

The **CHASE** **ACTION AGENDA**

Connecting People to Economic Opportunity in
Congress **H**eights, **A**nacostia and **S**aint **E**lizabets



CHASE

CONGRESS HEIGHTS
ANACOSTIA • ST. ELIZABETHS

MAY 2014



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WHAT IS THE ACTION AGENDA?

The Congress Heights, Anacostia, and Saint Elizabeths area—called collectively “CHASE” for this initiative—is expected to see many more new housing developments, major redevelopment projects, jobs, and transportation infrastructure investments in the next five to ten years. The *CHASE Action Agenda* takes steps to ensure that these changes bring meaningful economic opportunity to Ward 8 and its residents and businesses. It builds on unique assets already in or coming to the area, such as historic neighborhood districts, new jobs at Saint Elizabeths (East and West campuses), and increased transportation options like streetcar service. The goal of the *CHASE Action Agenda* is to prioritize implementation and develop community resources to ensure that area residents and businesses realize the benefits of renewed growth and development.

Building on the priorities highlighted in Mayor Vincent C. Gray’s Ward 8 Community Summits convened in 2011 and 2012, the *Action Agenda* examines seven topics: jobs and job training; entrepreneurship and small business development; housing; retail amenities ; preservation and redevelopment; arts and culture; and transportation connections. The *CHASE Action Agenda* focuses on two key deliverables: 1) An **Implementation Blueprint** to help guide and prioritize actions; and 2) **Resource Guides and Tools** to connect residents and businesses to resources and services covering these topics.

The *Implementation Blueprint* lays out a vision for each topic area and identifies key actions for implementation by both District agencies and community-based organizations to complete by early 2015. *The Implementation Blueprint* deliberately includes only select top priority, implementable actions to take place in the next 12 months. It is a clear statement of what government can and will do. It also serves as a road map for steps that residents and local stakeholders can take to move the community

closer to its shared vision. With momentum during the development of the *CHASE Action Agenda*, several of these actions have already jumpstarted implementation.

The **Implementation Blueprint** outlines the specific challenges facing these Ward 8 neighborhoods and identifies opportunities that can be realized when investments are made to make CHASE a more thriving place. It focuses on choices, commitments and actions that will deliver immediate results over the next year and will continue to pay dividends in the following years for residents and businesses.

The *CHASE Action Agenda* also focuses on the **creation of resources and guides** that maximize collaboration among DC agencies and utilize community organizations to help coordinate resources and connect them to community needs. The culmination of this effort was the development of several community resource guides and the organization of a Community Resource Fair on September 21, 2013. The Fair featured exhibitors from District

agencies and community-based organizations and provided residents and businesses with “one-stop” access to information on existing programs, funding, technical assistance, and training and job-placement services already available to the CHASE area.

The *CHASE Action Agenda* was made possible through a **Community Challenge Planning Grant** awarded to the District of Columbia’s Department of Housing and Community

Development (DHCD) in late 2010 from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. The grant has funded a number of projects and builds on existing city and federal investments in the CHASE area. The Challenge grant emphasizes affordable housing, economic development, and community engagement to benefit the

community and its residents. The *CHASE Action Agenda* was spearheaded by the District of Columbia’s Office of Planning (OP) in partnership with DHCD, and under the direction of an Advisory Committee of local stakeholders and community leaders.



WHY NOW?

On the Cusp of Change

Na resurgent Washington, D.C., the Anacostia and Congress Heights neighborhoods that flank St. Elizabeths East Campus have also begun to experience renewed interest.

Over the past decade, the District government has been committed to providing these areas with multimodal access improvements and other infrastructure investments in order to seamlessly link southeast Washington and St. Elizabeths with the rest of the city and region. The new 11th Street Bridge and enhanced interchange, planned Frederick Douglass Bridge, planned new infrastructure at St. Elizabeths East, proposed streetcar access, and improved streetscapes and commercial corridors are examples of the this improved connectivity and development potential for CHASE neighborhoods.

The current administration under Mayor Vincent C. Gray has placed high importance on investing in the city's East End and growing an inclusive city with development and opportunities that benefit all residents. Creation of the St. Elizabeths East Innovation Hub has been a top priority. Anacostia's commercial corridors have experienced considerable new investment in recent years, such as establishment of new headquarters for the D.C. Department of Housing and Community Development at the prime intersection of Martin Luther King Jr. Avenue and Good Hope Road. Additionally, 160 units of new condominiums have been built in the vicinity. In summer 2013, the owners of the Curtis Brothers property in downtown Anacostia announced plans for a new residential building on W Street SE and the adaptive reuse of an office building on Shannon Place SE as initial phases of more significant redevelopment on this property.

As part of the proposed new DC United Soccer stadium in Buzzard Point, the Reeves Center, a municipal complex currently at U and 14th Streets NW, is expected to move to public land in Anacostia, off Good Hope Road, adding to the municipal anchors that will further catalyze the private market and increase the population of daytime employees to support retail.

Anacostia also looks to build its prominence as an affordable alternative for the arts and small businesses. ARCH Development Corporation opened the Hive on Martin Luther King Jr. Avenue in Anacostia in 2010, a small-business incubator that features offices and shared resources like meeting spaces and equipment aimed at budding entrepreneurs, small businesses and non-profit organizations. The HIVE has since been consolidated into a new HIVE 2.0 location on Good Hope Road and continues to draw members.



Mixed-use development proposed for Congress Heights (upper image) and an Anacostia parking lot owned by Curtis Brothers Furniture (lower image) which is a likely future development site suggest growing investor interest in CHASE neighborhoods.



The opening of the new US Coast Guard headquarters (upper image) brought 3,700 jobs to the St. Elizabeths West campus, which could ultimately hold 14,000 new jobs. HIVE 2.0 (lower image) opened in 2012 and added an Arts Center in early 2013.

Anacostia is also shaping into an emerging arts district. Investment in the arts has brought several additions to the neighborhood including the Anacostia Arts Center, Honfleur Art Gallery, and the Gallery at Vivid Solutions. In 2013, Anacostia became the new home of the Anacostia Playhouse, which relocated from H Street, NE (where it operated as the H Street Playhouse). These new amenities combined with anchors such as the Smithsonian’s Anacostia Community Museum, American Poetry Museum and Frederick Douglass National Historic Site create a distinctive arts and culture hub.

The redevelopment of St. Elizabeths East and West campuses is expected to be transformational for Congress Heights in particular and Ward 8 as a

whole. Redevelopment of St. Elizabeths East alone will eventually deliver approximately 1,300 new housing units, almost 2 million square feet of new office space, and more than 200,000 square feet of new retail space. The consolidation of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security’s headquarters facilities at St. Elizabeths West, when complete, will be the largest federal government building project since the construction of the Pentagon. The West Campus is expected to host more than 14,000 federal employees at full build-out. 2013 marked completion of the new Coast Guard headquarters, with five acres of green roof; it now accommodates 3,700 employees. Helping to enliven the St. Elizabeths area with new community spaces and state-of-the-art architecture is the St. Elizabeths pavilion, “Gateway DC.” It opened on the East Campus in fall 2013 and provides a significant new amenity for the Congress Heights community and St. Elizabeths campus workers, with green space; lunchtime retail and dining; educational and cultural programming; and a farmer’s market.

In the past ten years, the areas that surround St. Elizabeths East have added significant new development: 2,975 new residential units and 114,000 square feet of new retail space. Ancillary development is also occurring at the Congress Heights Metrorail station. City Partners and Sanford Capital plan to build a 275,000-square-foot office building with 20,000 square feet of retail space on top of the southern station entrance. In addition, the Friendship Technology Preparatory Academy is building a new 80,000-square-foot facility at Milwaukee Place and Martin Luther King Jr. Avenue, SE.

The DC Vibrant Retail Streets Toolkit (VRST), developed through the DC Office of Planning, was applied to Anacostia and Congress Heights commercial districts in 2013 to determine



The new Gateway DC Pavilion at St. Elizabeths East creates a major new amenity for surrounding neighborhoods.

which strategies would help improve the retail core in these neighborhoods. The Vibrant Retail Streets Toolkit provides a framework for evaluating retail streets in the District, enabling them to truly thrive by stimulating greater and more innovative collaboration among retail stakeholders, supporting retail entrepreneurs, and ensuring shoppers have a greater selection of products and services. With renewed attention to urban markets by retailers in general, and growing interest in the CHASE area in particular, the application of VRST customized workshops and technical assistance programs will help to advance a vision for retail in the CHASE area with strategic next steps and a basis for community collaboration and commercial district management.

In February 2014, Mayor Gray announced the launch of “forWARD 8: Investing in Our Future,” awarding \$2.5 million to support a package of District-led career-training and business-development projects for Ward 8 residents. Programs supported with these funds are incorporated into the Implementation Blueprint action steps and include: the Demonstration Center at St. Elizabeths; culinary and entrepreneurship training; construction training with connections to jobs generated by St. Elizabeths infrastructure; and a Ward 8 business directory. The forWARD 8 initiative is in direct

response to the priorities identified at the Ward 8 Community Summits in 2011 and 2012.

Growing reinvestment in and around CHASE comes after a period of significant community-based planning intended to identify ways to get the most benefit from reinvestment for the community. Both locally and nationally, urban reinvestment has often deepened economic and social gaps between residents who can afford living and working in improved urban settings and those who end up priced out. Specific actions—such as enhanced job-training programs, home-improvement loans to existing homeowners, and home-buyer assistance—can ensure that the residents who today call Anacostia and Congress Heights home will also benefit from community revitalization.

Through the CHASE initiative and other planning efforts, the District government and a host of community organizations have identified a wide and growing range of innovative programs and resources that can help bring more positive outcomes from new investment within CHASE. The *CHASE Action Agenda* helps to raise awareness and access to these programs. Implementation of the *Action Agenda* will also create a legacy of partnerships among the community, the District, and the private sector aimed at increasing investor confidence and stabilizing and enhancing the community.

FOUNDATION OF THE AGENDA

Stakeholder Engagement



Mayor Gray's Ward 8 Community Summits, conducted in July 2011 and July 2012 and attended by hundreds of residents, provided strong direction to the goals of this *Action Agenda*.

The CHASE process itself has involved significant outreach to stakeholders, both groups and individuals, to improve methods for connecting people with resources. Engagement has occurred through three primary mechanisms: an Advisory Committee, interagency coordination, and a Community Resource Fair.

ADVISORY COMMITTEE

An Advisory Committee comprised of community-based organizations, community leaders, residents, and local business representatives, was created to shape the CHASE Action Agenda and guide community input and outreach. The committee met regularly with the project team and provided feedback on the Action Agenda including implementation actions for each topic area and identifying organizations, programs, and stakeholders that could provide information and/or resources that would benefit the CHASE community.



(Left) The Advisory Committee of community stakeholders helped shape the Action Agenda. (Below) The Action Agenda builds on the recommendations of many planning efforts from the last ten years, including the Ward 8 Community Summits of 2011 and 2012.



COMMUNITY RESOURCE FAIR

In order to connect residents to existing programs and funding opportunities for housing, employment, training and small business development, a Community Resource Fair was conducted at Savoy Elementary School in Anacostia in September 2013. A station on the *Action Agenda* and *Implementation Blueprint* was featured where Office of Planning staff solicited public feedback regarding topic areas.

Core Themes

Residents in the CHASE area have taken part in many planning efforts; approximately 30 reports and plans have focused on the area over the last 10 years. Working to build on, and not duplicate

these efforts, all past plans were reviewed as part of the CHASE Action Agenda. An appendix describes how each study applies to the CHASE study area.

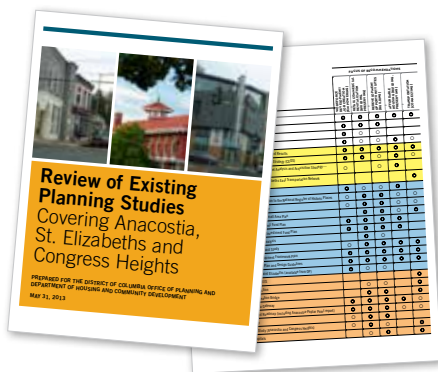
The *CHASE Action Agenda* departs from past plans in its focus on action and implementation toward realizing the visions laid out in those prior

efforts. Community stakeholders were clear that it was important that this initiative help to “move the needle” toward realizing a revitalized and inclusive CHASE area that maximizes neighborhood potential while benefiting existing residents.

Mayor Gray’s Ward 8 Community Summits produced a set of priority issues to guide the

CHASE planning effort. These issues were divided into seven categories that create the structure of this *Action Agenda*: jobs; housing; retail entrepreneurship and small businesses; arts and culture; preservation and redevelopment; and transportation. A review of the 30 previous studies identified several themes that correspond with all or most of the seven categories. Identification of these themes helped to further define the needs expressed by the community and guided the development of the *CHASE Action Agenda*. Key themes included:

- All major implementation initiatives must promote **job access and workforce development** opportunities.
- **Enhanced safety** in Ward 8 is necessary to improve retail businesses and protect property values.
- Gentrification and concern about **potential displacement** need to be addressed through multiple strategies to support both renters and homeowners who need affordable housing.
- Early implementation actions should include measures to produce **improved retail options** through “pop-up” stores, a clean-streets initiative, and other quick-start steps.
- **Cultural tourism** efforts to make Anacostia a destination place should align with historic preservation priorities.
- **Investment visibility** for new development, streetscape improvements, and public art installations will play a central role in highlighting economic growth and opportunity within CHASE.
- Priorities should include support for existing and development of new **education, recreation, and work opportunities for youth**.



Multiple planning efforts have focused on the CHASE neighborhoods over the last decade. As part of the Action Agenda, all plans were reviewed and summarized in a separate appendix.

Implementation BLUEPRINT

The Implementation Blueprint identifies 12-month Action Steps to be implemented throughout 2014 and into early 2015. Only select top priority, implementable actions to take place in the next 12 months were selected for inclusion and several have already jumpstarted implementation during the *CHASE Action Agenda* process. These actions are organized into seven topic areas, each with a guiding vision statement. **Action Steps** are specific actions that District government, community groups, or other stakeholders can immediately undertake to meet the objectives of each topic area. Many District-wide policies that support the *CHASE Action Agenda*, such as Mandatory Inclusionary Zoning for housing, do not appear within this document but are already in place and will help meet the Agenda's goals.





JOBS & WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

CHASE residents will have access to a broad range of career development options through expanded opportunities for education, local employment, and training, both locally and globally.

VISION

Burgeoning redevelopment in the CHASE area has the opportunity to improve access to quality, good-paying jobs, a paramount concern for many residents. Investments at the St. Elizabeths campus and revitalization of commercial districts with new small businesses introduce new employment options.

employment, providing resources that break the cycle of poverty, and equipping residents with job-ready skills are essential in a competitive market for good-paying, low-barrier-to-entry jobs. As the District of Columbia evolves toward a knowledge-based economy, ensuring that CHASE residents are prepared for employment opportunities becomes an even greater imperative.

Workforce-development opportunities that can enhance job readiness and access are in high demand within the CHASE communities, which have long grappled with unemployment and under-employment. While 17.7 percent of the population in Ward 8 is currently unemployed, the unemployment rate has steadily fallen from a high of 26.9 percent in June 2011. As new opportunities for employment arrive, collaboration among players who have served the community in the past can help assure that residents benefit from new economic development.

The 12-month Action Steps build on earlier workforce and economic development studies and reflect both analysis from the Department of Employment Services (DOES) and objectives drawn up by the Ward 8 Workforce Development Council, two major actors promoting workforce development. Removing historic barriers to

IMPROVEMENTS IN JOB TRAINING AND JOB ASSISTANCE

- As of June 2012, 16% of Ward 8 residents obtained employment through programs offered by the **Department of Employment Services (DOES)**.
- The **DC American Job Center** (formerly One Stop Center), run by DOES and located in Congress Heights, has made significant changes, focusing more closely on staff development to improve customer service, and implementing Eligible Training Provider requirements.
- Since its inception in 2007, the **Ward 8 Workforce Development Council** has brought employment and training opportunities to 550 Ward 8 residents.

Ward 8 Snapshot

12-month Action Steps for JOBS & WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

DISTRICT AGENCIES

- 1** Create the Center for Construction Careers in Congress Heights to train and place Ward 8 residents in skilled construction jobs. Connect Ward 8 residents with opportunities presented by the \$113 million in infrastructure construction for the St. Elizabeths East Campus. (DOES/DDOT)
- 2** Promote the enrollment of Ward 8 residents in the Registered Apprentice program that provides a combination of on-the-job training and related technical instruction in a chosen industry. (DOES)
- 3** Assist local and regional employers in meeting hiring needs for CHASE residents through the Workforce Investment Council. (DMPED)
- 4** Launch a free culinary training program for Ward 8 residents to prepare them for culinary job opportunities. (DOES)
- 5** Construct the Demonstration Center at the St. Elizabeths chapel to support workforce development and job-readiness. (DMPED/DGS)

COMMUNITY-BASED ORGANIZATIONS

- 1** Convene quarterly meetings and disseminate information to residents about economic and workforce development projects, education and training resources, wraparound support services, and employment and entrepreneurship opportunities (Ward 8 Workforce Development Council).
- 2** Enter partnerships with business improvement districts outside of the CHASE neighborhoods to link to employment opportunities for CHASE residents. (Ward 8 Workforce Development Council)



2



The CHASE area will offer a broad range of quality housing choices that serve a full spectrum of household types and income levels.

VISION

The CHASE area boasts a diverse housing stock, from single-family historic properties to subsidized multi-family apartment buildings. The community values this robust range of housing and wants to retain it as the area revitalizes. To ensure that all CHASE residents gain from the changes coming to the area, housing stability, housing affordability, and increased homeownership stand as a key focus of the Action Agenda. Currently, only 23 percent of households own homes, compared with 42 percent citywide.

Housing also offers the biggest and most transformative opportunity for rehabilitating blighted properties and filling vacant lots with people and buildings that strengthen neighborhood vitality and character. The CHASE area has seen an influx of new housing in recent years, including Sheridan Station, Wheeler Road Renaissance, the planned Congress Heights Metro redevelopment, and Cedar Hill Flats (former “Big K” site). The DC Housing Authority has also selected a developer and master planner to explore redeveloping Barry Farm as a mixed-use, mixed-income community.

The community welcomes housing investment, particularly if it increases quality housing options that serve a broad range of household types and income levels, and both renters and owners. CHASE is ideal for housing development, given its proximity to Center City and its rich transit choices—including Metro, Circulator, bus and future streetcar—which provide good connections to jobs and amenities. Developers have already proposed hundreds of potential units of new market-rate rental housing.

The CHASE neighborhoods combine one of the District’s largest concentrations of affordable housing, and significant opportunity to add more market-rate housing for new residents. More than one-third of renters and homeowners within the area spend more than 30 percent of their income on housing, making them cost-burdened by standard measures. The Action Steps address these conditions in multiple ways, including the preservation of existing affordability; the addition of new affordable units in mixed-income settings; improvements of housing security; active solicitation of quality new development; and measures intended to increase ownership opportunities.

12-month Action Steps for AFFORDABLE HOUSING

DISTRICT AGENCIES

- 1** Finance and advance CHASE-area affordable-housing development projects identified in DHCD's Development Finance pipeline. (DHCD)
- 2** Provide funding for Tenant Opportunity to Purchase Act (TOPA) acquisitions. (DHCD)
- 3** Seek development approval for new housing at Barry Farm. (DCHA)



COMMUNITY-BASED ORGANIZATIONS

- 1** Distribute the housing resource guide created for CHASE to local stakeholder groups in order to explain available housing resources more efficiently. (AEDC)
- 2** Explore partnerships between developers, Community Based Organizations (CBO), and lenders to enhance CBO capacity for the creation of new housing. (Training Grounds)



Implementation BLUEPRINT

3



The CHASE area will contain a complete set of quality neighborhood retail choices to serve residents, create jobs, attract visitors, and provide support to local small businesses.

VISION

The CHASE area has two distinct retail districts, one in Anacostia and the other in Congress Heights. The Anacostia corridor extends along Martin Luther King Jr. Avenue SE (between Howard Rd SE and Good Hope Rd SE) and Good Hope Rd SE (from Martin Luther King Jr. Avenue to 18th St SE). In Congress Heights, the commercial district follows Martin Luther King Jr. Avenue SE between Milwaukee Pl SE and 4th St SE.

CHASE residents support the continued revitalization of these commercial areas, especially recruitment of new quality stores and services. Each retail area has a management entity—Anacostia Business Improvement District (BID) and Congress Heights Main Streets, respectively—that works to build capacity and improve appearance and amenities. District investments in infrastructure and façade improvements for small businesses, interest from private entrepreneurs, and new

housing have begun to change the landscape and the opportunity for retail in these emerging markets.

As emerging commercial Districts, Anacostia and Congress Heights face some challenges to revitalization. High levels of storefront vacancy can undermine efforts to create a retail street, and vacancy rates in the two commercial districts are high: 9 percent in Congress Heights and 32 percent in Anacostia. Vacant lots and storefronts and non-retail uses also disrupt the continuity of retail corridors. At the same time, both neighborhoods have a significant shortage of neighborhood-serving businesses such as restaurants, grocery stores, and general merchandise stores. While older building stock creates authentic character, these buildings often require restoration or retrofitting to attract new tenants, which makes filling them a challenge. Despite these challenges, the CHASE neighborhoods could attract gradual but steady retail growth.

	ANACOSTIA	CONGRESS HEIGHTS	WASHINGTON
Retail tenants	81	39	4,158
Retail space	272,000sf	107,000sf	21,000,000sf
Average retail rent	\$24.25/sf	\$24.18/sf	\$45.00/sf
YTD absorption	15,930sf	- 8,200sf	470,000sf
Vacancy	7.6%	8.5%	5.6%
Retail gap*	\$48,000,000	\$245,000,000	—
Categories with the largest retail gaps	Grocery stores; clothing and accessories; health and personal care; full-service restaurants; general merchandise; gas stations/auto-oriented uses		—

* A retail gap reflects spending by study-area households in stores located outside of the study area.

Source: CoStar; ESRI 2Q 2013 data

12-month Action Steps for **RETAIL OPTIONS**

DISTRICT AGENCIES	
1	Provide \$100k in funding for Anacostia’s “clean team.” (DSLBD)
2	Support Congress Heights Main Streets in providing “clean team” services and business development assistance to Congress Heights. (DSLBD)
3	Register additional community-based enterprises from CHASE. (DSLBD)
4	Create a broker program that trains nonprofit organizations to promote and market the Anacostia neighborhood. (OP)
5	Promote the Great Streets Program for Martin Luther King Jr. Avenue SE and South Capitol Street SE. (DMPED)
6	Program pop-up retailers at the Saint Elizabeths Pavilion that help to expand the retail options for CHASE residents. (DMPED)
7	Undertake a vibrant-retail-zone space assessment for Anacostia. (OP)
8	Conduct temporary urbanism event for Congress Heights and develop a lessons-learned memo. (OP)
9	Conduct community visioning exercise for the Martin Luther King Jr. Ave. corridor in Congress Heights and develop a white paper. (OP)
10	Develop a Ward 8 Business Directory highlighting businesses arranged by category to further support small-business development (OP).

Millions of square feet of new residential, office, and retail space, have either been recently completed or are on the horizon in the CHASE Area. The Washington, DC Economic Partnership identified demand for 70,000 square feet of new retail and restaurants by 2015 in Anacostia. Congress Heights also has unmet demand for restaurants, food stores, and personal care services. Both retail corridors have added new workers and residents, increasing potential demand.

COMMUNITY-BASED ORGANIZATIONS	
1	Continue to update the Eat.Shop.Live website to promote CHASE area businesses. (ARCH)
2	Provide \$15K in façade improvements to six businesses in Congress Heights. (CHMS)
3	Provide business-repositioning technical assistance to ten businesses in Congress Heights. (CHMS)
4	Create brochures that market the opportunities offered in Anacostia and Congress Heights and describe a vision of the future. (Anacostia BID)



IMAGE: NURISH FOOD + DRINK (1231 GOOD HOPPER SE)

The DC Vibrant Retail Streets Toolkit was applied to Anacostia and Congress Heights in 2013. The toolkit provides a framework for creating healthy retail streets by stimulating greater and more innovative collaboration among retail stakeholders, supporting entrepreneurs, and increasing the selection of products and services for shoppers. Application of the toolkit helped identify key steps for revitalizing retail. The District also allocated money from a HUD Challenge Grant to begin implementing key action items in downtown Anacostia and Congress Heights.

The Action Steps above build on these efforts and opportunities by making retail space easier to create, upgrade, and occupy and by making the public realm more supportive of pedestrian-oriented retail.

4



The CHASE area will retain, attract and sustain a wide variety of entrepreneurs seeking to start and grow their businesses.

VISION

Small businesses are the heart of the U.S. economy, and countless Americans dream of becoming entrepreneurs and small business owners. Ward 8 has nine percent (9%) of the District's Certified Business Enterprises. In a city with one of the highest rates of entrepreneurship in the country, Anacostia and Congress Heights have qualities that make them particularly good hosts for entrepreneurs and small businesses, including:

- Strong transportation access: Metro stations, Circulator, bus, the Anacostia Freeway, and Suitland Parkway all provide short travel times for employees and customers traveling by transit or car to and from the CHASE planning area.
- Lower rents and plentiful retail space offer an important option for new businesses that cannot afford to locate in downtown Washington.
- A range of existing District programs that support small businesses already operate in Anacostia and Congress Heights.
- Opportunities for shared office space at the HIVE 2.0 located in Anacostia.

The CHASE area already hosts multiple small businesses. As the St. Elizabeths campuses undergo redevelopment, new housing is constructed throughout the area, and more District government agencies move to Anacostia, existing and new small businesses must have the ability to capitalize on these new markets. To support existing businesses and emerging entrepreneurs, the CHASE planning process produced a *DC Retail & Small Business Resource Guide*, which outlines existing resources for small businesses and entrepreneurs. A *Financial Resources Guide*, also a product of the process, catalogs potential resources that can help nonprofits and small businesses find the capital to strengthen and expand their organizations.

The Action Steps address small business development and support in multiple ways, including marketing, technical assistance, training and connecting to District resources and business opportunities.

12-month Action Steps for ENTREPRENEURSHIP & SMALL BUSINESSES

DISTRICT AGENCIES	COMMUNITY-BASED ORGANIZATIONS
<p>1 Through the creation of the Demonstration Center, provide temporary space at the Saint Elizabeths East chapel for entrepreneurship and a Digital Inclusion Center. (DMPED)</p>	<p>1 Promote the Anacostia Arts Center as a place where private companies and government agencies can hold functions related to small business and entrepreneurial opportunities at St. Elizabeths. (ARCH)</p>
<p>2 Provide one-on-one assistance from trained, certified professionals at the American Jobs Center in Congress Heights for aspiring entrepreneurs and small business owners. (DOES)</p>	<p>2 Promote the HIVE 2.0 as a business incubator leading to entrepreneurial success within Historic Anacostia. (ARCH)</p>
<p>3 Provide free entrepreneurship training courses to residents of Ward 8 that are interested in starting their own businesses. (DOES/DSLBD)</p>	<p>3 Capitalize on and publicize/market the Business Development Center in Anacostia. (AEDC)</p>





The CHASE area will be a thriving arts and culture destination, strengthening the existing arts district and growing new ones.

VISION

Congress Heights, Anacostia, and Saint Elizabeths boast a long-standing arts and cultural scene and are home to a multiple arts and cultural organizations. Coupled with the area's natural heritage, this cultural activity contributes a creative richness and vibrancy found in few other parts of the city. The arts have generally proved effective generators of economic growth and stability by providing attractive and familiar destinations for visitors and residents.

Anacostia boasts an emerging arts and cultural hub in which new additions—including Honfleur Art Gallery, the Gallery at Vivid Solutions, and the Anacostia Playhouse—join established institutions like the Smithsonian's Anacostia Community Museum, the American Poetry Museum, and the Frederick Douglass National Historic Site. Newly developed live/work spaces for artists have brought more artists to make their homes in the area. Anacostia is particularly well positioned to contribute to the growing creative economy and to compete regionally for creative businesses looking for office space.

One example of cultural activity within the CHASE area is Lumen8Anacostia, which took place in June

2012 and June 2013. The week-long series of events featured art, music, and a light festival with over 100 performers and visual artists along with ten pop-up boutiques. LUMEN8Anacostia's "temporiums" focused primarily on the arts, in particular the fine arts, providing an opportunity for artists and curators to become entrepreneurs or for performers to showcase their talents. More than 100,000 people visited Lumen8Anacostia in 2012, making Anacostia a top creative destination within the District.

The ongoing transformation of the old St. Elizabeths Hospital can also play a part in making the arts more visible in Congress Heights. The addition of the new Gateway DC Pavilion, with its defining presence and distinctive contemporary architecture, provides a new venue not only for retail but also for cultural programming and community events.

The Action Steps contain practical strategies to strengthen arts and culture in the area, connect creative work to larger civic issues, and to increase access to cultural experiences within the CHASE neighborhoods.

12-month Action Steps for ARTS & CULTURE

DISTRICT AGENCIES

- 1** Develop artistic way-finding at the St. Elizabeths Pavilion along MLK Jr. Avenue. (DMPED/DCCAH)
- 2** Provide public art at that Congress Heights Metro Station. (DMPED/DCCAH)
- 3** Promote the Saint Elizabeths East Campus by conducting festivals and activities at the Gateway Pavilion. (DMPED)

COMMUNITY-BASED ORGANIZATIONS

- 1** Work with program staff at Pavilion to promote East of River artists and cultural organizations. (ARCH)
- 2** Promote all the cultural assets within the CHASE neighborhoods. (Cultural Tourism DC)
- 3** Highlight local artists within the CHASE area and use the HIVE 2.0 to leverage additional marketing of their skills. (ARCH)





The CHASE area will feature a mix of new housing, office, educational and retail real estate reinvestment. This will help bring new economic life to vacant and underutilized buildings and lots that capitalizes on historic assets, improves business district corridors, and attracts new development around Metro stations.

Prominent historic buildings of varying ages and styles grace the CHASE neighborhoods and can continue to accommodate many uses while contributing greatly to the area's overall character and marketability. The Anacostia Historic District, comprising 550 buildings built between 1854 and 1930, dates to 1973, when it became one of the first Washington neighborhoods to win district designation. It was expanded and listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1978. High-quality historic and vernacular architecture throughout the CHASE neighborhoods provides a strong foundation for rehabilitation and new development.

In a similar vein, redevelopment of the Saint Elizabeths campus opens a new chapter in the hospital's long and remarkable history, which stretches back to the 1850s. Implementation of the master plan, now underway, will create an important mixed-use hub and employment center in Congress Heights while respecting the institution's architectural and urban heritage.

Vacant and underutilized sites offer redevelopment opportunities for a variety of land uses within the

CHASE neighborhoods. While weak market demand had discouraged reinvestment in underused sites for some time, demand has begun to strengthen for historic houses and new construction. At the same time, the District government has acquired several prominent vacant sites with the goal of stimulating redevelopment by private investors, such as at the Big K site on Martin Luther King Jr. Avenue SE. The District has also focused on using municipal agency offices to anchor new and existing office development, particularly in Downtown Anacostia with the move of DHCD headquarters and the proposed Reeves Center relocation. Reinforcing the CHASE neighborhood's urban character and promoting quality architecture and development will help Anacostia and Congress Heights benefit from growing market interest in the area.

The Action Steps encourage preservation and redevelopment at all scales. Owners of residential and commercial buildings will find resources for improving their properties. Developers, particularly small and local ones, will find tools for identifying economically feasible rehabilitation, restoration, and new construction.

12-month Action Steps for PRESERVATION & REDEVELOPMENT

DISTRICT AGENCIES

- 1** Develop design guidelines for Historic Anacostia and ensure that any new development proposals adhere to them. (OP)
- 2** Select a developer for 1909 Martin Luther King, Jr. Avenue, which highlights the CHASE vision for the creation of quality housing and retail choices. (DMPED)
- 3** Issue a request for proposals for Phase 1 development at St. Elizabeths East Campus. (DMPED)
- 4** Issue a pattern book for design aid for new construction and renovation of residential buildings (single-family dwellings, two-family dwellings, townhouses, and multifamily dwellings). (OP)
- 5** Provide financial assistance to help qualified homeowners pay for repairs that restore or rehabilitate their historic house. (OP/HPO)
- 6** Promote creative uses (e.g., artist housing, studios) in the reuse of city-owned assets, such as underutilized and vacant properties. (DMPED)



COMMUNITY-BASED ORGANIZATIONS

- 1** Explore the opportunity for Historic District expansion. (HABA)
- 2** Provide a mix of uses within the Wheeler Road project that aligns with the vision developed for this topic area. (Washington Business Group)



BLUEPRINT



The CHASE area will support economic and community development with a variety of convenient transportation choices, including high-quality walking and biking options, innovative parking solutions, and diverse transit choices that benefit health, household economics, and community vitality.

Transportation systems make business, trade, and other activities possible. A strong network is vital to expanding jobs, retail, small businesses and housing in the CHASE study area, which already enjoys competitive strategic transportation advantages in both vehicular and transit access.

Public investment—recently completed or still under way—has significantly enhanced connectivity in the CHASE neighborhoods. The sidebar shows how this investment will strengthen every form of movement, from walking and bicycling to buses, streetcars, and vehicles, creating a system that works for all users. Improving walking, transit and biking options makes particular sense: they can help capture the economic-development and public-health benefits that a walkable, bikeable community provides, and they offer households practical alternatives to the high costs of car ownership and operation.

Recent investments, such as the new 11th Street Bridge and the upcoming South Capitol Street Bridge reconstruction, aim not only to reduce nonresident traffic passing through Ward 8, but also to provide stronger and more efficient links for all modes to the rest of the city. Public transit improvements—Metrobus A line revisions, DC Circulator’s East of the River extension, DC Streetcar, and multimodal

accommodations on the rebuilt bridges—represent upgrades that will benefit residents who depend on public transportation to get to jobs, schools, and shopping.

- > **Great Streets Improvements on MLK Jr Avenue and South Capitol Street** (sidewalks, lighting, etc.)
Completed; \$19.5 million
- > **Great Streets (Pennsylvania Avenue)**
Completed; \$28.9 million
- > **Capital Bikeshare stations** (3 initially, 5 additional in CHASE)
Completed (fall 2011)
- > **DC Circulator east of the river**
Completed (fall 2011)
- > **Study for the reuse of 11th Street Bridge span**
Completed (2012)
- > **Road and sidewalk improvements** (including Good Hope Road to MLK Jr Avenue)
- > **Logan Park streetscape project** (14th Street between U and V streets SE)
Completed; \$390,000
- > **Sidewalk maintenance and repairs and pedestrian lighting improvements with Streetcar**
Completed
- > **Initial Streetcar line and road reconstruction**
Underway
- > **West Campus access road construction**
Underway
- > **11th Street Bridge** (ongoing)
Underway; \$390 million (estimated)
- > **Metrobus A Line study and improvements**
Completed

VISION

Ward 8 Snapshot

12-month Action Steps for **TRANSPORTATION CONNECTIONS**

DISTRICT AGENCIES	COMMUNITY-BASED ORGANIZATIONS
<p>1 Complete the Anacostia Streetcar Environmental Assessment and Section 106 Evaluation. (DDOT)</p>	<p>1 Provide three group rides for residents of Ward 8. (Washington Area Bicyclist Association)</p>
<p>2 Continue work on Phase 2 of the 11th Street Bridge project. (DDOT)</p>	<p>2 Provide 20 free Capital Bikeshare memberships to Ward 8 residents. (Washington Area Bicyclist Association)</p>
<p>3 Complete the remaining 8 miles of the Anacostia Riverwalk Trail. (DDOT)</p>	<p>3 Provide a “Learn to Ride” bicycle course in Ward 8. (Washington Area Bicyclist Association)</p>
<p>4 Provide training opportunities in the highway construction industry for women, minorities, and disadvantaged persons. (DDOT)</p>	<p>4 Launch and complete a nationwide design competition for the future 11th Street Bridge Park. (THEARC/Building Bridges Across the River)</p>



In addition to functional transportation routes, the CHASE neighborhoods have added new recreational amenities and access to the waterfront. A continuous 20-mile trail on both sides of the Anacostia River, the Riverwalk Trail System is a new recreational amenity and transportation alternative. The 10- to 12-foot-wide trail accommodates a wide range of users—from cyclists and runners to skaters and walkers—and introduces seating areas, bike racks, and interactive maps. These amenities enhance quality of life and affirm the CHASE neighborhoods as waterfront communities. Twelve of an eventual 20 miles of trail have opened to date and have attracted heavy use.

The Action Steps stress implementation of projects that support the CHASE economic-development goals, maximize benefits, and minimize construction impacts.



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District Department of Small and Local Business Development

District Department of Transportation

District of Columbia Housing Authority

District of Columbia Housing Finance Agency

Office of the Deputy Mayor for Planning and Economic Development

Office of the Tenant Advocate

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