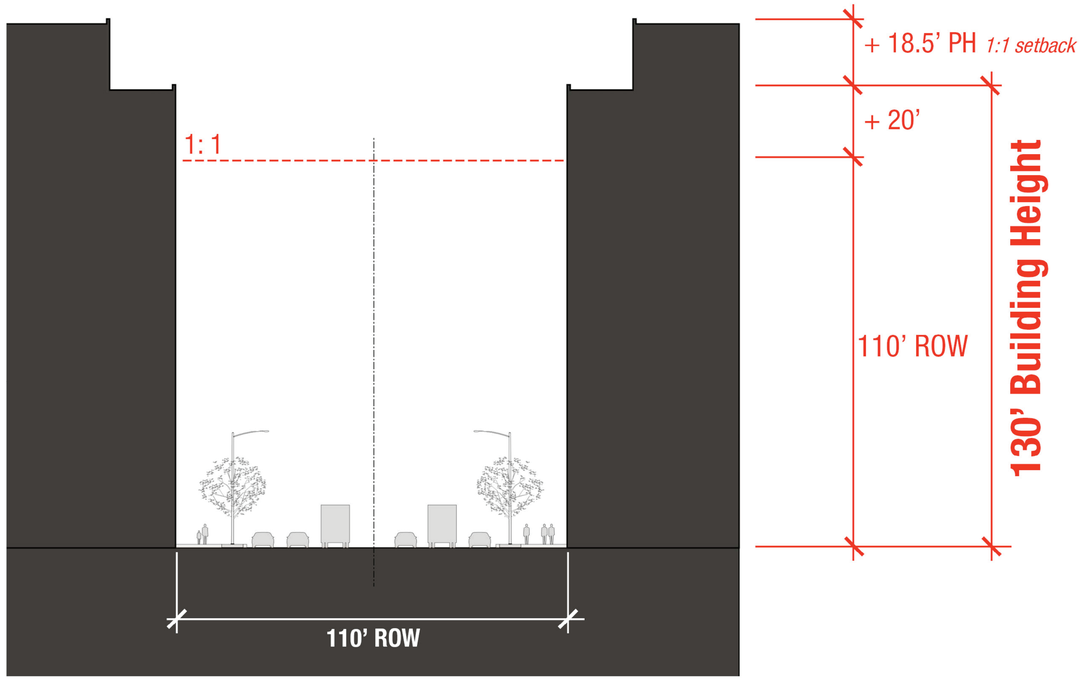
# What is the Height Act?

**The Height of Buildings Act of 1910**

**Residential Streets (80′ - 160′ ROW)**
- **Width of the street = building height**
- **Maximum height = 90′**

**Commercial Streets (90′ - 160′ ROW)**
- **Width of the street = building height + 20′**
- **Maximum height = 130′**

**Pennsylvania Avenue (160′ ROW)**
- **Maximum height = 160′**




| | |
|---|---|
| 1894 | **164-foot Cairo Building constructed (1615 Q Street, NW)** |
| 1899 | **Congress passed the first law regulating the District's building height** |
| 1910 | **First law amended into the present-day Federal Height Act** |
| 1912-1961 | **Congress has modified the Height Act seven times, four of which allowed more height for individual buildings** |





# Overview of Study

NCPC and DCOP are jointly conducting the Height Master Plan study at the request of Congress.

## The study will address:

The impact of strategic changes to the federal Height of Buildings Act of 1910.

The extent to which the Height Act continues to serve the interests of both federal and District governments.

## The study will not include:

DC zoning issues or proposed changes to zoning or the District's Comprehensive Plan

Detailed environmental or infrastructure analysis

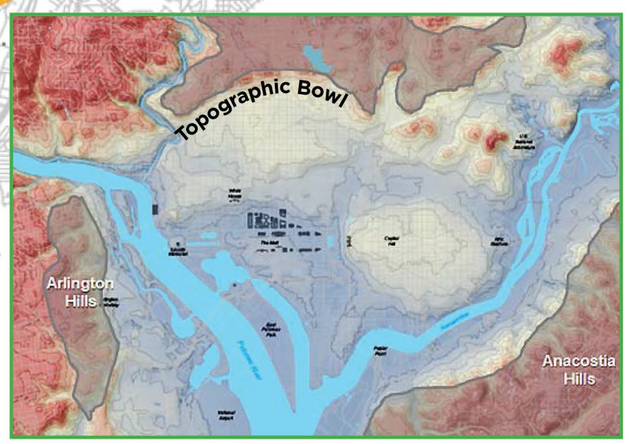
# Height Master Plan Study

**Phase 1** Overview, discussion of study principles and issues shaping federal and local interests, case studies. Public meetings in May-June 2013.

**Phase 2** Modeling studies and planning analysis. Identification of opportunity areas for strategic changes to the Height Act. Public meetings in July-August 2013.

**Phase 3** Draft recommendations. Public meetings and hearing in Fall 2013.

Recommendations transmitted to Congress in Fall 2013.


# Phase 2 Modeling Study

**Panoramic views:** The larger context

**Skyline studies:**

Impacts on Washington, DC's skyline character

L'Enfant City

Topographic Bowl
(Beyond Florida Avenue and along the edges of the escarpment which reflect steep grade change outside of the L'Enfant City)

Illustrative sites across the District

**Street-level corridor studies:**

Impacts on pedestrian experience and quality of public spaces

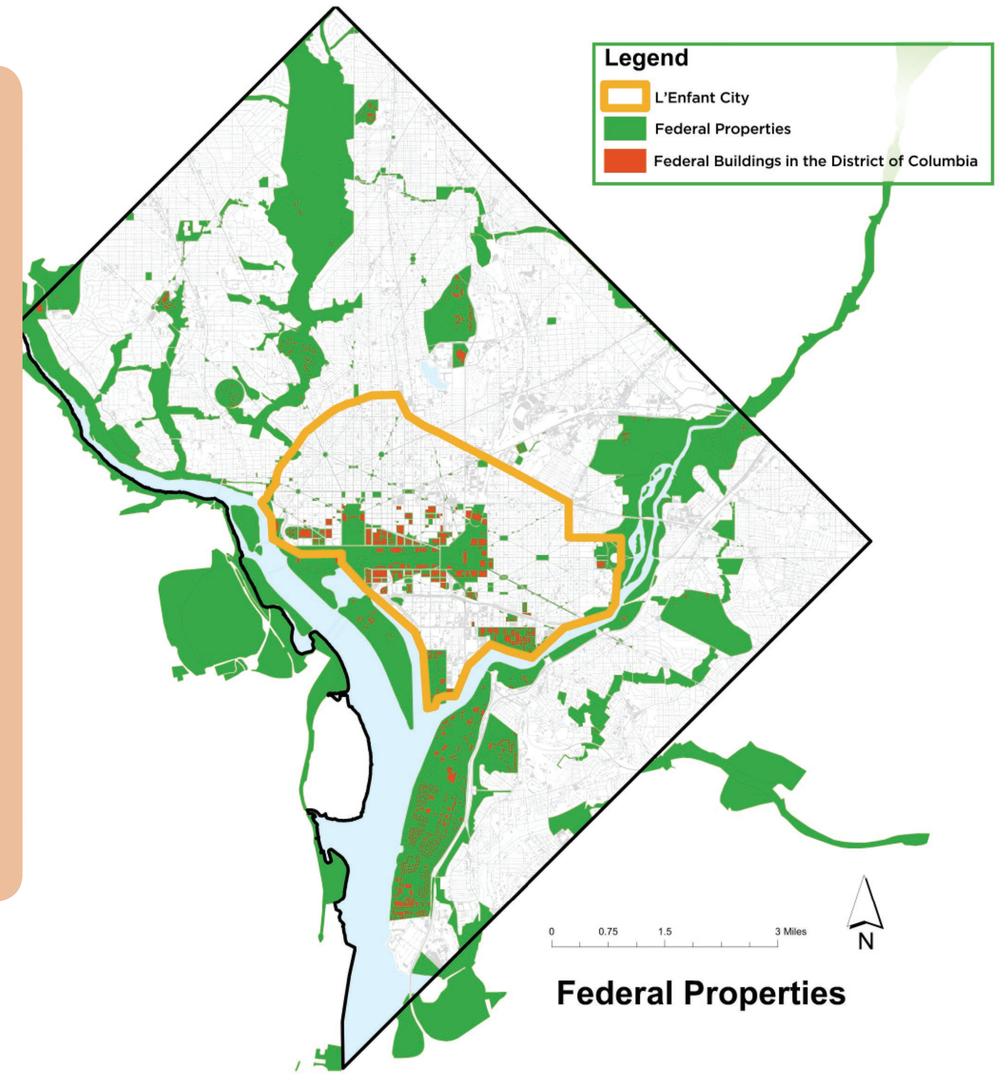
# How will we evaluate potential changes to the Height Act?

## CORE PRINCIPLES:

Ensure the prominence of federal landmarks and monuments by preserving views to and from their settings

Maintain the horizontality of the monumental city skyline

Minimize negative impacts to nationally significant historic resources, including the L'Enfant Plan




## Consider impacts to:

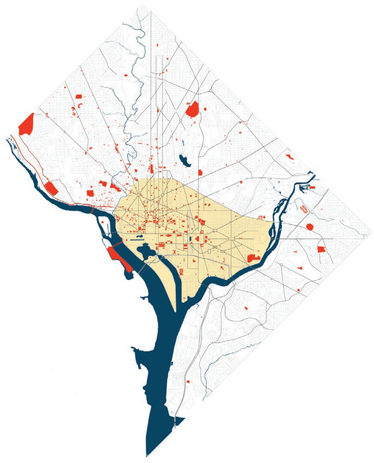
Capital city image

Federal properties and operations

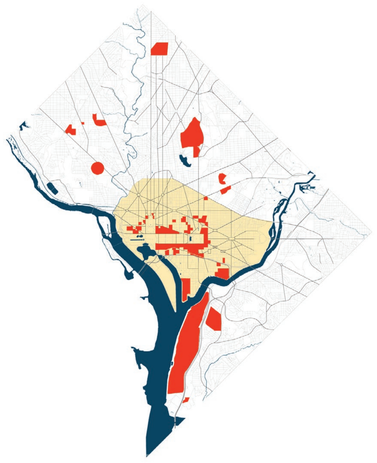
Issues important to the future growth of the national capital and local city

**What's important to you**

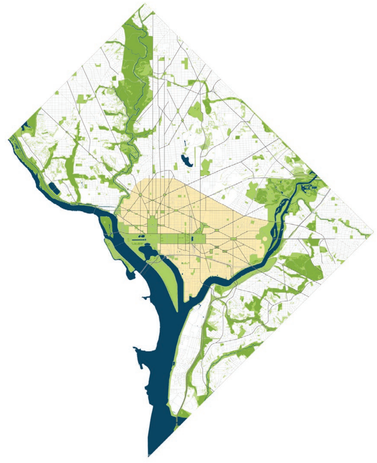
# Areas Not Included in Modeling Study



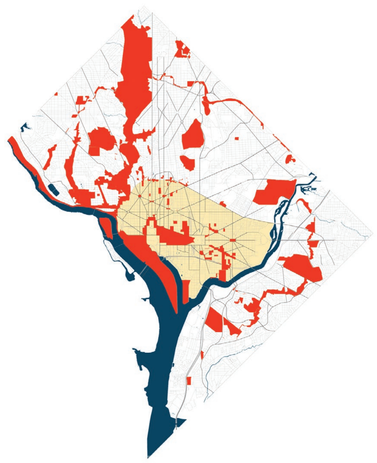
Historic Sites



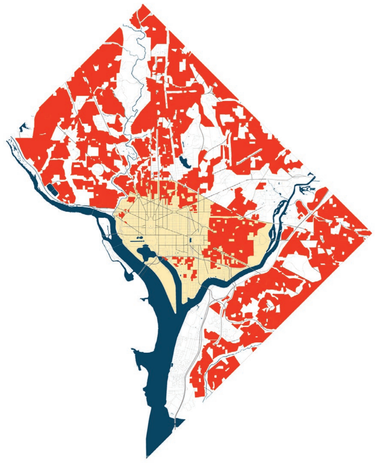
Federal Properties



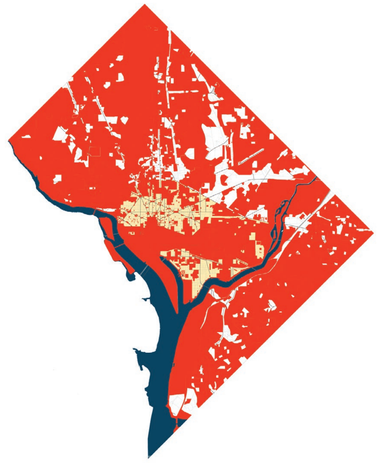
Open Space



Low Density Historic Districts

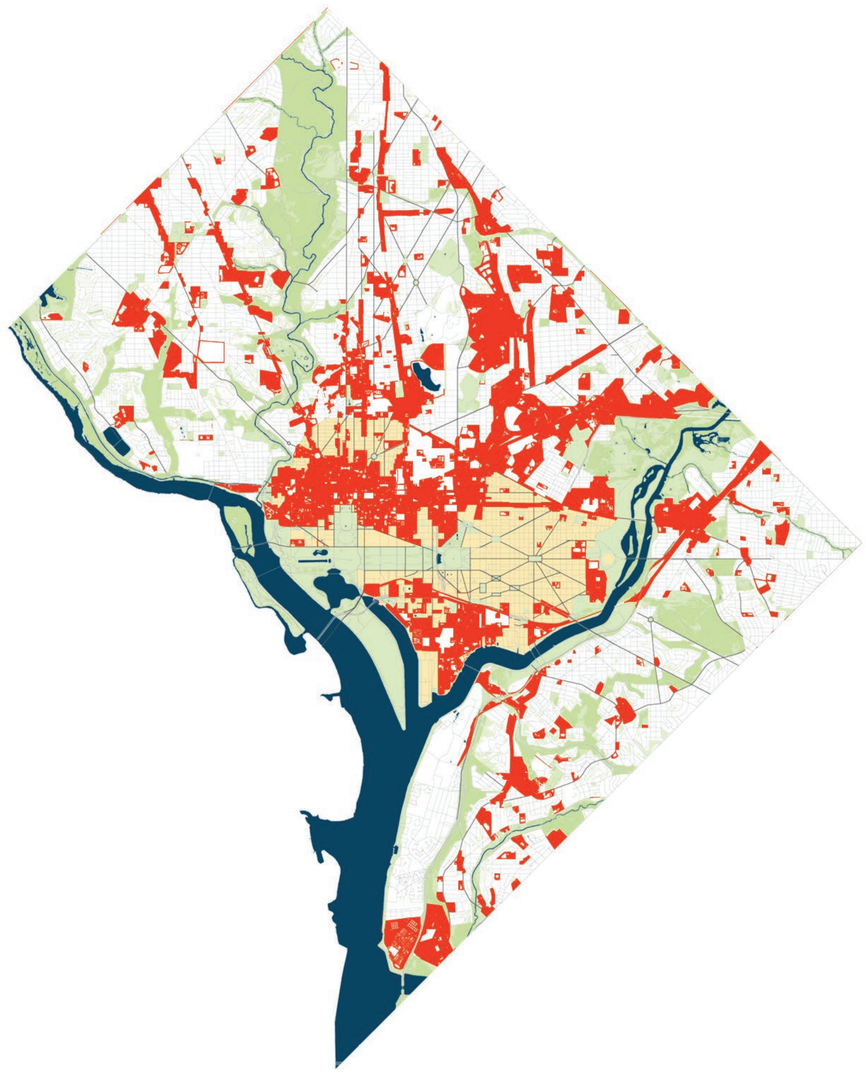


Low Density Areas

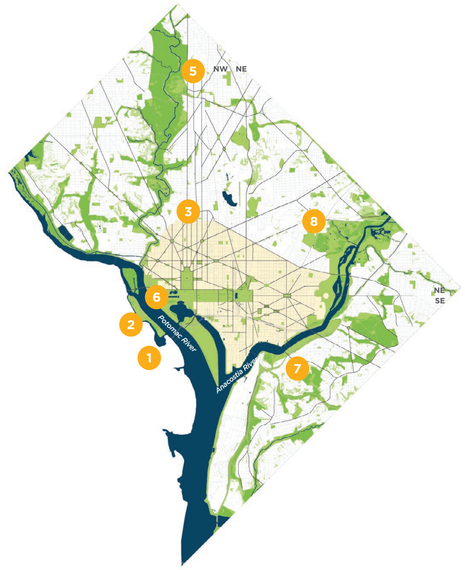


All areas excluded from modeling

# Areas Included in Modeling Study



# Aerial Study Vantage Points



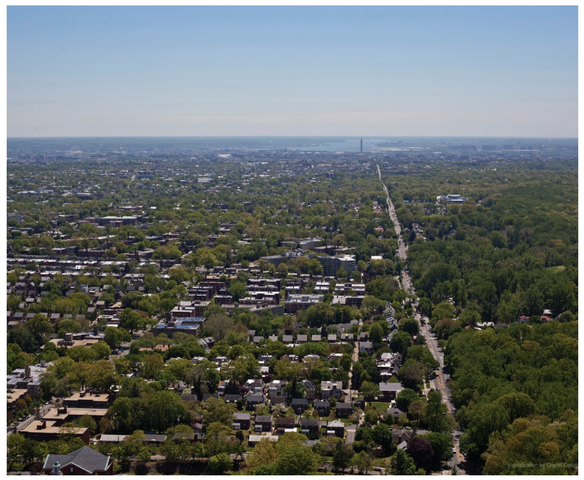

Vantage Points

1 Air Force Memorial
2 Arlington Cemetery
3 Meridian Hill Park
4 Walter Reed
5 North Capitol Street
6 Lincoln Memorial
7 Frederick Douglass House
8 New York Avenue, NE

1 Air Force Memorial

2 Arlington Cemetery

3 Meridian Hill Park



4 Walter Reed

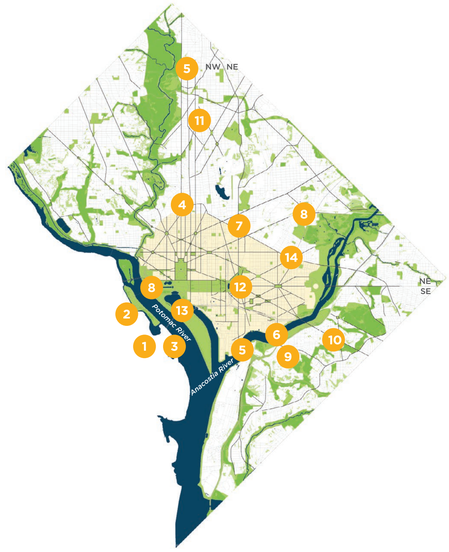
5 North Capitol Street

6 Lincoln Memorial

7 Frederick Douglass House

8 New York Avenue< NE

# Skyline Study Vantage Points




Vantage Points

1 Air Force Memorial
2 Arlington Cemetery
3 Gravelly Point
4 Meridian Hill Park
5 Frederick Douglass Bridge
6 11th Street Bridge
7 North Capitol Street
8 Lincoln Memorial
9 Frederick Douglass House
10 Pennsylvania Avenue, SE
11 Georgia Avenue, NW
12 U.S. Capitol Building Steps
13 Jefferson Memorial
14 Maryland Avenue, NE


1 Air Force Memorial


2 Arlington Cemetery


3 Gravelly Point


4 Meridian Hill Park


5 Frederick Douglass Bridge


6 11th Street Bridge


7 North Capitol Street


8 Lincoln Memorial


9 Frederick Douglass House


10 Pennsylvania Avenue, SE

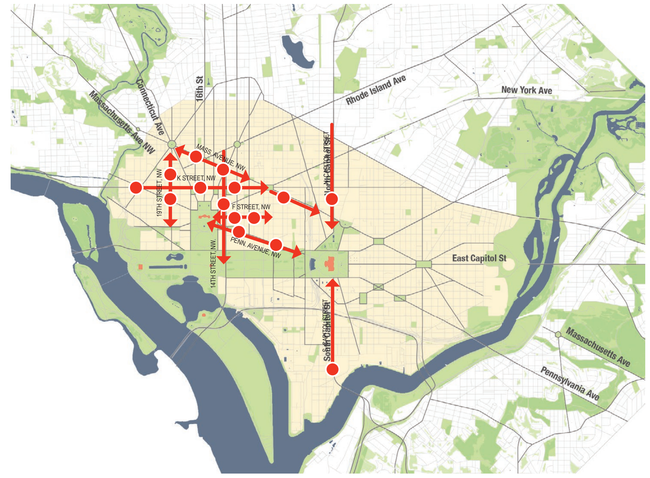

11 Georgia Avenue, NW


12 U.S. Capitol Building


13 Jefferson Memorial


14 Maryland Avenue, NE

# L'Enfant City Street Study
# Vantage Points





North Capitol Street


South Capitol Street


Pennsylvania Avenue, NW


Pennsylvania Avenue, NW


Scott Circle


Massachusetts Avenue, NW


Massachusetts Avenue, NW


Massachusetts Avenue, NW


Washington Circle


Franklin Square


K Street, NW


Thomas Circle


14th Street, NW


F Street, NW

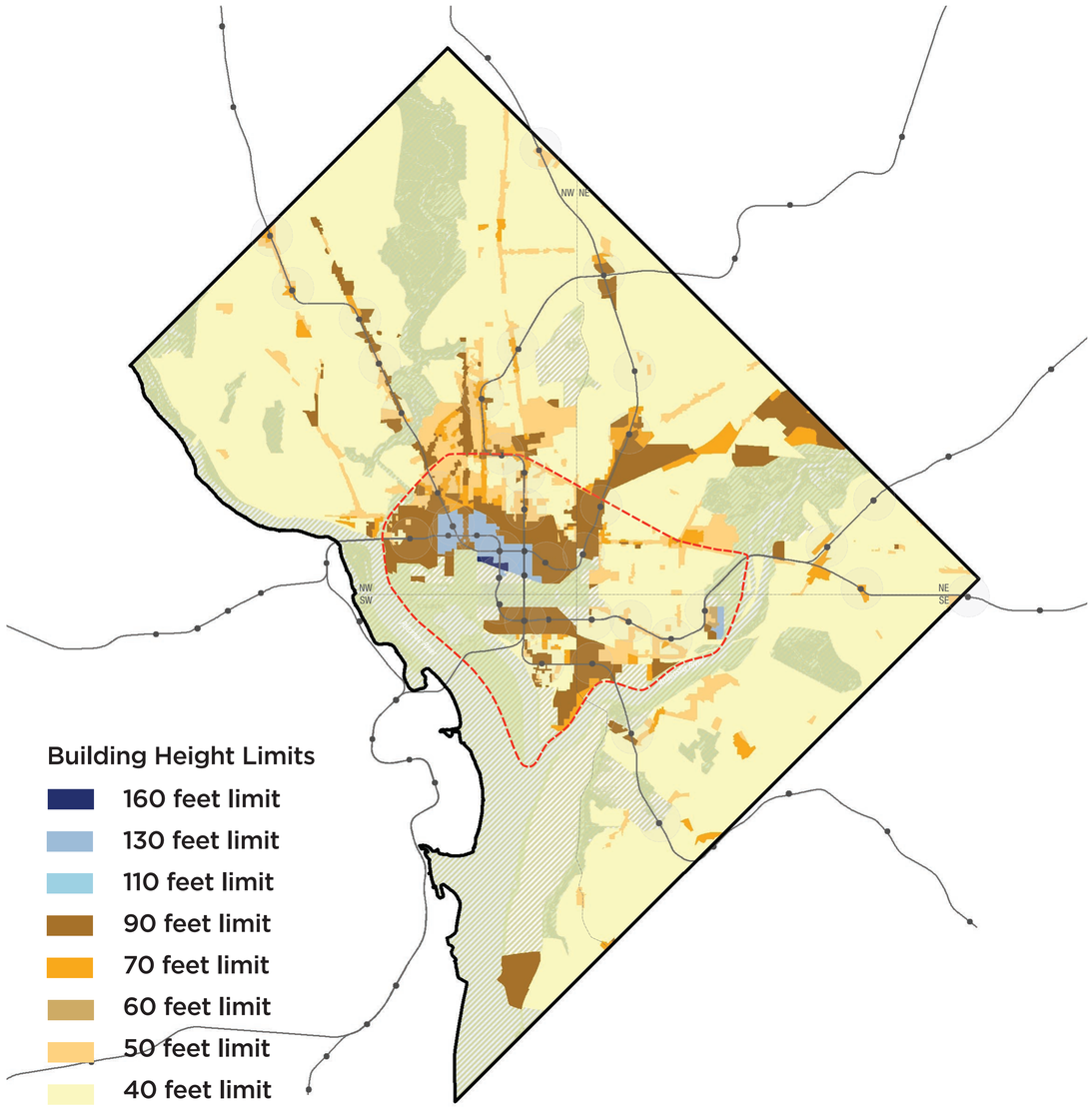

F Street, NW

19th Street, NW


19th Street, NW

Approach 1: No Height Increase

# 1A Status Quo: Make No Changes to the Height Act




## What if the current development potential was realized?

*South Capitol Street: looking north*

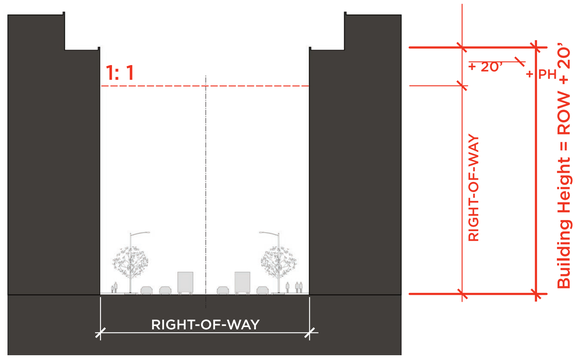
Existing Conditions

Key Map

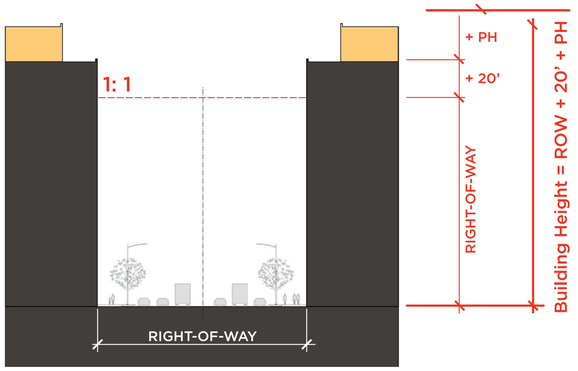
Full build-out within existing height limit

## Approach 1: No Height Increase

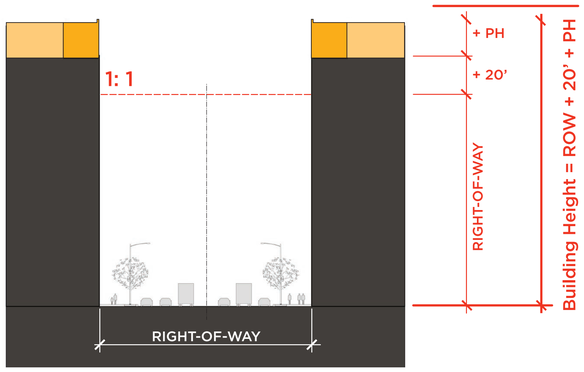
# 1B Allow Penthouse Occupancy




Existing Conditions




Occupied Penthouse Spaces




Eliminate Penthouse Setbacks

Existing Penthouse to be Occupied

Expanded Occupied Penthouse

## What if penthouses could be occupied?

Key Map

*K Street, NW: looking east*

Existing Conditions

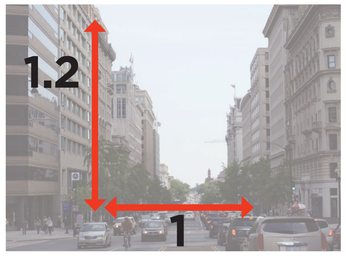
Expanded occupied penthouse

### Approach 2: Working with the Principles of the L'Enfant Plan

# Reinforce Relationship between Building Height and Street Width

Existing Building Height and Street Width Relationship

*14th Street, NW*

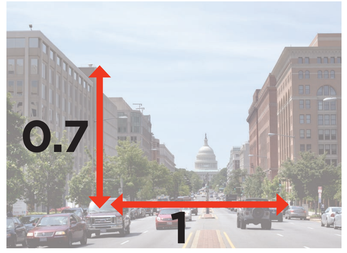



Street Width = 110′
Building Height = 130′

*19th Street, NW*

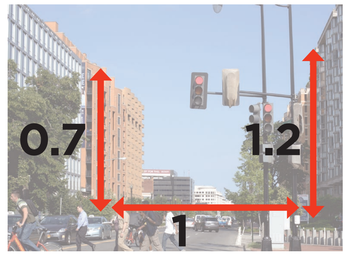

Street Width = 110′
Building Height = 90′

*North Capitol Street*

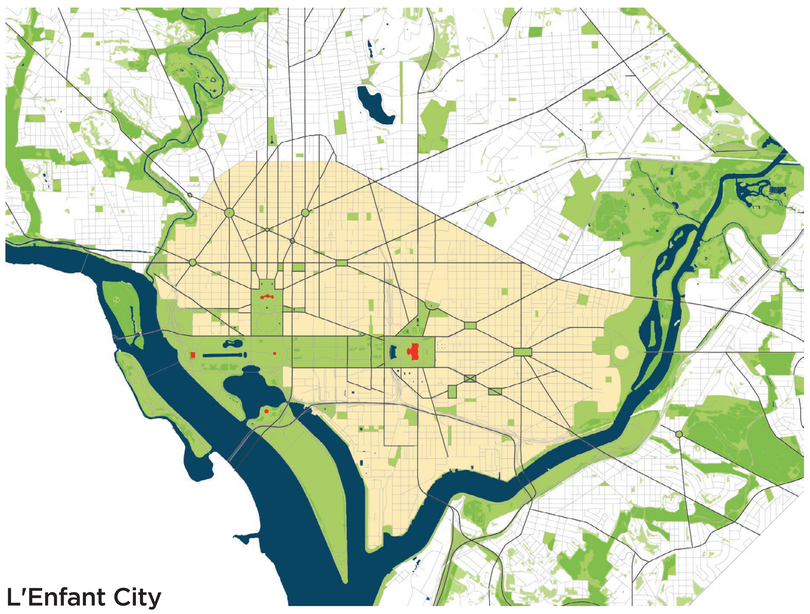



Street Width = 130′
Building Height = 90′

*Massachusetts Avenue*




Street Width = 160′
Building Height = 90′-130′



L'Enfant City

## What if the relationship between height and width increased to...

*Pennsylvania Avenue: looking east*

Existing Conditions


Street Width: 160′
Street to Width Ratio = 1 : 1


Street Width: 160′
Street to Width Ratio = 1 : 1.125


Street Width: 160′
Street to Width Ratio = 1 : 1.25

*North Capitol Street: looking south*

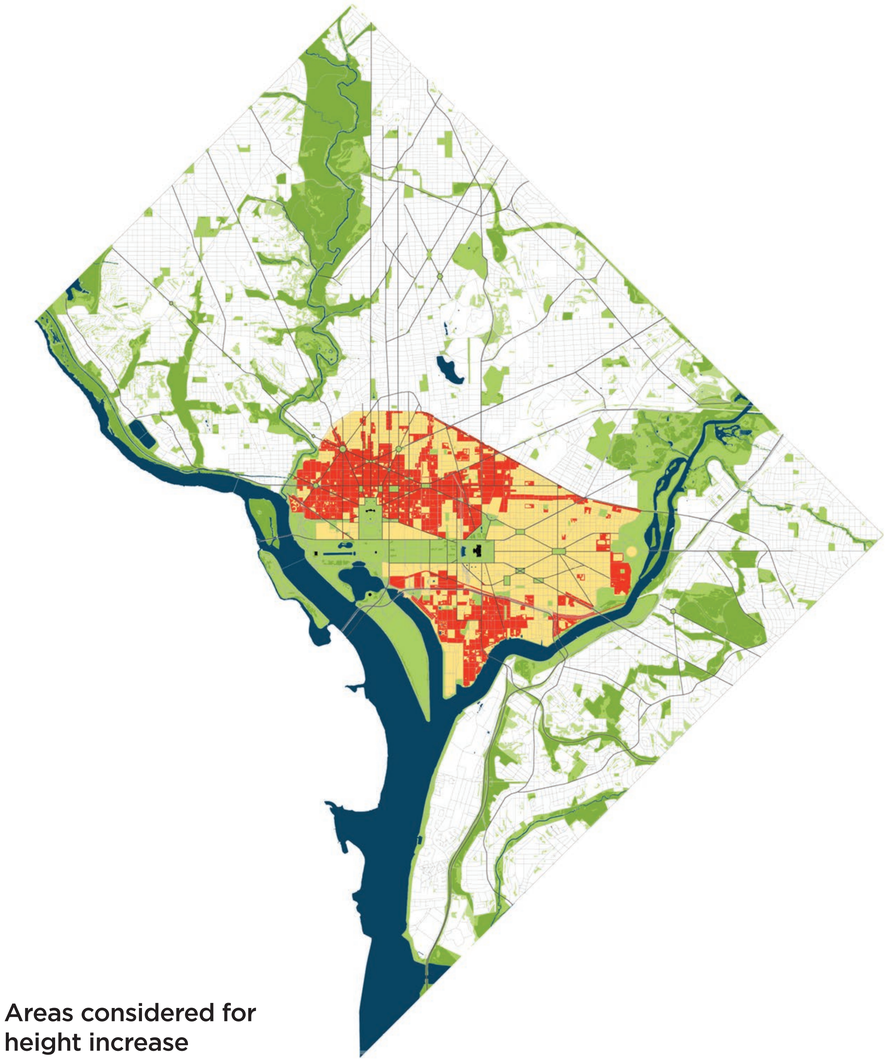
Existing Conditions


Street Width: 130′
Street to Width Ratio = 1 : 1


Street Width: 130′
Street to Width Ratio = 1 : 1.2

## Approach 3: Raise Height in Selected Areas

# 3A L'Enfant City



Areas considered for height increase

## What if the building height in L'Enfant City increased to...

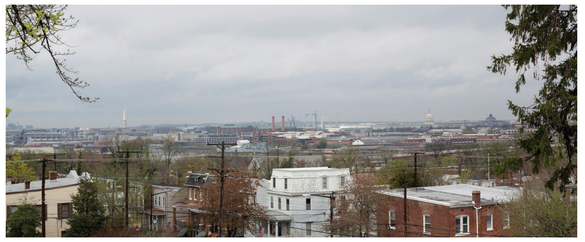
*Air Force Memorial*

Existing Conditions

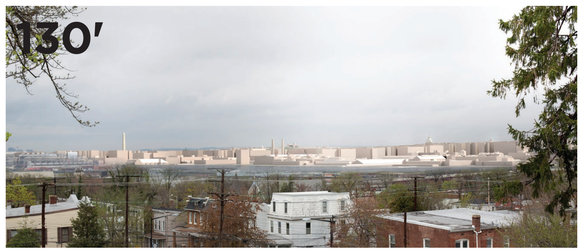


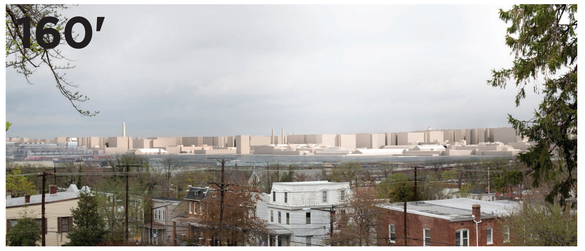


*Fredrick Douglass House*

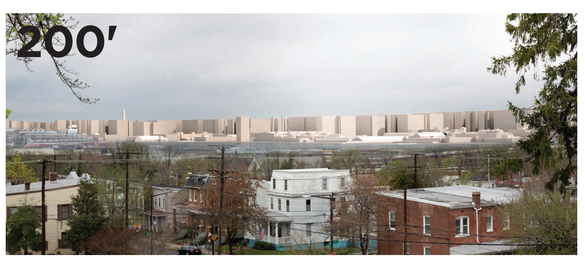


Existing Conditions



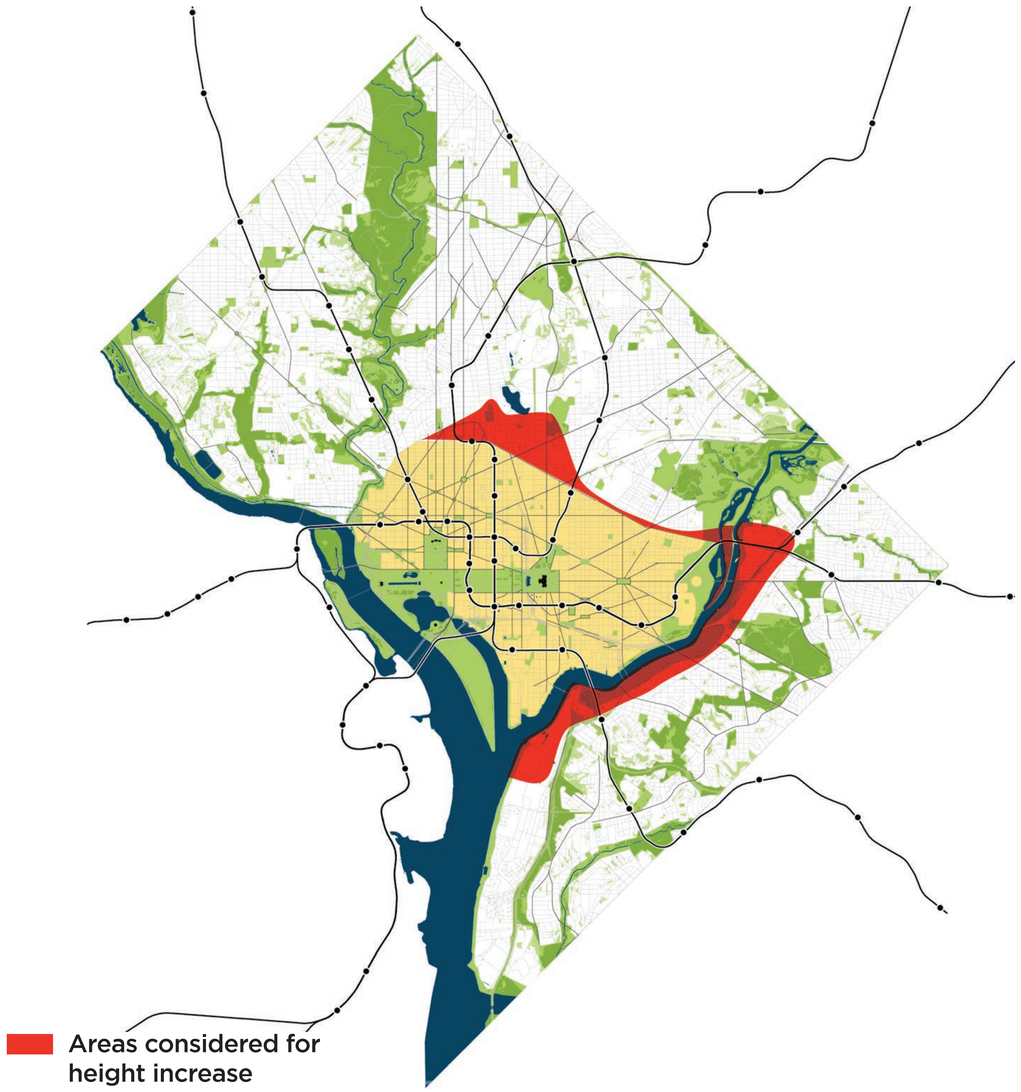







Approach 3: Raise Height in Selected Areas

# 3B Outside L'Enfant City within Topographic Bowl

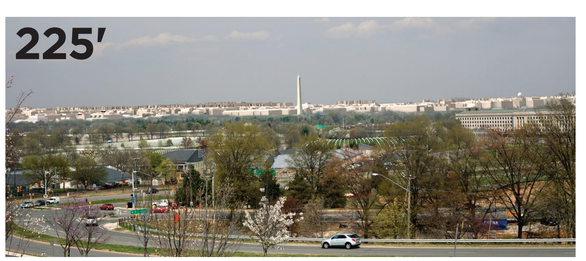



## What if the building height outside L'Enfant City but within the topographic bowl increased to...

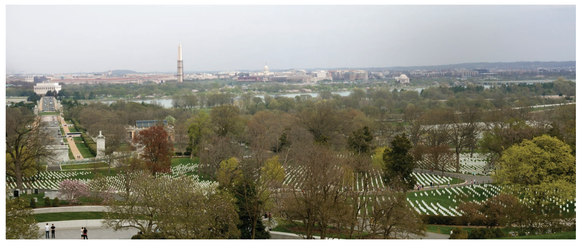
*Air Force Memorial*

Existing Conditions



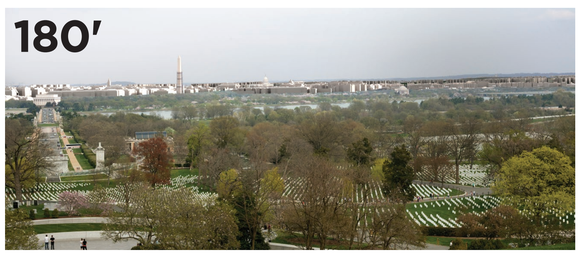



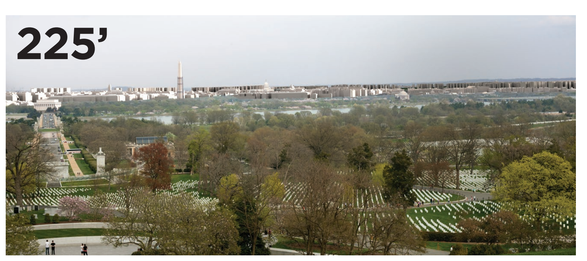

*Arlington Cemetery*



Existing Conditions



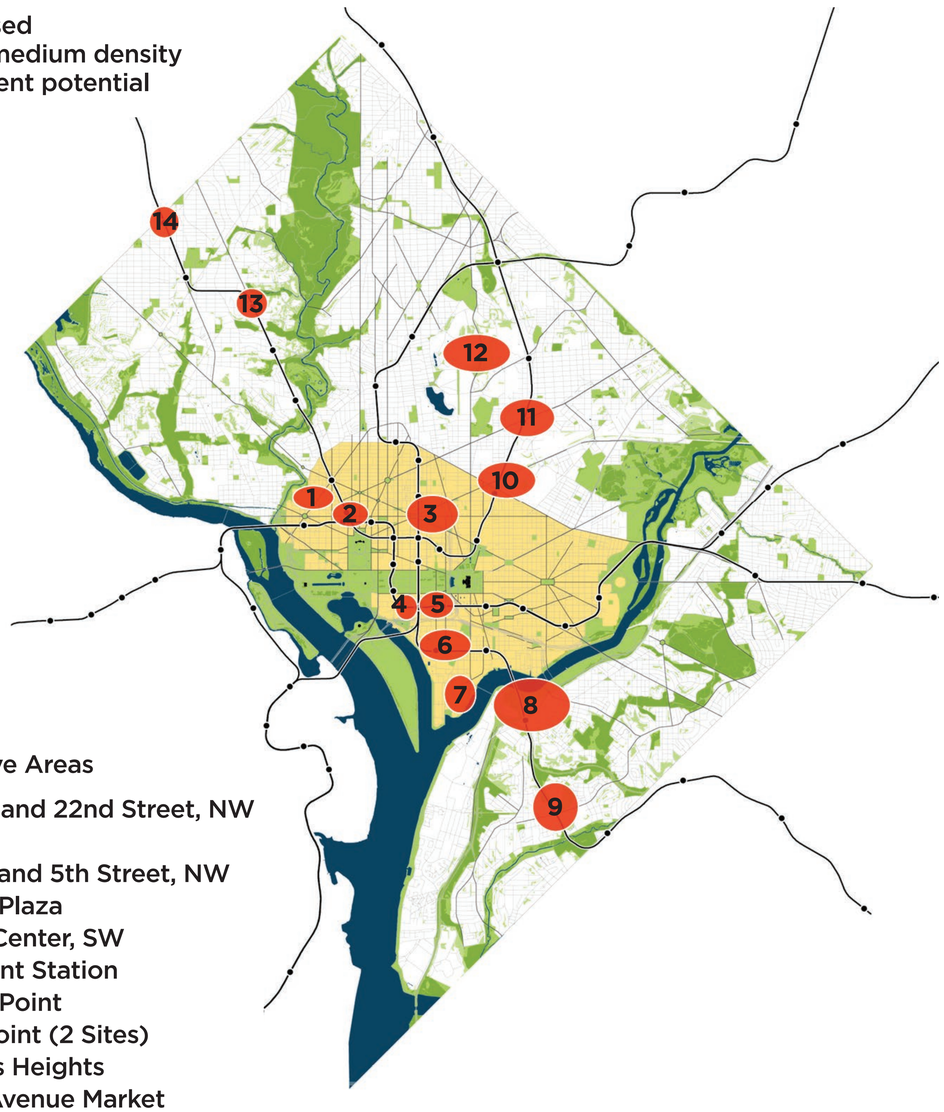


## Approach 3: Raise Height in Selected Areas

# 3C Illustrative Clusters

- Transit based
- High and medium density
- 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

## What if the building height in the clusters increased to...

*Air Force Memorial*

Existing Conditions





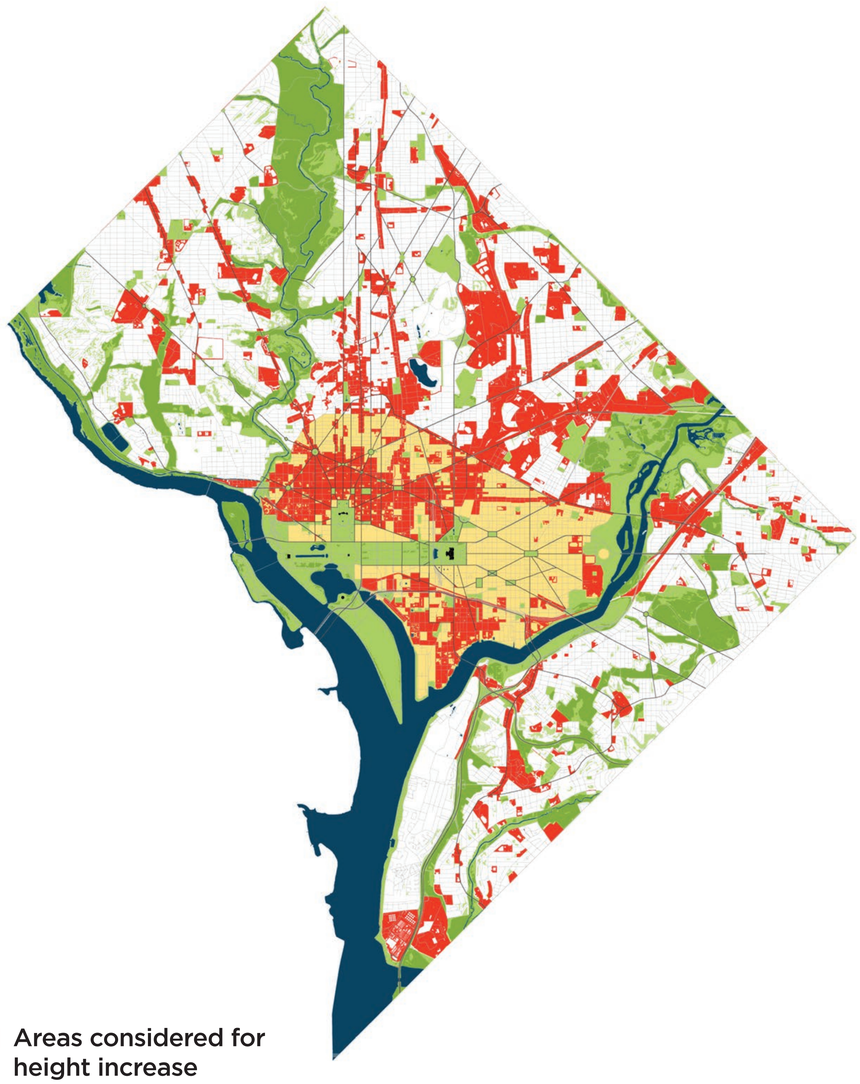
*Meridian Hill Park*

Existing Conditions




Approach 4

# Change Height Cap City Wide



Areas considered for height increase

## What if the building height increased to...

*Jefferson Memorial*

Existing Conditions




# Height Master Plan
## For Washington, DC

www.ncpc.gov/heightstudy

National Capital Planning Commission

dc op