

Finding Sustainable Urban Patterns: Streets and Housing Stock in Congress Heights

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Congress Heights Boundaries



Esri Map Maker Online, modified with
Illustrator

Community Concerns

- A sense of disconnection from the city west of the river
 - Desire to preserve the “Soul of the City” and historic character of Congress Heights
 - Safety at Metro and access points along Alabama Avenue
 - Community’s current reliance on cars: shift with younger generations
- Addressing Community Concerns through Design Guidelines:

- Streetscape Guidelines
 - Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED)
 - Sustainability

Summary Overview

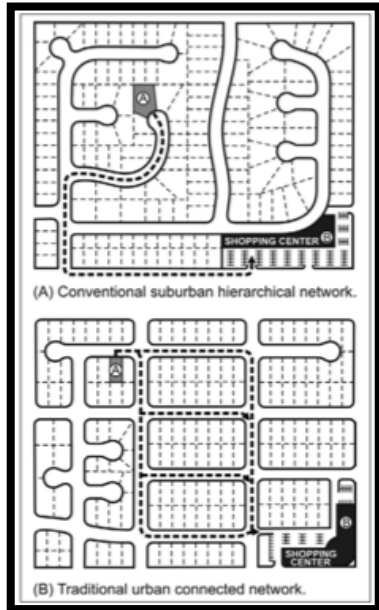
To improve the physical manifestation of the Soul of the City:

- Fundamental Principles:
 - Promote Safety
 - Encourage Walkability
 - Retain Affordable Living for Current Residents
 - Advance Environmental Sustainability
- Spirit of Place
 - Enhance Connection to the Capital City
 - Encourage Community



Congress Heights Community
Partnership, Twitter

Existing Street Patterns

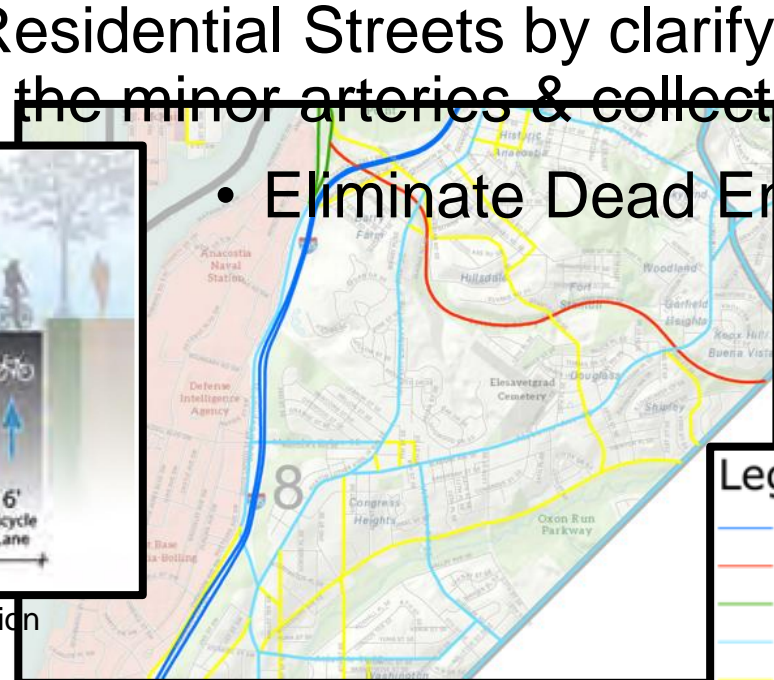


- Commercial Strip – bleed historic MLK and Alabama into new TOD at Metro station
- “Knit” collector streets into the larger system
- Preserve Residential Streets by clarifying the minor arterials & collectors
- Eliminate Dead Ends

Connect street patterns and reduce block lengths



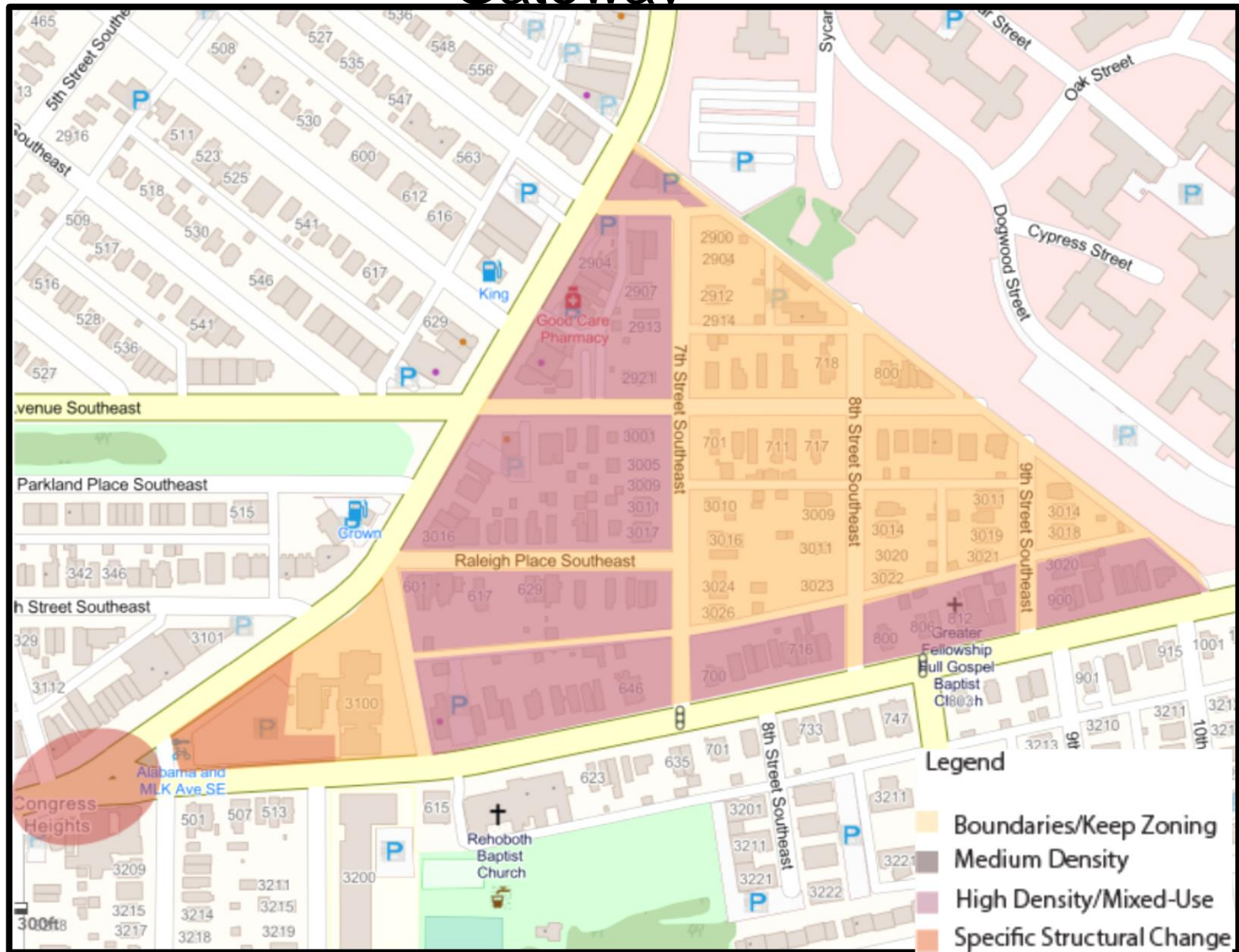
DDOT Proposed Alabama Street Section



DDOT Functional Classification Map 2016



Focus Area 1: Historic Commercial Strip and CH Gateway



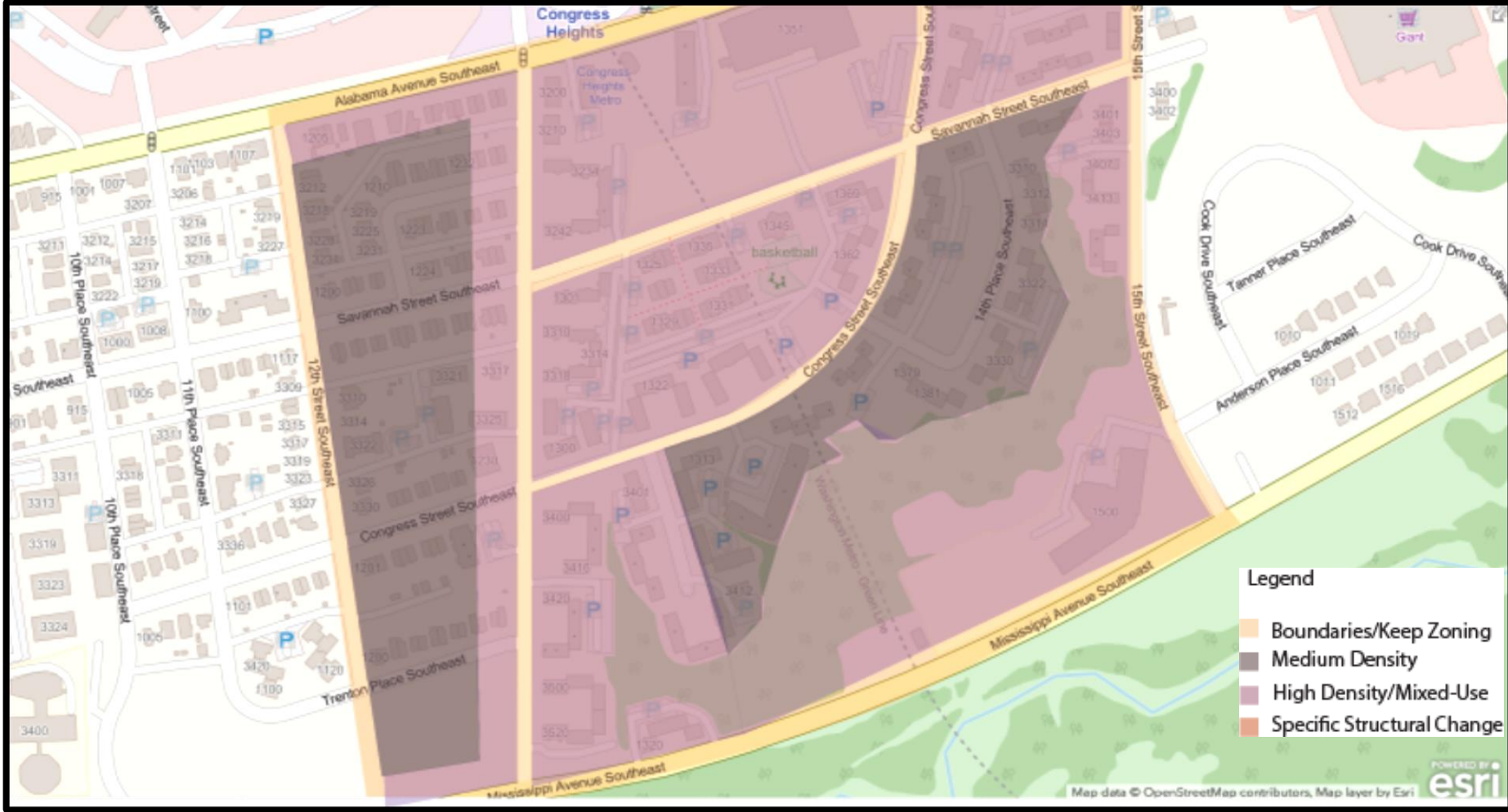
Esri Map Maker Online, modified with Illustrator

Focus Area 1: Historic Commercial Strip and CH Gateway

- Revise traffic pattern for Legibility
- Connect St. E's East
- Separate Residential from Arteries & Collectors
- Create Pedestrian Street Wall
 - Avoid Surface parking & bleeding Edge



Focus Area 2: Metro South



Esri Map Maker Online, modified with Illustrator

Focus Area 2: Metro South

Alabama to Mississippi S of Metro
(10th to Stanton)

- Large Apartment Blocks interrupt street grid
 - Eliminate Dead ends
 - Engage pedestrian sidewalks
 - Subordinate parking lots
- Phase out apartment blocks for street-facing townhouses and mixed-income residences

Topography Challenge

- Open Up Views to Oxon Run & Nature



Dead end at 13th St. Place, SE



Stanton Road topography

Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design(CPTED)

- A culmination of best practice design interventions that are proven to decrease crime
- These design interventions can be integrated into a single building, but are most effective when incorporated into an entire neighborhood through zoning or codes
- The four major overarching principles of CPTED are Natural Surveillance, Territorial Reinforcement, Natural Access Control, and

Friendship Heights Example of CPTED



Savannah Street Cattle Chute(Giant Access)

Streetscape Modifications



Open street grid

- Increased safety for residents
- Promote greater connectivity

Reorient buildings to face the street

- Improved streetscape
- Promotes safety
- Allows for more welcoming feeling

IFPO, CPTED

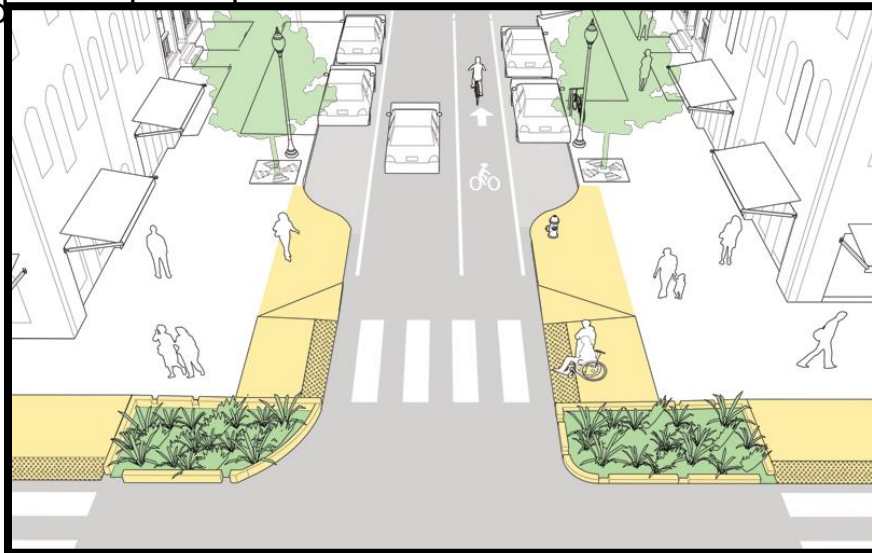
Streetscape modifications

- Curb cuts to enhance walkability
- Pedestrian scale lighting
- Tree boxes to absorb storm water



Environmental Design Elements

- Pedestrian scale lighting
 - Increased safety
- Tree boxes
 - Absorb Stormwater
 - More appealing streetscape; psychological benefits of green space
- Curb cuts
 - Slow traffic
 - Distinguish crosswalks
- Suggested Traffic Circle between MLK Ave SE, Alabama Ave SE, and 5th St SE using environmental



NACTO, Urban Street Design
Guidebook



Uptown Normal Circle / Pinterest

Current Building Stock

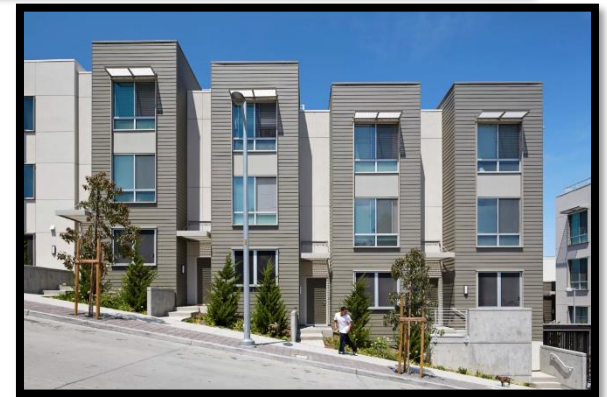
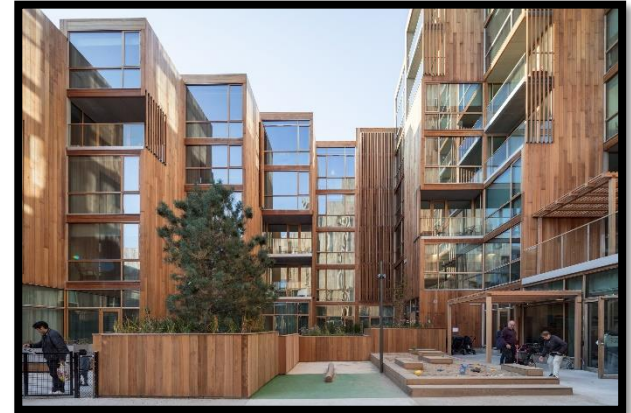
- Low rise Commercial
- Historic St. Elizabeth's (East)
- Detached houses
- Semi-detached houses
- Small Garden Apt buildings
- Large Multi-family Midrise Block



Precedents for Housing Enhancements

Affordable Housing

- 79 & Park
 - Affordable, pre-fab “manmade hills”
 - Green roofs & city views
- Hunters View Housing Blocks
 - Hillside
 - Built in phases to mitigate resident displacement
- Thorton Place (Seattle)
 - Storm water infrastructure
 - Parking oriented community



Conclusion



- Connect dead-end streets where possible
- Enhance streetscape to promote safety and sustainability
- Interventions for existing residents, and will also welcome new members to the Congress Heights community

Citations

- Soul of the City Logo- Congress Heights Community Partnership, Twitter
- [ddot Alabama Avenue, SE Safety Study:](https://www.alabamaavenuesestudy.com/)
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- ddot functional classification street map:
- https://ddot.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/ddot/publication/attachments/FunctionalClass_2016.pdf
- Institute of Transportation Engineers' Designing Walkable Urban Thoroughfares: A Context Sensitive Approach:
<https://www.epa.gov/smartgrowth/designing-walkable-urban-thoroughfares-context-sensitive-approach>
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- <https://dirt.asla.org/2015/04/09/complete-streets-are-a-bargain/>