DRAFT SMALL CELL DESIGN GUIDELINES



The guidelines have been drafted with input from the following:











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1. Background

- 1.1. The District of Columbia has a history spanning more than two centuries establishing a unique streetscape that sets it apart from any other city in the world. A crucial component of that streetscape is its extensive network of public space. The public space enhances the quality of life for our residents and visitors, and ensures that the city has the foundation to become a more walkable and sustainable city. The District's public space is a valuable and intentional asset that requires careful stewardship to maintain its integrity and safeguard it as a legacy to future generations. This heritage is safeguarded through the work of many agencies, including the District of Columbia's Historic Preservation Office and Public Space Committee (among others), and the Federally constituted Commission of Fine Arts and National Capital Planning Commission. Any new use made of that public space must be cognizant of and adapted to the special characteristics of the District of Columbia.
- 1.2. To address the growing demand for wireless technology across the United States, cellular providers propose to increase the capacity of their networks by deploying small cell infrastructure (Small Cell), a new lower-powered antenna technology, to reduce data traffic load on roof mounted equipment and larger cell towers. This new technology requires infrastructure to be installed in closer proximity to the users on the ground; this infrastructure will affect the aesthetics of public spaces.
- 1.3. Small Cell infrastructure consists of antennas and related power equipment that transmits wireless signals to improve reliable data streaming. This infrastructure will provide cellular and data coverage to smaller geographic areas. New Small Cell facilities will improve the provider's ability to meet the public's current 4G (LTE) voice and data demands and the future 5th generation cellular needs for interconnected devices to operate at high speeds to access data.
- 1.4. Cities across the nation are beginning to address the issue of balancing the need to accommodate the increased cellular demand with their community's public space character and function.
- 1.5. To provide the necessary coverage, each cellular provider will install infrastructure to serve their individual needs; additionally, some companies serve as an infrastructure provider, or hotelier, installing equipment that will house infrastructure for multiple cellular providers. Like other utilities, federal law allows Small Cell infrastructure equipment in the public right-of-way.

2. Adoption

- 2.1. The guidelines are intended to cover the general standards and aesthetics for the design and installation of Small Cell technology in public space across the District of Columbia. They are comprehensive in nature while recognizing the unique characteristics and history of the District of Columbia. The guidelines cover the different areas of the District while keeping generally applicable standards based on the type of infrastructure installed.
- 2.2. As a result of this comprehensive approach, the guidelines have been drafted with input from a variety of government stakeholders, including staff of the District Department of Transportation (DDOT), the Office of Planning (OP), the Historic Preservation Office

- (HPO), the U.S. Commission of Fine Arts (CFA), and the National Capital Planning Commission (NCPC).
- 2.3. The guidelines are also the result of the review of information shared by telecommunication providers, technical limitations, and requirements of Small Cell infrastructure standards and practices across the country, such as Denver, Boston, Dublin, OH, and Lincoln, NE. In addition, these guidelines have been informed through a best practices review of international cities in North America, Europe, and Asia.
- 2.4. The guidelines supplement applicable local and federal policies and regulations. The applications shall comply with the most current version of guidelines and regulations, including but not limited to:
 - 2.4.1. District of Columbia (DC) Code
 - 2.4.2. DC Municipal Regulations
 - 2.4.3. DDOT Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices
 - 2.4.4. DDOT Design and Engineering Manual (DEM)
 - 2.4.5. The Comprehensive Plan for the National Capital
 - 2.4.6. Shipstead-Luce Act
 - 2.4.7. National Historic Preservation Act

3. Purpose

3.1. Goals of the Guidelines

- 3.1.1. The Small Cell Infrastructure Guidelines set forth requirements and specifications for the placement and design of Small Cell infrastructure within the District's public right of way (ROW) to address engineering, safety, and aesthetic concerns. The guidelines intend to fit the functional needs of the cellular infrastructure necessary to provide adequate coverage within the character and function of the capital city's public space with the goals of:
 - 3.1.1.1. Avoiding impact on the most important view sheds and vistas within the L'Enfant Plan of the District of Columbia;
 - 3.1.1.2. Minimizing the impact on the character of designated historic districts and landmarks;
 - 3.1.1.3. Protecting access and circulation to public open spaces;
 - 3.1.1.4. Minimizing visual and physical clutter within the streetscape; and
 - 3.1.1.5. Treating all areas of the District equitably; i.e. historic districts will be dealt with the same way, regardless of location within the District.

3.2. The Monumental Core

3.2.1. The L'Enfant Plan of 1791 established Washington's historic urban form and its framework for development. Reinforced by the McMillan Plan of 1902, the combined Plan of the City of Washington includes an orthogonal grid and a series of diagonal avenues radiating from the White House and U.S. Capitol, which at the Capitol's center point, establishes the District's four quadrants. The intersection of the street grid and diagonal avenues create a system of parks, open space, and vistas that are integral to the District's historic street network. L'Enfant's urban framework is recognized for its national importance through its listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

3.2.2. The character of Washington's streetscape reinforces the importance of the public realm, where the streets, squares, and public spaces are the primary figures in the city defined against the background of private development. A strong tradition of public space planning in the late 19th and early 20th centuries built upon Washington's historic plans through intentionally designed public infrastructure and streetscapes, such as curb and gutters, tree planting, streetlights, and traffic control devices. Many of these elements are contributing elements to the District's cultural landscapes. This essential quality of the District's streetscapes and public spaces must be maintained as a creative, welcoming and livable environment, and to reinforce the District's unique role as the nation's capital and the home to approximately 700,000 residents.

4. Review Process

4.1. Master License Agreement

- 4.1.1. Before an entity can install Small Cell infrastructure in the ROW, it must first submit and have executed a Master License Agreement (MLA) with the District of Columbia.
- 4.1.2. The MLA governs many aspects of Small Cell infrastructure and is a standardized document that does not allow modification or alteration by or for individual MLA applicants. The MLA includes multiple provisions that establish conditions, requirements, and limitations on the MLA holder and any Small Cell infrastructure installed in the District. In and of itself the MLA does not permit the installation of any Small Cell infrastructure. It serves as a preliminary step in the process to an MLA holder submitting applications with DDOT for public space permits to install Small Cell infrastructure.
- 4.1.3. All of the conditions, requirements, and limitations to which the MLA holder agrees by executing an MLA with the District of Columbia are incorporated by reference into every public space permit an MLA holder may receive. In addition, particular provisions may be reiterated in this document and in an issued public space permit.
- 4.1.4. A copy of each executed MLA can be found online at octo.dc.gov. The webpage is: https://octo.dc.gov/page/small-cells

4.2. Public Space Permits

4.2.1. All Small Cell installations in the District of Columbia require a public space permit from the District Department of Transportation (DDOT). DDOT uses an online permitting system (TOPS: tops.ddot.dc.gov) to process public space permit applications. All applications will require review to ensure adherence both to these guidelines and all other applicable standards, regulations, and laws. Any applications that are not consistent with these guidelines require review and approval by the Public Space Committee (PSC) and will include review and comment by Advisory Neighborhood Commissions (ANCs) as well as by NCPC, CFA, and HPO as appropriate. Consistent with standard PSC practice, applications that comply with these guidelines and all other applicable standards,

- regulations, and laws will be processed by DDOT's Public Space Regulation Division.
- 4.2.2. NCPC and CFA are discussing the review process for applications that are consistent with the guidelines in locations that may affect the federal interest.

5. General Guidelines

5.1. General limits: Locations

- 5.1.1. These guidelines for Small Cell infrastructure apply to all areas in the District, except those areas that are under Federal ownership.
- 5.1.2. Small Cell infrastructure is not permitted to be installed on:
 - 5.1.2.1. Medians and traffic islands (i.e. any public space that is contiguous only with roadways and does not border any private property, regardless of whether it currently houses a District owned streetlight or a 3rd party utility pole)
 - 5.1.2.2. Bridges and tunnels
 - 5.1.2.3. Poles that have traffic control devices
 - 5.1.2.4. All sidewalks immediately adjacent to Federal reservations within the L'Enfant Plan
 - 5.1.2.5. Pennsylvania Avenue NW, between 1st and 15th Street

5.2. General limits: Preference for Locations and Methods

- 5.2.1. The preferred locations of Small Cell infrastructure, in order, are:
 - 5.2.1.1. Any type of mount in unnamed alleys
 - 5.2.1.2. A mount to Pendant Pole streetlights with cobra heads or on 3rd party poles on streets
 - 5.2.1.3. Standalone poles on streets or named alleys.
 - 5.2.1.4. Where there are existing poles that the guidelines allow for attachment, no new standalone poles will be permitted.

5.3. General limits: Appearance

- 5.3.1. Except when Small Cell infrastructure is attached to a wood pole, poles and all equipment must be the same color and finish as surrounding streetlight poles or 3rd party poles.
- 5.3.2. Except when Small Cell infrastructure is attached to a wood pole, exposed wires are not permitted.
- 5.3.3. Corporate or company names (except for location identification purposes noted below), logos, identifying graphics or other advertisements shall not be painted, embossed, applied or displayed in any manner on the poles, equipment enclosures (boxes, cabinets, etc.), hand hole covers, or other component of the pole. Individual location identification information will be permitted, provided no letter, number, or graphic symbol is taller than one inch in height.

5.3.4. Height

5.3.4.1. Existing Poles: Any attachment, including antenna(e), to an existing pole shall not extend the existing pole to a height of more than 31 feet or by more than 10 percent, whichever is greater.

5.3.4.2. Standalone Poles: The height of any standalone pole including its antenna(e) shall not exceed 31 feet or no more than 10 percent taller than other adjacent poles, whichever is greater.

5.4. General limits: Adherence to Other Applicable Standards

- 5.4.1. Nothing in these guidelines is intended to limit the applicability of any other duty, requirement, limitation, or condition for work in public space in the District of Columbia. As required in the Master License Agreement (MLA) and in accordance with DC Municipal Regulations persons working in the public ROW are required to abide by all traffic control, construction safety, and public space restoration standards. Separate public space permits approving temporary traffic control may be required.
- 5.4.2. Nothing in these guidelines is intended to limit the responsibility of a person who obtains a public space permit to install Small Cell infrastructure in public space to obtain all other necessary licenses, permits, and approvals from any government agency or other party that has authority or responsibility to grant and issue such license, permit, or approval.

5.5. General Parameters on Installations: Types, Locations, and Frequency

- 5.5.1. Chart 1, Permissible Installation Types and Locations, indicates where Small Cell installations are allowed based on the location and context of each proposed placement.
- 5.5.2. Chart 2, Permissible Spacing and Frequency of Installations, indicates the spacing and frequency of Small Cell installations that will be allowed.
- 5.5.3. Map 1, Applicable Boundaries, indicates the areas included in the L'Enfant Plan, Shipstead-Luce Act, Old Georgetown, and Historic Districts.

Pole Ownership	Pole Type	Cabinetry	Monumental Core (L'Enfant Plan, Shipstead Luce Act and Old Georgetown)	Historic Districts	District other than MC/HD
District	Existing 5A Poles	Depends on location	Ok, w/ underground vault only		Ok, attach cabinetry to pole
District	Existing Wood Poles	Depends on location	Ok, w/ underground vault only		Ok, attach cabinetry to pole
District	Existing Pendant Poles with cobraheads	Below grade vaults ¹	Ok, w/ underground vault only		
Carrier	New Standalone Poles: Pendant Pole or Washington Pole	Below grade vaults ¹	Ok, w/ underground vault only		
3 rd Party	Existing Utility Pole	Attach to pole	Un-named alley only, attach cabinetry to pole	Ok, attach cabinetry to pole	Ok, attach cabinetry to pole

Chart 1, Permissible Installation Types and Locations

¹ Applications for at grade cabinet installations may be considered on a per location basis. Any application would require review by the Public Space Committee as well as ANCs, CFA, NCPC, and SHPO as appropriate. Additional guidelines would have to be developed.

Blockface Length Intervals ¹	Number of Small Cell Facilities Permitted per Blockface ² outside the Monumental Core and Historic Districts	Number of Small Cell Facilities Permitted per Blockface within the Monumental Core and Historic Districts	Minimum Distance between Facilities on same Blockface ³	Minimum Distance between Facilities on same Blockface within the Monumental Core and Historic Districts	Limit per Carrier per Block ⁴
0'-150'	1	1	N/A	N/A	1
151'-300'	2	1	60'	60'	1
301'-450'	3	2	60'	75'	1
451'-600'	4	3	60'	90'	1
601'-750'	5	4	60'	105'	2

¹Block lengths should be measured along the edge of curb between the edge line extended of adjacent intersecting streets.

Chart 2, Permissible Spacing and Frequency of Installations

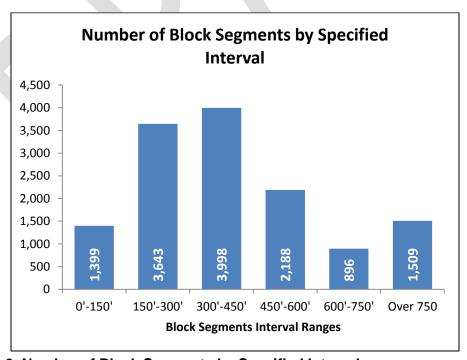
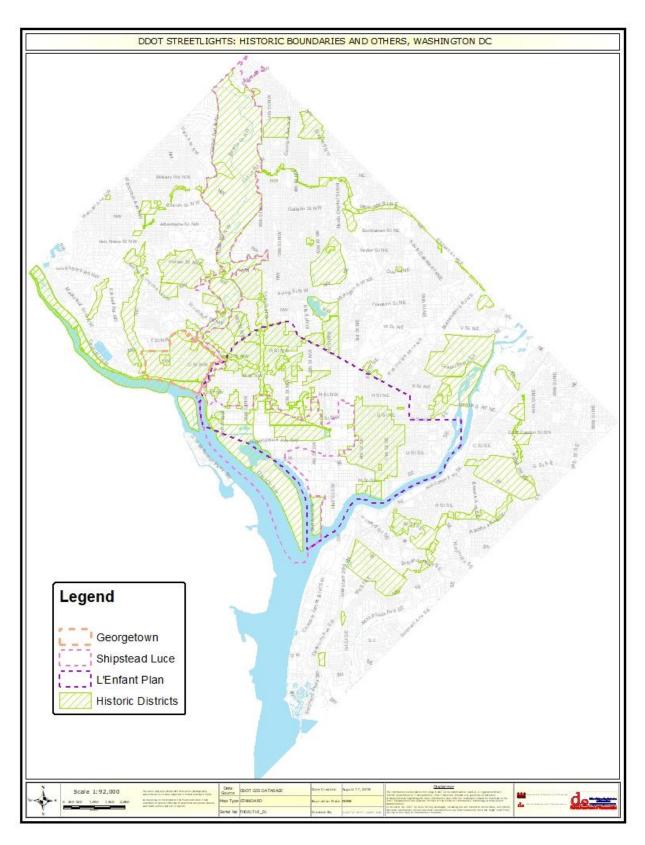


Chart 3, Number of Block Segments by Specified Interval

²This is inclusive of all types of installations and regardless of carrier.

³In other words, the minimum distance between two facilities sharing the same side of the block. Distance should be measured in a linear fashion along the edge of curb between the two facilities' center points.

⁴A block is defined as two opposing blockfaces.



Map 1, Applicable Boundaries

6. Guidelines regarding Historic Districts and Landmarked Properties

- 6.1. Small Cell infrastructure shall not be located within twenty feet (20') of the front or side boundary lines of a D.C. Landmark, a National Historic Landmark, federal properties or a property individually listed in the National Register of Historic Places.
- 6.2. Small Cell infrastructure located in unnamed alleys within a historic district shall be a minimum of twenty feet (20') from the property line extended across the alley entrance. If the properties adjacent to the alley have a building restriction line (BRL) the twenty feet (20') shall be measured from the BRL.

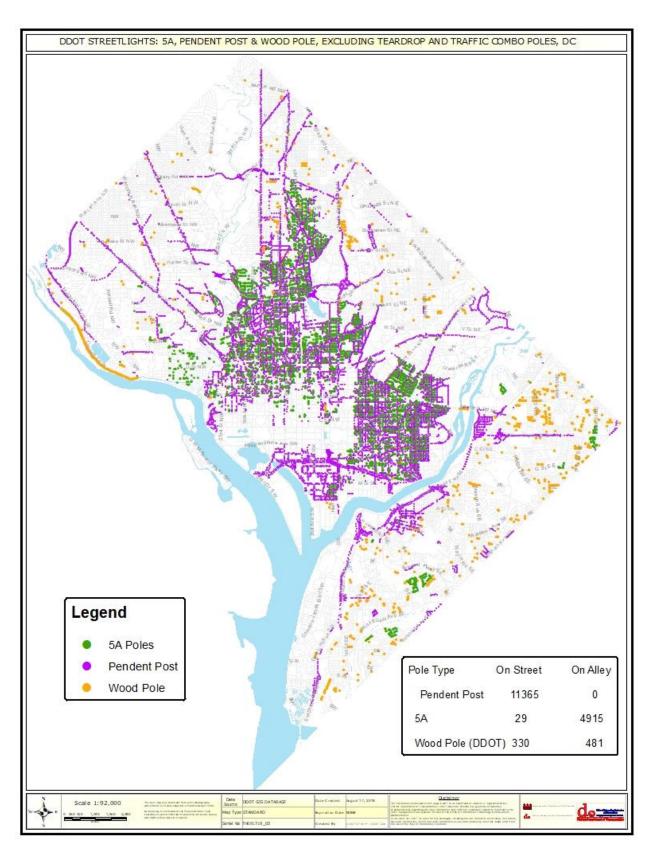
7. Guidelines regarding DDOT Streetlights

- 7.1. The guidelines will allow attachments to certain categories of poles. These include Pendant Poles with cobra head fixtures, wood poles, and 5A poles (aka metal alley poles). (See Map 2, Pole Types and Locations and Illustrations 1 & 2.)
- 7.2. All other categories of DDOT streetlights will not be permitted for attachment of Small Cell infrastructure.
- 7.3. These guidelines do not allow the installation of new DDOT streetlights.
- 7.4. Any application intended to install on an existing DDOT streetlight must indicate the replacement of an existing DDOT streetlight pole. The replacement pole must be exactly the same in outward appearance, while having increased structural strength to support the additional equipment.
- 7.5. These guidelines do not allow the use of any streetlight on bridges or in tunnels.
- 7.6. DDOT will require engineer stamped plans showing the replacement of its existing streetlight pole.

8. Guidelines regarding New Standalone Poles

8.1. Appearance

- 8.1.1. New standalone poles must match the appearance of existing DDOT streetlights
- 8.1.2. There are two types: Pendant Pole or Washington Upright Pole (See Illustrations 3 & 4).
 - 8.1.2.1. The type of pole to be used is based on the type of DDOT streetlight in the surrounding neighborhood. The pole will not include a streetlight; with the exception of a light fixture, it will mimic the appearance of streetlights in the area.
 - 8.1.2.2. In areas where the surrounding streetlights are Washington Uprights or Twin-Twenties, new standalone poles shall use the Washington Pole. (See Illustration 3)
 - 8.1.2.3. In areas where the surrounding streetlights are Pendant Poles, the Pendant Pole type shall be used. (See Illustration 4)



Map 2, Pole Types and Locations

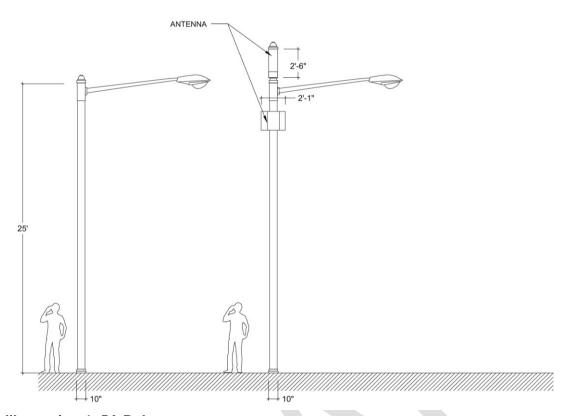


Illustration 1, 5A Pole

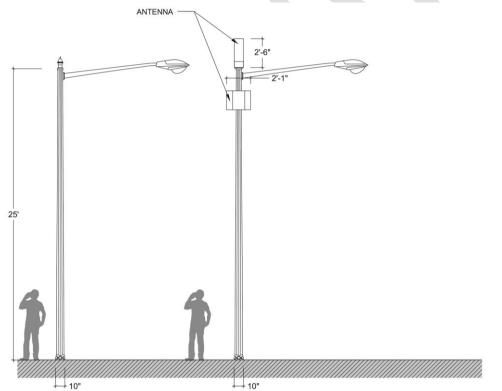


Illustration 2, Pendant Pole w/Cobra Head

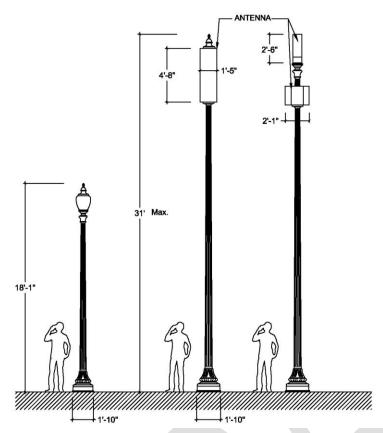


Illustration 3, Washington Standalone Pole

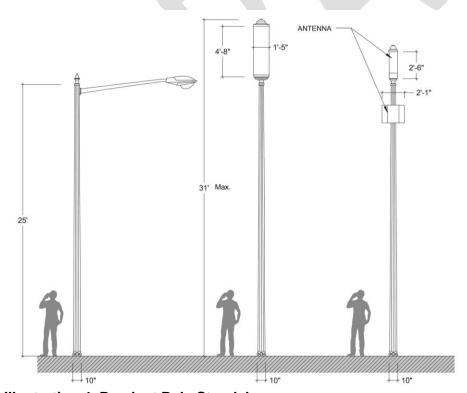


Illustration 4, Pendant Pole Standalone

8.2. Pedestrian Path and Amenity Zone

- 8.2.1. The sidewalk area of public space is typically delineated into pedestrian paths and tree box zones, which are also referred to as the amenity zone. The amenity zone is located between the pedestrian path and the roadway and provides access between the two as well as the area for street trees, streetlights and traffic signals, and other functional elements. It is critical that all pedestrian paths are clear to facilitate safe and optimal access and circulation along sidewalks.
- 8.2.2. Standalone poles shall not be located in the clear pedestrian path, as established by the most current DC Municipal Regulations and the most current Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices.
- 8.2.3. Standalone poles shall be located in the amenity zone, when one is provided.

 Nevertheless, poles shall not be located in a manner that requires the removal of an existing street tree or that prevents the planting of a street tree in the future.
- 8.2.4. Standalone poles shall not be located within a designated right-of-way of a paper street or paper alley within the L'Enfant Plan.
- 8.2.5. In non-residential areas where there is no amenity zone, standalone poles shall be placed within the area traditionally devoted to the amenity zone within the right-of-way if it does not obstruct the required width for the clear pedestrian path in accordance with DDOT's most current Design and Engineering Manual (DEM) and DC Municipal Regulations.
- 8.2.6. In non-commercial areas where there is no amenity zone, poles may be located in the sidewalk space within the right-of-way if it does not obstruct the required width for the clear pedestrian path in accordance with DDOT's most current Design and Engineering Manual (DEM) and DC Municipal Regulations.
- 8.2.7. Standalone poles shall be aligned with existing streetlights, 3rd party poles, and street trees as applicable in order to maintain a visual and physical organization of structures within the right-of-way, as measured from the center of the base of the pole.
- 8.2.8. All measurements shall be taken from the outer edge of the standalone pole and the infrastructure listed in the following specific limits/prohibitions.
 - 8.2.8.1. The exterior of the standalone pole shall be placed a minimum of two feet six inches (2'6") from the face of curb Standalone poles must be placed a minimum of six feet (6') from existing fire hydrants or buildings' fire connections.
 - 8.2.8.2. Standalone poles shall be located a minimum of 10 feet (10') from light poles and traffic signal poles.
 - 8.2.8.3. Standalone poles shall be located a minimum of 3 feet (3') from bicycle racks and shall not impede the attachment of bicycles.
 - 8.2.8.4. Standalone poles shall not interfere with the operation of Capital Bikeshare docks and stations. This requires a minimum of four feet (4') of clearance from the rear wheel of a docked bicycle, five feet (5') distance from each end of a station, and should not be installed in such a way that would prevent solar access to the solar panel.

- 8.2.8.5. Standalone poles shall be placed a minimum of ten feet (10') from any above grade building face, including bay windows, show windows, or oriel windows.
- 8.2.9. In areas where DDOT does not have streetlight poles and instead attaches its streetlights to existing 3rd party poles, no new standalone poles will be allowed.
- 8.2.10. In residential areas, standalone poles shall be placed in alignment with lot lines extended to the maximum degree possible.

8.3. Access, Circulation, and Sight Distances

- 8.3.1. Safe and functional access, circulation, and clear sight lines are important for pedestrian ease of movement and to maintain unobstructed line of sight among drivers, pedestrians, bicyclists.
- 8.3.2. Standalone poles shall not obstruct ADA access, including maintaining a clear landing at the top of curb ramps at crosswalks.
- 8.3.3. Pole placement shall not impede, obstruct, violate, conflict with, or hinder any mode of travel or access to the public right-of-way, an alley, or driveway.
- 8.3.4. Poles shall be placed consistent with the most current Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) and adopted District standards for maintenance of an intersection's sight line triangles.
- 8.3.5. Poles shall not be placed to obstruct the sight line of any alley or driveway. A minimum of fifteen feet (15') shall be maintained between the pole and the outside edge of the alley or driveway.

8.4. Spacing among Streetscape Elements

- 8.4.1. A standalone pole shall not be located within an existing street tree's critical root zone. The protected zone shall be equal to one foot for each inch of the tree's diameter or a minimum of fifteen feet (15'), whichever is greater. The protected zone shall be measured from the outside of the tree to protect root growth.
- 8.4.2. Trees shall not be removed or have their critical root zones damaged for the installation of Small Cell infrastructure, regardless of whether the application is for a standalone pole or to replace an existing DDOT streetlight or 3rd party pole. Excavation to install a replacement streetlight or 3rd party pole may damage an existing trees critical root zone. As such DDOT reserves the right to deny a permit for a location where a tree has been recently removed.
- 8.4.3. Standalone poles shall not be placed where it limits the ability of the District of Columbia to plant a street tree in the future, regardless of whether the District plans to plant a tree in that location at the time the application is submitted.

9. Guidelines regarding Existing Utility Poles

- 9.1. Poles owned by a 3rd party (i.e. poles installed in public space by entities other than DDOT) are typically wood utility poles and are located throughout the District's rights-ofway and alleyways.
- 9.2. With the consent of the pole owner, Small Cell providers may submit applications to install infrastructure attached to these poles.
- 9.3. These guidelines do not allow the installation of new 3rd party poles. Any application must indicate the installation on and replacement of an existing 3rd party pole.

9.4. All Small Cell equipment on third party poles, including antennas, antenna related equipment, cabinets, shrouds, conduit, and mounting hardware shall be a grey powder coated finish.



10. Glossary

The following serve to define terms used in the guidelines as they relate to the public spaces in the District of Columbia.

5A Pole – A DDOT-standard pole type as described in the DDOT Streetlight Policy and Design Guidelines, typically round in shape and found in alleys

Amenity Zone – The area of public space between the curb and the sidewalk reserved for the installation of street lights, parking meters, bicycle racks, signs regulating curbside management. It also includes the tree space, the area of public space reserved for the planting of street trees.

Antenna - an apparatus designed for the purpose of emitting radiofrequency (RF) radiation, to be operated or operating from a fixed location, for the transmission of writing, signs, signals, data, images, pictures, and sounds of all kinds.

Building face – Any building wall, or its projection, that fronts a right-of-way.

Clear pedestrian path - The straight path that is free of all obstructions within the sidewalk between the amenity zone and the public parking area or property line/building restriction line. The clear pedestrian path is measured from the farthest extended portion of any element projecting out from the building facade, such as a sidewalk café, to the curb line or the nearest obstruction, such as the outer edge of a tree box.

Cobra head fixture – A DDOT-standard lighting fixture as described in the DDOT Streetlight Policy and Design Guidelines, typically attached to a pendant pole, wood pole or 5A pole.

Monumental Core – The spatial and symbolic center of the city, which includes the U.S. Capitol grounds, the White House, the National Mall, Federal Triangle, and the surrounding government offices and civic, cultural, and symbolic structures. The monumental core is most closely linked to the distinctive image of the capital city and the functions of the federal government. While the major landmarks and resources within the core are perceived, it does not have a rigid geographic or jurisdictional boundary and continues to evolve.

Paper street or paper alley – An unimproved public right of way.

Pendant Pole – A DDOT-standard pole type as described in the DDOT Streetlight Policy and Design Guidelines, that is typically fluted.

Primary building face – The face of a building that generally represents the building's overall design intent and includes access points with the highest volume of pedestrian traffic.

Small Cell infrastructure – Low-powered antennas and related equipment that provide cellular and data coverage to smaller geographic areas, supplementing the larger cellular network and improving service for wireless customers.

Standalone poles – Independent poles that antennas are attached to for the purpose of transmitting wireless signals.

Streetscape elements – Components that make up the city street, such as trees, light poles, bicycle racks, traffic cabinets, parking meters, signs, sculptures, and street furniture.

Teardrop fixture – A DDOT-standard lighting fixture as described in the DDOT Streetlight Policy and Design Guidelines, typically attached to a pendant pole that is teardrop in shape.

Terminating Vista (Linear view corridors): Linear views that extend from a street level viewpoint to and terminate at a focal point object(s) such as a structure and building. Within the L'Enfant Plan, there are important terminating vistas (linear view corridors), defined by street walls and public realm elements, which terminate at significant civic buildings or memorials.

Third-party pole – An existing pole in public space owned by a party other than the District or the cellular provider installed to provide public utilities and that can accommodate Small Cell infrastructure equipment.

Traffic signal – A pole of any type to which a traffic or pedestrian signal or other traffic right of way regulating equipment is attached. This includes Stop, Yield, and similar signage. It does not include street name, parking regulation, or similar signage.

Twin-Twenty Pole – A DDOT-standard pole type as described in the DDOT Streetlight Policy and Design Guidelines that is in the same family as the Washington Upright, that is typically fluted and decorative in design with two globe-type light fixtures mounted on top.

Washington Upright Pole – A DDOT-standard pole type as described in the DDOT Streetlight Policy and Design Guidelines, also referred to as Washington Globe, available in several heights and is typically fluted and decorative in design with a globe-type light fixture mounted on top.