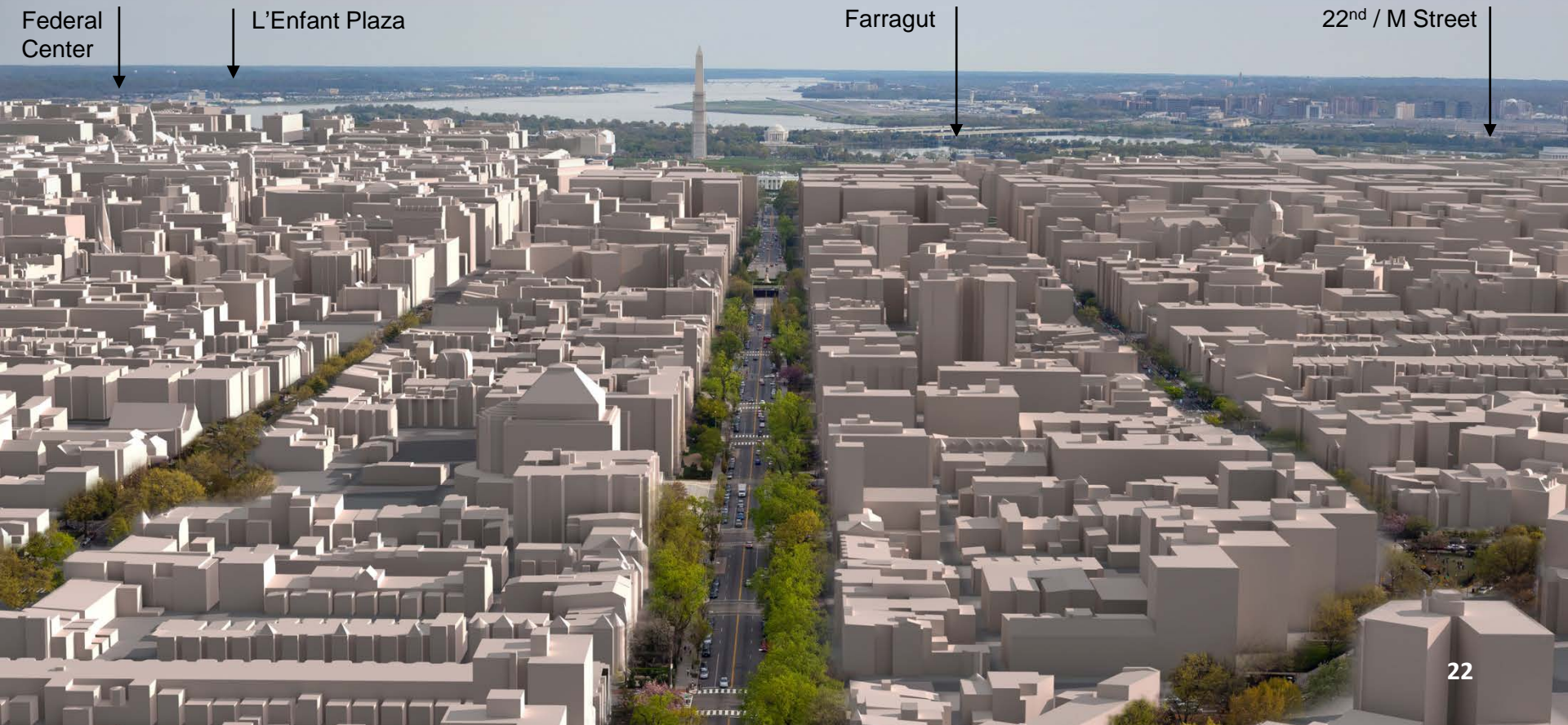
130'



Approach 3C: Illustrative Clusters

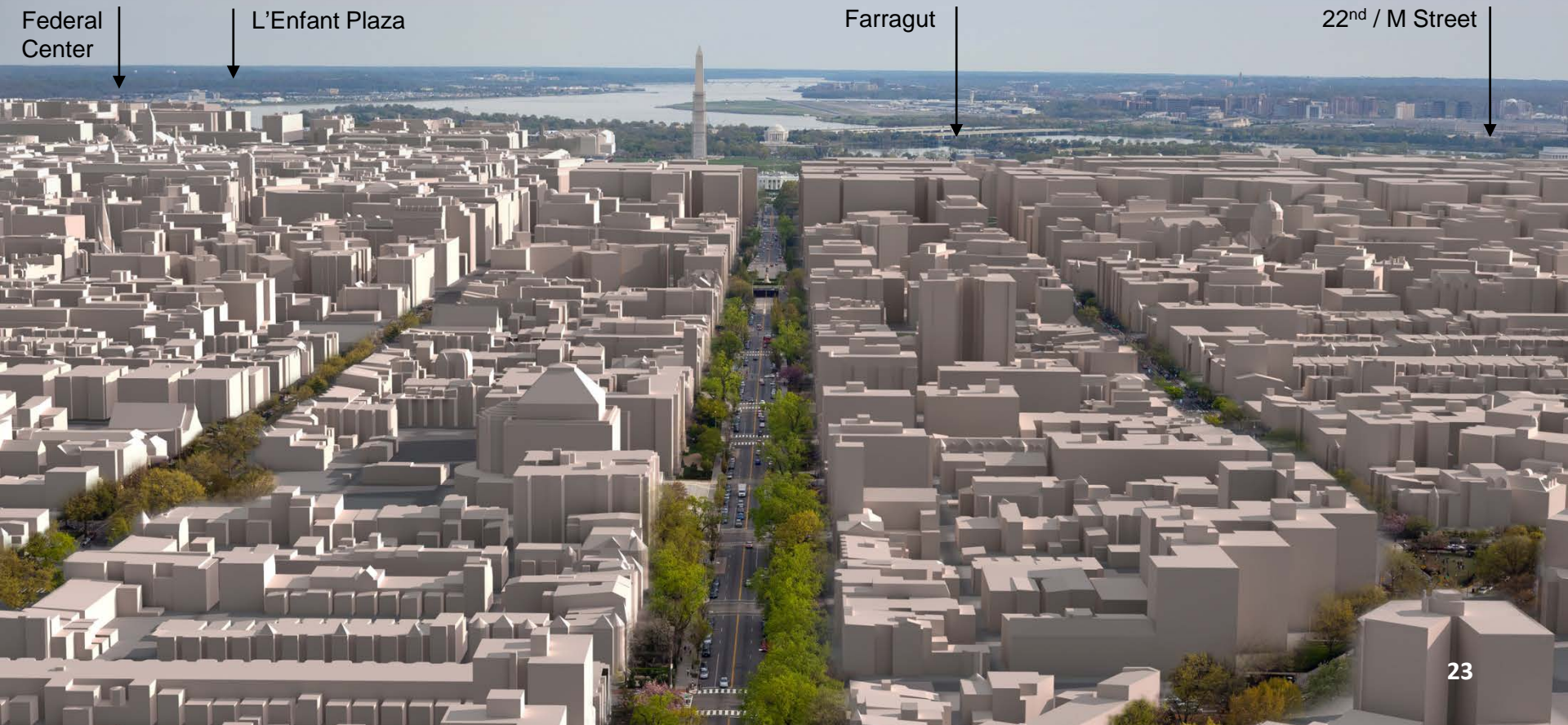
**Meridian Hill Park:
What if the building height
in the clusters increased to**

160'



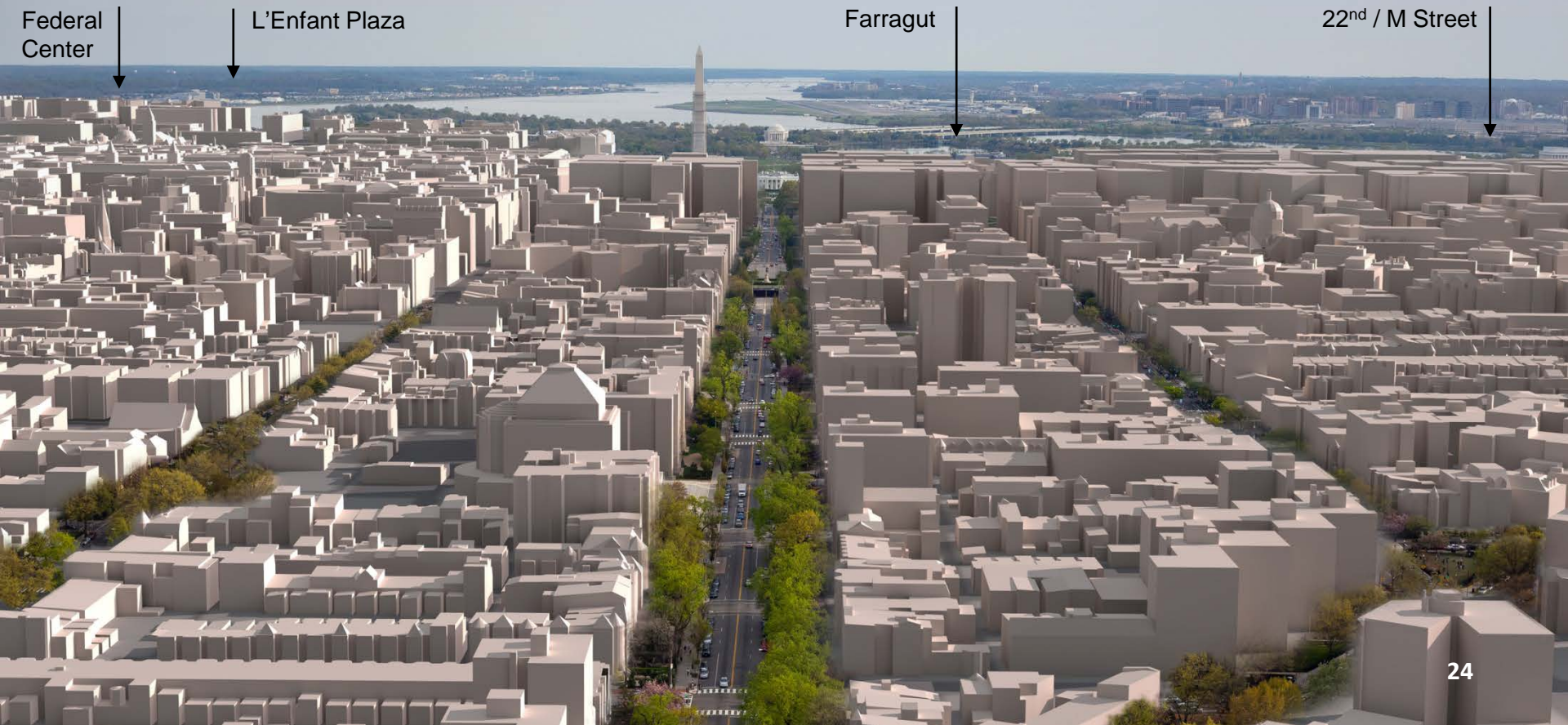
Approach 3C: Illustrative Clusters

Meridian Hill Park: What if the building height in the clusters increased to **180'**



Approach 3C: Illustrative Clusters

Meridian Hill Park: What if the building height in the clusters increased to **200'**



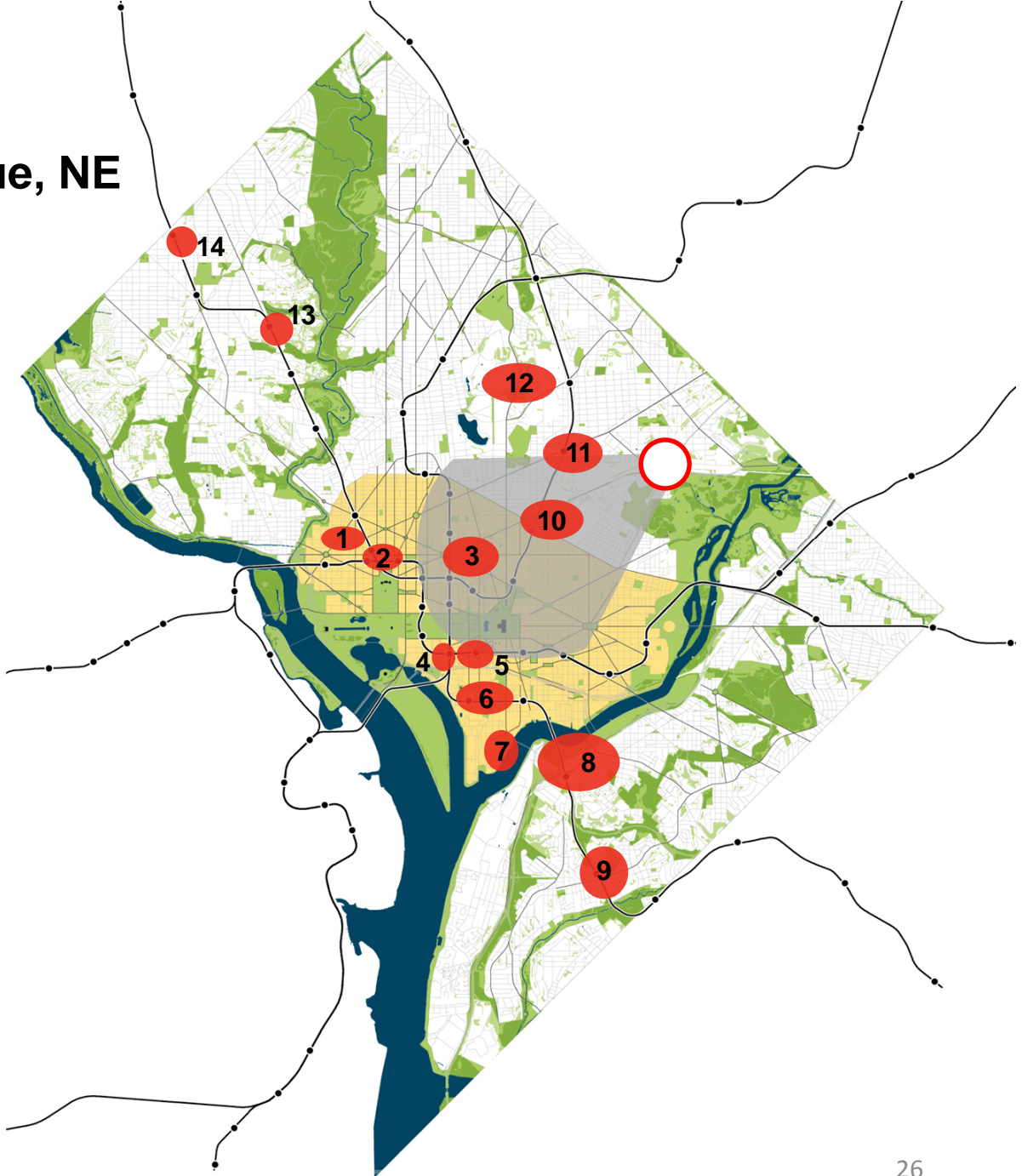
Approach 3C: Illustrative Clusters

View from New York Avenue, NE



View from New York Avenue, NE

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New York Avenue, NE Existing Conditions

U.S. Capitol Building



Washington Monument



Approach 3C: Illustrative Clusters

New York Avenue, NE
What if the building height
in the clusters increased to
130'

Rhode Island Avenue, NE

Florida Avenue Market



Approach 3C: Illustrative Clusters

New York Avenue, NE
What if the building height
in the clusters increased to
160'

Rhode Island Avenue, NE

Florida Avenue Market



Approach 3C: Illustrative Clusters

New York Avenue, NE
What if the building height
in the clusters increased to
180'

Rhode Island Avenue, NE

Florida Avenue Market



Approach 3C: Illustrative Clusters

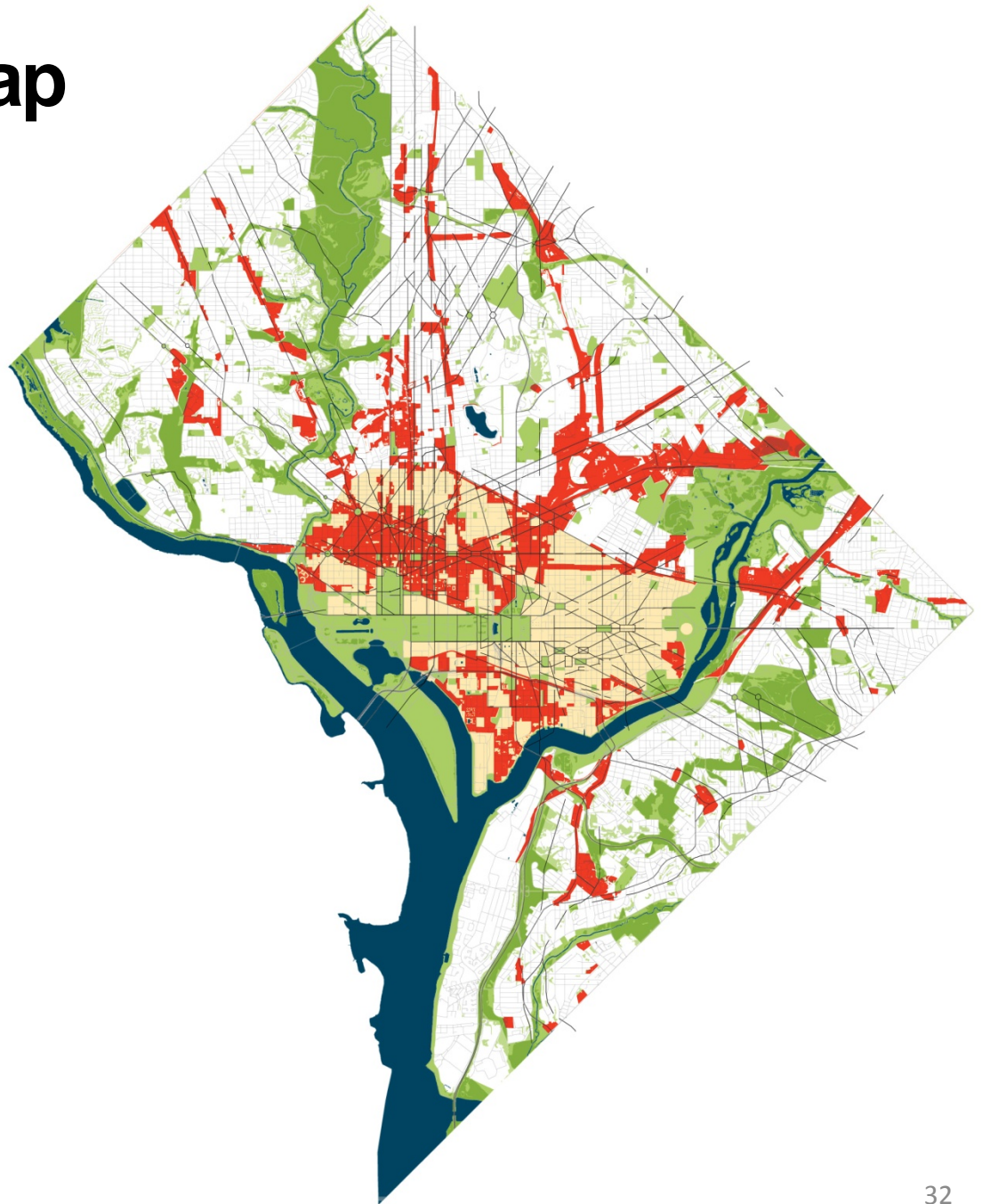
New York Avenue, NE
What if the building height
in the clusters increased to
200' / 225'


Rhode Island Avenue, NE

Florida Avenue Market



Change Height Cap City Wide



 Areas included
in the Height Study

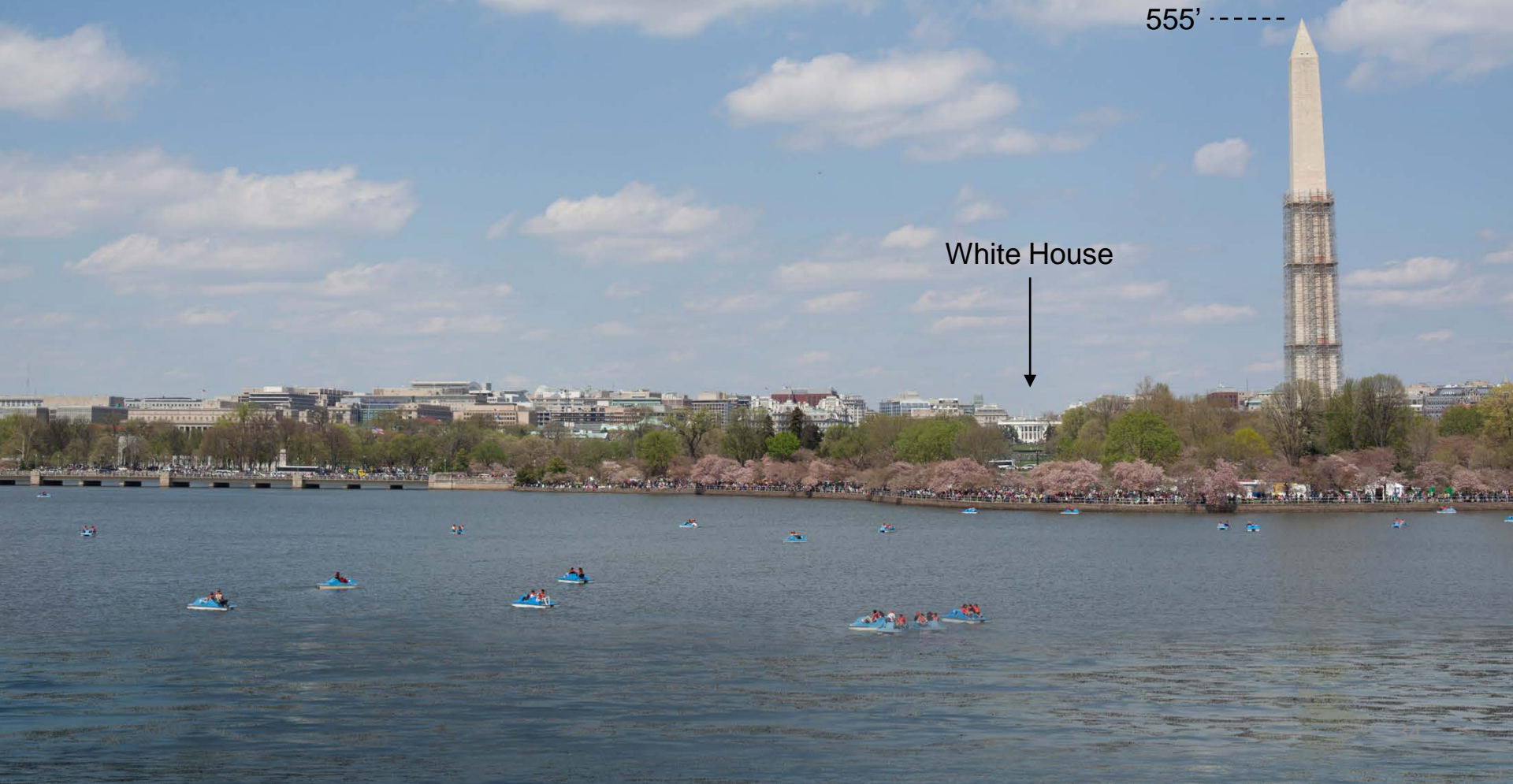
Approach 4: Uniform City Wide Height Cap

View from Jefferson Memorial



Approach 4: Uniform City Wide Height Cap

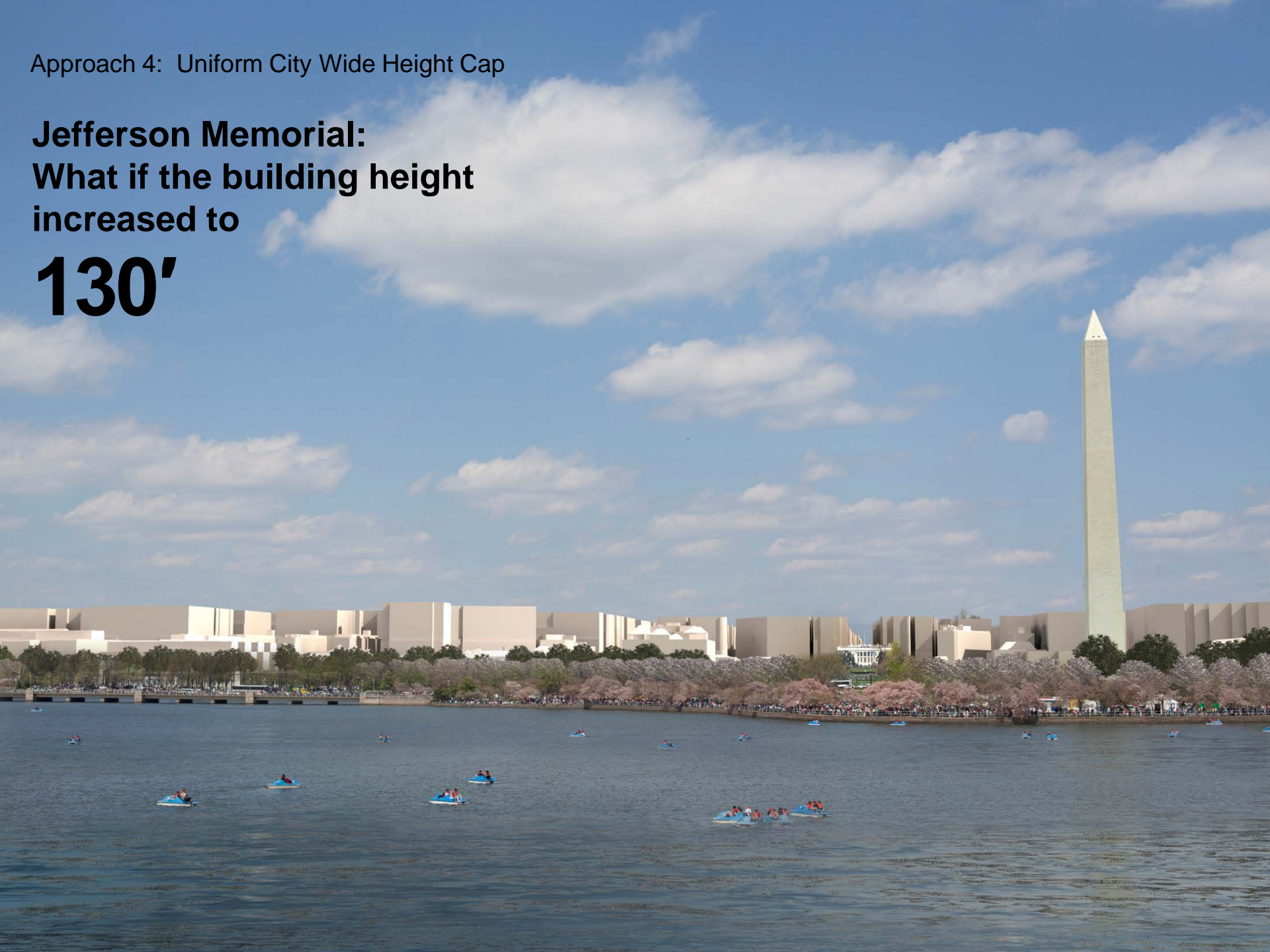
Jefferson Memorial: Existing Conditions



Approach 4: Uniform City Wide Height Cap

**Jefferson Memorial:
What if the building height
increased to**

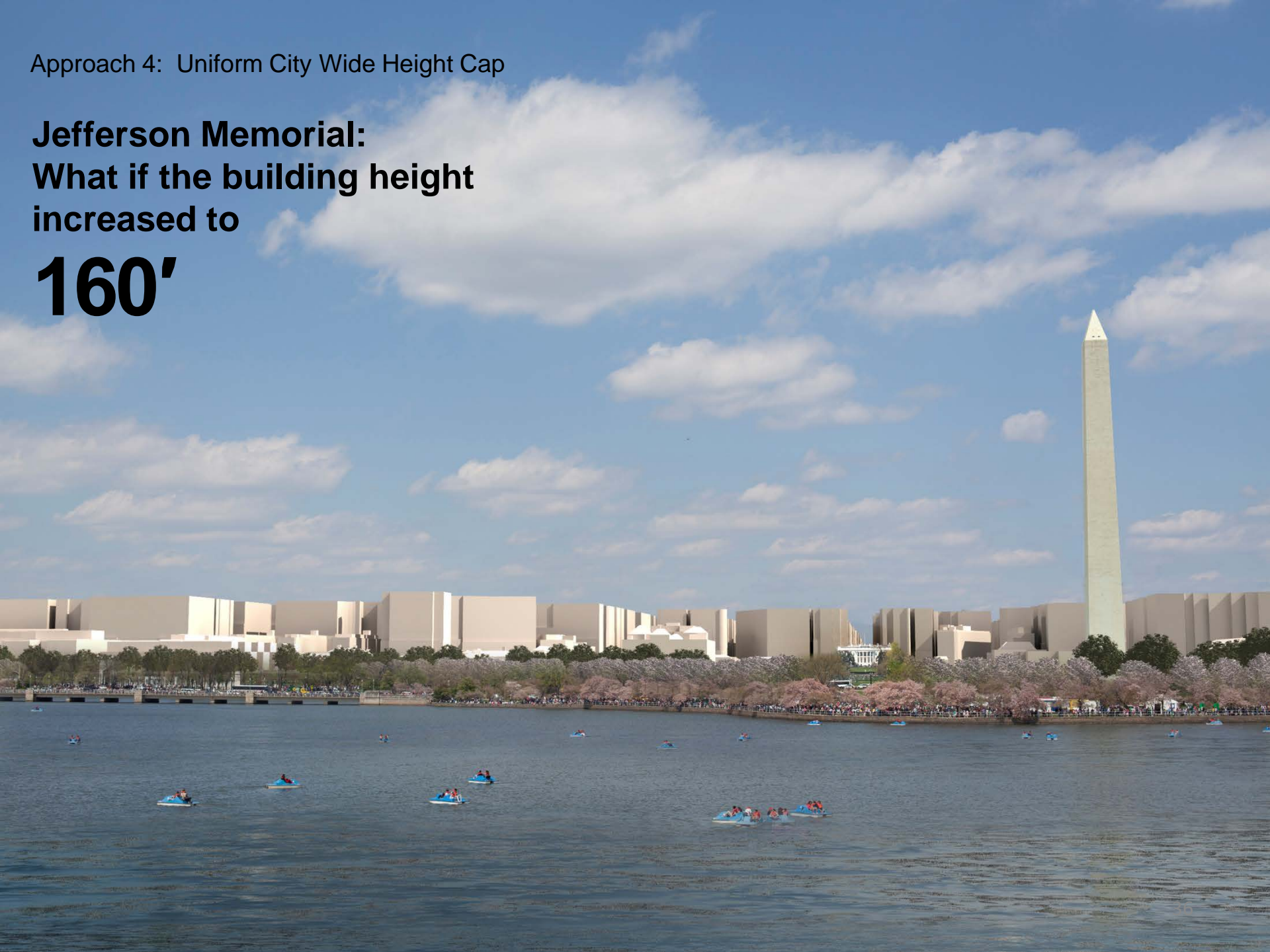
130'



Approach 4: Uniform City Wide Height Cap

**Jefferson Memorial:
What if the building height
increased to**

160'



Approach 4: Uniform City Wide Height Cap

**Jefferson Memorial:
What if the building height
increased to**

180'



Approach 4: Uniform City Wide Height Cap

**Jefferson Memorial:
What if the building height
increased to
200'**



How will federal interests be protected outside the L'Enfant City?

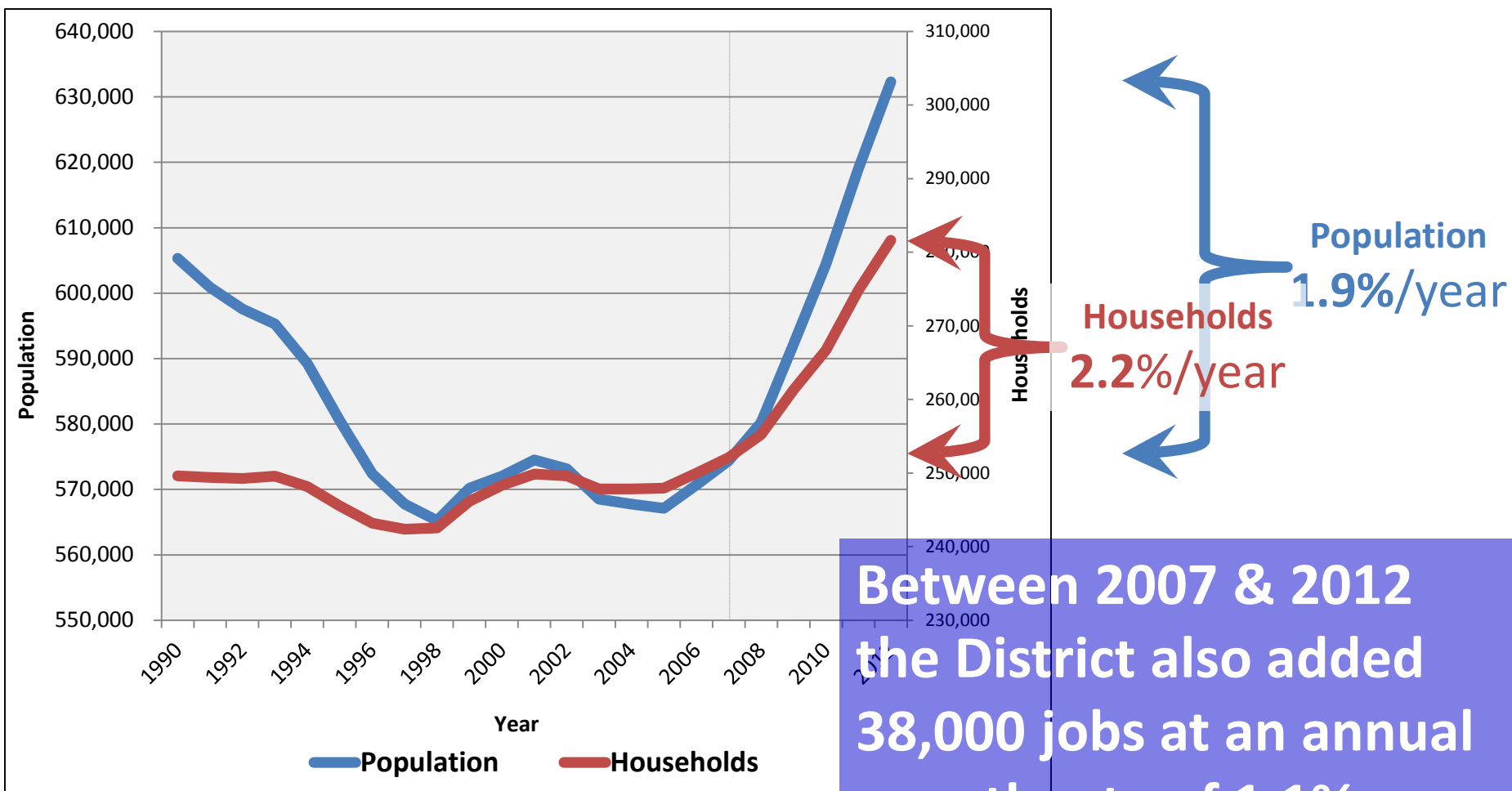
- Comprehensive Plan Review and Approval
 - NCPC
 - Council of the District of Columbia
 - U.S. Congress
- Zoning Commission
 - 40% of members federally appointed

The District's Analysis:

CAPACITY AND GROWTH

The District is Growing

Household and Population Growth: 1990 - 2012



Source: US Census, DC Office of Planning.

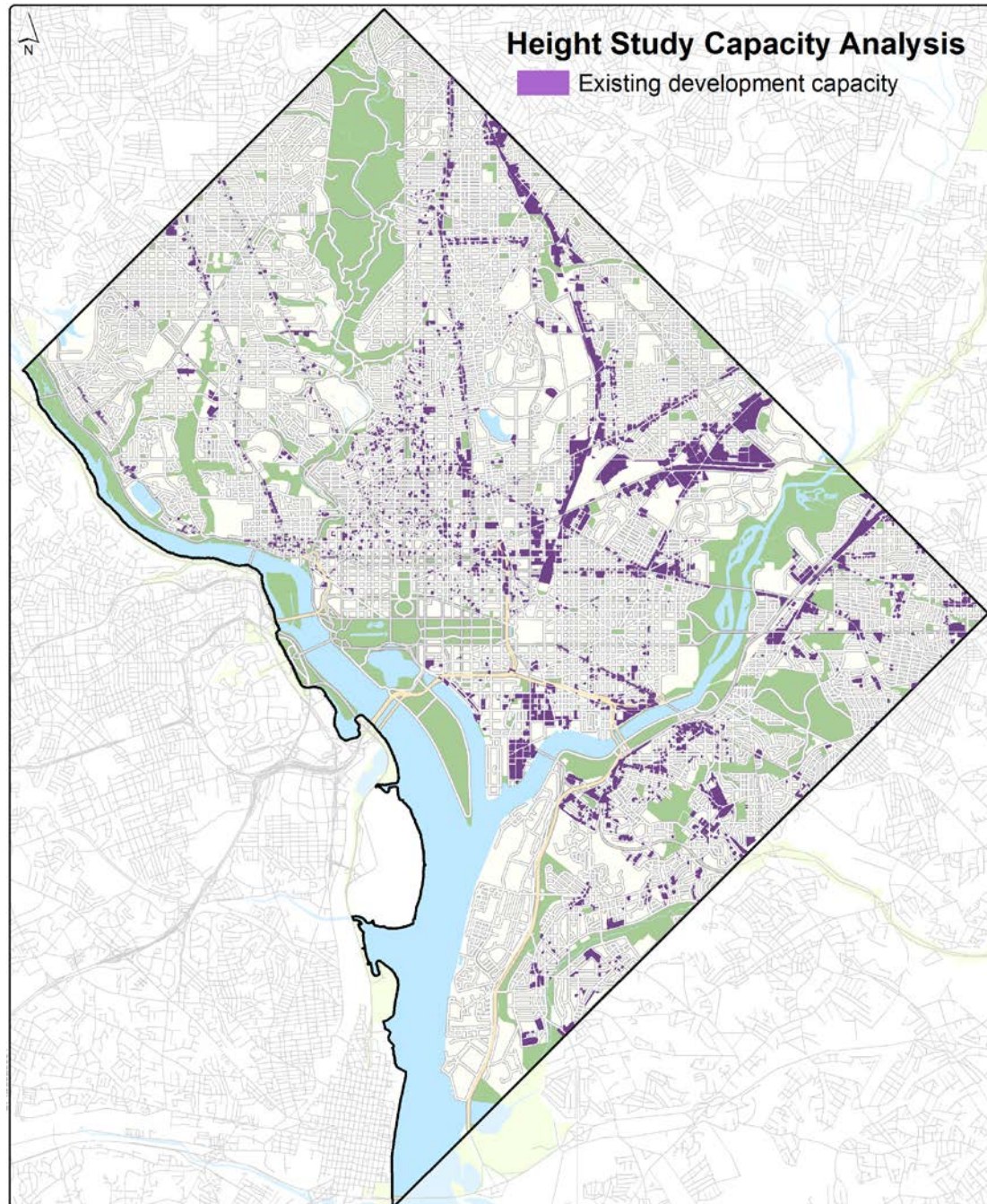
Between 2007 & 2012
the District also added
38,000 jobs at an annual
growth rate of 1.1%

Limited Land for Growth

Only 4.9%* of the total land area has significant capacity for growth.

Opportunity for job growth is even more constrained.

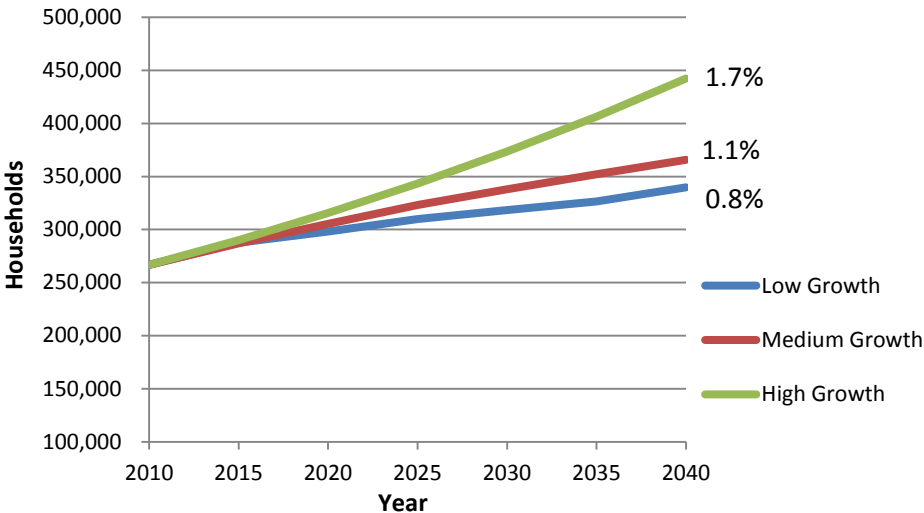
* Private non-institutional lands with greater than 70% capacity under current zoning.



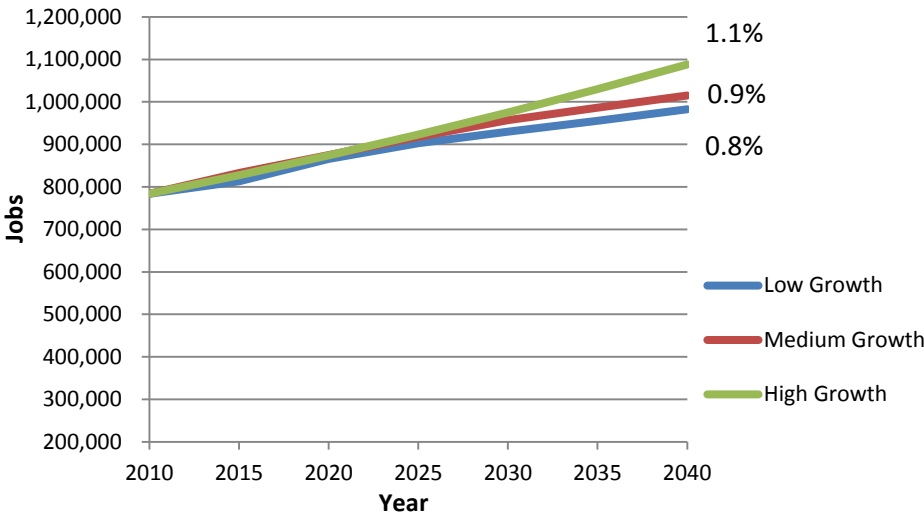
Source: DC Office of Planning.

Growth Scenarios & Demand for Space

Forecast of Households: 2010 - 2040



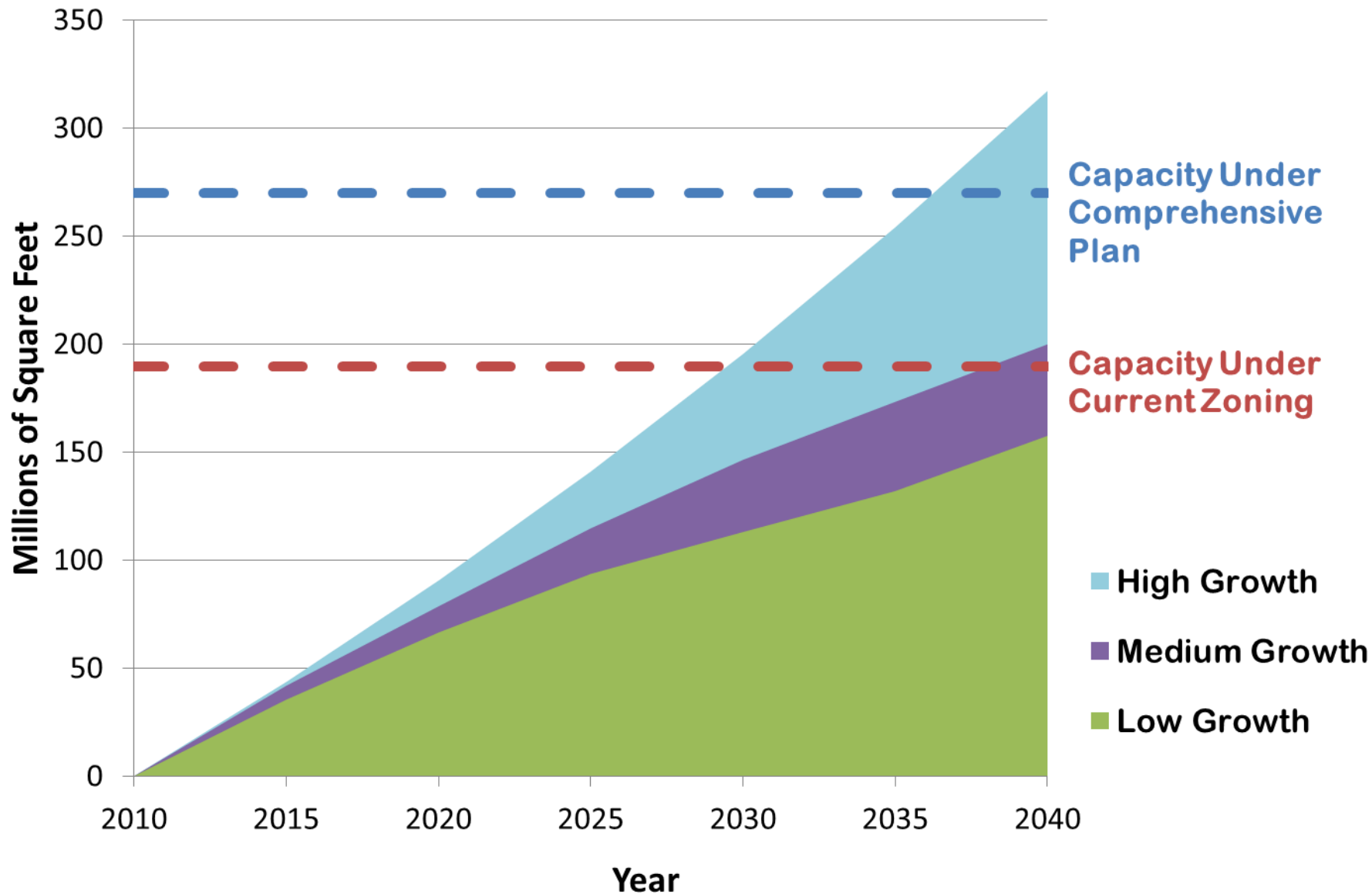
Forecast of Jobs: 2010 - 2040



Developable Space Demand by Growth Forecast (2010 to 2040)

| Growth Forecast | Household Demand | Jobs Demand | Total Demand |
|-----------------|------------------|-------------|--------------|
| Low Growth | 87,840,000 | 69,720,000 | 157,560,000 |
| Medium Growth | 118,920,000 | 81,025,000 | 199,945,000 |
| High Growth | 210,600,000 | 106,505,000 | 317,105,000 |
| | in square feet | | |

Square Feet of Demand and Achievable Capacity: 2010 - 2040



Scarcity Close to the Center Distorts Prices

DC has the highest prices in the Region



Courtesy of Popville.com

Office developments
sell for over \$900 per
square foot

New residential
apartments are trading
at over \$600,000 per
unit



Courtesy of Westdev.com

Development Capacity

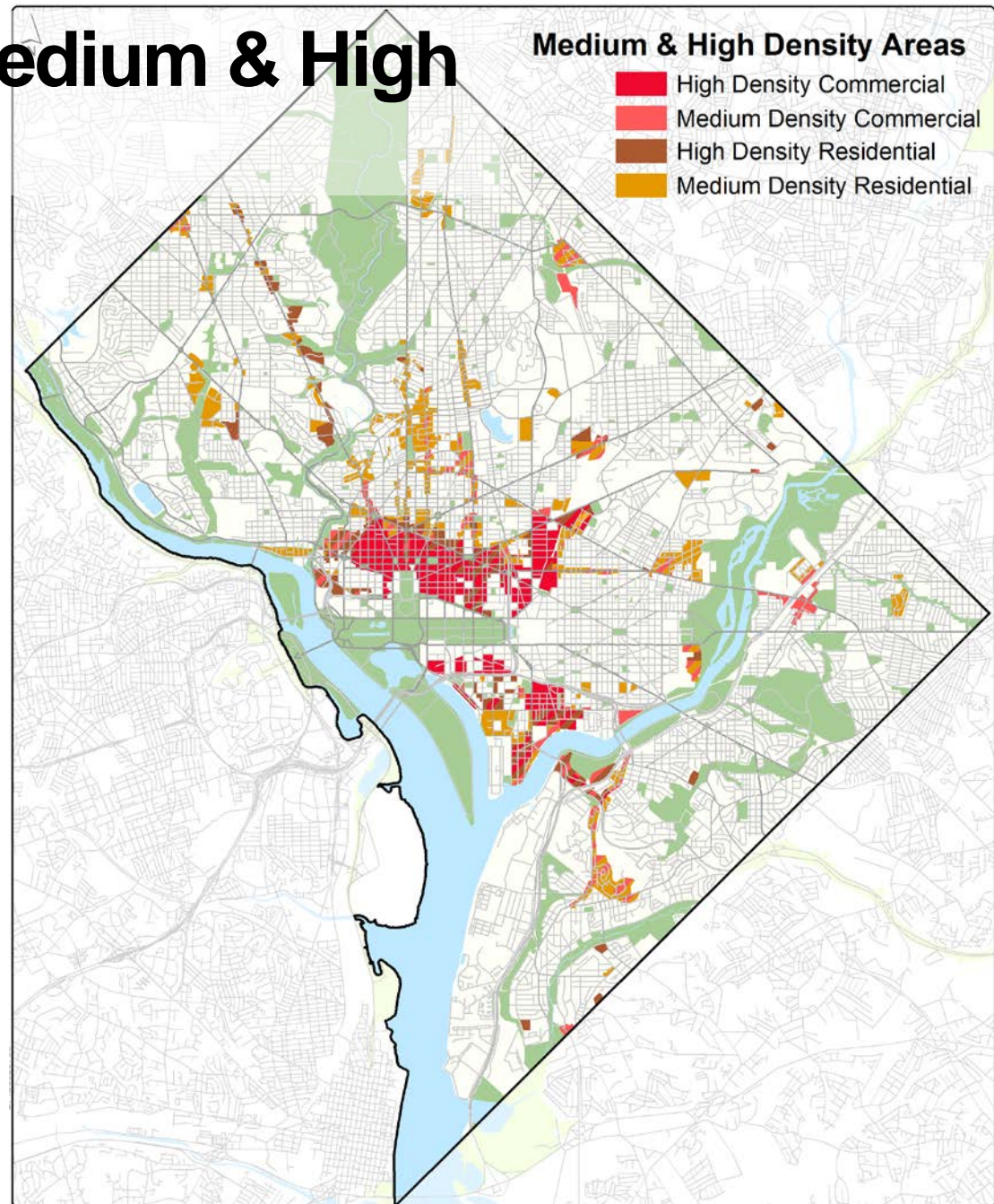
Amending the Height Act could allow significant capacity and enable the city to respond to demand pressures.

| Modeling Study: Approaches to Manage Height ** | Base Zoning (SF) | Gross Development Capacity (SF) | | | | Net Development Capacity (SF) | | | |
|---|------------------------------|---------------------------------|--------|--------|---------------------|-------------------------------|--------|--------|---------------------|
| (Medium & High Density Areas ONLY) | (no change to FAR or Height) | | | | | | | | |
| 1A: Status Quo--no change to Height Act (includes full build out at 130 feet) | 136.9 | 221.8 | | | | 84.9 | | | |
| 2: Reinforce relationship between building height & street width (Max Height = 1.25 * ROW) | 136.9 | 246.0 | | | | 109.1 | | | |
| Modeled height increments | | 130 ft | 160 ft | 180 ft | 200 ft/ 225 ft** | 130 ft | 160 ft | 180 ft | 200 ft/ 225 ft** |
| Approach 3: Raise height in targeted areas | | | | | | | | | |
| 3A: Raise height only in L'Enfant City | 78.1 | 119.6 | 158.0 | 182.2 | 208.0 | 41.5 | 79.9 | 104.1 | 129.9 |
| 3B: Raise height only in topo bowl | 11.8 | 26.2 | 34.2 | 39.1 | 49.9 | 14.4 | 22.4 | 27.3 | 38.1 |
| 3C: Raise height only in illustrative areas (Montgomery Park, etc.) | 49.4 | 67.9 | 87.7 | 100.1 | 118.7 | 18.5 | 38.3 | 50.7 | 69.3 |
| 4: Raise uniform height citywide | 136.9 | 321.9 | 419.6 | 485.6 | 607.4 | 185.0 | 282.7 | 348.7 | 470.5 |
| 5: New Approach - Raise uniform height outside L'Enfant City*** | 58.8 | 202.3 | 261.6 | 303.4 | 399.4 | 143.5 | 202.8 | 244.6 | 340.6 |
| | | Values in million square feet | | | | | | | |
| <p>Notes: Modeling Study used 200 feet maximum height within L'Enfant City; 225 feet maximum outside L'Enfant City.</p> <p>** Note: All Analyses in Modeling Study include ONLY medium and high density commercial and residential areas as defined by the Comp Plan, except Approach 3C, which also includes certain Federal areas.</p> <p>***Note: New Approach 5 was not modeled directly as a component of the Modeling Study. The calculations are derived by subtracting approach 3A (Raise height only in L'Enfant City) from Approach 4 (Raise height citywide).</p> <p>General Note: This analysis presents the max (100%) development capacity.</p> | | | | | | | | | |

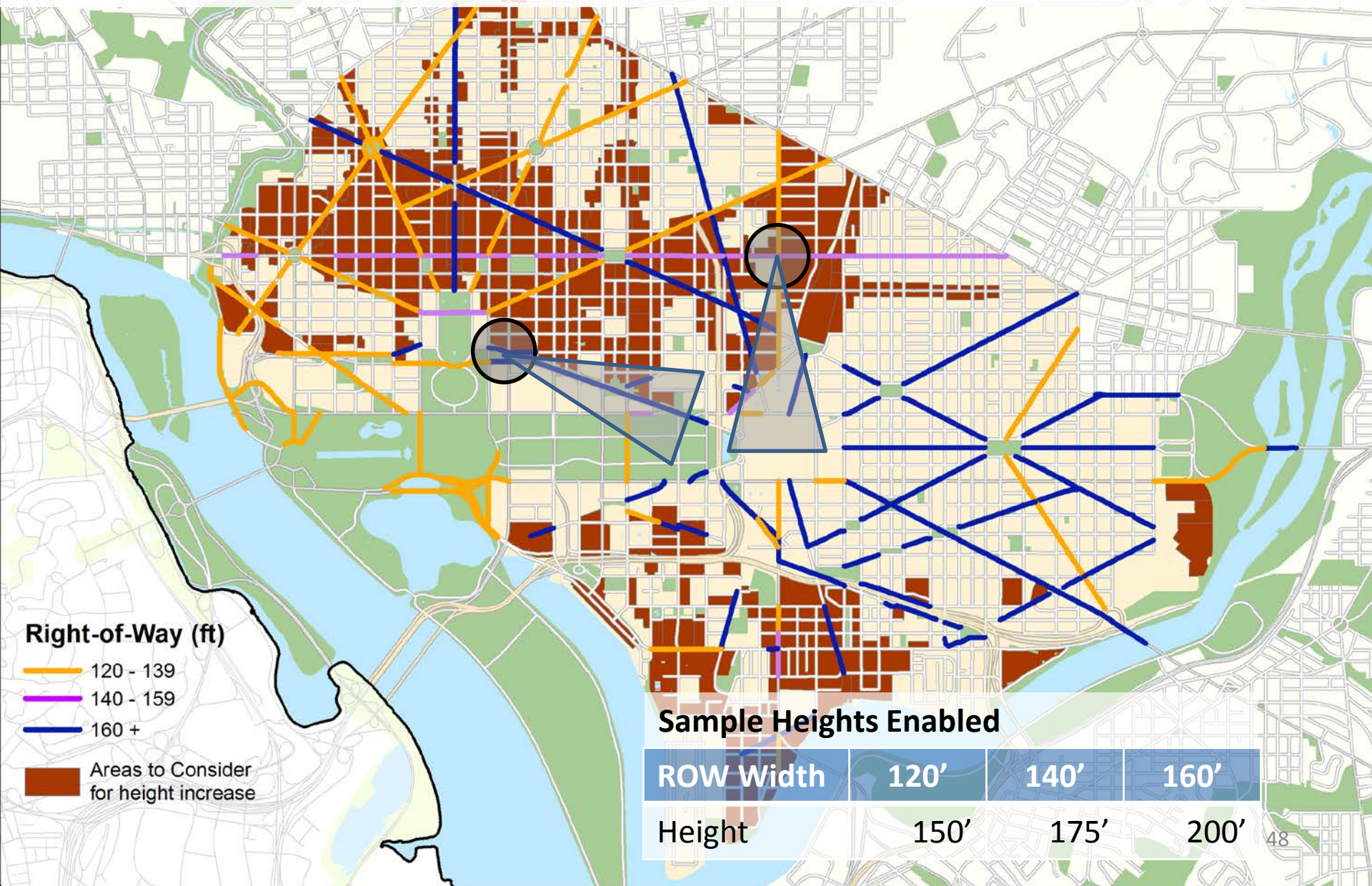
Looking to DC's Medium & High Density Areas

Reinforcing the relationship between building height & street width city wide (Approach 2) creates the net capacity for upwards of 109 million square feet of capacity in just the District's medium to high density areas.

Actual capacity would depend on future planning efforts to determine locations, appropriate heights and square footage.



Right-of-Way to Height Ratio of 1:1.25



Approach 2: Building Height / Street Width Relationship
Pennsylvania Avenue, NW



What if the relationship between
height and width increased to

200'

ROW Width: 160'

ROW to Height ratio = 1 : 1.25

Approach 2: Building Height / Street Width Relationship
North Capitol



What if the relationship between
height and width increased to

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ROW Width: 130'

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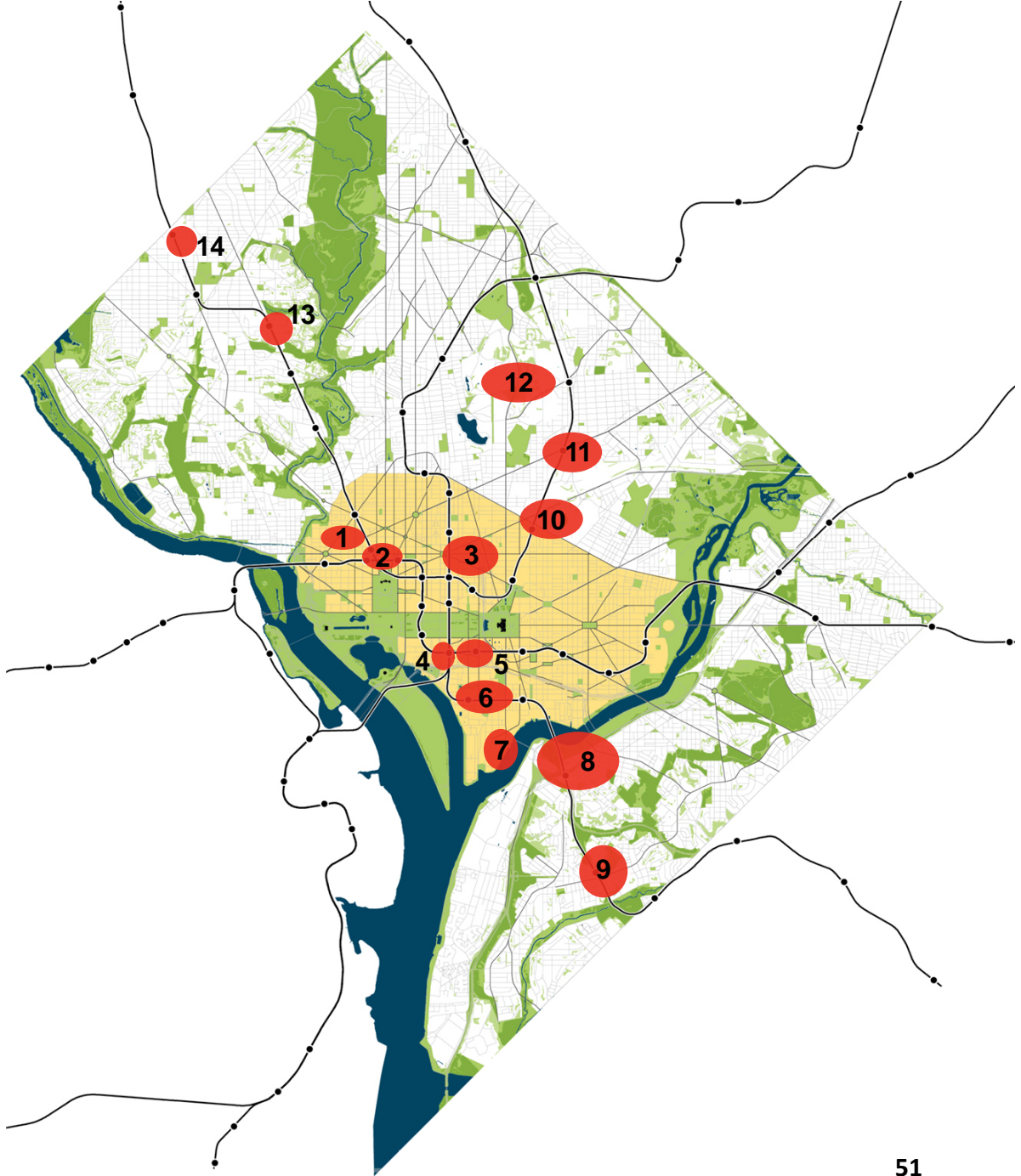
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- **Allow the District of Columbia to determine building height maximums for areas outside of the L'Enfant City through its Comprehensive Plan and zoning processes.** This enables the District to capture future demand for growth with less distortion of development economics and continues Federal oversight via NCPC's review of the District's Comprehensive Plan and the Federal appointees to the District's Zoning Commission.
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