



# NOMA 2017 ANNUAL REPORT



## Greetings from Doug Firstenberg and Robin-Eve Jasper



It wasn't very long ago that NoMa was just a dream shared by a handful of people with imagination. They were elected leaders and real estate investors, intrepid residents who loved their community, and a very few commercial tenants enticed by development incentives provided by the District government.

What happened? In almost the blink of an eye, as urban development goes, NoMa transformed and dreams became reality. With more than 100,000 people walking about each day, excitement is everywhere on the neighborhood's streets. There is an abundance of inspiring public art; each season brings great new retail, pop-ups, and festivals; and thousands of smart new residents move to NoMa each year. These highly educated, ambitious, mostly 30-somethings are the workforce coveted by businesses throughout the region.

Why NoMa? Rails, trails, history, highways, abundant fiber, new green buildings, beautiful rowhomes, and location, location, location. NoMa is adjacent to downtown, Shaw, H Street, Bloomingdale, and Union Market. But the question "Why NoMa?" can't be answered without acknowledging the importance of vision and realizing dreams. NoMa grew from smart, contemporary ideas about urban living seeded on the empty lots and abandoned warehouses of a former industrial area. These ideas have magnified community assets by providing transportation improvements, creating jobs, constructing new affordable housing units, eradicating a food desert, expanding educational choices, and ensuring the development of parks and green space.

NoMa is a phenomenon much-studied, nationally and globally. NoMa is an inspiration. NoMa, the subject of modest, smart public investment, has delivered incredible returns for Washington, D.C. But most important, NoMa has become a community where we love to hang out, celebrate, enjoy life, and continue to dream, **"What's next?"**

A blue ink signature of Doug Firstenberg, written in a cursive style.

**Doug Firstenberg, Chairman of the Board**

A blue ink signature of Robin-Eve Jasper, written in a cursive style.

**Robin-Eve Jasper, President**

# The space you need for all your big ideas.

In 2017, total built space in NoMa crossed the 19 million square foot mark. With government agencies, international think tanks and nonprofits, and companies of every size moving here, 2.1 million square feet of new construction was under way here in the heart of D.C. at year's end.

But it's not all business within our 35 blocks. There's plenty of space for living: smartly designed apartments, pet-friendly amenities, and rooftops offering incredible views of the city, with more on the way. There's also increasing space for retail, as the list of dining and shopping options in the neighborhood continues to grow. Finally, the NoMa Parks Foundation is at the forefront in developing and improving space for recreation. Whether it's managing efforts to improve the Metropolitan Branch Trail, developing new streetscape guidelines that treat NoMa's sidewalks as linear parks, or constructing new parks like Swampoodle Park, NoMa is leading the way with thoughtful, green, community-driven design.

In other words, 2017 in NoMa touched on every aspect of what makes this truly mixed-use neighborhood not just a thriving part of the District, but

## CITY. SMARTER.





## We're creating a lot of new square footage — for residents, workers, and visitors.

NoMa continued to be among the District's fastest-growing neighborhoods, and the magnitude of the changes remains transformational. By the end of 2017, there was more than 2.1 million square feet of new construction occurring in the BID area: 1,595 residential units, almost half a million square feet of office space, and 39,000 square feet of retail. And with four buildings opening over the course of the year, bringing the total built space in NoMa to a little over 19 million square feet, there were ample new options for those who want to work, live, and play here.

With all of this activity — including four newly approved projects that will bring an additional 1.2 million square

feet — it's no wonder smart people, businesses, and government agencies are looking to make a home in NoMa. The U.S. Department of Justice began the process of moving 3,100 employees to the neighborhood, while the D.C. government took on nearly 165,000 square feet of office space; the coworking entity SPACES established a large presence at Uline Arena; and by year's end, we learned that the Peace Corps intended on moving its headquarters to First Street NE.

The year also saw a flurry of retail openings and announcements of new establishments, from CycleBar to Carving Room's second outpost to Red Bear Brewing, the District's first LGBT-owned brewery.





Rain, by Thurlow Small Architecture/NIO Architecten

## 2017 was a year of accolades and action as park-related activity heated up.

Halfway into its six-year plan to establish welcoming, sustainable, and beautiful spaces in the neighborhood, the NoMa Parks Foundation had a productive 2017, with park plans moving to construction and three projects greenlit to start.

### > “NOMA GREEN”

The NoMa Parks Foundation’s 2016 acquisition of an additional parcel to expand the “NoMa Green” received a nod in early 2017 from the ***Washington Business Journal’s Best Real Estate Deals*** (BRED) awards program. This complex transaction, involving a partnership with real estate developer Foulger-Pratt, added a half-acre — at no additional cost — to the existing 2-acre “NoMa

Green” and will allow the Parks Foundation to straighten out a dangerous curve on the Metropolitan Branch Trail and create a dog park. And though recognition for savvy dealmaking is wonderful, even more encouraging was the special “**Best Community Impact**” award the NoMa Parks Foundation received at the BRED event.

As 2017 progressed, landscape architecture firm Nelson Byrd Woltz continued to refine its design for the 2.5-acre space, with input from the Parks Foundation and ongoing Community Conversations. By year’s end, with the design phase complete, “NoMa Green” (whose final, official name has yet to be determined) was set to begin the next chapter: preparing for a groundbreaking in 2018.





### > 3RD AND L STREET PARK

In 2017, the 8,200-square-foot dog park and children's playground at the corner of 3rd and L streets NE moved from evolving concept to physical reality. With the final design from landscape architecture firm Lee and Associates applauded by the community and approved by the necessary oversight entities by mid-summer, the construction process began in August. Along the way, a group of NoMa neighbors formed a 501(c)(3) support group, the Friends of NoMa Dogs (FOND), which will maintain the dog park portion of the space.

In late summer, the Parks Foundation kicked off the naming process for the new park. Three finalists were

selected from 123 submissions from the community, which then voted on them to select a single name. More than 1,500 park enthusiasts participated in the survey, and with almost 70% of the vote, **Swampoodle Park** — a name that reflects the late-19th-century history of the neighborhood — was the clear winner. The name is expected to become official by the spring of 2018, just in time for the park's opening.

### > UNDERPASS ART PARKS

At long last, the winning designs for the L and M street underpasses — *Lightweave* (L Street), by Future Cities Lab, and *Rain* (M Street), by Thurlow Small Architecture/NIO Architecten — received necessary final approvals and



# PARKS



Streetscape Guidelines

permits for construction of the art parks. Installation of both Underpass Art Parks is set to be completed in spring 2018. Let there be light!

## > STREETScape

In 2017 the BID completed work on a set of comprehensive guidelines that provide clear direction on the design of public space and view streets as linear parks. The **NoMa Streetscape Guidelines** (which may be downloaded at [nomabid.org/mapsstudies](http://nomabid.org/mapsstudies)) are designed to improve the neighborhood's tree canopy, create inviting streets that serve as usable social spaces, and improve stormwater runoff capture in NoMa. Initiated as part of the NoMa Parks Foundation's Pocket Parks and

Corridors project, these guidelines will be used by the D.C. agencies in the development review process. Looking ahead, BID staff are pursuing the installation of new public space elements in the 1200 block of First Street NE as a demonstration project that will provide street furniture and improve failing tree boxes there.

**VISIT [NOMAPARKS.ORG](http://NOMAPARKS.ORG) FOR MORE INFORMATION.**





# PUBLIC SPACE

103,000

average number of weekday  
pedestrians in the heart  
of NoMa

North Capitol Street

## > POP-UPS

NoMa was home to three pop-ups in 2017.

**Femme Fatale DC**, a marketplace of local, women-owned businesses, opened in October 2017 in the empty restaurant space at 100 Florida Ave. NE for a nearly three-month run. A BID-sponsored project, Femme Fatale featured more than 50 vendors, including fashion, art, gifts, a vegan café, and a photography studio. Add to that a wide variety of community-focused events, from fashion shows to farmers markets to music parties, and there was little surprise that Femme Fatale saw a steady stream of visitors and shoppers.

The pet- and family-friendly **Wunder Garten** beer garden continued year-round operations at 1101 First St. NE, serving as a favorite watering hole for NoMa workers and residents, offering event space for area groups and organizations, and filling its calendar with great events, including an Oktoberfest celebration and the brand-new, three-weekend-long Winterfest holiday market, which the NoMa BID sponsored.

Thanks to the addition of a landscape specialist to the team in 2017, Wunder Garten became a lush urban oasis from spring through early fall. We like to say Wunder Garten is the only beer garden in the District that cares as





Top: Femme Fatale DC  
Below: Wunder Garten

**30** block faces of free outdoor WiFi

much about the “garden” as the “beer.”

And three years after opening its studio in the ground floor at 1200 First St. NE, **Yoga NoMa** continues to offer yoga, Zumba, and meditation classes.

#### > GETTING ONLINE

Since the NoMa BID launched the city’s first free neighborhood-wide outdoor WiFi network in 2014, there have been **more than 60,000 unique users** on the service. Each year the network grows, and in 2017 we expanded coverage to 30 block faces. The system has counted an average of 103,000 pedestrians each weekday in the NoMa neighborhood, and more than 200 users access the service every day. Visit [nomabid.org/wifi](http://nomabid.org/wifi) for more information about our WiFi network, including a map of coverage areas.





# PLANNING

## Improving movement around the neighborhood and thinking about NoMa's bright future.

### > STREETS

Since 2013, the NoMa BID has encouraged the District Department of Transportation (DDOT) to change the one-way L, M, and Pierce streets NE to two-way operation between First Street NE and North Capitol Street. Studies have shown that converting these streets would improve traffic flow in NoMa. After the conversion of L Street in 2016, last year achieved a second victory in this ongoing effort: the conversion of Pierce Street.

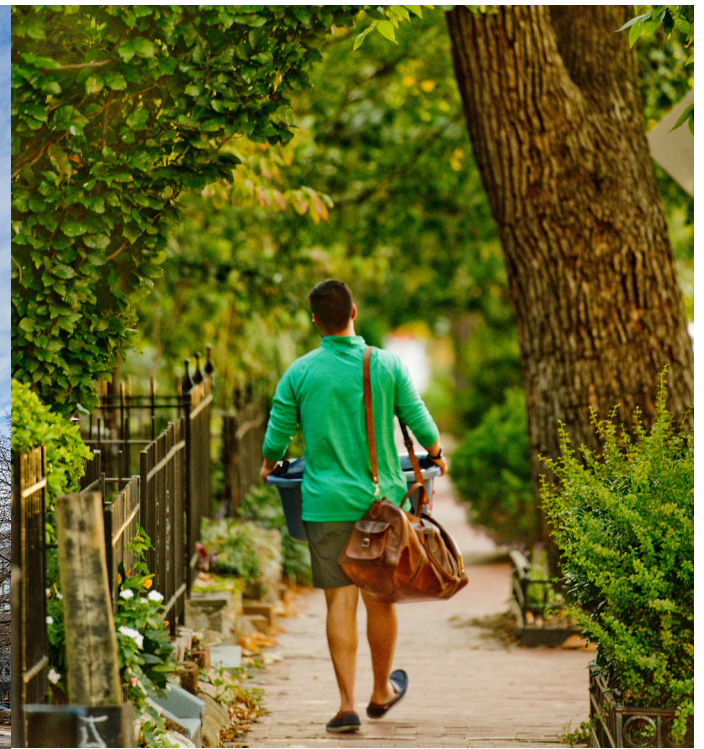
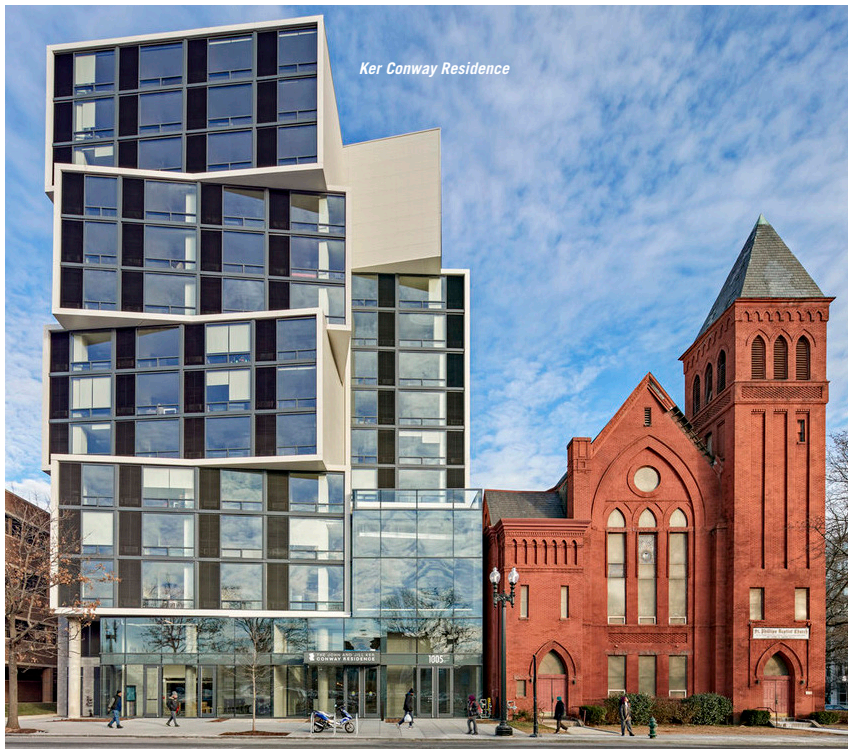
The conversion of the final road segment, M Street, is still under consideration pending completion of a DDOT bike study reviewing the next east-west bike facility for

the NoMa neighborhood. The agency sees K Street NE as the likely preferred alternative for an east-west bike lane through NoMa, and we believe that choosing this roadway as the primary east-west bike lane will improve connectivity between the downtown core, the Mount Vernon Triangle area, and NoMa.

### > GATEWAYS

In November, BID staff kicked off the NoMa Gateways project. An important element of the BID's Strategic Plan, the Gateways include several **important sites around NoMa** where people enter, exit, or pass through the neighborhood. The primary goals of this project are





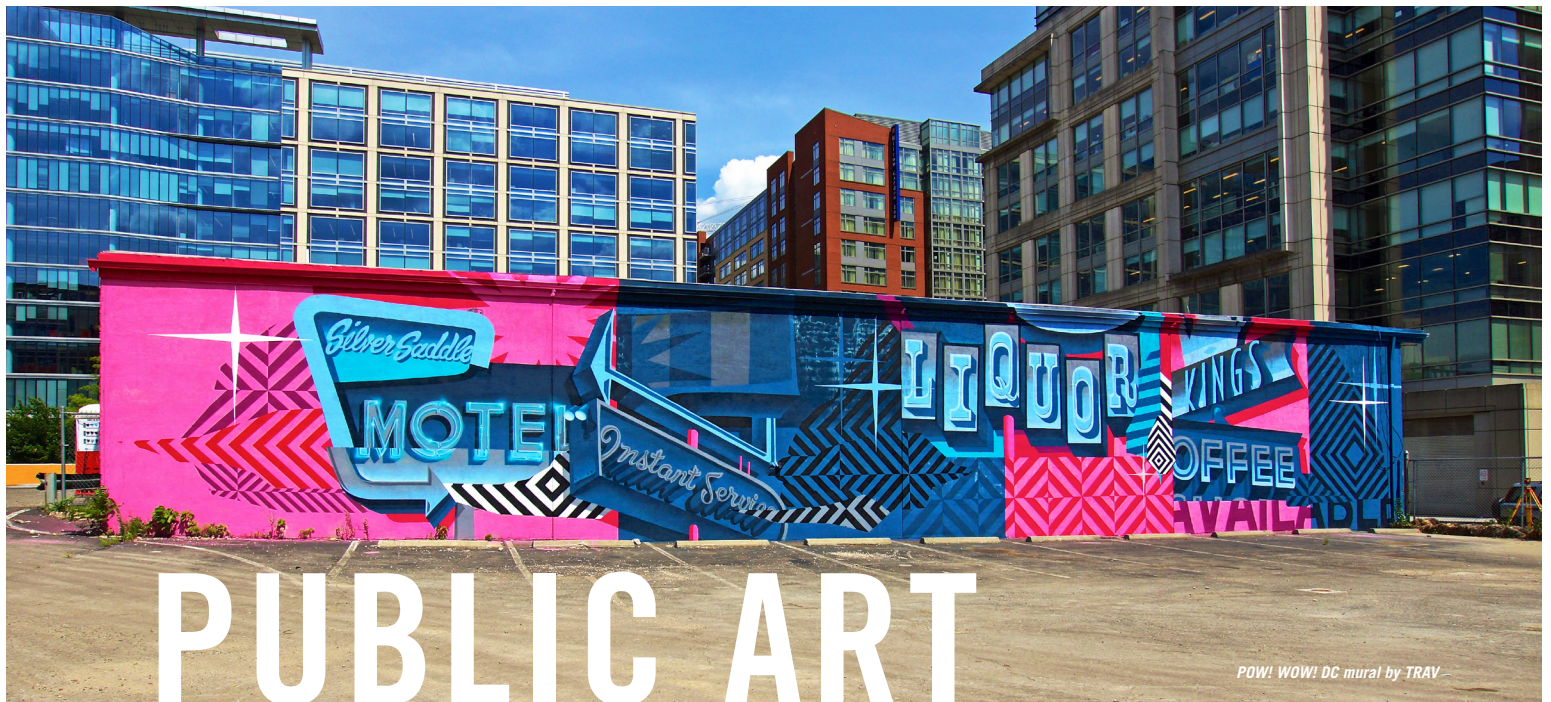
to improve the experience of people passing through these sites, to provide a strong visual identity for the neighborhood, and to better connect NoMa to its surroundings.

### > HQ2

In September, at the suggestion of BID leadership, a group of NoMa and Union Market property owners agreed to respond to a request for proposals (RFP) for Amazon's second North American headquarters, aka **Amazon HQ2**. The BID quickly mobilized to gain the support of the D.C. government for this effort and worked closely with the owners of sites that were responsive to

the RFP's requirements. In less than three weeks, we had sharp new materials — including a standalone website ([nomaunionmarket.com](http://nomaunionmarket.com)) and two custom videos — that made NoMa stand out as a strong contender for HQ2.

Amazon has stated that it will make its decision in 2018. In the meantime, many analysts and media outlets have placed the District of Columbia among the top picks for this \$5 billion endeavor by the tech and retail giant.



## Artists from across the region and around the globe left their creative marks on NoMa.

It was a banner year for public art in 2017. The celebrated international mural festival **POW! WOW! DC** returned to NoMa in May for a second time. In all, local, national, and international artists created 15 murals around the neighborhood, bringing color and vibrancy to building walls and public spaces. (Download a map of murals around NoMa at [nomabid.org/mapsstudies](http://nomabid.org/mapsstudies).) How excited were locals about the festival? Four public tours led by festival director and well-known District artist Kelly Towles attracted a total of more than 400 people.

As part of the POW! WOW! DC festival, six of the murals were completed along the MBT on the 900-foot-long wall between R Street NE and New York Avenue NE. This wall — a project of **WMATA's Art in Transit** program — will receive a

fresh set of murals every year. The continued proliferation of murals in NoMa has earned our neighborhood the coveted title of “**mural capital of D.C.**” by local press.

Our friends at D.C. hip-hop art collective **Words Beats & Life** also helped enliven the MBT last year. Adjacent to the Metro station, where a temporary covered passageway was built along the trail to protect people from the construction work at 4 Constitution Square, 16 wheat-pasted photos showcased the work of Laylah Amatullah Barryn, a New York City-based documentary photographer. Further north, where the MBT passes beneath New York Avenue NE, the mural *People Resist With Love* brought the distinctive “calligraffiti” style of street art to NoMa. The artwork was a collaborative project with lead artist Dema, from Belgium,





and supporting artists Aadil, based in London, and District muralist Mas Paz.

The BID's ongoing arts activation of the **lobby space at 1200 First St. NE** saw two installations in 2017. Early in the year, D.C. artist and curator Heloisa Escudero's *50/50 Interactive Drawing* comprised a mural and an interactive component that allowed lobby visitors to "draw" with wires and mini-clipboards. Heloisa also performed her *BackPack Gallery*, a mobile art installation, as part of a Nerds In NoMa event. Then, in the autumn, up-and-coming District painter Kate Fleming, whose work is inspired by urban spaces and the interplay of light and shadow, installed a mural that

interpreted the NoMa skyline in layers of blue. The artwork presented the neighborhood — buildings, our iconic water tower, construction cranes, the elevated rail tracks — in a "mood indigo" way: instantly recognizable, but also a little mysterious.

And **Art All Night**, the annual night-long celebration of arts and culture throughout the District, brought thousands of people out to North Capitol Street and four sites within the NoMa BID in late September to enjoy music performances, art installations, a silent disco, a fashion show, and more.





22,000+

NoMa visitors attended  
Winterfest at Wunder Garten

EVENTS

## NoMa happenings bring the neighborhood, and the city, together all year.

Our name may include the word “business,” but we also like to have fun, and 2017 was no different. Four **Nerds In NoMa** panel discussions covered a variety of thoughtful topics, including how to keep artists in the District and why green spaces are so vital to urban places, while the weekly **NoMa Summer Screen** offered Hollywood’s take on the intersection of politics and power (and a great selection of food trucks, too).

The best events, of course, engage all members of the NoMa community: young and old, families and couples, friends and co-workers. That’s why our **October PumpkinPalooza** is regularly among the largest single-night gatherings every year — 1,200 people in 2017

— and one that people start asking about weeks in advance. A 600-pumpkin giveaway and tools on hand to carve and decorate them? Who doesn’t love that?

But it’s not just the annual events NoMa is known for that get people excited. We’re always looking for opportunities to develop and support compelling new happenings. In 2017, these included a June restaurateur panel discussion and **chef cook-off** showcasing five RAMMY-nominated talents, as well as **Winterfest at Wunder Garten**, a holiday market at NoMa’s favorite beer garden featuring local makers and a tree lot, that attracted more than 22,000 people to the neighborhood over the course of three December weekends — 12,000 of them for the first time.



# METROPOLITAN BRANCH TRAIL

25%

increase in daily MBT  
users in two years

## The MBT is infrastructure, yes, but also a recreational space beloved by pedestrians and dog-walkers, joggers and cyclists.

Whether it's used for commuting, exercise, or simply a moment to experience city views and cool public art, the Metropolitan Branch Trail (MBT) is a great asset that gets better all the time. And we're leading the effort to keep it that way. Two years after the **Metropolitan Branch Trail Safety & Access Study** was published, a number of the 30 actions recommended in the report have been implemented. (The report is available for download at [nomabid.org/mapsstudies](http://nomabid.org/mapsstudies).)

Safety continues to be a top priority. In addition to regular coordination with the District Department of Transportation (DDOT) and the Metropolitan Police Department on safety issues, the BID ensures the quick repair of broken lighting and trail mirrors; installs new mirrors and signs at common collision points; and is now establishing a permanent security-camera network.

But just as important as a safe, clean, well-maintained MBT is a trail that sees more people on it year after year. Since our initiation of the MBT Safety & Access Study in 2015, trail usage has increased by 25%. Today, an average of 1,000 daily users are on the MBT in favorable weather.

This is wonderful growth, but we want to see more. That's why last year we partnered with DDOT and sought input from community groups and the greater public to create a **comprehensive wayfinding placement plan** for signage on the MBT. The new signage will improve the user experience on the trail and in the adjacent neighborhoods, promoting trail use and noteworthy connections to neighborhood destinations like libraries, parks, schools, and cultural attractions.





Trash &  
Recycling Removal  
**1,052,431**  
POUNDS OF  
WASTE

## It takes teamwork to make NoMa a sparkling environment for workers, residents, and visitors.

At the NoMa BID, we're committed to ensuring that our sidewalks and public spaces are safe and welcoming. How do we accomplish this?

In part, it's through regular communication with business owners and property managers, D.C. government officials and ANCs, and the Metropolitan Police Department and other security entities. NoMa's well-attended monthly public safety meetings foster stronger connections and

coordination among these groups and help everyone understand concerns and opportunities around the neighborhood. As each month brings more residents and greater commercial activity to NoMa, it is heartening to see NoMa's multi-year downward trend in crime continue.

But a clean, attractive neighborhood doesn't happen on its own. Seven days a week, the hard-working **NoMa Clean Team** provides a high level of maintenance service that





residents, workers, and visitors appreciate and expect. In addition to collecting and disposing of trash, the team also pressure-washes sidewalks and underpasses, removes graffiti and reports broken infrastructure, and assists with other neighborhood beautification projects. And if you like to bike in NoMa, you can thank them for keeping our tire pumps and repair stations in good working order.

Offering assistance and a friendly face, our **Hospitality Ambassadors** make the NoMa experience a welcoming

and inviting one. Ambassadors circulate throughout the neighborhood, including the Metropolitan Branch Trail, to greet people, provide directions and guidance, and distribute information about NoMa and our events, which they also help staff. And as our eyes and ears on the street, they serve as a critical first line of interaction with the homeless community in NoMa, reaching out for emergency services when needed.

# FINANCIALS

The NoMa BID receives an assessment from commercial property (including land and parking lots), residential buildings with 10 or more units, and hotels. Summarized information from NoMa BID audited financial statements set forth below represents the consolidated finances of the NoMa BID and the NoMa Parks Foundation in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States.

## STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

ASSETS	2017
Cash/Cash Equivalents	\$2,419,754
Accounts Receivable	\$906,021
Reimbursable Cost	\$78,661
Prepaid Expenses	\$8,292
Deposits	\$47,466
Other Assets	\$18,000
Property & Equipment, Net	\$243,594
TOTAL ASSETS	\$3,721,788

## LIABILITIES & NET ASSETS

LIABILITIES	
Accounts Payable & Accrued Expenses	\$974,437
Deferred Revenue	\$483,970
Deferred Rent	\$188,700
Capital Lease Obligation	\$20,040
Other Liabilities	\$124,683
TOTAL LIABILITIES	\$1,791,830
NET ASSETS	
Reserves & Unrestricted Net Assets	\$1,929,958

TOTAL LIABILITIES & NET ASSETS: \$3,721,788

## STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES

INCOME	2017	
BID Assessments	\$2,456,912	48%
Grant Income	\$2,447,097	48%
Contract Revenue	\$169,644	3%
Other Income	\$58,655	1%
Contributions	\$10,000	0%
Interest & Dividends	\$5,542	0%
TOTAL REVENUE	\$5,147,850	100%

EXPENSES		
Parks	\$2,094,155	41%
Administration	\$1,085,408	21%
Public Space Maintenance	\$679,927	13%
Economic Development	\$406,070	8%
Hospitality Ambassadors	\$326,770	7%
Events and Programming	\$268,525	5%
Marketing	\$230,028	5%
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$5,090,883	100%

NET INCOME: \$56,967



STAFF & BOARD

Staff	Title
As of December 2017	
Robin-Eve Jasper	President
Phil Kotiza	Chief Operating Officer
Otavio Thompson	Administrative Director
Galin Brooks	Director of Planning & Economic Development
Stacie West	Director of Park & Public Realm Development
Jeff Brown	Director of Public Space Operations
Braulio Agnese	Director of Marketing & Events
Lia Seremetis	Marketing & Events Manager
Rachid Rabbaa	Business Manager
Thomas Henderson	Hospitality Ambassador Supervisor
Robert Walker	Hospitality Ambassador Supervisor
Michele Hydier	Hospitality Ambassador
Pamela Jackson	Hospitality Ambassador
Tim Stringer	Hospitality Ambassador
Ibrahim Turayson	Hospitality Ambassador

Board	Company Name
As of December 2017	
Douglas M. Firstenberg, Chairman	StonebridgeCarras
Charles “Sandy” Wilkes, Vice Chairman	The Wilkes Company
Deborah A. Cowan, Treasurer	NPR
Michael Smith, Secretary	The Washington Center
Dave Bevirt	Brookfield Office Properties
Brigg Bunker	Foulger-Pratt
Charles Garner II	CIM Group
John Gordon	Polinger Shannon & Luchs
Thomas James	General Services Administration
Matt Liddle	REI
Matthew Robinson	MRP Realty
David Tuchmann	Akridge
Andrew VanHorn	JBG Smith
Robert Ward	Skanska
Adam Warren	Harris Teeter



The NoMa Parks Foundation's "NoMa Green" team receives the "Best Community Impact" award at the Washington Business Journal's Best Real Estate Deals event.

Photography by Sam Kittner  
Photographer, NoMa BID, and  
BID members.

Page 7, top left: WTOP/Tata Alim

Page 9, left: Robert Benson  
Photography

Page 12, top left: Jeff Claypool/  
Kalorama Photo

# NOMA

**CITY. SMARTER.**

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