



Update on the Friendship Heights Alliance BID & Urban District Formation Process

Dear Friendship Heights Stakeholder,

Our efforts to secure sustainable funding for the Friendship Heights Alliance are moving apace, and the programs of the organization are in full swing. We have a full update on our efforts below. As we move forward, we plan to increase our touchpoints with property owners, stakeholders, residents, and others.

First: We'd like to invite you to a **Neighborhood Mixer on Tuesday, June 20, 2023, 5-7 pm** at Junction Bistro, Bar & Bakery, 5471 Wisconsin Avenue, Maryland. This is an opportunity for all neighborhood stakeholders to mingle and meet each other as we work collaboratively on the transformation of this place. *RSVP at friendshipheights.com/events*

Update on Programs

For four months in 2022, the Friendship Heights Alliance conducted robust engagement with residents, business owners, and community members. These efforts were supported by funding from major property owners, the District and Montgomery County. Based on this community and business feedback, the Alliance initiated a range of placemaking, research and community building efforts, including:

- Placemaking installations along Wisconsin Avenue featuring new seating areas and colorful plantings;
- Two pop-up galleries featuring renowned local artists and photographers, comprising 10 activated weekends and five separate events;
- Three Makers Markets attracting 800-2,000 people each, featuring a diverse range of artisans and entrepreneurs to an empty stretch of Wisconsin Avenue;
- Marketing infrastructure to help communicate a refreshed story about Friendship Heights and its potential;
- Advisory Committee comprised of residents, business owners, nonprofits, and neighborhood organizations created to inform our ongoing efforts;
- Market research to understand and promote a thriving future for the neighborhood.



Through this programming, rooted in ongoing community engagement, the Alliance has built a strong network of support and enthusiasm for the future of Friendship Heights. These efforts demonstrate the value of a cross-jurisdictional, place-focused approach to shepherding transformation and revitalization.

Update on BID & Urban District Formation Efforts

As a result of our successes over the past year, property owners on both sides of Western Avenue have come together with DC and Montgomery County government leaders to develop a sustainable funding model that will support this place-focused work into the future.

On the District side, property owners are forming a Business Improvement District under The Business Improvement District Act of 1996. The Friendship Heights BID will be the District of Columbia's 12th BID. The formation process is nearing completion, with two upcoming hearings in June to finalize approvals from both the DC Council and the Department of Small and Local Business Development.

On the Maryland side, Councilmember Andrew Friedson introduced legislation to form an Urban District in Friendship Heights in February. This will be the County's fourth urban district. The Montgomery County Council established the Friendship Heights Urban District through a unanimous vote in April 2023.

With these two funding mechanisms in place, billing will begin during the summer of 2023.





What's Next: Fully Operational Organization

By October 2023, the Friendship Heights Alliance will be fully operational with full-time staff and a sustained funding source. This will allow it to build on the successful programming and community and business engagement undertaken over the last year. The goal is to provide:

- Deeper coordination among property owners, residents, businesses, and government stakeholders around planning, design and economic development;
- Marketing of Friendship Heights to attract residents, customers, and businesses to the neighborhood;
- Enhanced cleaning and maintenance services along Wisconsin Avenue and commercial side streets;
- A more dynamic and vibrant public realm through landscaping, public art, and other placemaking interventions.

The Friendship Heights Alliance will build on the success of the BID and Urban District models in other areas of the region, delivering increased coordination, marketing, and place-focused services to help Friendship Heights thrive. It will be governed by a Board of Directors comprised of property owners and business and community stakeholders. The BID will come up for renewal with the District government every five years.

The Alliance will also build on the extensive community engagement work and programming implemented over the last year with support from both the Montgomery County and District governments. For more details on the Friendship Heights Alliance, view our *Business Plan* and *newsletter archive* on our *website*.

We look forward to collaborating with you. We'll look forward to seeing you on June 20!

Best,

The Friendship Heights Alliance Team

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