

2019 Annual
Report

NOMA
CITY. SMARTER.

Greetings from Robin-Eve Jasper & Brigg Bunker



The vibrancy and creativity of NoMa was on dramatic display in 2019 and continues to be the turbocharged engine of growth in Northeast Washington, DC. In 2019, 3.4 million square feet of new Class A office space was leased and/or occupied in NoMa. Architecture, design and technology firms chose to make NoMa their home, and WeWork opened the third major co-working space in NoMa. Neighbors moved into newly built apartment homes, 796 of them. NoMa became more delicious with the openings of CR NoMa, Laos in Town, Red Bear Brewing Co. and Rice Bar. NoMa parks continued to win the hearts of the community...and three global design awards for Swampoodle Park, *Lightweave* Art Park, and *Rain* Underpass Park. Art in NoMa got new boosts with the installation of the *Chicken and the Egg* sculpture at North Capitol Street and N Street NE, plus 18 new murals painted during the Fourth Annual POW! WOW! DC fest. In the midst of all of this exciting “new stuff,” the NoMa BID balanced its focus on the present with the future vision of NoMa by establishing an homage to 400 years of neighborhood history. That enduring legacy is now represented on banners throughout the streets and sidewalks of NoMa, as well as on the NoMa BID website at [**nomabid.org/noma-history/**](https://nomabid.org/noma-history/).

In 2020, NoMa is poised to continue this vibrant growth with 6.5 million square feet of construction underway or planned to begin.

And now there is coronavirus to contend with. A few short months into this pandemic, what have we learned? Areas heavily dominated by retail have suffered greatly, as have office districts. Areas dependent on tourism and mass entertainment attractions are hard hit. But the lesson being reinforced every day in NoMa is that a true, mixed-use community like ours is resilient. While office workers are telecommuting, our streets remain cautiously active



with residents walking or shopping for essentials. NoMa's retailers have demonstrated their drive, nimbleness and entrepreneurial chops by opening virtual bodegas and expanding delivery and takeout services. Their customer-neighbors in NoMa support them, and NoMa residents are finding ways to come together, including afternoon sing-alongs on apartment building balconies.

NoMa BID immediately responded to the crisis too, by adding a new focus: providing critical information — and offering technical assistance — with coronavirus relief programs and resources. With stay-at-home restrictions, we are launching virtual events to engage residents and drive support for members. The feedback on these new undertakings has been very positive. Of course, the NoMa Clean Team bravely continues its daily work on the streets of NoMa, and all of the rest of our operations and projects continue seamlessly through telework.

While we are all being tested in these challenging times and adjusting 2020 forecasts, we are heartened to observe that the balance and resources that have been created in NoMa over the last 15 years is a good one and serves the community well. And we are ready to double down on the work of building a great, balanced neighborhood to assure the health and well-being of NoMa for a long time to come!

Brigg Bunker, Chairman of the Board

Robin-Eve Jasper, President



6,000

new employees in FY2019

NoMa continued to flourish in 2019, and we stayed busy keeping track of it all.

For several years now, there have been two constants in NoMa: an ever-changing skyline, with new office and apartment buildings appearing almost like clockwork; and a greater number of people, including residents, workers and visitors.

> OFFICE

Over the summer, Four Constitution Square, the final building in the block-sized development that has been under construction for almost a decade, opened its doors to almost 1,900 U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) employees. Now about 5,000 DOJ workers commute to the block next to the NoMa-Gallaudet U Metrorail station on a typical weekday. A few blocks down First Street NE, Sentinel Square III

neared completion in anticipation of welcoming the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) to its new headquarters in early 2020.

Throughout the year, businesses, nonprofits and government agencies relocated to NoMa, a primary reason the neighborhood continued to boast an office vacancy rate lower than the District average. Here are just some of the employers now calling this part of the city home: Peace Corps; D.C. Department of Parks and Recreation; Goodwill of Greater Washington; and Antunovich Associates, the architecture firm responsible for the design that transformed the historic Uline Arena into a signature office and retail complex.

GROWTH



> RESIDENTIAL

A pair of new apartment buildings opened in NoMa in 2019, one on each side of the elevated railroad tracks. To the east: Union Place, which started leasing in the spring with 525 units and an incredible, sweeping rooftop view of the District. To the west: RESA, a striking, 326-unit building that has the distinction of being the first building to open on the NoMa Meander, a three-block-long pedestrian retail promenade that will wind its way through the middle of three city blocks between North Capitol and First Streets NE. And the construction continued, with three additional new residential projects underway.

The BID estimates that almost 12,000 people lived within our boundary by year's end. How explosive has growth in NoMa been since the first apartment buildings opened in 2010? Explosive enough to cause the DC Board of Elections to create a new voting precinct (number 144, if you're keeping track) for the area south of New York Avenue. It's the first time the city has created a new precinct since 2008, and just the latest marker of how dense NoMa has become.



84%+

of NoMa residents
commute without a car

PUBLIC SPACE

Can a significant but unfriendly intersection become a better place? We say yes.

For years the NoMa BID, residents and city planners have advocated for a “fix” for the unsafe and daunting conditions at the “Virtual Circle” that includes Florida and New York Avenues, First and O Streets, and Eckington Place NE. This high-traffic intersection, known colloquially as “Dave Thomas Circle” because of the Wendy’s at its center, has long been a source of frustration to drivers, a dangerous space for pedestrians and cyclists, a barrier to economic activity between the north and south sections of the neighborhood, and an unwelcoming gateway to the heart of downtown DC.

In early spring, news arrived that the DC government had finalized plans and dedicated funding to reconfigure the “Virtual Circle” into a safer, better place for walkers, bikers and cars. The plans also established three significant new public spaces. Hoping to spur the city to create something beyond the utilitarian, the BID partnered with the NoMa Parks Foundation to commission a Technical Assistance Panel (TAP) from the Washington chapter of the Urban Land Institute. This group of planning, construction and design professionals met with neighborhood stakeholders and city officials to



learn about the challenges and the plans and spent time considering how the “Virtual Circle” redesign could be improved.

The resulting TAP report — “Transforming the Virtual Circle to Reconnect the Neighborhoods” — called for the establishment of great, creative public spaces to better serve the community and connect the south and north portions of NoMa, as well as improved pedestrian and bike infrastructure, public art and event programming

opportunities in the newly created public spaces, and more attention to the need to connect the upper and lower portions of the neighborhood. (Download a PDF at bit.ly/VirtualCircleTAP.) Praised by neighborhood advocates and well-received by the city, the report has already spurred action: By year’s end, the BID and the NoMa Parks Foundation were working with renowned landscape architects SWA/Balsley on plans to beautify and enhance this critical location and infrastructure in NoMa.

RETAIL



From morning coffee through drinks and dinner, 2019 brought new options and flavors.

> FOOD & BEVERAGE

Great mixed-use neighborhoods have lots of good options for hungry and thirsty people, and last year made NoMa a much tastier part of the District. Local grocery and prepared-foods chain Streets Market created a market and bar featuring Korean-inspired fare and 30 beers on tap. The beer scene moved up another notch with the spring opening of Red Bear Brewing Co. at Uline Arena. With its continually rotating selection of beer styles and community-minded approach — including wheelchair-accessible design and ASL-conversant staff — the city's first gay-owned brewery/taphouse quickly established itself as a popular destination.

On the restaurant scene, Laos in Town brought the flavors of Southeast Asia to the corner of Third and K Streets NE, earning itself a Michelin Guide Bib Gourmand Award within months of opening. In the heart of the neighborhood, CR NoMa's North African/Middle Eastern-inspired spreads, flatbreads and other dishes proved popular with the lunchtime and happy hour crowds. And by year's end, Virginia-based King Street Oyster Bar opened its doors as the first seafood-focused establishment in the neighborhood.

Throughout the year, Sweet Science Coffee — a cult favorite among District caffeine-afficionados — appeared



at a number of BID events in anticipation of its first brick-and-mortar location, which opened on N Street NE at year's end. And in late summer, farmers market vendor Spot of Tea established a permanent presence within Streets Market, offering a variety of hot and cold beverages from morning to early evening.

> NEIGHBORHOOD GUIDE

Keeping NoMa's residents, workers and visitors current on all that the neighborhood and surrounding areas have to offer is important to us. For years, the BID has produced a handy pamphlet pointing out cultural and retail destinations, dining options, hotels, means of

transportation and more. To make this crucial information even easier to access, in 2019, we pivoted to digital: **nomaneighborhoodguide.org**, available in desktop and mobile versions. This new platform enables the BID to update information in near real-time, which means everyone can be in the know, in the now, about NoMa.

The print version of the Neighborhood Guide is not going away, however. By year's end, we were working on a new pamphlet highlighting a handful of neighborhood amenities and reminding everyone to go online for complete listings. Watch for it in 2020.



Art by Wing Chow, 2018
POW! WOW! DC Festival

PUBLIC ART

We made sure there's always something interesting to see in NoMa.

> FOURTH ANNUAL POW! WOW! DC

Since 2016, the BID has partnered with the POW! WOW! DC collective and property owners to adorn NoMa with colorful and dynamic artwork, and our fourth annual mural festival brought more of it in May 2019. Ten local talents applied their artistic visions to portions of the 900-foot-long WMATA wall along the Metropolitan Branch Trail, while 10 visiting artists added new perspectives to buildings throughout the neighborhood. As usual, art lovers ate it up, from maximum-capacity mural tours to a summer feature in the Taiwanese magazine *Mirror Media*.

> LOBBY ART

As we have done since 2014, the BID continued to partner with DC-area artists to bring compelling installations to the lobby of 1200 First Street NE, where our office is located. Highlights included *A Rising Tide Lifts All Boats*, a gorgeous four-piece artwork by Andrea Limauro about climate change and the nation's capital; and *Biosphere*, by Eric Celarier, whose work has been an ongoing exploration of the theme of biological evolution as associated with human impact on the environment.



Art by Richt, 2018 POW!
WOW! DC Festival

> GATEWAYS PROJECT

The BID's Gateways Project is an effort to use public art to transform key intersections into spaces that create positive experiences for people, provide a strong visual identity for NoMa and celebrate the neighborhood's history. In 2019, we had our first milestone: installation of *The Chicken and the Egg*, a two-part, CMYK-colored sculpture located at the intersection of North Capitol Street, New York Avenue, and N Street NE. The sculptures are a playful comment on the conundrum of ongoing change here, and suggestive of the role that the city's nearby wholesale food market and transportation infrastructure had in those changes, while the cyan/magenta/yellow/black coloration is a nod to the area's past as a center of printing and publishing facilities.

> BANNERS

CMYK was all over the neighborhood in 2019, as it turned out. Carrying the color scheme over into another public space application, the BID refreshed its branded street pole banners with a variety of images from NoMa's rich and diverse history — including women working at the US Government Publishing Office; the Beatles concert at the Washington Coliseum, now known as the Uline Arena; Swampoodle Grounds baseball park; and Earl Lloyd of the Washington Capitols, who was the first black man to play in the NBA. (For more about NoMa's interesting past, read our overview of the last 400 years at nomabid.org/noma-history.)



PARKS

Swampoodle Park on
opening day

This year we lit up an underpass and opened a play destination for canines and kids.

> LIGHTWEAVE ART PARK

In April, the NoMa Parks Foundation turned on the power for *Lightweave*, the dynamic and compelling light installation comprised of six spiraling lattices of stainless steel and bent LED tubing. San Francisco art and design firm FUTUREFORMS designed the LEDs to respond to both sound and movement; when trains pass overhead, the vibrations cause the LEDs to change colors. With a gentle pattern of illumination “woven” through the lattices, *Lightweave* encourages passersby to walk through the L Street NE underpass and delight in the playful lights. At the ribbon-cutting, community members enjoyed the performance of a drummer who helped demonstrate the interactive nature of the lights.

The *Lightweave* installation in the L Street underpass recently won the Silver Prize in Responsive Design from Design That Educates.

> SWAMPOODLE PARK

Swampoodle Park, opened in 2018, continued to be the hit of the neighborhood, drawing many kids and dogs all day, in all kinds of weather. Not to be outdone by *Rain* (following page), Lee and Associates, Inc., the landscape architecture firm that designed Swampoodle Park, won three awards for the park. In May, the Potomac Chapter of the American Society of Landscape Architects (ASLA) awarded Lee and Associates an Honor Award for Social Impact for the Swampoodle Park design. In June, the New York Council of the Society of American Registered Architects (SARA)



Playground at Alethia
Tanner Park

honored Lee and Associates for the park design at the group's 2019 Professional Design Awards event. And November brought an Award of Honor for the park and Lee and Associates from the National Society of American Architects.

> ALETHIA TANNER PARK

With a great plan from landscape architecture firm Nelson Byrd Woltz, the NoMa Parks Foundation hired Forrester Construction to build Alethia Tanner Park. Construction commenced in March, beginning with the removal of contaminated soils on the site and excavation for bioretention areas, foundations and utilities. Through the summer, Forrester installed foundations for the two buildings, stage armature and playground. In late summer, Forrester created a temporary detour for the

Metropolitan Branch Trail. This critical work allowed for the widening and repaving of the existing MBT and the much-anticipated softening of the Z-turn at R Street NE at the north end of the park. View the MBT Safety & Access Study at <https://bit.ly/2yAx7WB>. NPF was pleased to reopen the trail to users in December, even as construction continued in the rest of the park. Construction on the park lasted into early 2020.

> RAIN UNDERPASS PARK

Rain, opened in 2018, continued to win awards in 2019. Designer Thurlow Small, Inc. and NIO architecten accepted the 2019 American Institute of Architects San Francisco (AIASF) Chapter Special Commendation for Urban Infrastructure Design Award in April.



Winterfest at Wunder Garten

EVENTS

In 2019, our signature gatherings were as good as ever. But we also debuted a popular new series.

The BID works hard to create events that build community in NoMa — more than 50 happenings last year, in fact, attracting upwards of 31,000 people. It's a lot to capture in a few paragraphs, so instead we'll look at a few highlights.

> NERDS IN NOMA

In its sixth season, our winter panel-discussion series offered one of the most thoughtful dialogues yet: A standing room only gathering focused on design for deaf and hard of hearing. The event — which included Gallaudet University's campus architect, a deaf business owner and a deaf community advocate on the panel — was covered in depth by the well-regarded website *CityLab*, and *Curbed DC* used it as a

launching point for a piece about how deaf design principles are being implemented in businesses and public spaces around the District.

> FEEL GOOD FRIDAYS

Occasionally, it's good to try something different. Looking to bring surprise and delight to NoMa office workers, one Friday morning each month from June through September, the BID set up stations near our two Metrorail stops to offer complimentary coffee, breakfast treats, branded swag and more. Each event served between 800 and 1,000 people, many of whom proved to be regulars whose smiles we could count on seeing each month.



Feel Good Fridays

> SUMMER SCREEN

Who's got game? The NoMa BID does. We've been showing movies under the warm-weather stars since 2008, and have the formula down: a great theme (this year, it was sports-related films), a welcoming green space, and free treats and food trucks. It's why hundreds of neighbors and others from across the city gather each week all summer long, and neighborhood businesses want to participate in the fun as sponsors. This was the final year Summer Screen would occur in a temporary location — many thanks to all of the property owners who have been a part of it. In 2020, the series is expected to move to its permanent home: Alethia Tanner Park!

> PUMPKINPALOOZA

Our annual grand gourd giveaway is always fun, and in 2019, it proved to be something special. With support from local businesses, the NoMa BID provided more than 800 free pumpkins, carving/decorating tables, live bluegrass, a petting zoo, a dog costume competition, Halloween-themed activity stations and free seasonal snacks — and the mix of attendees was incredible: young professionals, neighborhood families, school groups, people of all ages. It was a fantastic representation of the breadth of community the NoMa BID serves.

CLEAN & SAFE



84%+

of NoMa residents
commute without a car

It takes dedication and hard work to keep NoMa beautiful and welcoming.

> AMBASSADORS

The BID's dozen-plus Ambassadors serve in a variety of important roles: They are our eyes and ears on the streets, greeting people and providing information and a friendly face. They distribute BID pamphlets to residential and office buildings. And they help set up, staff and break down our many, many events.

They also keep the neighborhood sparkling by picking up trash and recycling every day of the week, providing landscaping services for select public spaces, removing graffiti, and pressure-washing sidewalks. If there's an infrastructure problem, they report it to DC's 311 service.

And if you're a cyclist, you can thank them for keeping our bike pumps and repair stations in good working order and, through a partnership with the District Department of Transportation, maintaining the lights and mirrors along the mile-long section of the Metropolitan Branch Trail that runs through NoMa.

In short, our Ambassadors are indispensable. And if something seems different about them when you meet them, you're not wrong. In late 2019, we redesigned the team's uniform, suiting them up in bold new colors and refreshed branding.



> PUBLIC SAFETY

Bringing neighborhood stakeholders together to discuss important safety issues, the BID continued to host its monthly public meeting that connects property managers, developers, business owners, construction teams and others with local and federal agencies, including the three Metropolitan Police Department districts (First, Third and Fifth) that serve the neighborhood. With more going on in NoMa than ever before, this ongoing conversation is a vital source of information for all.

The NoMa BID team continued to focus attention on conditions related to homeless encampments in the

underpasses and on First Street NE in NoMa. In 2019, we worked to shine a light on the nature of the challenges faced by people experiencing homelessness in NoMa as well as the concerns of residents, workers and visitors in NoMa. While this effort had some vocal detractors, community response was overwhelmingly supportive. We will continue to partner with city agencies and do our best to bring better understanding to those who may be less familiar with the specific situation in NoMa, and to support compassionate responses that improve NoMa conditions over time.

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	2019
Cash/Cash Equivalents	\$2,730,304
Accounts Receivable	\$439,148
Reimbursable Cost	\$183,186
Prepaid Expenses	\$24,263
Deposits	\$203,138
Other Assets	\$64,525
Property & Equipment	\$149,103
TOTAL ASSETS	\$3,793,667

LIABILITIES & NET ASSETS

LIABILITIES	
Accounts Payable & Accrued Expenses	\$647,023
Deferred Revenue	\$534,399
Deferred Rent	\$156,157
Capital Lease Obligation	\$12,710
Other Liabilities	\$104,500
TOTAL LIABILITIES	\$1,454,789
NET ASSETS	
Reserves & Unrestricted Net Assets	\$2,338,878

TOTAL LIABILITIES & NET ASSETS: \$3,793,667

STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES

INCOME	2019	
BID Assessments	\$2,691,948	30%
Grant Income	\$6,081,509	67%
Contract Revenue	\$167,120	2%
Other Income	\$116,953	1%
Contributions	\$5,000	0.06%
Interest & Dividends	\$11,048	0.12%
TOTAL REVENUE	\$9,073,578	100%

EXPENSES		
Parks	\$5,726,527	64%
Administration	\$885,388	10%
Public Space Maintenance	\$935,954	11%
Economic Development	\$617,175	7%
Hospitality Ambassadors	\$211,808	2%
Events and Programming	\$287,343	3%
Marketing	\$239,184	3%
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$8,903,379	100%

NET INCOME: \$170,199

STAFF & BOARD

Staff	Title
<i>At end of FY2019</i>	
Robin-Eve Jasper	President
Braulio Agnese	Director of Marketing & Communications
Kimberly Ford	Director of Events
Gregory Haygood	Finance Director
Jesse London	Planning & Economic Development Manager
Rachid Rabbaa	Business Manager
Otavio Thompson	Administrative Director
Dave Webb	Director of Public Space Operations
Stacie West	Director of Parks Projects
Thomas Henderson	Hospitality Ambassador
Robert Walker	Hospitality Ambassador
Pamela Jackson	Hospitality Ambassador

Board	Company Name
<i>At end of FY2019</i>	
Brigg Bunker, Chair	Foulger-Pratt
Berkeley Shervin, Vice Chair	The Wilkes Company
Thomas Archer, Secretary	Skanska
Deborah A. Cowan, Treasurer	NPR
Caiti Anderson	REI
Josh Dix	Trammel Crow Company
John Gordon	Polinger Shannon & Luchs
Tony Greenberg	JBG Smith
Thomas James	General Services Administration
Christopher Lynch	Wunder Garten
Christopher Norton	The Washington Center
Mike Ponticelli	Bisnow
Matthew Robinson	MRP Realty
Pamela Tapscott	Mathematica
David Tuchmann	Akridge



Photography by Sam Kittner
Photographer and NoMa BID

NOMA

CITY. SMARTER.

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