

2.0
A SPACE
FOR ALL



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ROLES OF THE STREET

Streets support a range of transportation, access, and civic functions, and their roles have evolved over time. These roles have different—and often competing—design and operational needs. How they are prioritized depends on the context of the individual street. For each street, priorities rank differently depending on the time of day or in response to special events. Street design and curbside management help organize and balance these competing roles. Typical street functions include:



Mobility

Streets allow us to move from one location to another by several modes, including walking, biking, transit, cars, and other forms of mobility.



Public Realm

As publicly owned spaces, they also have a civic function and can be designed with places to rest, gather, eat, or play.



Loading Goods

Goods have to be transported between delivery vehicles and buildings, either using designated loading zones or at the curb.



Loading People

People access buses, the streetcar, or cars at the curb or valet drop-offs. Seating, shelter, and shade can help make the wait more comfortable.



Parking and Storage

Private vehicles—including cars, bikes, scooters, and other mobility devices—are sometimes stored on the street while their users are at their destinations.

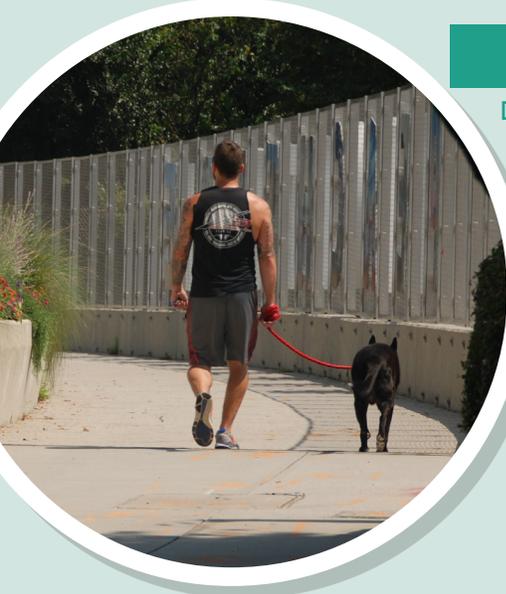
All these functions must be accommodated within the Downtown network. As Downtown’s signature street, the way Peachtree Street will balance these roles must be organized in a way that puts people first to create a space that is not only functional, but safe, vibrant, and beautiful. Figure 1 illustrates how these competing functions may shift in priority throughout the course of a typical day.

Figure 1. Peachtree Street Curbside Use Prioritization Framework

Priority Ranking	Time of Day				
	AM Peak	Mid-day	PM Peak	Evening	Overnight
	6 am - 9 am	9 am - 3 pm	3 pm - 6 pm	6 pm - 2 am	2 am - 6am
1	 Mobility	 Public Realm	 Mobility	 Public Realm	 Loading Goods
2	 Loading People	 Loading People	 Loading People	 Loading People	 Parking and Storage
3	 Public Realm	 Loading Goods	 Public Realm	 Parking and Storage	 Mobility
4	 Parking and Storage	 Mobility	 Parking and Storage	 Loading Goods	 Loading People
5	 Loading Goods	 Parking and Storage	 Loading Goods	 Mobility	 Public Realm

PEOPLE OF PEACHTREE

Throughout the planning process, participants voiced a central theme: Peachtree should be a place for *everyone*. It should be a place where everyone feels not only safe and comfortable, but welcome and invited. To do this, it must be designed and programmed with its many different users in mind, adding elements that both contribute to universal accessibility and a sense of safety and ease, but also unique features that make people feel like they were thoughtfully considered and cared for in the shaping of the space, with enough interest that they would enjoy spending time there. The many people of Peachtree are what make it a special place. They include these and other people:



RESIDENTS

Downtown residents have chosen the “city life,” love the neighborhood’s character, and enjoy a lifestyle where they can walk, bike, or take transit for many activities. Many are craving more of the amenities of a mature urban neighborhood, like a grocery store and more local shops and restaurants.



SHOPPERS & DINERS

Peachtree’s shops and restaurants draw visitors from across the region who want to enjoy the heart of the city, but they compete with businesses in other neighborhoods that have their own dynamic

WORKERS

Downtown’s many offices, hotels, and attractions make it one of the region’s largest employment centers. Daytime workers add life to the street, but often live outside of Downtown and leave after hours.



STUDENTS

Campuses like Georgia State University and Cristo Rey Jesuit High School call Downtown home, and recent expansions have resulted in growing numbers of students.



ACTIVISTS

Peachtree has continued to be the stage for Atlanta's civic life over the years, and its essential role as a space for protest and dialogue helps our city grow.



TOURISTS

The conference centers, events venues, and hotels Downtown draw tourists from across the world to Peachtree Street. Their visits support Downtown restaurants and shops and contribute to an active public realm. They often need more directional assistance and may be looking to experience Atlanta's unique food and culture.



LEISURE USERS

Great main streets invite people to stroll and linger. People exercising, playing, and resting in the corridor are also part of its fabric.

PEOPLE WITH LIMITED VISION OR MOBILITY

The design of the built environment can support or inhibit people with limited vision or mobility from moving safely, comfortably, and conveniently through the community. Features like curbless spaces or frequent curb ramps, tactile guidance, movable seating, and other elements can help make their experience as seamless as possible.



KIDS

Atlanta's youngest community members need safe places to spark their imagination, play freely, and rest, whether living near or visiting Peachtree. More family-friendly features will help Downtown retain and attract residents of all life stages.



NEIGHBORS IN NEED

People experiencing homelessness are part of the Peachtree community and may have needs like safe places to rest and socialize, access to amenities like restrooms or WiFi, and connections to available housing, jobs, and support services.

WHAT IS A SHARED SPACE?

“Shared spaces” take a holistic approach to how we use the public realm between buildings. They emphasize the social elements of streets as much as the mobility function, with a goal of creating a vibrant and safe space for people to move and gather. Shared spaces are not just streets to move through, they are destinations to go to.

Following the widespread adoption of the car, many streets had become dominated by the automobile by the 1950s. The term “**shared space**” was coined by Dutch traffic engineers Hans Monderman and Ben Hamilton-Ballie in the 1990s as a way to return to streets more focused on people than on cars. Unlike the streets of the pre-automobile era, modern shared spaces benefit from new technology and research, designed with excellent drainage, shade trees, lighting, materials, and accommodations for people with disabilities.

What are the design features of a shared space?

Shared spaces can take on many different forms and there is no single way to design them. While the exact design can vary, they tend to have a several key features that distinguish them from a conventional street:

1. Uses are desegregated by minimizing road markings and signage.
2. Special pavement is used to make the shared space distinct from conventional streets, delineate zones within the shared space, and create an attractive environment.
3. They do not have curbs, making it a seamless experience throughout the space and easier for people with limited mobility, wheelchairs, or strollers to move around.
4. In some cases, a pedestrian-only comfort zone is delineated closest to the buildings for pedestrians who prefer not to mix with other modes. This is typically wider than a standard sidewalk (more than 6 feet wide) and identified through material changes rather than striping or level changes. The center of the street is a shared zone for all types of users.
5. Because they lack curbs, they often use alternative drainage designs to manage stormwater, such as French drains, permeable pavers, or bioswales. Drainage features can help visually and tactically separate the pedestrian-only comfort zone from the shared zone.



Even surface (raised street 6" to meet curb)

Tactile Strip & Protected Pedestrian Comfort Zone

On-Street Parking with Permeable Pavers

Bioswale Drainage

KIRKLAND, WA

- 6. Lighting is designed at the human scale, rather than the automotive scale. There is soft lighting throughout to both create an inviting atmosphere and make sure all users are clearly visible. Like drainage, the placement of light poles can help separate the pedestrian-only comfort zone from the shared zone.
- 7. A furniture zone for shade trees, seating, trash and recycling bins, bicycle parking, planters, or other features is aligned with light poles. This helps organize potential obstacles and define separation between the pedestrian-only comfort zone and the shared zone.



Lighting

BELFAST, NORTHERN IRELAND



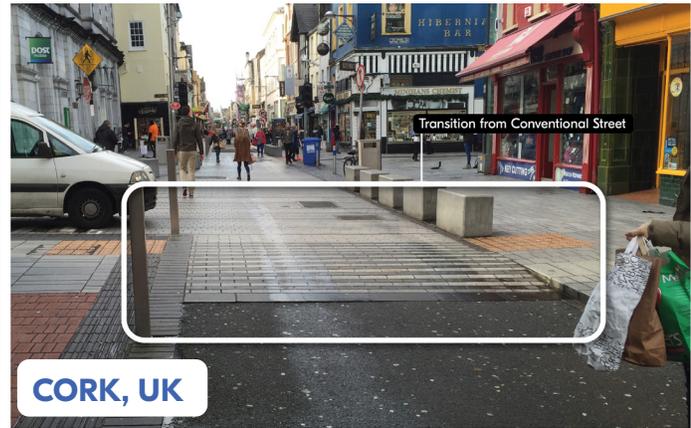
Multiple Lighting Sources

ORLANDO, FL



Furniture Zone

BELFAST, NORTHERN IRELAND



Transition from Conventional Street

CORK, UK



Shared Zone Notice

AUCKLAND, NZ

8. Places for people to gather and rest are mixed in throughout. These can range from a simple bench in the shade of a tree to larger plaza spaces for events.
9. Tactile warning strips are used at entrances to the shared space and throughout intersections to indicate the change in environment, which is especially necessary for people with limited vision. Defined crossings using tactile materials can also be used to connect pedestrian-only comfort zones for people with limited vision.

10. Gateway features notify people when they are entering and leaving the shared space.
11. On-street parking can be incorporated, if desired.
12. Informational guidance to help people use the space, including signs, kiosks, and auditory cues, as well as information provided to navigational app providers.

The exact design of the Peachtree Shared Space, including which of the typical features described above are appropriate here, will be determined through this process.

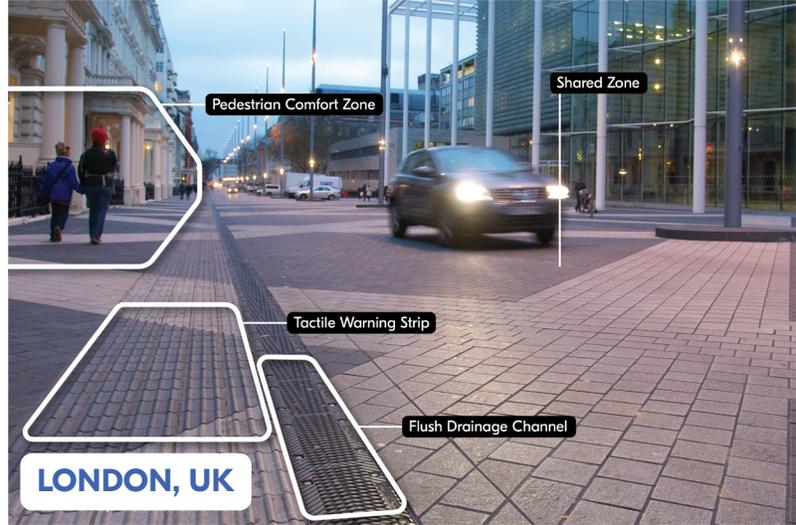
How do people move through a shared space?

Walking, biking, and transit use are encouraged modes of transportation. People walking or biking can get across at any point and are not limited to typical crosswalks. Buses and the streetcar will continue to use the space. Cars are permitted, but most travel at slow speeds (5 to 15 miles per hour). The space is not designed to maximize vehicular throughput, as is often the case for street design. In fact, it is a goal to lower vehicle volumes. For drivers, the primary reason to use a shared space is to access a property or drop off a passenger, not as part of a long-distance trip. Nearby parallel streets tend to be a better choice for drivers passing through the area. While freight loading is also allowed in the shared zone, side streets can provide alternative loading areas in some cases, and deliveries may be time restricted.

CASE STUDIES

A shared space is in many ways a return to the way city streets functioned for centuries, and the modern version has been implemented in cities around the world. In recent years, many global cities have implemented shared space designs for their signature streets. The following case studies illustrate how shared spaces created a vibrant public realm in three such cities:

- Exhibition Road | London, UK
- Bell Street | Seattle, WA
- Wharf Street | Washington, DC



Case Study: Exhibition Road

Location: London, United Kingdom

Exhibition Road is often highlighted as the premier shared space example. Its flexible design allows for all users of all abilities to access its world-class museums and academic establishments with a vibrant and safe public realm. But this wasn't always the case. In the 1960's the road that owes its name to the Great Exhibition of 1851, gave way to the automobile and pushed the pedestrian to edges. The original intent of street as a place for ease of access for all modes and to frame important architecture was slowly crumbling.

In 2003 a design competition was held to improve the street and bring back its original intent. The solution was a shared space that would put people-first while still allowing vehicular traffic and access to the museums. Through design vehicular speed was reduced and pedestrian areas were expanded. The project was completed prior to the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games.

Previous Condition:

- Two lanes for vehicular traffic, three rows of parking (one of which was in the center of the road), sidewalks on both sides.
- Visual clutter in pavement markings and signage
- Limited pedestrian crossing locations

Shared Space Condition:

- Two-way curbless design
- Visual clutter removed (this includes traffic signs, pavement markings, safety barriers)
- Drainage channel covers and tactile strips demark pedestrian and vehicular areas

Year: 2009 - 2011

Length: Approximately 2,600 feet

Completion: Work was completed prior to the 2012 Olympics and Paralympic Games

Context: Urban main street with a mix of retail, office, and national museums. The corridor attracts over 11 million visitors each year.

Cost: \$30.0 million

- High-volume intersections still retain signals and road markings, while low-volume intersections have signage noting entry into street and ramps into the space
- Vehicle speed is posted as you enter the space
- Flexible space along the corridor allows for on-street parking, pedestrian amenities, café seating, and bicycle parking
- Private vehicles, delivery vehicles and buses area all allowed on the corridor

Application to Peachtree Street:

- Flexibility and simplicity of the space is important
- Parking is prohibited anywhere in the road except in marked parking bays
- Loading and unloading, including drop-offs and pick-ups of passengers, is only allowed in certain locations
- Limit or remove visual clutter
- Use design to slow speeds and designate areas between pedestrians and vehicles
- Increased speed can be an issue when there is low pedestrian volumes — lateral shifts are recommended
- High-quality materials speak to the street's prominence



CASE STUDY: EXHIBITION ROAD



Case Study: Bell Street Park

Location: Seattle, Washington

Bell Street Park was the City of Seattle's first shared street in the densely populated Belltown neighborhood. The project established a new typology for streets as parks in Seattle and set a precedent for other cities to explore how their existing right-of-way can be rebalanced to be accessible for all users. A 2008 City audit discovered that the Belltown neighborhood was underserved in its access to open space but acquiring land for new open space was deemed too expensive. In response, voters with support of the community, approved a levy to generate new funds and granted the City of Seattle's Park and Recreation Department ability to create Bell Street Park.

The community was an active participant in designing the street along with various city departments, and other partner agencies. The final curbsless design included stormwater features, new street trees and planters, and pedestrian-scale amenities. Care was also taken to program and activate the space with tables and chairs, public art installations, and bike parking. Since construction was completed in 2014, traffic has been slowed and vehicle volumes have decreased slightly. Bus operations remained the same and actually saw improved operations along the corridor.

Previous Condition:

- One-way road with two vehicular lanes, on-street parking on one side and sharrows.

Year: 2010 - 2014

Length: 4 city blocks (approximately 1,300 feet)

Completion: March 2014; Officially opened April 12, 2014

Context: Urban mixed use neighborhood

Cost: \$5.0 million from voter-approved levy (\$3.5 million for planning, design, and construction, and \$1.5 million for right-of-way acquisitions)

- Critical corridor to buses (over 300 bus pass through daily, most during peak times)
- Mixed-use residential between 3 and 6 stories

Shared Space Condition:

- One-way curbsless road
- Flexibility in design to allow for high turnover areas for parking/loading/unloading, outdoor dining, and pedestrian scaled amenities
- Transition to shared space happens at intersections
- Private vehicles are limited but buses and bicycles are allowed along the entire corridor

Application to Peachtree Street:

- Material choice is critical and should be considered with long-term maintenance and accessibility in mind.
- Simplicity of the space lends to its adaptability.
- Coordination across departments and partner agencies is critical from the onset of the project.
- The designation (e.g. street or park) and maintenance responsibilities for a shared space can vary and may include the DOT, parks department, or a partner agency like a CID
- Accessibility design features should be placed to maximize comfort.



CASE STUDY: BELL STREET PARK

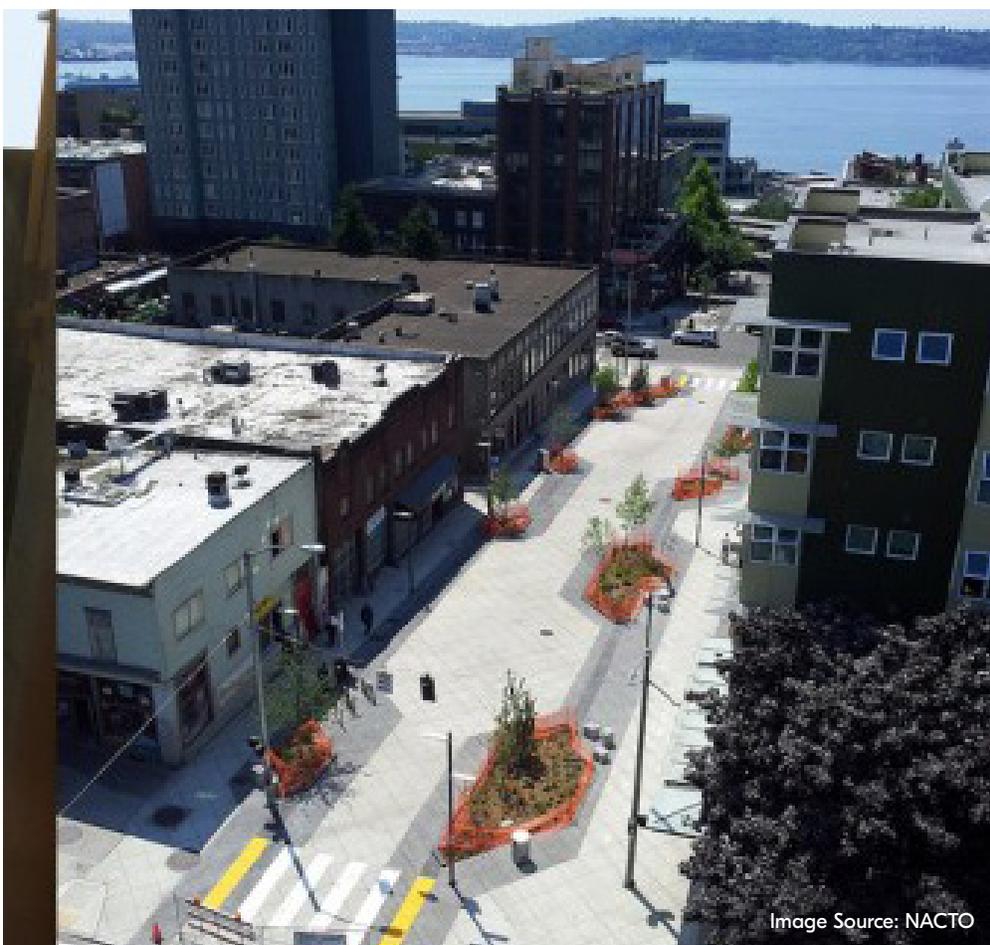


Image Source: NACTO



Image Source: MIG

Case Study: Wharf Street

Location: Washington, D.C.

District Wharf is a public-public private partnership to transform almost one mile of waterfront into a mixed-use development in Washington, DC. Wharf Street is the development's signature street, a 60-foot-wide, highly designed shared space with retail and restaurants on one side and the Washington Channel on the other. The public realm has been designed to put people first and vehicles when necessary. In total, there are 12 blocks of shared spaces on the site. Different paving materials, textures, colors, and patterns help differentiate the spaces for vehicles and people.

Previous Condition:

- Visual clutter in pavement markings and signage
- Limited pedestrian crossing locations

Shared Space Condition:

- 60-foot right-of-way that includes:
 - 20 feet of café seating along the retail edge
 - 20 feet of vehicular circulation (one-way with areas for short-term parking or loading/unloading)
 - 20 feet of dedicated pedestrian circulation
- Paving materials, trees, and drainage features delineate the shared space, including smoother pavers for the pedestrian-only areas and rougher textures within the shared zone
- Bollards are located at intersections

Year: Planning and land acquisition between 2003-2014, groundbreaking in 2014
Length: Approximately 800 feet
Completion: Phase 1 of the District was opened 2017
Context: Urban main street
Cost: The cost of Wharf Street itself is not publicly available. Tax increment financing bonds for the development's overall infrastructure totaled \$198 million.

- Design of street and materiality enforce slow driving
- Centralized ridehailing pick-up/drop-off locations on the edge of the site
- Loading docks and primary loading zones located off the main street with restricted delivery hours

Application to Peachtree Street:

- Use design to slow speeds and designate areas between pedestrians and vehicles
- Highly programmed/curated activation
- Use of high-quality materials
- Stormwater and green infrastructure is located throughout the development
- Focus on authenticity
- Variety of human scale lighting sources create an inviting glow
- A public-private partnership between the developers and the District of Columbia's Deputy Mayor of Planning and Economic Development



CASE STUDY: WHARF STREET

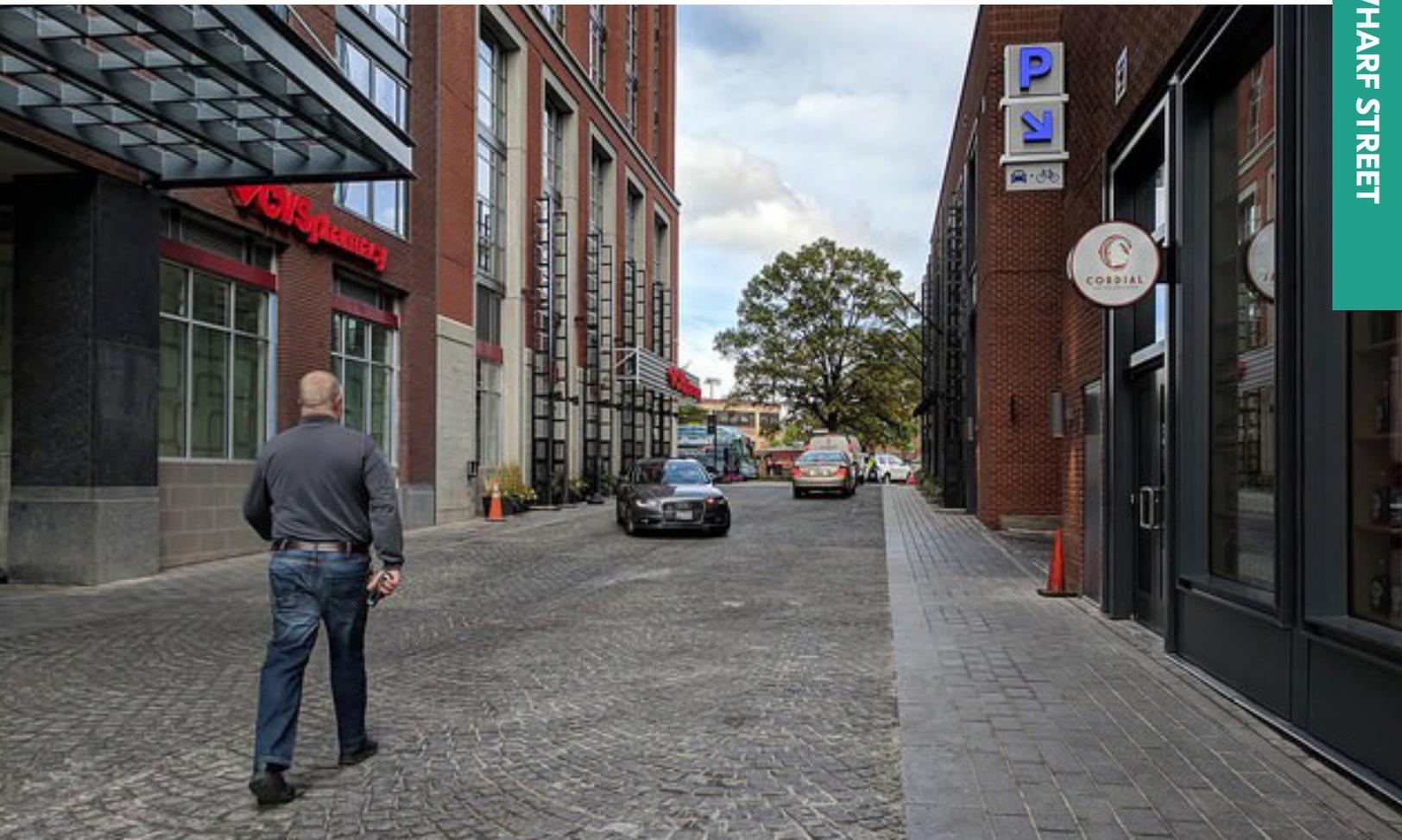


Image Source: Payton Chung