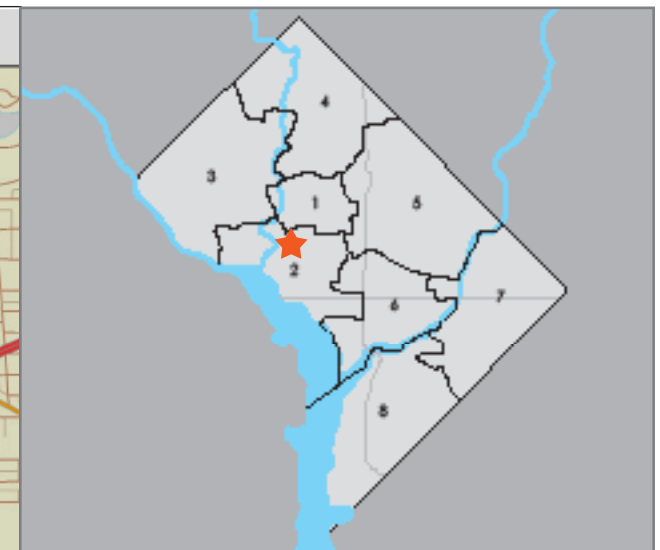
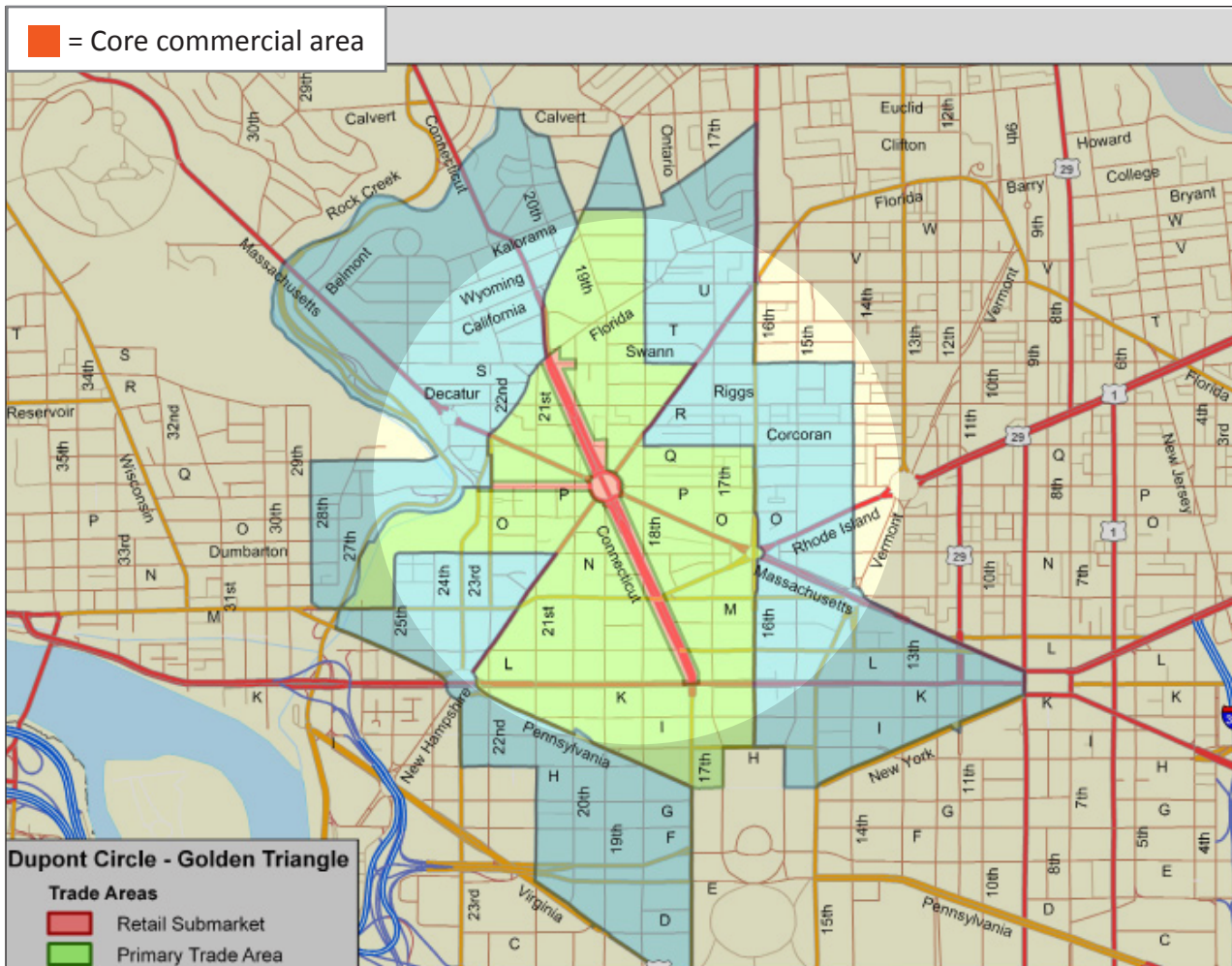


Connecticut Avenue-Dupont Circle



Connecticut Avenue-Dupont Circle Strategic SWOT Analysis





Boundaries

Connecticut Avenue NW from Florida Ave south to K Street; P Street from Dupont Circle west to 22nd St.

Zoning

Connecticut Avenue is zoned as a major business and employment center (high-bulk). Below Dupont Circle, most of the area surrounding Connecticut Avenue is similarly zoned, creating a central business district. P Street is also commercially zoned, but it is a community business center (medium-high to high density). The area's other major streets, Massachusetts and New Hampshire Avenues, are zoned primarily as special purpose districts (specifically, as medium and medium-high density offices and apartments). The outlying area is mostly moderate density general residence, while the grassy area within Dupont Circle itself is government-owned property.

Overview

This submarket just north of downtown's business district has established itself as one of DC's most desirable neighborhoods. Its eclectic mix of restaurants, bookstores, boutique hotels, and private art galleries have helped it to emerge as a one-of-a-kind destination. However, the influx of national retail chains as well as lack of cohesiveness north and south of the Circle has threatened the area's ability to remain viable as a unique retail locale. The submarket draws upon its affluent built-in population (located mostly north of the traffic circle), its large daytime population of office workers (located south of the traffic circle), and tourists. Situated along Connecticut Avenue, this multi-modal transit hub has easy access to the Dupont Circle Metro station, as well as several major commuter routes into and out of the city.

1 Upper Connecticut Ave

This section of the submarket largely defines its identity. It is Dupont Circle's key retail corridor and its small, creative shops (such as Kramerbooks) have become local institutions. Although the western side of the street is noticeably less active than the eastern side, the historic designation of key buildings here may prevent this area from changing significantly.

2 P Street

Secondary to Connecticut Avenue, P Street is dotted with local-serving, offbeat shops and restaurants. Like much of the submarket, these small properties are difficult to consolidate; therefore, this street should remain as is.

3 Lower Connecticut Ave

The area south of the Circle is essentially a separate submarket. As a business district that currently lacks the after-hours density and anchors necessary for a successful retail corridor, it should be approached differently than Nodes 1 and 2. The existing tenant mix in this node is not well linked, with high-end and pricepoint-sensitive tenants sporadically intermingled.



Note: Tenant lists do not include all businesses located in the submarket.



Retail Node 1: Upper Connecticut Avenue

Upper Connecticut Avenue, which is north of P Street, can be divided into 2 sub-nodes: Rowhouse Retail and Offices.








A - Rowhouse Retail lines most of Connecticut Avenue north of P Street and gives the submarket its eclectic quality. This upper node is a clear spine of retail amid residences and is the liveliest area of the submarket. Because Connecticut Avenue tunnels underneath Dupont Circle, this corridor cannot become a 2-sided retail experience. However, retail is strong on the east side of Connecticut Avenue. The west side suffers from a retail dead zone around the PNC Bank site at the node's southern end. Although it has great potential to be redeveloped into a mixed-use transit-oriented development by the Circle and Metro, its historic status poses a limitation for redevelopment. If the bank was converted to retail, however, it would likely impact the retail environment surrounding the Circle in a positive way.



B - Offices with ground-floor retail occupy less than a block of this upper node. Unlike Lower Connecticut Avenue, which has a spattering of retail among its towering office buildings, offices are clearly secondary to retail here. Future office development is not particularly suited to this node, as its distinct feel as a retail corridor gives the submarket much of its charm.



-  = Major Intersection
-  = Minor Intersection
-  = Sub-node A
-  = Sub-node B
-  = Public open space



P Street can be divided into 2 sub-nodes: Rowhouse Retail and Hotels.



A - Rowhouse Retail bookends both sides of P Street and gives it an eclectic energy similar to Upper Connecticut Avenue. Retail here consists of step-up shops and offbeat restaurants with outdoor seating; combined with the street's small scale, this retail gives P Street a more residential feel. However, P Street retains a distinct "Dupont Circle" characteristic, much more so than Lower Connecticut Avenue (see Node 3).



B - Hotels (namely Residence Inn and Hotel Palomar) dominate the central area of P Street. Although they have ground-floor retail, these hotel shops are uniform in appearance and are tucked just beneath street level; they serve hotel customers more than P Street pedestrians. While this breaks up the flow of P Street's eclectic shops, hotels serve an important function in a submarket that is known as a popular tourist and business destination.

Retail Node 3: Lower Connecticut Avenue

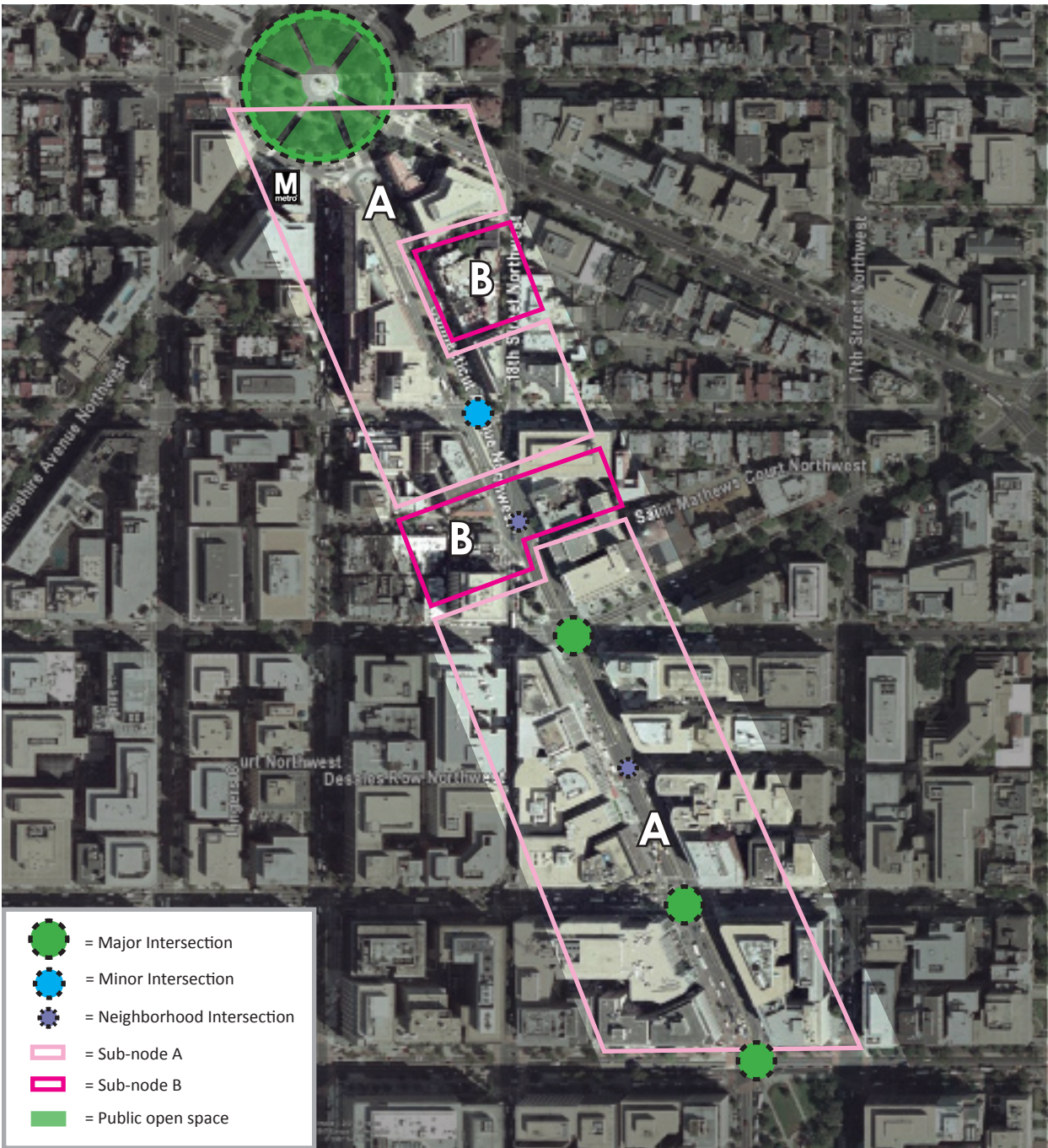
Lower Connecticut Avenue, the area south of P Street, can be divided into 2 sub-nodes: Office High-Rises and Rowhouse Retail.



A - Office High-Rises with ground-floor retail define the majority of Lower Connecticut Avenue. Unlike Upper Connecticut Avenue and P Street, this node is not a clearly discernible spine of retail surrounded by residences. Rather, it is part of an expanse of office buildings that comprise DC's Central Business District centered around K Street. This northern part of the Golden Triangle, from a retail perspective, has a 9-to-5 feel. Existing retail does not function well after dark, though many workers remain in the area for dining and entertainment. The ground level retail located here ranges significantly from high-end soft goods to neighborhood goods and services tenants. The significant daytime population is this area's strength, in contrast with Nodes 1 and 2 that have more of a built-in resident population to support different types of retail.



B - Rowhouse Retail occupies a small fraction of Lower Connecticut Avenue. This retail, which is comprised mainly of restaurants and bars, plays an important role in animating the street after business hours. However, these smaller-scale buildings also represent an area where consolidation can happen so that mixed-use development can take place.



Retail Infrastructure

Streets & Blocks

Connecticut Avenue is the submarket's primary corridor, while P Street is a secondary street with a more residential quality. As a major district artery that runs alongside the Metro's red line, Connecticut Avenue is infrastructure-heavy. In addition to 3-4 lanes of traffic in each direction, its inner lanes form a tunnel underneath Dupont Circle. This change in grade creates a major barrier to crossing the street, an obvious hindrance to a 2-sided retail experience; however, because Connecticut Avenue is the most visible and energetic corridor in the submarket (especially its Upper node), improvement efforts should be focused here. P Street is a smaller street with 2 lanes in each direction. Although it is an important connector to Georgetown, it has a quieter, residential feel.



Intersections

The submarket's most significant intersection is Dupont Circle itself, which facilitates the confluence of several major streets: Connecticut, New Hampshire, and Massachusetts Avenues, as well as 19th and P Streets. Because the Circle is critical to regulating traffic, its functional infrastructure takes priority over its pedestrian environment; because of this, the submarket's retail energy should be focused on its corridors rather than immediately surrounding the Circle. Other major intersections in the submarket occur at the northern and southern tips of Connecticut Avenue (where it intersects Florida Avenue and K Street). The 2 Metro entrances are also critical in terms of pedestrian activity; they occur at Connecticut Avenue and Q Street, and at New Hampshire Avenue and the Circle.



Buildings

The Dupont Circle submarket has a mix of building types in its 3 nodes. North of the Circle, Connecticut Avenue has older rowhouses fitted with retail. Shops along P Street are similarly small-scale. However, these P Street rowhouses have step-up retail that enhances their residential quality; similarly, cafes and restaurants with outdoor seating have a more leisurely feel than Connecticut Avenue. P Street also has several large hotels that cater to the area's business travelers and tourists. South of Dupont Circle, the building type changes entirely. High-rise office buildings, many with modern glass facades, dominate Connecticut Avenue and define the northern part of DC's business district. Retail uses are interspersed, though are not dominant. This change makes this area feel separate from the rest of the submarket.



Alleys & Service

Because this submarket is incredibly dense, there is not enough room for service and loading. A narrow network of alleys services rowhouses fitted with retail; however, adjacent residences back against this commercial back-door space. In particularly small blocks (such as the one just north of the Circle between Connecticut Avenue and 19th Streets), secondary streets function as service roads. In the dense business district south of the Circle, office buildings do not have easily accessible service areas. Because of this, double parking is the common practice for loading and unloading.



Strengths

- Much of the submarket is well known by residents and visitors and has long been considered one of the District's most desirable neighborhoods
- The submarket has an affluent, built-in population whose spending power is significantly higher than the District average; additionally, office workers, primarily along Connecticut Avenue, and tourists that come into the submarket everyday further increase demand for specialty retail uses
- The submarket is a multi-modal transit hub, including the Dupont Circle and Farragut North Metro stations; it is also located along major commuter corridors, such as Connecticut and Massachusetts Avenues.
- The very walkable nature of the submarket supports retail, and the area links to entertainment zones such as Adams Morgan and U Street.
- The current retail inventory has several successful clusters (i.e., bookstores like Kramerbooks and restaurants) that establish the submarket as a unique destination with both national and local retailers
- The streetscape is in good condition, with banners that brand the district, globe lampposts, and mature trees
- Dupont Circle is a great example of a commercially-programmed circle that functions as a community gathering spot; very few circles in the US have successfully been activated by their surrounding uses
- The Dupont area and clusters along Connecticut Avenue are among the most popular entertainment destinations in the city, with a collection of bars and restaurants that appeal to people of various ages and pricepoints

Weaknesses

- The submarket's 3 nodes feel disjointed, particularly south of Dupont Circle
- There is not much land available for redevelopment in this established submarket; nearby residences limit the potential for expansion in Nodes 1 and 2, while high-rise offices are already densely built-up in Node 3
- The existing infrastructure is at capacity and there are issues with sufficient space for service and loading (double parking remains problematic)
- Increasing land costs and subsequent high rents continue to force unique retail and restaurant offerings eastward; Dupont's identity as a unique, eclectic, gay-oriented niche market continues to be threatened by the influx of national credit tenants along Connecticut Avenue
- High rents also limit the type of tenants that can afford to be in the market—drugstores and banks are often the only tenants willing to pay the premium associated with locating a store here
- The Connecticut Avenue tunnel acts as a major barrier to crossing the street, especially in Node 1, which otherwise has great potential for 2-sided retail development; currently, the western side of the street is inactive between the Circle and R Street
- Lower Connecticut Avenue suffers as a retail corridor because its office buildings are not conducive to an animated pedestrian experience; ground-floor retail space is vacant at its southern end near Farragut North
- The range of retail tenants (from high-end fashion to pricepoint-sensitive goods and services) located south of the Circle hinders this portion of the corridor's ability to read as a cohesive retail street

Opportunities

- Create distinct merchandising strategies for Dupont Circle and the Golden Triangle; the two business support organizations should collaborate to ensure that there is a consistent vision for the larger area
- Create a retail/merchandising strategy for the Connecticut avenue corridor including a vision for retail mix and buy-in among property owners
- Focus on retail retention and cultivation, and supporting or incubating new businesses to help alleviate the barriers to entry for small and local retailers caused by rapidly increasing land costs/rental rates in the submarket (this will help maintain the unique retail identity for which the neighborhood is known)
- As space becomes available, position retail south of the Circle, particularly south of N Street, in order to facilitate the creation of a more cohesive retail district with retailers at similar pricepoints in similar categories located proximate to one another

Threats

- North of the Circle, rental pricepoint has forced out local, specialty retailers in favor of national credit tenants, threatening this area of the Dupont submarket's eclectic charm
- The lack of a cohesive merchandising strategy can create a confused consumer draw especially south of the Circle
- If there is not a deliberate effort to seek out tenants for rehabilitated spaces that are consistent with a desired merchandising strategy, the area will continue to see the influx of banks and drugstores that are willing and able to pay high rents
- The existence of 2 areas that often overlap in name but differ in characteristics (Dupont Circle and The Golden Triangle) can lead to confused branding and merchandising

Submarket Summary

The Dupont neighborhood is one of the most cosmopolitan in Washington, full of ethnic restaurants, art galleries, bookstores, eclectic shops, embassies, museums, and offices. It is a magnet for residents and visitors attracted by its lively urban lifestyle, diversity, and unique mix of architectural styles.

North Connecticut Avenue (Node 1) and east along the P Street corridor (Node 2) of Dupont Circle, once catalyzed as the center of Washington's gay community, has changed in recent years. The business district serves as a neighborhood retail commercial area for the surrounding affluent residential neighborhood. Although the Circle itself remains a staging ground for events and social action, increasing rents and property values have pushed many avant garde businesses to other parts of the city.

The commercial areas of Lower Connecticut Avenue - south of Dupont Circle to K Street -(Node 3) include high concentrations of office employment totaling approximately 75,000 workers, as well as a mix of retailers ranging from luxury apparel and accessory goods to specialty shoppers' goods and imports. The area also has a strong mix of food service offerings as well as consumer and personal services.

The submarket also contains several hotels of varying sizes . Guests at these hotels include leisure and business visitors who provide another customer base for area retailers and restaurants.

Economically, physically, and functionally the three nodes are quite different and need to approach retail development in different ways to respond to their varying markets.

The three nodes are served by two organizations:

Founded in 1997, the Golden Triangle Business Improvement District (BID) is a private non-profit 501(c)(6) corporation that works to enhance the business district in 42 blocks south of the Circle. The BID's primary focus is to provide a clean, safe and friendly environment for area workers and visitors, and to retain and attract businesses to the Golden Triangle.

In May of 2003, Historic Dupont Circle Main Streets (HDCMS) was awarded a Main Streets grant from reStore DC. The application was supported by the DC Merchants and Professionals Association (DC MAP) and others in the neighborhood and the organization represents a range of interests. HDCMS serves the commercial areas north of the Circle and west along P Street NW.

Approach and Typology

Approach

The DC Retail Action Strategy assessed five submarkets that are established commercial districts with recognized market positions, but which may be in transition. The assessment was intended to address key strategic issues such as underperformance and positioning, with a view to protecting, maintaining and/or enhancing market share.

Some of these submarkets have been the subject of past studies; demographic data on the primary and secondary markets has been provided, but in-depth demand analyses were not completed, as their greater markets are not primarily defined by geographic proximity, but by their destination-oriented offerings that appeal to a larger trade area .

The strategic area retail assessments include:

- A definition of boundaries for the commercial district (“submarket”)
- Demographic and economic information about the immediate residential markets (“trade areas”). Primary trade areas generally represent one quarter-mile from the submarket; secondary trade areas generally represent one half-mile from the submarket. Census block group base-line data were assigned to the primary and secondary areas
- Characterization of the type of district, how it functions and its positioning within the market
- An identification of strategic issues – strengths weaknesses, opportunities, and threats
- Recommendations for physical, policy and zoning, merchandising, organizational, and development strategies to support the submarket

Typology

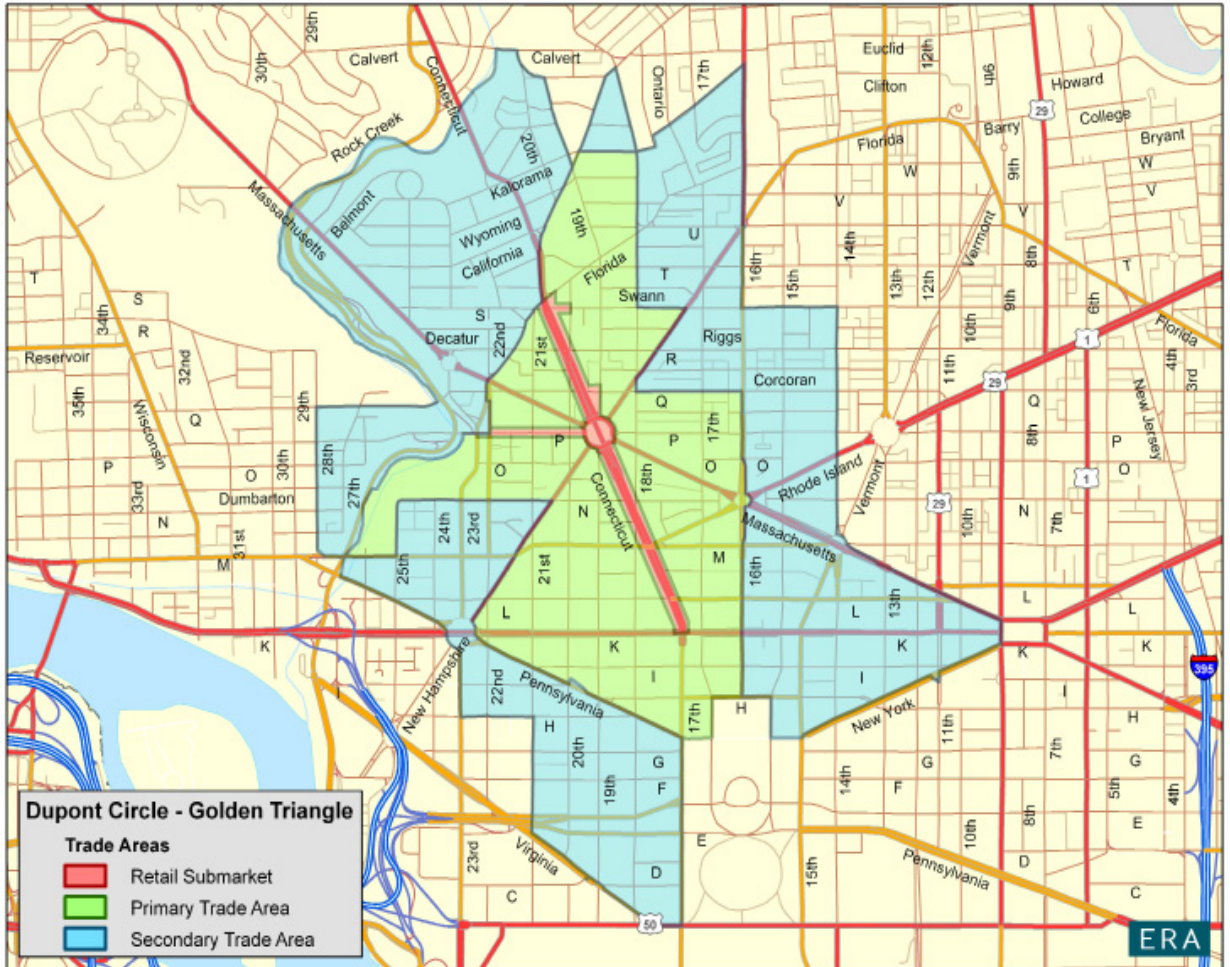
The Connecticut Avenue/Dupont Circle submarkets may be classified as :

1. North of the Circle: An established neighborhood-serving retail and restaurant center - Many of the businesses along Connecticut Avenue north of the Circle and the P Street corridor are restaurants, small-scale independents, and few national chains. Although the area draws some customers from beyond the area, most shoppers live or work in the immediate neighborhood. The major hotels in the area bring additional visitors who shop, dine, and recreate in the trade area.
2. South of the Circle - An employment center that serves a large base of professional office workers. As real estate developments, most buildings are office buildings that include retail as an ancillary use, not as the primary focus. The retail mix appeals to a daytime employment base ranging from executives and professionals to administrative staff persons. The retail offerings appeal to the daytime working population. Fashion shopping, jewelry and boutiques in the area also draw from hotel visitors.

The submarket is located in Ward 2 and extends from Connecticut Avenue NW from Florida Ave south to K Street; P Street from Dupont Circle east to 22nd Street. It shares market areas with Adams Morgan.

Key Elements

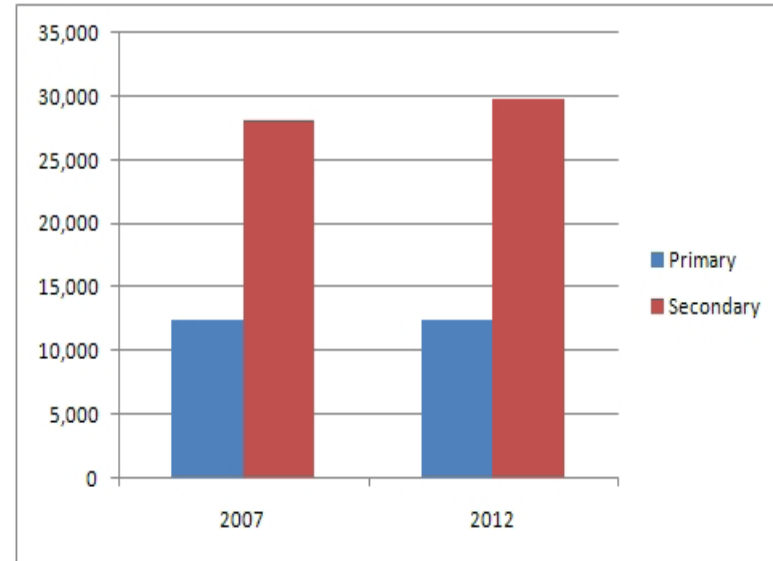
- Trade areas assess residents and other potential customers that could be drawn to the site
- The primary trade area encompasses the block groups within a ¼ mile of the retail submarket; the secondary trade area includes the block groups within a ½ mile of the retail submarket (reasonable walking distances for pedestrian shopping)
- Primary trade area residents are expected to be frequent customers, with a focus on those living closest to the site; secondary trade area residents are expected to be consistent, but not frequent customers
- Potential customers who are not primary or secondary trade area residents are accounted for by an “inflow” factor; this is a percentage applied to potential expenditures at the site



Connecticut Avenue-Dupont Circle Trade Area Household & Population Growth Trends

- The submarket trade area has a relatively small resident market population. Population in the primary residential market area is estimated to grow by 109 persons; from 12,428 to 12,537 by 2012. By 2012, population in the secondary residential market area is projected to grow from 28,100 to 29,844.
- Households in the primary residential market area are projected to increase by 124 over the next five years; in the secondary residential market area by 1,311 households. Most households are located north and east of the Circle. Few households are located south of the Circle.
- The Dupont Circle (north) residential market area is shared with commercial areas in Adams Morgan, 17th Street, and 18th Street, south of Florida Avenue.
- Average household size is 1.4 and 1.46 respectively in the primary and secondary residential market areas. The relatively smaller household size reflects the large number of single-person households living in the area.
- The median age in the primary area is 36; 34.6 in the secondary area.

Trade Area Population Growth, 2007 and 2012



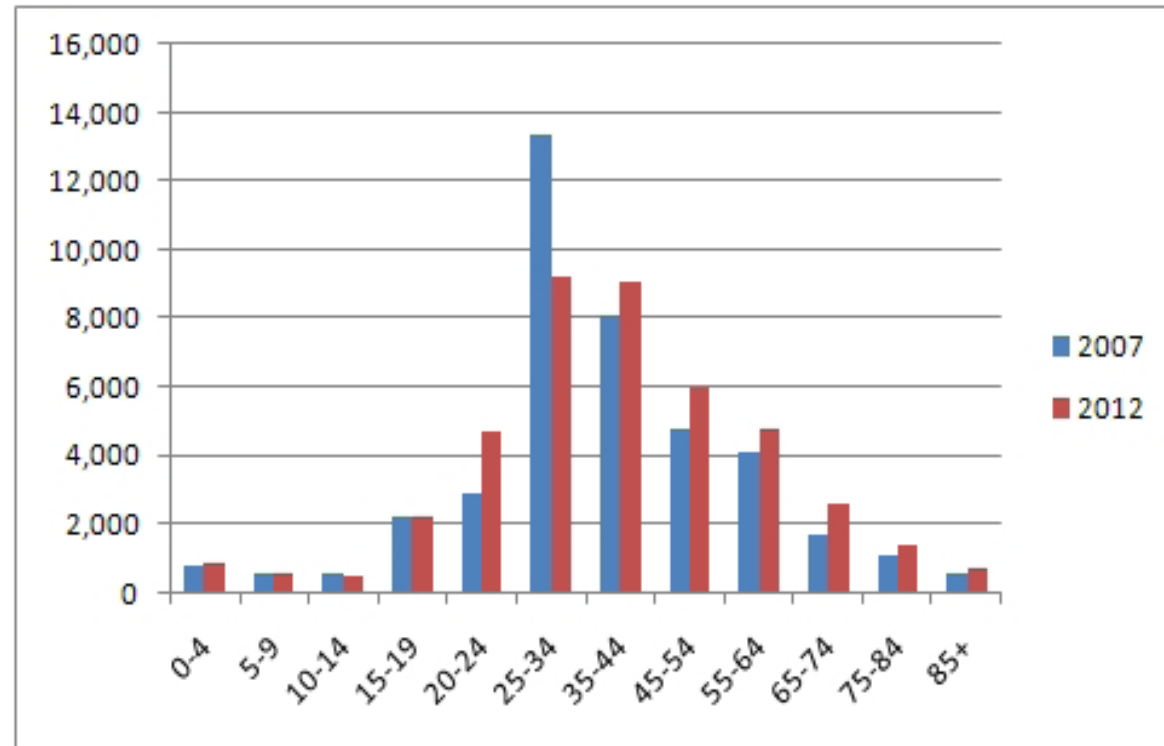
Trade Area Household Growth, 2007 and 2012

	2007	2012
Primary Area	8,561	8,685
Secondary Area	17,743	19,054
Totals	26,304	27,739

Connecticut Avenue-Dupont Circle Trade Area Population Age Cohorts, 2007 and 2012

- Although the age cohorts 25 to 34 are higher in 2007, the group is projected to decline over the next five years as a result in the drop in population from the “Baby Boomlet” and higher cost of living in the submarket trade areas. Some age cohorts will begin balancing as the cohort shift continues.
- Growth in the 20-24 age cohort is projected to increase demand for goods and services associated with recent college graduates and young adults, including food service.
- There is little to no resident market for goods and services directed to families with children.
- Moderate growth among the 35 to 54 age cohorts indicate continued demand for goods and services for established adult households (typically without children.)

Trade Area Population by Age, 2007 and 2012



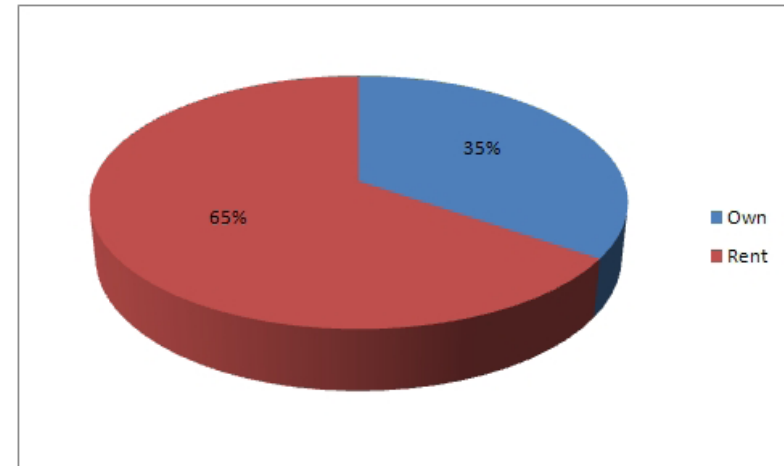
Connecticut Avenue-Dupont Circle Trade Area Key Demographics- Total Trade Area Household Profile

- Homeownership patterns in the total submarket indicate that the majority – 65% of households – rent, while 35% of household own their own homes. Viewed in the context of age patterns and other housing and employment data, the area residents may be characterized as young adults in 1-2 person households that primarily rent apartments. The ownership pattern suggests that residents are likely transient, moving in and out of the neighborhood as they enter the work force or form families. For retailers to serve such customers, on-going advertising to introduce businesses to the residents is necessary.

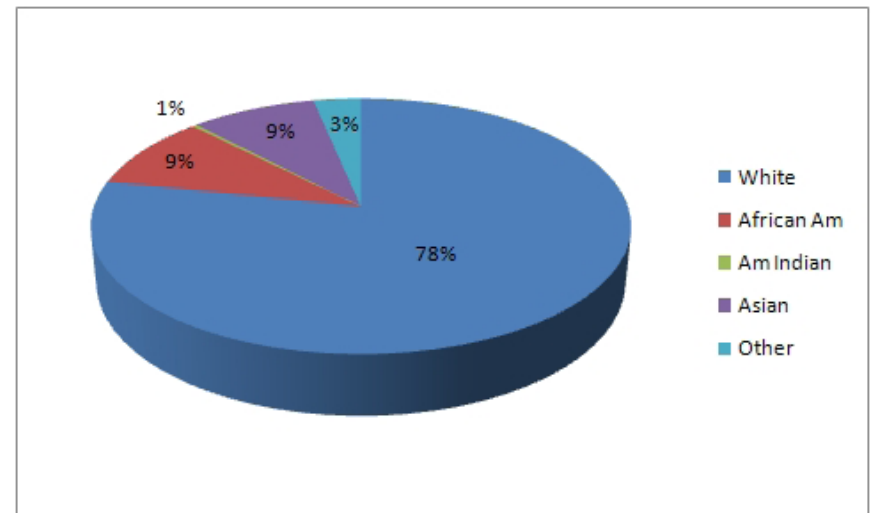
- The resident market is majority White (79%) with African-American and Asian residents making up 9% each of the community.*

*Note that Latino or Hispanic residents may be self-identified as any of a number of racial groups. 3,684 residents are self-identified as of Hispanic-origin.

Home Ownership, 2007



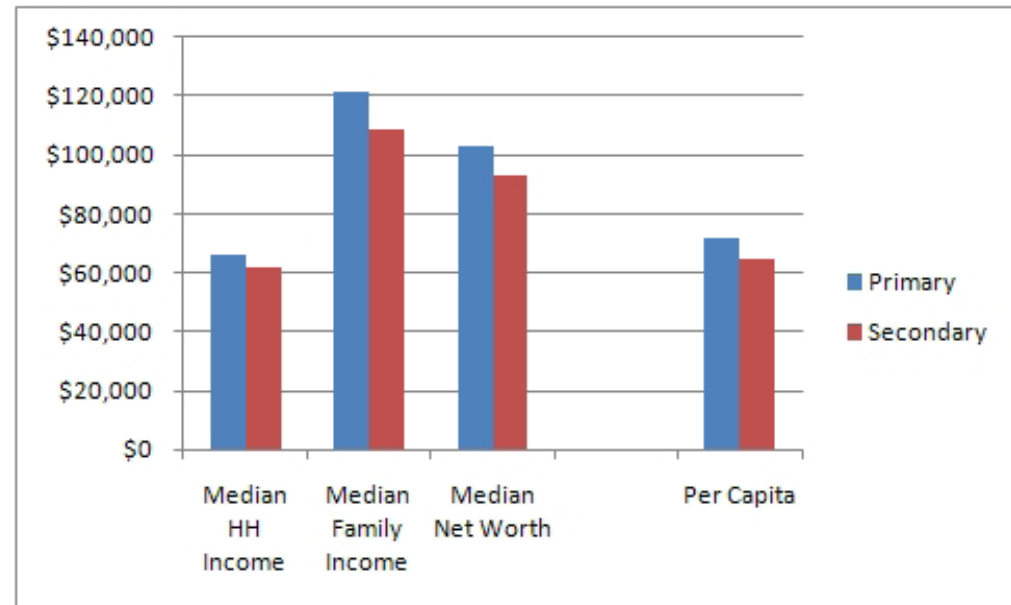
Racial and Ethnic Groups, 2007



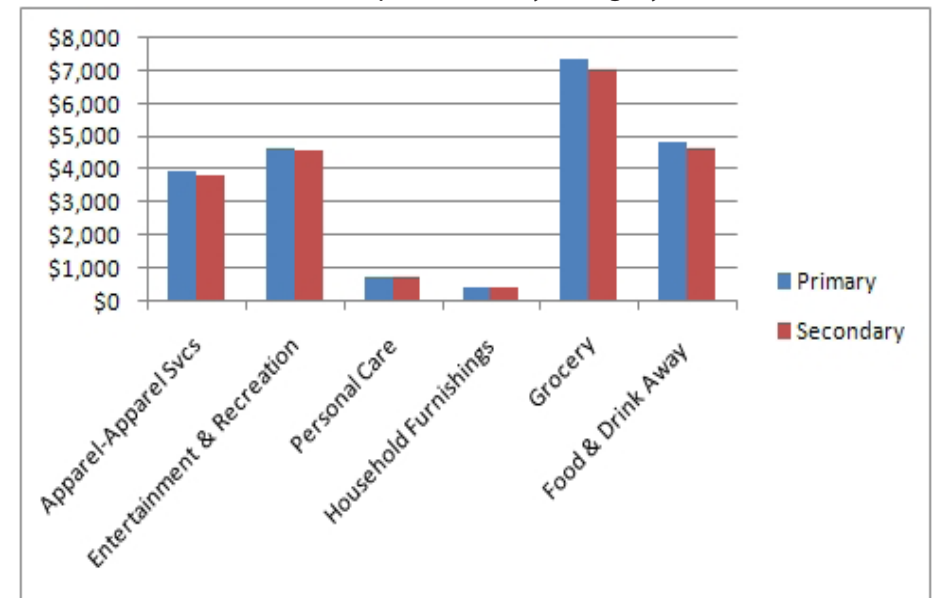
Connecticut Avenue-Dupont Circle Key Demographics- Trade Area Household Income and Spending Profile

- The Dupont Circle area residential market median household income is \$66,060 in the primary area. As many of the households are 2-person households, median family income is about the twice median household income. Median net worth is relatively modest, as the majority of residents rent their homes.
- The stronger performing categories are groceries, entertainment, apparel and accessories, and food & drink away from home. As residents are preparing meals for smaller households, grocery costs are higher due to purchases of pre-prepared items and specialty foods. Food and drink away from home represents a larger portion of household expenditures than might be found in an area with more families with children or working-class groups.
- Household expenditures in the trade area show lower amounts being spent for personal care and household furnishings.

Trade Area Household Income Statistics, 2007



Estimated Annual Household Expenditures by Category, 2007



Profile of Lower Connecticut Avenue (Node 3) Area Potential Customer Groups

Lower Connecticut Avenue (Node 3) is adjacent to and attracts significant expenditures from workers and visitors. The employment base and visitor market in the lower Connecticut Avenue area represents a major market for area retailers.

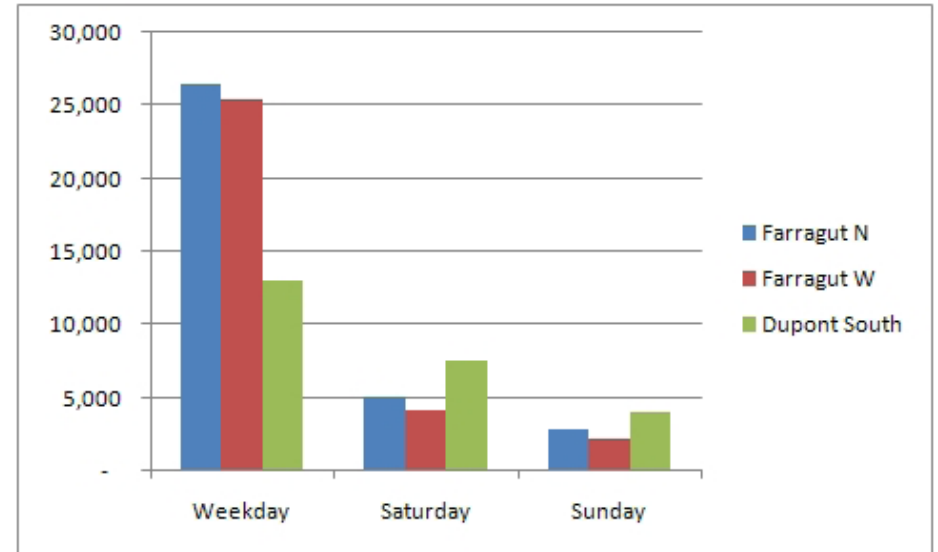
According to the Golden Triangle BID, the average worker in the Golden Triangle BID service area earns \$87,000 per year. Over 37,500 workers in the area earn an average of \$100,000 or more per year.

With 3,591 hotel rooms located in the BID area or within one block of the BID boundaries, many visitors to DC stay in hotels in the lower Connecticut Avenue commercial node. These rooms have average occupancy of 72.6% (five year average). With standard room rates greater than \$400 per night, visitors in the area tend to be affluent tourists and business travelers - the market for the upscale retailers in the area.

There are three Metro stations that exit into the Golden Triangle area – Farragut North, Farragut West, and Dupont Circle (south side)- making the subdistrict very accessible and off-setting the limited parking availability.

These stations are ranked third, fourth, and fifth respectively for volume of ridership for weekdays. Weekend exits are considerably lower due to the office environment. Weekend foot traffic is significantly less than weekday pedestrian counts as well.

Daily Exits from Metro Stations in Area



Planned Improvements

The Golden Triangle BID commissioned a streetscape plan for lower Connecticut Avenue to create a more pedestrian-friendly, shopping environment.

Key elements of the plan include:

- More green – Street trees and planted medians are used to soften the hard streetscape, to provide more shade in warmer months, and create a sense of intimacy
- Traffic - Traffic calming and bike lanes to reduce vehicle/pedestrian-bike conflicts. By creating the medians, taxis and other vehicles making U-turns are reduced, thus reducing potential for pedestrian-vehicle conflicts
- In locations with a minimum of 24 feet of sidewalk, sidewalk dining could be accommodated. Areas that would qualify for sidewalk dining include locations near the intersection of L Street NW and Connecticut Avenue and along Connecticut south of Farragut Square.
- Some accommodation or improved vendor carts and placement is also a part of the new plan, as well as improved signage and wayfinding

Strategy Recommendation

The Dupont Circle-Golden Triangle area is a thriving, diverse section of Washington. Because the submarket is too large to address as a single location, planning, incentives, organization, and focus should be applied separately to the areas north and south of the Circle. The area should be addressed as two submarkets – Dupont Circle, which is a more neighborhood-oriented shopping area, and the Golden Triangle, a major employment district with supporting retail, services and dining options.

Merchandising Strategies

The strategies should be coordinated among and between the Dupont Circle Main Street organization and the Golden Triangle BID. Each organization, however, would be responsible for implementation within its respective area.

Upper Connecticut Avenue and P Street (Nodes 1 & 2)

North of Dupont Circle should continue to encourage neighborhood-serving, unique retail. While the current business mix includes unique shops, restaurants (eat-in and carry-out), and services, additional boutiques apparel and accessory shops would be good accompaniments.

Grocery needs are being met by the Harris Teeter on Kalorama Street, but a neighborhood gourmet market (such as the former Larimer's Gourmet Market once located north of Dupont Circle) may be successful. An Italian market, such as Litteri's from the Florida Avenue Market or The Italian Store in Arlington would be well received. Businesses with take-out food service as well as gourmet market shopping can appeal to the upscale, trend-conscious residents in the area.

Retention of the area's book cluster is important. Kramer Books, Lambda Rising, Books-a-Million, The Newsroom, and Second Story Books represent a niche that is unique in the Washington metro area.

Lower Connecticut Avenue (Node 3)

South of Dupont Circle (Golden Triangle) should focus on retaining the "carriage trade" higher quality retailers it already has and continue to develop an identity for the area. The Golden Triangle BID is making significant efforts to do this. The central strategy is clustering retailers that appeal to compatible and/or similar markets. The clusters would be centered on key intersections, particularly Connecticut/ 18th Street/ M Street/ Rhode Island Avenue. While the current mix of upscale shops is impressive, the businesses are scattered throughout the Golden Triangle. The impact of the intersection at Connecticut Avenue/ 18th Street/ M Street and Rhode Island Avenue would be increased if Stores such as Brooks Brothers and Burberry were joined by similar stores as space becomes available. The breadth of current upscale offerings is lost among the office buildings and non-retail uses.

Additional upscale women's clothing and shoes would balance the number of menswear offerings. Many of the affluence office workers in the area are women.

Entertainment and Nightlife

The lower Connecticut Avenue area (Node 3) is home to several popular nightclubs. While many of these businesses are quiet during daytime office hours, the crowds, noise and activity increases after 10 PM until 3 AM on weekends. Balancing this "split-use economy", whose primary uses and populations change dramatically before and after 10 PM, is a challenge for government and BID services. In addition to changing the pedestrian and vehicular use and demand patterns, nighttime venues can make a significant contribution to the submarket economy. Antici-

Recommended Strategies (continued)

pating and recognizing the dual nature of the area, and the late-night economic contribution of the club venues, will make it easier to plan for needed services such as policing and crowd control, public and private transportation demands, and trash pick-up.

A proven way to manage entertainment districts is the Hospitality Resource Panel (HRP) process developed by the Responsible Hospitality Institute (RHI). The HRP is “a non-membership alliance of business owners and associations, government and safety personnel, and community and neighborhood coalition representatives working together to develop safe communities and healthy businesses through the promotion of responsible hospitality principals and practices.”

Physical Improvements

North of Dupont Circle, office uses should be encouraged to stay above the ground floor. In order to maintain the pedestrian scale and neighborhood-character of the area, high-rise office construction should continue to be discouraged.

Encourage new developments and buildings being renovated in the Golden Triangle district to improve the quality of retail storefronts and interior spaces in buildings that are primarily office use. Currently, many retailers are located in poorly designed storefronts that do not enhance or support a quality retail environment to activate the street.

The streetscape plan for the southern part of Connecticut Avenue should be encouraged. A greater emphasis on pedestrian amenities and traffic calming will make Connecticut into a better shopping street by allowing more interaction by shoppers with stores on both sides of the street and reducing noise and congestion. Sidewalk dining will likely not increase until such streetscape improvements are in place.

Based on past experience, attempting development of retail in the un-

derground space below Dupont Circle should be discouraged.

All three retail areas will require outreach to property owners to keep owners and brokers involved and committed to coordinated merchandising strategies.

Other Recommendations

Rent Increase and Credit Tenants

An issue of continuing concern is increasing rents in the Dupont Circle area which force out independent, unique businesses in favor of higher-paying “credit tenants” such as drug stores and banks. While areas with high employment bases need both pharmacies and financial services, the submarket will benefit from a broader range of shops. Owners and brokers should be included in regularly scheduled meetings to discuss available properties, opportunities to attract additional tenant types and the value to the shopping district of retaining independent operators and diversifying the retail mix.

Recommended Strategies (continued)

Marketing

Retailers of complimentary groups (restaurants, apparel etc.) should consider coordinated marketing to office building tenants through the property managers. With so many upper income workers in the area, targeted advertising to employees would build both awareness and store knowledge as well as customer loyalty.

Connecticut Avenue and P Street north and west of Dupont Circle lacks a clear “brand”. Once known as the center of diverse culture, the area needs to create a new narrative about the businesses and the atmosphere of the shopping district and neighborhood. The Historic Dupont Circle Main Street (HDCMS) organization should work with the Washington DC Economic Development Partnership (WDCEP) on developing a marketable identity for the area that acknowledges the history of the district while communicating the current neighborhood.

The Golden Triangle BID has been taking steps to brand and market its service area through marketing publications, uniformed ‘street ambassadors’, and introduction of public art. The implementation of the proposed Connecticut Avenue streetscape plan will provide a platform to communicate a message about the quality and quantity of retail in the district that may not be readily apparent to DC residents, area workers and visitors. The BID is also interested in working with WMATA to include “Golden Triangle” to the station names for Farragut North or Farragut West.

The Golden Triangle BID area is often presented as part of downtown DC in statistics and Downtown DC BID reports. Whenever possible, the Golden Triangle data should be reported separately to reinforce the shopping opportunities and buying power represented by the submarket. The Golden Triangle brand should be emphasized as a separate, upscale shopping and employment center in its own right.

Implementation: Key Actions

1. Coordinate primary responsibility for the implementation of retail strategies for nodes 1 and 2 should be assigned to the HDCMS. The group would work closely with business and property owners, DC government agencies, and cooperate with the Golden Triangle BID.

- As a DC Main Streets program, HDCMS will need ongoing funding, staff and program support from the Department of Small and Local Business Development (DSLBD), reStore DC.

2. The Golden Triangle BID has a professional, capable staff that can take on the role of primary responsibility for retail development south of Dupont Circle. Its member property owners will need to focus activities to implement the vision of Connecticut Avenue as a major retail shopping street, as well as taking the steps necessary in individual storefront and building improvements to recreate a more attractive shopping environment.

- Create a retail/merchandising strategy for the Connecticut avenue corridor including a vision for retail mix and buy-in among property owners
- GT BID continues to coordinate with District Department of Transportation (DDOT) on the implementation, construction, and construction phasing of the streetscape plan. The BID should also prepare retailers for business loss/mitigation as a result of future disruptions created by streetscape construction
- GT BID, the DC Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs (DCRA), and the DC Office of Planning (OP) should work together to create a coordinated street vendor policy that includes regulation, design, and placement to implement the BID's vision of improved street vending in the BID area
- Initiate a Hospitality Resource Panel for the clubs in the lower Connecticut Avenue area

3. At some future date, it may be desirable to consider merging the two organizations under a single BID structure for efficient operations at economies of scale and staff coverage. If such a merger is needed, consider separate retail merchandising and marketing strategies to highlight the unique qualities of the areas north and south of the Circle, respectively.