



Real Estate and Construction Committee Recommendations to the ReOpen DC Advisory Group Steering Committee



May 21, 2020

For more information, and to see the ReOpen DC Advisory Group Steering Committee's full recommendations, please visit <https://coronavirus.dc.gov/>.

COMMITTEE MISSION & FOCUS

The District has been laser-focused on building affordable housing and expanding commercial and retail development in all eight wards of Washington, DC. Approved and permitted projects continue in the District, but there is concern that the economic effects of COVID-19 could disrupt the production of affordable housing and of real estate at large. Already, the real estate market has seen a freeze in sales as tenants, owners and lenders assess the long-term effects of the crisis. At the same time, the District Government's budget – which relies heavily on real property taxes — has significant financial gaps, which will make it much more difficult to fund affordable housing at the previous levels, while many residents are facing uncertain incomes and ability to pay rents, whether subsidized or not.

The committee focused on supporting our ongoing housing, affordable housing, retail, commercial, and neighborhood-level real estate needs, while ensuring safety for workers and residents alike in this new economic and public health environment, including considering:

- Development
- Construction Permits & Licenses
- Multifamily Units
- Land Use
- Single-Family Homes
- Retail Development
- Neighborhood Design
- Affordable Housing

The committee made recommendations on the strategies and guidelines that the District Government as well as private industry actors can employ to reopen responsibly, gradually, and efficiently based on existing industry best practices.

COMMITTEE CHAIRS

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OVERVIEW & STATUS

CURRENT SECTOR STATUS

Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, the District had been experiencing exponential growth across the real estate and construction industry over the past several years. Commercial and residential development has been realized across the city's eight wards and the District's commitment to increased housing has been reaffirmed by large-scale impact projects and the Mayor's bold goal of 36,000 additional housing units by 2025.

The impact on the real estate and construction industries in the District remains uncertain. Unlike the 2008 financial crisis, the impact on the housing market will be gradual, likely following the impacts on unemployment as the District remains under a Stay-At-Home Order. As a result of the District's Stay-At-Home Order, office-based employees are largely teleworking, property managers are working to ensure tenant and employee safety within residential and commercial buildings, and residents are instructed to limit contact outside of their family units. While essential services, including construction and essential building services continue, new health and safety requirements from DC Health have been installed to protect workers and residents.

A gradual reopening of the District must be led by our public health experts and be rooted in a commitment to rebuilding a prosperity that is inclusive and equitable. Each step of the city's recovery out of this pandemic must be taken thoughtfully, cautiously, and in consideration of the District's most vulnerable populations.

This report focuses on how key sectors within the real estate and construction industry should begin to reopen in the immediate stages following the District meeting the public health gating criteria. Science, data, and the District's health capacity to manage this pandemic will remain the driving forces in determining the timing of when restrictions begin to ease. This report provides recommendations for how key stakeholders within

the real estate and construction community can ensure the District's households and workforce have access to the measures needed to stay safe and secure.

ASSESSING RISK BY SECTOR

The Real Estate and Construction Committee focused on three sectors: 1) Commercial Office and Co-Working Space, 2) Residential, and 3) Development and Construction. These sectors represent the spaces within the real estate and construction umbrella where District residents and workers come into contact with each other as tenants, homeowners, property managers, developers, construction workers, contractors, and office-based employees.

As the District reopens, resident experiences within these sectors will require new guidelines and strategies that cut across industries and professions. For example, while each organization or company is unique in its mission, level of resources, daily operations, and employee policies, the ways in which individuals interact with physical space are more universally applicable. While law firms and non-profit organizations are distinct professions and categorized separately, these predominantly office-based employees engage their physical work space in similar manners, and therefore the proposed guidelines for both employees and the responsible implementers can be applied similarly.

To help frame the committee's work, the matrix below, adapted from Johns Hopkins University by District officials, including DC Health, (Figure 1) provides a high-level risk assessment for each of the committee's sectors of focus by examining:

1. **Contact intensity:** Intensity of both the contact type (ranging from close to distant) and duration (ranging from brief to prolonged).
2. **Number of contacts:** The number of contacts as the approximate number of people in the setting at the same time, on average.
3. **Modification Potential:** Modification potential (the degree to which mitigation measures can buy down those risks) is a qualitative assessment of the degree to which activities can be modified to reduce risk.¹

¹ Adapted from: Public Health Principles for a Phased Reopening During COVID-19: Guidance for Governors. See page 11 for further description of risk assessment.

Figure 1. Risk Matrix by Sector

Sectors	Contact Intensity	# of Contacts	Modification Potential
Commercial Office and Co-Working Space	High	High	High
Residential	Low	Low	High
Development and Construction	Low	Low	Medium/High

Commercial Office Space

Commercial office space, including co-working space, consists of a broad range of landlords, tenants, vendors and service providers who inhabit and serve the approximately 650 privately owned office buildings throughout the District. The sector is also served by a number of associations, Business Improvement Districts (BIDS), and related organizations who play a vital role as key stakeholders, partners and allies to this centerpiece of the District’s economic engine. With more than 125 million square feet of space across the City, the sector includes buildings and office spaces that are occupied and served by tens of thousands of private organizations who employ the majority of the District’s 800,000-person workforce.²

In addition to the private commercial office and co-working sector participants, the District is home to approximately 53 buildings and facilities owned by the Federal Government along with an additional 19 million square feet of space leased by the GSA.³ While the Federal Government policies and procedures for re-opening is beyond the scope of this report’s recommendations, their stance and approach toward modified operations will have a significant impact on the commercial office and co-working sector given the scale of Federal operations across the District.

2019 was a positive year for the sector which saw 1.3 million square feet of net absorption of commercial office space across the District. However, the overall commercial office vacancy rate still stood at just under 15% by the end of Q1 2020 -

² U.S. Bureau of Labor and Statistics Mid-Atlantic Information Office. “District of Columbia: Nonfarm employment and labor force data, not seasonally adjusted”. <https://www.bls.gov/regions/mid-atlantic/data/xg-tables/ro3fx9511.htm>

³ U.S General Services Administration. “DC Federal Buildings”. <https://www.gsa.gov/about-us/regions/welcome-to-the-national-capital-region-11/buildings-and-facilities/dc-federal-buildings>

prior to the full impact of the COVID pandemic beginning to take hold.⁴ The sector is now bracing for what will undoubtedly be significant impacts and a further softening of the market. While the ramifications of this market dislocation are difficult to forecast, it is prudent to anticipate a rise in vacancy rates, a decrease in sale and leasing transaction volume, and a material decrease in office valuations in the short term, all of which will create financial strain on the organizations that make up this sector. These disruptions will also have an impact on the District in the form of reductions in real estate, income and other taxes generated by these firms.

For the vast majority of the organizations in this sector, the effect of the pandemic was dramatic and swift as offices closed and daily operations shifted from office environments to remote setups in a matter of days. The implications of COVID-19 have been profound and the path to business recovery is evolving and fluid. As the focus of the sector changes from reaction to reopening, it will be critical for all organizations and companies involved to begin laying the foundation for an orderly transition to the next phase and a return to work.

The migration of a remote workforce back to places of business will look different for every organization and will undoubtedly be challenging for all involved. Companies and their employees must navigate this new phase in the midst of ongoing financial challenges, societal adjustments, and other factors that will generate heightened levels of stress. A spirit of collaboration, a focus on enhanced communication, and a culture of health and safety should infuse all aspects of the reopening phase from planning to execution. Similarly, a premium should be placed on understanding and flexibility as the best practices and policies put forward on the front end of the reopening efforts will undoubtedly need to adapt and evolve. Despite the challenges and uncertainties involved, the importance of planning and process as a foundational principle of these reopening efforts cannot be overstated.

Commercial office space represents both a high level of contact intensity and density. Office spaces do, however, have high modification potential to reconfigure office settings, employee work schedules, entranceways, and as applicable, teleworking policies. In compliance with the Mayor's Stay-At-Home Order, office-based employers and contractors are limiting in-person working and are instead implementing teleworking

⁴ CBRE, Inc. 2020. "Washington, D.C. Office, Q1 2020" .
http://cbre.vo.llnwd.net/grgservices/secure/Washington%20D.C.%20Office%20MarketView%20Q1%202020_1WoL.pdf?e=1589129714&h=58b84ff494211d01c17a72de8ce9bbec

policies where possible and rotating essential staff to decrease exposure risk for employees both in the office and during transit.

Residential

Since the beginning of the COVID-19 crisis and the State of Emergency declared on March 11, residential communities were one of the few buildings/businesses that have remained open. Additional measures were put in place ad hoc by building managers, landlords and condominium boards to help mitigate virus exposure and keep residents and employees safe. The Stay-at-Home Order has put an unprecedented burden on multifamily communities. With little direct guidance outside of ever-changing Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidelines, managers have had to work with each other and with their communities to devise strategies to keep the residents safe and the buildings clean. Shutting down specific common areas and amenities were some of the first steps taken, but as we now look to reopen those amenities, there is a need for strong guidance to help the residential communities provide the services and support to their residents without creating a new wave of infections in the buildings and building workers.

The COVID-19 crisis required that the residential real estate sales industry also pivot operations to ensure the continued safety of real estate agents and the public they serve. Everything from brokerage operations, property marketing and showings, and the ability to close transactions have been impacted. While all public open houses were stopped, virtual tours and virtual open houses have been leveraged for both marketing and showings. All in-person showings were limited to one prospective buyer at a time, allowing and this has also allowed buyers to continue to see homes, complete inspections, appraisals and final walkthroughs. In April, DC had the lowest volume of new homes come onto the market in 10 years. During this same period of time DC reached a new record for monthly median sales price and a 10-year low for days on market.⁵

There is a diversity of residences within the District (single-family homes, multi-family residential apartments, cooperatives and condominium units) that experience varying levels of person-to-person contact outside of core family units. For example, single-family homes are more likely to rank as low intensity and density than apartments with shared amenity spaces (patios, gyms, rooftops, elevators) or multi-use buildings with both apartments and retail. Overall, the committee operated under the assumption that, residential structures offered the greatest opportunity for residents to experience low-contact intensity and density with a high modification potential reinforced by the District's existing Stay-At-Home Order. The committee chose to target its guidelines more directly

⁵ Bright MLS. "Bright Steps: COVID-19 Market Update". 2020. <https://www.brightmls.com/#/article/12040>

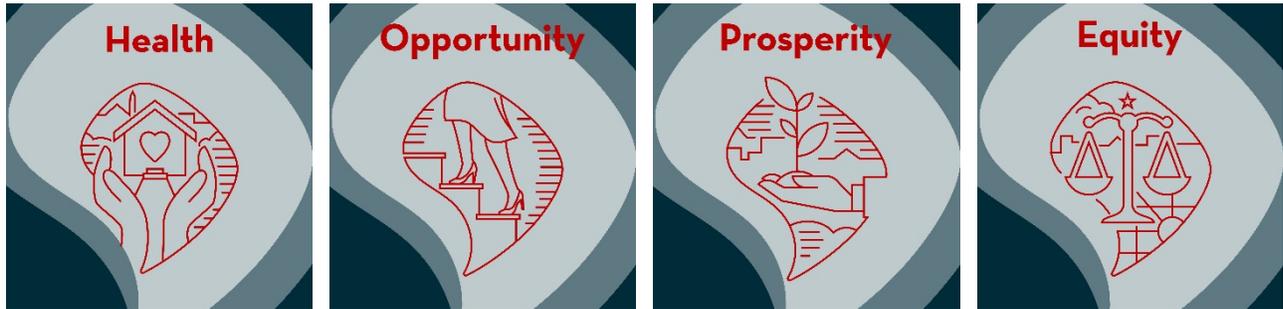
to property owners and landlords responsible for the health and hygiene, physical changes, and policies that are needed to ensure resident safety and continuation of essential residential services.

Development and Construction

The strength of the construction industry in the District and nationally is tied to the overall economy. While at the onset of 2020 the outlook was promising and the economy was growing, the COVID-19 pandemic has sent a chilling shock on foreign investment which will likely continue until there is more certainty in the market. Despite this, employment in construction remains high compared to nationally and shortages remain for skilled labor.

The lower risk levels and relatively high modification capacities for construction are reflected in the decision taken by the District and around the country to categorize construction as an essential service that continues with precautions, such as social distancing and protective masks. Since the Mayor's essential designation on March 24, job sites have been operating thus keeping projects on schedule or as close to schedule as possible. Despite the essential nature of the industry, construction work has not proceeded at the same rate as compared to before the public health emergency. The reasons for this are myriad. The committee has heard that significantly reduced numbers of workers are on the job, inspections and other on-site activities are delayed, and logistical shortfalls and supply chain uncertainty are persistent.

MOVING TOWARD OUR VALUES



COMMITTEE APPROACH AND ENGAGEMENT

From April 28 to May 11, the Real Estate and Construction Committee convened five times as a full committee and held nearly a dozen sub-team meetings to extract best practices and develop sector-specific recommendations for reopening. Committee members engaged with industry experts and examined steps taken by residential and commercial property managers and construction companies to determine guidelines for reopening in the District. The committee also received recommendations and insight from At-Large Councilmember Anita Bonds and was advised by a Public Health Advisor, a Legal Advisor, and a Health Equity expert.

Public Survey Input

On April 28, the Mayor launched the ReOpen DC survey to solicit both general and committee-specific feedback from District residents. Over 15,000 residents provided responses, many with direct suggestions for the Real Estate and Construction committee.

Overall, tenants, homeowners, and landlords across the District are very concerned about individuals and businesses being able to pay rent and mortgages. Proposed resident solutions included canceling rent and mortgages during the pandemic; providing rental assistance for low-income residents and individuals recently experiencing homelessness; grants to pay off small mortgages and grants or loans to make rent and mortgage payments; expanding the Emergency Rental Assistance Programs (ERAP); requiring landlords to engage in payment plan negotiations with tenants; and preventing evictions immediately after the state of emergency is lifted.

These solutions tie directly into the work of the DC Economic Recovery Team (DERT), a cross-cutting District Government team spearheading the coordination of both immediate and longer-term policies to support DC residents and businesses. The DERT, launched on April 8, is working alongside District agencies to implement innovative programs responding to the needs of COVID-19 impacted residents and businesses.

For example, on April 29, the Mayor announced a COVID-19 Tenant-Based Rental Assistance (TBRA) program that would provide rent assistance for six months to tenants in small (50- or fewer unit) buildings. The program targets affordable housing buildings without an operating subsidy or vouchers and where tenants have been financially impacted by COVID-19. Funded with \$1.5 million in federal HOME Investment Partnerships Program resources, the program, which began accepting applications on May 11, represents an initial step in providing much-needed relief in our most vulnerable communities. Throughout the course of the committee's work, resident ideas focused on recovery were relayed to the DERT team for consideration and further exploration and additional housing assistance programs utilizing anticipated federal funds and local resources are also in process.

Respondents also called on the District Government for clear guidelines and training on how construction sites and contractors should be operating during the pandemic. While DC Health issued construction guidance on March 24, the committee recognizes that the need for consistent health- and science-driven guidelines are needed not only for essential services like construction during the current Stay-At-Home Order, but across the real estate landscape once the District begins to reopen.

Stakeholder Engagement

The Real Estate and Construction Committee represented leading voices in its membership, consisting of housing developers, affordable housing advocates and practitioners, commercial developers, property managers, landlords, union leaders, and legal professionals. In addition to the wealth of knowledge brought forth by each individual committee member, the recommended guidelines developed by this committee were informed by members of major trade associations, including the District of Columbia Building Industry Association (DCBIA), the Coalition for Nonprofit Housing and Economic Development (CNHED), and the Apartment and Office Building Association of Metropolitan Washington (AOBA), as well as relevant industry practitioners such as AECOM, Gensler, Goulston Storrs, Smoot Construction, the Urban Land Institute, Federal City Council, Urban Atlantic, the Building Operators and Managers Association (BOMA) and the National Apartment Association (NAA). A complete list of stakeholders engaged can be found in the "External Stakeholder Engagement" section of this report.

Committee leadership and each committee sub-team relied heavily on existing resources from the CDC to ensure current practitioners' experiences were considered in developing recommendations for the District. The committee also received feedback and input on the recommended guidelines and broader report from District agency representatives from the Department of Housing and Community Development, the District of Columbia Housing Authority and the Department of General Services.

Council of the District of Columbia

At-Large Councilmember Anita Bonds provided welcoming remarks in the committee's inaugural meeting as well as legislative background and reopening guidelines for committee consideration during the third full committee meeting. Recommendations included health and hygiene requirements in residential buildings, mandated signage in commercial and residential buildings, as well as options for monthly payment plans both between residential tenants and housing providers as well as between multi-family housing providers, tenants, and utility companies. As Chairperson of the Council's Housing and Neighborhood Revitalization Committee, Councilmember Bonds continues to champion the preservation and production of affordable housing, tenants' rights, and anti-displacement policies.

OPPORTUNITIES

Rethinking Office Space

The forced abandonment of the office environment and the challenge of reoccupying these spaces under a new rubric of appropriate physical distancing has created an opportunity to completely reimagine how we use the office spaces and common areas utilized by the commercial office and co-working space sector every day. How facilities can be configured or repurposed for efficiency and equity as organizations define their new normal is an open question. A full understanding of the ramifications of these changes will play out over a long-time horizon, but leading design firms, occupiers, and co-working operators have already begun to contemplate how some of these spaces might be reimaged [*See Appendix I: Gensler Office Configuration Examples*].

A recent Brightline Strategies survey of commercial decision makers (79% of respondents from the DC metro area) found that 62% of office tenants see less value in their physical space than they had before the COVID-19 pandemic. Additionally, the survey found that 45% of all tenants would plan on reducing overall office square footage as a result of the pandemic.⁶ As teleworking becomes more entrenched in this sector, there is an opportunity to reimagine commercial office space consistent with our DC Values. The allowance for conversion of office space to mixed use, mixed income/affordable housing, and resident- owned/-retail should be seriously considered by the DC Council and relevant agencies as an opportunity to provide new opportunities

⁶ Brightline Strategies. 2020. "COVID-19 COMMERCIAL IMPACT: Commercial Office Users/Tenants Impact Survey Debrief"

in existing city spaces. Conversions could also take advantage of existing office setup to create workforce or educational training facilities.⁷

Harnessing Virtual, Paperless Technologies

The current stay-at-home restrictions have forced industries both across the committee's area of focus and other District economic sectors to adapt to a virtual interaction in terms of person-to-person engagement and key business processing. There is an opportunity to embrace a virtual transition for countless real estate and construction-related processes (permitting, notarization, contracts, etc.) that often suffer unnecessary delays due to a reliance on physical documentation. Industry leaders should continue utilizing technology for document extension via DocuSign, Acrobat, e-notaries, etc. without reliance on hard copies to enhance efficiency in the new normal and reduce strains on the environment. Virtual transitions should be continued also for housing inspections and open houses across the District.

Case Study: Fort Totten Virtual Closing and Sales Opening

EYA is closing on a mixed-use, mixed-income, public-private partnership with the Deputy Mayor for Economic Development (DMPED) in Fort Totten in mid/late May 2020. EYA will be closing on the project virtually. It will open for sales of homes at first virtually and then, as appropriate, in a physically distanced on-site sales office. It will also start construction in early June. Each of these activities will follow the guidelines informed by this committee and issued by District agencies. Particular best practices from this project include:

- **Virtual Closing** - Conducting virtually all meetings with DMPED, EYA, lenders, and title companies and collecting all signatures via DocuSign.
- **Virtual Sales Opening** - Through online and social media marketing of the project, EYA created a database of over 1,000 residents interested in learning more about the project. EYA will host a virtual sales opening with all interested parties and will use virtual 3D models and floor plans to explain the project to interested participants.

Similarly, the restrictions on person-to-person interactions provide a host of opportunities within the construction space to convert traditional tasks to virtual processes. For example, construction site inspections, permitting and plan review, and

⁷ Bruce Katz, Frances Kern Mennone and Gunnar Branson. The New Localism. 2020. "Re-Opening the Economy and the Complexities of Downtown." <https://www.thenewlocalism.com/newsletter/re-opening-the-economy-and-the-complexities-of-downtowns/>

virtual tours of job sites can be completed via video-conferencing technologies. If virtual technology is not accessible, recipients should ask the contractor, owner, architect or engineer to electronically submit supplemental photographs (e.g., site photographs, work completed including equipment installation).

Computer vision paired with artificial intelligence is already in use on some construction sites, analyzing photos and video to spot safety hazards and identify possible construction errors.⁸ As feasible, these types of virtual assessments should be implemented across the industry, including large-scale projects. Steps should also be taken to minimize contact between workers related to rental equipment and material delivery by shifting from paper documents to mobile apps for ordering and confirming delivery from paper documents. Finally, the use 3D laser scanning and virtual 3D representation of the construction site or facility, including high-resolution photographs

⁸ Jeff Rubenstone, Bruce Buckley, Jeff Yoders, and Debra K. Rubin. Engineering News-Record. 2020. "Industry Finds New Innovations to Stay Ahead of COVID-19". <https://www.enr.com/articles/49193-industry-finds-new-innovations-to-stay-ahead-of-covid-19>

for use by architects, engineers, surveyors and others can help to limit person-to-person interaction.

LESSONS LEARNED FROM THE STAY-AT-HOME ORDER

Teleworking

Companies were able to test and improve telework practices like never before and many have found it to be an effective solution for at least a portion of their work. In an April survey from Gartner, 75% of the 317 finance leaders and chief financial officers surveyed planned to move at least 5% of their workforce to full-time telework and nearly one in five CFOs surveyed planned to keep at least 20% of their workforce working remotely to cut costs.⁹

Video conferencing and connection tools (MS Teams, Zoom, etc.) have seen near-universal adoption and proven useful in enabling the connections and communications necessary to continue operations despite remote working. Continued enhancements for both security and collaboration considerations are essential if these tools are to be more permanently adopted. Enhanced communication among an organization's workforce is essential for remote working situations. Improved communication helps improve connections within the workforce and may help offset issues of isolation.

Many organizations find the value of in-person interaction and human connection being highlighted by the current situation. It is likely that a combination of in-office and remote work is a more optimal situation. There are equity components to remote working which should be considered. For a variety of reasons, some telework environments are less optimal than the office environment. Workplaces that enable in-office work to continue in a safe manner while still enabling the support of telework when necessary will be highly sought after.

Coordination and Communication

The extreme disruptions of the current environment have highlighted the need for communication as a tool to connect the many communities involved in residential and commercial real estate. As organizations adjust their focus to reopening, this emphasis on community should continue and, when appropriate, should result in an investment in ways to strengthen and improve these bonds. Many of the concerns and challenges that companies will face during the next phase will be common, and a spirit of shared purpose and direction will be invaluable.

⁹ Ezequiel Minaya. Forbes. 2020. "CFOs Plan To Permanently Shift Significant Numbers Of Employees To Work Remotely — Survey". <https://www.forbes.com/sites/ezequielminaya/2020/04/03/cfos-plan-to-permanently-shift-significant-numbers-of-employees-to-work-remotely---survey/#4a89720b575b>

Landlords, tenants and vendors should embrace and explore new ways of communication to promote public health and safety, improve efficiency of operations, and benefit from shared learnings and knowledge. Many organizations have formed internal task forces to provide broader input from employees on operational changes related to the stay-at-home orders and planned reopenings. This solicitation of broader input among employee stakeholders can serve as a valuable ongoing means of improving communication and facilitating internal input. The committee's guidelines focus heavily on coordinated communication efforts between leading health officials, District agencies, and across industry stakeholders to ensure residents and employees are receiving clear and consistent guidelines.

A New Social Contract

One of this committee's strongest recommendations for the District and industry leaders across sectors is to promote and communicate a new sense of social responsibility. A critical lesson already learned from communities around the world during this pandemic is that there is a collective responsibility from all citizens to follow new and evolving guidelines in order to protect ourselves and our neighbors. In residential communities, tenants and residents cannot rely solely on building staff to make sure the building is clean – each member of the community should endeavor to be responsible for their own actions and lack of actions in making their unit, their building, and their community safe. This new social contract should continue to be reinforced by the District Government and must be communicated thoroughly throughout all communities to ensure residents are not just looking out for themselves, but one another.

CHALLENGES

Employee and Resident Access to Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

Key employees across the committee's sectors of focus, primarily construction workers and site managers, property managers and residential building staff, and office custodial and maintenance staff, will need access to PPE in order to perform their jobs safely and without risk to fellow employees, themselves, or their families. The guidelines recommended by this committee as well as the safety measures that are currently in place across the real estate and construction sector depend on access to this critical equipment, and the demand for these products has far surpassed inventory.

Increased Operational Costs

In addition to the added costs of PPE and other health supplies, development and construction projects are already factoring in increased anticipated costs associated with enhanced safety and cleaning procedures. Rotational work schedules and additional employees to stagger these work schedules, coupled with distancing requirements, temperature check equipment, and new technologies to transition into virtual processes will result in current project cost overruns and future cost constraints

for new projects. Smaller general contractors and subcontractors will struggle to meet these costs without additional supports.

Strain on Employees and Systems

Residential buildings do not close at night or over the weekend. These buildings and communities demand services, supplies and continued maintenance to keep the operations running 24/7/365. With the additional constraints on additional cleaning services as well as social distancing challenges, employees may find the working environment more difficult to work in and require more time to do basic tasks. Additionally, with more people at home in the building, managers are likely to see a spike in resources (namely cleaning supplies and cleaning worker hours) needed to run the building.¹⁰

Leasing Challenges

Coordinating leasing activities while maintaining social distancing will be a continued challenge. While feasible, providing online tours, digital signatures for leases, and other virtual experiences will take time to perfect and money to achieve. Working with tenants who struggle to pay rent due to unemployment will be a challenge for the foreseeable future, and property managers are preparing for rent collection rates to drop while aforementioned operational costs and expenses rise with new health and safety requirements.

Liability Concerns

While all organizations (public and private) are working hard to deal with the rapid changes in understanding and best practices for how to operate in the current environment, the potential exists for an additional burden to be placed on companies and organizations through lawsuits and actions pursued by individuals who may have been exposed or infected while in one of the spaces included in the committee's investigation.

During this interim period where standards for testing, contact tracing, vaccination, and even basic understanding of the coronavirus itself are still evolving, it should be agreed that it is not possible to accurately tie the cause or source of an individual who is infected to a building or portion of a building. The committee is concerned that, despite this ambiguity, some individuals may choose to pursue legal actions against the owners, occupiers or service providers in an effort to extract resources, gain concessions or generate notoriety. These actions should be diligently guarded against and, should

¹⁰ Hosking Associates. 2020. "COVID-19 Guidance for Property Managers and Occupiers". <https://www.hosking-associates.com/blog/covid-19-property-manager-guidance/>

such activities emerge, the public and private sectors should work together to address it immediately.

The federal government is currently considering tort reform legislation that could immunize businesses and service providers from liability regarding COVID-19. District emergency legislation has provided health service providers immunity from liability (excluding gross negligence) during the state of emergency, but does not appear to extend such immunity to service providers, landlords, or real property operators.

In the event of that legislation, or even in addition to the enactment of such, liability waivers should be considered by business owners, landlords, commercial tenants, and real estate operators as an additional measure to mitigate against lawsuits during and after reopening. Although no court in the country has yet analyzed such waiver in the context of COVID-19, general principles and case law regarding waivers can be applied to draft waivers that may limit or waive liability related to COVID-19 after reopening.

For example, waivers should be drafted in a manner that guarantees customers/patrons will understand the risks associated with the services, as well as the rights they intend to waive. A clear intention to waive specific rights is paramount. Additionally, courts require waivers to be clear and unambiguous, hence industries may consider expressly including exposure to the coronavirus as a potential risk. It should be noted that DC's Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) requires waivers for certain activities in its recreation centers.¹¹ Adding language regarding waiving liability for COVID-19 exposure to such waivers, at least during a certain period defined as reopening, should be considered. Similarly, business owners, landlords, commercial tenants, and real estate operators should consider drafting waivers with specific reference to COVID-19.

¹¹

(<https://dpr.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/dpr/publication/attachments/DPR%20General%20Waiver.pdf>).

REOPENING GUIDANCE AND PREPARATION

PRIORITIZATION AND PHASING OF SECTORS

The “Pre-Opening” Phase

While the committee guidelines emphasize the immediate rounds of reopening, committee members also considered the current, “Pre-Opening” period and developed recommendations for how implementing stakeholders should create and operationalize plans ahead of reopening to ready themselves and their constituents. Across the real estate and construction sectors considered by this committee, businesses, property managers, landlords, and development and construction companies should view plans through three main perspectives:

- **Community Readiness:** Proactively engage with District Government agencies, including DC Health, as health and government officials will set the pace for reopening and easing of restrictions.
- **Enterprise Readiness:** Create a specific plan for reopening, adapting guidelines outlined by this committee as relevant, in order to consider reopening.
- **Resident/Employee Readiness:** Consider resident and employee circumstances (high-risk groups, family care needs, etc.) when designing health and safety measures, policies, and communication plans.

Figure 2. Proposed Prioritization and Phasing Overview

Pre-Opening (Across Sectors)	Reopening Day 1	Reopening Later Stages
<p>Plan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Residential and commercial landlords, property managers, and development and construction leaders devise plans in concert with industry peers, health officials, and District Government. <p>Communicate</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Residents and employees receive clear communications on new guidelines and are updated frequently as situations evolve. 	<p>Commercial Office Space</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continuation of mass telework and rotational shifts for essential workers in order to maintain social distancing. <p>Residential</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure health and safety protocols are in place that allow for maintained social distancing for residents, maintenance and service providers, and employees both in residences and during real estate engagement. 	<p>Commercial Office Space</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interim office guidelines in place to manage gradual flow of workforce to offices while maintaining social distancing requirements and enforcing new health and safety measures. <p>Residential</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continuation of health and hygiene measures and reopening of amenities and common spaces as informed by District health officials and authorized by the Mayor’s office.

<p>Act</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Guidelines are implemented and enforced in preparation for initial reopening and gradual easing of restrictions until widespread immunity is achieved. 	<p>Development and Construction</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continued adherence to DC Health guidelines for construction workforce as well as OSHA guidelines, with ongoing safety assessments and frequent communication with health and government leadership. 	<p>Development and Construction</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continuation of health and hygiene measures and gradual transition on worksites to allow for additional workers per shift as informed by District health officials and authorized by the Mayor's office.
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Phasing Considerations: Health and Sector Dependencies

As depicted in Figure 2 (Proposed Prioritization and Phasing Overview), the decision to transition into later stages of the reopening process will be driven by public health guidance as well as directives from the Mayor's office. It is imperative that implementing stakeholders in the real estate and construction sector are prepared to transition, for example, from mass teleworking to a gradual and likely staggered return to the office. It is important to note that entering the reopening phase does not mean there will be an elimination of all uncertainty. Frequent assessments of building space, residential properties, and construction worksites, coupled with consistent communication with DC Health officials and relevant agencies, will be necessary to adapt guidelines in what is a dynamic and uncertain environment.

In addition to reliance on public health guidance, any reopening of the real estate and construction sectors, in particular commercial office space, will be intrinsically linked to decisions made within the education and transportation realms. Similar to a gradual re-migration to office spaces, the need to maintain some magnitude of social distancing in the immediate reopening phases will mean that educators may need to find either alternate facilities for schooling or stagger school attendance. The latter will directly impact office-based companies' timelines for continued teleworking or contemplate parallel rotational office attendance policies that do not conflict with parent schedules. Similarly, likely capacity and scheduling restrictions for mass transit in the District will dictate the feasibility of even incremental returns to the office.

While these two sectors will, in addition to guidance from District health officials, determine the scale of easing teleworking practice, several sectors will need to prepare for the return to office-based work in order to reopen in the right sequence. Retail, small businesses, and restaurants situated near offices that depend on this customer base to sustain revenues and their own employees will need to coordinate closely with office industry officials as well as the education and transportation leaders.

The Mayor's decision to convene community leaders alongside public health experts and government officials to establish reopening guidelines is a necessary first step in guiding the District out of this pandemic. The District should continue to engage cross-sectoral leaders to encourage clear pathways of communication as initial steps are taken, assessed, and adapted as public and private stakeholders navigate unprecedented circumstances together.

MITIGATION AND GUIDELINES FOR REOPENING

The following recommendations focus on the immediate containment phase once the District has cleared DC Health-established gating requirements in order to begin easing current COVID-19 restrictions on the economy and residents. The committee drew upon existing DC Health guidelines as relevant, industry best practices, and lessons from within and outside the District. There is a wealth of information developed by government and health agencies such as OSHA and the CDC as well as industry leaders, including the NAA, BOMA, the Center for Construction Research and Training (CPWR), and the National Association of Homebuilders (NAH) that provided an opportunity to adapt and innovate for the District context.

Each committee sub-team (Commercial Office Space, Residential, and Development and Construction) took into account the diverse set of end users in both the compilation of recommended guidelines and considerations for implementation. Accompanying each set of guidelines is a brief narrative that illuminates such considerations, as well as compliance and enforcement issues as relevant. The committee recognizes that many of these guidelines will require additional resources and expanded internal business operations to meet the need for constant health monitoring and communication with District government, industry peers, employees and residents. The equity of these resource constraints, as well as the vulnerable populations that exist within each sub-team area of focus, is examined further in the "Equity Considerations for Reopening" section of this report.

During this process, the committee noted some key areas of concern that all organizations in the sector and the District Government should consider when examining these recommendations:

1. Guidelines, not Regulations:

- a. A majority of the committee members feel that it is vital for the recommendations stemming from this report to be communicated as guidelines, and not governmental mandates or regulations. This view was not universal, and it should be noted that this topic was debated among the committee, with a variety of perspectives being shared, all of which are valid and valuable.

- b. It is unavoidable that the challenges, risks and potential liabilities inherent in this reopening effort are daunting. To the extent, however, that the guidelines or recommendations developed through the ReOpen DC effort are communicated as mandates from the government, all of these factors (challenge, risk, liability) will be increased significantly.
- c. Questions of how enforcement is handled become infinitely more complex and burdensome given the scope of these policies and the speed with which they will continue to evolve and change. On this point alone, the potential liability for both the public sector and the private sector is increased if these ideas and recommendations are turned into laws or requirements.

2. Challenges with Enforcement

- a. Even when the framework of guidelines is adhered to, enforcement of these policies and recommendations will be a sincere challenge. Each individual organization must consider how it will plan for and handle enforcement of the rules and policies it is establishing as a part of the reopening process.
- b. Property managers, office managers, and human resource professionals may face new challenges in handling the difficult tensions inherent in confronting or dealing with employees, visitors and members of the general public who choose not to comply with building or company policies.

3. Communication is Vital

- a. A recurring theme in many of the committee's recommendations is the critical need for all organizations to embrace a posture of enhanced communication during the reopening phase. The planning and execution of the policies involved in reopening will not succeed without the companies and organizations involved committing to clear, frequent, and recurring communication, both internally and externally.
- b. Whatever communication methods organizations choose to implement, they should be robust enough to handle inbound and outbound flows of information. No single individual or organization has a monopoly on good ideas, and all participants in the sector will benefit from shared knowledge and a posture of flexibility. Feedback loops and the ability to receive, review, and learn from incoming information will be critical.
- c. During the reopening phase, organizations must establish contingency plans for emergency situations that require time-sensitive notifications. If these events occur, there will be an immediate need to notify others who may have been impacted. Procedures should be in place beforehand to avoid delays and reduce the risk of additional exposure.

Commercial and Co-Working Office Space Guidelines

The commercial office and co-working space sub-team represents a broad mix of stakeholders that represent landlords, tenants, BIDs, associations, unions, developers, service providers and investors in commercial office buildings from across the District. During the committee process, the sub-team compiled a database of information, guidance and best practices from a variety of resources that provided a broad spectrum of thinking, ideas and lessons learned from across the globe from Europe to China to Canada. The resources consulted include materials and guidance from the following organizations: CBRE, Cushman & Wakefield, AECOM, Kroger, CORE Architects, Gensler, NAIOP DC|MD, WeWork, BOMA, DC Health, Global Workplace Association, SEIU, AOBA, ASHRAE, Colliers, and MakeOffices.

After an extensive and iterative process of discussion and evaluation, the information from this knowledge base was combined with the team's sector-specific expertise and a set of specific guidelines were developed, along with a framework of recommendations designed to assist organizations included within the commercial office and co-working space sector as they develop plans to reopen.

Figure 3. Proposed Round 1 Reopening Guidelines: Commercial Office and Co-Working Spaces

Commercial Office and Co-Working Spaces

I. Owners and Property Managers

(A) ENTERPRISE PLANNING

DAY 1 REOPENING GUIDELINES

Policy and Training

- Defer to DC Health guidance for start of reopening when published
- Establish building communication lines between landlord, tenant, and co-tenants as well as service providers, vendors, and suppliers
- Consider creating a task force or steering committee (internal) to focus on COVID-19 related issues
- Create an emergency communications procedure and identify an emergency communications POC
- Decide when and how reopen will commence for your organization
- Consider a phased approach, and determine your phasing policy
- Create enhanced cleaning policies, considering the scope and increased frequency of cleaning for office spaces and common areas
- Establish emergency cleaning protocol for COVID-19 exposure events
- Establish baseline and emergency budgets for added costs, and consider group purchasing or cost sharing with co-tenants or landlord
- Create incident plans, policies, and guidance for employees who are symptomatic at work, test positive for COVID-19, or have had close contact to positive or potential positive cases, including notification plans for office and building
- Create policy for employees with symptoms to not come to work

Physical Separation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Developing an access control and path of travel plan that allows for the opening of stairwells to ease burden of reduced elevator capacity• Encourage one-direction path of travel where possible, including having separate up and down stairwells and separate entrance and exit doors.• Consider foot openers on swing doors where possible to limit touch points in bathrooms and elsewhere• Limit the number of people in restrooms at the same time• Consider increasing outside air ventilation rates where possible and minimize HVAC downtime, running system longer to increase the circulation of outside air ventilation• Increase central air filtration efficiency where possible and consider more frequent filter changes• Provide cleaners with EPA-registered disinfectants and training on how to use the cleaning supplies at no cost to workers covering (1) hazards of chemicals, (2) proper use, (3) personal hygiene and (4) mixing and applying disinfectants. Training should be performed by approved providers.
Health Measures	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Place hand sanitizing stations throughout the common areas.• Create policies for provisioning of PPE/supplies (including gloves, masks, sanitizing wipes, eye protection, disinfectants) and services• Provision and monitor PPE for all cleaning crews• Employers bear the costs of additional cleaning for uniforms (daily if the same uniform)

ONGOING REOPENING GUIDELINES

Policy And Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Establish baseline and emergency budgets for added costs, and consider group purchasing or cost sharing ideas with co-tenants or landlord.• Regularly update and review effectiveness and consider necessary changes.• Ensure task force monitors government/public health information and requirements on a regular basis and incorporate any changes into policies immediately.
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Whenever possible, coordinate in advance to establish preferred vendors for normal purchase/service needs and for emergency event needs.
Health Measures	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provide adequate PPE (disposable gloves and gowns, eye protection, N-95 respirators), as well as hand sanitizers and disinfectant wipes at no cost to building service workers

(B) COMMON AREAS, AMENITIES, AND OFFICE SPACE

DAY 1 REOPENING GUIDELINES

Policy and Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reconfigure space for office environment to achieve social distancing• Modify access/capacity policies for the following high-traffic common areas: restrooms, lobby, elevators, reception area, corridors, mail rooms, and the like.
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Physical Separation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Remove or cover common area furniture to ensure six-foot distance• Remove seats, reconfigure (or close) rooms, or alter distribution of physical work space for work spaces, conference rooms, gathering spaces, common areas, etc.• Develop a plan to maintain social distancing at elevators• Follow CDC guidelines for mail and package handling; consider touch-free digital mail solutions• Consider installing touchless faucets in bathroom and kitchens• Designate delivery areas, where delivery personnel are required to leave goods at designated areas for contactless collection later.• As feasible, create separate entry and waiting area for guests.• Install a plexiglass barrier between security desk and guests with a six-foot floor marker.
Health Measures	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Enhance cleaning of high-touch areas (vending machines, restrooms, elevators)• Eliminating communal food offerings that cannot be controlled for single-serving distribution• Require all tenants and building staff to wear masks at all times in common areas. Consider providing disposable gloves at lobby and reception areas for employees and guests• Provide hand sanitizer stations at all entry points and elevator landings.• Consider nightly emptying and cleaning of refrigerators in all tenant spaces
<u>ONGOING REOPENING GUIDELINES</u>	
Policy and Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Consider further space reconfiguration for office environment to achieve social distancing.

(C) COMMUNICATION AND SIGNAGE

DAY 1 REOPENING GUIDELINES

Policy and Training

- Clearly communicate building entry activities/requirements between landlord and all tenants in the building
- Recommend tenant communication of building entry activity/requirements to guests prior to arrival
- Provide additional signage to augment or assist in office reconfiguration policies including: Interior flow guides, six-foot distance markers, office door guides (max capacity, utilization policy, etc.)
- Post signage in spaces to assist in policy compliance or signal cleaning status on doors, exits, common areas, bathrooms, etc.
- Communicate new company policies (e.g., the business continuity plan) to all employees: perhaps via an app for instant push updates to tenants, employees, etc., for policy changes or warnings
- Communicate building policies related to COVID-19 to all employees
- Clearly delineate expectations to employees and methods for ensuring compliance (consider how to resolve conflicts or potential non-compliance issues before they arise)
- Share portions of your business continuity plan with key stakeholders (landlord, co-tenants, neighborhood leaders, etc.)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Communicate to all parties that the plan and policies may be subject to change given the fluid nature
Physical Separation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provide elevator floor decals at six-foot intervals limiting capacity• Provide signage to match PPE/supply policy on masks, gloves, sanitizer, etc.
Health Measures	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Consider a landlord questionnaire for all tenants in building, the results of which could be shared with all building occupants for improved communication. <p><u>Sample questions can include:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• When is your company expecting to return to the building?• How many employees do you expect will return initially?• Have you considered stagger start times, days in the office? If so, are you able to elaborate on details?• Do you have any changes to your Point of Contact?• Do you have a plan for physical distancing within your space? Is this something we can help with?• Will you require employees to wear PPE in your suite and will you provide the PPE?• Do you have a plan in place to answer employee questions and concerns?

ONGOING REOPENING GUIDELINES

Policy and Training

- Stay in regular communication with local Business Improvement Districts (BIDs), Advisory Neighborhood Commissions (ANCs), or other key community leaders
- Clearly communicate building entry activities/requirements between landlord and all tenants in the building
- Communicate new company policies (e.g., the business continuity plan) to all employees: perhaps an app for instant push updates to tenants, employees, etc., for policy changes or warnings.
- Encourage employees and visitors to self-administer temperature checks before departing for the office
- Provide COVID-19 reporting policy for employees and visitors with confirmed cases including date/times of visits to the workplace and areas accessed
- Encourage limiting in-person meetings with non-employees as much as possible
- Encourage employee-driven suggestions for improvements to policies or rules.
- Encourage ongoing communication with key stakeholders (e.g. landlord, co-tenants, etc.) to provide/obtain regular updates and consider adjustments to policies

Commercial Office and Co-Working Spaces (continued)

II. TENANT COMPANIES

(A) ENTERPRISE PLANNING

DAY 1 REOPENING GUIDELINES

Policy and

- Defer to current DC Health guidance for start of reopening
- Establish building communication lines between landlord,

Training	<p>tenant, and co-tenants as well as with service providers, vendors, and suppliers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Decide when and how reopening will commence for your organization• Modify office guest policy (e.g., appointment only, small meeting only, etc.) to reduce level of guests in office• Create a phased approach to bringing employees back to office with graduated ramp up over time• Establish baseline and emergency budgets for added costs, and consider group purchasing or cost sharing ideas with co-tenants or landlord• Create incident plans, policies, and guidance for employees who are symptomatic at work, test positive for COVID-19, or have had close contact to positive or potential positive cases, including notification plans for office and building• Create policy for employees with symptoms to not come to work• Create policy if notified by landlord or co-tenants of COVID exposure in building (need notification plan for office)
Physical Separation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Consider flexible re-entry dates for employee populations with ongoing remote work needs (childcare, family care, etc.)• For portions of employee base returning to office, consider split team approach (A-Team, B-Team) with alternating weeks.• Consider alternate schedule for employees in high-risk populations or with medical concerns (for themselves or for close exposure to family or household)• Consider alternate schedule for employees with continuing remote work needs (e.g. family care, childcare, etc.)
<u>ONGOING REOPENING GUIDELINES</u>	
Policy and Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Regularly monitor DC Health guidance on changes of public health emergency status• Adapt and evolve: utilize feedback loops to adjust policies as you go, making periodic adjustments and updates to policies based on feedback obtained from employees and stakeholders• Provide regular updates and reviews by task force leading the effort to evaluate effectiveness and consider necessary

	<p>changes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ensure task force monitors government/public health information and requirements on a regular basis (incorporate any changes into policies immediately)
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(B) COMMON AREAS, AMENITIES, & OFFICE SPACE

DAY 1 REOPENING GUIDELINES

Policy and Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Modify access/capacity policies for the following high-traffic common areas: restrooms, lobby, elevators, reception area, corridors, mail rooms, and the like.
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Physical Separation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Remove or cover common area furniture to ensure six-foot distance• Consider the removal of seats, reconfiguration/closing of rooms, or other distribution of physical work space for desk and work spaces, conference rooms, gathering spaces, common areas, etc.
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Health Measures	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Place hand sanitizer stations at all entry points and elevator landings
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(C) COMMUNICATION AND SIGNAGE

DAY 1 REOPENING GUIDELINES

Policy and Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Communicate new company policies (e.g., the business continuity plan) to all employees: perhaps through an app for instant push updates to tenants, employees, etc., for policy changes or warnings.• Communicate building policies related to COVID-19 to all employees• Clearly delineate expectations to employees and methods for ensuring compliance (consider how to resolve conflicts or potential non-compliance issues before they arise)• Share portions of your business continuity plan with key stakeholders (landlord, co-tenants, neighborhood leaders, etc.)• Communicate to all parties that the plan and policies may be subject to change given the fluid nature• Encourage employee-driven suggestions for improvements to policies or rules.• Whenever possible, coordinate in advance to establish preferred 3rd party vendors for normal purchase/service needs and for emergency event needs
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<u>ONGOING REOPENING GUIDELINES</u>	
Policy and Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Encourage employees and visitors to self-administer temperature checks before departing for the office• Encourage limiting in-person meetings with non-employees as much as possible• Encourage ongoing communication with key stakeholders (e.g., landlord, co-tenants, etc.) to provide/obtain regular updates and consider adjustments to policies
Health Measures	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Communicate cleaning and PPE stance to guests <i>prior</i> to arrival.• Require all guests wear masks when in the building common areas.

Residential Space Guidelines

The residential sub-team is represented by an assortment of local DC executives that lead a wide variety of housing managers, developers, associations, unions and non-profit organizations. Our challenge and focus have been to give clear guidelines in the best and safest way for the residential community to "ReOpen" and move forward in the new COVID-19 era. It is our understanding that COVID-19 is here to stay, and will not simply go away. Because of this, housing providers will all be seeking continued guidance on how to work and interact in this new normal. This committee has been focused on how to best guide (and not dictate) new rules and procedures in the various residential communities it relates to. Our strongest guidance is to connect both tenants and residents as well as housing managers with the resources they need to protect themselves, their staff and the general public from this virus - and any other communicable virus/disease in the future.

Figure 4. Proposed Round 1 Reopening Guidelines: Residential Spaces

Residential Spaces	
I. OWNERS, REAL ESTATE AGENTS, AND PROPERTY MANAGERS	
(A) ENTERPRISE PLANNING	
<u>DAY 1 REOPENING GUIDELINES</u>	
Policy and Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Develop a plan for in-unit emergency service requests in order to minimize the physical proximity between tenants and service providers to the greatest degree possible• Defer nonessential construction.

<p>Physical Separation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete an access control and path of travel plan (i.e., a one-direction path of travel) where possible that allows for the opening of stairwells to ease burdens of reduced elevator capacity. • Instruct building personnel, vendors and contractors to wear face masks/coverings provided by employers. Amend existing service agreements, if necessary, to include these new requirements. • Consider having employees/real estate agents work in the sales or leasing office, but encourage visitors to enter only by appointment and when absolutely necessary per the guidelines you provide. • Temporarily transition all prospect tours and open houses to virtual tours. For communities and residences still accepting walk-in and appointment tours, consider accompanying the prospect to the model, but simply let them in and allow them to self-tour. Ensure compliance with Fair Housing Administration (FHA) and Fair Housing regulations. • Encourage residents to pay rent online. Employees should handle all money collection with disposable gloves and wash their hands accordingly. If the leasing office is closed, a drop box or other method for money collection should be available for residents • Provide virtual leasing and sales capabilities to the maximum extent possible (Zoom, WhatsApp, Facetime, etc.) • Encourage residents to use web portal to pay rent. Consider setting up a drop-box for rent payments and other correspondence from residents. Wear gloves when opening envelopes
<p>Health Measures</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extend off-hours mechanical service to circulate air before and after core working hours • Add ventilation to buildings as feasible.
<p align="center"><u>ONGOING REOPENING GUIDELINES</u></p>	
<p>Policy and Training</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to defer nonessential construction. • Assure adherence to both CDC and OSHA regulations with regards to protection against COVID-19

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prioritize fulfillment requests based on life/safety. • Defer nonessential maintenance. • Limit nonessential visits from vendors when practical. • Continue to maintain enhanced disinfectant/cleaning protocols • Continue to follow protocols for COVID-19 positive residents prior to entering units • Continue to provide PPE supplies for maintenance employees and office personnel as needed
<p>Health Measures</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regularly sanitize any and all work areas, public areas, and commonly touched places (e.g., door handles, elevator buttons, etc.)

(B) COMMON AREAS AND AMENITIES

DAY 1 REOPENING GUIDELINES

<p>Policy and Training</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amenity spaces (fitness centers, pools, etc.) may be opened at the discretion of housing providers as it is safe and reasonable to do so and consistent with public health guidelines and social distancing recommendations • Include instructional signage in common area and amenity spaces that reflects best practices as published by the CDC • Consider adding a Package Locker System on site to limit the handing of packages
<p>Physical Separation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Install Plexiglas shield and six-foot floor markers at any staffed front desk • Remove or cover common area furniture to ensure six-foot distance • Establish limits for the number of persons congregating in any given common space to comply with the current social distancing recommendations, installing floor decals where needed

Health Measures	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provide hand sanitizer dispensers (touchless, if possible) and or stations in office, front desk areas and common areas as needed.• Make internal and external entrances and exits as touchless as possible (automatic sensors, foot openers, etc.)• Require masks to be worn at all times in common areas• In kitchens and bathrooms, move towards touchless faucets, toilets, and hand dryers.• Eliminate communal food offerings that can't be controlled for single-serving distribution
<u>ONGOING REOPENING GUIDELINES</u>	
Health Measures	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Maintain common areas (lobby, elevators, etc.) in a manner consistent with evolving public health guidelines.• Sanitize work areas, public areas and commonly touched places (door handles, elevator buttons, etc.) and place hand sanitizers in common areas.• Ensure there is sufficient supply of PPE for employees and any visitor or guest who enters a common space without a face mask

(C) COMMUNICATION AND SIGNAGE

DAY 1 REOPENING GUIDELINES

Policy and Training

- Post signs and send correspondence to residents and prospects about the proper protocols and any changes in procedures.
- Provide instructional signage in common areas and amenity spaces that reflects best practices as published by the CDC
- Though not required on their part, ask residents to inform you of a confirmed COVID-19 diagnosis in the event a resident does test positive so that appropriate preventative measures can be taken.
- Create a regularly updated COVID-19 FAQ for renters addressing these general guidelines as they apply to your specific building
- Notify prospective buyers and residents to avoid physically visiting the leasing and sales office if possible, and if not possible, have them visit by appointment only
- Provide guidance to purchasers and tenants on what warrants an appointment, and prioritize accordingly

ONGOING REOPENING GUIDELINES

Policy and Training

- Publish changes to building policies and protocols in multiple formats (direct mail, online, flyer distribution, bulletin boards, text message, etc.).
- Consider utilizing electronic platforms (portals, Zoom, etc.) to communicate with residents and employees.
- Consider sending notices and updates more frequently, or at a minimum on a weekly basis
- Communicate all construction activity to residents and visitors
- Where appropriate, refer residents to public health guidelines and support resources.
- Develop a Community COVID-19 Safety Plan for dissemination to residents as well as any contractor coming to the site.
- Discuss with local counsel how you might address a situation in which an employee was to contract COVID-19.

Residential Spaces

(continued)

II. TENANTS AND VISITORS

(A) ADMINISTRATIVE

DAY 1 REOPENING GUIDELINES

Policy and Training

- Check with building management on rules and guidelines for third-party contractors and service providers
- Buyers/Prospects/Visitors should contact Leasing/Sales office beforehand, as the community or residence may be closed or only offer scheduled appointments. Check website to see if community has virtual tours. Limit on-site tours during emergency period.
- Coordinate all in-home construction activities with building management and/or condo board as applicable.
- Make sure any third-party construction contractor has a copy of the building's COVID-19 Safety Plan

Physical Separation

- Residents are encouraged to pay rent online. Employees should handle all money collection with disposable gloves and wash their hands accordingly. If the leasing office is closed, a drop box or other method for money collection should be available for residents
- Current owners/residents should email or call leasing/sales office, as opposed to in-person visits

Health Measures

- Defer nonessential maintenance requests when possible.
- Prioritize submitting service requests based on life/safety concerns (e.g., plumbing & mechanical breakdowns)
- Expect a delay in service request fulfillment due to the backlog

- created during the emergency
- Notify management if COVID-positive or symptomatic when requesting in-unit maintenance

(B) COMMON AREAS, AMENITIES, AND OFFICE SPACE

DAY 1 REOPENING GUIDELINES

Health Measures

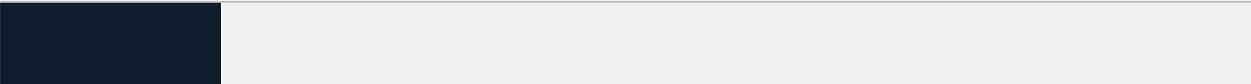
- Residents/visitors should abide by public health guidelines (wearing masks/face coverings, social distancing, etc.) when in common areas (lobbies, elevators, etc.)
- Resident/visitors may access various amenity spaces (rooftops, party rooms, dog parks, tennis courts, business centers, etc.) opened at the discretion of housing providers when it is safe and reasonable to do so consistent with public health guidelines.
- Residents and visitors should act socially responsibly and clean after themselves when using facilities
- Treat pets as you would other human family members – do not let pets interact with people or animals outside the household. If a person inside the household becomes sick, isolate that person from everyone else, including pets.

(C) COMMUNICATION AND SIGNAGE

DAY 1 REOPENING GUIDELINES

Policy and Training

- Abide by building instructional signage to maximize the effectiveness of public health strategies
- Follow evolving policies and protocols as published by building management.
- Communicate financial hardship and need for social services with building management as early as possible
- Inform building management if anyone in your unit or a visitor tests positive for COVID-19 or is experiencing symptoms



Development and Construction Guidelines

In response to the public health emergency, contractors large and small reviewed DC Health's guidance, conferred among the industry, implemented safety plans, and then iterated based on practical application, experience and evolving information. With two months of experience operating under this emergency, there are many lessons learned. Foremost among them is that the encouraging and permissive approach taken by DC Health in its guidance to the construction industry, rather than a prescriptive approach, is the right one. The public health knowledge about COVID-19 and how to best prevent its transmission has changed rapidly and frequently. Having a permissive set of guidelines advising the industry has resulted in job sites that are safer today than they were even a week ago, and certainly more than on March 24. A permissive approach allows the industry to use its human capital and thought leadership to adapt and improve.

The approach taken by the sub-team in developing the recommended guidelines relies on the direct experience of the construction industry, national organizations representing the industry, guidance issued by jurisdictions across the country, news articles, health reports, and regular briefings from the Mayor's staff. The guidelines recommended provide a best practices approach that allows for adaptability by individual contractors.

Primarily, the sub-team relied on the experience of the industry here in the District. We also relied heavily on industry organizations that have been advising their members and government bodies across the country. It will be important for contractors and employees to understand that one size does not fit all. The circumstances of each job site are unique and the implementation of the guidance here must be tailored to the unique job site, the size of the organization and its resources, the employees, and the tasks being performed. Contractors and workers are adept at putting safety first. Nevertheless, the safety concerns addressed by the guidelines are different than those that traditionally concern jobsites and general contractors. This and the physical nature of the environment and of the work will require adaptations of tasks and protocols, and of course, rigorous attention to implementation by everyone on the job.

Figure 5. Proposed Round 1 Reopening Guidelines: Development and Construction

Development and Construction	
I. Contractors and Employers	
(A) ENTERPRISE PLANNING	
<u>DAY 1 REOPENING GUIDELINES</u>	
Policy and Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a comprehensive COVID-19 job safety plan, which includes control measures, symptom checking, social distancing, hygiene and decontamination procedures, PPE utilization, training, and exposure control. • The job site safety plan shall reference recommendations from the CDC, DC Health, and other national bodies. The safety plan must be provided in English and Spanish, or other languages spoken by workers, provided regularly, and posted on large signs at the job site. • An exposure control plan provided by DC Health shall be provided to all employers and included in the employer’s job safety plan • In the development of the comprehensive COVID-19 job safety plan, review the ReOpen DC recommendations below for Ongoing Reopening Guidelines for Construction Workers. • Designate a site-specific COVID-19 Supervisor at every job site, excluding residential sites, to monitor the health of employees and enforce the COVID-19 job site safety plan. Residential sites include any project working on a single-family house, row-dwelling, condominium unit or single apartment unit with 9 or fewer workers at the job site at any given time. The COVID-19 Supervisor must always be present during construction activities.
Physical Separation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider adjusting work sequence and crew size. • To the extent practicable, divide crews into two groups so that projects can continue working effectively if one of the divided teams is required to quarantine

ONGOING REOPENING GUIDELINES

Policy and Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Follow these guidelines to the greatest extent practicable, and stay abreast of DC Health guidance and Mayor’s Orders
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(B) CONSTRUCTION ACTIVITIES

DAY 1 REOPENING GUIDELINES

Policy and Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Should a confirmed case of COVID-19 be identified by DC Health (or other public health authority) and linked to a field office or construction site, the COVID-19 Supervisor should be notified immediately.
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Physical Separation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify “choke points” and “high-risk areas” on job sites where workers typically congregate and control them so social distancing is always maintained. Tenant-in-place renovations should continue but only in vacant areas and consistent with social distancing guidelines published by DC Health.
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Health Measures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement cleaning or sanitizing protocols at all construction sites and projects Identify and regularly clean and disinfect areas that are at high risk for transmission, including trailers, break/lunchroom Employees performing cleaning will be issued proper personal protective equipment (“PPE”), such as nitrile, latex, or vinyl gloves and gowns, as recommended by the CDC
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ONGOING REOPENING GUIDELINES

Policy and Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Employ job site screening based on DC Health and CDC guidance to determine if employees should not work. Prohibit any employees with any symptoms of COVID-19 from working
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<p>Physical Separation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Require social distancing (six-foot minimum distance between workers) unless the safety of the public or workers require deviation (e.g., drywalling, team lifting). General Contractors and workers should be aware of and comply with the Mayor's Order on mass gathering, to the extent practicable. • Where work trailers are used, all workers should maintain social distancing while inside the trailers and trailers should be cleaned regularly • Stagger lunch and breaks to the extent feasible • Encourage food delivery to be contactless. Social distancing should be followed at all food and lunch trucks, including while queuing, ordering, and waiting for food • Limit job site visitors only to those necessary; screen all visitors. • Minimize interactions when picking up or delivering equipment or materials, ensuring minimum six-foot separation • Virtual inspections and other visits by DCRA and third-party providers are encouraged when in-person visits are delayed or not practicable

(C) COMMUNICATION AND SIGNAGE

DAY 1 REOPENING GUIDELINES

<p>Policy and Training</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Post, in areas visible to all workers, required hygienic practices, including not to touch face with unwashed hands or with gloves; washing hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds; use of hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol; cleaning and disinfecting frequently touched objects and surfaces; covering the mouth and nose when coughing or sneezing as well as other hygienic recommendations by DC Health and the CDC
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ONGOING REOPENING GUIDELINES

<p>Policy</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide regular training to workers on the Job Safety Plan
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<p>and Training</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage sick employees to stay home; encourage workers to report any safety and health concerns
<p>Physical Separation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage workers to travel to and from the job site separately. Wherever possible employees should not share a vehicle, including on job site • Safety meetings should be brief and should include discussion and training of the COVID-19 safety plan

Development and Construction (continued)

II. Construction Workers

(A) CONSTRUCTION ACTIVITIES

ONGOING REOPENING GUIDELINES

<p>Policy and Training</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When employees perform construction and maintenance activities within occupied homes, office buildings, and other establishments, these work locations present unique hazards with regards to COVID-19 exposures. All such workers should evaluate the specific hazards when determining best practices related to COVID-19.
<p>Physical Separation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where work trailers are used, all workers should maintain social distancing while inside the trailers.
<p>Health Measures</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Upon arrival at the job site and frequently thereafter, employees must wash hands and sanitize tools and work areas. • Employees shall clean hands often by washing them with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. When hand washing isn't

	<p>available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with greater than 60% ethanol or 70% isopropanol. Soap and water should be used if hands are visibly dirty.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Eye protection must always be worn by every employee while on job site.• Gloves must always be worn by every employee and should be appropriate to the task. If gloves are not typically required for the task, any glove is acceptable, including latex gloves.• Workers are required to wear masks or shields to cover their nose and mouth.• Workers shall bring food and water bottles from home to the job site and do not share.• To the extent tools, equipment, or vehicles must be shared, provide and instruct workers to use alcohol-based wipes to clean tools before and after use. When cleaning tools and equipment, workers should consult manufacturer recommendations for proper cleaning techniques and restrictions.• Employees performing cleaning will be issued proper personal protective equipment (“PPE”), such as nitrile, latex, or vinyl gloves and gowns, as recommended by the CDC.
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(B) COMMUNICATION AND SIGNAGE

ONGOING REOPENING GUIDELINES

Policy and Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• If doing resident-in-unit work, employees should ask other occupants of the residential space to keep a personal distance of six feet at a minimum. Workers should wash or sanitize hands immediately before starting and after completing the work.
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EQUITY CONSIDERATIONS FOR REOPENING

In making decisions around reopening the District's economy, we should prioritize the basic needs of our communities of color, who will bear the brunt of the job loss, medical costs, and death related to the public health emergency. Underresourced populations disproportionately work the low-wage jobs that have been eliminated, have less access to health insurance, and have pre-existing health conditions that make them more vulnerable to infection and complications.

The District must be vigilant to guard against further harming these communities when thinking through health measures, physical separation, policies and training related to residential and commercial real estate and the development and construction industry. Further, when mandating practices, the District remain aware of the disparate abilities of small, especially minority-owned landlords and contractors, to implement them without technical or financial assistance and make provisions to deliver such.

Where people live and work in the District plays a large part in their relative health and safety — disparities that COVID-19 and the health emergency exacerbate. The District must develop principles for equitably directing information and resources to all who live and work here. As such, the following equity principles should guide the implementation of these universal recommendations:

- All health measures, physical distancing requirements, and policies and trainings put into place in commercial, residential buildings, or construction sites should apply and be available to everyone who works and lives there, including but not limited to janitorial, concierge, garage and hospitality workers.
- All communications and guidance around COVID-19 distributed to workers and residents or displayed in buildings or at worksites should be transparent and clear about the risks involved, and produced in commonly spoken languages (e.g., English, Spanish, Amharic, Chinese), as well as being available in formats accessible to the visually and hearing impaired. Any hotlines for residential or commercial property owners, construction workers, tenants, and office-based service and maintenance employees must be staffed by individuals conversant in multiple languages. This includes communication around DC's emergency legislation as it relates to tenants, landlords and homeowners, which is continuously evolving.
- All guidance around reopening commercial and residential buildings should consider differing needs of vulnerable populations (See Figure 6: Equity Considerations for Vulnerable Populations) and allow for flexibility. For example, buildings that do not have air conditioning should consider opening community spaces and providing appropriate physical distancing guidance.

- All commercial offices, residential multifamily properties, and construction sites should conduct assessments around the safety of their workers and tenants. Workers and tenants whose safety cannot be guaranteed with proper PPE or physical distancing should not be required to work unless they are offered a guarantee that all safety protocols are being abided by. The District should work to provide access to necessary PPE for all buildings, with a focus on those that serve vulnerable tenants (e.g., low-income populations, justice-involved individuals, older adults living in congregate settings, people experiencing homelessness, etc.).
- All workers who do not have the option to work from home must be compensated by their employers for their calculated risks through hazard pay. Priority testing must also be expanded to those who take on these calculated risks.
- All workers should have access to flexible sick leave and supportive policies and practices and they should have a clear understanding of these policies. These flexible policies should permit workers to stay home to care for sick family members or provide childcare.

It is important to note that public housing residents and Housing Choice Voucher Participants are able to recertify income changes due to COVID-19 job losses in order to reduce rental burden during this pandemic. In addition, all evictions and recommendations for termination are postponed at this time. The District of Columbia Housing Authority (DCHA) is performing ongoing wellness checks of all residents to assist with filling needs related to food insecurity, health access and connectivity for distance learning of all school-aged youth.

District residents and workers who are able to meet their basic needs, including food, transportation, supplies, and rent are better able to fully comply with the health and safety measures required for our community's recovery. It is incumbent on The District to ensure that people who have suffered the most during the public health emergency do not face additional hardship when transitioning into and throughout the initial reopening phases.

Figure 6. Equity Considerations for Vulnerable Populations

Vulnerable Populations	Equity Considerations
<p>Low-income households</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Property owners must ensure that commercial and residential tenants receive information and are able to pay rent through multiple means, not solely provide online platforms as an alternative to in-person contact. As of 2019, 25% of DC households lacked broadband and 17% did not have a computer. • Some portions of the sector workforce may rely more heavily on public transportation to travel to and from the office environment. To the extent there are limitations on levels of service or access to public transportation during the reopening phase, employers and organizations should be sensitive to factors like extended travel times or flexible hour requirements. • Employers and organizations should bear in mind that high-speed internet may not be universally available for all members of the workforce. Remote working assignments that require certain technologies to be fully or effectively utilized may need to be adjusted or alternative arrangements made. • To the extent enhanced safety or cleaning requirements are not fully covered by employers or organizations, considerations should be made for those members of the workforce with less means to absorb these additional costs. • Adjustments to the schedule and operations of educational institutions across the District have had differing levels of impact on individuals depending on their means and living situations. Employers and organizations should consider that some members of the workforce have limited or no access to childcare options and thus may be impacted in their ability or willingness to return to the office environment.
<p>Immigrant Workforce</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communications and signage policies and adjustments should be made with sensitivity to the fact that English is a second language for some individuals • Whenever possible, the effect of language barriers should be considered, especially as it relates to signage and communications within buildings and office spaces • Enforcement procedures should also consider this aspect as individuals not complying with policies may be unaware of their non-compliance due to a language barrier • District government should consider providing universal signage resources (in electronic form) to assist organizations with multilingual signage needs

People with disabilities

- Communications and signage policies and adjustments should be made with sensitivity to and consideration of individuals with disabilities.
- This applies both to portions of the workforce within the sector and to visitors to buildings and office spaces
- Examples of these considerations include incorporating Braille or audible communications into signage to assist those with sight impairments, or consideration of the tension between communication for hearing-impaired individuals and face-covering policies.

PREPARATION AND RESOURCES NEEDED FOR REOPENING

Testing

- **Priority Testing for Essential Workers:** Frequent testing will eventually be needed for all individuals across all sectors, however, that capacity is not currently available. As testing facilities and materials continue to become more widely available (but before it is universal), the District should consider providing regular testing resources or facilities for portions of individuals within the residential and commercial real estate sector. Further, when sufficient testing is readily available to the general population, large-scale construction projects with 150 or more workers on a construction site per day should have onsite testing capabilities for COVID-19. A phasing plan for testing might look like the following:
 - INITIAL TESTING PHASE (Day 1)
 - Janitorial and cleaning vendors and service providers
 - Property/facility managers and building maintenance personnel
 - Building systems vendors and service providers (HVAC, elevators, etc.)
 - Security guards, porters, and building reception personnel
 - SECONDARY TESTING PHASE (Later Reopening Phases)
 - Portions of employees who return to office first
 - FULL TESTING PHASE
 - Everyone - all the time
- **Employee Testing:** Employers who elect to require testing of employees should refer to local health department guidelines for testing protocols, availability and locations.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

- **PPE for Workers:** PPE (masks/face coverings and gloves) will be necessary for commercial and residential building management employees as well as third-

party contractors performing work in common areas, amenity space or in residential units for maintenance emergencies. These workers include on-site property managers and employees in charge of leasing, building engineers, janitorial personnel, service technicians (HVAC, plumbers, electricians, elevator maintenance), and security personnel, were identified as essential critical infrastructure employees by the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Agency on April 17.¹² Management should make best efforts to provide hand sanitizers in common areas and amenity space as well as employee offices.

- **PPE Portal:** The committee is aware that industries across the District, including but not limited to health care workers, transportation workers, restaurant and grocery staff, and educational staff will all require appropriate PPE. Similar to actions taken by Los Angeles and Kansas City, the committee proposes a portal linking PPE local and regional suppliers with District industries in need.¹³ The District, in partnership with private and/or regional partners such as the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments could help ensure small and large businesses are linked with suppliers that meet their needs. The Kansas City portal, KCPPE.com, displays transparent pricing for masks, hand sanitizer, face shields; separates bulk mask requests from targeted ones; and allows local businesses to apply as providers.

Transportation Recommendations

For some portions of the workforce included in the real estate and construction sector, reliance on and utilization of traditional public transportation measures is more vital than for others. Limited service levels or operational changes may impact the ability for certain employees, vendors or service providers to be able to return to work. The resulting limitations on workforce availability may have impacts on numerous employers across residential and commercial real estate, as well as construction. Companies, property managers, and office leaders should be aware of and sensitive to changes or adjustments to public transportation resources. When possible, landlords and tenants should be aware of and communicate adjustments to WMATA service levels to their workforce.

¹² Director Christopher C. Krebs. Department of Homeland Security Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Agency. 2020. "Advisory Memorandum on Identification of Essential Critical Infrastructure Workers During COVID-19 Response."
https://www.cisa.gov/sites/default/files/publications/Version_3.0_CISA_Guidance_on_Essential_Critical_Infrastructure_Workers_4.pdf

¹³ <https://lovla.org/>

The District should consider taking steps to make alternatives to public transportation more accessible, for example:

- Make Capital Bikeshare free as an option/alternative to public transportation
- Provide subsidy for ridesharing services as an alternative to public transportation
- Ease parking restrictions during the reopening phase given the reduced capacity of public transportation and the potential for a resulting increase in driving by members of the real estate and construction workforce

Legislative, Regulatory, and Policy Recommendations

The committee recommends the following legislative, regulatory and policy changes to successfully position the real estate and construction industry to achieve reopening goals:

- **Legislative Recommendations**
 - Consider legislative solutions to address liability concerns for employers and landlords acting in good faith as reopening coincides with increased levels of exposure and infection.
 - Indemnification protection for building managers is necessary for them to begin to open amenity space. Communicating social distancing and face covering protocols as well as providing hand sanitizers in amenity space is not enough to protect management from exposure to liability from resident illness, or employee exposure to sick residents and visitors.
- **Regulatory Recommendations**
 - In light of the COVID-19 public health emergency, recipients may use alternative methods to meet the requirements under permitting, construction contracts, bank loans etc., such as:
 - Allowing the use of online notary public services if the recipient's district permits notarized digital signatures validated with an electronic notary seal.
 - Allowing the use of a subscribing witness if the District permits such use, permitting the document to be signed in the presence of a witness; the witness, not the signer, then appears before a notary if doing so does not compromise social distancing.
 - Allowing the filing of unsworn declarations executed under penalty of perjury rather than sworn affidavits, including affidavits of no change.
- **Policy Recommendations**
 - Continue to conduct virtual inspections for new leases participating in the Housing Choice Voucher Program and suspend inspections for recertification

- Open the DC Court record office to allow criminal screening for new move-ins and annual Housing Choice Voucher recertifications
- Consider a certification process for cleaning service providers to assist with training and confirmation of applicable policies (e.g., PPE, physical distancing, approved materials/products, insurance, etc.)
- Consider virtual Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs (DCRA) inspections of construction sites.

Workforce Changes and Needs

- **Continued Telework:** When possible, consider continuation of remote work for portions of the office/co-working employee base as necessary to facilitate adherence to social distancing guidelines. If telework is not possible given data security concerns, technology challenges, etc., consider phasing/shift plans for those portions of the employee base that do return to the office environment as necessary to facilitate adherence to social distancing guidelines. This graduated approach to the return of the workforce to office environment is necessary to ensure an orderly return to work and will help facilitate adherence to new policies and physical distancing guidelines.
- **Third-Party Service Contracts:** Revise contracts with third-party service companies to require PPE and cleaning/disinfecting protocols consistent with OSHA and CDC guidelines.
- **Sector Health Ambassadors:** Across the real estate and construction industries, Health Ambassadors should be designated as business point of contacts for developing and maintaining health and safety policies, coordinating with District government officials, including DC Health, and collaborating with industry counterparts to ensure internal policies align and are constantly evaluated as restrictions are relaxed or intensified.
- **At-Risk Workforce:** When possible, companies and organizations should have sensitivity to portions of the workforce (high-risk populations, employees with family or child care obligations, etc.) who may need to spend longer periods of time (beyond the reopening phase) in remote working situations.

COMMUNICATION AND SIGNAGE

FIGURE 7. COMMUNICATION AND SIGNAGE BY SECTOR

Sector Responsibility	Communication and Signage Required
District of Columbia Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide recommended signage templates in e-mail/download form that private sector can easily access, print and use • Posters regarding self-health monitoring • Since mask wearing is mandatory, provide signs building managers can put at entrances highlighting this requirement • Posters with graphics regarding coughing, sneezing and handwashing etiquette for building managers to place in common areas and washrooms
Commercial Office Space	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In-office environment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Interior office spaces: Interior flow and distance guides (path of travel, 6' distance, etc.), room door guides (capacity, utilization rules, time of last cleaning, etc.) for conference rooms and common spaces, status of gathering spaces (open/closed) and utilization rules for dining areas and high touch equipment (coffee/water machines, vending machines, etc.) ○ Access points (elevator lobbies, reception, etc.): Office status (open/closed) and operations (hours, etc.), delivery and visitor policies, explanations of cleaning or self-sanitization stance and PPE policies, physical distancing signage ○ Travel paths and restrooms: Physical distancing (flow of travel, 6' markers, floor decals, etc.), restroom door guides (capacity, utilization rules, time of last cleaning, etc.), blocking off of urinals or sinks that are not 6 feet apart • Building entry and common area environment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Access/entry points (including garage and loading docks: Building status (open/closed), building hours, operations and amenities, visitor policy ○ Main lobby/reception: Screening stance (thermal yes/no, etc.), explanation of cleaning or self-sanitization stance and PPE policies, physical distancing (floor decals, waiting areas, etc.), guides to explain elevator capacity plan (including 6' distance markers inside cab) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Travel paths: Physical distancing (floor decals, flow of travel, etc.), guides to explain elevator capacity plan (including 6' distance markers inside cab), where possible, allow for the opening of stairwells to ease the

	<p>burden of reduced elevator capacity. Consider designating separate “up” and “down” stairwells where possible.</p>
<p>Residential Apartments and Condos</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication in lobby – define expectations with brief, easily read and situated signage • Deploy floor decals and signage to orient movement within lobbies and hallways with particular attention to pinch points • Near elevators, post signs with respect to expectations of elevator use, number of people riding at same time, etc. • Consider placing signs on PPE disposal bins with instructions on proper disposal and etiquette • Install signage to manage washroom line-ups and/or encourage physical distancing • Apply decals on the mirrors demonstrating proper hand washing techniques • Install signage/decals in/outside mailroom, loading docks and shipping explaining new behavior • Install signage with physical distancing and personal hygiene messages at loading docks and pick-up facilities • Appropriate signage for specialized PPE disposal bins with key messages at loading docks and pick-up facilities • Signage on physical distancing in amenity space.
<p>Development and Construction</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Signs to be posted at the job site that provide generic information for hand washing, social distancing, and other preventative measures can be supplied by the District government or other authority based on best practices and to ensure uniformity. For instance, the CDC offers posters with messages that include “Stay at home when you are sick,” “Stop the Spread of Germs,” and “Symptoms of Coronavirus Disease 2019,” which can be placed at site entrances, elevators, buck hoists, job boards, break areas, and toilets. • Information specific to the industry, the jobsite, or equipment used there should be provided and posted by the general contractor or employer. In addition to posting materials in English, materials should be posted in Spanish.

ISSUES FOR FUTURE PHASES

CONSIDERATIONS FOR FUTURE ROUNDS OF REOPENING

Implementing stakeholders should ensure that new mitigation measures considered for reopening allow for flexibility to either ramp up or ease based on the District's performance against public health indicators. Communication plans therefore must be robust to ensure rapid response to a dynamic public health environment and residents and workers who rely on updated guidelines for safety. The guidelines adopted by relevant industry stakeholders should remain in place until herd immunity is achieved via vaccination or widespread treatment. As the District progresses through each phase of reopening, the following represent additional considerations, by sector:

FIGURE 8. CONSIDERATIONS FOR FUTURE ROUNDS OF RECOVERY

Sector	Considerations for Future Rounds of Recovery
<p style="text-align: center;">General Considerations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <p>Best Practices Library: As the reopening process unfolds across the country, the recommendations, guidelines and best practices developed today will undoubtedly need to be adapted and changed. The District should develop a living database that can capture these updates and provide a system or process by which organizations can provide input, feedback and changes as they discover improved ways to implement and utilize the guidelines and recommendations. This tool could be used as a model for other states to follow and, as others implement similar knowledge bases, could eventually be rolled into a national database. Similarly, this tool could be matched with or linked to a similar database of public health recommendations/guidelines or similar information (CDC, OSHA, WHO, etc).</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Residential and Commercial</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <p>Clean Energy DC Act: The Clean Energy DC Act regulations are set to start in January 2021 and require significant investment in existing building systems. Delaying the implementation of these guidelines will allow owners time to absorb and adjust to the financial hardship incurred during the public health emergency.</p> <p>Health and Safety Building Certification: A potential idea building off of the BOMA 360 Performance Program in 2009, would be create a new building certification program rooted in the achievement of health and safety measures required by DC Health and industry officials. The BOMA program currently reflect today's standards of excellence – taking into account everything from electric vehicle charging stations to</p>

	<p>occupant wellness. To receive the designation, the required points for each section must be achieved. The District should consider working with industry leaders to potentially incorporate elements that must be considered in this new reality into a similar certification process.</p>
Development and Construction	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Establish risk-mitigation programs for employees who still need to work onsite. Invest in education campaigns for front-line employees who have to be onsite so they know what to do to minimize the spread of the disease and what to do if they experience symptoms.• Recommend negative air for enclosed construction areas in buildings on large construction projects• Recommend different portable bathrooms and bathrooms for trades, i.e., concrete workers use a separate port-a-potty from the carpenters etc.• Interactions with District agencies, DCRA, DOEE, DDOT have moved primarily online and having these virtual options should continue, as should online hearings with the Zoning Commission and the Historic Preservation Review Board.

CONSIDERATIONS FOR RECOVERY

Consider re-shoring or business attraction opportunities: Develop creative incentive structures to attract new PPE manufacturing businesses to the District and consider tax credit/abatement structures for net new job creation or tax revenue generation (include residency requirements, workforce programs and local hiring):

- Encourage the establishment of 3D printing or fabrication laboratory facilities
- Re-shore existing facilities from other countries or attraction from other US locations
- Encourage conversion of existing manufacturing facilities in the District to incorporate PPE production
- Develop creative incentive structures for the conversion of existing vacant or underutilized office or parking garages into facilities for light manufacturing, storage or distribution.

ISSUES FOR FUTURE PHASES

This report provides recommendations and considerations based on industry standards that will help the District and leaders within the real estate and construction sectors better understand how to begin reopening. As the District gradually shifts from reopening to recovery, this committee recommends maintaining the formal public-private dialogue demonstrated by the ReOpen DC effort. Such coordination will be vital both on an operational level as the public health environment remains dynamic and on a policy level as the District seeks to resurrect the economy with innovative, value-based strategies and programs.

Almost one year ago, Mayor Bowser issued a challenge to both the administration and the city's housing developers to create 36,000 new units of housing and 12,000 affordable units equitably dispersed across all eight wards by 2025 to meet the city's current and future housing needs. A year removed from the initial Mayor's Order, the COVID-19 pandemic has impacted the District's ability to meet its housing goals and exacerbated the inequalities it sought to mitigate. As the District considers the policies and programs that will shape the post-pandemic recovery, the need for affordable housing remains great.

Similarly, the first step in ensuring the city is able to reimagine residential and commercial space is through the endorsement of a Comprehensive Plan that provides the flexibility and foresight to set the long-term vision for the physical development of the District. Passing the Comprehensive Plan is the keystone to any innovative repurposing of the District's commercial office space and will allow for new opportunities entrenched in the city's guiding values of health, opportunity, prosperity, and equality.

The recommendations and opportunities identified by this committee serve as a starting point to reopen the District's real estate and construction sector, reinforce the need for housing opportunities across all eight wards and a Comprehensive Plan that will allow for future equity-based land policies, and advance new ideas to restore economic prosperity to the city and its residents. The committee welcomes continued engaged with District Government officials as the real estate and construction industries continue to face the COVID-19 challenge and thank Mayor Bowser for this opportunity to provide initial guidelines for reopening.

RESEARCH, RESOURCES, AND REFERENCES

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EXTERNAL STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

In addition to the feedback gathered from 25 committee members, the committee engaged the following individuals and organizations for reopening guidance and recommendations:

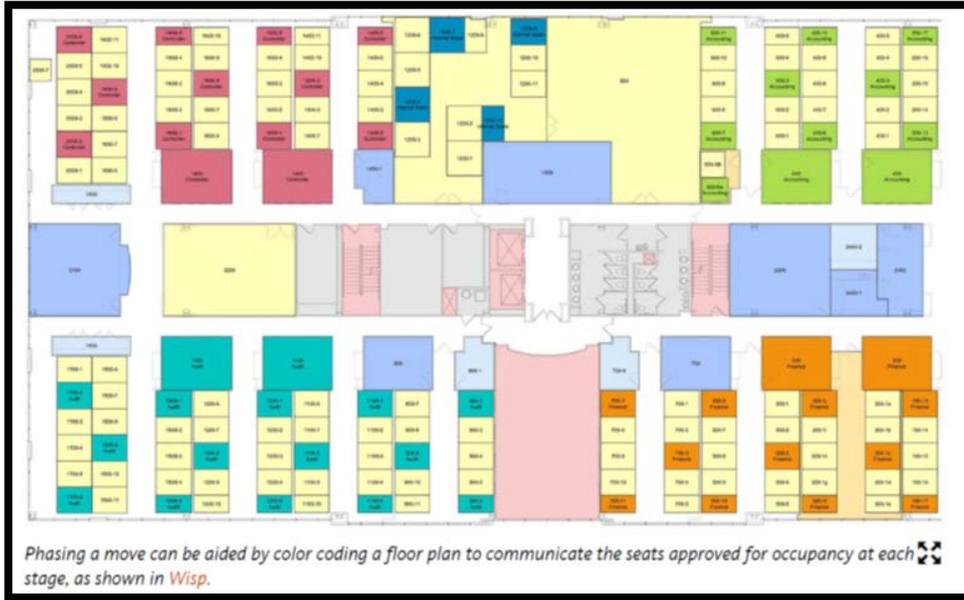
1. Dr. Anneta Arno, DC Health
2. Bassem Boustany, MCN Build

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3. David J. Byrd, Minority Business Development Agency, U.S. Department of Commerce
4. Bill Calhoun, Clark Construction
5. Oliver Carr, Carr Properties
6. Sharlene Castle, JayDot, Inc.
7. Kevin Clinton, Federal City Council
8. Adam Cook, JLL
9. Stephen W. Courtien, Baltimore - DC Building Trades, The Center for Construction Research and Training, North America's Building Trades Unions
10. Darien Grant, Turner Construction
11. Phil Hecht, Housing Up
12. Isha Heru, Community Connections DC
13. Scottie Irving, Blue Skye
14. Maggie Johnson, MakeOffices
15. William Kaye, Colliers International
16. Jim Knight, Jubilee Housing
17. Doreen Littlejohn, National Association of Minority Contractors
18. Omar McIntosh, Smoot Construction
19. Scott Nordheimer, Urban Atlantic
20. Sandra Paret, AECOM
21. John Seavey, Gilbane
22. Raj Setty, ASHRAE
23. Wendell Stemley, Black IPO
24. Jeffrey C. Utz, Goulston Storrs
25. Balfour Beatty
26. CNHED Support Housing Working Group
27. Tiber Hudson LLC

APPENDICES

APPENDIX I: GENSLER OFFICE RECONFIGURATION EXAMPLES



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