

MC-2.8: Eckington

The neighborhood of Eckington is uniquely situated between several key thoroughfares of the District (Florida Avenue, Rhode Island Avenue, and North Capitol). It is a quiet neighborhood despite its proximity to downtown DC. Demographically, the neighborhood is diverse in all aspects. 2018.1

Eckington already has experienced the pressures of growth, and that will likely continue, if not increase, in the coming years. These recommendations address the concerns and goals of Eckington residents and allow us to plan for growth in a way that maintains Eckington's relative affordability, diversity, and family-friendly appeal, while incentivizing retail and commercial development in key areas, and encouraging higher-density development close to Metro stations and along the Metropolitan Branch Trail. 2018.2

Policy MC-2.8.1: Preservation of Low-Density Housing in Eckington

Keep the residential atmosphere of the neighborhood in the core of Eckington, i.e. low- to medium-density residential. We want to preserve housing that is suitable for more than two people as much as feasible. (The boundaries of this "heart of Eckington" would be north of Sirius XM on Q St., North Capitol to the west, west of Eckington Pl., and west of 4th-5th St. to the east.) 2018.3

Policy MC-2.8.2: Higher-Density Residential Near Transit

Focus higher-density residential in Eckington close to the two Metro stations near Eckington (NoMa-Gallaudet and Rhode Island Avenue). Specifically, between the Metropolitan Branch Trail and 4th St. NE, east of Eckington Place, south Eckington from New York Avenue to North Capitol to O St NE, along Florida Avenue east of North Capitol to the Metropolitan Branch Trail, and from 4th Street to the Metropolitan Branch Trail on Rhode Island Avenue are ideal locations for additional high-density housing. 2018.4

Policy MC-2.8.3: Metropolitan Branch Trail Area

Consistent with Eckington's history as a residential and industrial part of our city, the area along the Metropolitan Branch Trail should be developed with new and emerging businesses with a particular focus on arts uses and makers, media and communications, food industries and green sustainable businesses. In order to maximize trail safety, design of these businesses should encourage interaction with MBT users, to the extent possible. 2018.5

Action MC-2.8.A: Incentivize Creative Arts

Explore the creation of a "Creative Arts District" along the Metropolitan Branch Trail to further incentivize the specific types of commercial development listed above. 2018.6

Action MC-2.8.B: Encourage Activity along Trail

Develop the MBT as an active site for users to engage with the community and to live an active lifestyle through examples of exercise stations, historical markers, and interactive stations. 2018.7

Action MC-2.8.C: Aesthetic Improvements to Trail

Create shaded areas along the Metropolitan Branch Trail to reduce heat island effect and reduce pollution from surrounding industrial spaces. Create an art wall, sustainable infrastructure, bioswales and other innovations which provide a natural and interactive barrier separating industrial spaces east of the MBT. 2018.8

Action MC-2.8.D: Continued Investment in the Trail

Designate adequate funding to trail safety and upkeep so that the Metropolitan Branch Trail continues to be a highly-trafficked urban bike trail. 2018.9

Policy MC-2.8.4: Transition to Metropolitan Branch Trail

The area between the lower-density residential part of Eckington and the more industrial development along the MBT trail and 5th St. NE should serve as a buffer zone to transition from one type of area to the other. 2018.10

Action MC-2.8.E: Commercial Development

Recruit and incentivize neighborhood-serving retail, restaurants, affordable healthy food options, sustainable streetscapes (bioswales, etc.), family-friendly destinations, specialized sports and recreation-oriented businesses. 2018.11

Action MC-2.8.F: Make/Live Workspace

Explore a "make/live" workspace as a buffer. 2018.12

Action MC-2.8.G: Addressing Increased Traffic

As commercial development occurs, encourage on-site parking and increased bike infrastructure. 2018.13

Policy MC-2.8.5: Connecting Bloomingdale and Eckington

Improve connectivity between Eckington and Bloomingdale by expanding the North Capitol overpass, decking over the entire expanse to create a tunnel between Seaton Street and Rhode Island and creating a green space to make crossing North Capitol more inviting for pedestrians and other non-motor vehicles. 2018.14

Policy MC-2.8.6: Traffic Management

Eckington residents face many traffic challenges that affect the entire neighborhood. Our proximity to many parts of the city also means we are somewhat "boxed in" by major thoroughfares. Often, drivers will use the neighborhood as a throughway from Rhode Island Avenue to New York Avenue, and vice versa. In the mornings, traffic often becomes so congested that it can take 15-20 minutes just to leave the neighborhood. On many streets, cars will speed through the neighborhood with little consideration for pedestrians or other vehicles. The city should explore ways to mitigate these traffic problems and maximize safety for all Eckington residents. 2018.15

Action MC-2.8.H: Neighborhood-wide Traffic Study

DDOT should conduct a neighborhood-wide traffic study in Eckington to examine current and anticipated traffic trends given expected growth. 2018.16

Action MC-2.8.I: Additional Public Transportation

Add additional public transportation options through Eckington (increased bus service and additional bus routes) to accommodate growth. 2018.17

Action MC-2.8.J: Speed Reduction on R St. Alley

Implement speed reduction measures on R Street alley south of McKinley Tech. 2018.18

Action MC-2.8.K: Lincoln Road

In order to promote pedestrian-friendly streets, the city should encourage residential development that fronts Lincoln Road. In addition, DDOT should add traffic calming measures to reduce speed down Lincoln Road. 2018.19

Policy MC-2.8.7: Affordable Housing

In order to preserve and grow the racial and economic diversity in Eckington, it is important to ensure that affordable rental and homeownership options are available to low and moderate income families in Eckington. 2018.20

Policy MC-2.8.8: Increased Green Space

Encourage preservation and improvement of existing green spaces in Eckington. Identify new opportunities for further public green space, tree planting, and tree boxes throughout the neighborhood and along the Metropolitan Branch Trail, including the development of more “pocket parks.” 2018.21

Policy MC-2.8.9: Neighborhood Connectivity

Improve connection points from Eckington to other parts of the city, including NoMa, Bloomingdale, Ivy City, Union Market, and anticipated development north of Rhode Island Avenue. In addition, provide safer accessibility to the Metro (especially NoMa-Gallaudet). Create more safe and easy access points to the MBT. 2018.22

Policy MC-2.8.10: Improved Streetscape

Revitalize Eckington’s streetscapes to provide for safer and easier mobility for all non-motor vehicle transportation (e.g. walking and cycling). All Eckington streets should have sidewalks, providing a safe environment for pedestrians. Some streets currently lack sidewalks completely or only have sidewalks on one side of the street. Specifically, 5th Street NE lacks sidewalks between T and V streets and V Street NE does not have continuous sidewalk coverage to the Metropolitan Branch Trail, leaving students unable to safely access the Sonia Gutierrez Campus at 514 V St NE. 2018.23

Policy MC-2.8.11: Sustainable Design

Development in Eckington should be done in a way that maximizes resiliency in accordance with the Comprehensive Plan’s overarching goals. To the greatest extent possible, new commercial development should be done sustainably in a way that mitigates pollution, reduces energy consumption, and minimizes its environmental impact on the community. Furthermore, sidewalks and streetscapes should address stormwater management. 2018.24

Policy MC-2.8.12: Florida Avenue Virtual Circle

Implement short-term and long-term improvements to the Florida Avenue Virtual Circle to improve connectivity, improve pedestrian and non-motor vehicle safety, and reduce motor vehicle speed. 2018.25

Policy MC-2.8.13: Neighborhood Branding

Improve signage throughout Eckington to demarcate a distinct neighborhood. Add signage at the

northeast and northwest corners of Eckington similar to that on Lincoln Road in the southwest to indicate entry to the neighborhood. Provide historical references and points of interest to educate the public about the history of the neighborhood. 2018.26