

Thank you for initiating a rethinking of Pennsylvania Avenue. This street is an underperforming asset in Washington DC. It comes to life with every parade and special event, but for the most of the time, it is just an attractive but dull boulevard separating the National Mall and Federal Triangle from the rest of DC. The boulevard clearly needs more activation, life and reasons to visit it.

Here are some ideas that might be useful in revisioning Pennsylvania Avenue:

1. Imagine the avenue benefiting from a annual arts competition, similar to London's Trafalger Square's 4th Plinth. Imagine a series of sites along the avenue where the temporary art could be located and the annual buzz of excitement that would come from the competition. Corporations could underwrite it competition and benefit from sponsorship. Tourists and residents would find this fun. There needs to be a bit of whimsy and fun into DC's urban setting. Even along Pennsylvania Avenue.
2. Hold a photography contest of views along the avenue or nearby vicinity that captures the unexpected or weird juxtaposition of architecture, people and events. This event could be a one time activity or an annual event that would bring people out throughout the year to photograph the avenue. Here is an example of such an image.

Thank you for consideration of these ideas. I am confident that your panelists also can come up with many interesting ways to activate the street and make more use of this important asset in our city.

Karen



— Karen Kumm Morris, Arlington, VA (September 17, 2014)

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Comment: Will there be a standalone session on Freedom Plaza?

NCPC: It would be helpful to know if your interest in Freedom Plaza is about design, programming, or a particular issue.

Comment: Design. There is little if any programming at Dupont Circle or outside the Centre Pompidou (the fountain, not the immediate plaza) but both succeed as publicspaces in a way Freedom Plaza does not.

— Josh Gibson, Washington, DC (September 16, 2014)

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Hi,

I would like to talk further about walkability, connectivity by active transportation and indoor walking/running track for meetings.

Thank you,

@Jess2non

Wanting to make DC better than it already is

— Jessica Tunon, Washington, DC (September 12, 2014)

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Pennsylvania redesign plan

Washington DC population is the nation's capital and center for world affairs business which makes its more vulnerable to security threat or invasion. Over the years we have seen a rapid immigrants migrations who moved to DC to live and settled here and some are coming from war tone countries including terrorist invaded nations from the MiddleEast or North Africa. With this type of influx of people, one will argue that the center of town in Washington dc, such as Pennsylvania ave, which almost housed all our important offices and administrative building must be a more restricted area from people or host public events. The core security of any state is indomitable how much its heads and capital city is completely secured and safe from any foreign threat or internal threat. Over the past months and years we have witnessed few instances in which citizens who are mad with the system tries to break security around that vicinity. With such increasing internal confrontations, hosting public events around our national treasure building or main administrative center is not an advisable idea even if that continue to be the security arrangements must be review and probably ensure that movement of people and hosting of public must highly regulated to protect any unwanted threat from individual.

Access to pedestration

The planning must be increase a better and improve pedestrian walk way to prevent unwanted accidents from vehicles It will be good to rework on the lanes motor vehicles use more especially in Pennsylvania. As of now, the lanes are too wide to cross over. Since our freedom plaza is one of core symbol of our nation's founding sprite and citizens' rights, to add value to its face, greener design including a well 21st century art work will

increase its incredible tourism site seeing and global value to our guest and visitors. Additionally, the country's historical achievement and founding spirit must be visible and displayed using a 21st century art design to attract more global audience and pass by.

Disability walk way should also be more visible and wide as a way to improve the easy access of persons of disability. I will prefer to see more restrictions to street trading rather it should be meant to restrict for official matters. Cultural attractions should be displaced to increase the beautification of the city center more especially for our elite or political events. Commercial centers should not be too close to main buildings in order to prevent influx of people. The government under the federal budget must establish a special revolving fund to help with capital city maintenance and beautifications since our city is the face of our nation's pride and Pennsylvania Avenue is the main center for all our government and commercial activities for the city.

— Kamara, Washington, DC (September 11, 2014)

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September 8, 2014

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

SUBJECT: Pennsylvania Avenue Initiative

Dear Mr. Acosta:

The Committee of 100 on the Federal City (Committee of 100), founded in 1923, is the District of Columbia's oldest citizen planning organization. We are pleased to provide these initial comments on the Pennsylvania Avenue Initiative, the new combined effort to continue the revitalization of the Pennsylvania Avenue area. Pennsylvania Avenue is important to the nation and to our city, so its continued revitalization should be a federal priority.

The Committee of 100 on the Federal City has long been concerned with protecting and enhancing, in our time, the various elements of the L'Enfant Plan (1791-92) and the planning and design work of the McMillan Commission (1901-02). Both of these plans have been important in shaping the "Monumental Core" of Washington, D.C. Pennsylvania Avenue between the Capitol and the White House is a key element of the L'Enfant Plan and of the Monumental Core and adjacent areas. The Avenue has long been seen as a "bridge" between Downtown to the north and the Federal Triangle and National Mall to the south.

The Opportunity

It is now clear that we are in the process of a dramatic change for the center of our city. This includes the revitalization of Downtown north of Pennsylvania Avenue, a process underway for over fifty years and now nearing completion; the remaking of Pennsylvania Avenue under the initial guidance from the Pennsylvania Avenue Development Corporation (PADC); the continued development and enhancement of the National Mall

by the National Park Service, the Smithsonian Institution and others; and new plans for the area south of the National Mall, generally extending from 1st Street to 15th Street, SW, and south to the Southwest Freeway (I-395). That large area includes the Southwest Ecodistrict Plan area, prepared by the National Capital Planning Commission; the Maryland Avenue Plan area, prepared by the D.C. Office of Planning; the site of a future memorial to President Eisenhower and the American Veterans Disabled for Life Memorial, now nearing completion. These projects have the potential cumulative effect of transforming the commercial and federal centers of Washington. There are, of course, many other major changes planned or underway in other areas of the Monumental Core, and in nearby commercial, institutional and residential areas.

Although some of these efforts will take some years to realize, the result can be an exciting new activity pattern for the central area of Washington. This progress is important to the residents of Washington, D.C., the region, and the nation. Pennsylvania Avenue, at the center of this action, is truly a national street, recognized across the nation and around the world

In moving forward with the Pennsylvania Avenue Initiative, NCPC and the other agencies and organizations involved should give special consideration to collecting information on various aspects of Pennsylvania Avenue and making it available in understandable form, both in text and graphics. The same is true for the proposals for future development and activation as they are prepared. We note some categories for study in the “Big and Little Ideas for the Avenue” section below.

As information and concepts are collected and developed, there should be ample opportunities for public review and comment, and for all concerned to think and learn about the past, present and future of Pennsylvania Avenue. NCPC is off to a good start with the initial public meeting on July 23, 2014, the present comment period ending September 8, 2014, and the Pennsylvania Avenue Speaker Series Event on September 19. Mary Pat Rowan attended the July 23 meeting to represent the Committee of 100. In outlining our comments, we have used the categories suggested by NCPC for commenting on the initial information presented at the July 23 meeting.

#### User Experiences along the Avenue

The members of the Committee of 100 have experienced sections of Pennsylvania Avenue at different times, as have many residents of the Washington area, and visitors from this country and abroad. Some members of the Committee have been able to witness the many changes to the area since the Pennsylvania Avenue Plan was adopted in 1974, some forty years ago, and some remember the initial concepts going back to the early 1960s. As work continues, the Committee of 100 can provide more detailed responses about user experiences.

We understand that for purposes of this project, Pennsylvania Avenue includes not only the width of the Avenue but also areas to the north into Downtown and areas to the south into the Federal Triangle. We assume the work of the Pennsylvania Avenue Initiative will extend at least to the boundaries of the Pennsylvania Avenue Development Corporation (PADC) Development Area, and to some adjacent areas. It would be useful for NCPC to clarify the area that is being considered. In the following sections

we make suggestions about what NCPC should consider. In saying this, we understand that the Pennsylvania Avenue Initiative is a collaborative process involving NCPC, NPS, GSA and other federal agencies; the D.C. Office of Planning and other District agencies, the Downtown BID, Pennsylvania Avenue and various neighborhood and citywide business and civic groups.

## Crafting an Aspiration Statement

We have not tried to craft a complete formal aspiration statement for Pennsylvania Avenue at this early stage. We believe it should be a special place in our city, and indeed in our country (sometimes called the “Main Street of America”). It should have some monumental aspects but it should also have a festive aspect, alive with people and activities. The Avenue should continue to have historic elements that recall the history of our city and the country. Of course it will be the place of Presidential Inaugural parades as well as other local and national events. New design ideas should be explored, but everyone involved needs to be careful not to promote design fads that may quickly be dated. Pennsylvania Avenue needs to have a timeless quality. We note that many objectives outlined in the 1974 PADC Plan are still valid.

## Big and Little Ideas for the Avenue

**Need for a Strong Federal and District Commitment:** A key factor in the Pennsylvania Avenue Initiative is to obtain a strong commitment by the federal government to the project. There was such a commitment in the PADC period (1972-1996) and, though key federal agencies have continued to be involved with Pennsylvania Avenue, it is clear that adequate funding for upkeep and improvement of the public spaces along Pennsylvania Avenue has been lacking. Strong federal commitment for the Pennsylvania Avenue Initiative is a key element. Fortunately, there is considerable information available, both in the previous work of PADC, the recent work of the National Park Service (National Park Service National Historic Site Management Plan-April 2014, released July 21, 2014), and NCPC’s studies of the Monumental Core. Strong commitment from the District government, especially the Office of Planning and DDOT, as well as other District agencies, will also be important.

**Private and Civic Involvement:** Strong commitment from the private sector, both through the Downtown Business Improvement (BID) and from property owners and businesses along the Avenue, will be necessary, as well as commitment and participation of neighborhood and citywide organizations. The Committee of 100 is committed to strong participation in the Pennsylvania Avenue Initiative.

**The Avenue and Adjacent Open Spaces:** The design and use of the Avenue itself (sidewalks, tree planting, traffic lanes and bike paths) is especially important, as well as maintenance and use of the major open spaces (John Marshall Park, Indiana Plaza, Navy Memorial Park, Freedom Plaza and Pershing Park), and some smaller open spaces. Full maintenance of many sidewalks, including the larger landscaped areas, has been lacking in recent years. Some of the open spaces also have maintenance and design problems, especially Freedom Plaza and Pershing Park. Decisions about the future redesign of these two park areas will be especially important. We suggest that lighting for the pedestrian areas and the roadway be reviewed. Studies should consider how the future Avenue can be further activated, with more sidewalk cafes, outdoor vending, fountains, art works, orientation signing and similar measures.

**Transportation:** Transportation considerations along Pennsylvania Avenue include the very important pedestrian movements, as well as the automobile, taxi, transit and bicycle movements in the main roadway (maintained by DDOT). Transportation needs and preferences need to be reviewed. North- south movement, especially pedestrian movement and transit movement, linking Downtown, the Federal Triangle and National Mall, will be increasingly important in the future.

**Planning for Development Opportunities:** NCPC will need to review development opportunities in the

Pennsylvania Avenue area, with a strong emphasis on encouraging a mix of uses that will spur more activity along the Avenue. This may mean new development or it may be reusing existing buildings for existing uses, or for new uses. Today, major renovation of the Old Post Office as a luxury hotel is underway. There have been discussions of some other sites being redeveloped, and the FBI Building is a major development opportunity. NCPC should also work closely with the D.C. Office of Planning, the Downtown BID, and neighborhood groups to address development opportunities just north of the Pennsylvania Avenue Area. Despite major development, there appears to be some weakness in the retail market in adjacent areas.

In planning for Pennsylvania Avenue, NCPC will need to review the status of the PADC square guidelines, existing and proposed zoning, and historic preservation and design review to see if the present development guidelines are still appropriate, or if new or revised measures are needed.

**Realizing the Potential of the FBI Building Site:** We believe major attention needs to be focused on the future development of the site of the J. Edgar Hoover Building, bounded by Pennsylvania Avenue, 9th Street, 10th Street and E Street, NW. even though redevelopment of that site will be some of years in the future. At the present time, GSA is engaged in the initial steps leading to selection of a new site for a modern, secure and attractive “FBI Campus”. It will take some years to design and build that campus and to relocate the FBI offices.

We are concerned that the present emphasis seems to be all on the future FBI Campus with limited regard for the future of the existing J. Edgar Hoover Building site. The use of the site to reactivate that section of Pennsylvania Avenue, through good design and a mix of uses, should also be a major federal interest.

The present building, with its front façade, and large moat-like setbacks on 9th, 10th and E streets, has a negative effect on adjacent frontages. Special urban design of future development on this site is critical to increase activity on those streets, as well as along Pennsylvania Avenue.

**Connecting with Adjacent Areas:** Planning for Pennsylvania Avenue must consider linkages to adjacent areas, including the Federal Triangle to the south, the Capitol Grounds to the east, the sections of Downtown on to the north, and President’s Park to the west. All of these areas have had considerable planning, some by NCPC, some by other federal agencies and the Architect of the Capitol, and some by the D.C. Office of Planning and the Downtown BID. All these areas have some relationship and effect on the main area of Pennsylvania Avenue.

**Historic Preservation and Historic Commemoration:** The original plans for Pennsylvania Avenue in the early 1960s called for completely rebuilding the north side of the Avenue, with a uniform building line and large open spaces. The FBI Building, completed in 1974, was the first step. Fortunately, the efforts of the District government, federal agencies, and local and national groups, led to plan revisions in 1974 that included a mix of new and old buildings. Historic buildings retained include the Willard and Washington hotels, the National Theater, the Old Post Office, the Evening Star Building, and the cluster of buildings at Pennsylvania Avenue and Indiana Avenue, as well as other buildings in the PADC area to the north. The Pennsylvania Avenue Initiative should include a review of the condition of these buildings and should determine if further preservation actions are needed.

Additional marking of the history of buildings and areas along the Avenue may also be needed. For example, marking the original location of Washington’s original Chinatown near Pennsylvania Avenue and Fourth Street, NW (suggested in several comments at the July 23rd meeting) seems like a good example of providing more

information about the national and local history of Pennsylvania Avenue.

Activating the Avenue: There is a good level of activity along Pennsylvania Avenue today, aided by many restaurants, retail establishments, four hotels (and the Trump International Hotel in the Old Post Office to open in 2016) and a number of apartments, as well as office space. Yet much more needs to be done to activate the Avenue with more restaurants and more hotels and residential space. Pennsylvania Avenue is already used for a number of different events, especially in Navy Memorial Park, the farmers market on 8th Street and on Freedom Plaza. However, an increased program is needed to add new events and entertainment, and to make the Avenue the place where both residents and visitors want to come for a special Washington experience.

#### The Pennsylvania Avenue Development Corporation

The Pennsylvania Avenue Development Corporation was in existence for over 20 years (1972-1996) and over that period was responsible for major changes and improvements for Pennsylvania Avenue, changes that were almost entirely beneficial. Since then, NCPD, NPS and GSA have acted to continue the federal role in the continued revitalization of Pennsylvania Avenue. Moving forward, we believe some new organizational structure, involving the key agencies and other actors, will be needed to efficiently carry out the proposals of the Pennsylvania Avenue Initiative in coming years. Creating this enhanced organizational structure should be a key element of the Initiative studies.

#### Lessons Learned from Capital City Streets

As has been suggested, we believe it is useful to look at the lessons of great streets in other capital cities, both in terms of what works and, as noted in the information provided, what does not work or at least would not be suitable for Pennsylvania Avenue. Lessons from other great streets in this country might also be useful. At the same time, it is necessary to recognize that these great streets are different from Pennsylvania Avenue, and not to spend too much time in making comparisons.

#### Looking Ahead for Pennsylvania Avenue

Achieving the next stages of improving and revitalizing Pennsylvania Avenue will take time. Some efforts can begin soon but other actions will take longer. Repair and upgrading of the infrastructure of the Avenue (cleaning and replacing pavers, improving landscaping, and possibly revising some of the public spaces) will take longer and require considerable funding. New development will take longer. The single major development opportunity for Pennsylvania Avenue is, of course, the J. Edgar Hoover FBI Building site. That great opportunity must not be wasted.

Some target date should be set for this next stage of Pennsylvania Avenue revitalization. The year 2026, now some 12 years in the future, is the 250th anniversary of American Independence. That year will be celebrated across our country with numerous events and projects. We believe that 2026 would be a good target date, while noting that we should all begin now to think about and begin to implement the continued revitalization of Pennsylvania Avenue.

The Committee of 100 on the Federal City looks forward to further discussion of the continuing revitalization of Pennsylvania Avenue as ideas and options are developed as part of the Pennsylvania Avenue Initiative.

Thank you for this opportunity to make these initial comments.

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy MacWood  
Chair

In replying please respond to:  
john.fondersmith@verizon.net

— *Committee of 100 on the Federal City, Washington, DC (September 11, 2014)*

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[View attachment](#)

— *Christine Janumala, Washington, D.C. (September 08, 2014)*

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[View attachment](#)

— *Daniel Brown, 1307 L St NW Washington DC (September 08, 2014)*

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Good evening,

My name is Kaidia Pickels and I'm an NYU student studying in Washington, D.C. this semester. I've come up with a short proposal regarding the revitalization of Pennsylvania Avenue and have attached it below. Thank you for your consideration of my feedback!

[View attachment](#)

— *Kaidia Pickels, Washington, D.C. (September 08, 2014)*

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[View attachment](#)

— *Dorothy Qian, 1307 L St. Washington DC 20005 (September 08, 2014)*

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— *Jessica, Washington DC (September 08, 2014)*



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— Electra Colevas, Washington D.C. (September 08, 2014)

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Here are my ideas for Pennsylvania Avenue.

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— Foley C Pfalzgraf, Washington, DC (September 08, 2014)

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1. Provide road map that helps tourists to navigate not only around PA avenue but also walking distance to nearby landmark places.
2. Info Boards that talks about the history of the construction and buildings nearby.
3. Maybe have statues of influential people in America on two sides of the road.
4. Attract more commercial vendors or restaurants. Have better lighting on the buildings and landmarks during nights --> makes the environment more hangout-friendly --> give people a reason to visit.
5. Have too much lanes: develop a better vehicle + bike lanes & encourage more cyclists .
6. Like when there are trees on two sides of the street.
7. Redevelop FBI site.
8. Improve crossing signal timing.
9. Renovate buildings and road.

— Charles Chen, Washington, DC (September 08, 2014)

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— Conor Jackman, Washington, DC (September 08, 2014)

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It struck me as odd that restaurants were closed while I walked along Pennsylvania Avenue at 5:00 PM on a Saturday. But one look at the surroundings could explain why. Almost no one was there. The tourists were on their way out from their day of hustling through the Smithsonians and other near by monuments, and since the offices, that took up the majority of the buildings on the street, were closed, there was no reason for locals to be there. Pennsylvania Avenue is not a dynamic space, but it could be. With the plan I am proposing, Pennsylvania Avenue could be an attraction, but also a space for locals to congregate and celebrate their city. My plan has three main objectives for a new Pennsylvania Avenue: to make it greener, to make it a place to celebrate the social movements that have crossed it, and to make it a place that locals want to be. The first part of my plan- make it greener- is probably the most straightforward. While Pennsylvania Avenue does have some tree cover, more trees could be added to enhance it aesthetically as well sustainably. In some

places, like Freedom Plaza, there was no shade. I propose increasing the tree cover as well as making the tree cover look more natural to increase the green space DC is so famous for. Another thing that could make the space look less rigid and look more like a fluid, natural environment is the addition of rain gardens. These gardens not only are aesthetically pleasing but also are helpful in combatting flooding. I noticed some succulents in some of the potted plants, and I also think converting more of the potted plants to succulents could help with flooding issues. Better yet, making those potted plants into raised beds of succulents alongside the rain gardens could be both more aesthetically pleasing and better for the city. Also infrastructural changes could be applied to make the road more sustainable. Little things like making the sidewalks permeable surfaces that can soak up rainwater and changing the light fixtures to be LED bulbs placed at the top of the lighting fixtures to avoid light pollution help to decrease the impact this one street has on our environment as well as providing benefits to the city.

Another thing I noted while walking down Pennsylvania Avenue is that there is no commemoration of all the protests and parades that have crossed Pennsylvania Avenue. Pennsylvania Avenue has been a historic fixture in the social movements that have swept this country as well as the place of many official celebrations. I suggest that we ask local artists or schools to create murals on the sidewalks depicting the stories of the movements and celebrations that have happened on Pennsylvania Avenue. This would add another dimension to the repetitious, neoclassical buildings that flank both sides of the Pennsylvania Avenue. Also we could change Pershing Park to be a celebration of social movements by dedicating it to a leader or multiple leaders of social movements such as Alice Paul, the woman who organized the Woman Suffrage Parade in 1913, or A. Phillip Randolph, the man in charge of organizing the 1963 March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom. An interesting monument would be to have multiple leaders of different protests standing side-by-side with signs and hands in the air in the act of protest and tell their story on the wall behind them.

The last part of my plan is meant to incorporate DC locals into this design, because locals are often left out of designs such as this. My last suggestion is to transform Freedom Plaza into more of an interactive space. As it is now, Freedom plaza doesn't offer much other than a skate park for teenagers. With all of it's flat, empty, stone space, in the heat, it is unbearably hot and not hospitable to people spending time there. Therefore, I am recommending changing Freedom Plaza into a community space. The biggest highlight of this space would be an outdoor event space, equipped with a stage. It wouldn't be huge event space, but it could be a space for local concerts, plays, as well as a collection point for future social action. The space would be very green, with trees flanking both sides of the park, as well as spaces for people to relax throughout Freedom Plaza.

Overall, I think these changes will make Pennsylvania Avenue a more dynamic space that more locals and tourists will want to participate in. These changes could help Pennsylvania Avenue live up to its historic significance with change that reflects the events that have made it famous, while also incorporating the people who walk there every day. It is important for the evolution of Pennsylvania Avenue to look at all not only increasing foot traffic and the appeal of the street but also its ability to be sustainable for the people who will be walking there in the future, and I believe this design does just that.

As a side-note I apologize for my sketches, drawing is not my forte.

[View attachment](#)

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— Ansley Roberts, Washington, DC (September 08, 2014)

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— Alex King, Washington, DC (September 08, 2014)

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— adam blech, Washington D.C (September 08, 2014)

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## Pennsylvania Avenue

I have never been outside in the streets and thought to myself, "there is so much history here." Of course, there is history made everywhere every day but no one comes to think of it until they visit Washington, D.C. On Friday evening, around 7:53PM, I was walking on Pennsylvania Avenue on 14th street and noticed so many things. As I walked from 14th street towards the direction of the Capitol on Pennsylvania Avenue I could not understand why there was barely anyone around on a Friday night. Then, I made some observations and came up with some ideas as to how can Pennsylvania Avenue revive history.

As I began my walk, I came across what is known as the Freedom Plaza. However, I was not aware of where I was standing on because there was no particular sign or label that said this was Freedom Plaza. I had to find out where I was standing on, on my GPS. I saw many skateboarders taking advantage of the empty space, because it sure was empty. There were some people walking up and down the streets as well as cars. Most of these people were tourists. I then told myself, "Of course there are tourists here! Pennsylvania Avenue is one of the most popular streets in our nation's capital where people come to visit just to walk on these streets." Walking through Pennsylvania Avenue, I focused on many different areas where the street can be better improved for the public's eye. For starters, as I walked on the Avenue I expected to be able to clearly see each and every building that surrounds this street but I was disappointed to see trees. I am not a fan of deforestation and I definitely would not want to engage in activities to induce global warming, however I am to make exceptions on these trees that cover almost every building on Pennsylvania Avenue. There was the National Theater that had trees covering the sign. I could not tell it was a theater either, because of how empty it looked. Maybe have more advertisements about what is on this great avenue.

As I reached 10th street, I was in front of the FBI Building and remembered hearing about rumors of them relocating which had me think that the building can either become an entertainment center or even a museum. It is a very huge building with so much space. Further, while I was continue to walk I was beginning to get thirsty and saw that there was a water fountain. As I reached the fountain, I was devastated to find out there was no water. In fact, none of the water fountains worked which I found to be highly insane. This city has tourists visiting every day and the walk from one historical location to another is dreadfully long, it would be beneficial to fix these water fountains especially for the hot summer days in Washington.

I couldn't help to miss the cracked floors in the streets as well in the sidewalks. I almost tripped in a pot hole that should have been covered on 9th street and Pennsylvania Avenue. It could be very dangerous for those people who are walking and looking up to see these wonderful buildings and see such great architecture but then trip and fall for not looking in the ground.

Another thing that came across to me was the fact that the only bank that I constantly saw was Wells Fargo. I suggest decreasing the number of Wells Fargo Banks on Pennsylvania Avenue and perhaps establishing several other banks like Bank of America or Chase Bank. I know there are many people who come from different parts

of the world and feel hopeless to find a bank besides Wells Fargo. Lastly, I was totally shocked to see that by the time I reached 3rd Street on Pennsylvania Avenue, I had only seen one security guard and no police. That brought up a question of security and how I did not feel safe walking these streets at night. Perhaps amp up the security around this area, especially on a Friday night when people are going out for the weekends.

— *Ledwin Martinez, Washington, DC (September 08, 2014)*

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— *Eli, Washington, DC (September 08, 2014)*

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— *Samiksha Shetty, Washington, DC (September 08, 2014)*

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— *Clifton Iler, Washington, D.C. (September 08, 2014)*

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— *Raven Harris, Washington, D.C. (September 08, 2014)*

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At 7:50pm on Friday September 6th, 2014 I was sitting on Pennsylvania ave and 14th street. I decided to walk from 14th street, Pennsylvania ave to the Capitol building. I saw people sitting on the benches in Freedom Plaza however, I feel the Plaza should be labeled with a bigger sign so that tourists know the name of the Plaza and what it's significance is to Washington, D.C history. Also with the Freedom Plaza I noticed that the floors are somewhat cracked. Therefore, there should be the reconstruction of tiles on the floor. There should be more police officers and security guards on duty at night. I noticed that there was only ONE security guard on duty tonight.

Along the sidewalks there a lot of tall trees covering the nation's buildings. These buildings include Canada's embassy and the J.Edgar Hoover FBI building. I am not a fan of deforestation but I think these trees should be cut down due to the fact that a lot of tourists come to D.C to site see and to take pictures. It would be better if the trees are cut down so that they can take more full pictures of these buildings in general. The water fountains that are along the side that don't work should be fixed to work again. D.C has a lot of tourist sites and since it's very hot in the summer therefore, some tourists might forget to bring water with them when they are walking around and exploring D.C. Having these water fountains working would be beneficial to tourists on the streets who are dehydrated from exploring the city. The floor tiles on the regular sidewalks

need to be fixed. For example, I almost tripped and fell because one of the tiles were completely out from the ground; not fully cemented into the ground. This problem needs to be fixed because someone could really get hurt from tripping over a disheveled platform.

As I was getting closer to the end of third street, I noticed that a lot of the plaza's ex. Indiana plaza has a lot of homeless people lounging around them. I think that the plaza's should be open for the public in the daytime and then closed for the public in the night. I think this idea should be taken into consideration because it looks really inappropriate seeing homeless people at these historical monuments lounging either in front of them or on them. When I reached the end of third street I realized that along the sides of Pennsylvania ave there are numerous amounts of Wells Fargo Banks. They should get rid of at least two of the Wells Fargo Banks and establish a Capital one bank, a Chase bank and a Bank Of America because not everyone has Wells Fargo as their primary bank.

— *Yasmyn Camp, Washington, D.C (September 08, 2014)*

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Please see attached for comments.

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— *Massimiliano Valli, Washington, D.C. (September 08, 2014)*

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— *Yevin Jayatilake, Washington, D.C (September 08, 2014)*

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— *Olivia Carroll, Washington, D.C. (September 08, 2014)*

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— *Mona Hamza, Richmond, VA (September 08, 2014)*

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Pennsylvania Avenue: Development Corporation

When you think of Pennsylvania Avenue you think of a clean sector of DC that lines all of the major government buildings, the monuments, and the museums. When you think of Pennsylvania Avenue you think

of businessmen and women and tourists flooding the streets. However, this image of Pennsylvania Avenue dies the minute the clock strikes 6pm and all businesses have closed along the street. When I went to Pennsylvania Avenue at the 3rd street intersection at 7pm, pedestrians abandoned the avenue. The lack of use of this public space in the evening limits its function and profitability. In order to reap the maximum benefit from the urban space that is Pennsylvania Avenue green space should be turned into “play space”, older buildings should be refurbished to accommodate workers and tourists with hotels, residencies and fine dining and public buildings should be open for extended recreational hours.

While Pennsylvania Avenue has beautifully maintained fields on its sides (especially closest to the capital on 3rd street) these fields serve little to no purpose. Perhaps the evening jogger might come and run on them or a homeless man may find shelter under a tree but vast fields do not bring people- playgrounds and events do. What is meant by play space is not limited to children’s jungle gyms but adult one’s too. A recreational urban model used by Rio de Janeiro, Brazil is to have adult outdoor gyms on every corner in order to stimulate pedestrian fitness and health. These gyms come with pull up bars, bench tables, and leg presses. While this model is most effective in Rio due to the year round summer weather, having a unit or two installed along with a child play space would make for an excellent summer fitness alternative. After all, DC was recently rated amongst the fittest United States cities, and what would enhance a work out would be the capital hill backdrop. Further, gyms would only be a recreational use of green space under fair weather conditions. For the colder seasons, fall markets and winter fairs would fend well with the tourism downtown draws. Using the free green land for a “fall fest” and a “winter light garden” would make the fields of Pennsylvania Avenue an evening staple of the touristic visit. Much like the folk festival, the tree lighting and the zoo lights- the use of the Pennsylvania Avenue capital fields could bring a new tradition to the seasons for tourists. These events combined with exercise space and equipment for the summer would keep the sector alive after dark.

Second, the website suggests that some buildings of Pennsylvania are experiencing wear and tear that would require a refurbishing. Why not eliminate the use of these buildings as office space and sell it to become high-end residencies, hotels and restaurants. The most expensive sector to live, stay, and eat in New York city is the upper west and east borders with park avenue (the avenue facing central park). The reason? There is an allure of living by the “most beautiful” part of the city. Even more so- it is a fad location driven by a contagious idea that it is the place to be when in the city. What more could lead to a fad location than the museums, the obelisk, the public government offices and the white house? Pennsylvania Avenue is cut to be a “fad” street for that trendy elite that want the best experience in DC. Real estate would entail high end permanent residencies for those commuters to government offices who desire to be that much closer to work, hotels for the tourists and businessmen wanting the full “DC experience” and appropriate eateries open until evening for those individuals to be able to make use of Pennsylvania Avenue at night. Living and dining on Pennsylvania Avenue would become a show of class and financial stability. While it would be an ambitious idea to open this area to a “normal” economic profile, the amount of maintenance the area requires to maintain it as a touristic showcase could only accommodate those who are willing to pay a higher ticket price for a finer downtown experience. Finally, there is a clear shift in activity on Pennsylvania Avenue the minute the daytime museum attractions close at 5pm. While this is a normal occurrence for a business district, it is not for a commercial one.

Pennsylvania Avenue does not only attract workers but tourists. Tourists are on vacation and want to maximize their time. Therefore, when the tourist rearing Smithsonian museums close at 5pm, tourists vacate the area for another site. While it is cost ineffective to maintain a free public museum open after hours, it would be a great option to make after hours a paying exclusive privilege for those who want to stick around. Extending the café hours for the art galleries or hosting “evening special” late night show cases for a ticket price would stimulate evening tourism but not sacrifice as much cost as general extended hours.

As part of your imitative with the Development Corporation I hope my user experience reflected through the suggestions of green space into “play space”, older buildings refurbished to accommodate workers and

tourists with hotels, residencies and fine dining and public open for extended recreational hours serves of some aid for your future efforts in improving Pennsylvania avenue.

— Nicole Piedra, Washington, DC (September 08, 2014)

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Please look at this, I spent time thinking about how I feel this space could be extremely well utilized to provide a benefit for the community and the country as a whole. Thank you so much!

[View attachment](#)

— Kimberly Bernotas, 1307 L Street NW Washington, D.C. 20005 (September 08, 2014)

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Please find my submission attached below.

[View attachment](#)

— Anna Sutton, Washington, DC (September 07, 2014)

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Attached are my suggestions for a section of Pennsylvania Avenue!

[View attachment](#)

— Anna Robinson, Washington, DC (September 07, 2014)

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[View attachment](#)

— Casey Murphy, Washington, DC (September 07, 2014)

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See attached document

[View attachment](#)

— Ellen Henderson, Washington DC (September 07, 2014)

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The Pennsylvania Avenue Initiative is a project with the bold goal of “developing a vision for how the Avenue can meet local and national needs in a 21st capital city”. While some may be looking to the streets of Brasilia, Brazil and Moscow, Russia, it is important to recognize the uniqueness of Washington D.C and to take into account the symbolic nature of Pennsylvania Avenue in particular. Pennsylvania Avenue connects the Capitol building to the White House, and the view of the hill from down the avenue is a widely recognized sight by people from all walks of life. The avenue is also the route President elects take to their new home (The White House) on the day of their inaugurations.

Today the Avenue is home to many federal office buildings, and in a walk down Pennsylvania on a Saturday afternoon, the majority of the few people you see are tourists on their way to see the impressive White House or the remarkable office of our Congress, the Capitol building. Maybe it is because of the large width of the Avenue itself or because of the plaques installed reminding readers of moments in our country’s history, but on a weekend or weekday evening Pennsylvania Avenue seems empty. The area isn’t as residential as other streets in the district or as commercial as other neighborhoods, and while some may use the initiative to transform this (and increase density, or foster economic development), I think the most fitting solution would be to keep the overall atmosphere unchanged. The symbolic nature of a street connecting our Commander in Chief and Executive Branch of government to the voice of the people (our Congress), represents a very American principle; a principle our country was founded on.

In making changes that are compatible with the Avenue as it has existed before and continues to exist today, while still bringing a new and fresh element to the area, I would recommend re-purposing the current FBI office building (Pennsylvania Avenue between 9th and 10th street NW). It is understood that the repurposing of any federal building can be very challenging, but in the case of the J. Edgar Hoover building, there is a lot of potential for positive additions to the area.

While it isn’t the most efficient method, if the building was torn down and then rebuilt in a smaller and lower fashion, there would be enough room to create a huge green space. My vision would have a building around half the size of the current headquarters, with a large public green space/park area for tourists to stop and sit. With benches and small tables, it could also serve as a place for federal employees to sit outside with their lunch on days when weather is permitting. My idea also includes a playground/jungle gym area in one area of the new park for children to play outside. The reason I would include an area for children in the plan for the park is because of my larger vision for the use of the new building. I think the best use of space for the location would be a community center focused on civic education and teaching local D.C children about their country and its government. Because the Avenue has always stood as a symbolic link between two branches of government, the location is perfect for making progress in the education of our country’s future leaders. Like most other states, the public school education system in D.C has a lot to work on and an educational community center focusing on teaching kids about American history and government could serve as a supplemental activity for the districts children, especially for those who for some reason are at a disadvantage (socioeconomically, academically, etc.). Through the establishment of afterschool programs, summer camps, and/or a kind of academic historical center and library, I think the center could serve as a valuable resource to enhance students’ interest and understanding of the way our government works.

My idea includes the community education center on the upper floors of the new building. The first floor though would be designated as an open cafeteria-like space. With seating and tables available for federal employees, or the tourists who walk up and down the Avenue, there would be booths set up in a circular formation around the entire first floor. The booths could be sold or rented to D.C food establishments, and help to stimulate the local economy. Food trucks have made their way to D.C and have been very successful, so this would be very similar, but indoors (a selling point for hot D.C summers) with available seating in the same place. My idea would include a sleek and modern looking open space for the cafeteria with large windows to let in natural light and provide prime people-watching opportunities for patrons enjoying lunch.



My plan for repurposing the site of the FBI headquarters would combine a green space that would add an aesthetic value to the Avenue, a venue that would benefit local food vendors and the federal employees who work in the vicinity, and most importantly- would take on the task of educating future generations in a place that has long stood as an iconic symbol of the ideals America was founded on.

— Jessica Herrera, Washington, D.C (September 07, 2014)

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[View attachment](#)

— Sulman, Alexandria, Virginia (September 07, 2014)

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[View attachment](#)

— Anjali Fisher, Washington, DC (September 05, 2014)

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[View attachment](#)

— Alana Davicino, Washington, DC (September 05, 2014)

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Could you provide information on each of the panel members that describes what in their background makes each of them an expert (your word) on what the future of Pennsylvania Avenue should become. I know only one of the panel members and though a very savvy person, i had not considered him an 'expert' visionary for the task before you. I have never heard of the other panelists and would like more information on them and what qualifies them as experts in the arena you are seeking advice on.

I would also like clarification on a phrase you used. You referred to Pennsylvania Avenue as a "special neighborhood," can you define the boundaries of this neighborhood or is this a slip of the tongue -- something that just sounded good? To me the neighborhood is Penn Quarter and one of its boundary streets is Pennsylvania Avenue. I would suspect you would agree that a boundary street is quite different than a neighborhood. In the nearly 50 years i have worked on and in this part of the city, until now, i have never heard anyone refer to The Avenue as a neighborhood.

Thank you for this opportunity to ask these questions. I look forward to your response.

— Jo-Ann Neuhaus, Penn Quarter - F bet. 9th and 10th streets, NW (September 04, 2014)

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See attached file.

[View attachment](#)

— Julie Reynes, Washington, DC (August 28, 2014)