



DC Public Library

New Library in Eckington/Edgewood Site Selection Process and Community Engagement

by: DC Public Library

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Introduction

The DC Public Library has embarked on the journey to bridge the library service gap for residents of the Eckington/Edgewood neighborhoods with a full-service approximately 20,000 SF library, per the recommendations of [Next Libris, DC Public Library Facilities Master Plan](#).

The Library's commitment to [excellence in built environment](#) guides the journey of locating, designing, and constructing the new library in Eckington/Edgewood ensuring that the new library embodies design excellence.

This document is written to provide a transparent, and illustrative overview of the site selection process, the stakeholder feedback garnered as part of the process, and an outline of next steps in the journey to finalize the site for the new library in Eckington/ Edgewood.

This document includes an [illustrated roadmap](#) with [provisos on the timeline and funding](#).

This document was created for digital viewing and includes hyperlinks to visuals or narratives with additional detail for the reader, both within the main document as well as within the appendix.



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



Executive Summary

In Summer 2023, the DC Public Library launched a site selection study with clear criteria and metrics. KeyUrban LLC was competitively selected to support the site selection process. The first task in this process involved defining the Eckington-Edgewood geographic boundaries, followed by inventorying all possible sites to which the metrics established by the Library were applied, narrowing the inventory down to four sites. It is important to note that a fifth site (Penn Center), a District-owned asset, was also considered as a shortlisted site; however, given the condition of the long-unoccupied historic structure, the investment was deemed cost-prohibitive.

Concurrent with the site selection process, the Library engaged LINK Strategic Partners (LINK) to liaise with the community to validate the delineation of the neighborhood geographically and solicit feedback on the four shortlisted sites. Based on community feedback, the two sites flanking Rhode Island Avenue have emerged as the most favored locations. While Rhode Island Avenue serves as the boundary between two neighborhoods—600 Rhode Island Ave in Edgewood and 605 Rhode Island Ave in Eckington—the close proximity of the two sites ensures that both communities will be well served, regardless of which location is ultimately selected.

It is important to note that stakeholders have emphasized pedestrian and bike safety as well as placed a high value on ensuring ease of access to the Metropolitan Branch Trail (MBT).

A wide range of stakeholders were engaged and consulted in various formats, including surveys, focus groups, and interviews. While there was a broad range of themes offered by the community, this report focuses specifically on feedback relevant to site selection. The appendix to this report details the engagement in depth.

In addition to LINK liaising with the community, the Library's leads for Built Environment and Community Engagement provided briefings in Summer 2024 to the ANC 5F, Eckington Civic Association, and Brookland Neighborhood Civic Association on the site inventory process.

Stakeholders have appreciated the sophistication and transparency of the Library's process, as well as the Library's efforts to seek input into the decision-making process. They are excited about the new Edgewood/Eckington library.

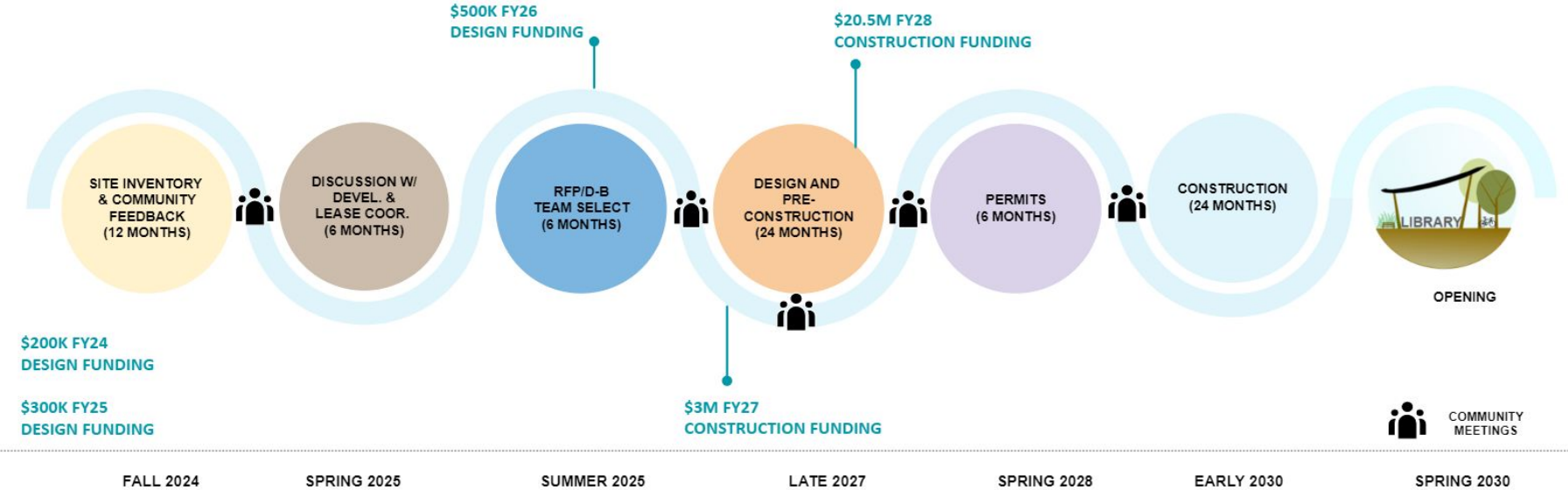
The Library's Built Environment team, with support from KeyUrban, has engaged the entities that control the two shortlisted sites with the goal of negotiating long-term leases most beneficial to the District. As these terms are negotiated, updates will be provided to stakeholders.

TIMELINE & FUNDING



TIMELINE & FUNDING

The new library in Eckington/Edgewood is anticipated to be delivered per a logical roadmap, illustrated in the figure below.



It is important to note that given all the variables and considerations enumerated below, this roadmap is subject to evolution.

This roadmap draws upon Library’s experience with designing and constructing neighborhood libraries and takes into consideration, steps needed to solidify a site in advance of designing the new library in Eckington/Edgewood.

TIMELINE & FUNDING (continued)

The \$24M funding appropriated for the design and construction of the new library in Eckington/Edgewood does not include costs for site acquisition or a long-term lease. These costs are yet to be determined and solidified, subject to negotiations with entities that have site control.

Depending on the site ownership/lease terms negotiated, the need to secure additional funding may also evolve the project timeline.

Given the unprecedented volatile construction market that has been in effect since the pandemic, the Library has determined that:

1. The existing budget will not be sufficient to design and construct a new full service library
2. The Library will have a better sense of costs once the design advances with community input and estimates are provided by subcontractors

DCPL will continue to work closely with the Mayor and City Council on additional funding needs.



SITE SELECTION METHODOLOGY & PROCESS



SITE SELECTION CRITERIA

The DC Public Library Built Environment team launched a site selection study in Spring 2023, establishing clear criteria and metrics within the competitively solicited scope of work.

The scope of work required the consultant to **Inventory Real Estate** for a new full-service library as

1. **A new stand-alone building or be part of a planned mixed-use development;**
 - with the premise that an existing mixed-use development or a development that had been designed without library needs integrated from the very start, would undermine the Library's ability to fulfill on its design excellence commitment.
2. With proximity **to public transportation, and other neighborhood amenities.**

It was also clearly established that:

1. **Renovation of an existing structure while not preferable** *could be considered.*
2. Purchasing space in an existing mixed-use facility **will not be considered**
3. **For any site to be considered viable and prior to any commitment made to a site owner, the negotiation timeline has to provision adequate time to:**
 - a. ascertain broad community, and elected official support for the proposed location;
 - b. allow for due-diligence with entities having jurisdiction specific for the site



SITE SELECTION METHODOLOGY

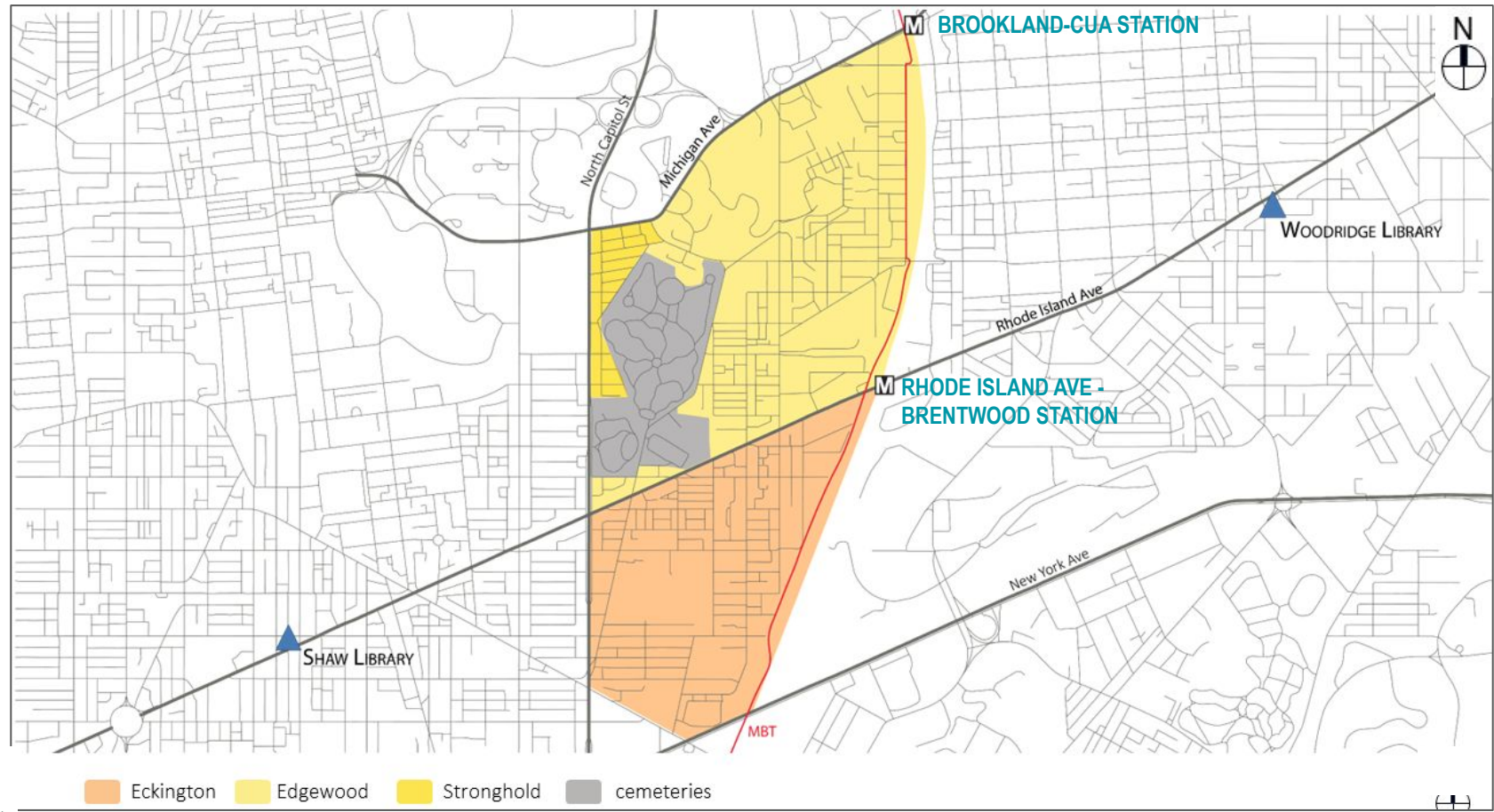
From July to September 2023, DC Public Library engaged in a study with KeyUrban that entailed inventorying locations for a 20,000 square foot full-service library in the Eckington/Edgewood neighborhoods. The following steps and tools aided the site inventorying process.

- Geographically Defining Site Study Area
- GIS Mapping
- Google Earth Mapping
- Visual Surveying
- Cataloguing
- Devising and Applying Metrics



GEOGRAPHICALLY DEFINING THE ECKINGTON/EDGEWOOD NEIGHBORHOODS

See [‘Delineating & Validating Eckington/Edgewood Boundaries’](#) within the appendix for accompanying narrative to the below map

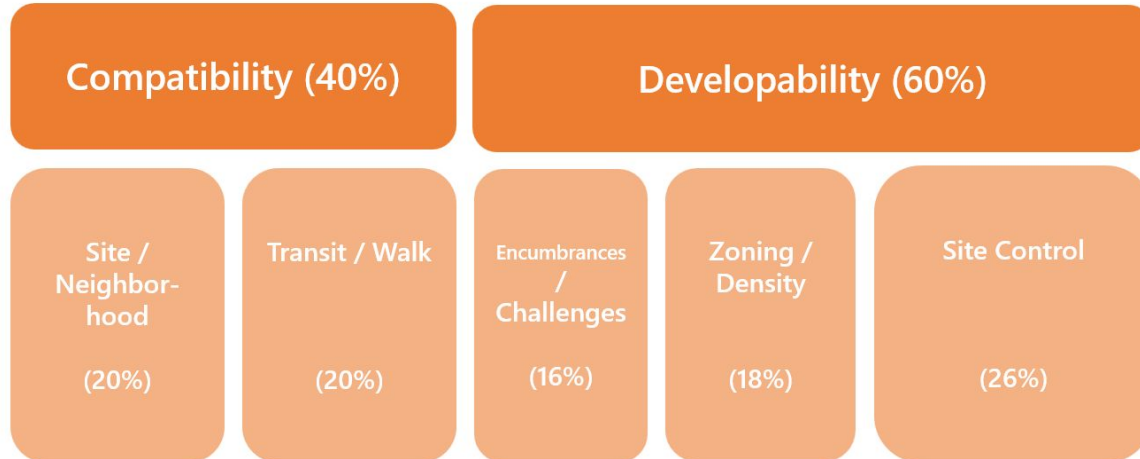


SITE SELECTION METRICS

The DC Public Library Built Environment team issued the solicitation providing Urban Design and Design Excellence metrics. As part of their work, KeyUrban used the Library's metrics to numerically score inventoried sites finally leading to a list of top four sites.

At the broadest level:

The Compatibility Metric entailed location, as measured by type of adjoining amenities, access to transportation and walkability score. **The Developability Metric** entailed viability for a library to be on the site as informed by lot size, existing or allowed zoning, site owner's openness to a transaction, with the District & the Library, any encumbrances, environmental, historic preservation considerations, location of flood plains and other land use restrictions.



SHORTLISTED SITES AT A GLANCE



EACH SHORTLISTED SITE & COMMUNITY FEEDBACK



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT GOALS, METHODOLOGY & TAKEAWAYS

In tandem with launching the site selection study and onboarding KeyUrban, the Library onboarded LINK Strategic Partners (LINK) to engage with residents and community members from Edgewood and Eckington through multiple touchpoints.

Goal

The main goal for LINK was to liaise with the community to gain a thorough and representative understanding of community needs and preferences with regard to the location of the new library, gather feedback for community's preference to further narrow down the four shortlisted sites.

Methodology

LINK supported the Library by developing a multi-faceted approach to engage residents and ensure that anyone who wanted to provide feedback was able to. LINK conducted one-on-one interviews, focus groups, in-person interactions at community events, and a survey.

Takeaways

While there was a broad range of themes offered by the community, this report focuses specifically on feedback relevant to site selection. The appendix to this report details the engagement in depth. Feedback garnered by LINK for each site includes community's insights pertaining accessibility, transportation needs, community gathering potential, possible challenges, and other concerns.

There is especially valuable feedback for the two most preferred sites that will guide the Library's work through further planning, design, and construction.



STAKEHOLDERS ENGAGED

A wide range of stakeholders were engaged and consulted in various formats, including surveys, focus groups, and interviews. While there was a broad range of themes offered by the community, this report focuses specifically on feedback relevant to site selection. The appendix to this report details the engagement in depth.

In addition to LINK liaising with the community, the Library's leads for Built Environment and Community Engagement provided briefings in Summer 2024 to the ANC 5F, Eckington Civic Association, and Brookland Neighborhood Civic Association on the site inventory process.

LINK conducted extensive outreach, including the following

- ANCs 5E and 5F
- ANC 5F DC Library Task Force Representatives
- Local Bike Organizations
- Mayor's Office of Community Relations and Services (MOCRS)
- Parents and Caregivers
- Educators
- Langley Elementary School Parents, Caregivers and Faculty
- Inspired Teaching Public Charter School Students
- Edgewood & Eckington Residents

Presentations by the Library's Built Environment Team

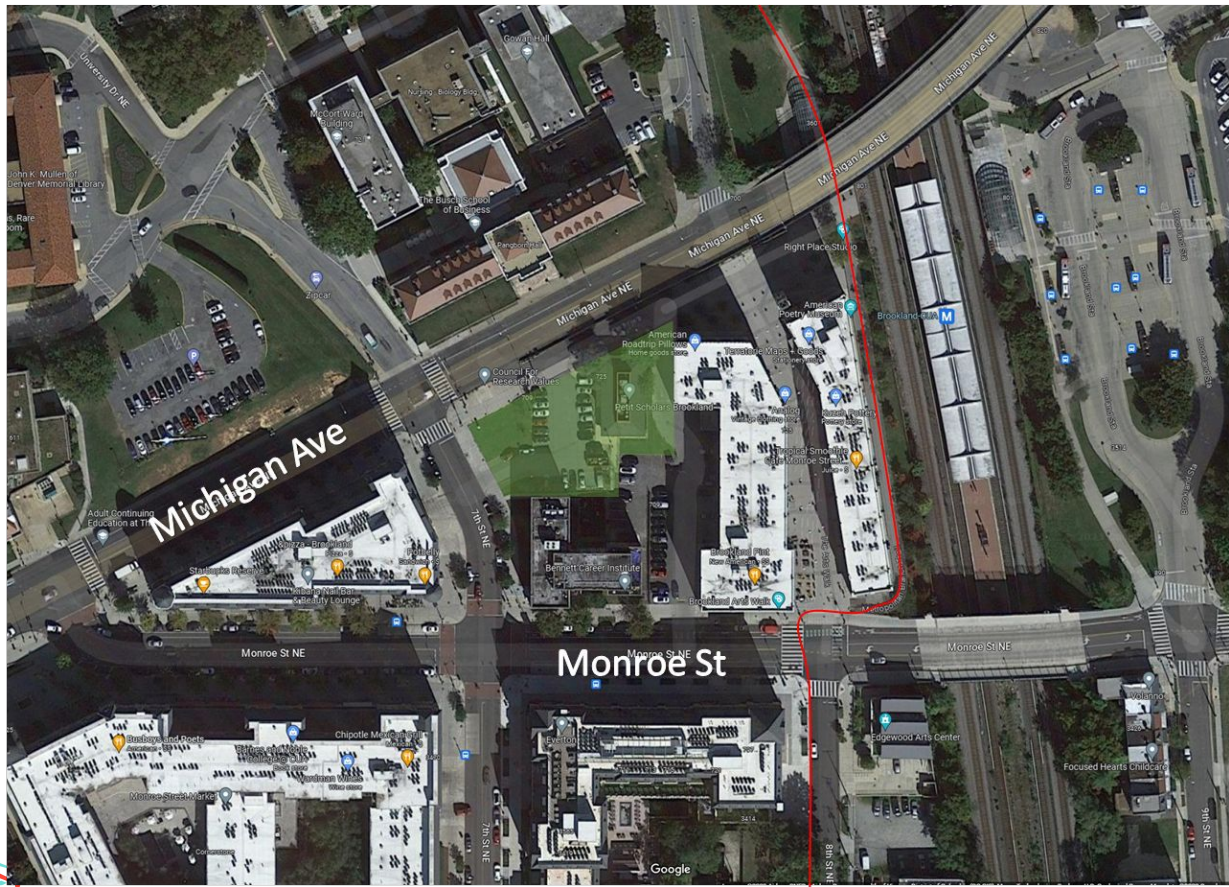
- ANC 5F - April 15, 2024, and January 14, 2025
- Eckington Civic Association - June 10, 2024
- Brookland Neighborhood Citizens Association - June 18, 2024
- ANC 5F Library TaskForce - January 14, 2025
- District Agencies (Deputy Mayor for Planning, Office of Planning, Office of the State Superintendent of Education, and State Historic Preservation Office)



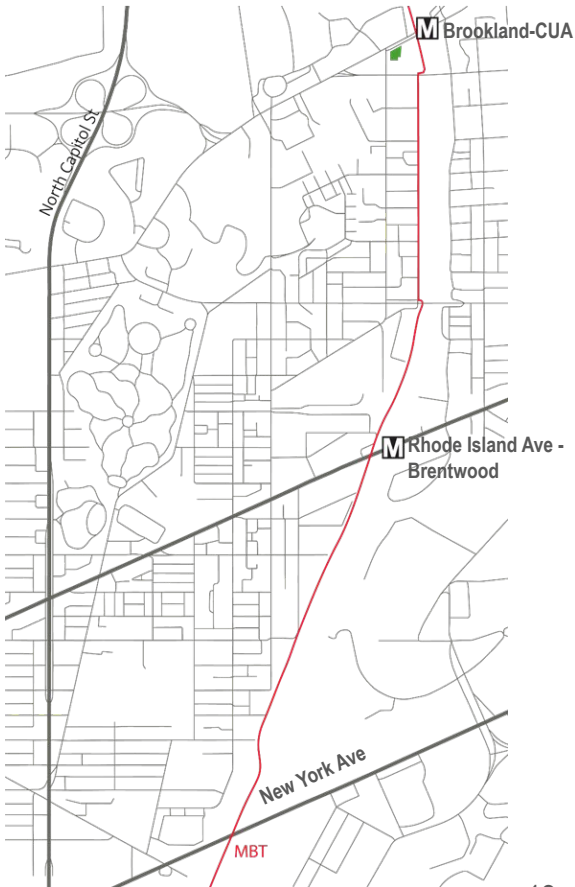
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT METHODOLOGY & STAKEHOLDERS ENGAGED



701 Michigan Ave NE



--- Potential Library



701 Michigan Ave NE



Ownership: SK Investments Development

Lot Size: 18,947 Square Feet

Zoning: MU-3A (Mixed-use including commercial and residential)

1.2 FAR allows 22,736 Buildable SF



Community Feedback: 701 Michigan Ave NE

Summary: While not as accessible for Eckington residents, this site provides library access to Edgewood and Brookland. It is conveniently located near public transportation and the MBT. Additionally, it is near a weekly farmer's market and Brookland Middle School, which would foster integration within the community.

Site Rankings:

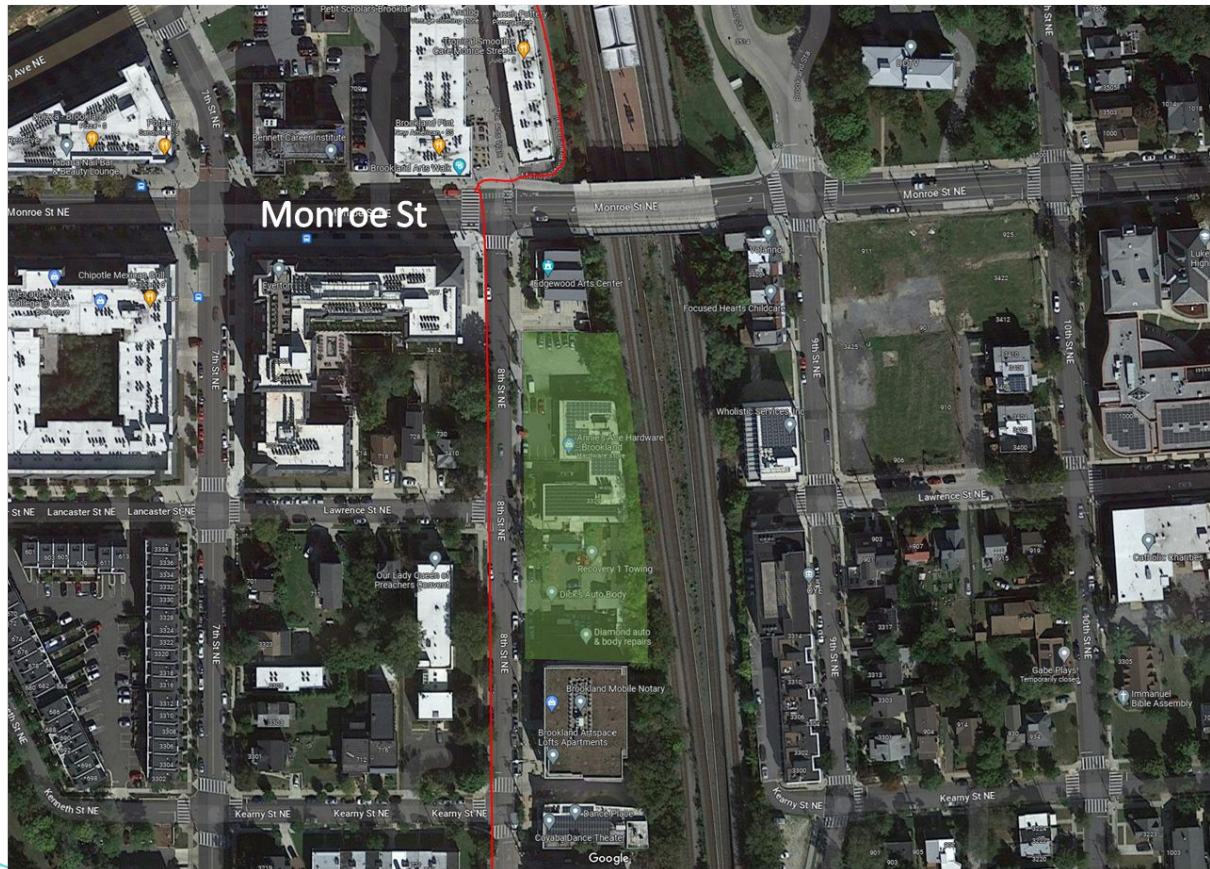
- Consistently listed as the third or fourth choice among focus group participants and interviewees.
- 23% of survey respondents selected it as "Most Convenient."

Site Comments:

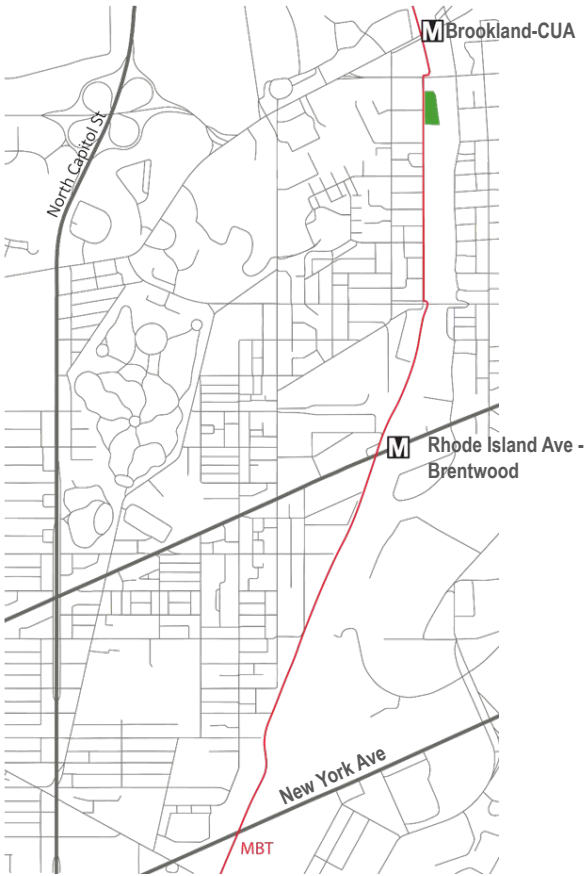
- Responses noted that this site appeared to be more in Brookland than Edgewood/Eckington, with individuals noting the location would be particularly difficult for Eckington residents to travel to by walking.
 - "This would be a good option if it was a Brookland/Edgewood library."
 - Residents in more northern communities, such as Brookland, also feel that they need a library nearby and would like to see a library come to their community.
- Being able to walk to the new library is important to residents. Residents in Eckington would likely have to drive to this site if it were selected.
- No concerns were expressed over the volume of traffic or road that this site sits on. Residents expressed liking the infrastructure around the Brookland metro, which makes them feel safer when traveling from the metro to the library.
- Site 1 is near the Brookland metro and the MBT, making it accessible by public transportation.
- There is a farmer's market each Saturday near this site, as well as businesses on 12th Street, and several schools and daycares. Some of the daycares appear to be walking distance to the library.



3315-3329 8th St NE



--- Potential Library site



3315-3329 8th St NE



- Ownership: Menkiti Group Properties
- Lot Size: Total size of 32,100 SF
- 17,765 SF of two adjacent lots (south of Lawrence St)
- Zoning PDR-1
- 3.5 FAR



Community Feedback: 3315-3329 8th St NE

Summary: While not as accessible for Eckington residents, this site provides library access to Edgewood and Brookland. It is conveniently located near public transportation and the MBT. Additionally, it is near several performing arts spaces, which could create unique opportunities for collaboration (including programming, events, and art installations)—as well as helping the library be seen as a “destination” similar to these performing arts spaces.

Site Rankings:

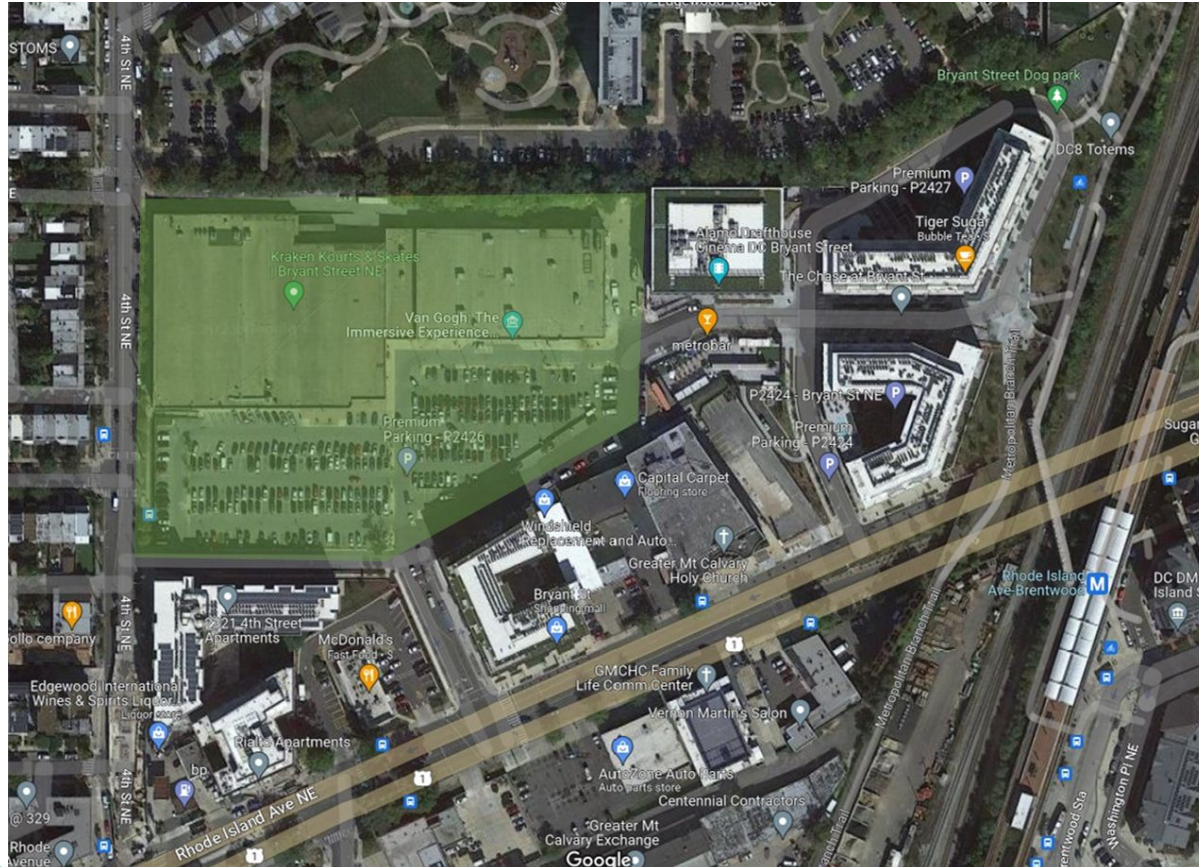
- Consistently listed as the third or fourth choice among focus group participants and interviewees.
- 20% of survey respondents selected it as “Most Convenient.”

Site Comments:

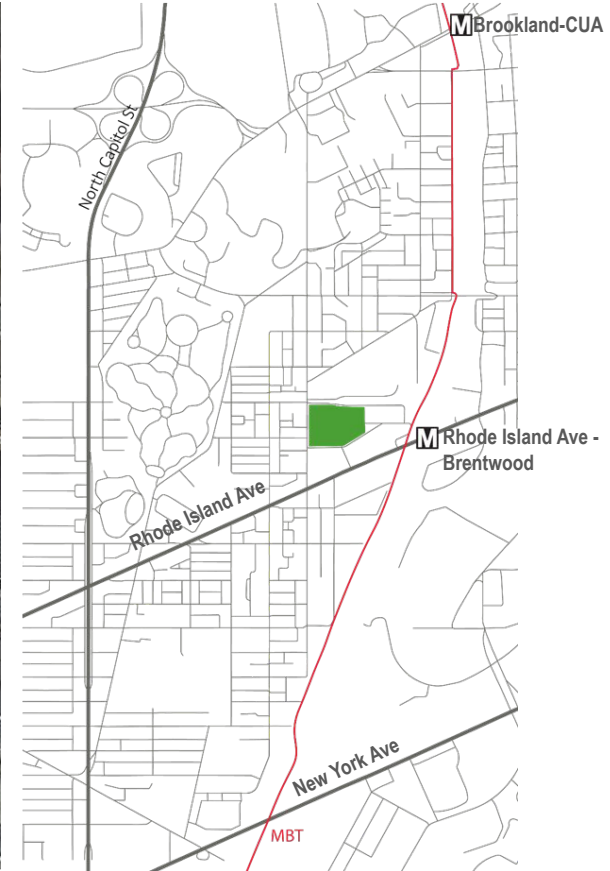
- Similar to the 701 Michigan Ave site, responses noted that this site appeared to be more in Brookland than Edgewood/Eckington, with individuals noting the location would be particularly difficult for Eckington residents to travel to by walking.
- No concerns were expressed over the volume of traffic or road that this site sits on. It was noted that this site has easy to access sidewalks.
- This site is located near a metro and MBT, making it accessible by public transportation. The sidewalks and the bridge over the metro station make this site easy to access.
- There are a lot of performing arts spaces around this site, lending themselves to unique opportunities for collaboration. Additionally, both the 701 Michigan Ave site and this site are near where the new Trader Joes will be, putting it in a central location for residents.



600 Rhode Island Ave NE



--- Potential Library Site



600 Rhode Island Ave NE



--- Potential Library sites



Ownership: MRP Bryant Street Development

Lot Size:

Block 4 19,600 SF

5A size is projected to be 110,000 SF

Zoning: MU-7B

4.8 FAR



Community Feedback: 600 Rhode Island Ave NE

Summary: This site is accessible to both Edgewood and Eckington residents. It is conveniently located near public transportation and the MBT, though there are concerns over the traffic safety on Rhode Island Avenue and the usability of the sidewalk on the south end of Rhode Island Avenue.

Site Rankings:

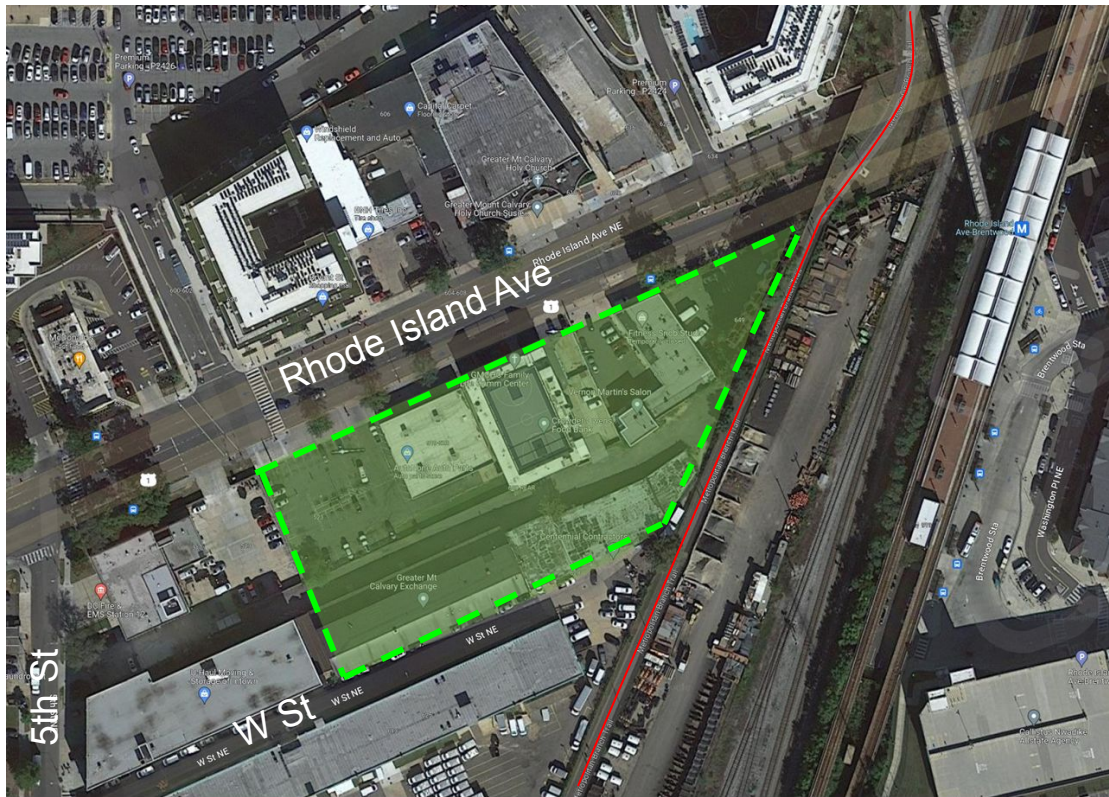
- One of the top two site choices among focus group and interview participants.
- 28% of survey respondents ranked this site as the “Most Convenient.”

Site Comments:

- Residents expressed concern about the traffic safety of Rhode Island Avenue. Many residents feel that despite efforts made to improve the safety of the area, such as clearly marked pedestrian walkways and lights, it is still unsafe to cross. Ideas to make Rhode Island Avenue safer for cyclists and pedestrians included protected two-way bike lanes, wider sidewalks, and reducing the speed limit on the road.
- Site is close to, but not at, the Bryant Street Development, which would place the library in a central community space. There is additional development coming into the area, making it a top location choice for many residents. That being said, residents expressed concern over how the Bryant Street Development, which is not finished, will further impact the site's connectivity to the MBT.
- Site is conveniently located by the Rhode Island Avenue metro station, bus stops, and the MBT. However, there are concerns about the sidewalks in the area being too narrow, and occasionally having cars parked on them for special events.
- While this site is more centrally located between Edgewood and Eckington, it was noted that the current sidewalk on the south side of Rhode Island Avenue is not currently walkable.
- Site is in a relatively high-density area with a variety of housing located near the site, as well as several schools—making it easily accessible to many residents.



605 Rhode Island Ave NE



--- Potential Library location from Site Inventory

605 Rhode Island Ave NE



- Ownership: Jair Lynch-Wilkes-GMCHC Development
- Lot Size: 2.14 acre assemblage of seven lots
(501,000 SF buildable area)
- Zoning: MU-10



Community Feedback: 605 Rhode Island Ave NE

Summary: Site is accessible to both Edgewood and Eckington residents. It is conveniently located near public transportation and the MBT, though there are concerns over the safety of Rhode Island Avenue and the feasibility of the site's connectivity to the MBT. This site is also seen as the one most conveniently located for students to get to from nearby schools. There are additional concerns about flooding.

Site Rankings:

- One of the top two site choices among focus group and interview participants.
- 29% of survey respondents ranked this site as the "Most Convenient."

Site Comments:

- Residents are interested in knowing the feasibility of getting from the MBT to this site, with concerns about the site potentially not being at grade with the MBT and therefore not allowing bicyclists to bike from the MBT directly to the library. For both sites on Rhode Island, some residents would have to cross train tracks to get from the MBT to the library.
- Given the site's connectivity to the MBT, there are safety concerns around bike storage and accessibility. Lighting and indoor or covered bike parking could help alleviate these safety concerns. While there were concerns about the site's connectivity to the MBT, residents also felt this space provided an opportunity to add in a playground or outdoor reading area.
- There was a concern that there could be a flooding problem with this site, as it is near the doggy daycare that tragically flooded in August 2023. However, some respondents said they believe that by putting the library at the Bryant Street Development, it will be above grade and not susceptible to flooding.
- Similar to the concerns expressed with the 600 Rhode Island Ave site, residents expressed concern about traffic safety of Rhode Island Ave.
- The location of this site is centrally located between Edgewood and Eckington.



NEXT STEPS



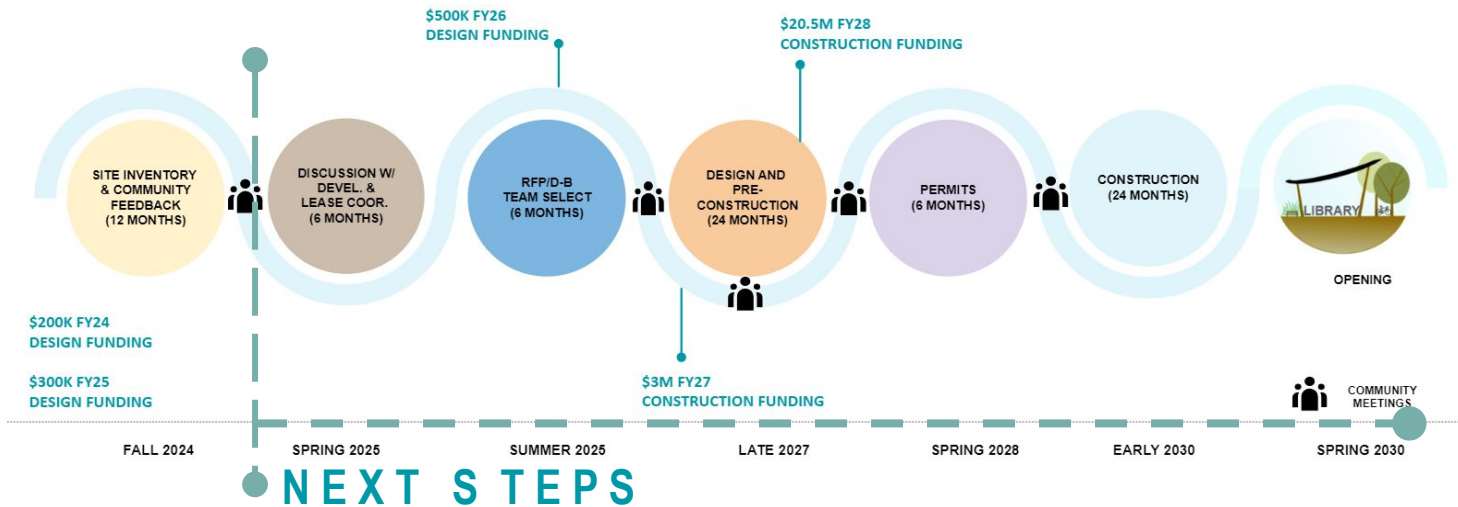
NEXT STEPS

Based on Community feedback, 600 Rhode Island Ave and 605 Rhode Island Ave, were identified as the most favorable sites, and as next steps, the Library Built Environment team, with support from KeyUrban, has engaged the entities that control these two shortlisted sites. The goal of these engagements is to negotiate site ownership or long-term leases most beneficial to the District.

As these terms are negotiated, the Library will update stakeholders on the outcome of the negotiations.

The Library will work with the Mayor and City Council on additional funding needed based on the negotiated terms.

The below timeline illustrates the journey for the design and construction of new library.



APPENDIX



APPENDIX

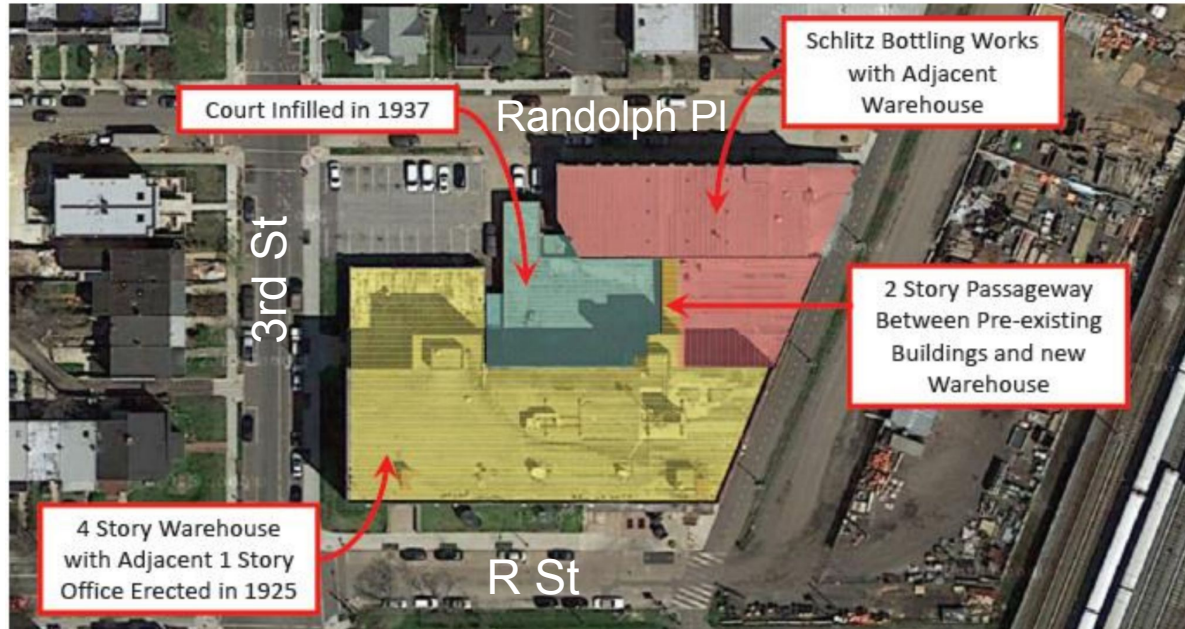
Click links to access hyperlinked documents

- [5th Site Evaluated but not Shortlisted](#)
- [Defining The Eckington/Edgewood Neighborhoods](#)
- [Walkshed of Shortlisted sites on Rhode Island](#)
- [LINK Strategic Partners Community Engagement Report Appendix](#)
- [DC Public Library Design Excellence Guidelines](#)



1709 3rd Street NE (Penn Center Annex - Schlitz Building)

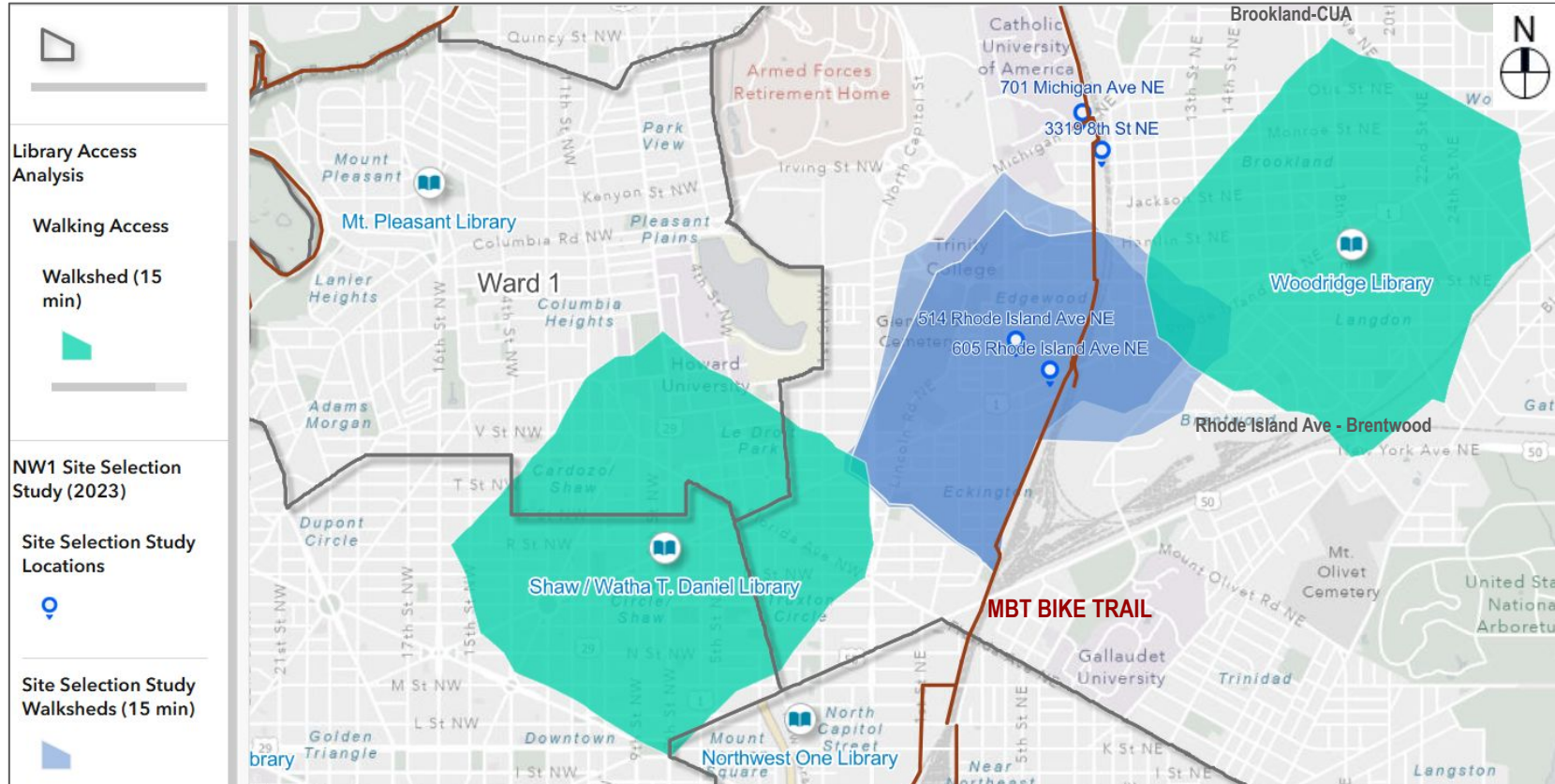
- District Historic Landmark
- Approximate Total Gross Area 16,000 SF
 - Approximate Usable Interior Net SF: 14,000 (rough interior dimensions taken from site visit)
- Rough Budgetary projection \$57M
 - Factoring \$2,000/SF (Southeast GMP as the historic) \$32M in 2024
 - 8% escalations yr over yr till 2028 (year of construction)
 - 30% Design & Construction Contingency



DELINEATING & VALIDATING ECKINGTON/EDGEWOOD NEIGHBORHOOD BOUNDARIES

- The first task from DCPL for KeyUrban (KU) entailed geographically defining the study area for the Eckington, Edgewood, and Stronghold neighborhoods. KU utilized Google maps, neighborhood map images and employed principles of what defines a neighborhood to frame the study area. KU used satellite imagery to survey the natural and built urban forms along with road and rail infrastructure.
- Eckington
 - KU proposed Eckington as a northeast District neighborhood bounded by North Capitol Street to its west, Florida and New York Avenues to its south, Rhode Island Avenue to its north, and the rail tracks to its east.
 - The nearest Metro stations being NoMa-Gallaudet U New York Ave station in the neighborhood to its south and Rhode Island Ave-Brentwood station at its far northeast corner.
 - The Metropolitan Branch Trail (MBT) – a popular walking-cycling path – abuts the eastern edge of the neighborhood and connects both Metro stations. McKinley Technology High School sits on a hill at the center of the neighborhood.
 - The neighborhood is otherwise primarily residential with commercial and industrial uses along its southern and eastern sides.
 - Many of the lots zoned for Production-Distribution-Repair (PDR) are slowly experiencing transition to mixed-use and residential uses, especially around the new Alethia Tanner Park in the far southeast corner of the neighborhood.
- Edgewood/Stronghold
 - Continuing northward, KeyUrban defined the Edgewood and Stronghold neighborhoods as bounded by North Capitol Street along the west, Rhode Island Avenue to the south, Michigan Avenue to the north, and the rail tracks to the east.
 - Three cemeteries and Trinity University create a geographic divide between the two triangular residential pockets forming Stronghold along North Capitol Street and the rest of the Edgewood neighborhood on the eastern side of the study area.
 - Franklin Street (adjacent to the northeastern tip of the cemeteries) runs east-west and divides the southern and northern portions of the Edgewood neighborhood.
 - Fourth Street NE runs north-south and connects the northern end of the study area through to the southern end of Eckington.
 - The Rhode Island Ave-Brentwood and Brookland-CUA Metro stations anchor the southeast and northeast corners of the neighborhood, respectively, with the MBT trail connecting the two.

WALKSHED OF TOP TWO SHORTLISTED SITES ON RHODE ISLAND



EXCELLENCE IN LIBRARY BUILT ENVIRONMENT

Translates to each library,

being sited and designed to be **CONTEXT SENSITIVE**

maximizing **CONNECTION TO OUTDOORS** for informal and formal gatherings with **Universal ACCESSIBILITY, SAFETY.**

Integrating **BIOPHILIA**, and glare free **NATURAL LIGHT**

be **BUILT** with **PRECISION**, for **RESILIENCE** and **High Performance** over the building's **Lifecycle.**

be designed, built and operated to be **ENVIRONMENTALLY, & ECOLOGICALLY CONSCIOUS**

be Logical and intuitive in spatial adjacencies, for **core & bespoke library services** while being **Flexible & ADAPTABLE** to evolve with needs of the community.



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS



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Thank you to all of the community-based organizations, civic and citizens associations, government agency staff, ANC members, councilmember offices, and members of the public who attended meetings, helped spread the word, engaged online, completed our survey and provided comments. The feedback we have received is critical to our journey. It is our hope that you see yourself and your guidance reflected in this work. The journey is not over, now comes the time for implementation. Please do not stop engaging and holding us accountable for the ambitious aims set out in this document. Thank you for shepherding us along this journey.