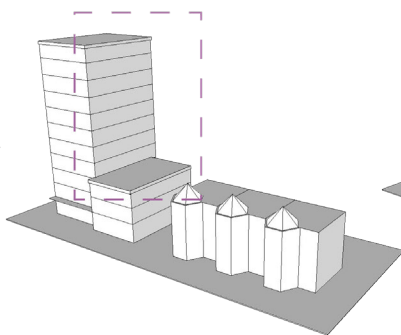# Urban Design

Element Summary: 9-UD

GOAL

Enhance the beauty, equity, and livability of the city by reinforcing its historic design legacy and the diversity of its neighborhoods and centers, harmoniously integrating new construction with existing buildings and the natural environment, and improving the vitality, appearance, and function of streets and public spaces.
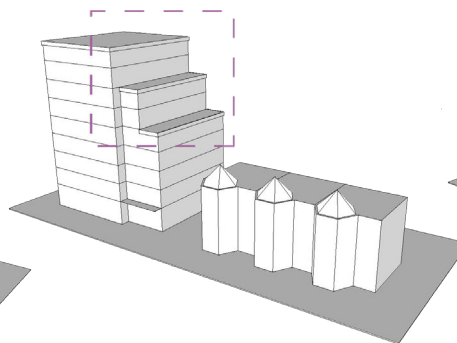
CONTENTS

- **UD-1 Shaping Our Shared Civic Identity:** emphasizes the role our natural topography and features play in experiencing our city, and the important legacy of the L'Enfant, McMillan, and Olmsted Highway plans in shaping its layout. In addition, it provides policies and actions for strengthening these systems to enable continued growth.
- **UD-2 Designing the Livable City:** provides design guidance for creating great neighborhoods in every ward that can inclusively grow through an emphasis on respecting neighborhood identity, creating dynamic streets, increasing the accessibility and equity of our buildings and public spaces, and integrating play into our city fabric.
- **UD-3 Fostering A Vibrant Public Life:** analyzes the District's public life and provides guidance for how to elevate it through encouraging greater access and equality of public spaces throughout the city, enhanced support for neighborhood generated public life activities such as block parties, and the development of a public life tracking methodology.
- **UD-4 Making Great Urban Architecture:** provides guidance to planning staff, architects, and ANCs on key principles for creating urban buildings that support great neighborhoods and policy guidance for creating exemplary and iconic public buildings.

Transitions in Building Intensity
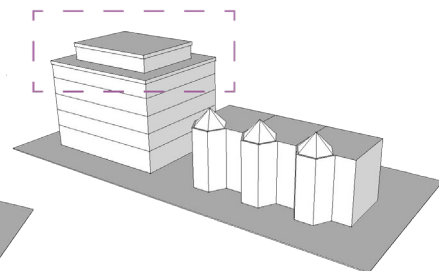
Slender Massing   Stepped-down Massing   Stepped-back Massing

These building transitions illustrate ways in which larger scale buildings can relate to lower scale neighborhoods through a variety of context-specific design strategies.

Urban Design

Element Summary: 9-UD

SUMMARY OF MAJOR POLICY THEMES

Affirming our Civic Identity

- Build on Washington's historic plans by preserving and restoring L'Enfant streets and alleys, renovating L'Enfant reservations, creating signature commemorative works, and utilizing our alley network to create new housing and community spaces.
- Reinforce the topographic bowl and panoramic views of and to the escarpment and the Anacostia hills through preservation of landscape features and deliberate planning of signature civic buildings.
- Design a vibrant, accessible and resilient waterfront for the next century through increased shoreline access, the creation of dynamic waterfront places, and increased connectivity to the waterfront from neighborhoods.
- Enhance thoroughfares and gateways through special design treatments and prioritizing the pedestrian experience.

Strengthening Neighborhood Quality of Life While Accommodating Growth and Change

- Create streets for people by enhancing commercial corridors with street trees, pedestrian amenities like benches, and minimizing curb cuts.
- Design successful neighborhoods by encouraging thoughtful infill and new construction while accommodating denser housing and promoting the development of neighborhood centers and places.
- Create a city of play by promoting playful structures in everyday spaces and encouraging development to incorporate playable spacers.
- Realize an equitable city by recognizing the needs of our most vulnerable citizens in the design of public spaces and creating public spaces that are comfortable for people of all backgrounds.

Supporting a Vibrant Urban Life

- Create a city with public life for all by creating recreational and gathering spaces in every neighborhood.
- Design the active city through the design of active recreational amenities in parks and public spaces and inclusion of exercise facilities in buildings.
- Cultivate places for lingering by creating design standards and guidelines for plazas and streetscapes.

Realizing Design Excellence and Innovation in Architecture, Infrastructure and Public Spaces

- Elevate the design of public buildings and infrastructure through an increased focus on design excellence.
- Design architecture for people by providing guidelines and design standards for everyday buildings.
- Celebrate Washington, DC's unique design legacy and realize innovative architecture through the continued development of design based regulatory systems.