

# **H Street/Benning Road Streetcar Project**

## **Historic Architectural Survey**

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District Department of Transportation

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# Table of Contents

<b>1.0</b>	<b>Introduction .....</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1.	Project Background.....	2
1.1.1.	Overhead Catenary System.....	2
1.1.2.	Car Barn Training Center.....	4
1.1.3.	Traction Power Sub-Stations.....	5
1.1.4.	Interim Western Destination .....	6
1.2.	Regulatory Context .....	7
1.2.1.	DC Inventory of Historic Sites .....	7
1.2.2.	National Register of Historic Places .....	8
1.3.	District of Columbia Preservation Process.....	9
1.3.1.	Area of Potential Effects .....	9
<b>2.0</b>	<b>Project Methods.....</b>	<b>17</b>
2.1.	Archival and Background Research.....	17
2.2.	Architectural Survey.....	17
<b>3.0</b>	<b>Historic Context.....</b>	<b>23</b>
3.1.	Early History of the Corridor .....	23
3.2.	Introduction and Development of the Streetcar .....	25
3.3.	Development of the Corridor.....	34
3.4.	Education Hill .....	35
3.5.	Langston Terrace.....	35
3.6.	Shifting Demographics .....	39
3.7.	1968 Riots and the Aftermath .....	39
3.8.	Efforts Towards Renewal and Change .....	41
<b>4.0</b>	<b>Survey Results .....</b>	<b>45</b>
4.1.	Building Forms and Types .....	45
4.1.1.	Residential Buildings .....	51
4.1.1.	Commercial Buildings.....	54
4.1.2.	Other Buildings.....	56
<b>5.0</b>	<b>Recommendations.....</b>	<b>57</b>
5.1.	Education Hill Historic District Eligibility .....	57
5.1.1.	Charles Young Elementary School .....	60

5.1.2.	Hugh M. Browne Junior High School .....	63
5.1.3.	Seth Ledyard Phelps Vocational School .....	66
5.1.4.	Joel Elias Spingarn High School .....	69
<b>6.0</b>	<b>Assessment of Effects .....</b>	<b>73</b>
6.1.	Assessment of Effects on Historic Properties .....	73
6.1.1.	Overhead Catenary System.....	73
6.1.1.	Car Barn and Training Center.....	74
6.1.2.	Traction Power Sub-Station.....	74
6.1.1.	Interim Western Destination .....	75
6.2.	Summary of Effects on Historic Properties.....	75
<b>7.0</b>	<b>References.....</b>	<b>79</b>

Appendix A: Surveyed Properties, Sorted by Address

## List of Tables

Table 1	Identified Historic Properties in the APE .....	15
Table 2	Surveyed Properties in the APE, Sorted by Date of Construction.....	19
Table 3	Property Types Surveyed.....	45
Table 4	Summary of Effects on Historic Resources.....	77

## List of Figures

Figure 1	Rendering of Span Wire (DDOT 2012).....	3
Figure 2	Proposed Car Barn Training Center Location and Site Rendering (DDOT 2012).....	4
Figure 3	Proposed Locations of TPSS (DDOT 2012).....	5
Figure 4	Interim Western Destination (DDOT 2012).....	6
Figure 5	Area of Potential Effects (Sheet 1 of 3) .....	11
Figure 6	Area of Potential Effects (Sheet 2 of 3) .....	12
Figure 7	Area of Potential Effects (Sheet 3 of 3) .....	12
Figure 8	Detail of Map of Washington City (Boschke 1857), showing starburst intersection and tollgate .....	24
Figure 9	Topographical Map of the District of Columbia (Boschke 1861) .....	25
Figure 10	Columbia Railway Company horsecar, 1891, likely taken near 15th and H Streets NE (King 1972, 12) .....	26

Figure 11 | Columbia Railway Company Car Barns, 15th Street & Benning Road NE, North Front and West Side (HABS 1970) ..... 28

Figure 12 | Street Railway Trackage in the District of Columbia 1925 (King 1972, 129)..... 29

Figure 13 | School Children of the 6th Division on a Columbia Railway Company Trolley Car no. 20 (Johnston 1899) ..... 30

Figure 14 | Westbound 942 leaves H Street underpass in back of Union Station October 10, 1948 (King 1972, 168) ..... 31

Figure 15 | Starburst, 1947 (DDOT 2009), shows streetcars and buses traveling along H Street and Benning Road and the former Columbia Railway Car Barn used as a bus depot ..... 32

Figure 16 | Capital Transit Co. Company Origin & Relationship (King 1972, 318)..... 33

Figure 17 | View of the [Langston Terrace] common, ca. 1938 (Leiner 1986). Young Elementary School’s cupola is visible in the distance. .... 37

Figure 18 | View Southwest over 26th Street NE, the Langston School [Young Elementary], the Langston Terrace Housing Project (Aero Services 1938)..... 38

Figure 19 | Aerial view northwest over Langston Terrace constructed in 1937-1938 by the PWA (ca. 1938) ..... 38

Figure 20 | H Street the Morning After, photo by Sam Smith (Smith 1997) ..... 40

Figure 21 | Fire on H Street NE, April 1968, photo by Matthew Lewis (*Washington Post* 2012)..... 41

Figure 22 | 1910 Benning Road NE, view northeast..... 46

Figure 23 | 1720-1748 Benning Road NE, view northwest..... 47

Figure 24 | 2417 Benning Road NE, view south ..... 48

Figure 25 | 2033-2029 Benning Road NE, view southwest ..... 49

Figure 26 | 580 23rd Place NE, view southwest ..... 50

Figure 27 | 2519 Benning Road NE, view south ..... 51

Figure 28 | 2023-2027 Benning Road NE, view southeast ..... 52

Figure 29 | 1800-1814 Benning Road NE, view northeast..... 53

Figure 30 | 1822-1826 Benning Road NE, view north ..... 54

Figure 31 | 1923 Benning Road NE, view southwest..... 55

Figure 32 | 2013-2001 Benning Road NE, view southwest ..... 56

Figure 33 | Parcel Map, 2600 Benning Road NE..... 58

Figure 34 | Aerial Image, 2600 Benning Road NE..... 59

Figure 35 | Charles Young School, 1941 (Washingtoniana Division, Prints and Photographs) ..... 61

Figure 36 | Browne Junior High School, view northwest (HDR 2012) ..... 64

**H Street/Benning Road Streetcar Project**

Figure 37 | Phelps Vocational 1960 (Phelps Vertical File, Sumner School) ..... 66

Figure 38 | 2008 Addition to Phelps (HDR 2012)..... 68

Figure 39 | Proposed rendering for a senior high school at 24th and Benning, 1950 (Washingtoniana Division, Prints and Photographs)..... 69

Figure 40 | Spingarn High School, view northwest (HDR 2012) ..... 71

Figure 41 | View south of overhead wires along Benning Road, south of the school campus (HDR 2012) ..... 74

## 1.0 Introduction

The DC Streetcar program is a central part of the District Department of Transportation's (DDOT) commitment to improve quality of life in the District by effectively providing neighborhood access and transportation choice, connecting the Metro stations, and facilitating economic development and neighborhood sustainability in the selected corridors.

The first operational segment of the DC Streetcar system will be on H Street and Benning Road NE, which is scheduled to open in late 2013. H/Benning is a 2.2-mile segment stretching between Union Station on the west and 26th Street NE on the east. The segment will be powered primarily by head span wire and will use a combination of Skoda-Inekon and Oregon Iron Works vehicles. The streetcar will operate on surface tracks imbedded in the street. The eastern turnaround for the line is at Benning Road and 26th Street NE, where a Car Barn Training Center (CBTC) will be constructed. The CBTC will handle storage and light maintenance of the vehicles and will also feature an educational/training component for local high school and community college students. The interim western turnaround is on the Hopscotch Bridge, where passengers will disembark and follow a pedestrian path into Union Station. A future phase of the DC Streetcar will pick up at Union Station and travel to the Georgetown Waterfront, primarily along K Street. Traction Power Sub-Stations (TPSS) will be located under the Hopscotch Bridge at 2nd Street NE, the southwest corner of 12th Street and H Street NE, and on the northwest corner of 26th Street and Benning Road NE.

The DC Historic Landmark & Historic District Protection Act requires that District agencies take into account the effect of their undertakings on properties listed or eligible for the DC Inventory of Historic Sites, and to consult with and afford the State Historic Preservation Officer a reasonable opportunity to comment on those undertakings. Therefore, as part of the cultural resources studies, DDOT asked HDR Engineering, Inc. (HDR), to conduct a historic architectural survey to identify and evaluate properties for DC Inventory of Historic Sites eligibility in the project's Area of Potential of Effects (APE). Dr. Gregory Lockard served as the project manager for this report and Jeanne Barnes served as the principal investigator, report author, and architectural historian for the project. Paul Weishar assisted in the architectural survey.

This report provides an outline of the local historic preservation review process for the H/Benning line, provides a brief historic context for the area, summarizes the results of the architectural survey, provides eligibility recommendations, and assesses the effects of the project on historic resources within the APE.

### **H Street/Benning Road Streetcar Project**

## 1.1. Project Background

This H Street/Benning Road Streetcar (Phase 2) project includes the installation of an Overhead Catenary System (OCS) along the entire 2.2 mile H Street/Benning Road NE corridor, the construction of a Car Barn and Training Center (CBTC) on the eastern end, power substations located at the ends of the line and at the midline, and an interim western destination serving Union Station. The H Street/Benning Road streetcar is projected to be in service in late 2013.

The purpose of the project is to develop and maintain an efficient, reliable, and convenient transit service that enhances connectivity within and between neighborhoods and supports community revitalization and economic development. The streetcar will provide an enhanced connection to Union Station for residents in the H Street/Benning Road area. This line is part of the larger planned 37-mile citywide streetcar system designed to improve connectivity among neighborhoods, invest in an urban public transportation project that will help foster economic development, and provide a permanent public service amenity that promotes livability and economic reinvestment.

Phase 1 of the H Street/Benning Road Streetcar project included the acquisition of three streetcars, the installation of embedded streetcar tracks on Benning Road and H Street, the installation of duct work, stop platforms, shelters, and pole foundations. Phase 1 was completed in June 2011. The installation of the streetcar tracks occurred as part of the Great Streets Initiative from 2006 to 2012 that also involved street/sidewalk reconstruction, plaza design, curb/gutter realignment, public art, street lighting, and new street trees. The goal of this multi-year, multiple-agency effort was “to transform nine underinvested corridors into thriving and inviting neighborhood centers using public actions and tools as needed to leverage private investment” (Office of the Deputy Mayor for Planning and Economic Development 2012).

### 1.1.1. Overhead Catenary System

The OCS includes support structures and overhead wires for supplying electrical power to the streetcars. Support poles for the streetcar were installed along H Street and Benning Road NE as part of road improvements associated with the Great Streets Initiative. Along H Street NE, the poles along both sides of the street will have span wires installed across the tracks (Figure 1). The support poles along Benning Road NE are located in the center median and will have cantilevered bracket arms. A single, trolley-type contact wire that is supported by guy-wires, will be used which typically has less of a visual impact than two-wire systems.



**Figure 1** | Rendering of Span Wire (DDOT 2012)



### 1.1.2. Car Barn Training Center

The CBTC will be located on the northwest corner of Benning Road and 26th Street NE on the grounds of the Joel Elias Spingarn Senior High School (SHS). The CBTC will serve as the operations and maintenance facility for the H Street/Benning Road streetcar line and a facility to provide transit-related career training. The CBTC will be composed of a maintenance facility with a footprint of approximately 14,500 square feet, a 15-car storage yard, wash track, and a new 52-space parking lot. The facility will handle light vehicle maintenance and vehicle storage. The facility will be designed so that it may be expanded to accommodate future streetcar segments.

**Figure 2** | Proposed Car Barn Training Center Location and Site Rendering (DDOT 2012)



### 1.1.3. Traction Power Sub-Stations

Three Traction Power Sub-Stations (TPSS) will be needed to provide power to the H/Benning line (Figure 3). The proposed locations include:

- Below the Hopscotch Bridge at 2nd Street NE, behind the curtain wall of the abutment and below the bridge deck not in public view (West End)
- Southwest corner of 12th and H Streets NE (Mid-line)
- Northwest corner of 26th Street and Benning Road, NE (CBTC site, East End)

On average, the TPSS will be 20 feet wide, 40 feet long, and 7.5 to 8 feet tall. Exterior treatments, landscaping, and fencing would be designed on a case-by-case basis to allow each TPSS and its site to fit into the urban environment.

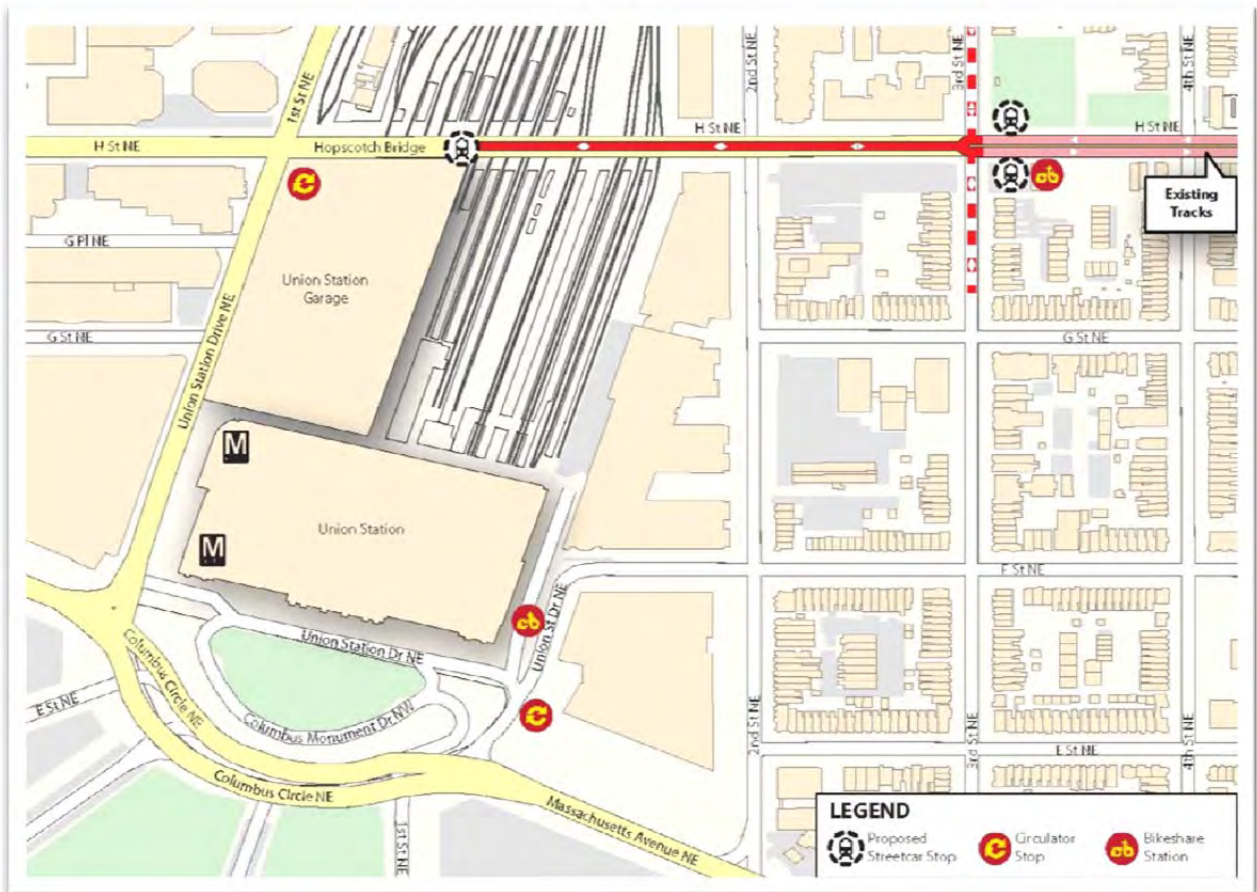
**Figure 3** | Proposed Locations of TPSS (DDOT 2012)



### 1.1.4. Interim Western Destination

The western destination to provide a connection to Union Station is only an interim destination. The selected location is the Hopscotch Bridge, which will connect riders to the parking garage of Union Station.

**Figure 4 |** Interim Western Destination (DDOT 2012)



## 1.2. Regulatory Context

The H/Benning Streetcar Line is a District of Columbia undertaking that requires compliance with the DC Historic Landmark & Historic District Protection Act of 1978 (DC Law 2-144, as amended). This law requires District agencies to take into account the effect of their undertakings on properties listed or eligible for the DC Inventory of Historic Sites; and to consult with and afford the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) a reasonable opportunity to comment on those undertakings. The historic preservation review serves to protect historic properties and ensures compatible development, promotes good design, uses federal planning standards as a model for DC projects, requires district agencies to conduct full due diligence as a good business practice, promotes an efficient and fiscally responsible approach to project management, and assists in avoiding last-minute surprises, costly delays, and community controversy.

### 1.2.1. DC Inventory of Historic Sites

To qualify for designation in the DC Inventory of Historic Sites as historic landmarks or historic districts, historic and prehistoric buildings, building interiors, structures, monuments, works of art or other similar objects, areas, places, sites, neighborhoods, and cultural landscapes must possess one or more of the following values or qualities:

- (a) *Events*: They are the site of events that contributed significantly to the heritage, culture or development of the District of Columbia or the nation;
- (b) *History*: They are associated with historical periods, social movements, groups, institutions, achievements, or patterns of growth and change that contributed significantly to the heritage, culture or development of the District of Columbia or the nation;
- (c) *Individuals*: They are associated with the lives of persons significant to the history of the District of Columbia or the nation;
- (d) *Architecture and Urbanism*: They embody the distinguishing characteristics of architectural styles, building types, or methods of construction, or are expressions of landscape architecture, engineering, or urban planning, siting, or design significant to the appearance and development of the District of Columbia or the nation;
- (e) *Artistry*: They possess high artistic or aesthetic values that contribute significantly to the heritage and appearance of the District of Columbia or the nation;

(f) *Creative Masters*: They have been identified as notable works of craftsmen, artists, sculptors, architects, landscape architects, urban planners, engineers, builders, or developers whose works have influenced the evolution of their fields of endeavor, or are significant to the development of the District of Columbia or the nation; or

(g) *Archaeology*: They have yielded or may be likely to yield information significant to an understanding of historic or prehistoric events, cultures, and standards of living, building, and design.

Sufficient time must have passed since the resource achieved significance and the resource must possess sufficient integrity to convey, represent or contain the values and qualities for which they are judged significant.

Properties meeting the criteria for designation in the DC Inventory are also considered to meet the criteria for listing in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) unless the National Register officially determines otherwise.

### 1.2.2. National Register of Historic Places

To be determined eligible for inclusion in the NRHP, properties must generally be 50 years of age or older, meet at least one of four criteria of significance, and retain sufficient historic integrity to convey that significance. The four criteria of significance are:

- Criterion A – be associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history
- Criterion B – be associated with the lives of persons significant in our past
- Criterion C – embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction; or represent the work of a master; or possess high artistic values; or represent a significant distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction
- Criterion D – have yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history

The significance of properties may be at the local, state, or national level depending on its historical associations. Typically, historic properties are at least 50 years of age, but more recent properties may be considered for listing if they are of exceptional significance (Criteria Consideration G).

To qualify for listing in the NRHP, a property must be historically significant in that it represents an important part of history, architecture, archaeology, engineering, or culture of an area (National Park

Service [NPS] 1997). In addition, a property must possess sufficient integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and/or association to convey its historical significance. To help researchers effectively assess significance, NPS developed the concept of a *historic context*, which combines place, time, and theme to create an interpretive framework within which the significance of a historic property can be explained, judged, and evaluated. Most of the properties in the APE that were evaluated were early twentieth-century residential and commercial properties. The historic context for this study includes brief summaries of prior historical periods, but focuses primarily on the late nineteenth and twentieth-century development of the H Street/Benning Road corridor.

### **1.3. District of Columbia Preservation Process**

On February 6, 2012, DDOT sent a letter to the DC HPO, initiating the local historic preservation review process.

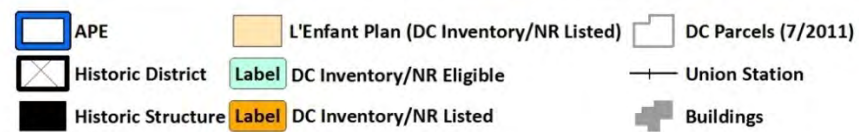
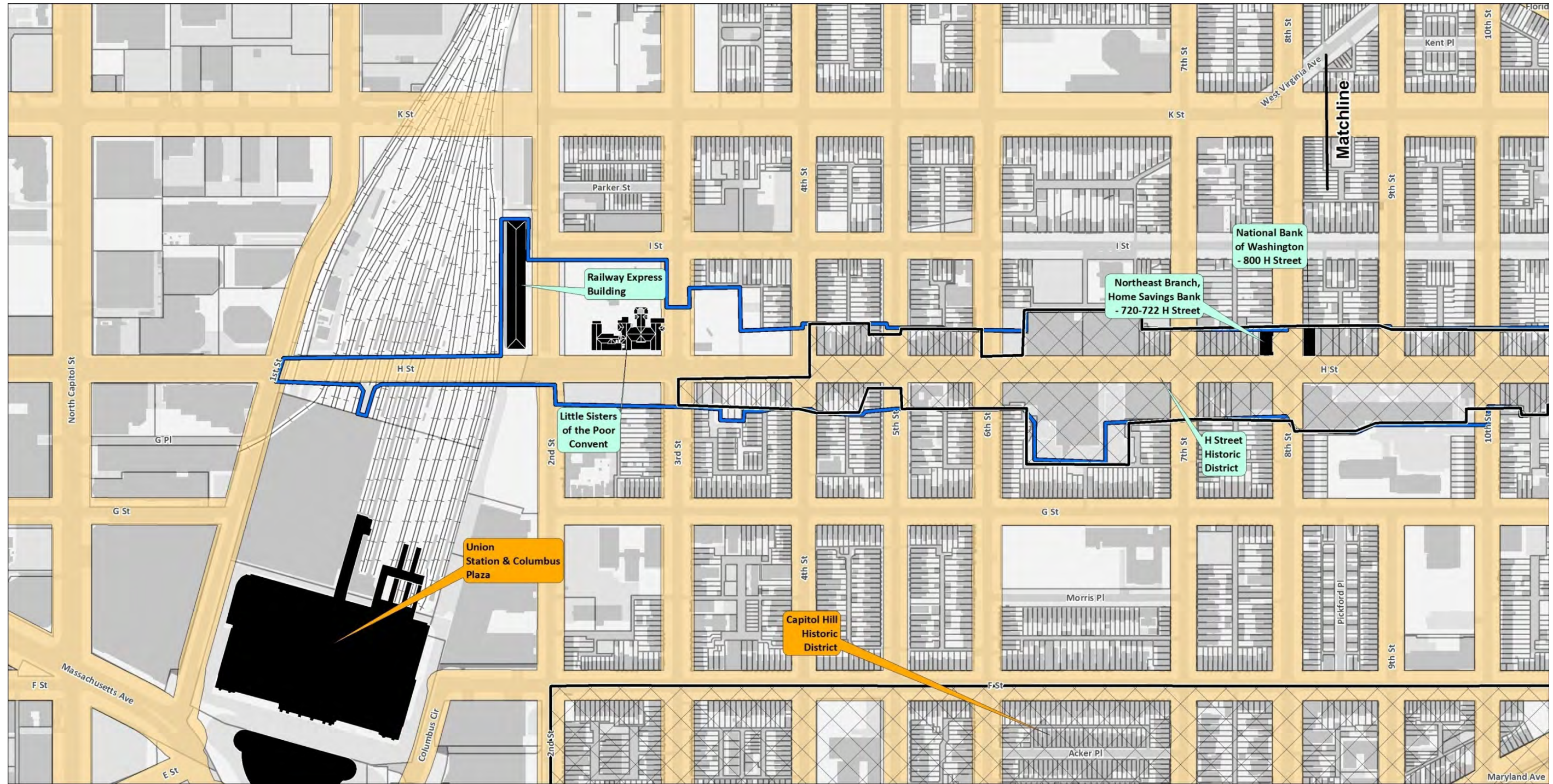
#### **1.3.1. Area of Potential Effects**

In consultation with the DC Historic Preservation Office (DC HPO), DDOT established the APE (Figure 5-Figure 7) for the project. The APE is a delineation of the farthest extent of the area in which historic properties might be affected by any number of project effects. For this project, the APE was defined as those parcels immediately fronting the streetcar line from the interim western destination on the Hopscotch Bridge to the CBTC on the east end of the line.

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Figure 5 | Area of Potential Effects (Sheet 1 of 3)



Projection: Lambert Conformal Conic  
State Plane Maryland FIPS 1900  
North American Datum of 1983

Figure 6 | Area of Potential Effects (Sheet 2 of 3)

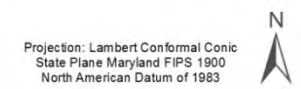
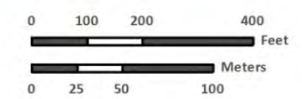
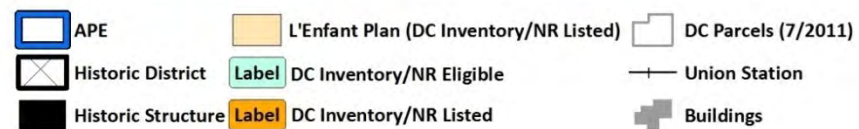
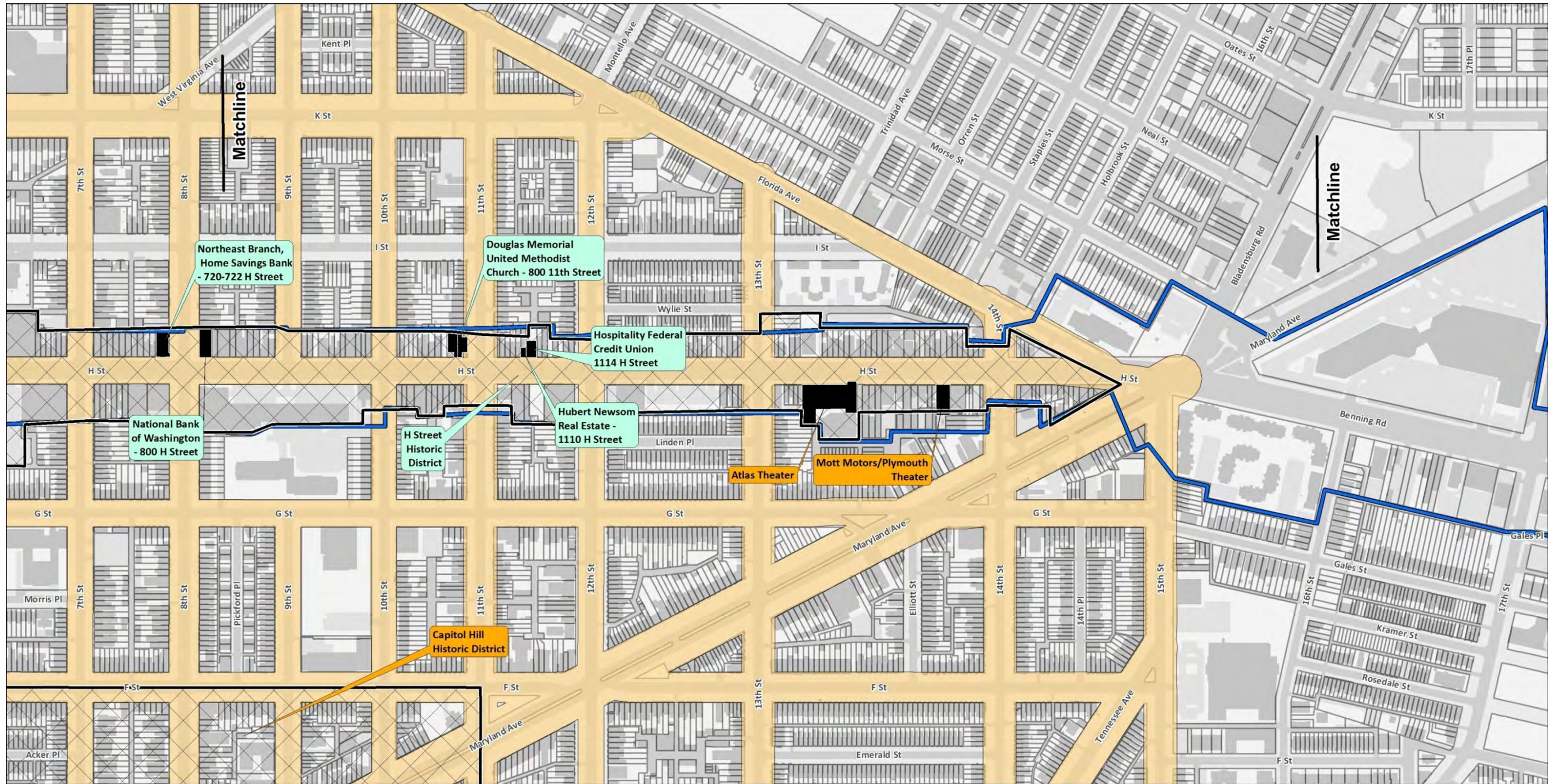
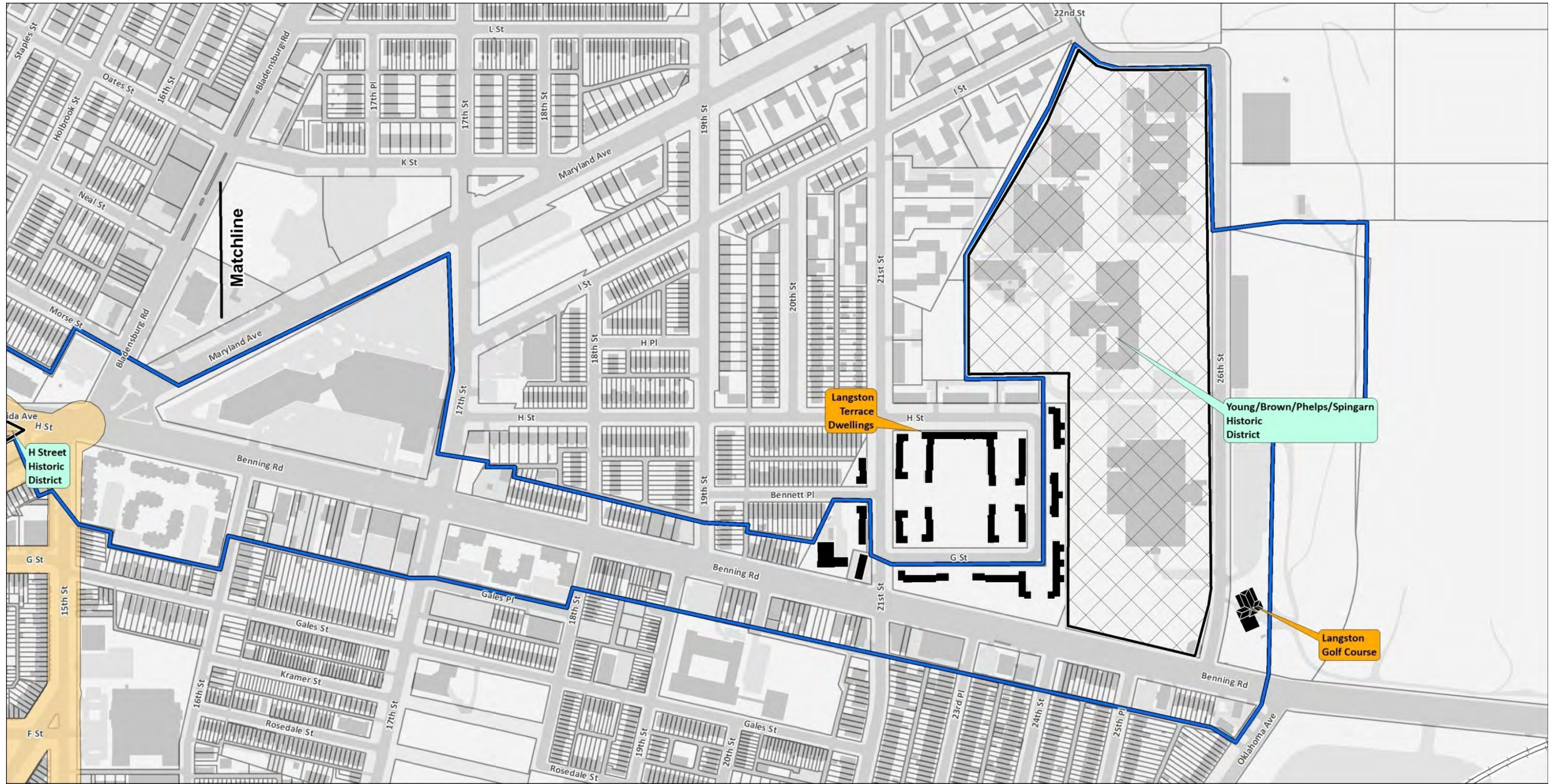
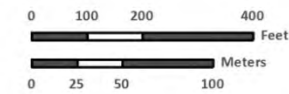


Figure 7 | Area of Potential Effects (Sheet 3 of 3)

**H Street/Benning Road Streetcar Project**



- APE
- L'Enfant Plan (DC Inventory/NR Listed)
- DC Parcels (7/2011)
- Historic District
- Label DC Inventory/NR Eligible
- Label DC Inventory/NR Listed
- Historic Structure
- Union Station
- Buildings



Projection: Lambert Conformal Conic  
State Plane Maryland FIPS 1900  
North American Datum of 1983



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DDOT worked with the DC HPO to identify existing and potentially eligible historic properties in the larger H Street/Benning Road corridor. Multiple historic resources were identified within the APE that was established for the project.

**Table 1 | Identified Historic Properties in the APE**

Resource Name	DC Inventory of Historic Sites Status	NRHP Status	Address
<b>The Plan of the City of Washington (L'Enfant Plan)</b>	Listed, 1964, updated multiple times	Listed, 1997	
<b>H Street NE Historic District</b>	Eligible	Eligible	Properties fronting H Street between 4th Street NE and the Starburst intersection
<b>Railway Express Building</b>	Considered eligible by SHPO	Considered eligible by SHPO	900 2nd Street NE
<b>Little Sisters of the Poor Convent</b>	Considered eligible by SHPO	Considered eligible by SHPO	800 3rd Street NE
<b>Northeast Branch, Home Savings Bank</b>	Recommended for listing	Recommended for listing	720-722 H Street NE
<b>National Bank of Washington</b>	Recommended for listing	Recommended for listing	800 H Street NE
<b>Douglas Memorial United Methodist Church</b>	Recommended for listing	Recommended for listing	800 11th Street NE
<b>Hubert Newsom Real Estate</b>	Recommended for listing	Recommended for listing	1110 H Street NE
<b>Hospitality Federal Credit Union</b>	Recommended for listing	Recommended for listing	1114 H Street NE
<b>Atlas Theater and Shops</b>	Listed, 2002	Listed	1313-1333 H Street NE
<b>Mott Motors/Plymouth Theater</b>	Listed, 2004	Listed, 2004	1365 H Street NE
<b>Langston Terrace Dwellings</b>	Listed, 1987	Listed, 1987	661-667 24th Street NE/715-729 Langston Place/718-720 21st Street NE
<b>Education Hill Historic District (Young/Brown/Phelps/Spingarn campus)</b>	Identified for further study by SHPO	Identified for further study by SHPO	2500 Benning Road NE
<b>Langston Golf Course</b>	Not listed	Listed, 1991	2600 Benning Road NE

The DC HPO also completed a Project Data Request for Archaeological resources. No identified sites were present in the APE. A geoarchaeological survey was conducted at the location of the CBTC (see Gabler and McKee, *Geoarchaeological Survey of the Proposed Car Barn Training Center for the H Street/Benning Road Streetcar Project, Washington, DC, 2012*) and found highly disturbed soils with no archaeological sites.

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## 2.0 Project Methods

HDR identified historic-age resources within the APE. This effort included a review of existing information, correspondence and discussions with the DC HPO’s National Register Coordinator, Senior Historic Preservation Specialist, and Archaeologist, and conversations with community members knowledgeable about the area. Preliminary windshield-level surveys were conducted of the area to confirm the dates and locations of properties that are 50 years or older that were identified during the records review, to observe the current conditions of known properties, and to identify historic properties that had not been previously detected. The field survey also provided an opportunity to observe the spatial relationships of the project area and to begin to develop a sense of the geographical extent of direct and indirect effects that might result from the project.

### 2.1. Archival and Background Research

Project historians from HDR who meet the Secretary of the Interior’s Professional Qualification Standards, conducted research and fieldwork in the metropolitan Washington, DC area to gather information regarding the development of the project area, the subdivision of land, builders, developers, and architects, and information regarding educational, commercial, and religious institutions. Resources and repositories consulted include the SHPO, Washingtoniana Room at the Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial Library, DC’s Building Permit Database, Kiplinger Library of the Historical Society of Washington, Charles Sumner School Museum and Archives, Capitol Hill Restoration Society, Library of Congress, and National Archives. Data collected included historic building permits, neighborhood and city planning documents, city directories, ephemera files, pamphlets, institutional histories, newspapers, historic photos and maps, and census records.

### 2.2. Architectural Survey

The architectural survey was conducted in accordance with the *Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Identification and Evaluation* (NPS 1983). The evaluation of DC Inventory of Historic Sites eligibility of resources was conducted following Chapter 2 of the District of Columbia Municipal Regulations Title 10A Historic Preservation (DCMR Title 10A).

The project architectural historian conducted a reconnaissance-level architectural survey of all resources located within the APE constructed in or prior to 1963 (project completion date is 2013). Properties located within the APE along H Street NE and along the south side of Benning Road between the Starburst Intersection and 19th Street NE were not surveyed because they were recently documented by EHT Tracerics as part of the Capitol Hill Restoration Society’s “Beyond the Boundaries” survey (EHT

Tracerics, 2011). A windshield-level survey of H Street was conducted to take streetscape photographs and evaluate any significant changes in the corridor. DC's Building Permit Database and historic maps were used to identify construction dates of all buildings within the APE. At least one digital photograph was taken of each surveyed property, and visible secondary resources were also photographed. The survey was conducted entirely from the public right-of-way, except in those instances when the surveyors were invited onto the property by the property owner. Seventy-nine properties were surveyed (Table 2).



**Table 2 |** Surveyed Properties in the APE, Sorted by Date of Construction

Address	SSL	Purpose	Permit Number	Permit or Construction Date	Owner	Architect	Builder	Architectural Style
1916 Benning Road NE	4506 0165	dwelling	1677	10/26/1908	Gill, E. H.	Lindsey, A. R.	Gill, E. H.	Other
753 19th Street NE	4506 0823	dwelling	903	7/29/1925	Small (C.H.) & Co.	Santmyers, George T.	Small (C.H.) & Co.	Colonial Revival
755 19th Street NE	4506 0085	dwelling	903	7/29/1925	Small (C.H.) & Co.	Santmyers, George T.	Small (C.H.) & Co.	Classical Revival
757 19th Street NE	4506 0086	dwelling	903	7/29/1925	Small (C.H.) & Co.	Santmyers, George T.	Small (C.H.) & Co.	Colonial Revival/Craftsman
759 19th Street NE	4507 0087	dwelling	903	7/29/1925	Small (C.H.) & Co.	Santmyers, George T.	Small (C.H.) & Co.	Colonial Revival/Craftsman
761 19th Street NE	4508 0088	dwelling	903	7/29/1925	Small (C.H.) & Co.	Santmyers, George T.	Small (C.H.) & Co.	Colonial Revival/Craftsman
763 19th Street NE	4509 0089	dwelling	903	7/29/1925	Small (C.H.) & Co.	Santmyers, George T.	Small (C.H.) & Co.	Colonial Revival/Craftsman
1910 Benning Road NE	4506 0821	dwelling	903	7/29/1925	Small (C.H.) & Co.	Santmyers, George T.	Small (C.H.) & Co.	Classical Revival
1912 Benning Road NE	4506 0819	dwelling	903	7/29/1925	Small (C.H.) & Co.	Santmyers, George T.	Small (C.H.) & Co.	Colonial Revival
1914 Benning Road NE	4506 0817	dwelling	903	7/29/1925	Small (C.H.) & Co.	Santmyers, George T.	Small (C.H.) & Co.	Colonial Revival
1920 Benning Road NE	4506 0813	dwelling	903	7/29/1925	Small (C.H.) & Co.	Santmyers, George T.	Small (C.H.) & Co.	Colonial Revival/Craftsman
1922 Benning Road NE	4506 0811	dwelling	903	7/29/1925	Small (C.H.) & Co.	Santmyers, George T.	Small (C.H.) & Co.	Colonial Revival/Craftsman
1926 Benning Road NE	4506 0166	dwelling	903	7/29/1925	Small (C.H.) & Co.	Santmyers, George T.	Small (C.H.) & Co.	Colonial Revival/Craftsman
1915 Benning Road NE	4514 0815	apartment	5150	12/8/1925	Mill, J.F.	Mill, J.F.	Mill, J.F.	Classical Revival
1917 Benning Road NE	4514 0812	apartment	5150	12/8/1925	Mill, J.F.	Mill, J.F.	Mill, J.F.	Classical Revival
1919 Benning Road NE	4514 0810	apartment	5150	12/8/1925	Mill, J.F.	Mill, J.F.	Mill, J.F.	Classical Revival
1921 Benning Road NE	4514 0808	apartment	5150	12/8/1925	Mill, J.F.	Mill, J.F.	Mill, J.F.	Classical Revival
2005 Benning Road NE	4515 0809	dwelling	7427	3/15/1926	Hall Johnson Const. Co.	Santmyers, George T.	Hall Johnson Const. Co.	Classical Revival
2007 Benning Road NE	4515 0823	dwelling	7427	3/15/1926	Hall Johnson Const. Co.	Santmyers, George T.	Hall Johnson Const. Co.	Classical Revival
2011 Benning Road NE	4515 0825	dwelling	7427	3/15/1926	Hall Johnson Const. Co.	Santmyers, George T.	Hall Johnson Const. Co.	Classical Revival
2013 Benning Road NE	4515 0098	dwelling	7427	3/15/1926	Hall Johnson Const. Co.	Santmyers, George T.	Hall Johnson Const. Co.	Classical Revival
2023 Benning Road NE	4515 0101	dwelling	7427	3/15/1926	Hall Johnson Const. Co.	Santmyers, George T.	Hall Johnson Const. Co.	Classical Revival
2025 Benning Road NE	4515 0101	dwelling	7427	3/15/1926	Hall Johnson Const. Co.	Santmyers, George T.	Hall Johnson Const. Co.	Classical Revival
2027 Benning Road NE	4515 0102	dwelling	7427	3/15/1926	Hall Johnson Const. Co.	Santmyers, George T.	Hall Johnson Const. Co.	Classical Revival
2029 Benning Road NE	4515 0817	dwelling	7427	3/15/1926	Hall Johnson Const. Co.	Santmyers, George T.	Hall Johnson Const. Co.	Colonial Revival
2031 Benning Road NE	4515 0819	dwelling	7427	3/15/1926	Hall Johnson Const. Co.	Santmyers, George T.	Hall Johnson Const. Co.	Other
2403 Benning Road NE	4517 0821	flat	118390	10/24/1928	Sager, Charles D.	Santmyers, George T.	Sager, Charles D.	Colonial Revival/Craftsman
2405 Benning Road NE	4514 0803	flat	118390	10/24/1928	Sager, Charles D.	Santmyers, George T.	Sager, Charles D.	Classical Revival
2407 Benning Road NE	4517 0805	flat	118390	10/24/1928	Sager, Charles D.	Santmyers, George T.	Sager, Charles D.	Classical Revival
2409 Benning Road NE	4517 0077	flat	118390	10/24/1928	Sager, Charles D.	Santmyers, George T.	Sager, Charles D.	Classical Revival
1816 Benning Road NE	4507 0937	store	no permit	ca. 1928	unknown	unknown	unknown	Colonial Revival

**H Street/Benning Road Streetcar Project**

Address	SSL	Purpose	Permit Number	Permit or Construction Date	Owner	Architect	Builder	Architectural Style
725 20th Street NE	4515 0829	apartment	no permit	ca. 1928	unknown	unknown	unknown	Other
2411 Benning Road NE	4517 0809	dwelling	123599	5/14/1929	Sager, Charles D.	Santmyers, George T.	Sager, Charles D.	Colonial Revival/Craftsman
2413 Benning Road NE	4517 0811	dwelling	123599	5/14/1929	Sager, Charles D.	Santmyers, George T.	Sager, Charles D.	Classical Revival
2415 Benning Road NE	4517 0813	dwelling	123599	5/14/1929	Sager, Charles D.	Santmyers, George T.	Sager, Charles D.	Colonial Revival/Craftsman
2417 Benning Road NE	4517 0815	dwelling	123599	5/14/1929	Sager, Charles D.	Santmyers, George T.	Sager, Charles D.	Classical Revival
2419 Benning Road NE	4517 0817	dwelling	123599	5/14/1929	Sager, Charles D.	Santmyers, George T.	Sager, Charles D.	Colonial Revival/Craftsman
1818-1820 Benning Road NE	4507 0935	office	129516	12/10/1929	Ryan, H. L.	Ryan, H. L.	Ryan, H. L.	Classical Revival
566 25th Place NE	4517 0819	dwelling	135108	8/7/1930	Sager, Charles D.	Santmyers, George T.	Sager, Charles D.	Classical Revival
1923 Benning Road NE	4514 0818	store	130133	1/17/1930	Silverman, Joseph	Honey, W.B.	Cladny (M.) Const. Co.	Classical Revival
2600 Benning Road NE	PAR 01600045	school	No permit	1931	District Board of Education	Office of the Municipal Architect	Various	Colonial Revival/Classical Revival
2101 Benning Road NE	4516 0159	gas station	156567	8/19/1932	Republic Investment Co.	Briscoe, Richard M.	Republic Investment Co.	Modern
2033 Benning Road NE	PAR 149 LOT 60	apartment & store	204737	7/15/1937	Sager, Charles D.	Santmyers, George T.	Sager, Charles D.	Other
2401 Benning Road NE	4517 0822	apartment & store	208651	11/26/1937	Lenkin Const. Co.	Turner, R. Benson	Lenkin Const. Co.	Colonial Revival
2519 Benning Road NE	4518 0075	dwelling	221621	4/7/1939	Foxcroft, Inc.	Levy, D. Morton	Central Building Co.	Colonial Revival
2521 Benning Road NE	4518 0076	dwelling	221621	4/7/1939	Foxcroft, Inc.	Levy, D. Morton	Central Building Co.	Classical Revival
2523 Benning Road NE	4518 0077	dwelling	221621	4/7/1939	Foxcroft, Inc.	Levy, D. Morton	Central Building Co.	Colonial Revival
2525 Benning Road NE	4518 0078	dwelling	221621	4/7/1939	Foxcroft, Inc.	Levy, D. Morton	Central Building Co.	Colonial Revival
2527 Benning Road NE	4518 0079	dwelling	221621	4/7/1939	Foxcroft, Inc.	Levy, D. Morton	Central Building Co.	Colonial Revival
2529 Benning Road NE	4518 0080	dwelling	221621	4/7/1939	Foxcroft, Inc.	Levy, D. Morton	Central Building Co.	Classical Revival
2531 Benning Road NE	4518 0081	dwelling	221621	4/7/1939	Foxcroft, Inc.	Levy, D. Morton	Central Building Co.	Colonial Revival
1720 Benning Road NE	4507 0142	apartment	238907	11/27/1940	Wire, Preston E.	Hallett, Marcus	Wire, Preston E.	Colonial Revival
1722 Benning Road NE	4507 0141	apartment	238907	11/27/1940	Wire, Preston E.	Hallett, Marcus	Wire, Preston E.	Colonial Revival
1724 Benning Road NE	4507 0140	apartment	238907	11/27/1940	Wire, Preston E.	Hallett, Marcus	Wire, Preston E.	Colonial Revival/Craftsman
1726 Benning Road NE	4507 0139	apartment	238907	11/27/1940	Wire, Preston E.	Hallett, Marcus	Wire, Preston E.	Colonial Revival
1728 Benning Road NE	4507 0138	apartment	238907	11/27/1940	Wire, Preston E.	Hallett, Marcus	Wire, Preston E.	Colonial Revival
1730 Benning Road NE	4507 0170	apartment	238907	11/27/1940	Wire, Preston E.	Hallett, Marcus	Wire, Preston E.	Colonial Revival
1732 Benning Road NE	4507 0169	apartment	238907	11/27/1940	Wire, Preston E.	Hallett, Marcus	Wire, Preston E.	Colonial Revival
1734 Benning Road NE	4507 0168	apartment	238907	11/27/1940	Wire, Preston E.	Hallett, Marcus	Wire, Preston E.	Colonial Revival
1736 Benning Road NE	4507 0167	apartment	238907	11/27/1940	Wire, Preston E.	Hallett, Marcus	Wire, Preston E.	Colonial Revival

### H Street/Benning Road Streetcar Project



Address	SSL	Purpose	Permit Number	Permit or Construction Date	Owner	Architect	Builder	Architectural Style
1738 Benning Road NE	4507 0166	apartment	238907	11/27/1940	Wire, Preston E.	Hallett, Marcus	Wire, Preston E.	Colonial Revival
1740 Benning Road NE	4507 0132	apartment	238907	11/27/1940	Wire, Preston E.	Hallett, Marcus	Wire, Preston E.	Colonial Revival
1742 Benning Road NE	4507 0131	apartment	238907	11/27/1940	Wire, Preston E.	Hallett, Marcus	Wire, Preston E.	Colonial Revival
1744 Benning Road NE	4507 0130	apartment	238907	11/27/1940	Wire, Preston E.	Hallett, Marcus	Wire, Preston E.	Colonial Revival
1746 Benning Road NE	4507 0129	apartment	238907	11/27/1940	Wire, Preston E.	Hallett, Marcus	Wire, Preston E.	Colonial Revival
1748 Benning Road NE	4507 0128	apartment	238907	11/27/1940	Wire, Preston E.	Hallett, Marcus	Wire, Preston E.	Colonial Revival
1750 Benning Road NE	4507 0127	apartment	238907	11/27/1940	Wire, Preston E.	Hallett, Marcus	Wire, Preston E.	Colonial Revival
1800 Benning Road NE	4507 0126	apartment	238907	11/27/1940	Wire, Preston E.	Hallett, Marcus	Wire, Preston E.	Colonial Revival
1802 Benning Road NE	4507 0125	apartment	238907	11/27/1940	Wire, Preston E.	Hallett, Marcus	Wire, Preston E.	Colonial Revival
1804 Benning Road NE	4507 0124	apartment	238907	11/27/1940	Wire, Preston E.	Hallett, Marcus	Wire, Preston E.	Colonial Revival
1806 Benning Road NE	4507 0123	apartment	238907	11/27/1940	Wire, Preston E.	Hallett, Marcus	Wire, Preston E.	Colonial Revival
1808 Benning Road NE	4507 0122	apartment	238907	11/27/1940	Wire, Preston E.	Hallett, Marcus	Wire, Preston E.	Colonial Revival
1812 Benning Road NE	4507 0120	apartment	238907	11/27/1940	Wire, Preston E.	Hallett, Marcus	Wire, Preston E.	Colonial Revival
1814 Benning Road NE	4507 0119	apartment	238907	11/27/1940	Wire, Preston E.	Hallett, Marcus	Wire, Preston E.	Colonial Revival
1704 Benning Road NE	4507 0936	filling station	no permit	ca. 1946	unknown	unknown	unknown	Other
1822-1824 Benning Road NE	4507 0940	store	288418	8/28/1946	Kogod, Jack	Beatty, Frank G.	Phillips, Frank S.	Modern
2001 Benning Road NE	4515 0828	apartment	A-51915	3/9/1954	Browne, Hugh	unknown	unknown	Modern
2539 Benning Road NE	4518 0800	gas station	no permit	ca. 1960	unknown	unknown	unknown	Modern
580 23rd Place NE	4516 0206	warehouse	no permit	1963	unknown	unknown	unknown	Modern

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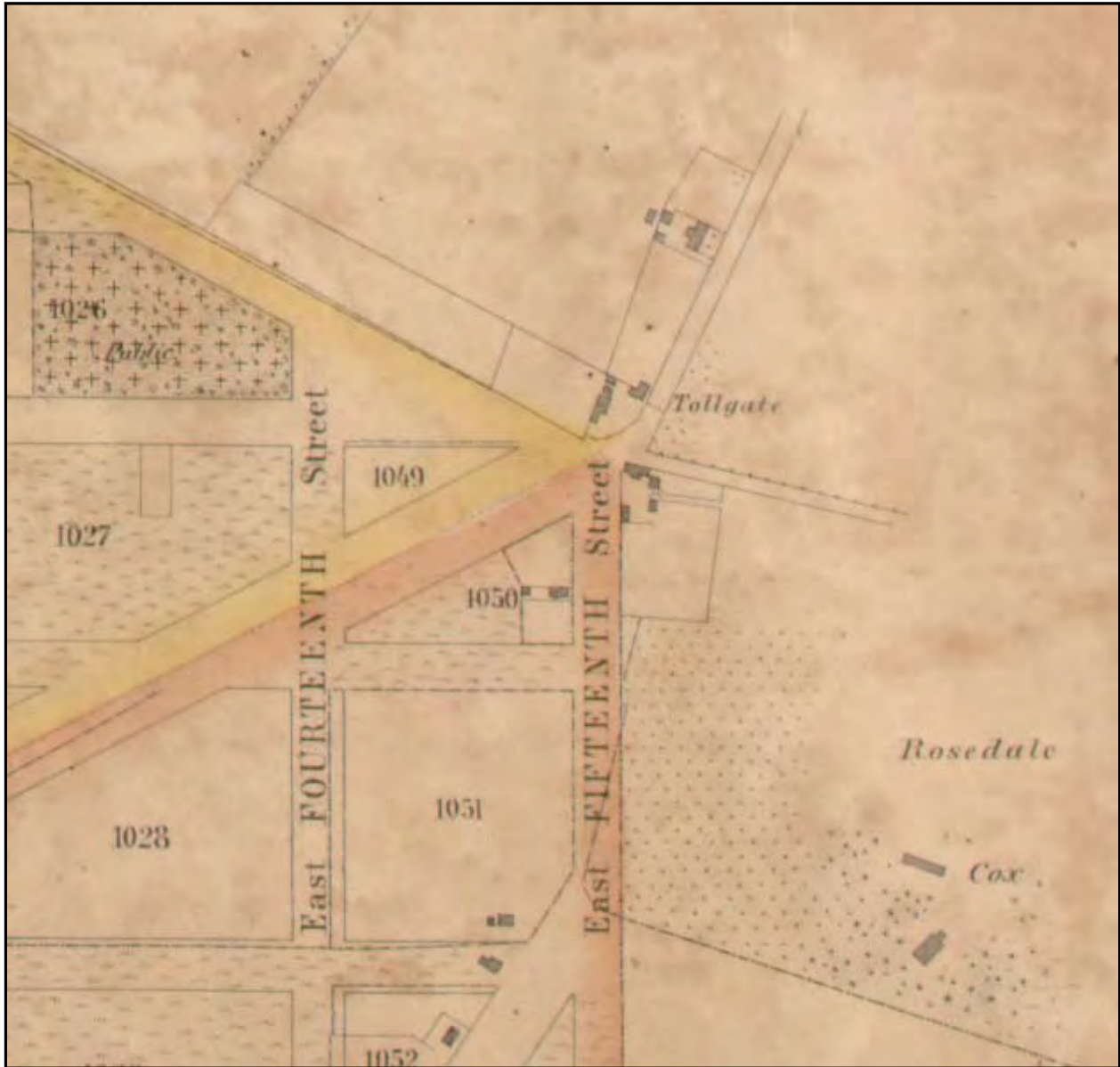
## 3.0 Historic Context

The H Street/Benning Road NE corridor is located in the northeast quadrant of the District and is surrounded by several neighborhoods including Near Northeast, Stanton Park, Trinidad, Kingman Park, Carver Langston, and others. H Street and Benning Road NE have long been important transportation routes in the District of Columbia. H Street and Benning Road meet at the “Starburst Intersection” which marks the convergence of several significant roads, including Bladensburg Road, Maryland Avenue, 15th Street NE, and Florida Avenue. H Street NE is part of Pierre L’Enfant’s 1791 Plan of the City of Washington. Although not constructed until 1849 and not paved until 1880, H street NE was designed as an east-west 90-foot-wide road in L’Enfant’s Plan (Michael Baker 2003, 2-3). Benning Road NE stretches east from the Starburst Intersection and crosses the Anacostia River.

### 3.1. Early History of the Corridor

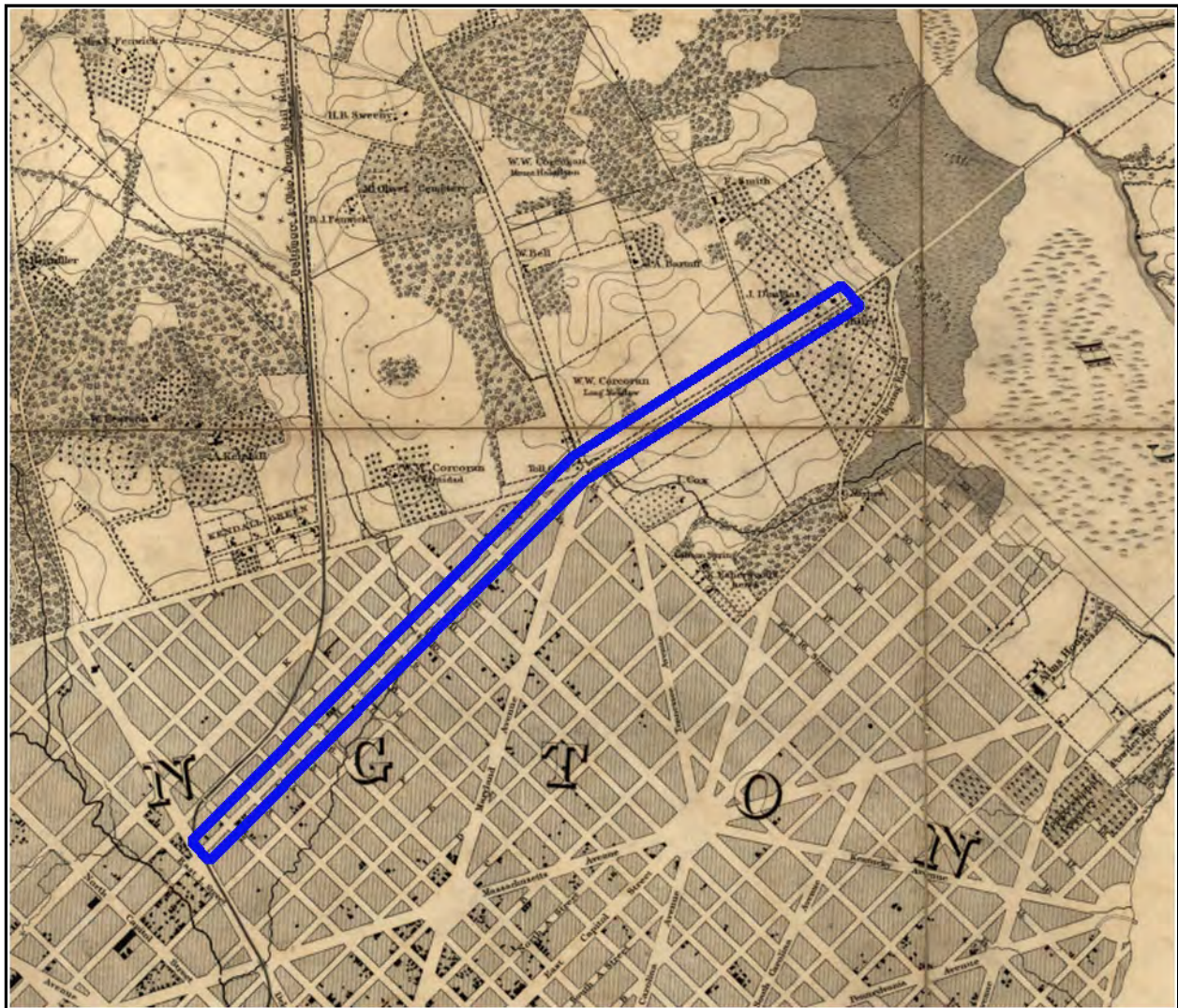
As early as 1805, a bridge was constructed to cross the Eastern Branch (Anacostia River) at what is now Benning Road. The bridge, later known as Bennings Bridge for its operator William Benning, was replaced multiple times in the nineteenth century, and served as an important crossing from Washington County and Maryland into the federal city (LeeDecker and Friedlander 1986). Prior to the Civil War, a tollgate was located at the entrance to the federal city, at the terminus of Bladensburg Turnpike (now Bladensburg Road), Boundary Street (Florida Avenue), H Street NE, and 15th Street, NE (Figure 8).

Figure 8 | Detail of Map of Washington City (Boschke 1857), showing starburst intersection and tollgate



In the mid-nineteenth century, the northeast portion of the federal city was largely rural and unpopulated. Boschke’s *Topographical Map of the District of Columbia* (Boschke 1861, Figure 8) documents the undeveloped land along H Street and shows a number of cemeteries and large farms on Benning Road.

**Figure 9 |** Topographical Map of the District of Columbia (Boschke 1861)



### **3.2. Introduction and Development of the Streetcar**

The introduction of the streetcar to Washington, DC in 1862 opened up many areas of the District to new development and spurred growth in areas of the city that were previously settled. The land along H Street NE and Benning Road remained undeveloped until the introduction of the Columbia Railway Company’s streetcar in 1870. The streetcar line spurred residential and commercial development along these two roads, turning the area into one of the District’s most significant transportation corridors.

#### **H Street/Benning Road Streetcar Project**

The Columbia Railway Company was chartered by Congress in May 1870 and was the city's third horsecar operator (Figure 10). The company's original streetcar route ran northeast along New York Avenue from the Treasury Building (located at 15th Street NW) to K Street NW, down Massachusetts Avenue to H Street NW, on to H Street NE, and to the eastern tollgate of the Columbia Turnpike Company at the intersection of H and 15th Streets NE. The line was originally conceived as a single track, but by March 1872, it was converted to a double-track line. The Columbia Railway Company operated at least eight trips a day, six days a week, with nine cars, forty horses, a stable, and a car barn which was at 15th and Gales Streets NE. By 1887, the company had grown to 23 cars and 71 horses.

**Figure 10** | Columbia Railway Company horsecar, 1891, likely taken near 15th and H Streets NE (King 1972, 12)



In 1892, Congress banned one-horse streetcars in the District in response to riders' complaints of the small, inconvenient, and crowded cars of the Columbia Railway (King 1972, 12-15). Electric streetcars were introduced to the District in October 1888 by the Eckington and Soldiers' Home Railway. The initial electric line in the city was a double track with a center pole overhead wire system (King 1972, 17-19). Once modern, electric streetcars were introduced, DC riders did not want to ride the horse-drawn cars, forcing many streetcar companies to convert to a more expensive electric-powered system. In 1890, Congress required that horse power be replaced with electric power for any company operating "from Georgetown or West Washington to and beyond the Capitol grounds." Storage battery cars, compressed air, and other experimental methods were tried by various streetcar companies, but the underground



conduit was perfected and became the preferred electric system for powering streetcars in the District (King 1972, 25, 31).

Overhead wires related to the streetcar system were banned within the federal city after July 1, 1893 (King 1972, 17-19). The federal city was considered the part of the city within the extent of Pierre L'Enfant's Plan of the City of Washington, which is the portion of the city south of Florida Avenue (formerly Boundary Street). Because the Columbia Railway Company's streetcar line operated fully within the federal city, the company needed to find an alternate power source and experimented unsuccessfully with a compressed air car in 1892. In August 1894, stockholders of the Columbia Railway Company approved the construction of a cable car system, which began in 1895 and marked the last cable car system built in the United States. That same year, the company erected a large cable powerhouse at 15th Street and Benning Road NE (Figure 11, demolished 1971) and purchased 20 open cars and 20 closed cars built by John Stephenson. The double-ended cars replaced the company's fleet of 44 horsecars and 180 horses (King 1972, 32-35).

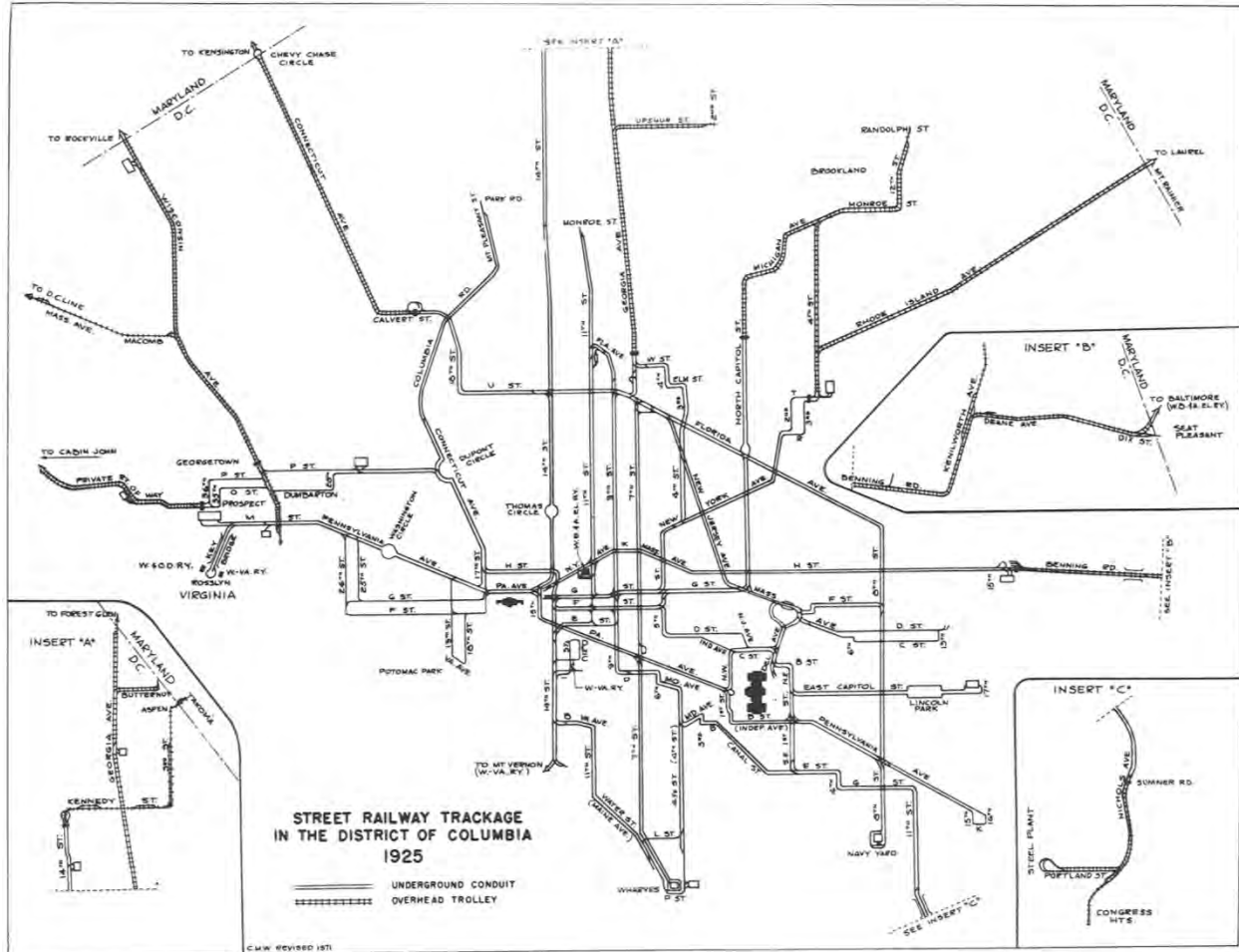
**Figure 11** | Columbia Railway Company Car Barns, 15th Street & Benning Road NE, North Front and West Side (HABS 1970)



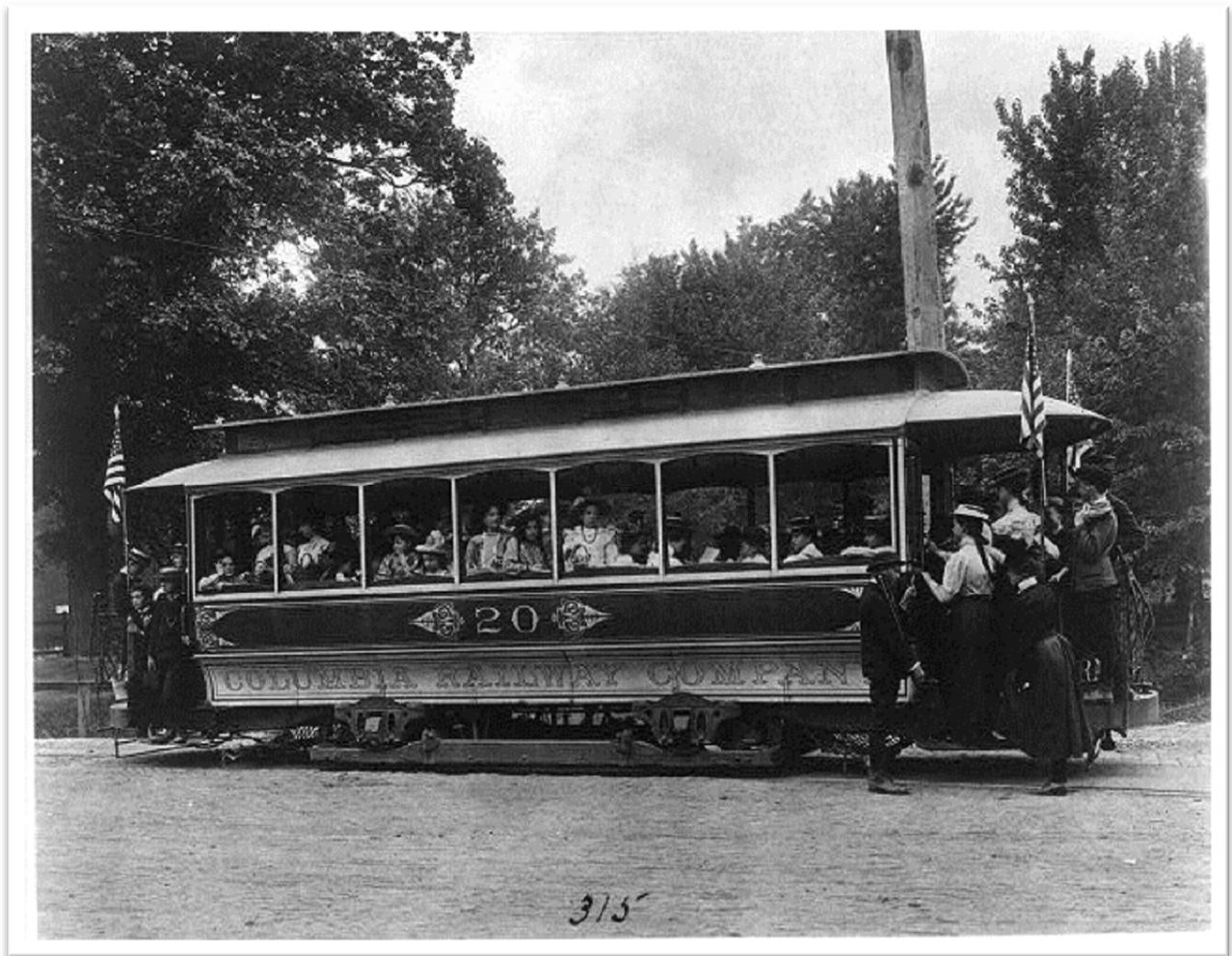
After conversion to the cable system, the Columbia Railway was authorized to extend its line east on Benning Road, across the Anacostia River to the B&O Railroad, north along the railroad (now Kenilworth Avenue) to Watts Creek. From the creek, one line traveled east under the Baltimore and Ohio and the Baltimore and Potomac Railroads to the eastern corner of the District at Chesapeake Junction (now Seat Pleasant). The other branch of the line traveled north along the B&O to the District line. The extension of the line along Benning Road, which was outside the federal city, used a double trolley system, where the return electrical circuit was conducted through an overhead wire rather than the rail. Just five years later in 1899, the Columbia Railway Company converted their lines to an underground conduit, making the company the last cable railway to operate in the country. The Columbia line used underground conduit from the Treasury Building to 15th and H Streets, NE; from there to the District Line the

streetcar operated with a double overhead wire. Once the line split, the streetcars operated on a single wire (King 1972, 32-37, 92; Figure 12).

**Figure 12 | Street Railway Trackage in the District of Columbia 1925 (King 1972, 129)**



**Figure 13** | School Children of the 6th Division on a Columbia Railway Company Trolley Car no. 20 (Johnston 1899)



Shortly after the turn of the century, several streetcar companies were merged into two major companies; Capital Traction and the City and Suburban Railway of Washington. The Columbia Railway Company was purchased by the Washington Traction and Electric Company in June 1899, but the company defaulted on its interest payments in 1901 and portions of the company were sold under foreclosure. The following year, the company renamed itself the Washington Railway and Electric Company (King 1972, 50-52, 58).

The former Columbia line continued to operate along H Street and Benning Road, but the construction of Union Station in the first decade of the twentieth century resulted in a disruption of the line on H Street NE. An underpass was constructed behind Union Station in 1905 to allow for a detour of the streetcar line (Figure 14). Passenger rail service from Union Station began in 1908 and its proximity to H

Street and Benning Road further solidified the area as a significant transportation corridor (King 1972, 76-77).

**Figure 14** | Westbound 942 leaves H Street underpass in back of Union Station October 10, 1948 (King 1972, 168)



As the automobile increased in popularity in the first half of the twentieth century, streetcar service declined, and as early as the 1920s, streetcar lines started converting to bus lines. Bus service was seen as a supplement to rail service and as a cost-effective means to replace less popular streetcar lines (King 1972, 118). In 1923, one of the Washington Railway and Electric Company's subsidiaries (the Washington Interurban) received permission to implement bus service from 15th and H Streets NE to the District Line and from the District Line to Bladensburg (Figure 15). Streetcars on this line were replaced by buses in April of that year (King 1972, 105). The introduction of buses and the increasing number of personal automobiles turned Benning Road and H Street into a busy transportation corridors that brought large volumes of traffic into the city (DDOT 2005, B-6).

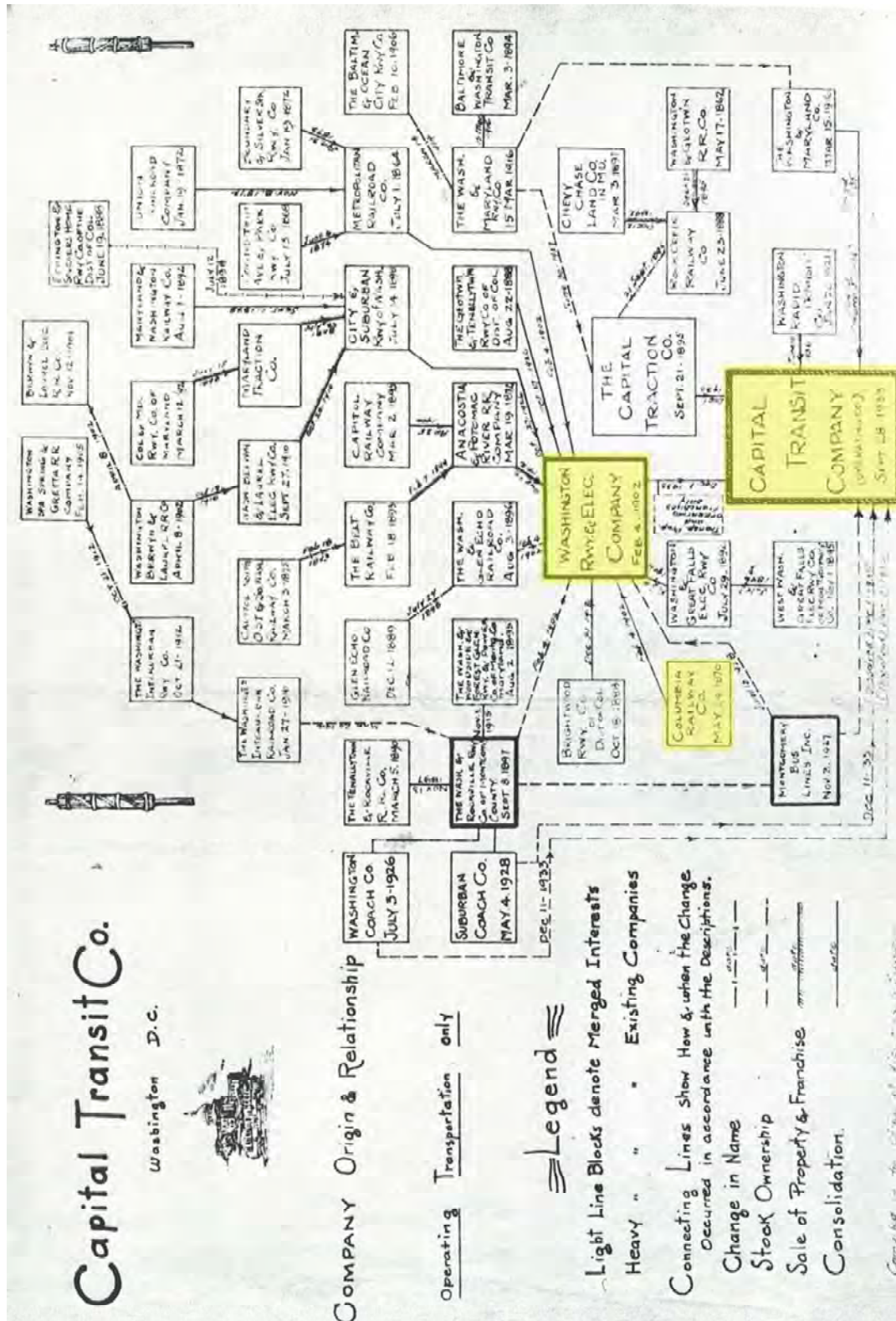
**Figure 15** | Starburst, 1947 (DDOT 2009), shows streetcars and buses traveling along H Street and Benning Road and the former Columbia Railway Car Barn used as a bus depot



In 1933, another period of streetcar company consolidation led to the creation of a monopoly under the Capital Transit Company (Figure 16). The Columbia Railway's car barn at 15th Street and Benning Road NE, also known as the Trinidad Car Barn, was converted to a bus garage in 1942 (Figure 15).

The end of World War II marked the beginning of a significant decline in public transit in the District. The number of personal automobiles increased at a rapid pace and streetcar and bus service began to be reduced (King 1972, 162). Benning Road continued to be a busy thoroughfare, connecting commuters in the outer edges of the District and the Maryland suburbs to downtown DC and Union Station. However, the Benning line was completely abandoned in 1949 and replaced with bus service (King 1962, 168). In 1962, streetcar service in Washington, DC was discontinued.

Figure 16 | Capital Transit Co. Company Origin & Relationship (King 1972, 318)



### 3.3. Development of the Corridor

The opening of the streetcar line spurred late-nineteenth-century residential and commercial development along the H Street/Benning Road corridor. The impetus for development was also sparked by advances made by the Territorial Government for the District of Columbia and the Board of Public Works. The Board “laid 123 miles of sewers, 208 miles of sidewalk, 157 miles of improved roads, 30 miles of water mains, 39 miles of gas mains, planted 6,000 trees, graded 3,340,000 cubic yards of dirt, and filled in much of the ugliest part of the canal” that divided the city (Maury 1972, 407).

The improvements were spread throughout the District, but H Street NE also directly benefited. The street was paved in stone in 1872 and was one of the only paved streets in the entire northeast quadrant by 1880. Street lights, gas mains, and a telegraph line ran the length of the street, which also had fire plugs and hydrants. The swampy land surrounding the H Street/Benning corridor was improved by the completion of the Boundary Street sewer in the 1880s. Clearing the water resulted in buildable land suitable for development and the improvements that would soon follow (Maury 1972, 407).

Lots fronting both sides of H Street and the south side of Benning Road were subdivided into buildable lots. Land on the north side of Benning Road was still primarily farm land with the exception of Graceland Cemetery located on the northeast corner of Benning Road and 15th Street NE. Residential construction along H Street and Benning was typically speculative development with a developer constructing multiple buildings at the same time with similar architectural styles and details. The 1880 federal census reveals that residents of H Street were predominantly white middle-class workers who had jobs such as clerks, laborers, carpenters, painters, and printers. Many residents had young families with children attending school. The majority of residents were immigrants, typically from Ireland or Scotland (US Federal Census 1880, ED 321).

Commercial development followed the residential construction and consisted of purpose-built commercial buildings, as well as multi-story residential buildings with commercial space on the first floor. Construction of commercial buildings grew from 75 buildings in 1880, to 427 in 1910. Typical businesses included tailors, laundries, banks, food purveyors, grocery stores, dry goods, restaurants, saloons, and pool halls (Schwartz et. al. 2002, 34). By the turn of the twentieth century, several fraternal organizations, social groups, and religious institutions erected dedicated buildings for their group’s use. A variety of new commercial buildings appeared in the corridor in the first decades of the twentieth century, including banks, theaters, gas stations, and various automobile-related businesses.

The construction of Union Station in the first decade of the twentieth century not only brought new commuters who traveled through the corridor on their way to work, but also a group of skilled and

#### H Street/Benning Road Streetcar Project



unskilled laborers who worked on the massive Union Station project and other related projects. These workers were typically immigrants who often decided to make their home in the H Street and Benning Road corridor. Census records indicate H Street remained a majority white population, whereas the Kingman Park area on the south side of Benning Road was predominantly black.

At the turn of the twentieth century, the area that became Kingman Park on the south side of Benning Road was an undeveloped, wooded parcel of land located near the District's city dump. Building permits indicate that local real estate developer Charles Sager began constructing houses in 1927. Perhaps because of the location, many white buyers were uninterested in buying houses in Kingman Park. As a result, Sager began marketing his houses directly to African American buyers and by 1931, over 230 houses were in the area (*Washington Post*, 4/2/1988; 2/15/1931). The growing number of black residents in Kingman Park sparked a great need for schools for the increasing number of children in the area. The construction of a new elementary school in 1929 in turn boosted the interest of homebuyers and the Kingman Park neighborhood grew. Sager continued to building houses in the area into the 1940s.

### **3.4. Education Hill**

As the population of the area increased, particularly along Benning Road, so did the demand for public services. One of the most significant community needs was public schools for the growing African American community. In September 1929, the District Board of Education purchased 42.5 acres of land at Benning Road and 26th Street NE from the Thrift Building Company. Board of Education minutes indicate the former Douglas family farm land was purchased "for school buildings and playground sites" and was intended to be the location of an elementary and junior high school for black students (Board of Education 1929). Over the next 25 years, this parcel would become known in the community as Education Hill and was the site of four schools for African American children: the Charles Young Elementary School (1929), Hugh M. Browne Junior High School (1932), Seth Ledyard Phelps Vocational School (1934), and Joel Elias Spingarn High School (1952). Each named for a figure prominent in African American history, these buildings would constitute the first and only planned public educational campus in the District of Columbia.

### **3.5. Langston Terrace**

As Kingman Park expanded and new schools were constructed at Education Hill, a site was selected immediately to the west of the school campus for the construction of the District's first federally sponsored public housing (Figure 17-Figure 19). The 13-acre Langston Terrace complex was built by the PWA from 1935 to 1938 as segregated housing for African Americans. The buildings were designed by

prominent local African American architect Hilyard Robinson and named in honor of John Mercer Langston, a noted black abolitionist and the first black elected official in the United States. The housing project was innovative for many reasons, including electric kitchens (considered a luxury), and a library, preschool, and recreation center all within the complex (*Washington Post*, 8/27/1987). The property was listed in the DC Inventory of Historic Sites and the NRHP in 1987. The complex is historically significant for its collection of International Style buildings that possess “innovative architectural characteristics which reflect European prototypes of large-scale housing and urban design and displays high standards of construction and planning typical of the 51 housing projects built by the Public Works Administration from 1933 to 1937” (Leiner 1986). Langston Terrace was immediately recognized as a success, not only for its design, but for the beginning of the federal government’s involvement in replacing substandard, low-rent housing for African American residents of the District (Leiner 1986). Unlike many other public housing complexes, the construction of Langston Terrace did not result from massive slum clearing. Historic maps indicate this portion of Benning Road was a farm owned by the Markham family (Baist 1921). The construction of Langston Terrace and growth in Kingman Park in the late 1930s solidified a growing African American community along Benning Road.

**Figure 17** | View of the [Langston Terrace] common, ca. 1938 (Leiner 1986). Young Elementary School's cupola is visible in the distance.



**Figure 18 |** View Southwest over 26th Street NE, the Langston School [Young Elementary], the Langston Terrace Housing Project (Aero Services 1938)



**Figure 19 |** Aerial view northwest over Langston Terrace constructed in 1937-1938 by the PWA (ca. 1938)



**H Street/Benning Road Streetcar Project**

### 3.6. Shifting Demographics

At the same time the African-American community along Benning Road and the related residential growth was increasing, development along the predominantly white H Street slowed, in large part because the corridor was fully built out at a much earlier time. By the 1940s, nearly all of the once residential buildings fronting H Street had been converted to house commercial businesses on the first floor. Owners of the shops typically lived in the upper stories, however, in the post-World War II era, increasing numbers of shop owners began to live elsewhere in the neighborhood or in the growing suburbs of the city, perhaps in response to increasing segregation Washington.

After World War II, census records reveal that the population of the H Street corridor began to markedly decline in the 1950s. At the same time, the census shows that white residents were moving out of the area, replaced by increasing numbers of black residents. Part of the decline can be attributed to the rapidly expanding post-war suburban development occurring outside of the District. Appealing new subdivisions featured affordable, attractive, and roomy single-family houses, rather than the smaller row houses of the city.

As the demographics of H Street residents shifted in the 1950s and 1960s, so did the commercial development in the area. As the spending power of the area changed, city directories indicate an increasing number of commercial vacancies along H Street, the decline of some popular chains, and the introduction of new stores that sold discounted merchandise. Reviews of city directories and maps indicate that at the same time, non-retail businesses increased in number, including churches, warehouses, offices, printing companies, and auto-related shops (Polk, 1954, 1960).

### 3.7. 1968 Riots and the Aftermath

The assassination of national civil rights leader Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. on April 4, 1968 sparked civil disorder across the United States. Five days of violent rioting erupted across Washington, DC. The rioting initially began as a peaceful protest at 14th and U Streets, NW, but eventually became violent, with rioters throwing bricks, setting fires, and widespread looting of local businesses. The following day, rioters on 7th Street NW and on H Street NE had confrontations with police. Firefighters attempting to battle numerous building fires were assaulted with bottles and rocks and were prevented from controlling the fires. Police that responded were unsuccessful in controlling the crowd, even with the use of tear gas. That same day on April 5th, nearly 14,000 federal troops, including DC National Guard members, were dispatched to assist the District police in controlling the crowds and riots (Figure 20). Police did not regain control of the city until Sunday, April 8th. The riots in DC resulted in the death of

twelve people, 1,097 injuries, the burning of approximately 1,200 buildings (including over 900 stores), and the arrest of more than 6,000 people (*Washington Post*, 4/6-10/1968).

**Figure 20** | H Street the Morning After, photo by Sam Smith (Smith 1997)



The damage that resulted from the riots on H Street NE led to a nearly 30-year period of economic decline in the community. Many of the elderly and small business owners of buildings that were destroyed or damaged in the riots could not afford to rebuild or fix the damages and ended up abandoning their businesses and homes (Maxwell 2011). More than half of the displaced workers from the closure of businesses in DC were black (Bean 2000, 169). H Street NE, particularly between 2nd and 14th Streets, experienced the most serious fire damage in the city (*Washington Post*, 4/6-10/1968). The Redevelopment Land Agency estimated the damages caused from the riots exceeded \$13 million. On H Street NE alone, 103 commercial businesses and 51 houses were affected by the riots. Of those, 51 commercial buildings and 38 housing units were total losses. The damage on H Street was focused between 2nd and 15th Streets NE and from F to K Streets NE and was estimated at nearly \$1.8 million (*Washington Post*, 4/10/1968).

**Figure 21** | Fire on H Street NE, April 1968, photo by Matthew Lewis (*Washington Post* 2012)



After the riots, the population of the H Street corridor dropped by more than 45 percent between 1960 and 1980, as both white and black residents fled the area. In 1969, the City Council approved an urban renewal plan for the corridor and purchased approximately 10 acres of land in the area to resubdivide and sell to developers. Numerous newspaper articles in the 1970s documented the languishing corridor and the efforts to rebuild. The urban renewal effort was slow to begin and passersby on H Street noted the “scene of decay, even devastation” with run-down buildings, vacancies, and empty lots. Of the 281 households moved from H Street after the riots, only 31 were able to return after receiving government subsidized rehabilitation loans. Sixty-five buildings were purchased by the city and 37 businesses were moved out of the area. Without the residents to patronize the businesses, the few remaining stores on the corridor suffered (*Washington Post*, 11/27/1977). Those who wanted to rebuild faced difficulty in acquiring loans to finance the rehabilitation (*Washington Post*, 3/18/1978).

### **3.8. Efforts Towards Renewal and Change**

A decade after the riots, the city had acquired 17 residential properties, 40 commercial, 1 mixed-use property, and 174 vacant lots in the H Street area. Of the units owned by the city, 120 were occupied,

#### **H Street/Benning Road Streetcar Project**

while 211 remained vacant. In the decade after the riot, the city had constructed 259 housing units, typically in the form of low-to-middle income apartments, they rehabilitated 56 housing units, and had 28 units under construction with another 22 under rehabilitation (*Washington Post*, 4/3/1978).

In 1979, John W. Hechinger was awarded a \$3.2 million federal grant to construct a shopping center on land he owned at the Starburst Intersection. The construction of the shopping center was intended to jumpstart revitalization of the corridor (*Washington Post*, 1/4/1979). Ground was broken on the Hechinger Mall in September 1979. The initial tenants included a Hechinger Hardware store, Peoples Drug, and a Safeway supermarket, which was the chain's largest on the east coast when it opened in 1981 (*Washington Post*, 9/30/1979; 4/14/1982).

Despite the efforts to spark redevelopment and several renewal attempts by the city, H Street remained relatively stagnant until the turn of the twenty-first century. Several factors combined in the early 2000s to begin the recovery for H Street NE. In 2002, the city launched the DC Main Streets program and designated H Street as one of the initial corridors. That same year, DDOT and WMATA began a multi-year study to explore transportation investments and transit opportunities that would support growth of DC's neighborhoods (*DC's Transit Future Alternatives Analysis*). The result was a recommendation in 2005 to implement a phased, 37-mile long streetcar system with eight different lines in twelve different corridor across the city. H Street/Benning Road NE and Anacostia were selected as pilot lines for the streetcar project.

At the same time, slow but steady private investment began as historic buildings such as the Atlas Theater and Plymouth Motors were rehabilitated and vacant and abandoned buildings were turned into shops, restaurants, and bars that catered to local residents, but also attracted newcomers to a growing night-time social and entertainment scene. DDOT undertook a dedicated transportation study of the corridor in 2005 (DDOT 2005) and in 2006, H Street was rezoned to meet the development guidelines specified in the Office of Planning's 2004 *H Street NE Strategic Development Plan*. The District's Great Streets Initiative was launched as an interagency effort to "use public tools and investments in real estate and business development as well as infrastructure and public art to leverage private and cultural investments on seven major corridors" (Woody 2012). DDOT undertook the H Street Reconstruction Project that began in 2008 and included full replacement of the street surfaces and sidewalks, installed updated traffic signals and streetlights, installed streetcar tracks and boarding platforms, and substantial streetscape beautification including trees, bicycle racks, benches, and public art. The project concluded in the summer of 2011.



Public-private partnerships in the twenty-first century have continued to transform the H Street/Benning Road corridor into a multi-modal, mixed-use community. New office buildings, residential housing, commercial businesses, and restaurants have been opening along H Street and Benning Road, indicating that the much anticipated, decades-long wait for renewal and revitalization is nearly over.

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## 4.0 Survey Results

The architectural survey included 79 properties constructed between 1908 and 1963. The overwhelming majority of these resources dated from the 1920s to the 1940s. Properties were almost evenly divided between residential and commercial structures (Table 3). A number of the formerly residential buildings have been rehabilitated for commercial use.

**Table 3 | Property Types Surveyed**

Property Type	Number of Buildings in the Survey Area
Residential	
Single-family	35
Multiple dwellings	33
Apartment/store	2
Commercial	
Stores	3
Automotive related	3
School campus	1
Office	1
Warehouse	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>79</b>

### 4.1. Building Forms and Types

Residential buildings in the survey area include by single-family and multiple dwellings. Residential buildings in the survey area include both single-family and multiple dwellings. The single-family dwellings are typically two-story, flat-front row houses, two or three bays wide, constructed in the 1920s through the 1940s. All of the surveyed buildings were masonry construction, typically concrete block faced with six- or seven-course, American-bond brick. The buildings typically reflect restrained interpretations of the Classical Revival and Colonial Revival styles (Figure 22, Figure 23). Classical Revival-style buildings in the survey area typically have stepped parapets and paneled or plain friezes sometimes ornamented with swags. Some of the buildings show the influence of the Craftsman style with their pent roofs with overhanging eaves, exposed rafter tails, and dormer windows that pierce the pent (Figure 24). The influence of the Modern Movement is evident on post-World War II buildings which are typically minimally ornamented (Figure 25, Figure 26).

**Figure 22** | 1910 Benning Road NE, view northeast (HDR 2012)



**Figure 23** | 1720-1748 Benning Road NE, view northwest (HDR 2012)



**Figure 24** | 2417 Benning Road NE, view south (HDR 2012)



**Figure 25 |** 2033-2029 Benning Road NE, view southwest (HDR 2012)

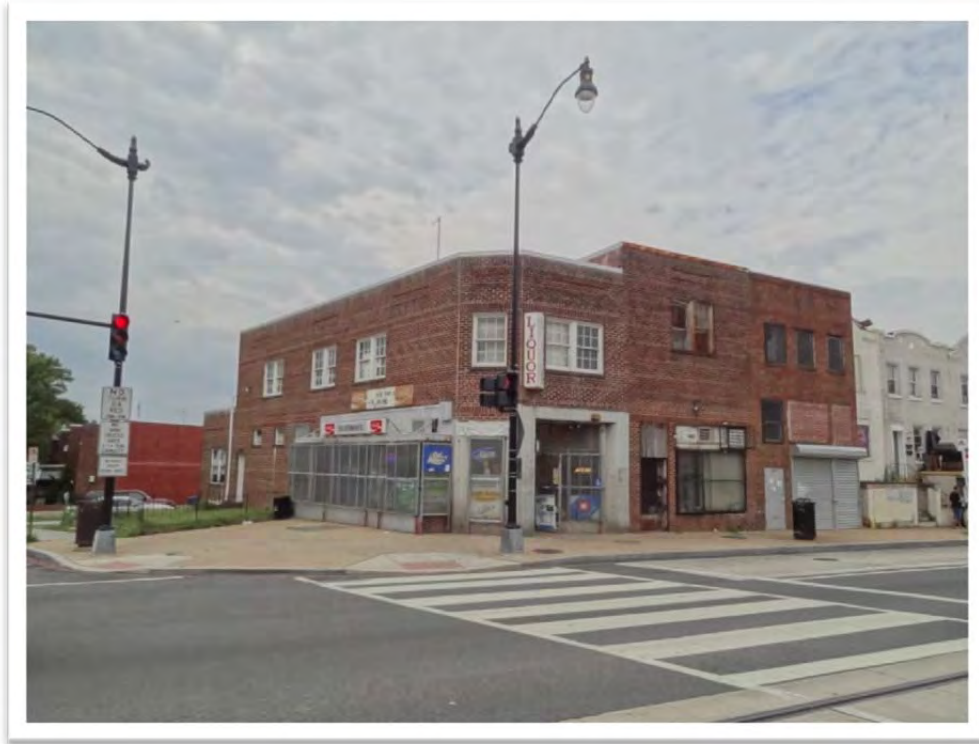
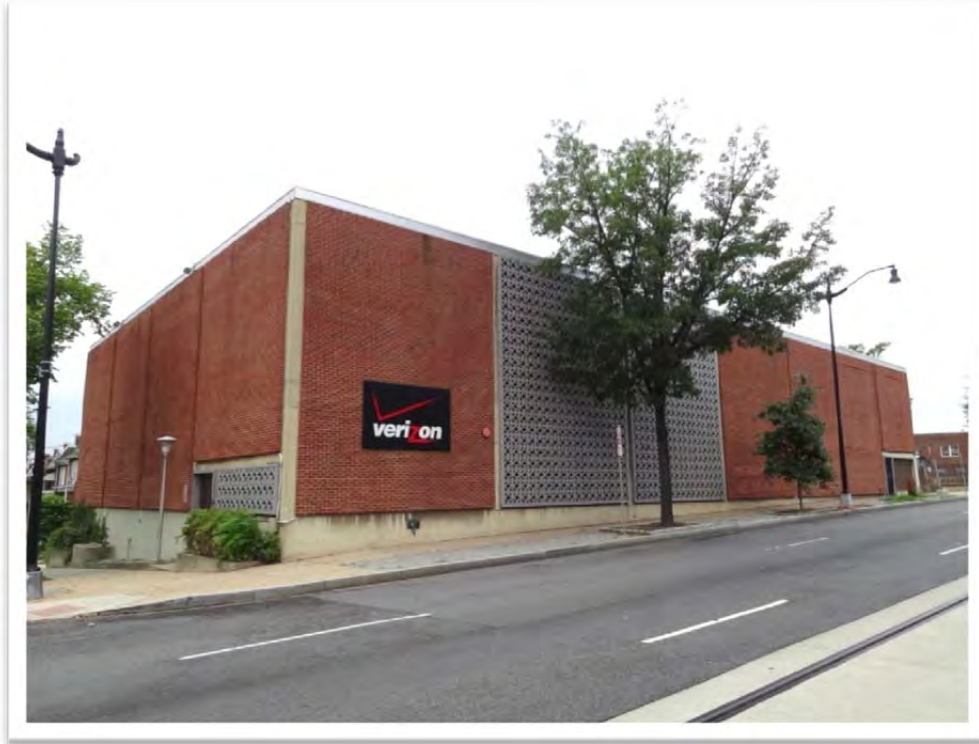


Figure 26 | 580 23rd Place NE, view southwest (HDR 2012)

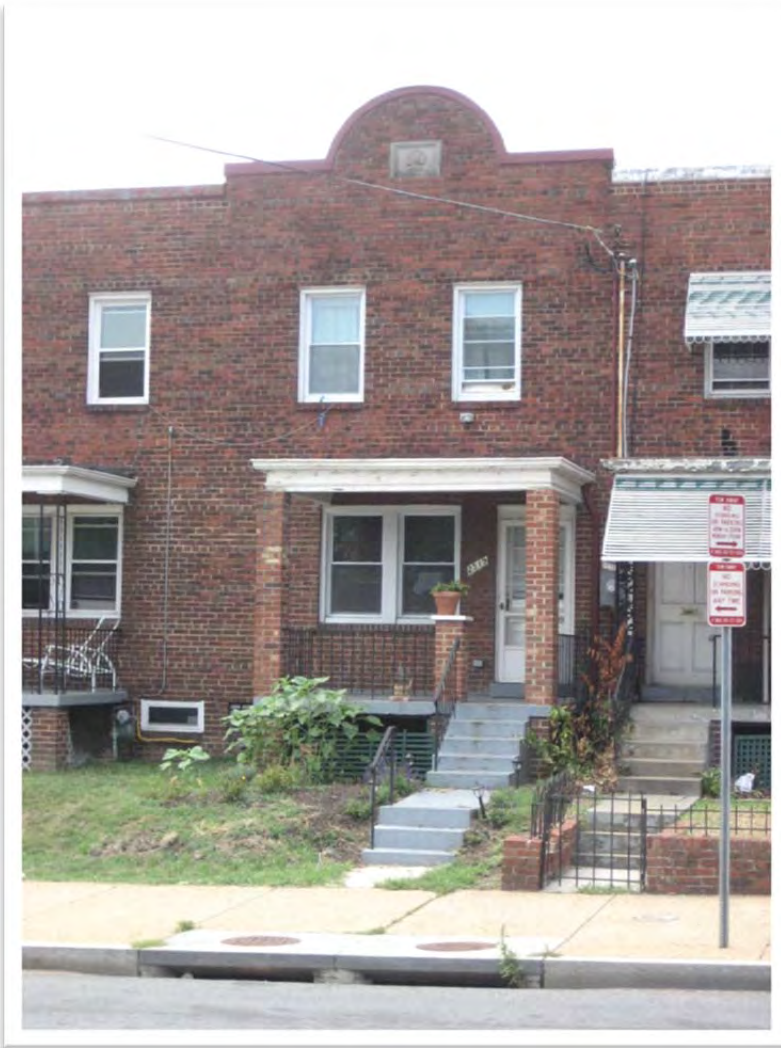




### 4.1.1. Residential Buildings

Typical of twentieth-century row houses in the District, the row houses in the survey area often have a “daylight” form. These daylight row houses are wider than earlier buildings, but are only two rooms deep to provide improved lighting and circulation. Daylight row houses often have a false mansard or pent roof, which is sometimes pierced with dormers. Also typical of the form are front porches, which provide additional outdoor living space for these modest houses (Figure 27).

**Figure 27** | 2519 Benning Road NE, view south (HDR 2012)



The majority of resources in the survey area were designed by architect George T. Santmyers, who worked with speculative developers Charles D. Sager, the Hall Johnson Construction Company, and Small & Co. Santmyers' designs were typical of the modest Colonial Revival and Classical Revival-style buildings common in Capitol Hill and the District. Originally built in 1926 as single-family dwellings, the buildings at 2023-2027 Benning Road NE were designed by Santmyers for the Hall Johnson Construction Company (Figure 28). The two-story, three-bay concrete-block, brick-faced buildings reflect a blend of the Colonial Revival and Classical Revival styles with their pedimented parapets and friezes decorated with concrete panels featuring swags and rosettes. Like many of the residential buildings in the corridor, the basement and/or first story was converted to commercial use.

**Figure 28** | 2023-2027 Benning Road NE, view southeast (HDR 2012)



Marcus Hallett worked with developer Preston E. Wire to construct the apartments at 1720-1814 Benning Road NE in 1940 (Figure 29). These two-family dwellings reflect the influence of the Colonial Revival style and the Modern Movement. The concrete-block, brick-faced buildings have flat roofs, some of which have pent roofs typical of twentieth-century Colonial Revival-style residential buildings in the District. Ornamentation is typically limited to brick beltcourses at the cornice and water table levels and around the main entry.

**Figure 29** | 1800-1814 Benning Road NE, view northeast (HDR 2012)



#### 4.1.1. Commercial Buildings

Only a handful of surveyed buildings were purpose-built as stores. 1822-1826 Benning Road NE (Figure 30) was constructed in 1946 by Frank S. Phillips for owner Jack Kogod. Designed by Frank G. Beatty, the two-story, concrete-block, brick-faced building reflects the influence of the Modern Movement.

Ornamentation is limited to paneled brick frieze. The building has three single-leaf entries which provide access to the two stores on the first floor and to a separate space on the upper story. The two-story Classical Revival-style store was built in 1930 by the Cladny Construction Company for owner Joseph Silverman (Figure 31). Designed by W.B. Honey, this corner store is typical of the commercial stores along Benning Road.

**Figure 30** | 1822-1826 Benning Road NE, view north (HDR 2012)



**Figure 31** | 1923 Benning Road NE, view southwest (HDR 2012)



More typical was the conversion of residential dwellings into commercial businesses, such as those along the 2000 block of Benning Road NE (Figure 32). These buildings were designed by Santmyers and constructed in 1926 by the Hall Johnson Construction Company. Sanborn Maps indicate that at least two of the houses on this row were converted to stores by 1959.

**Figure 32** | 2013-2001 Benning Road NE, view southwest (HDR 2012)



#### **4.1.2. Other Buildings**

The survey area also included three automotive-related resources (gas stations), a warehouse (the Verizon building at 580 23rd Place NE, Figure 26), and a school campus at 2600 Benning Road NE. Known among locals as “Education Hill,” the large campus contains four schools: Young Elementary School, Browne Junior High School, Phelps Vocational School, and Spingarn High School. Located adjacent to Langston Terrace, the property has served as a school campus since the construction of the first building (Young Elementary) in 1929. Refer to Section 5 (Recommendations) for more information on the campus.

## 5.0 Recommendations

As previously noted, there are various requirements a property must have in order to be included in the DC Inventory of Historic Sites. A total of 79 historic properties were surveyed and evaluated for their eligibility for listing in the DC Inventory (Table 2). Of those, only one property appears to meet the criteria for listing: the school campus at 2600 Benning Road NE. The remainder of the properties did not meet the criteria for listing because they lacked significance and/or lost their historic integrity.

### 5.1. Education Hill Historic District Eligibility

“Education Hill,” the campus composed of Young Elementary School, Browne Junior High School, Phelps Vocational School, and Spingarn High School is recommended eligible for inclusion in the DC Inventory of Historic Sites as a historic district. The campus is the only planned public school campus in the District of Columbia. All four segregated schools on the campus were constructed for African-American students to accommodate the growing population in Langston/Carver and Kingman Park. The buildings are excellent examples of the Colonial Revival and Classical Revival styles and reflect the evolution of public school architecture in the District. The buildings on the campus retain their historic integrity and are all more than 50 years old.

The campus meets several of the criteria for designation in the DC Inventory of Historic Sites, including (a) events, (b) history, and (d) architecture and urbanism. Further, the individual buildings meet the registration requirements for listing in the NRHP under the *Public School Buildings of Washington, DC, 1862-1960* Multiple Property Submission. It is recommended that the campus is eligible for listing in the NRHP under Criterion A as an example of the evolution of public education for African Americans, development of public education institutions, development of Washington neighborhoods, the evolution of African American life and culture, and segregation, desegregation, and integration.

In July 1929, the DC Board of Education authorized the purchase of nearly 43 acres of land north of Benning Road. The parcel was purchased from the Thrift Building Company for \$169,943.60 for “School Building and Playground Sites, DC, 1930 – New Junior High School, etc., in N.E. Washington” (District Board of Education, 9/4/1929). Plans were soon made for the construction of much-needed elementary and junior high schools for African American students in Northeast Washington.

Figure 33 | Parcel Map, 2600 Benning Road NE





**Figure 34** | Aerial Image, 2600 Benning Road NE



### 5.1.1. Charles Young Elementary School

Young Elementary School rests atop a grassy knoll oriented to the east and has a deep setback from 26<sup>th</sup> Street NE. Small asphalt parking lots are located southeast and southwest of the building. Concrete walkways provide access to the building. Mature trees line a playground installed in front of the northern half of the building.

Construction began on the African American elementary school in January 1931 by the Graham Construction Company. The school opened in November of that year and was named for Charles E. Young, one of the first African-American graduates from West Point, a decorated Army officer, and the first black U.S. National Park superintendent (Young Vertical File, Sumner School). When the school opened, it operated as the District's first platoon school, where two groups of students (called platoons) used the same classrooms at alternate times. The school hours extended from 8:30am to 5:00pm (Young Vertical File, Sumner School).

The Colonial Revival-style Young Elementary School is two-story building composed of several building campaigns that resulted in its current form. As originally built in 1931, the school consisted of the southern half of the current main block, inclusive of the bays that would become the current main entry. The original nine-room portion of the school was constructed for \$211,238.45 (Young Vertical File, Sumner School). In 1937, the school was extended north, adding an additional 11 rooms and balancing the structure to seven bays on each side of a new two-story, three-bay portico on the façade. This addition was completed as a cost of \$106,137.48 (Young Vertical File, Sumner School). A two-story auditorium was added to the rear of the building with an L-shaped form on the southwest corner of the school in 1949. In 1958, an identical addition was constructed on the northwest corner of the main block. Circa 1975, a large one-story addition was added to the rear of the auditorium.

**Figure 35** | Charles Young School, 1941 (Washingtoniana Division, Prints and Photographs)



The main block of Young Elementary School is a two-story, seventeen-bay concrete-block structure with a five-course, American-bond brick veneer. Brick quoins accentuate the corners. The structure rests on poured concrete foundation raised on all elevations and finished with a beveled edge. A hipped roof with pedimented ends caps the building. It is covered with slate shingles and has a beaded fascia board, and an ogee-molded wood cornice. Punctuating the center of the roof is a cupola capped by a bell roof with weathervane. The original segmentally arched window openings were infilled and the entire cupola clad in vinyl siding.

Dominating the façade is a centrally located, two-story portico with brick ends projecting from the main block. Approached by granite steps, the porch has paneled wood supports and a molded entablature with floral reliefs and the words “Charles Young School” affixed. Lending the building its Classical Revival

style, the portico has a front-gabled pediment with a smooth tympanum pierced by a four-light bull's-eye window. Block modillions and an ogee-molded cornice complete the portico.

The portico shelters three bays, including the main entry, that benefit from a smooth stucco finish. The main entry holds a double-leaf metal door set in a Classical Revival-style surround composed of fluted pilasters and a denticulated segmental pediment with floral reliefs. Paneled spandrels and ogee-molded architrave complete the main entry. Flanking the main entry are identical door openings, minus elaborate surrounds. Above each door opening are recessed blank panels. Three window openings pierce the second story sheltered by the portico. Each holds paired 1/1, double-hung wood sash with lug sills and keystone jack arches. Metal grates now cover the window openings. Small second-story window openings pierce the interior side walls of the portico. Each holds a fixed window set atop a lug sill.

Window openings on the façade hold 1/1, double-hung wood sash set atop concrete lug sills with soldier brick splayed jack keystone arches. Metal grates also cover these openings. The north and south (side) elevations of the main block are pierced by three large round arched windows openings. Each opening is composed of operable lower sash topped by fixed sash with a fixed transom. Concrete lug sills, concrete keystones and imposts, and brick voussoirs complete the openings. Based on historic photographs, these openings originally held 9/9, single-hung wood sash flanked by six-light fixed windows topped by multi-light transoms. (Young Vertical File, Sumner School) The northern and southernmost bays of the façade contain double-leaf metal doors with transoms. Oversized surrounds serve to anchor the ends of the façade. Each is composed of fluted pilasters, an entablature with floral motif, dentils, and an ogee-molded pediment. A door opening has been cut into the four bay from the north end. Replacing a window opening, the opening holds a single-leaf metal door with a rowlock brick jack arch.

A one-story auditorium is centrally located on the rear of the main block. Based on its form and materials, it appears that it dates to the 1937 addition to the north end of the original block. Veneered in five-course, American-bond brickwork, the auditorium is capped by a hipped roof of slate shingles that intersects the main block approximately half way up.

Constructed in 1948, the southwest addition has an L-shaped form that extends west and then north from the rear of the main block. Set on a solid concrete foundation, the concrete-block structure has a six-course, American-bond brick veneer. The flat roof is obscured from view by a short brick parapet with concrete coping. Fenestration consists of single and ribbons of six 1/1, double-hung wood-sash windows. Each openings has a concrete lug sill. A double-leaf metal door is located in the eastern bay of the south (side) elevation. It is set in a cast concrete surround with plain entablature. Three single-leaf metal doors on the south elevation accessed via a loading dock are not original openings. Based on

historic photographs, a ribbon of windows identical to the second story existed here originally (Young Vertical File, Sumner School).

The northwest addition to the rear of the school was constructed in 1958 and is similar in size, materials, and treatment to the 1948 addition it mirrors. Completed at a cost of \$199,562, the addition consisted of seven classrooms and a health suite (Young Vertical File, Sumner School). Fenestration consists of single and ribbons of six 1/1, double-hung wood-sash windows set atop concrete sills. A double-leaf metal door set in a plain concrete surround is located on the north (side) elevation.

Circa 1975, the school was added to in the rear and the elbow of the northwest elevation infilled and extended south to abut the auditorium. The one-story rear addition has a concrete-block structure with a brick veneer. A false mansard roof of standing-seam metal caps the addition. One-story, flat-roofed hyphens link the rear addition with the auditorium, as well as the southwest L addition. Fenestration consists of single-leaf, metal doors.

### **5.1.2. Hugh M. Browne Junior High School**

Browne Junior High School is located at the north end of campus. The building faces east towards the Anacostia River and has a setback of approximately seventy-five feet from 26<sup>th</sup> Street NE. The building is set at the edge of a slope, with mature trees and shrubs lining the building. Concrete steps, ramps, and walkways provide access to the building, which is also served by asphalt service roads. An asphalt parking lot is located south of the building.

Browne Junior High School was designed by S.B. Walsh and constructed in 1931-1932 by Arthur L. Smith and Company at a cost of \$449,361.92 (Browne Vertical File, Sumner School). The school was named for Hugh M. Browne, a native-born Washingtonian and prominent African-American educator, minister, and civil rights advocate. The school's restrained Colonial Revival-style embellishment is limited primarily to belt courses, lintels, and pilasters. The rectangular building is three stories in height and fifteen bays wide. Set on a solid foundation, this concrete-block structure has a five-course, American-bond brick veneer with limestone accents. The hipped roof is covered with slate shingles and finished with a limestone entablature inscribed "Hugh Browne Junior High School." The ogee-molded cornice is finished with a plain limestone frieze and modillions.

**Figure 36** | Browne Junior High School, view northwest (HDR 2012)



Centrally located on the façade (east elevation), the main entrance is composed of three double-leaf metal doors topped by multi-light transoms (security bars also attached). The arched and recessed openings have paneled soffits and oversized brick arches with limestone keystones. Window openings on the first story of the main block are round arched with operable sash and multi-light transoms. Oversized brick arches complete the openings, which now have security bars affixed. Second and third story window openings hold paired sash with concrete lug sills and brick surrounds. Brick pilasters lend verticality to the building.

In 1937, a large three-story addition was added to the rear of the building at a cost of \$165,954.53. The addition was constructed by the Highway Engineering and Construction Company (Browne Vertical File, Sumner School). Connected via three hyphens, the elongated addition stretched beyond the northern bounds of the main block. This concrete-block structure has five-course, American-bond brickwork and a

flat roof. Paired window openings are replete with concrete lug sills and soldier brick jack arches. Recessed double-leaf door openings include paneled soffits and soldier brick jack arches.

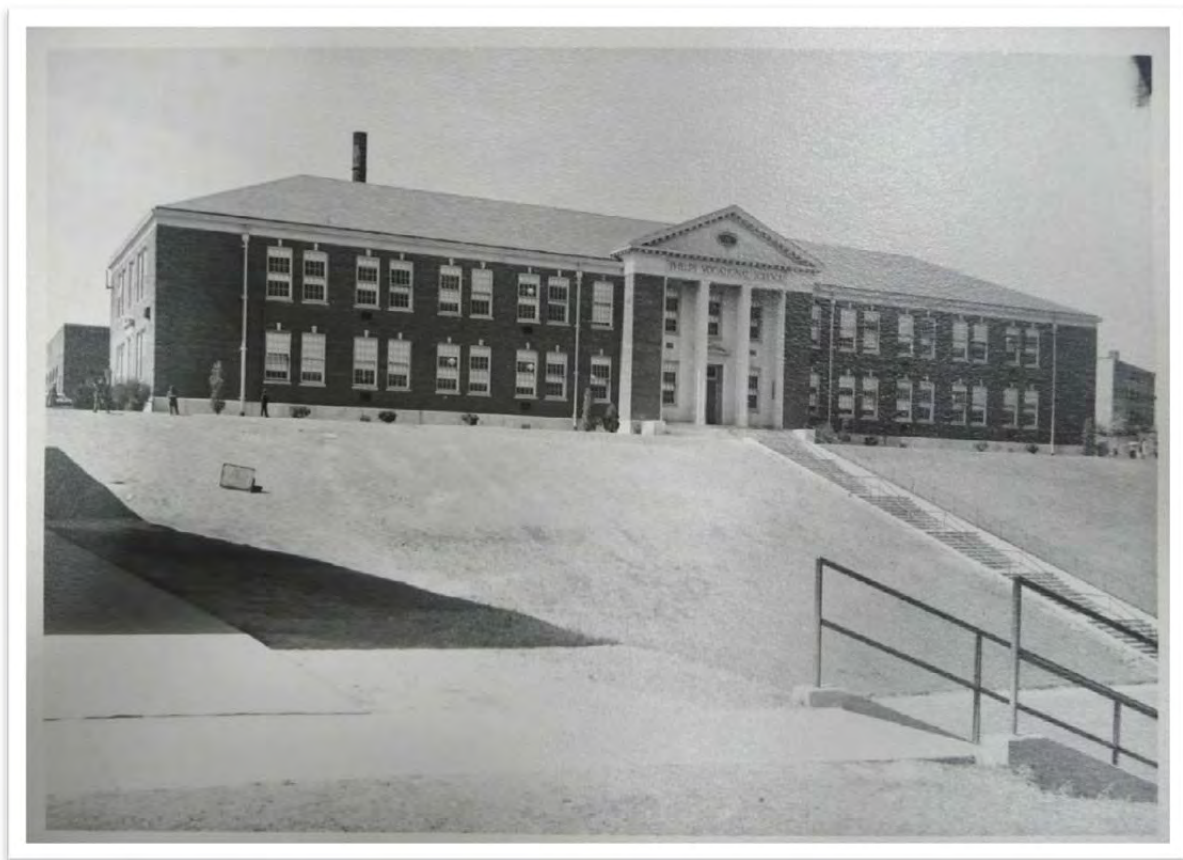
In 1957, a three-story addition was added to the south (side) elevation and contained electrical shops and classroom space for printing, wood working, home economics, mechanical drawing, art, and music (Browne Vertical File, Sumner School). The addition was connected to the main block via two narrow hyphens. Veneered in six-course, American-bond brickwork, the addition has a flat roof and paired window openings. Embellishment is limited to a soldier brick watercourse belt and concrete door opening accents and roof coping.

To the north of the main block is a large addition completed in 1970 (Browne Vertical File, Sumner School). The concrete-block structure is two-stories on a raised foundation and has a stretcher-bond brick veneer. Concrete accents and paired window openings relate to the main block.

### 5.1.3. Seth Ledyard Phelps Vocational School

Phelps Architecture, Construction, and Engineering High School was originally known as the Phelps Vocational School, and formerly known as the Phelps Career High School. The school was named for Seth Ledyard Phelps, an American naval officer and diplomat. The school is located in the northwest corner of campus. Similar to the surrounding educational buildings, Phelps is set atop a grassy knoll and oriented east towards the Anacostia River. A set of concrete steps approaches the main entry from far below the façade (east elevation). Immature trees line the concrete walkway which extends from the large asphalt parking lot southwest of the building.

**Figure 37** | Phelps Vocational 1960 (Phelps Vertical File, Sumner School)



The school opened in 1934 as a vocational training school for male African American students. In 1942, the school accepted its first female student. Declining enrollment and a lack of funding resulted in the closure of Phelps in 2002. The school underwent a \$63 million renovation and reopened in 2008 as the Phelps Architecture, Construction, and Engineering High School (*Washington Post*, 8/18/2008).



Phelps Vocational School was constructed from 1932-1934 by the Catalano Construction Company at a cost of \$312,000 (Phelps Vertical File, Sumner School). Designed by the Office of the Municipal Architect, this two-story, twenty-one-bay Colonial Revival/Classical Revival-style building has a rectangular form. This masonry structure is veneered with five-course, American-bond brick. Slate shingles cover the hipped roof, which is finished with a plain fascia board and a molded cornice.

The façade (east elevation) features a central pavilion with a full-height portico. The portico has enclosed brick ends and three open bays supported by paneled wood columns and pilasters. Block modillions and an enclosed oval light in the tympanum complete the pediment, which rests on a molded entablature emboldened with lettering “Phelps Vocational School.” The interior of the porch has a smooth stucco finish, which serves to highlight the stylized surround of the main entry. The main entry now holds a double-leaf metal door with a single-light transom. Paneled soffits and a narrow molded cornice frame the door. The Classical Revival-style surround has a simple entablature with geometric shapes and a denticulated ogee-molded cornice. The five window openings sheltered by the porch have limestone sills and keystone jack arches. Window openings on the main block also have limestone lug sills, but have splayed brick jack arches with concrete keystones. All of the window openings hold 1/1, double-hung sash.

Two flat-roofed additions were constructed on the rear elevation. Based on historic documentation and aerial photographs, these two buildings were constructed in 1943 (Young Vertical File, Sumner School). One-story hyphens connect the buildings to the main block. The additions have a rectangular form and are veneered in five-course, American-bond brick. Round arched windows pierce the north, west, and south elevations. Wide overhead roll-up doors are located on the west elevation.

A two-story addition is located on the north (side) elevation of the building and contained a multipurpose room. Constructed in 1966, this concrete-block structure has a stretcher-bond brick veneer and paired 1/1, double-hung, vinyl-sash windows (Young Vertical File, Sumner School). Concrete quoins and pilasters lend verticality to the addition. Based on its form and materials, a new veneer and windows were applied to this addition circa 2008. Attached to the east side of the 1966 addition is a smaller block. Due to the slope of the site, this addition is located primarily beneath the 1966 addition. It has a concrete-block structure, five-course, American-bond brick veneer, and a flat roof. Fenestration is limited to ribbons of fixed windows on the east elevation.

During the 2008 school year, a major renovation and addition was undertaken at Phelps. The exterior of the building received a major alteration with the addition of a two-story block on the south (side) elevation. This addition now serves as the building’s main entry.

**Figure 38** | 2008 Addition to Phelps (HDR 2012)

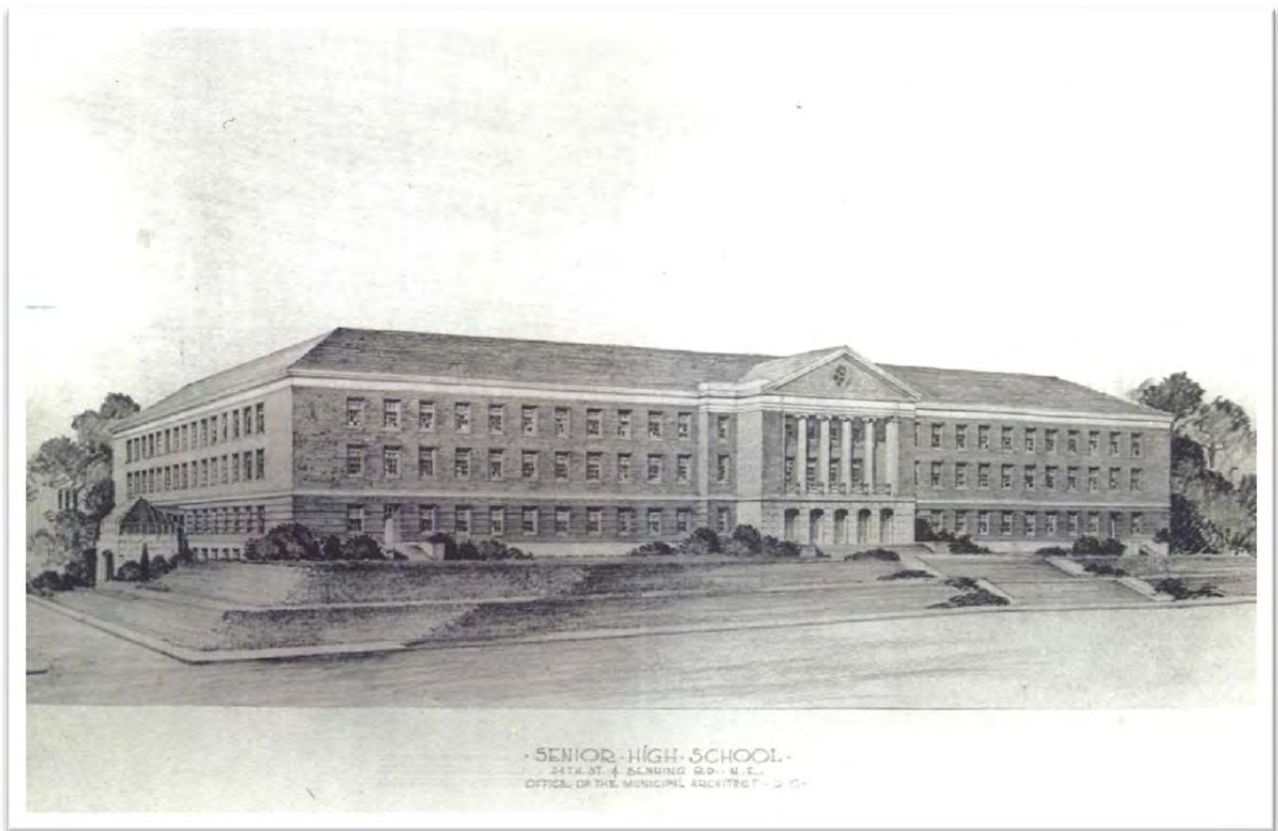


Designed with a modern stylistic interpretation of the Classical Revival style, this addition is composed of a concrete-block structure with a stretcher-bond brick veneer. The addition has a plain concrete foundation and entablature, with embellishments consisting of concrete quoins and pilasters. This same exterior is exhibited now on the 1966 addition to the north side of Phelps. Extending from the northwest corner of the flat roof is a brick tower with a metal structure extending from its interior. A full-height lobby with expanses of fixed glass highlights the southwest corner of the addition. An arched glass roof extends to form a porch supported by an arched concrete support. The arched roof extends the width of the rear elevation of the main block. The main entry, sheltered by the porch, consists of three sets of double-leaf, paneled wood doors with separated by narrow windows. Paired window openings hold 1/1, double-hung vinyl sash set on concrete lug sills with keystone jack arches. Three round arched windows are located on the west elevation of the addition in an attempt to blend the different sections of the building.

#### 5.1.4. Joel Elias Spingarn High School

Spingarn High School is located in the southern end of campus. The building is oriented east towards the Anacostia River. Set on a site sloping to the south, the building is framed by 26<sup>th</sup> Street NE to the east, an access road to the north, a line of mature trees to the west, and Benning Road to the south. A wide entranceway to the main entry features a brick veneer with recessed panels and a double stair. A flagpole stands centrally in front of the building. Mature trees and shrubs dot the grassy area surround Spingarn High School. Concrete walkways and asphalt parking lots provide access to the building.

**Figure 39** | Proposed rendering for a senior high school at 24th and Benning, 1950 (Washingtoniana Division, Prints and Photographs)



The need for a new African American high school to serve the northeastern part of the District was evident as early as the 1930s. In 1941, a new senior high school was proposed to complete the school campus on Benning Road. Construction for Spingarn High School commenced on March 27, 1950, with completion on June 24, 1952 and at a cost of more than \$3,500,000 (Spingarn Vertical File, Sumner School). The school was part of the post-World War II effort to construct new African American schools to alleviate overcrowding and was the first new senior high school for African American students to open in the District in 36 years. The building was also the last example of the Colonial Revival style to be

**H Street/Benning Road Streetcar Project**

utilized in the District schools. The school was named for Joel Elias Spingarn, a renowned literary critic and one of the early founders of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), serving as both the chairman of the board and president of the organization.

Monumental in scale, the Colonial Revival-style, three-story building is 29 bays wide. The building has a rectangular form with two interior courtyards. Set on a solid concrete foundation, this concrete-block structure has six-course, American-bond brickwork. All of the accents are pre-cast concrete. A half-hipped roof of slate shingles fronts the perimeter of the building, backed by a flat roof facing the interior of the building. The central section of the school is capped by a stepped flat roof. The three-story gymnasium/cafeteria on the rear of the building is capped by a flat roof. A tapered brick smokestack rises from rear of the building. The first story has brick channels, which accentuate the building's horizontality and lend the building a visual base. The raised foundation has a smooth pre-cast concrete finish, which is duplicated by the wide belt course between the first and second stories, as well as the plain entablature. An ogee-molded cornice completes the roofline.

**Figure 40** | Spingarn High School, view northwest (HDR 2012)



The center of the façade (east elevation) projects from the face of the main block. The seven central bays project from the main block, while the central five extend farther. These five central bays are set beneath a pedimented parapet and an entablature carved “Spingarn Senior High School.” The porch is supported visually by pilasters resting on a cantilevered porch with oversized scrolled modillions. Sheltered by the porch are five, double-leaf metal doors surmounted by multi-paned transoms. Large keystone segmental arches complete the openings, which are recessed with paneled soffits. A wide door opening (enclosed) is centrally located on the second story with four-light transoms and would have provided access to the porch. The window openings on the second and third stories of the central bays of the façade are set atop concrete sills and finished with keystone lintels.

Window openings on the remainder of the building hold 12/12, double-hung wood sash set atop concrete lug sills. Door openings located in the end bays of the façade and west (rear) elevation hold

double-leaf metal doors set in recessed openings with paneled soffits. Five-light transoms embellish the façade door openings. A set of double metal doors is also located on the north (side) elevation.

The south (side) elevation has one-story greenhouse with vehicular access to the southern courtyard underneath. Due to the slope of the site, the greenhouse is set on a tall concrete foundation through which a segmental arched opening permits access to the courtyard. The greenhouse has a brick veneer with concrete coping on which a metal-frame greenhouse is set atop.

## 6.0 Assessment of Effects

Although this project is a District of Columbia undertaking, the DC HPO's preservation review closely follows the federal regulations spelled out in Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966. The regulations require the assessment of project effects on properties that are listed or eligible for listing in the NRHP, or in the case of this project, the DC Inventory of Historic Sites. The criteria for adverse effects are defined in the regulations and have been applied to historic properties in the project APE. An adverse effect is one that may alter, directly or indirectly, the integrity of a historic property that make the property eligible for listing, including its location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, or association.

### 6.1. Assessment of Effects on Historic Properties

As noted in the historic context for this project, the streetcar was an integral part of the historic landscape of H Street and Benning Road NE, which directly contributed to the growth and development of this transportation corridor. Previously identified historic properties in the APE are listed in Table 1, and also includes the Education Hill Historic District, which is recommended eligible for listing in the DC Inventory of Historic Sites and the NRHP.

#### 6.1.1. Overhead Catenary System

The OCS includes support structures and overhead wires for supplying electrical power to the streetcars. Currently, light poles and traffic-light poles are located throughout the project corridor, including within the L'Enfant Plan and H Street NE Historic District. Utility poles with overhead wires are absent for the length of the corridor along H Street NE and for the majority of Benning Road NE. Therefore, the introduction of the OCS may have an adverse effect by altering the visual and atmospheric conditions of L'Enfant's Plan and the H Street NE Historic District. The introduction of the OCS will not impact the integrity of the remaining historic resources in the APE. Overhead wires are located in front of the eligible Education Hill Historic District and the additional lines would therefore not adversely affect the property's integrity (Figure 41).

**Figure 41** | View south of overhead wires along Benning Road, south of the school campus (HDR 2012)



### **6.1.1. Car Barn and Training Center**

The construction of the CBTC on the southeast corner of the eligible Education Hill Historic District will potentially have an adverse affect on the historic district, impacting the campus-like setting and viewsheds of the property that contribute to the district’s eligibility as a historic district. The CBTC will be visible from Langston Terrace and the Langston Golf Course, however this will not adversely affect these two historic resources. The CBTC will not have an effect on any other historic resources in the APE.

### **6.1.2. Traction Power Sub-Stations**

The installation of the TPSS may compromise the integrity of setting and feeling for some of the historic properties in the APE, including the mid-line TPSS on L’Enfant’s Plan and the H Street NE Historic District; and the east end TPSS on the Education Hill Historic District. The above-ground TPSS could constitute adverse visual effects that may affect the setting, feeling, and viewsheds of these historic resources.

Therefore, the mid-line and east end TPSS may have an adverse effect on L’Enfant’s Plan, the H Street **H Street/Benning Road Streetcar Project**



NE Historic District, and the Education Hill Historic District. The TPSS may be visible from the Railway Express Building, the Little Sisters of the Poor Convent, Langston Terrace, and Langston Golf Course, however this would not compromise the integrity of these resources and would therefore not have an adverse effect. The installation of the TPSS will not have an effect on any of the other historic resources in the APE.

### **6.1.1. Interim Western Destination**

The interim western destination on the non-historic Hopscotch Bridge at Union Station will not have an adverse effect on any historic resource in the APE. The destination may be visible from the eastern end of the H Street NE Historic District, and from the Railway Express Building and Little Sisters of the Poor Convent, but the destination will not compromise the integrity of the historic resources and will not have an adverse effect. Although the interim western destination connects to the parking garage of Union Station, a DC landmark and National Historic Landmark, the interim western destination will not be visible from Union Station and will not have an effect on that historic resource.

## **6.2. Summary of Effects on Historic Properties**

The introduction of various elements of Phase 2 of the H/Benning Streetcar Line may adversely affect some of the identified historic properties in the APE (Table 4). DDOT consulted with DC SHPO during the process and agreed that the installation of the OCS within the L'Enfant City Plan; the introduction of the CBTC into the historic schools' setting; and the placement of the above ground mid-line TPSS within public space will have adverse effects on historic properties. As a result, a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) has been developed between DDOT and DC HPO.

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**Table 4 |** Summary of Effects on Historic Resources

Resource Name	OCS	CBTC	TPSS	Interim Western Destination
<b>The Plan of the City of Washington</b>	<b>Potential Adverse Effect</b>	No Effect	<b>Potential Adverse Effect</b>	No Adverse Effect
<b>H Street NE Historic District</b>	<b>Potential Adverse Effect</b>	No Effect	<b>Potential Adverse Effect</b>	No Adverse Effect
<b>Railway Express Building</b>	No Adverse Effect	No Effect	No Adverse Effect	No Adverse Effect
<b>Little Sisters of the Poor Convent</b>	No Adverse Effect	No Effect	No Adverse Effect	No Adverse Effect
<b>Northeast Branch, Home Savings Bank</b>	No Adverse Effect	No Effect	No Effect	No effect
<b>National Bank of Washington</b>	No Adverse Effect	No Effect	No Effect	No effect
<b>Douglas Memorial United Methodist Church</b>	No Adverse Effect	No Effect	No Effect	No effect
<b>Hubert Newsom Real Estate</b>	No Adverse Effect	No Effect	No Effect	No effect
<b>Hospitality Federal Credit Union</b>	No Adverse Effect	No Effect	No Effect	No effect
<b>Atlas Theater and Shops</b>	No Adverse Effect	No Effect	No Effect	No effect
<b>Mott Motors/Plymouth Theater</b>	No Adverse Effect	No Effect	No Effect	No effect
<b>Langston Terrace Dwellings</b>	No Adverse Effect	No Adverse Effect	No Adverse Effect	No effect
<b>Langston Golf Course</b>	No Adverse Effect	No Adverse Effect	No Adverse Effect	No effect
<b>Education Hill Historic District (Young/Brown/Phelps/Spingarn campus, recommended eligible)</b>	No Adverse Effect	<b>Potential Adverse Effect</b>	<b>Potential Adverse Effect</b>	No effect

*\* In the event of an inadvertent discovery, all work in the immediate vicinity of the discovery would be halted until the materials are identified, documented, and appropriate treatment is developed in consultation with the SHPO*

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***Appendix A***

**Survey Information and Results**

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Table A-1 | Surveyed Properties, sorted by address

Address	SSL	Purpose	Permit Number	Permit or Construction Date	Owner	Architect	Builder	Architectural Style	DC Inventory of Historic Sites Eligibility
755 19th Street NE	4506 0085	dwelling	903	7/29/1925	Small (C.H.) & Co.	Santmyers, George T.	Small (C.H.) & Co.	Classical Revival	Not eligible
753 19th Street NE	4506 0823	dwelling	903	7/29/1925	Small (C.H.) & Co.	Santmyers, George T.	Small (C.H.) & Co.	Colonial Revival	Not eligible
757 19th Street NE	4506 0086	dwelling	903	7/29/1925	Small (C.H.) & Co.	Santmyers, George T.	Small (C.H.) & Co.	Colonial Revival/Craftsman	Not eligible
759 19th Street NE	4507 0087	dwelling	903	7/29/1925	Small (C.H.) & Co.	Santmyers, George T.	Small (C.H.) & Co.	Colonial Revival/Craftsman	Not eligible
761 19th Street NE	4508 0088	dwelling	903	7/29/1925	Small (C.H.) & Co.	Santmyers, George T.	Small (C.H.) & Co.	Colonial Revival/Craftsman	Not eligible
763 19th Street NE	4509 0089	dwelling	903	7/29/1925	Small (C.H.) & Co.	Santmyers, George T.	Small (C.H.) & Co.	Colonial Revival/Craftsman	Not eligible
725 20th Street NE	4515 0829	apartment	no permit	ca. 1928	unknown	unknown	unknown	Other	Not eligible
580 23rd Place NE	4516 0206	warehouse	no permit	1963	unknown	unknown	unknown	Modern	Not eligible
566 25th Place NE	4517 0819	dwelling	135108	8/7/1930	Sager, Charles D.	Santmyers, George T.	Sager, Charles D.	Classical Revival	Not eligible
1704 Benning Road NE	4507 0936	filling station	no permit	ca. 1946	unknown	unknown	unknown	Other	Not eligible
1720 Benning Road NE	4507 0142	apartment	238907	11/27/1940	Wire, Preston E.	Hallett, Marcus	Wire, Preston E.	Colonial Revival	Not eligible
1722 Benning Road NE	4507 0141	apartment	238907	11/27/1940	Wire, Preston E.	Hallett, Marcus	Wire, Preston E.	Colonial Revival	Not eligible
1724 Benning Road NE	4507 0140	apartment	238907	11/27/1940	Wire, Preston E.	Hallett, Marcus	Wire, Preston E.	Colonial Revival/Craftsman	Not eligible
1726 Benning Road NE	4507 0139	apartment	238907	11/27/1940	Wire, Preston E.	Hallett, Marcus	Wire, Preston E.	Colonial Revival	Not eligible
1728 Benning Road NE	4507 0138	apartment	238907	11/27/1940	Wire, Preston E.	Hallett, Marcus	Wire, Preston E.	Colonial Revival	Not eligible
1730 Benning Road NE	4507 0170	apartment	238907	11/27/1940	Wire, Preston E.	Hallett, Marcus	Wire, Preston E.	Colonial Revival	Not eligible
1732 Benning Road NE	4507 0169	apartment	238907	11/27/1940	Wire, Preston E.	Hallett, Marcus	Wire, Preston E.	Colonial Revival	Not eligible
1734 Benning Road NE	4507 0168	apartment	238907	11/27/1940	Wire, Preston E.	Hallett, Marcus	Wire, Preston E.	Colonial Revival	Not eligible
1736 Benning Road NE	4507 0167	apartment	238907	11/27/1940	Wire, Preston E.	Hallett, Marcus	Wire, Preston E.	Colonial Revival	Not eligible
1738 Benning Road NE	4507 0166	apartment	238907	11/27/1940	Wire, Preston E.	Hallett, Marcus	Wire, Preston E.	Colonial Revival	Not eligible
1740 Benning Road NE	4507 0132	apartment	238907	11/27/1940	Wire, Preston E.	Hallett, Marcus	Wire, Preston E.	Colonial Revival	Not eligible
1742 Benning Road NE	4507 0131	apartment	238907	11/27/1940	Wire, Preston E.	Hallett, Marcus	Wire, Preston E.	Colonial Revival	Not eligible
1744 Benning Road NE	4507 0130	apartment	238907	11/27/1940	Wire, Preston E.	Hallett, Marcus	Wire, Preston E.	Colonial Revival	Not eligible
1746 Benning Road NE	4507 0129	apartment	238907	11/27/1940	Wire, Preston E.	Hallett, Marcus	Wire, Preston E.	Colonial Revival	Not eligible
1748 Benning Road NE	4507 0128	apartment	238907	11/27/1940	Wire, Preston E.	Hallett, Marcus	Wire, Preston E.	Colonial Revival	Not eligible
1750 Benning Road NE	4507 0127	apartment	238907	11/27/1940	Wire, Preston E.	Hallett, Marcus	Wire, Preston E.	Colonial Revival	Not eligible
1800 Benning Road NE	4507 0126	apartment	238907	11/27/1940	Wire, Preston E.	Hallett, Marcus	Wire, Preston E.	Colonial Revival	Not eligible
1802 Benning Road NE	4507 0125	apartment	238907	11/27/1940	Wire, Preston E.	Hallett, Marcus	Wire, Preston E.	Colonial Revival	Not eligible
1804 Benning Road NE	4507 0124	apartment	238907	11/27/1940	Wire, Preston E.	Hallett, Marcus	Wire, Preston E.	Colonial Revival	Not eligible
1806 Benning Road NE	4507 0123	apartment	238907	11/27/1940	Wire, Preston E.	Hallett, Marcus	Wire, Preston E.	Colonial Revival	Not eligible
1808 Benning Road NE	4507 0122	apartment	238907	11/27/1940	Wire, Preston E.	Hallett, Marcus	Wire, Preston E.	Colonial Revival	Not eligible

Address	SSL	Purpose	Permit Number	Permit or Construction Date	Owner	Architect	Builder	Architectural Style	DC Inventory of Historic Sites Eligibility
1812 Benning Road NE	4507 0120	apartment	238907	11/27/1940	Wire, Preston E.	Hallett, Marcus	Wire, Preston E.	Colonial Revival	Not eligible
1814 Benning Road NE	4507 0119	apartment	238907	11/27/1940	Wire, Preston E.	Hallett, Marcus	Wire, Preston E.	Colonial Revival	Not eligible
1816 Benning Road NE	4507 0937	store	no permit	ca. 1928	unknown	unknown	unknown	Colonial Revival	Not eligible
1818-1820 Benning Road NE	4507 0935	office	129516	12/10/1929	Ryan, H. L.	Ryan, H. L.	Ryan, H. L.	Classical Revival	Not eligible
1822-1824 Benning Road NE	4507 0940	store	288418	8/28/1946	Kogod, Jack	Beatty, Frank G.	Phillips, Frank S.	Modern	Not eligible
1910 Benning Road NE	4506 0821	dwelling	903	7/29/1925	Small (C.H.) & Co.	Santmyers, George T.	Small (C.H.) & Co.	Classical Revival	Not eligible
1912 Benning Road NE	4506 0819	dwelling	903	7/29/1925	Small (C.H.) & Co.	Santmyers, George T.	Small (C.H.) & Co.	Colonial Revival	Not eligible
1914 Benning Road NE	4506 0817	dwelling	903	7/29/1925	Small (C.H.) & Co.	Santmyers, George T.	Small (C.H.) & Co.	Colonial Revival	Not eligible
1915 Benning Road NE	4514 0815	apartment	5150	12/8/1925	Mill, J.F.	Mill, J.F.	Mill, J.F.	Classical Revival	Not eligible
1916 Benning Road NE	4506 0165	dwelling	1677	10/26/1908	Gill, E. H.	Lindsey, A. R.	Gill, E. H.	Other	Not eligible
1917 Benning Road NE	4514 0812	apartment	5150	12/8/1925	Mill, J.F.	Mill, J.F.	Mill, J.F.	Classical Revival	Not eligible
1919 Benning Road NE	4514 0810	apartment	5150	12/8/1925	Mill, J.F.	Mill, J.F.	Mill, J.F.	Classical Revival	Not eligible
1920 Benning Road NE	4506 0813	dwelling	903	7/29/1925	Small (C.H.) & Co.	Santmyers, George T.	Small (C.H.) & Co.	Colonial Revival/Craftsman	Not eligible
1921 Benning Road NE	4514 0808	apartment	5150	12/8/1925	Mill, J.F.	Mill, J.F.	Mill, J.F.	Classical Revival	Not eligible
1922 Benning Road NE	4506 0811	dwelling	903	7/29/1925	Small (C.H.) & Co.	Santmyers, George T.	Small (C.H.) & Co.	Colonial Revival/Craftsman	Not eligible
1923 Benning Road NE	4514 0818	store	130133	1/17/1930	Silverman, Joseph	Honey, W.B.	Cladny (M.) Const. Co.	Classical Revival	Not eligible
1926 Benning Road NE	4506 0166	dwelling	903	7/29/1925	Small (C.H.) & Co.	Santmyers, George T.	Small (C.H.) & Co.	Colonial Revival/Craftsman	Not eligible
2001 Benning Road NE	4515 0828	apartment	A-51915	3/9/1954	Browne, Hugh	unknown	unknown	Modern	Not eligible
2005 Benning Road NE	4515 0809	dwelling	7427	3/15/1926	Hall Johnson Const. Co.	Santmyers, George T.	Hall Johnson Const. Co.	Classical Revival	Not eligible
2007 Benning Road NE	4515 0823	dwelling	7427	3/15/1926	Hall Johnson Const. Co.	Santmyers, George T.	Hall Johnson Const. Co.	Classical Revival	Not eligible
2011 Benning Road NE	4515 0825	dwelling	7427	3/15/1926	Hall Johnson Const. Co.	Santmyers, George T.	Hall Johnson Const. Co.	Classical Revival	Not eligible
2013 Benning Road NE	4515 0098	dwelling	7427	3/15/1926	Hall Johnson Const. Co.	Santmyers, George T.	Hall Johnson Const. Co.	Classical Revival	Not eligible
2023 Benning Road NE	4515 0101	dwelling	7427	3/15/1926	Hall Johnson Const. Co.	Santmyers, George T.	Hall Johnson Const. Co.	Classical Revival	Not eligible
2025 Benning Road NE	4515 0101	dwelling	7427	3/15/1926	Hall Johnson Const. Co.	Santmyers, George T.	Hall Johnson Const. Co.	Classical Revival	Not eligible
2027 Benning Road NE	4515 0102	dwelling	7427	3/15/1926	Hall Johnson Const. Co.	Santmyers, George T.	Hall Johnson Const. Co.	Classical Revival	Not eligible
2029 Benning Road NE	4515 0817	dwelling	7427	3/15/1926	Hall Johnson Const. Co.	Santmyers, George T.	Hall Johnson Const. Co.	Colonial Revival	Not eligible
2031 Benning Road NE	4515 0819	dwelling	7427	3/15/1926	Hall Johnson Const. Co.	Santmyers, George T.	Hall Johnson Const. Co.	Other	Not eligible
2033 Benning Road NE	PAR 149 LOT 60	apartment & store	204737	7/15/1937	Sager, Charles D.	Santmyers, George T.	Sager, Charles D.	Other	Not eligible
2101 Benning Road NE	4516 0159	gas station	156567	8/19/1932	Republic Investment Co.	Briscoe, Richard M.	Republic Investment Co.	Modern	Not eligible
2401 Benning Road NE	4517 0822	apartment & store	208651	11/26/1937	Lenkin Const. Co.	Turner, R. Benson	Lenkin Const. Co.	Colonial Revival	Not eligible
2403 Benning Road NE	4517 0821	flat	118390	10/24/1928	Sager, Charles D.	Santmyers, George T.	Sager, Charles D.	Colonial Revival/Craftsman	Not eligible

Address	SSL	Purpose	Permit Number	Permit or Construction Date	Owner	Architect	Builder	Architectural Style	DC Inventory of Historic Sites Eligibility
2405 Benning Road NE	4514 0803	flat	118390	10/24/1928	Sager, Charles D.	Santmyers, George T.	Sager, Charles D.	Classical Revival	Not eligible
2407 Benning Road NE	4517 0805	flat	118390	10/24/1928	Sager, Charles D.	Santmyers, George T.	Sager, Charles D.	Classical Revival	Not eligible
2409 Benning Road NE	4517 0077	flat	118390	10/24/1928	Sager, Charles D.	Santmyers, George T.	Sager, Charles D.	Classical Revival	Not eligible
2411 Benning Road NE	4517 0809	dwelling	123599	5/14/1929	Sager, Charles D.	Santmyers, George T.	Sager, Charles D.	Colonial Revival/Craftsman	Not eligible
2413 Benning Road NE	4517 0811	dwelling	123599	5/14/1929	Sager, Charles D.	Santmyers, George T.	Sager, Charles D.	Classical Revival	Not eligible
2415 Benning Road NE	4517 0813	dwelling	123599	5/14/1929	Sager, Charles D.	Santmyers, George T.	Sager, Charles D.	Colonial Revival/Craftsman	Not eligible
2417 Benning Road NE	4517 0815	dwelling	123599	5/14/1929	Sager, Charles D.	Santmyers, George T.	Sager, Charles D.	Classical Revival	Not eligible
2419 Benning Road NE	4517 0817	dwelling	123599	5/14/1929	Sager, Charles D.	Santmyers, George T.	Sager, Charles D.	Colonial Revival/Craftsman	Not eligible
2519 Benning Road NE	4518 0075	dwelling	221621	4/7/1939	Foxcroft, Inc.	Levy, D. Morton	Central Building Co.	Colonial Revival	Not eligible
2521 Benning Road NE	4518 0076	dwelling	221621	4/7/1939	Foxcroft, Inc.	Levy, D. Morton	Central Building Co.	Classical Revival	Not eligible
2523 Benning Road NE	4518 0077	dwelling	221621	4/7/1939	Foxcroft, Inc.	Levy, D. Morton	Central Building Co.	Colonial Revival	Not eligible
2525 Benning Road NE	4518 0078	dwelling	221621	4/7/1939	Foxcroft, Inc.	Levy, D. Morton	Central Building Co.	Colonial Revival	Not eligible
2527 Benning Road NE	4518 0079	dwelling	221621	4/7/1939	Foxcroft, Inc.	Levy, D. Morton	Central Building Co.	Colonial Revival	Not eligible
2529 Benning Road NE	4518 0080	dwelling	221621	4/7/1939	Foxcroft, Inc.	Levy, D. Morton	Central Building Co.	Classical Revival	Not eligible
2531 Benning Road NE	4518 0081	dwelling	221621	4/7/1939	Foxcroft, Inc.	Levy, D. Morton	Central Building Co.	Colonial Revival	Not eligible
2539 Benning Road NE	4518 0800	gas station	no permit	ca. 1960	unknown	unknown	unknown	Modern	Not eligible
2600 Benning Road NE	PAR 01600045	school	no permit	1931	District Board of Education	Office of the Municipal Architect	Various	Colonial Revival/Classical Revival	<b>Recommended eligible</b>