



# Transforming The Capital Region's Rail System

2021

**Gensler** *In partnership with*

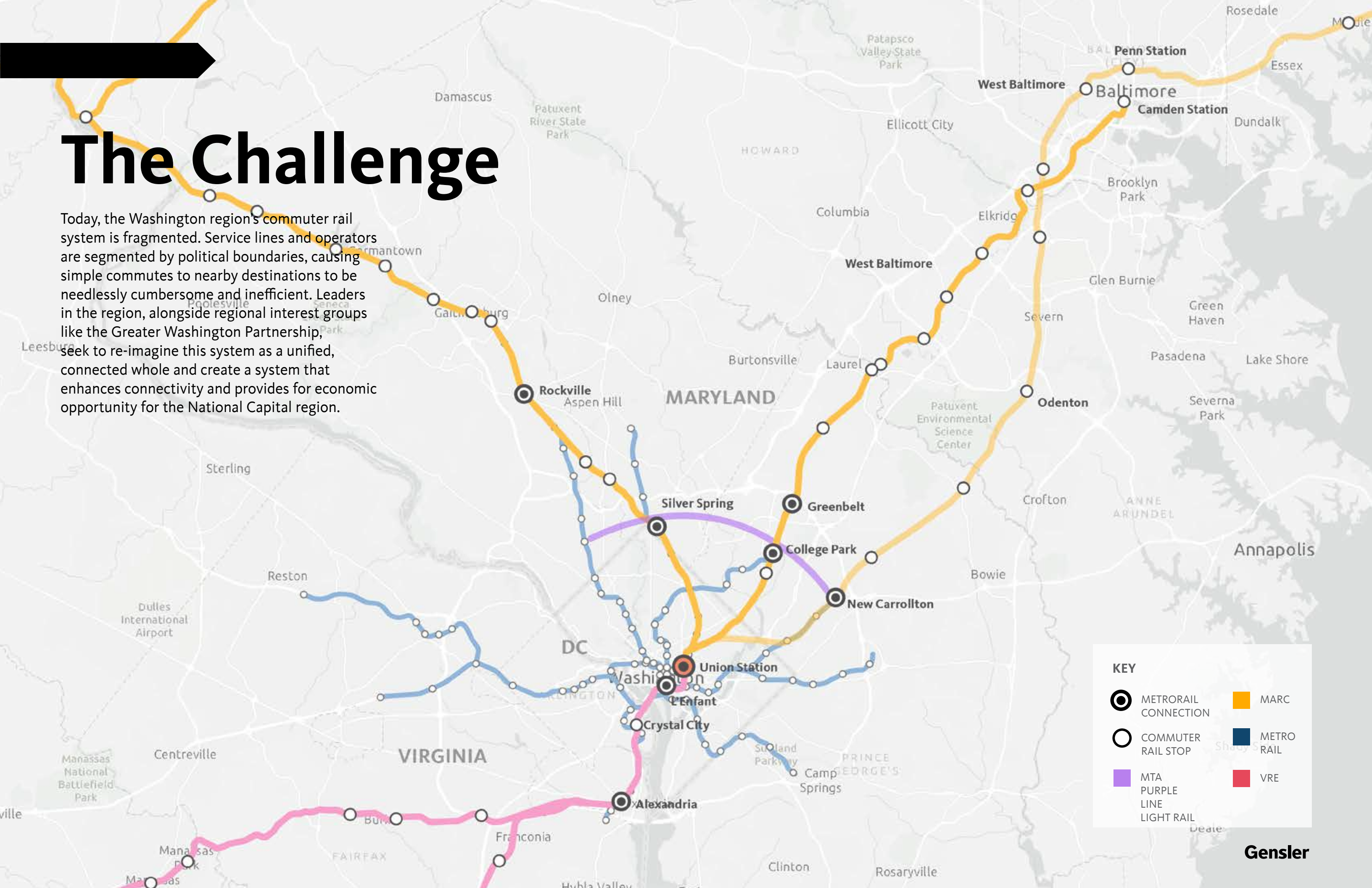
Capital Region Rail Vision





# The Challenge

Today, the Washington region's commuter rail system is fragmented. Service lines and operators are segmented by political boundaries, causing simple commutes to nearby destinations to be needlessly cumbersome and inefficient. Leaders in the region, alongside regional interest groups like the Greater Washington Partnership, seek to re-imagine this system as a unified, connected whole and create a system that enhances connectivity and provides for economic opportunity for the National Capital region.





# The Opportunity for Regional Connectivity

Tomorrow, a unified rail system will provide seamless connections between the region's economic hubs and its neighborhoods. It will link innovative projects in Baltimore, New Carrollton, and National Landing with the District of Columbia as the central hub. The regional momentum these projects usher in will help set the stage for enhanced station designs and rider experiences. It will also encourage the development of a cohesive regional rail brand and a more resilient economy that can better serve all residents by increasing their access to life-changing career opportunities.

## Union Station

Expanded Washington Union Station and new Burnham Place development.

## L'Enfant

Cross-state commuter rail would reimagine L'Enfant Station as a core, gateway hub

## National Landing/ Crystal City/DCA Airport

National Landing, new VRE station and multi-modal connection to DCA airport

## Silver Spring Transit Center

## College Park (UMD)

## New Carrollton

Reimagined New Carrollton station with adjacent commercial and residential development.

## New Long Bridge Rail Crossing over the Potomac

## New B&P Tunnel

## Baltimore Penn Station

Expanded Baltimore Penn Station with new adjacent commercial development.



Baltimore Penn Station





**THE RIDER  
EXPERIENCE**



**THE STATION  
OPPORTUNITIES**



**THE REGIONAL  
BRAND**







# The Rider Experience

The existing commuter rail system significantly impacts how we experience each day. It is a wellspring of potential that seldom gets the attention it deserves.



A woman with dark, curly hair is shown in profile, looking upwards. She is wearing a white t-shirt and a small hoop earring. The background is a night scene with blurred light trails from a train or city lights, creating a sense of motion and time. A diagonal line divides the image, with the woman on the right and the light trails on the left.

# TIME

*The most precious and fleeting resource in the world.*

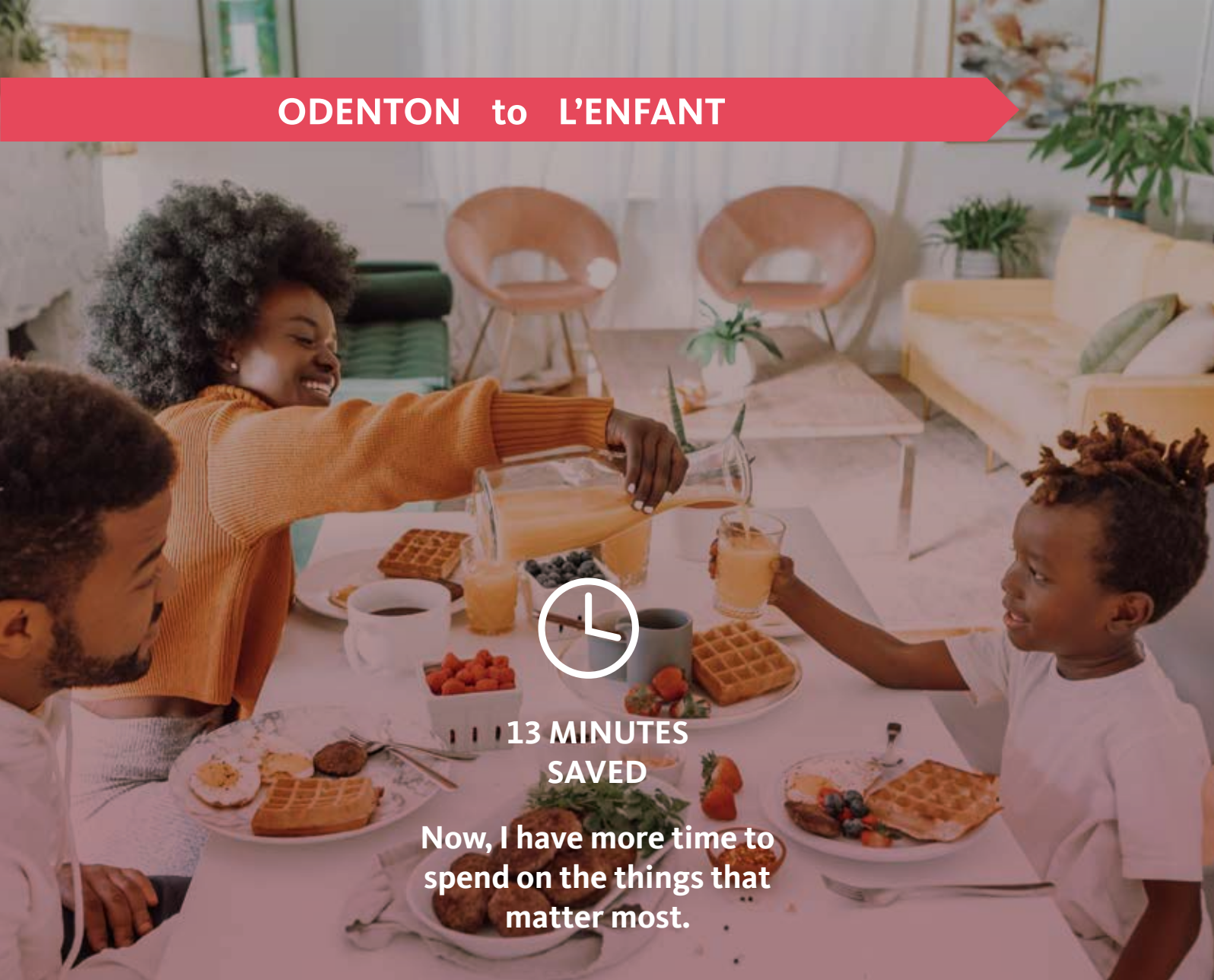
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# CONNECTION

*Networks determine our access to the things that matter most.*

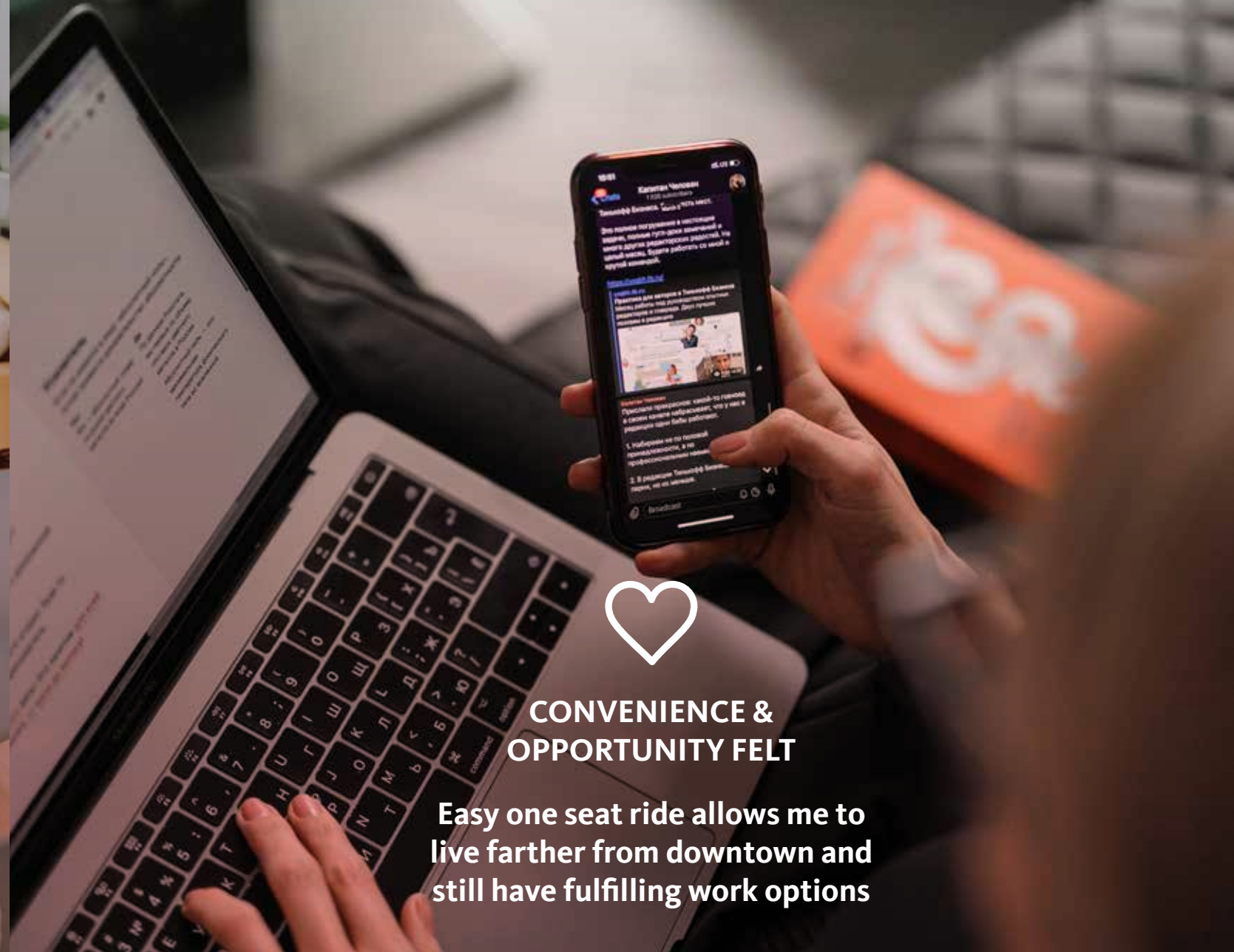


## ODENTON to L'ENFANT



**13 MINUTES  
SAVED**

Now, I have more time to  
spend on the things that  
matter most.



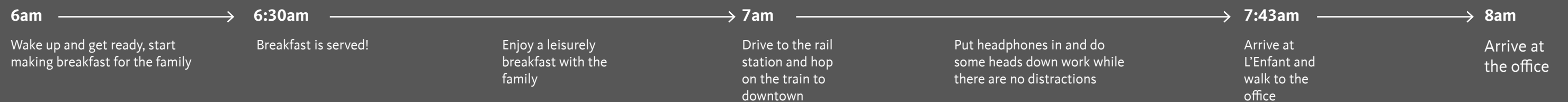
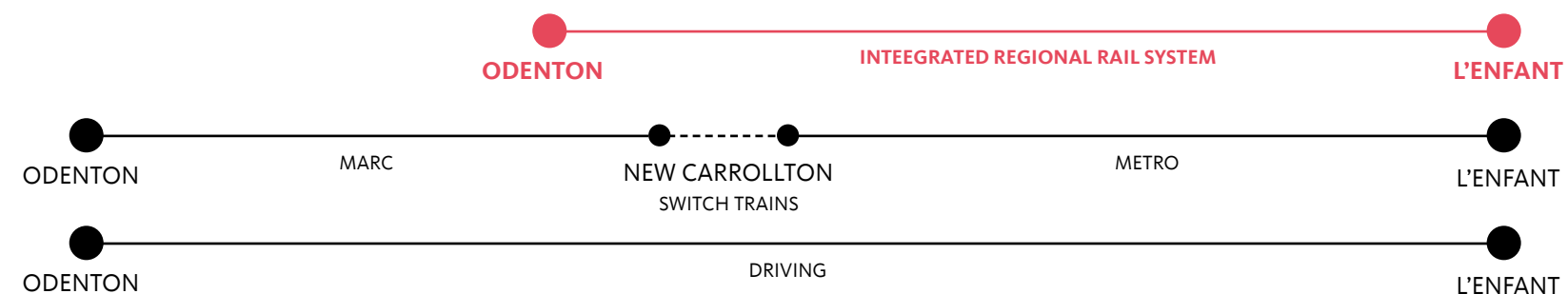
**CONVENIENCE &  
OPPORTUNITY FELT**

Easy one seat ride allows me to  
live farther from downtown and  
still have fulfilling work options

### FUTURE REGIONAL RAIL: 43 mins

CURRENT TRANSIT: 56 mins

CURRENT DRIVING: 55 mins







NEW CARROLLTON to CRYSTAL CITY



17 MINUTES  
SAVED

Fewer transfers means peace of mind I'll get there quickly without concern of missed connections.



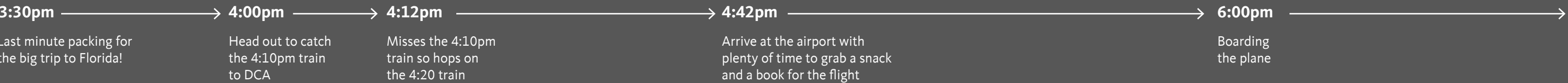
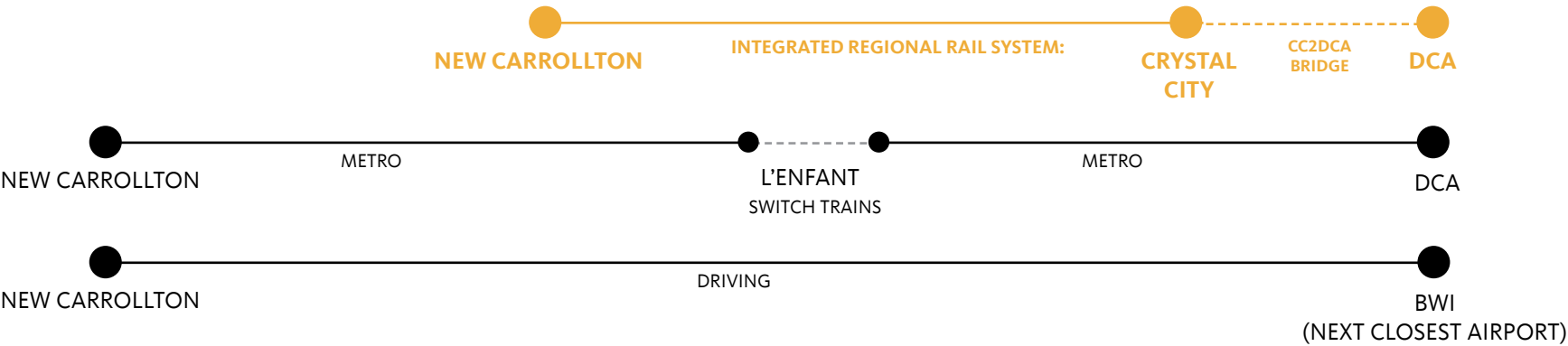
CONVENIENCE &  
OPPORTUNITY FELT

Easy one seat ride allows me to consider flying out of DCA on my next journey.

FUTURE REGIONAL RAIL: 30 mins

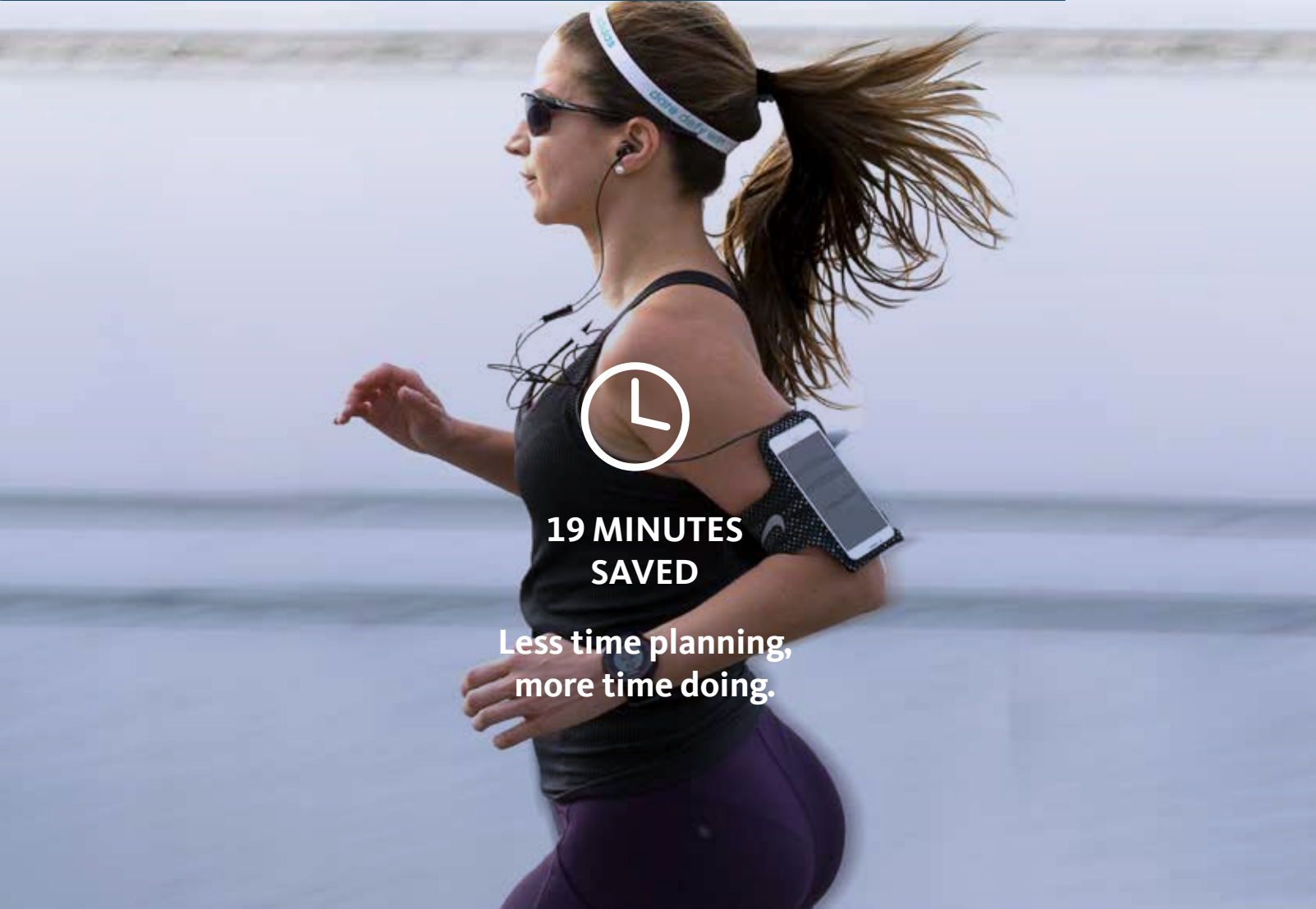
CURRENT TRANSIT: 47 mins

CURRENT DRIVING: 35 mins





ALEXANDRIA to BALTIMORE



19 MINUTES  
SAVED

Less time planning,  
more time doing.



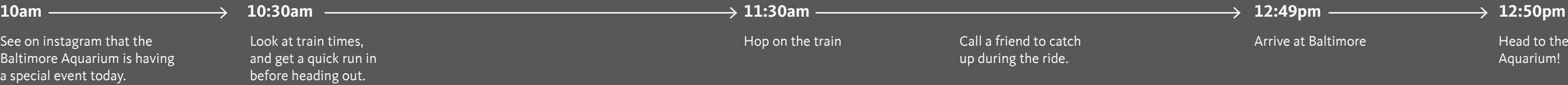
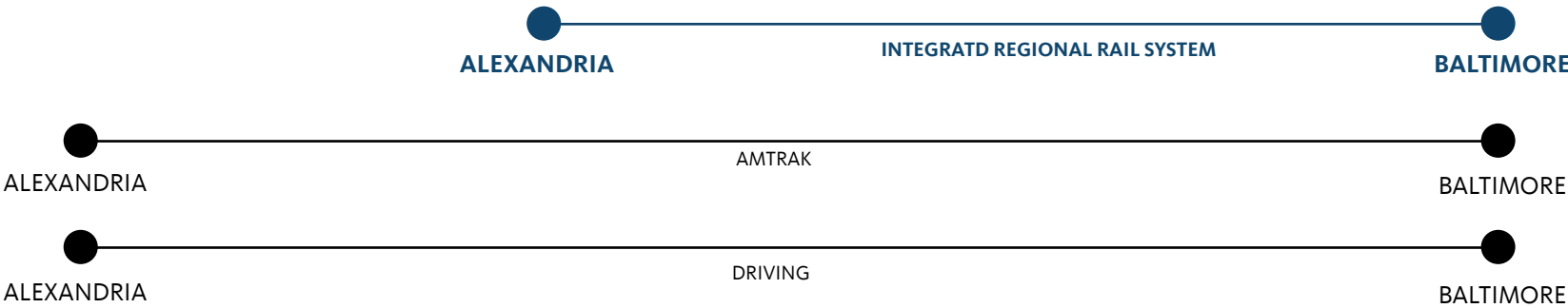
CONVENIENCE &  
OPPORTUNITY FELT

Easy one seat ride allows  
me to spend the day visiting  
local attractions and catch  
up with friends on the way  
there and back.

FUTURE REGIONAL RAIL: 1 hr 27 mins

CURRENT TRANSIT: 1 hr 46 mins

CURRENT DRIVING: 1 hr 40 mins





”

My son loves his new school, reading is his favorite subject.

## REGIONAL GROWTH

A vision for transit-oriented housing and targeted inclusive strategies means that formerly sequestered opportunities will become accessible to the entire region.

”

First day on the new job in DC!

## ECONOMIC GROWTH

Stronger connections between people, jobs, and housing means a more stable and naturally innovative regional economy in which all of society can withstand the next major crisis, whenever it may come.

”

Quick trip to the Spy Museum today?

## CULTURAL OFFERINGS

On-demand access to the region's cultural features means new tourism opportunities, increased business revenue, and a more lively exchange of ideas to weave a tight social fabric.

”

I've got 20 minutes on the train, I'll look then.

## SEAMLESSNESS

Seamless transportation service means less uncertainty, easier regional access and increasing transit options.

”

I never have to sit in traffic anymore!

## SUSTAINABILITY

Fewer drivers and more robust first- and last-mile connections means a more sustainable future and a region that can build on a reputation of climate leadership.





# The Station Opportunities

A successful system must be part and parcel of the region it serves. This requires purposeful, tailored design for its stations that follows from the local community's immediate needs, defining character, and aspirations.

A unified commuter rail will be the catalyst for stations to better achieve these ideals



## REGIONAL RAIL STATION DESIGN PRINCIPLES



### BE SAFE AND COMFORTABLE

Include family restrooms, charging stations, and shelter from harsh weather



### BE AUTHENTIC TO THEIR CONTEXT

Stations should reflect the scale and character of the context in which they reside



### PROVIDE CONVENIENCE AMENITIES

Amazon lockers, dry cleaning, and grocers are convenient for commuter travelers and generate revenue



### BE RESILIENT

Provide the infrastructure to adapt to technological evolution



### HAVE CLEAR & CONSISTENT WAYFINDING

Clear directional signage can quickly direct passengers to the correct platform and nearby places of interest



### ENHANCE BRAND RECOGNITION

Wayfinding elements and passenger checkpoints allow for rail brands to be reinforced



### ADJACENT DEVELOPMENT

Stations can provide vehicle parking in structured garages to make better use of adjacent land



### INTEGRATE CONNECTING MODES OF TRANSPORTATION

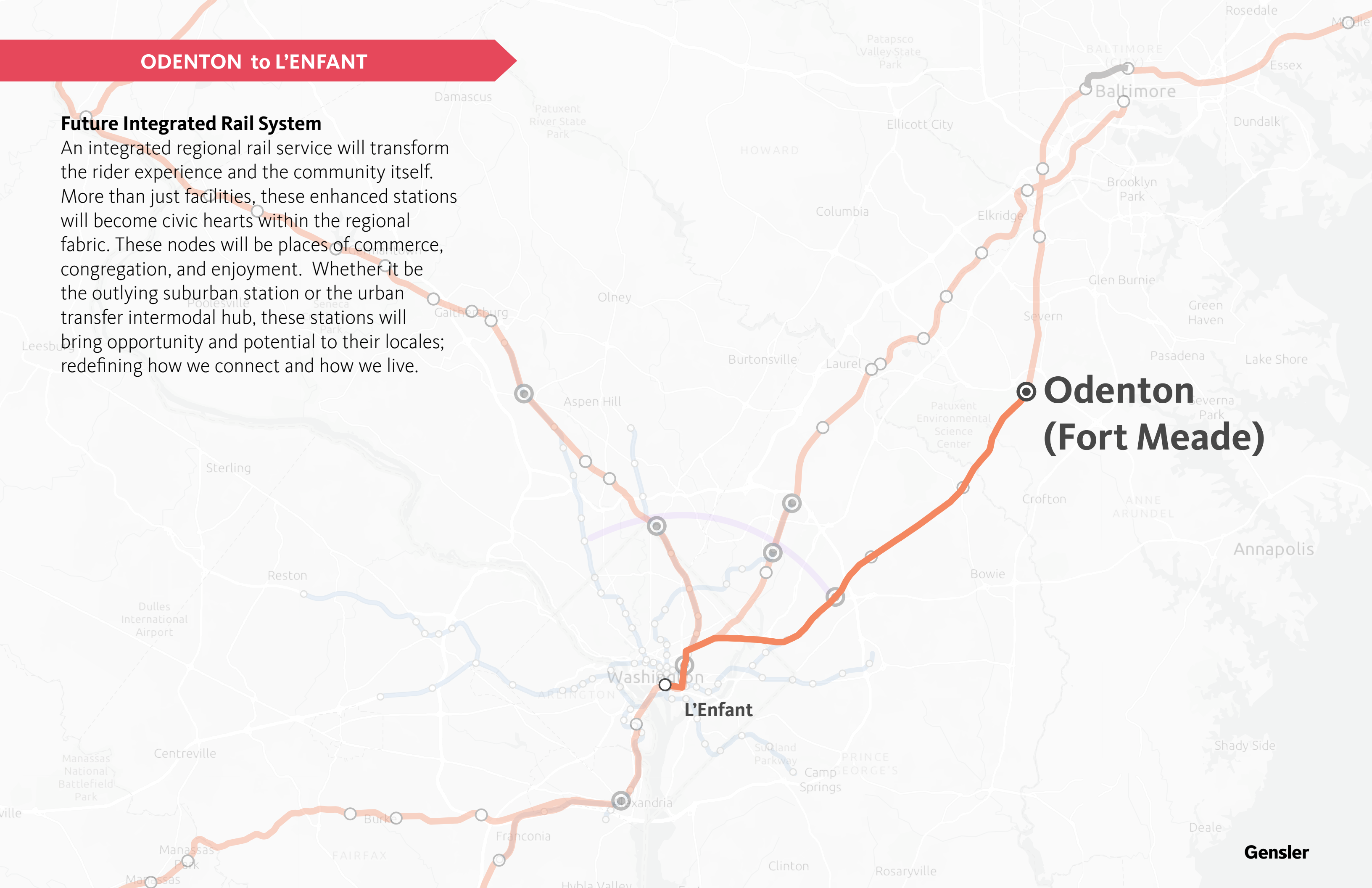
To support seamless connectivity stations should be organized to support first-and-last-mile connecting modes



## ODENTON to L'ENFANT

### Future Integrated Rail System

An integrated regional rail service will transform the rider experience and the community itself. More than just facilities, these enhanced stations will become civic hearts within the regional fabric. These nodes will be places of commerce, congregation, and enjoyment. Whether it be the outlying suburban station or the urban transfer intermodal hub, these stations will bring opportunity and potential to their locales; redefining how we connect and how we live.



**Odenton  
(Fort Meade)**

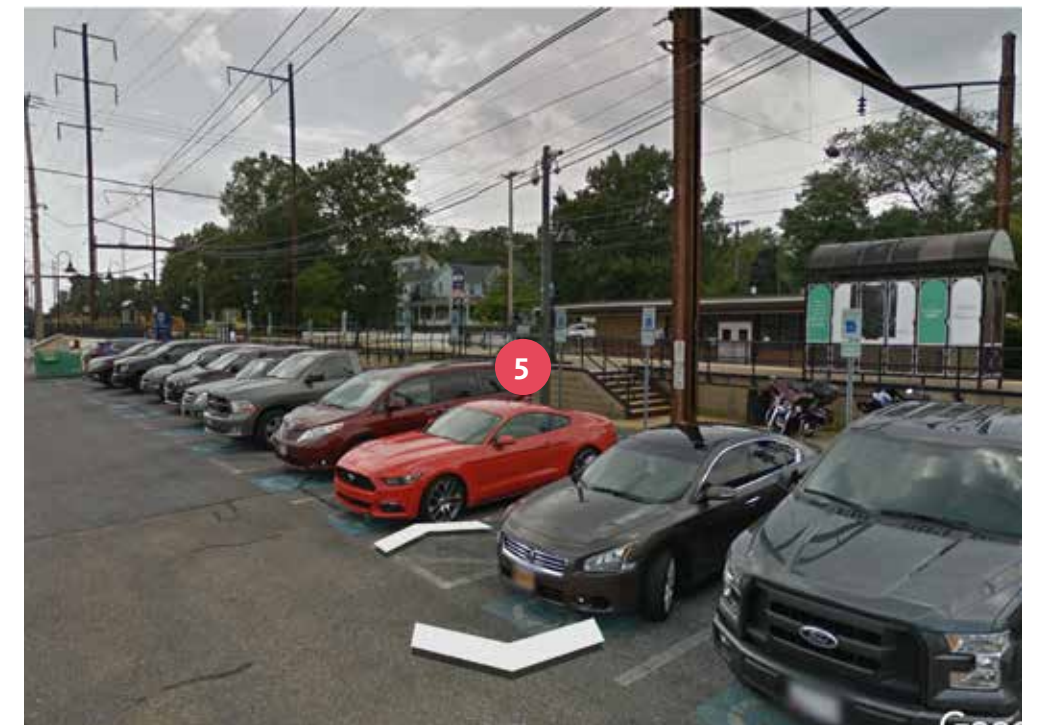
**L'Enfant**



## ODENTON STATION: EXISTING CONDITION

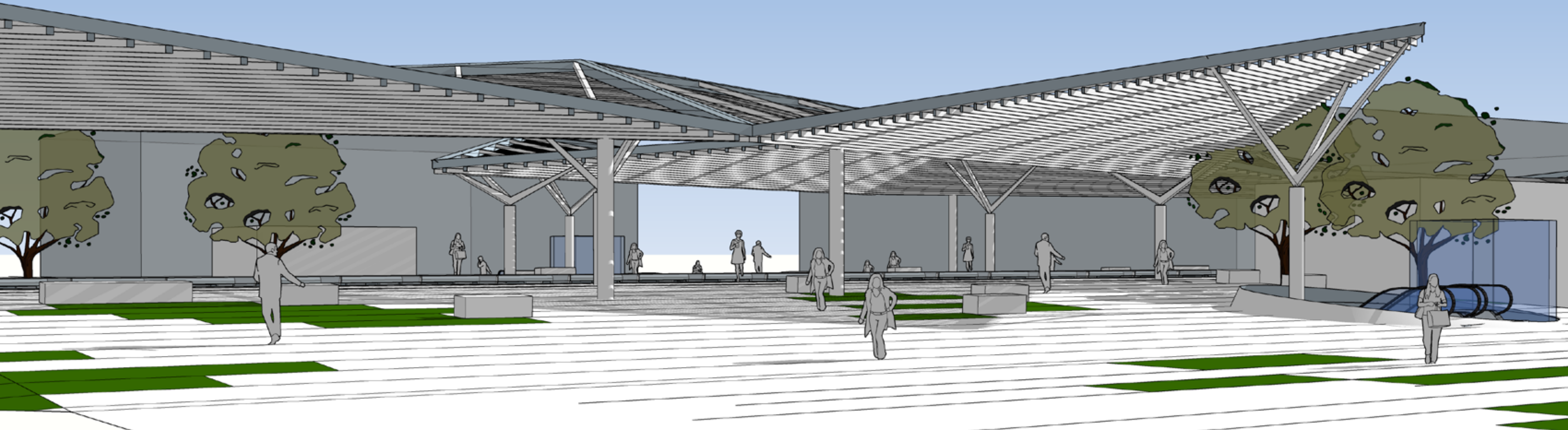
Existing neighborhood commuter stations, like Odenton, lack a cohesive experience. It's not only isolated from its surroundings by an expanse of parking, even the platforms act as individual entities with a minimal sense of connection.

- 1 Stations lack identity and placemaking
- 2 Independent platforms without unifying element functions as two stations
- 3 Parking lots isolate stations from surroundings
- 4 End connections create wayfinding and orientation obstacles
- 5 Change between platforms and grade isolate platform





## ODENTON STATION: FUTURE PROPOSAL



### **The Neighborhood Commuter Station: An Opportunity We Shouldn't Miss**

The outlying stations will be the beginning and end to many daily commutes. These stations, like Odenton, are rife with opportunity. Rather than isolated platforms amidst a field of parking, these stations could offer opportunities for engagement and personal fulfillment.



A chance to grab coffee  
on my way in and dinner  
on my way out, or a  
comfortable place to catch  
up on work while I wait.



## ODENTON STATION: FUTURE PROPOSAL

The stations are composed around three primary components: canopy, plaza, and activity. The canopy provides shelter for the platform as well as a placemaking opportunity for the station. The adjacent plaza acts as a zipper, stitching together the rail experience of the platforms and the surrounding community. Here, programmable and self-purposing spaces host a variety of commercial and entertainment possibilities. These activated cores might even become seeds, providing a nexus for future development.



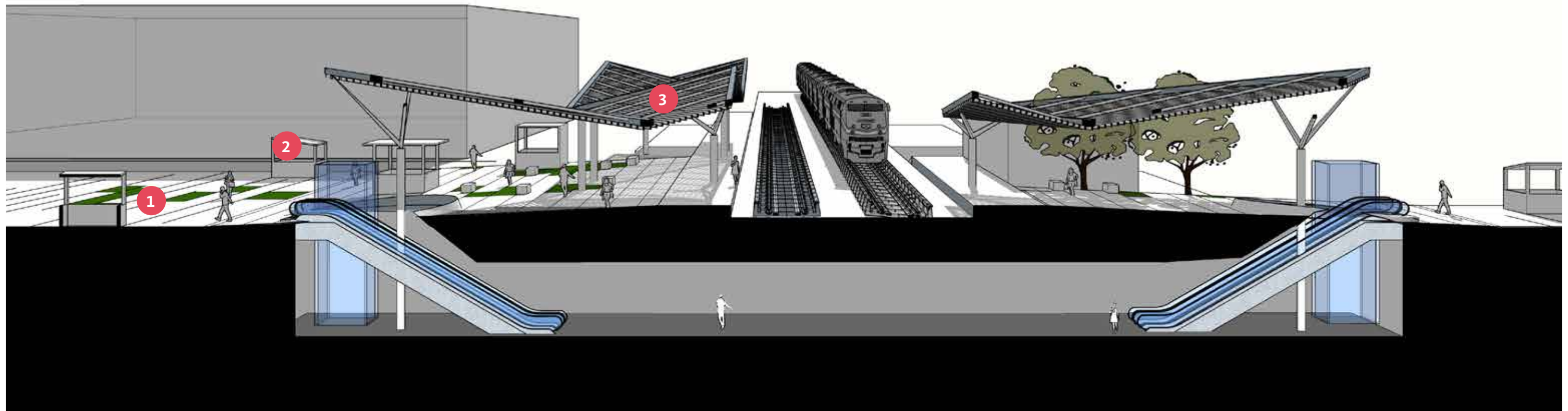
**1** Folding Ground Plane



**2** Retail Amenities



**3** Canopy





## ODENTON STATION: FUTURE PROPOSAL

Paved and landscaped plazas, with areas for pop-up retail, create a soft transition between parking and transit. In these inviting forecourts, travelers might grab a morning coffee on their way to work or finish the last few pages of their book before heading home in the evening. As a destination in itself travelers are encouraged to come early and linger after arriving. With every moment filled with potential, not a precious second is wasted on “just waiting”.

### 1 Canopy

Articulated form creates iconic presences with opportunities for branding and lighting, turning the station itself into a piece of civic art

### 2 Future Development

Adjacent sites now centered on a dynamic plaza will become attractive development opportunities

### 3 Future Parking

Structured parking reduces walking distances, increases capacity, and provides additional area for development

### 4 Sloped Plaza

Softens transition between parking and platforms - allowing a seamless experience

### 5 Center Node

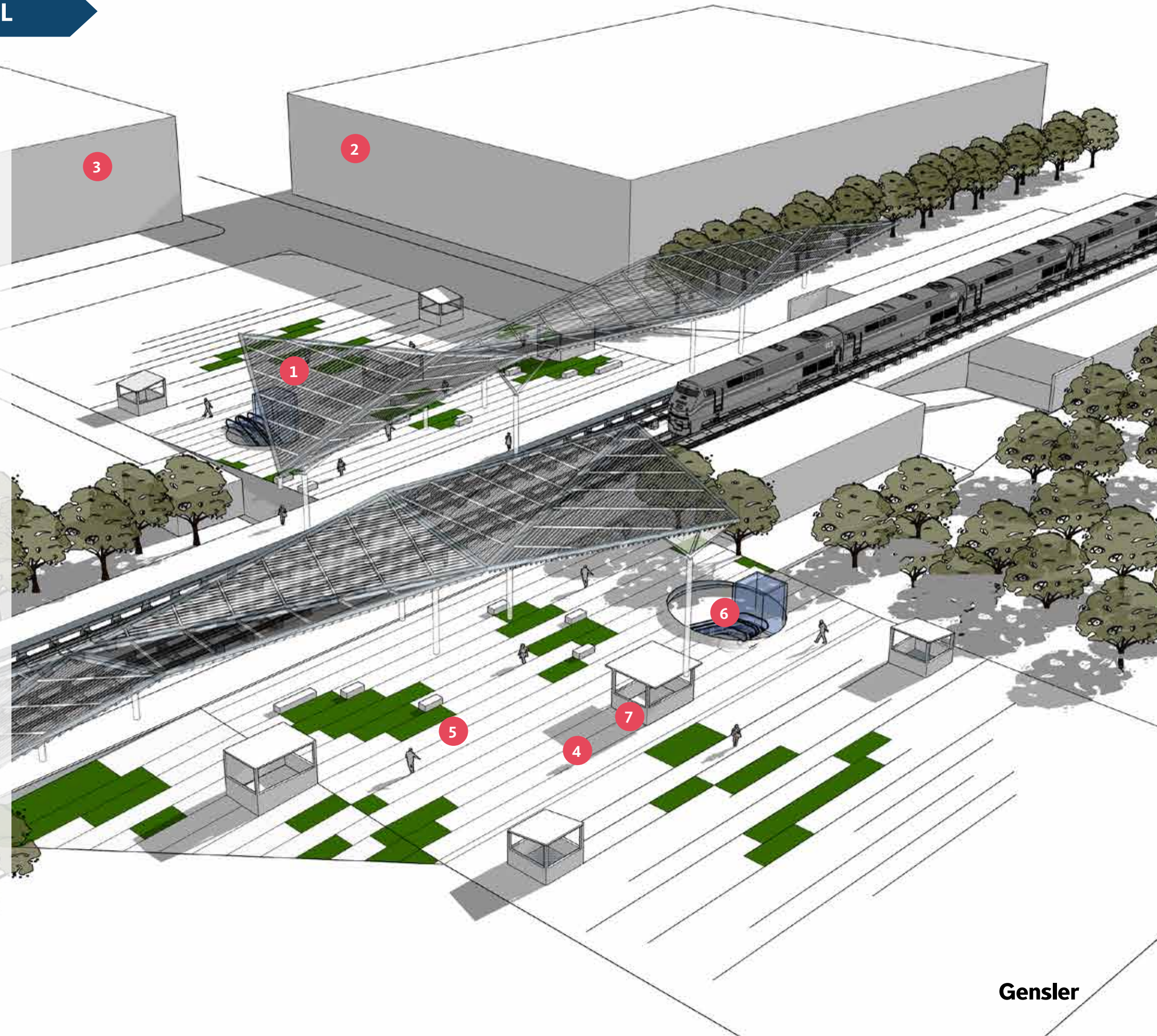
A soft area to relax and take it all in or an opportunity for events to engage users and the local community

### 6 Opposite Platform Access

Located within the heart of the plaza, moving between platforms takes users between one activated space to another.

### 7 Pop Up Retail

Provides opportunities for traveler amenities and services as well as community engagement such as weekend markets





## ODENTON STATION: FUTURE PROPOSAL

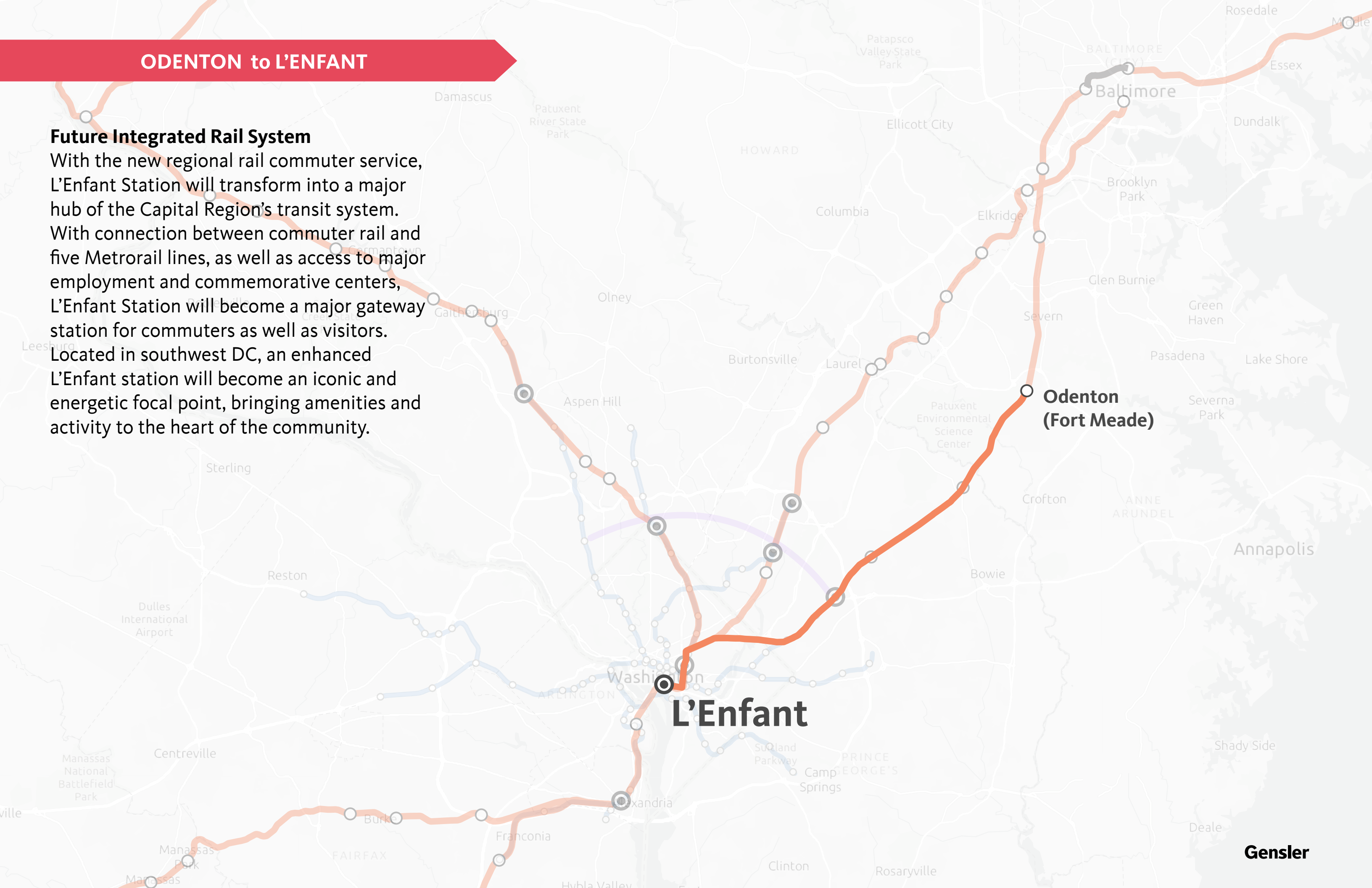




## ODENTON to L'ENFANT

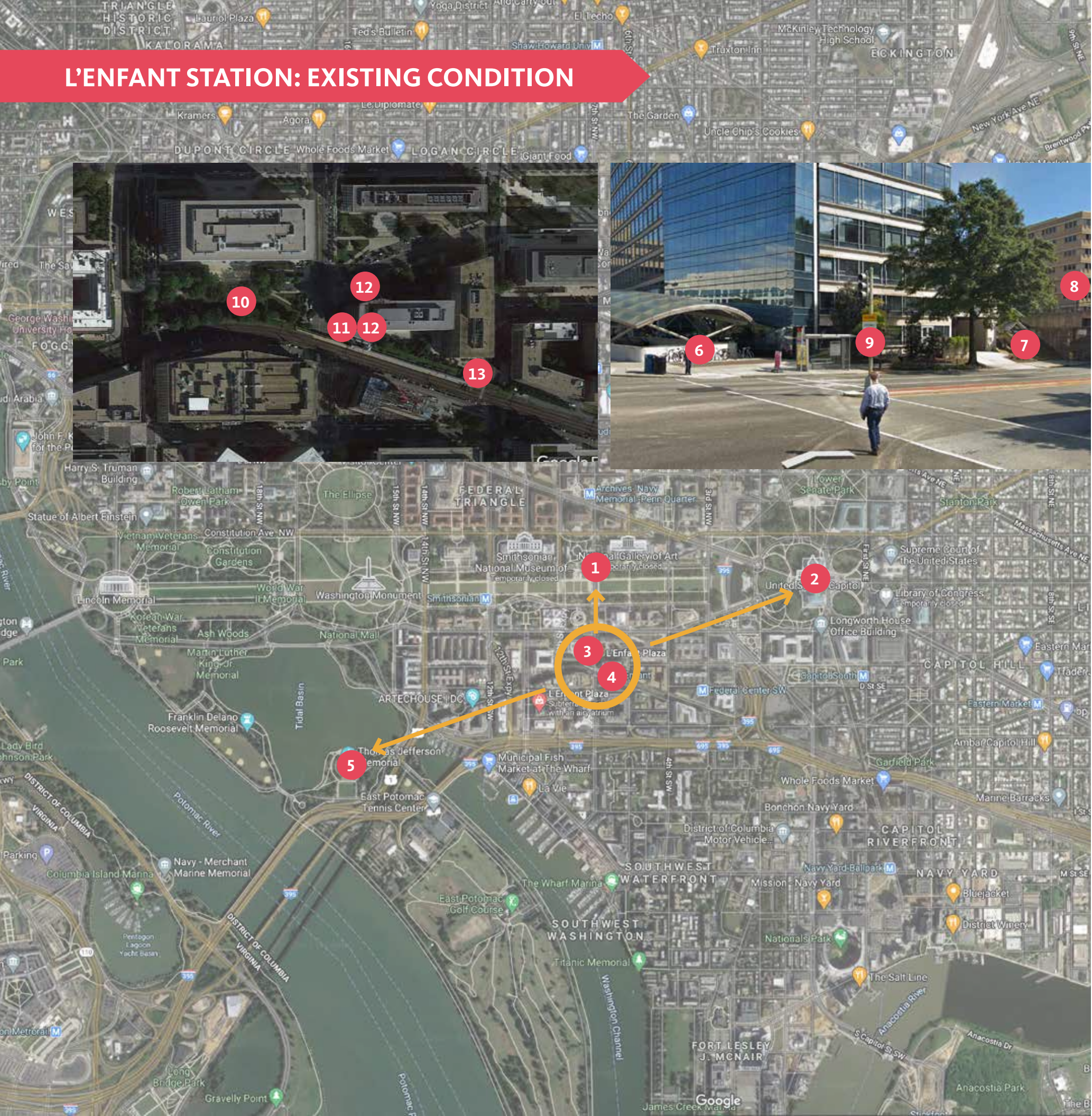
### Future Integrated Rail System

With the new regional rail commuter service, L'Enfant Station will transform into a major hub of the Capital Region's transit system. With connection between commuter rail and five Metrorail lines, as well as access to major employment and commemorative centers, L'Enfant Station will become a major gateway station for commuters as well as visitors. Located in southwest DC, an enhanced L'Enfant station will become an iconic and energetic focal point, bringing amenities and activity to the heart of the community.





L'ENFANT STATION: EXISTING CONDITION

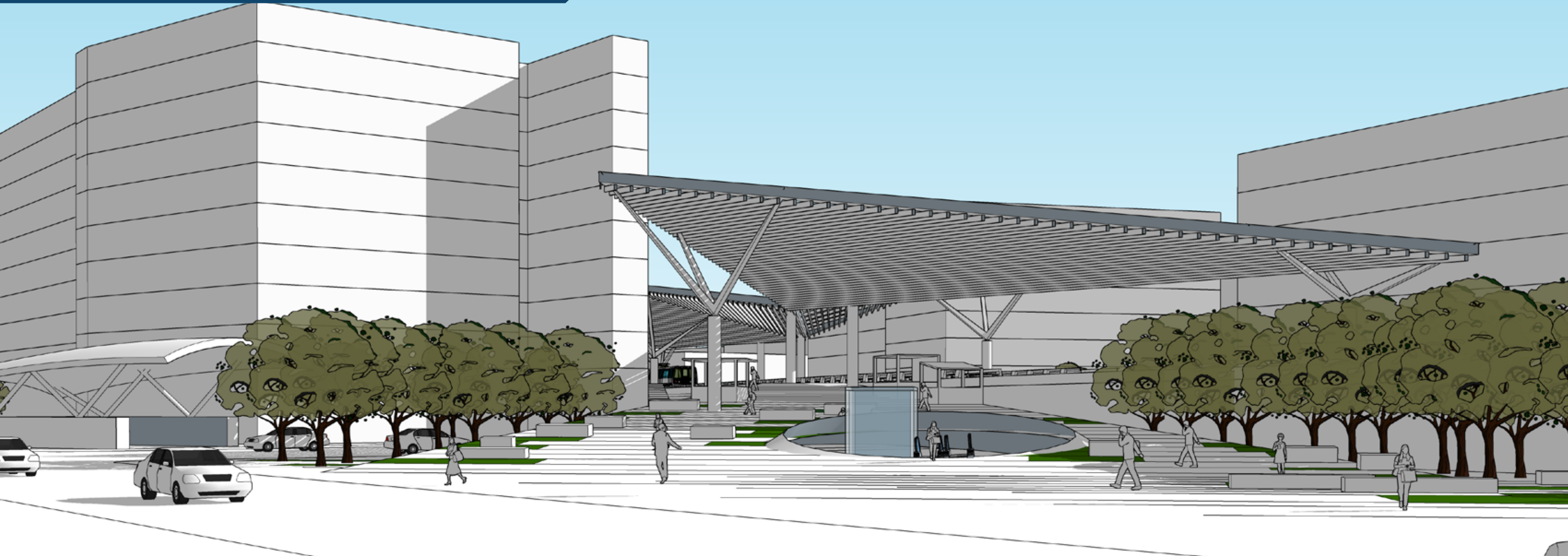


L'Enfant station sits on a prominent location within the city. At one of the celebrated intersection moments of the L'Enfant plan, the station offers view corridors up and down Maryland Avenue to the Capitol Building and the Jefferson Memorial while providing direct connection to the Mall and the Smithsonian core.

- |   |                           |    |  |
|---|---------------------------|----|--|
| 1 | Mall and Smithsonian Core | 8  | L'Enfant Station                       |
| 2 | Capitol Building          | 9  | Stations lack civic presence           |
| 3 | L'Enfant Station Entrance | 10 | Lack of engagement with L'Enfant Plaza |
| 4 | L'Enfant Station          | 11 | Non-direct connections                 |
| 5 | Jefferson Memorial        | 12 | Individual modal identities            |
| 6 | WMATA Station Entrance    | 13 | Nondescript secondary platform access  |
| 7 | VRE Station Entrance      |    |  |



## L'ENFANT STATION: FUTURE PROPOSAL



### A New Gateway to the City

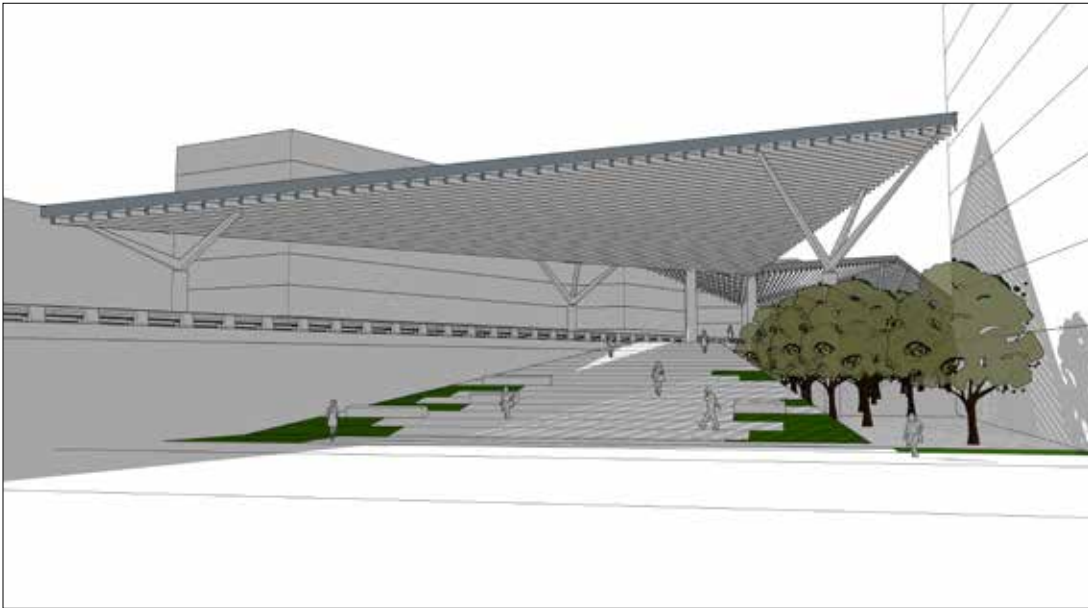
With direct connections between the modes as well as the offerings of the community and plaza, individuals have all they could want right at their fingertips. L'Enfant station is the place for quick connections, a leisurely lunch with friends, or a quiet moment to oneself, making the most of our precious time. "Its the place to get it all done, the place for me."



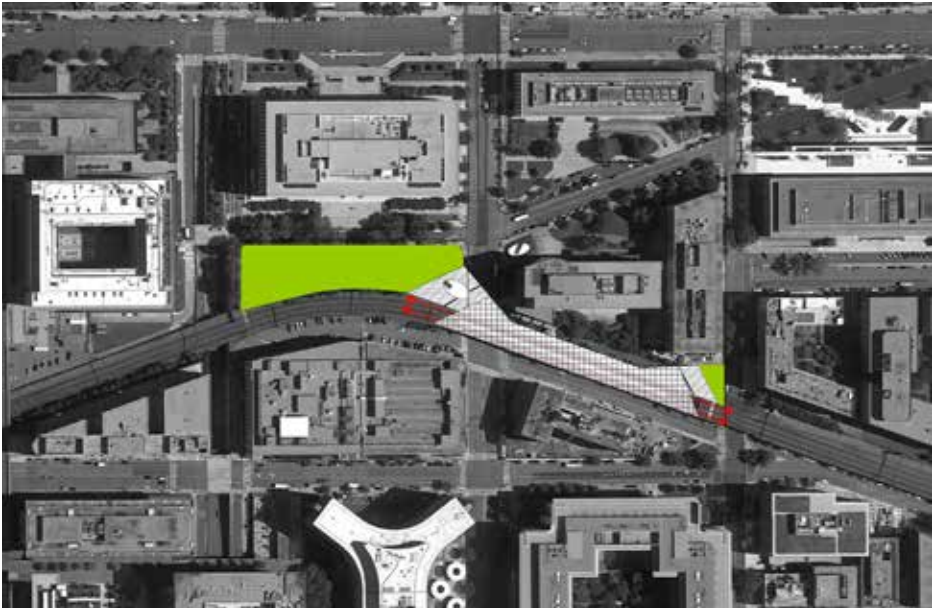
**A fun destination,  
resourceful hub, and  
seamless connector all  
in one... whether I am  
commuting or visiting.**



L'ENFANT STATION: FUTURE PROPOSAL

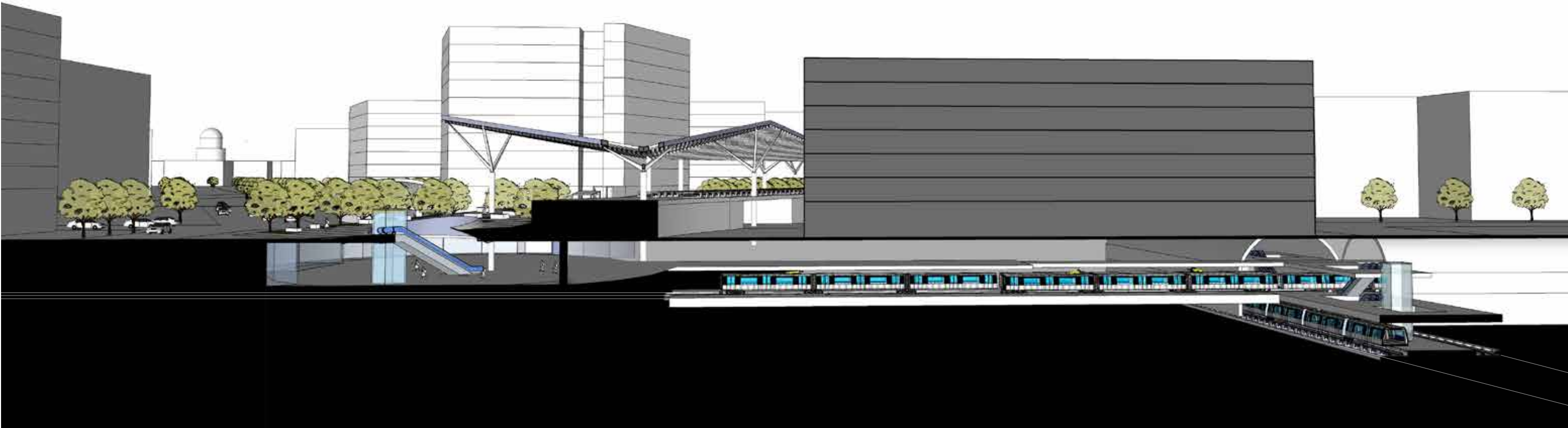


**Second Entrance**  
The upgraded 6th Street entrance envisions a similar treatment with a sloped plaza descending to a pocket park. This will promote ease of access to transit, enhance the station's identity, and create a local amenity.



**Connectivity**  
With plazas at both ends of the platform, the station has seamless folds down to become fully integrated into the surrounding urban fabric.

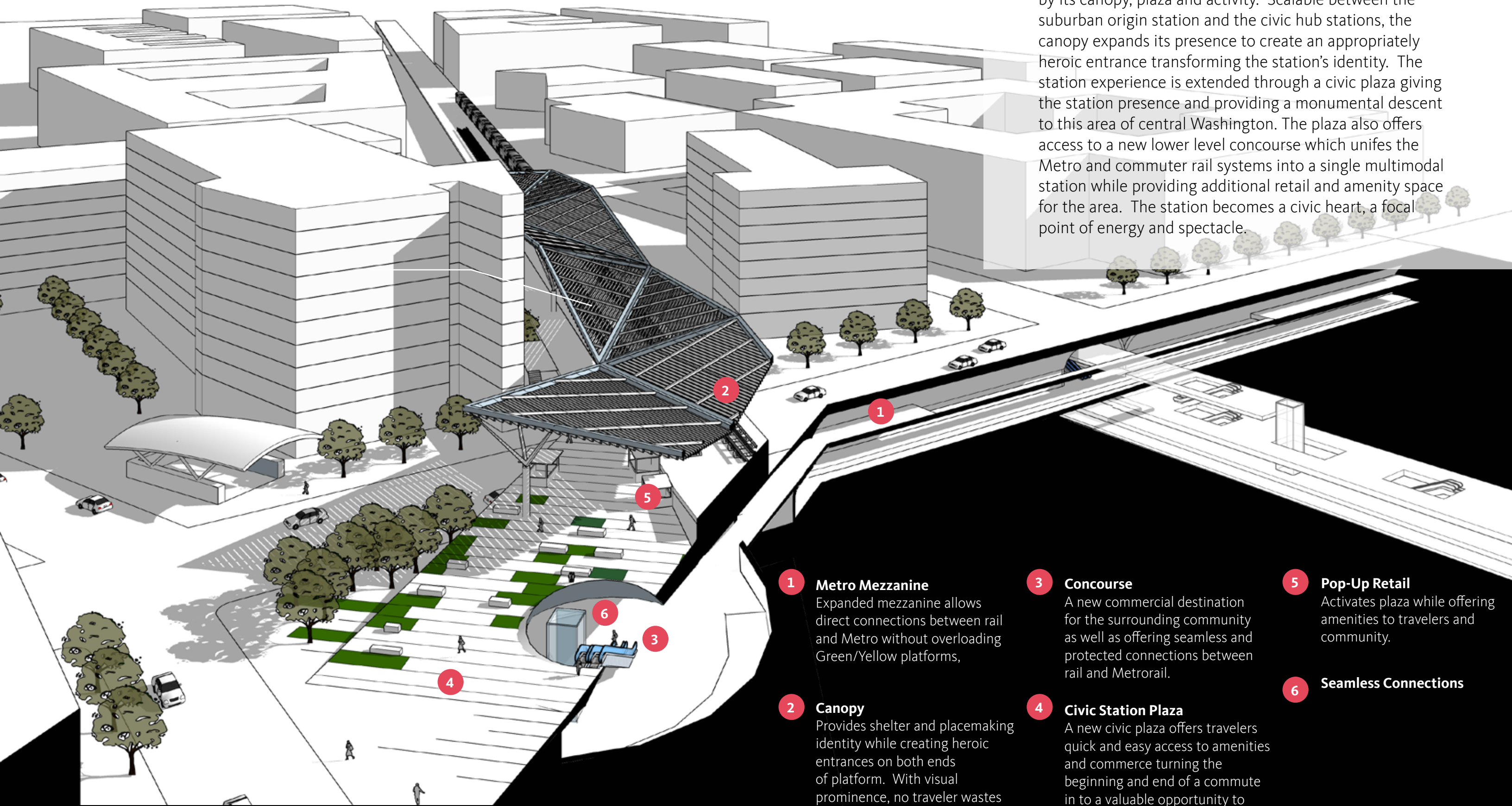
**Seamless Connections**  
The new station begins and ends in green, from the new pocket park along 6th street, to the grand ceremonial descent to L'Enfant Plaza. With the platform connected via a sloping plaza, commuters and visitors alike descend on to one of the iconic view corridors in the heart of our nation's capital.





# L'ENFANT STATION: FUTURE PROPOSAL

Utilizing the same kit of parts, L'Enfant Station is defined by its canopy, plaza and activity. Scalable between the suburban origin station and the civic hub stations, the canopy expands its presence to create an appropriately heroic entrance transforming the station's identity. The station experience is extended through a civic plaza giving the station presence and providing a monumental descent to this area of central Washington. The plaza also offers access to a new lower level concourse which unifies the Metro and commuter rail systems into a single multimodal station while providing additional retail and amenity space for the area. The station becomes a civic heart, a focal point of energy and spectacle.



- 1 Metro Mezzanine**  
Expanded mezzanine allows direct connections between rail and Metro without overloading Green/Yellow platforms,
- 2 Canopy**  
Provides shelter and placemaking identity while creating heroic entrances on both ends of platform. With visual prominence, no traveler wastes time asking "where is the station"?
- 3 Concourse**  
A new commercial destination for the surrounding community as well as offering seamless and protected connections between rail and Metrorail.
- 4 Civic Station Plaza**  
A new civic plaza offers travelers quick and easy access to amenities and commerce turning the beginning and end of a commute in to a valuable opportunity to make the most of a few minutes before the next train.
- 5 Pop-Up Retail**  
Activates plaza while offering amenities to travelers and community.
- 6 Seamless Connections**



## L'ENFANT STATION: FUTURE PROPOSAL





# FUTURE UNIFIED RAIL SYSTEM

The enhancements to the Odenton and L'Enfant Station represent that can be realized through this unified, regional commuter rail vision. With stations becoming more active and serving passengers from throughout the region, station improvements will be needed to heighten the passenger experience, take advantage of development opportunities and provide station experience that reflect successful commuter rail for the Nation's Capital.

Odenton  
(Fort Meade)



L'Enfant





# The Regional Brand

As a regional rail system gives its community more opportunities for genuine connection, a beloved brand is born. Stress-free experiences and the creation of authentic and unique junctures enhance local identity.



## THE BRAND

Creating an integrated regional rail service is critical. a true regional rail brand would influence many of the following elements that are part of the overall user experience.



SEAMLESS TICKETING



THE PLACE



VISUAL IDENTITY



SIGNAGE



APPS & DIGITAL PRESENCE



COLLATERAL



CAMPAIGNS



EVENTS



# Thank you!

This Rider & Reimagined Station Experience is accompanied by:

## **The Capital Region Rail Vision**

A regional strategy to remove key physical and operating barriers to provide residents a more coordinated, integrated, and competitive regional rail service network.

## **The Rail Vision's Technical Report**

that establishes a more detailed roadmap of the key components that underpin the Vision's outcomes and benefits, describes key barriers to realization and strategies to address them, articulates the stepping stones toward major service enhancements, and charts a 5-year Action Plan to deliver near term wins that will enable long term success.

## **A Rail Vision Economic Impact Brief**

that finds the Vision's capital investments could lead to over \$40 billion (\$2020) in gross economic output for the region, supporting upwards of 200,000 jobs in worker-years over 25 years, and, once complete, could support over 5,000 ongoing jobs and lead to an increase of over \$1.3 billion in annual gross economic output.

## **An Equity Analysis Mapping Experience**

that presents existing locations of jobs, housing, and residential populations, disaggregated by housing affordability, race, income, and access to transportation options.

**Gensler** In partnership with

**Capital Region Rail Vision**

