



Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority

COMPACT PUBLIC HEARING STAFF REPORT

***R20-01: Proposed Modifications to Parking Garage
Addition at Grosvenor-Strathmore Metrorail Station***

June 17, 2020

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1. INTRODUCTION

The Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (“**Metro**” or “**WMATA**”) is in the process of expanding the parking garage at the Grosvenor-Strathmore Metrorail Station, a project previously approved by WMATA’s Board of Directors. The design for the garage expansion now provides for a southern and western addition to replace all of the parking spaces in Metro’s surface parking lot that will be removed once the joint development project commences construction, which currently has no date certain.

The southern addition to the garage is currently under construction and will contain approximately 212 replacement parking spaces. It is the proposed western addition (that would contain approximately 196 parking spaces) that is the subject of this Compact public hearing and this Staff Report. Metro presented for public comment three options for the Grosvenor-Strathmore Metro parking garage:

- 1) Cancel the construction of the western addition, thereby permanently reducing the number of Park & Ride parking spaces at the Grosvenor-Strathmore Metrorail Station by approximately 196 parking spaces;
- 2) Reserve the area on the site where the western addition will go, but postpone construction of the addition until a time when parking demand requires it; or
- 3) Complete the construction of the western addition, as originally planned.

This Staff Report evaluates past, present and potential future parking situations at the Grosvenor-Strathmore Metrorail Station, discusses the public comments received as the result of a public participation and Compact public hearing process regarding the above options, and makes the recommendation to the WMATA Board of Directors to postpone the construction of the western addition until the need for it is substantiated.

1.1 The Joint Development Project

WMATA entered into an agreement with Fivesquares JDA at Grosvenor Metro, LLC (the “**Developer**”) to develop Metro-owned property at the Grosvenor-Strathmore Metrorail Station. The Developer is planning a multi-phased, mixed-use development that could total 2.3 million square feet at the Grosvenor-Strathmore Metrorail Station (the “**Joint Development Project**”). The vision for the development is shared by Montgomery County, which has processed the Joint Development Project through a “Minor Master Plan Amendment” for the Grosvenor-Strathmore area and approved various conceptual, sketch and preliminary plans submitted by the Developer. The Joint Development Project itself is projected to take place over the next 20 or more years. At full build-out, the Joint Development Project is anticipated to include:

- 1.7 million square feet of market-rate multi-family housing
- 385,000 square feet of moderately-priced multi-family housing
- 318,000 square feet of commercial, artist space and street level retail
- A 1.25-acre park or “civic green”
- Parking garages for the private development

1.2 Effect of Joint Development Project on Metro Parking

The Joint Development Project will require the removal of Metro’s 408-space surface parking lot when the Developer is ready to start construction of that area. Until construction of the Joint Development Project begins, most of the surface parking lot is expected to remain in operation. In the meantime, Metro and the Developer have decided to expand Metro’s parking garage at the Grosvenor-Strathmore Metrorail Station in anticipation of the eventual removal of the surface parking lot.

Metro's initial intent was to replace all the surface parking spaces to be removed by the Joint Development Project in one large garage addition. This intent was made public at various community meetings and is embedded in the Developer's own submissions to the Montgomery County Planning Board. However, given the desire to accommodate the highest quality Joint Development Project, the Developer proposed building two smaller additions to the parking garage consisting of approximately 200 spaces each, one on its southern side and the other on its western side. Combined, the two garage additions would replace the parking spaces that would be removed from Metro's surface parking lot with an equivalent number of (and maybe a handful of additional) new spaces.

It is worth noting that 250 of the original 408 surface parking lot spaces will be available until development actually occurs on that part of the site, which is not expected to begin until at least late 2021. Therefore, in the interim until development in fact begins, there will be approximately 100 more commuter parking available at Grosvenor-Strathmore than there were before construction on the southern addition began, even if the western addition is not built. This will allow time during which to evaluate any concerns about lack of parking.

Although construction of the garage addition(s) was originally expected to replace all of the spaces at one time under a single project, Metro determined to split the additions into two projects and move forward immediately with the southern garage addition (which construction will be completed Fall 2020) and re-evaluate the proposed western garage addition. The decision to advance the southern addition now was based on the following:

- the existing garage was structurally designed to accommodate an addition to the south;
- the southern addition was larger and contained more than half of the parking spaces to be replaced; and,
- the southern expansion would have limited to no impact on WMATA operations.

By contrast, the western addition would be built over an area currently occupied by the Kiss & Ride and Arts Walk, would be adjacent to the bus loop, would cause more interference with pedestrian travel through the site, and might require at least temporary relocation of or adjustments to the spaces in the garage dedicated to ADA-accessible parking, all of which create more conflicts with normal operations at the Grosvenor-Strathmore Metrorail Station. As importantly, the need for the western addition in the near- and medium-term is unclear, given that most of the spaces in the surface parking lot will remain available for commuter parking until that area is needed for the Joint Development Project. The Grosvenor-Strathmore Metrorail Station will have more parking in the meantime than it currently has, even if the western addition is not built.

1.3 Parking Utilization

To understand parking demand, staff evaluated the utilization of Metro's parking facilities at the Grosvenor-Strathmore Metrorail Station and at nearby Metrorail stations; the data used was from prior to the coronavirus pandemic. Data shows that the Grosvenor-Strathmore parking facilities are heavily utilized. The questions that staff investigated are as follows: (1) Is all of the proposed parking needed? (2) If the parking is needed, is it needed at Grosvenor-Strathmore or could the parking demand be satisfied somewhere else? (3) Is past utilization predictive of future utilization?

By way of background, the Metro garage and the surface parking lot at Grosvenor-Strathmore contained a total of 1,893 parking spaces ("**Original Parking Count**"): 1,485 parking spaces are in the garage and 408 were in the surface parking lot. As of the date of this Compact Hearing Staff Report, a small portion of the surface parking lot has already been removed for the construction of the southern addition. If and

when the surface parking lot is entirely removed and if the western garage addition is not built, there will be a total approximately 1,697 parking spaces at Grosvenor-Strathmore, all of them in the parking garage; that would reduce the station's parking capacity to approximately 90% of the Original Parking Count.

Staff evaluated parking data for the period of March through June 2019 to determine what the Peak Utilization of parking is at the Grosvenor-Strathmore Metrorail Station. "**Peak Utilization**" refers to the maximum number of cars actually parked at any one time, and therefore defines the maximum number of parking spaces needed, and is different from Average Utilization. "**Average Utilization**" is a measure of how many cars park in Metro's parking facilities over the entire course of a day, which explains why Average Utilization can exceed 100%. For example, if a commuter used a parking space for a morning work shift and then left the parking space at 2 p.m., and then another commuter used the same parking space starting at 5 p.m., that one space would count as one car for purposes of determining Peak Utilization, but would count as two cars for purposes of determining Average Utilization.

1.3.1 Is one-for-one replacement parking needed?

Metro staff evaluated parking usage at Grosvenor-Strathmore by 15-minute increments for the months of March through June 2019 to determine whether parking capacity could be reduced. Because the parking reduction would be just over 10% of Original Parking Count, Metro staff analyzed how often and when the Grosvenor-Strathmore parking facilities reached or exceeded 89% Peak Utilization.

The analysis found that Peak Utilization at Grosvenor-Strathmore never exceeded 44% on any Sunday or 52% on any Saturday during March through June 2019. Parking capacity on weekends is not an issue.

Therefore, the analysis focused on weekday Peak Utilization, when Metro's parking facilities are most used. The results for each separate day of the week are remarkably consistent over this four-month period, providing a meaningful basis for comparison:

- 89% Peak Utilization was reached or exceeded on about half of the Mondays.
- 89% Peak Utilization was routinely, but not always, reached on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays.
- 89% Peak Utilization was never reached on Fridays.

Except on five (out of 77) weekdays during that four-month period, anyone arriving in the parking garage by the time Metrorail's "peak fare" period ended at 9:30 a.m. could still find a parking space and catch a train in time to pay the peak fare even if the parking capacity was reduced to 89% of the Original Parking Count capacity. (Even on days when 89% Peak Utilization was achieved or exceeded, it usually wasn't achieved until 10:00, 10:15 or 10:30 a.m., sometimes not even until 11:00 a.m. or later.)

Breaking that down further by specific weekdays:

- *Mondays*: Parking facilities reached 89% Peak Utilization on eight out of 15 Mondays during this four-month period. Peak Utilization on a Monday never exceeded 92%. On no Monday was 89% Peak Utilization achieved before 10:15 a.m., so any customer looking for parking during or within 45 minutes after Metrorail's morning "peak fare" period ended at 9:30 a.m. would still have found parking. Anyone arriving as late as 9:00 a.m. would always have found at least 416 parking spaces available.
- *Tuesdays*: 15 out of 16 Tuesdays reached or surpassed the 89% Peak Utilization threshold. However, on no Tuesday during this period was 89% Peak Utilization reached before 9:15 a.m. Anyone arriving at 9:00 a.m. would have found at least 283 parking spaces available.

- Wednesdays: 15 out of 16 Wednesdays reached or surpassed the 89% Peak Utilization threshold. However, on no Wednesday during this period was this threshold reached before 9:30 a.m. (and then only twice; the earliest on the other Wednesdays was at 10:00 a.m.). Anyone arriving at 9:00 a.m. would have found at least 302 parking spaces available.
- Thursdays: 14 out of 15 Thursdays reached or surpassed the 89% Peak Utilization threshold. However, on no Thursday during this period was this threshold reached before 9:30 a.m. (and the threshold was reached by 9:30 a.m. only three times in June, traditionally one of the two heaviest ridership months. The earliest the threshold was reached during the other 12 Wednesdays was at 10:00 a.m.). Anyone arriving at 9:00 a.m. would have found at least 321 parking spaces available.
- Fridays: The parking facilities at Grosvenor-Strathmore never reached 89% Peak Utilization on a Friday. In fact, Friday Peak Utilization at any time of day over those four months never exceeded 80%. Anyone arriving at 9:00 a.m. would have found nearly half of the parking spaces empty.

The charts in **Appendix F** show the same information in more detailed graphic form.

1.3.2 Can parking demand be satisfied at another Metrorail station?

A Fall 2019 survey of 487 Grosvenor-Strathmore parking customers found that one-third of respondents would relocate to the White Flint Metrorail Station parking garage and that, in fact, many of them had already parked at White Flint. An additional, but smaller, number of respondents stated they would use the parking facilities at the Twinbrook Metrorail Station, and still smaller numbers indicated a willingness to relocate to the Shady Grove, Rockville and Wheaton Metrorail Stations, with some others willing to relocate elsewhere.

The White Flint, Twinbrook and Wheaton Metrorail Stations have hundreds of under-utilized parking spaces apiece. Any one of them could satisfy the entire overflow of Grosvenor-Strathmore parking, with some room to spare. Thus, if 150, or on most days only 95 or so, Grosvenor-Strathmore parking patrons would relocate to the commuter parking garages at the White Flint, Twinbrook and/or Wheaton Metrorail Stations, the Grosvenor-Strathmore overflow parking problem would solve itself at no cost to WMATA and with the benefit that currently under-utilized assets would be better utilized. And that number of parking customers have indicated that they would relocate to other garages.

1.3.3 Is past parking utilization predictive of future utilization?

The analysis so far has looked at historic parking utilization numbers; however, the analysis did not make any predictive assumptions of the future. The preceding analysis demonstrates that there are at least three days per week (Tuesdays through Thursdays), plus about half of the Mondays, when Metro's Grosvenor-Strathmore parking facilities could not handle the current demand, at least not until after the morning rail service peak ended at 9:30 a.m., if the on-site parking capacity was reduced by just over 10%. Unless there are mitigating factors and/or changes to existing parking trends, staff anticipates needing the western addition at some point in the future.

1.4 Factors that could Diminish Future Parking Demand

The eventual shortage of parking capacity at Grosvenor-Strathmore indicates that the parking to be supplied by the western addition of the parking garage will be needed at some point in time – at least unless there are counteracting factors that could lead to a reduction in demand. There are three possible counteracting factors that are easily identifiable:

- The end of the “Grosvenor turnback” and its effect on parking utilization at the Grosvenor-Strathmore Metrorail Station;
- The availability of parking at the White Flint and Twinbrook (or other) Metrorail Stations; and,
- The effect on Metrorail ridership of the coronavirus pandemic that began in early 2020.

1.4.1 *The Grosvenor Turnback*

The original impetus to reconsider building the western addition to the Grosvenor-Strathmore garage was the ending of the “Grosvenor turnback”¹ in mid-December 2018. Ending the “Grosvenor turnback” occurred after WMATA’s initial decision to replace all surface parking at Grosvenor-Strathmore with garage additions. As long as the “Grosvenor turnback” was in effect, Grosvenor-Strathmore Metrorail service during peak periods was twice that of the Metro stations north of it, making Grosvenor-Strathmore a more desirable station for customers. Is the ending of the “Grosvenor turnback” a superseding later fact that calls into question the future utilization of the Grosvenor-Strathmore Metrorail Station? If Metrorail service frequency was now the same at White Flint, Twinbrook, Rockville and Shady Grove as it had long been at Grosvenor-Strathmore, would some patrons of the Grosvenor-Strathmore Metrorail Station relocate to those other Stations, decreasing parking demand at Grosvenor-Strathmore?

The period since the end of the “Grosvenor turnback” was marked first by the Federal Government shutdown that began immediately thereafter and continued for several weeks in early 2019 and, more recently, by the coronavirus pandemic. Both skewed utilization. Disregarding those bookending events, during the interim period boardings by Metrorail riders at Grosvenor-Strathmore increased only slightly, while boardings by Metrorail riders at the four Metrorail stations north of it increased by considerably more (although by varying amounts, with Twinbrook seeing the largest increase at approximately 8% as of mid-2019). That increased ridership north of Grosvenor-Strathmore mirrored an increase in Metrorail ridership overall during that same period but outpaced the general increase.

The slight increase in boardings at Grosvenor-Strathmore indicated that Metrorail was not necessarily shifting riders from Grosvenor-Strathmore to those four other Metrorail stations, although there may have been some shifting. Instead, the improvement of Metrorail service to the four more northerly Metrorail stations was attracting a significant number of new riders north of Grosvenor-Strathmore.

Further, Average Utilization at Grosvenor-Strathmore did not change much after the “Grosvenor turnback” ended. However, Average Utilization at Grosvenor-Strathmore increased at a slower rate than did parking utilization at the four outer Metrorail stations. Average Utilization at those four outer stations increased by approximately 4% as of mid-2019 (including 6%-9% increases at White Flint and Twinbrook).

¹ The “Grosvenor turnback” was WMATA’s practice of ending half of the outbound Red Line trains at Grosvenor-Strathmore during rush hours and having only half of the outbound Red Line trains continue to the Shady Grove terminus during rush hours, and, conversely, beginning half of inbound Red Line service during rush hours at Grosvenor-Strathmore. The effect was that rush hour Red Line service north of Grosvenor-Strathmore – to the White Flint, Twinbrook, Rockville and Shady Grove Metrorail Stations – was only half that of Grosvenor-Strathmore and stations south of it.

Thus, analysis during that interim period did not indicate a significant drop-off in parking demand at Grosvenor-Strathmore. It is possible, but not at all certain, that the ending of the “Grosvenor turnback” will one day reduce demand at Grosvenor, but that possibility is not borne out by the data to date.

1.4.2 Parking at White Flint or Twinbrook Metrorail Stations

Can any shortage of parking at Grosvenor-Strathmore be addressed by shifting customers to other Metro Stations? White Flint and Twinbrook are the next-nearest stations on that branch of the Red Line.

White Flint Metrorail Station: White Flint Metrorail Station is the next station north of Grosvenor-Strathmore. It is also located on Maryland Route-355 (or Rockville Pike). It is somewhat accessible from the Beltway (I-495), although less so than Grosvenor-Strathmore, and it is less accessible from I-270. The White Flint Metro parking garage could have, on any given day, approximately 400 empty parking spaces. Thus, it alone could accommodate all parkers who cannot be accommodated at Grosvenor-Strathmore if parking capacity at Grosvenor-Strathmore is reduced.

Would parking customers actually park at the White Flint Metrorail Station if they could not park at Grosvenor-Strathmore? A survey conducted by WMATA in 2019 indicated that one-third of those surveyed would or could relocate to White Flint.

Twinbrook Metrorail Station: Twinbrook Metrorail Station is the next station north of White Flint. It is not as accessible from I-270 or the Beltway (I-495) as either Grosvenor-Strathmore or White Flint. Twinbrook Metrorail Station’s parking facilities usually have, on any given day, approximately 200 empty parking spaces. Thus, Twinbrook too could accommodate all overflow parking from Grosvenor-Strathmore. Would parking customers actually relocate to Twinbrook? The same WMATA survey referenced above indicated that some would, although only about 14%, probably not enough to be determinative on its own.

1.4.3 Effect of the coronavirus pandemic

Metrorail ridership has been down approximately 95% since the coronavirus pandemic caused shelter-at-home orders to be issued throughout the Washington region starting in March 2020. As a result of the pandemic, the Grosvenor-Strathmore Metrorail Station was closed due to low ridership. It is difficult to hypothesize what effect the coronavirus pandemic will have Metrorail ridership generally or on Peak Utilization or Average Utilization at Grosvenor-Strathmore specifically.

2. COMMUNICATIONS AND OUTREACH TO THE PUBLIC

As required by the WMATA Compact, the public was provided with the opportunity to comment on the proposed parking replacement options. Following the guidelines established by WMATA’s Board-approved Public Participation Plan, this Staff Report provides a summary of the public outreach efforts and responses received. Metro tailored a communications and outreach plan that focused on those most impacted by this proposal – i.e. those who use the Grosvenor-Strathmore Metrorail Station parking garage.

Below is an overview of all communications and outreach efforts conducted during the comment period from Saturday, February 29 through 5:00 p.m. Friday, May 1, 2020:

- Stakeholder communication
- Targeted marketing & media

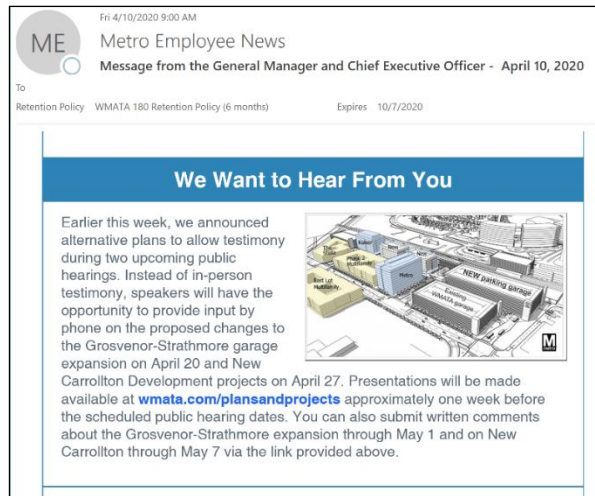
- Telephone public hearing on Monday, April 20, 2020

The public hearing was originally scheduled as a traditional face-to-face public hearing, but due to the stay-at-home restrictions during the coronavirus pandemic, the hearing was postponed to April 20, 2020 and the public comment period was accordingly extended from the original date through Friday, May 1, 2020. The public had the opportunity to provide feedback on the record through the following sources:

- On-line survey and feedback form
- Oral testimony at the public hearing by telephone

Local stakeholders were key in getting the word out to their constituents about the proposal. Metro engaged stakeholders in a variety of ways:

- Elected officials on the Montgomery County Council and state legislators from Montgomery County were provided extensive information from Metro about the proposal and ways to provide input. Metro employees were notified about the proposal and encouraged to participate in the process through an email from the General Manager/CEO on April 10.
- Community Based Organizations (“CBOs”) and community partners were notified about the proposal by Metro via email on April 16, 2020, requesting their comments and feedback. This list included 142 individuals working at 155 unique Community Based Organizations, CBO-like functioning institutions and other community stakeholders. This message included links to translated material and an invitation to attend the telephone public hearing. A second message was sent on May 1, 2020, which served as a reminder of the deadline to submit comments.
- Information about the proposal was sent via email to a stakeholder list on April 14, 2020. This list included over 30 local contacts, including places of worship, event venues, apartments and residences, schools, shopping areas, social services, and CBOs located near the Grosvenor-Strathmore Metrorail Station.



2.1 Targeted Marketing & Media

WMATA used targeted marketing and media strategies to increase awareness and encourage feedback on the proposal.

2.2 Website

The webpage wmata.com/plansandprojects was used as a major resource to provide the latest information about the proposal:

- The webpage received views from 586 unique viewers. 53% of views were



directly from wmata.com and 13% came from the Facebook event page.

- The webpage included a link at the top to a translated page in Spanish, which received 42 views from 35 unique viewers.
- The 40-page Environmental Evaluation was available for review on the webpage, and the webpage included information about how to provide feedback, including the link to the on-line survey/feedback form and the call-in details for the telephone public hearing.
- As a response to the coronavirus pandemic, the in-person open house was cancelled. Instead, a form was placed on the English and Spanish project pages where customers could send questions to Metro. Four questions were submitted.

2.3 Paid Advertisements and Social Media Tactics

Advertisements were placed in printed publications around the region. Once the decision was made to shut down the Grosvenor-Strathmore Metrorail Station due to the coronavirus pandemic, the media plan was adjusted to include a more robust on-line strategy, targeting key neighborhoods where many customers who use the Grosvenor-Strathmore Metrorail Station parking garage live.

- *The Washington Post* (legal notice) – February 29 and March 7, 2020
- *El Tiempo Latino* (Spanish) – March 20, 2020
- *Washington Hispanic* (Spanish) – April 17, 2020
- Facebook – A hosted Facebook event was posted April 13 – 20, 2020 with 181,634 impressions with a click-through rate of 0.87%, targeting neighborhoods where many Grosvenor-Strathmore Metrorail Station parking customers live. 99% of impressions were served on mobile devices.
- NextDoor – Posted on April 20, 2020 with 6,320 impressions, targeting neighborhoods where many Grosvenor-Strathmore Metrorail Station parking customers live.

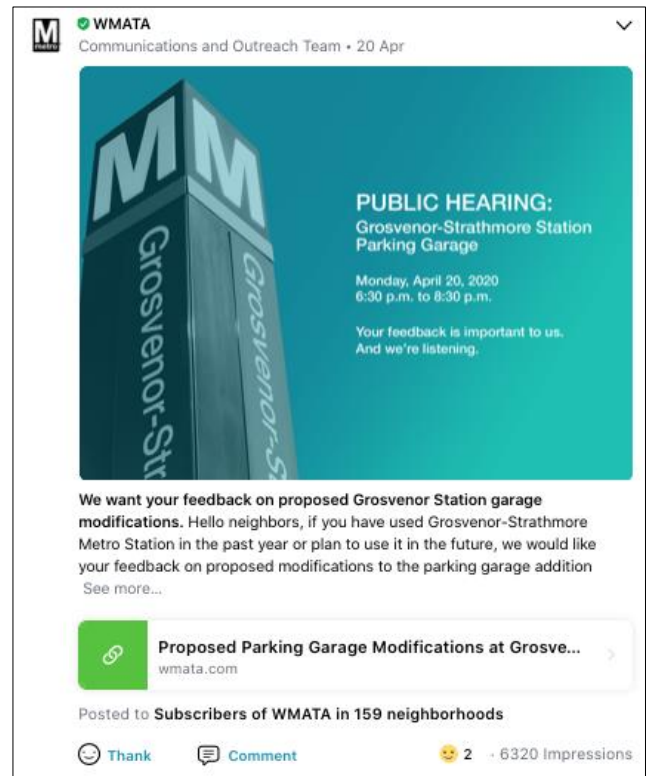
2.4 Sign Postings

Information about the public hearing was posted in English and Spanish inside the Grosvenor-Strathmore Metrorail Station and the parking garage. Signs were updated once the decision was made to switch from an in-person public hearing to a telephone public hearing.

2.5 Media Coverage

Besides the press releases that were published on March 2 and April 6, 2020, there was additional media coverage around the proposal in *Progressive Railroad* and the blogs *Friends of White Flint* and *Robert Dyer @ Bethesda Row*.

2.6 Docket Viewing



Copies of the English and Spanish notices and dockets were available for public viewing at the Davis Library in Bethesda, Maryland (until its closure due to the coronavirus pandemic) and at Metro’s headquarters building in Washington DC. These materials were also available on-line.

3. PUBLIC INPUT RESULTS

3.1 Public Hearing

As a response to the coronavirus pandemic, WMATA hosted a public hearing by telephone on Monday, April 20, 2020, instead of an in-person public hearing. Between 6:30 and 8:30 p.m., individuals were provided up to five minutes to provide recorded testimony by voicemail, and the testimony was transcribed and submitted into the public record. Two people submitted oral testimony. The transcribed oral testimony can be found in **Appendix C**.

3.2 Public Survey and On-Line Comments

In addition to the public hearing discussed immediately above, WMATA collected public input through the on-line survey and written comments (through the survey tool or letters sent to the Board Secretary’s Office), during the public comment period from Saturday, February 29 through Friday, May 1, 2020. WMATA received 182 survey and written comment responses.

Metro wants to hear from you regarding proposed modifications to the parking garage addition at Grosvenor-Strathmore Metrorail Station.

PUBLIC HEARING COVID-19 UPDATE

Metro is in the process of expanding the parking garage at Grosvenor-Strathmore Metrorail Station, a project previously approved by Metro’s Board of Directors. The garage expansion will replace all parking spaces that will be removed from the surface parking lot due to a joint development project.

Phase 1 of the garage expansion, currently under construction, will replace just over 52% of the lost surface parking. Phase 2 of the garage expansion will replace the remaining parking spaces.

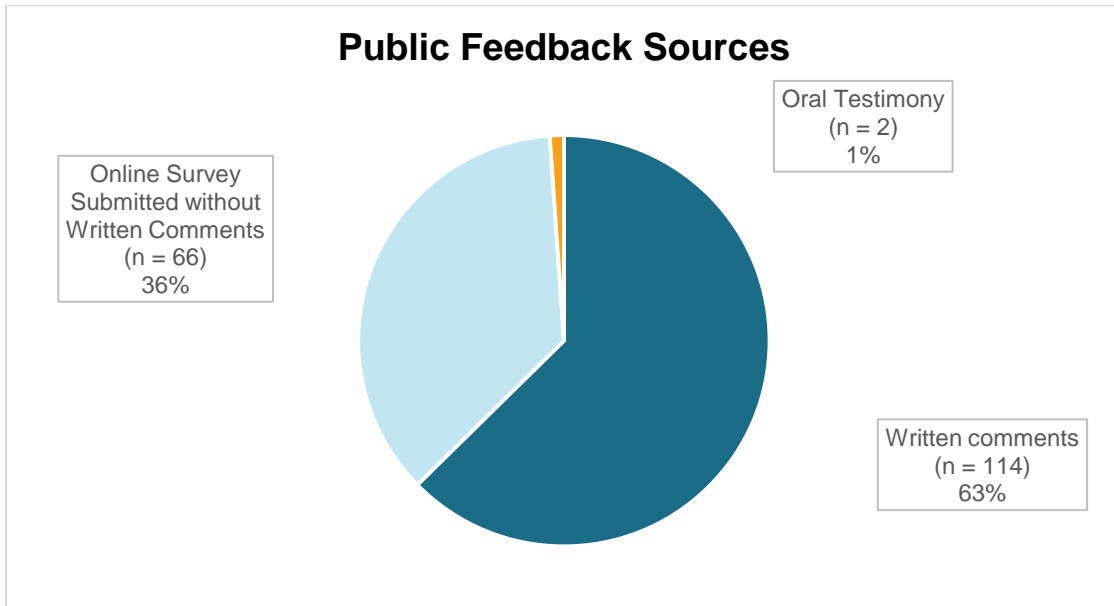
Due to the cost of the Phase 2 garage expansion, the availability of parking at other nearby Metrorail stations, and the expected disruption to the Kiss & Ride and Arts Walk during construction, Metro is considering multiple options:

- Complete the planned construction of the Phase 2 garage expansion.
- Cancel the construction of the Phase 2 garage expansion, reducing the number of on-site parking spaces at Grosvenor-Strathmore Metrorail Station by approximately 194.
- Wait to make a decision about completing or canceling the construction of the Phase 2 garage expansion until after the Phase 1 garage expansion is fully operational in late 2020 and a full parking demand evaluation can be completed.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Metro has cancelled all in-person outreach and meetings until further notice. Visit wmata.com/plansandprojects to get the latest updates about this proposal and provide your feedback.

Public feedback will be provided to the WMATA Board of Directors as part of the final decision making process in late spring 2020.

Public participation is voluntary without regard to race, color, national origin, age, gender, religion, disability or family status. If you require special accommodations under the Americans with Disabilities Act or translation services, please contact the project team at 202-588-2021. If you need more information, please email metro@wmata.com or visit wmata.com/plansandprojects.



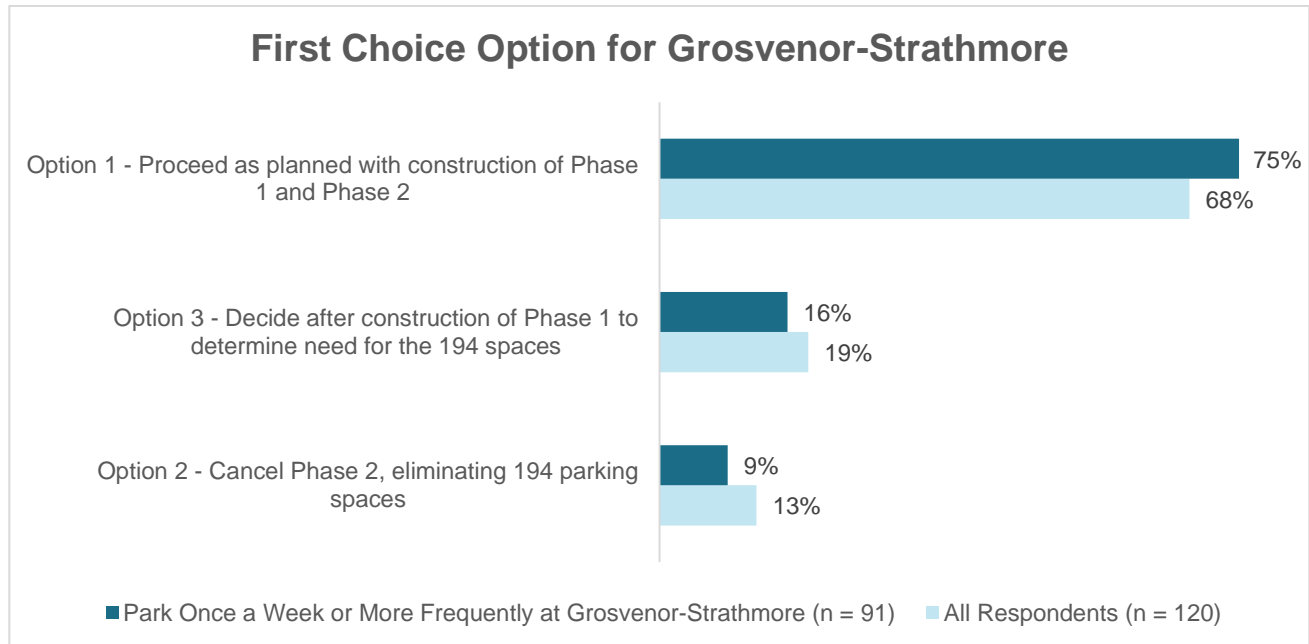
Respondents who took the on-line survey were asked to rank the options Metro is considering for the parking garage at Grosvenor-Strathmore Metrorail Station:

1. Cancel the construction of the western addition to the garage, ultimately (after the surface parking lot is fully removed) reducing the number of on-site parking spaces at the Grosvenor-Strathmore Metrorail Station by approximately 188.
2. Wait to make a decision about completing or canceling the construction of the western addition to the garage until after the southern garage expansion is fully operational in late 2020 and a full parking demand evaluation can be completed after the southern garage expansion is operational.
3. Complete the planned construction of the western addition to the garage.

The order of presentation of the options was randomized for each respondent. The percentage of respondents who selected each option as their first choice is shown in the graph below, entitled “*First Choice Option for Grosvenor-Strathmore.*”

91 survey respondents reported having parked at the Grosvenor-Strathmore Metrorail Station at least one or more times per week. Of these respondents:

- 75% ranked as their first choice Option 3, build both the southern (referred to in the survey as Phase 1) and western (referred to in the survey as Phase 2) additions;
- 16% ranked first Option 2, wait to make a decision; and
- 9% ranked first Option 1, cancel the construction of the western addition.



In comparing these survey results to the attitudes of those who also submitted written comments on this issue (see **Appendix D**), we find that those who only answered the survey questions were significantly less in favor of building the western addition than those who also submitted written comments. Those who submitted written comments therefore seem to be more intense about their position.

WMATA received 109 written comments, but four of them were not responsive to the issue addressed in this Staff Report. Therefore, only 105 of those written comments are considered in determining the percentages below. WMATA received comments from four organizations, which included the Montgomery County Department of Transportation, which favored building the western expansion, and from the Coalition for Smarter Growth, the Sierra Club and the Montgomery County Planning Department, all of which favored canceling the western expansion. A written comment was also submitted by the Music Center at Strathmore, but that comment stated that none of the alternatives would have an impact on it and no preference was stated.

Options	Survey Results	Written Comments from General Public	Written Comments from Organizations
Proceed with the western expansion	75%	84%	1
Defer a decision until after the southern expansion is built	16%	13%	none
Cancel the western expansion	9%	3%	3

The on-line survey also included questions to attempt to estimate demand for parking at Grosvenor-Strathmore and nearby Metrorail Stations, however, the sample size of respondents was not large enough for making such estimates. That said, as previously noted, in Fall 2019 WMATA conducted a survey of customers with registered SmarTrip® cards who had parked at the Grosvenor-Strathmore Metrorail Station within the preceding 90 days to learn their experiences and to gauge their willingness to park at other Metrorail stations. That data is shown in **Appendix E** and discussed in following sections of this Staff Report.

3.3 Demographics

The demographic breakdown of those participating in the on-line survey conducted February 29 through May 1, 2020 are shown here:

	Responses	%
Household income		
Less than \$30,000	0	0%
\$30,000 to \$99,999	25	20%
More than \$100,000	102	80%
Latino or Hispanic Origin		
Yes	10	6%
No	156	94%
Race		
African American or Black	6	4%
Native American	0	0%
Asian	11	7%
Pacific Islander	0	0%
White	137	87%
Other	7	4%
Gender		
Male	64	38%
Female	104	62%
Other	0	0%

3.4 Comments Received For The Record Via The Survey And At The Public Hearing

In addition to the opportunity to speak at the Public Hearing, customers had the option to take the survey and to write comments within the survey. The public comment period ended at 5:00 p.m. on May 1, 2020. Two comments were received via the voice-mail telephone lines that were used in lieu of the traditional face-to-face hearing; both of those oral comments referenced comments also submitted in writing by the same commenters. WMATA received a total of 114 written comments.

The oral comments received via voicemail in lieu of the traditional face-to-face hearing are provided in **Appendix C**. Copies of the written comments received via the survey are provided in **Appendix D**. All the oral testimony and written submissions were in the English language.

There were far more comments overall favoring (1) building the western garage expansion now (one organization and 89 comments from the general public) than (2) cancelling the western expansion entirely (three comments from the general public) or (3) deferring the western expansion (three organizations and 14 comments from the general public).

The most common points from the comments favoring building the western addition were:

- They believe parking at Grosvenor-Strathmore is already at or near capacity.

- They believe WMATA promised, or made a deal, to build the western addition.
- They believe the area is growing and more parking is needed.
- They believe construction costs and interest rates are low right now and/or that building the western addition now, while the Grosvenor-Strathmore Metrorail Station is closed, would cause the least interference for customers.

Those opposing building the western addition cited environmental issues (air quality, climate change), creating a more walkable, bikeable environment, and skepticism about the need for the additional spaces.

Those advocating for deferring a decision cited some of the same issues as those who favored canceling the western addition, and also cited unknown demand and, in particular, the effects of the coronavirus pandemic and teleworking on future demand.

4. COMMENTS AND WMATA STAFF RESPONSES TO COMMENTS RECEIVED

Because the Public Hearing testimony and written comments can be grouped into the broad themes noted above, the testimony and comments are being presented in that manner and WMATA staff is providing responses to the overall themes and concerns expressed.

4.1 Build the Western Addition

A significant majority (84%) of the written comments received from the public, and one of the five comments submitted by organizations, favored building the western addition now. This is a significantly higher percentage (84% versus 75%) than those survey respondents who favored building the western addition now but did not add written comments. The comments made by those favoring building the western addition generally fell into the four categories expanded on below:

(1) *Commenters believe that parking at Grosvenor-Strathmore is already at or near capacity.*

This was the most common statement. Among the comments making this point were:

- The parking “fills to capacity every weekday.”
- The parking is “always full,” or “always crowded.”
- It is “nearly impossible to find a space” or it is “impossible to find a space now.”
- To find a space, “one must arrive after 10.”
- The parking is “full to capacity” or “already full on normal commuting days.”
- There already is “no parking available” or “already not enough spaces to park.”
- The parking already operates at “99% occupancy.”
- Parking is “already challenging” or “extremely difficult.”

Many commenters offered specific times when, in their experience, parking capacity was reached:

- 7:20 a.m. (1)
- 7:30-8:00 a.m. (1)
- 8:00 a.m. (1)
- 8:00-8:30 a.m. (1)
- 8:15 a.m. (1)
- 8:15-8:30 a.m. (2)

- 8:30 a.m. (16 – this was the time stated by those submitting comments based on the same form)
- “Before 9:00 am” and “close to 9:00” (2)
- Daytime Washington Nationals games (1)
- “Going to Strathmore” (1)

At the opposite extreme, one commenter opposing building the western addition wrote, “I have never seen the garage or surface lot full or even close to it.”

It is difficult to reconcile those statements about the availability of parking at Grosvenor-Strathmore with each other given the disparate times cited for when the parking fills. The comments also do not comport with the results of the 15-minute interval vehicle counts recorded by WMATA for the months of March through June 2019, previously discussed in **Section 1.3**. As previously noted, those parking counts found only five out of 77 weekdays measured in the study period when the parking facility reached even 89% Peak Utilization by 9:30 a.m., let alone filled by the times cited. On most days, 89% Peak Utilization was not achieved until 10:00, 10:15 or 10:30 a.m., sometimes even later. (At 11% vacancy there would still be just over 200 available parking spaces available in the current facilities.) Not a single Friday approached 89% Peak Utilization. Thus, the previous parking capacity at Grosvenor-Strathmore can be said to never be “full” at any of the times cited by these public comments.

Further, as previously discussed in **Section 1.3** summarizing utilization and as shown in **Exhibit F** graphically showing actual utilization at the 8:00 a.m. and 9:00 a.m. hours, Peak Utilization of the Grosvenor-Strathmore parking facilities was not to the degree cited at the hours cited by the commenters. To the contrary, Peak Utilization was usually 45% to 55% at 8:00 a.m. (and considerably lower earlier) and, at its highest, in the mid-80% range at 9:00 a.m. Thus, at 9:00 a.m. there were usually somewhere between 250 and 300 parking spaces available.

It is also difficult to reconcile the comments about the unavailability of parking at Grosvenor-Strathmore with the results of the on-line survey conducted by WMATA in Fall 2019. That survey was conducted only among registered SmarTrip® users who had parked at Grosvenor-Strathmore Metrorail Station at least once in the previous 90 days. It had 487 responses – more than four times as many responses than this Compact public hearing process – out of approximately 5,000 customers invited to participate; WMATA staff considered this to be an excellent rate of response for an on-line survey. The results of the Fall 2019 survey were consistent with the parking data provided for March through June 2019. The results of that Fall 2019 study are explained in **Appendix E**. To summarize the results of the Fall 2019 survey (which did not ask for time of day information):

- 76% “always” found parking available at Grosvenor-Strathmore.
- Of the other 24%:
 - 11% reported difficulty only once in the previous 30 days
 - 5% reported difficulty once every other week
 - 2% reported difficulty once a week
 - 5% reported difficulty a few times a week
 - 1% reported difficulty daily.

It is also worth noting that, of those respondents in the Fall 2019 survey reporting difficulty in finding parking at Grosvenor-Strathmore, only 20% reported driving all the way to their destination instead of taking Metrorail; 67% of the respondents reporting difficulty in finding parking at

Grosvenor-Strathmore continued to access Metrorail by some other means — e.g. driving to another Metrorail station, parking on the street or finding another way to get to Metrorail.

The Montgomery County Department of Transportation (“**MCDOT**”) submitted a statement supporting building the western addition now, or at least committing now to be built in the future. MCDOT concluded that 55% of the weekdays in this period had Peak Utilization over 90%, which the Montgomery County Division of Parking considers at practical capacity.

A few of those who commented during this Compact public hearing process on how crowded parking is at Grosvenor-Strathmore Metrorail Station also made the point that they would not switch to the White Flint or any other Metrorail Station.

However, the results of the Fall 2019 survey indicated a different conclusion about the willingness of Grosvenor-Strathmore customers to switch to other stations. Of the 487 respondents to the Fall 2019 survey, 33% reported that they had already parked at White Flint and 34% said they would consider it an option. 12% of respondents to the Fall 2019 survey reported they had parked at Twinbrook, and 14% consider it an option. Lesser options included Rockville, Shady Grove and Wheaton (each 7%) and, in declining order from there, Forest Glen, Silver Spring and Glenmont. Considering the large number of parking spaces available on any given day at the White Flint, Twinbrook and Wheaton Metrorail Stations – the Wheaton garage being particularly heavily under-utilized – there seems to be enough available parking elsewhere to accommodate any overflow parking demand from Grosvenor-Strathmore.

(2) *Commenters believe WMATA promised, or made a deal, to build the western addition*

Another common theme in the comments was that, in the words of one them “a deal is a deal”, i.e. WMATA made a binding promise to build the western addition. This was variously stated by many commenters as WMATA made an “agreement” or a “promise,” WMATA “made a bargain with the community” or a “commitment to the community,” or the western addition was “part of the deal” or “a condition of the [private development].”

While staff understands that WMATA and the Developer initially assumed that the project would include full replacement of the surface parking lot spaces, that assumption predated ending the “Grosvenor turnback” and the coronavirus pandemic. Further, there was no formal commitment or agreement made with any person or organization to replace all of the surface parking. The decision has always been in Metro’s discretion. There wasn’t even such a commitment or agreement made with the Montgomery County Planning Board, which has advisory review authority over the project and therefore did receive a formal submission showing full replacement. To this point, the Montgomery County Planning Department has submitted a written statement, included in **Appendix D**, recommending that WMATA not build the western addition.

(3) *Commenters believe the area is growing and more parking is needed*

Some comments state that the area around Grosvenor-Strathmore is growing or will grow in the future, making it likely that more people will want to ride Metro, thereby making it necessary to provide more parking at the Grosvenor-Strathmore Metrorail Station. Only some of these comments identified the neighborhoods in which they foresee growth; most simply refer to the “area.”

However, the Grosvenor-Strathmore Minor Master Plan Amendment adopted by the Montgomery County Planning Board to make the Grosvenor-Strathmore Metrorail Station site developable did

not make allowance for any other development project in the study area surrounding the Grosvenor-Strathmore Metrorail Station. In any event, if and when such development occurs, some of it may be close enough to the Grosvenor-Strathmore Metrorail Station to enable Metro riders of the future to walk to the Station. If such development in the area necessitates additional parking at the Grosvenor-Strathmore Metrorail Station, there will be the opportunity at that time to add the western expansion. The area in which the western addition would be built will remain a WMATA-controlled area, and it is not included in the area to be used for the Private Development Project.

- (4) *Commenters believe construction costs and interest rates are low and/or that building the western addition now, while the Grosvenor-Strathmore Metrorail Station is closed, would cause the least interference for customers*

A small number of comments were to the effect that the western addition should be built now, whether because the Grosvenor-Strathmore Metrorail Station is fully closed to customers right now so there would be the least inconvenience, or because construction costs are low, financing costs are low, etc.

The status of the western addition is that it has largely been designed, but the project would have to be bid to contractors, which would take several months, not to mention that ordering precast concrete takes about six months. WMATA staff does not believe that the construction of the western addition could be completed during the time that the Grosvenor-Strathmore Metrorail Station will be closed.

Finally, construction costs have not proven to be lower at this time. Low interest rates are not material to the garage expansion project because it is being funded by WMATA's capital budget. WMATA staff assumes that the same funding process would continue to be followed for any western addition.

4.2 Do not build the western garage expansion at all

The completely opposite point of view to the foregoing is that WMATA should not build the western addition at all. This view was expressed by three members of the general public and by three organizations that submitted comments: the Coalition for Smarter Growth, the Sierra Club and the Montgomery County Planning Department.

As previously discussed, there was one comment that "I have never seen the garage or surface lot full or even close to it," but this is a claim neither the 15-minute-by-15-minute parking utilization data, the Fall 2019 survey results, nor the other public comments bear out. The other general themes were:

- Make the Grosvenor-Strathmore area more walkable, more pedestrian-friendly, more bikeable, and discourage automobile traffic in accordance with transit-oriented development goals.
- Spend WMATA's construction money, and thereafter maintenance money, elsewhere.
- Customers will park at other Metro Stations according to the Fall 2019 survey.
- Wait to see the effects of ending the "Grosvenor turnback." [As previously discussed, this means wait to see if demand at Grosvenor-Strathmore naturally decreases now that service to the four Metro Stations north of it equalized.]
- The availability of parking generally, and underpriced parking in particular, induces demand for parking and thus induces driving.
- More generally, we should discourage driving in light of climate change.

WMATA staff does not recommend this decision at this time. Although WMATA staff does not favor building the western addition now, staff acknowledges that parking utilization at Grosvenor-Strathmore has been high in the past and may prove to be high enough in the future to justify building the western addition to the parking garage. Terminating that possibility at this time does not provide flexibility to respond to whatever conditions may be in the future.

4.3 Defer a decision on the western addition

Fourteen comments advocated that WMATA defer a decision on building the western addition and take a “wait and see” approach. Some of those comments repeated themes expressed by those who favored canceling the western addition outright, and other themes raised were:

- Teleworking/telecommuting will probably reduce ridership and parking demand in the future.
- Related to that point, the effect on transit ridership of the Coronavirus pandemic is unknown.
- The proposed Route 355 bus rapid transit and other changes to traffic patterns should be studied to see if they affect parking demand.
- Pause to evaluate the need for the western expansion but continue planning for it.
- WMATA should save its money unless there is “irrefutable evidence that the [western addition] is worth it in terms of ridership and net environmental impact.”

WMATA and the Developer have plans and specifications for the western addition to the garage, which can be utilized if and when the addition is ready to be constructed.

5. RESPONSES TO COMMENTS RECEIVED ON THE PUBLIC HEARING STAFF REPORT

[This Section will be filled in after the Public Hearing Staff Report is circulated for public review and comment.]

6. COMMENTS RECEIVED AFTER THE CLOSE OF THE PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

[This Section will be filled in after the Public Hearing Staff Report is circulated for public review and comment.]

7. OTHER INFORMATION FOR THE PUBLIC RECORD

No other information has been provided.

8. STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that construction of the proposed western addition of the Grosvenor-Strathmore parking garage be deferred until the need for it can be better determined. Deferral of the decision would enable WMATA to determine any effect on parking utilization at Grosvenor-Strathmore from: (1) the end of the “Grosvenor turnback;” (2) the availability of parking at other Metrorail stations to absorb any overflow from Grosvenor-Strathmore; and (3) the effects of the coronavirus pandemic and the possible impact of increased teleworking on transit ridership. Reconsideration can be done at any time because the area that would be used for the western addition remains under WMATA’s control.

APPENDIX A
NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING



Notice of Public Hearing

Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority Proposed Modifications to Parking Garage Addition at Grosvenor-Strathmore Metro Station

Docket R20-01

Purpose

Notice is hereby given that a public hearing will be held by the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority on proposed modifications to the previously-approved addition to the parking garage at the Grosvenor-Strathmore Metro Station as follows:

Hearing No. 631
Monday, March 30, 2020
The Mansion at Strathmore
10701 Rockville Pike
North Bethesda, Maryland 20852
(Red Line, Grosvenor-Strathmore Metro Station)
(ADA shuttle available between Metro station and hearing)

Open house at 6 p.m.
Public Hearing scheduled to begin at 6:30 p.m.

Please note that this date is subject to the facility's cancellation policy.

The locations of all public hearings are wheelchair accessible. Any individual who requires special assistance such as a sign language interpreter or additional accommodation to participate in the public hearings, or who requires these materials in an alternate format, should contact John Pasek at 202-962-2511 or TTY: 202-962-2033 as soon as possible in order for Metro to make necessary arrangements. For language assistance, such as an interpreter or information in another language, please call 202-962-1082 at least 48 hours prior to the public hearing date.

For more information please visit
wmata.com/plansandprojects





PURPOSE OF THE PUBLIC HEARING

Notice is hereby given that a public hearing will be held by the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) regarding modifications to the proposed expansion of the parking garage at Grosvenor-Strathmore Metro Station. At the hearing, WMATA will receive and consider public comments and suggestions about the proposal.

HOW TO REGISTER TO SPEAK AT THE PUBLIC HEARING

All organizations or individuals desiring to be heard with respect to the proposal will be afforded the opportunity to present their views and make supporting statements and to offer alternative proposals. Public officials will be allowed five minutes each to make their presentations. All others will be allowed three minutes each. Relinquishing of time by one speaker to another will not be permitted.

In order to establish a witness list, individuals and representatives of organizations who wish to be heard at the public hearing are requested to furnish in writing their name and organization affiliation, if any, via email to speak@wmata.com. Please submit only one speaker's name per request. Lists of individual speakers will not be accepted. The request may also be made by calling WMATA's Office of the Secretary at (202) 962-2511.

HOW TO SUBMIT WRITTEN STATEMENTS

Testimony may be submitted on-line about this proposal at wmata.com/plansandprojects. On-line submission will be available by 9 a.m. on Saturday, February 29, 2020 and will close Thursday, April 9, 2020 at 5 p.m. This is in addition to your ability to speak at the public hearing. For those without access to computers or internet, testimony may also be mailed to the Office of the Secretary, Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority, 600 Fifth Street, NW, Washington, DC 20001. All comments must be received by the Office of the Secretary by 5 p.m. on Thursday, April 9, 2020 to be included in the public record.

The comments received by the Office of the Secretary, along with the on-line submissions and public hearing comments, will be presented to the WMATA Board of Directors and will be part of the official public hearing record. Please note all statements are releasable to the public upon request, and may be posted on WMATA's website, without change, including any personal information provided.

WHAT IS PROPOSED

WMATA is currently expanding the parking garage at the Grosvenor-Strathmore Metrorail Station to replace parking in the surface parking lot that is being removed to make room for a private-sector development project at the station. This expansion was approved by the WMATA Board of Directors. Phase 1 of that garage expansion is already under construction and is projected to replace just over 52% of the lost surface parking. Phase 2 of the garage expansion will replace the remainder the of the parking spaces, which is approximately 194.

Due to the cost of the Phase 2 garage expansion, the availability of parking at other nearby rail stations (particularly White Flint and Twinbrook), and the expected disruption to the current Kiss & Ride area and Arts Walk during construction, WMATA is considering not completing Phase 2 of the garage expansion at this time or permanently.

Metro is therefore seeking comment on the following options:

- Constructing the approved Phase 2 garage expansion to replace 194 parking spaces;
- Deferring the decision on the Phase 2 garage expansion until parking demand at Grosvenor-Strathmore can be evaluated after the Phase 1 expansion is completed and put into service; or
- Amending the WMATA mass transit plan by reducing the approved number of on-site parking spaces by approximately 194 and not constructing the Phase 2 garage expansion.

REFERENCE MATERIAL AVAILABLE FOR INSPECTION

The docket consists of this Notice of Public Hearing and an environmental report for the development project at the Grosvenor-Strathmore Metro Station. The environmental report is available on-line at wmata.com/plansandprojects and may be inspected during normal business hours at the following locations:

WMATA, Office of the Secretary
600 Fifth Street, NW
Washington, DC 20001
202-962-2511
(Please call in advance to coordinate)

Davis Library
6400 Democracy Boulevard
Bethesda, Maryland 20817
240-777-0922

WMATA COMPACT REQUIREMENTS

The WMATA Compact requires that the Board, in amending the mass transit plan, consider current and prospective conditions in the transit zone should the project be built. The transit zone includes Montgomery County, Maryland and considerations include, without limitation, land use, population, economic factors affecting development plans, existing and proposed transportation and transit facilities, any dislocation of families or businesses; preservation of the beauty and dignity of the DC Metro Area; factors affecting environmental amenities and aesthetics, and financial resources. The mass transit plan encompasses, among other things, transit facilities to be provided by WMATA, including stations and parking facilities, and the character, nature, design, location and capital and operating cost thereof. The mass transit plan, in addition to designating the design and location of transit facilities, also provides for capital and operating expenses, as well as “various other factors and considerations, which, in the opinion of the Board, justify and require the projects therein proposed,” all as more particularly set forth in the WMATA Compact.

The environmental report for the project is available for public review at the locations identified in the Reference Materials section above.

The work and changes depicted in this information package constitute the proposed amendment to the mass transit plan for purposes of the WMATA Compact.

Notice of Public Hearing
Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority
Proposed Modifications to Parking Garage Addition at
Grosvenor-Strathmore Metro Station
Docket R20-01

Purpose

Notice is hereby given that a public hearing will be held by the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority on proposed modifications to the previously-approved addition to the parking garage at the Grosvenor-Strathmore Metro Station as follows:

Hearing No. 631
Monday, April 20, 2020

Due to the ongoing public health emergency and the prohibition on public gatherings related to the COVID-19 outbreak, this hearing will be conducted by telephone.

Hearing Call-in Number: 202-962-1901

Número telefónico para la audiencia: 202-962-1906

(TTY) 202-962-2033

Public Hearing phone line open from 6:30 – 8:30 p.m. on Monday, April 20, 2020.

Anyone who is unable to access these materials via Metro's website or needs additional accommodation should contact the Office of the Secretary at 202-962-2511 or TTY: 202-962-2033 as soon as possible in order for Metro to make necessary arrangements. For language assistance, such as an interpreter or information in another language, please call 202-962-1082 at least 48 hours prior to the public hearing date.

For more information please visit
wmata.com/plansandprojects

APPENDIX B

PUBLIC HEARING PRESENTATION MATERIALS

As noted in the text of this Staff Report and in **Appendix A**, there was no traditional face-to-face hearing in this case because of the “stay at home” orders of the State of Maryland. As a result, there was no presentation to attendees of the type that customarily precedes such a face-to-face hearing. There was a short PowerPoint posted on the same WMATA webpage that hosted the Environmental Evaluation.

APPENDIX C

PUBLIC HEARING TRANSCRIPT

As noted in the text of this Staff Report, there was no traditional face-to-face hearing in this case because of the “stay at home” orders of the State of Maryland. Instead, there was an open phone line that was available to receive voice-mail messages during the hours allotted for the hearing. Only two voice-mail comments were received. The transcribed text is shown below.

From Gary Erenrich of the Montgomery County (Maryland) Department of Transportation:

This is Gary Erenrich with Montgomery County Dept. of Transportation and I wanted to let the Public Hearing record indicate that the County will be submitting written testimony prior to the May 1st deadline as reported on your website. We generally want the parking spaces replaced entirely and our documentation on our submission will give you more details on that decision.

Thank you.

From Jane Lyons of the Coalition for Smarter Growth:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback on the proposed parking garage modifications on the Grosvenor Strathmore Metro Station. Please accept these comments on behalf of the Coalition for Smarter Growth, the leading organization in the DC region advocating for a more walkable, inclusive, transit-oriented communities. For the record, I am Jane Lyons and I am the Coalition for Smarter Growth’s Maryland advocate manager.

We urge you not to advance the construction of the Phase 2 of garage expansion. This would be merely a 10% reduction in parking spaces, maintaining nearly 1700 spaces. New parking will also be available within the Strathmore Park development, in addition White Flint has the capacity of approx. 400 spaces to accommodate additional Park and Ride commuters. Riders are willing to do this. 34% of surveyed Grosvenor-Strathmore Park and Ride users state that they are able to park at White Flint instead.

The Coalition for Smarter Growth has long advocated to end the one-for-one parking replacement practice for WMATA properties due to affordability, climate and the economic impact of parking. TOD Projects like Strathmore invite walking, biking and transit and transit usage, including from surrounding neighborhoods. However, when more parking is built, especially underpriced parking, we invite more driving via induced demand. This increases congestion, pollutes the air and encourages sprawl and diminishes walkability.

A 2013 study found that Park and Ride facilities in major metro areas have measured unintended effects. They limit the benefits of transit and potentially increase vehicle travel, including the people who previously made their commute to the transit station by transit or bike as opposed to drive instead. Furthermore, a parking garage expansion is not the best use of space or money near a Metro station. The space for Phase 2 parking garage expansion could be used for trees or additional open space, cooling and activating the area. On top of construction cost, parking requires long-term maintenance. WMATA is currently facing significant cost due to aging parking garages and is planning to spend \$66.8M system wide for parking garage and lot rehab within the next 6 years. In conclusion the Strathmore development that tops the Grosvenor Strathmore metro station is an indicator that the land use patterns are changing in Montgomery County to support a TOD-friendly future. We should limit the amount of high-value land around Metro stations that is dedicated to cars, rather than to people, businesses and recreation. We urge you to not advance the construction of the Phase 2 garage expansion.

Thank you for your consideration.

APPENDIX D

TRANSCRIBED WRITTEN COMMENTS FROM PUBLIC OUTREACH

The following comments were submitted by organizations in response to the opportunity to post comments about the proposal. All comments are reprinted verbatim and in full.

April 20, 2020

WMATA Board of Directors
600 5th St NW
Washington, DC 20001

Re: Proposed Parking Garage Modifications at Grosvenor-Strathmore Metrorail Station

Dear Chair Smedberg and Directors:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback on the proposed parking garage modifications at Grosvenor-Strathmore Metrorail Station. Please accept these comments on behalf of the Coalition for Smarter Growth, the leading organization in the DC region advocating for more walkable, inclusive, transit-oriented communities.

We urge you to not advance the construction of the Phase 2 garage expansion. This would merely be a 10 percent reduction in parking spaces, maintaining nearly 1,700 spaces. New parking will also be available within the Strathmore Square developments. In addition, White Flint has capacity (approximately 400 spaces) to accommodate additional park-and-ride commuters. Riders are willing to do this – 34 percent of surveyed Grosvenor-Strathmore park-and-ride users said they are able to park at White Flint instead.

The Coalition for Smarter Growth has long advocated to end the one-for-one parking replacement practice for WMATA properties due to the affordability, climate, and economic impacts of parking. TOD projects like Strathmore Square invite more walking, biking, and transit-usage, including from surrounding neighborhoods. However, when more parking is built – especially underpriced parking – we invite more driving via induced demand. This increases congestion, pollutes the air, encourages sprawl, and diminishes walkability.

A 2013 [study](#) found that park-and-ride facilities in major metro areas have measurable unintended effects that limit the benefits of transit and potentially increase vehicle travel, including that people who previously made their commute to the transit station by transit or bike chose to drive instead.

Furthermore, a parking garage expansion is not the best use of space or money near a Metro station. The space where the Phase 2 garage expansion is planned could be used for trees or additional plaza space, cooling and activating the area. On top of construction costs, parking requires long-term maintenance. WMATA is faces significant costs due to aging parking garages and is such planning to spend \$66.8 million system-wide for parking garage and lot rehabilitation over the next six years.

In conclusion, the Strathmore Square development atop the Grosvenor-Strathmore Metro Station is an indicator that land use patterns are changing in Montgomery County. To support a TOD-friendly future, we should limit the amount of high-value land around Metro stations that are dedicated to cars rather than people, businesses, and recreation.

We urge you to not advance the construction of the Phase 2 garage expansion. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Jane Lyons
Maryland Advocacy Manager
Coalition for Smarter Growth



WMATA Board of Directors
600 5th Street NW
Washington DC 20001

April 26, 2020

RE: Proposed parking garage modifications at Grosvenor-Strathmore METRO station

Dear WMATA Directors:

As you are well aware, climate change is our most critical global challenge.

One important way that key regional institutions, such as WMATA, can address climate change is by making transportation and land use decisions that will lessen our dependence on the automobile.

Which brings us directly to the proposal to NOT go forward with the Phase 2 Grosvenor-Strathmore parking garage expansion. In brief, Sierra Club urges WMATA to scale back parking at this METRO station by eliminating the Phase 2 parking garage expansion.

When Sierra Club testified on November 8, 2018 regarding the Grosvenor-Strathmore Plan, we enumerated 6 key aspects of the plan that we support. These 6 key characteristics are – High density; Affordable housing; Parks and plazas; Walkability; Reduced parking; and Energy efficiency.

Regarding reduced parking, we said “the emphasis should be on the positive – designing this neighborhood to offer a more convenient and attractive set of non-automobile options to get around (and into Grosvenor-Strathmore from elsewhere) – transit, walking, biking; but the plan should also reduce the amount of parking that new development must provide.”

Our position is unchanged.

We thus urge WMATA to eliminate the Phase 2 parking garage expansion.

This is one small, but important, step in addressing climate change. The upcoming development at the Grosvenor-Strathmore METRO station, by limiting parking -- while simultaneously upgrading other transportation options – will contribute to the regional reduction in vehicle miles per capita.

Sincerely, Thank you.

Shruti Bhatnagar, Chair
Sierra Club Montgomery County, MD
Shruti.bhatnagar@mdsierra.org

Dave Sears, Land Use Chair
Sierra Club Montgomery County, MD
davidwsears@aol.com

Sierra Club Montgomery County, P.O. Box 4024, Rockville, MD 20849

Montgomery County Testimony on Grosvenor Garage Replacement Parking
Spaces Public Hearing is Monday, April 20, 2020

PUBLIC HEARING ISSUE: Metro is currently extending the existing Grosvenor Garage to the south to replace 212 surface parking spaces being converted to joint development. The remaining existing surface spaces, 196, can be replaced in a western expansion of the existing garage now or in the future or not be replaced at all. The public hearing is to obtain testimony on these three options for the remaining 196 surface parking spaces removed for the joint development

HISTORY: Montgomery County designed and constructed a 1500 space garage that opened in July 2004. The garage increased the parking at the station by 1200 spaces since the garage was constructed on 300 surface spaces. Montgomery County assumed the full cost of the garage and is funding the cost with parking surcharge backed revenue bonds.

The County has several agreements with Metro to permit the construction of the Grosvenor garage. Metro operates and maintains the garage and Metro will assume ownership of the garage when the bonds are paid off. The agreements have the garage being paid off on December 31, 2030. The County has an agreement with Metro on charging a parking surcharge on all Metro parking spaces in the County and this surcharge revenue is used to pay the bonds. Metro pays the bonds directly from the surcharge. The current parking surcharge is \$1.50 per parker for all Metro operated parking facilities in Montgomery County except Wheaton parking has a reduced parking rate.

The County and Metro have a special agreement with Strathmore Music Center for use of the parking facility for ticketed events. The agreement specifies rent payment for the use of the parking facility. There is nothing in the public hearing docket that will change in any way the Strathmore parking agreement.

REASONS FOR AND AGAINST PROPOSED OPTIONS:

1. Reduce overall one-for-one parking replacement to instead provide 212 of the 408 parking spaces (reduces overall parking capacity at the Metro station by approximately 10%). These 212 spaces are currently under construction.
 - a. FOR – Grosvenor is a good joint development location and reducing commuter parking is consistent with TDM goals and there currently are enough parking available at White Flint and Twinbrook stations.
 - b. AGAINST – Prior to COVID-19 outbreak, the sample data reviewed from March through June 2019, 55% of the weekdays in this period had peak occupancy over 90% which Montgomery County Division of Parking considers at practical capacity. Based on the Metro parking data and analysis, all replacement spaces are needed. In addition to the capacity need for the spaces, many of the current parkers that cannot find parking at Grosvenor station will not use an alternative location that requires additional travel away from Downtown. The current parkers that do not relocate will not pay the parking surcharge fee of \$1.50 per day, further depleting the account and driving instead of using Metrorail.
2. Reserve the option to build a second expansion in the future for the remaining 196 parking spaces, but do not build it now.

- a. FOR – This is variation on 1 above, but with a promise to build the spaces later. Space for expanding the garage to the west must be preserved to permit the future garage expansion without costly removal/relocation of the interim use for this space.
 - b. AGAINST – Now may be the right time to add the 196 spaces to the garage because the station is temporality closed, the cost of money is low and there is significant level of unemployment. A future year construction will likely encounter increased station activity with the joint development and an operating station so there would be more traveler and residential disruption. In addition, an interim use for this expansion space would have to be removed or relocated increasing garage expansion cost and potential public criticism for removing the interim use.
3. Build the second expansion now for the remaining 196 parking spaces.
- a. FOR – The capacity from the addition of the 196 spaces should be needed after COVID -19 and the region is in recovery. The construction cost escalation and the cost of expanding the garage with an active station can be reduced by immediately constructing the expansion spaces. The 200 spaces will be needed and should be able to be built with lower cost and disruption.
 - b. AGAINST – The construction is an immediate outlay of resources and there is short- term parking availability at White Flint and Twinbrook. There is uncertainty when the Metrorail system will recover from COVID-19 and resources may be better used elsewhere to support public transportation.

RECOMMENDATION: Montgomery County recommends alternative 3 that builds the 196 replacement spaces now. Alternative 2 is also acceptable if scheduling and cash flow are current issues. Montgomery County does require a Metro commitment to replace the 196 spaces with a garage expansion to the west.

Montgomery County is concerned that near-term and long-term loss of 195 spaces will diminish the parking surcharge account that is used to make revenue bond payments that are backed by Montgomery County. The continued loss of parking surcharge revenue is a concern as well as the uncertainty of the timing of the recovery.



April 30, 2020

WMATA Board of Directors
600 5th Street NW
Washington, DC 20001

RE: Proposed parking garage modifications at Grosvenor-Strathmore Metrorail Station

Dear WMATA Directors:

The Montgomery County Planning Department is writing to provide comment as part of WMATA's public hearing on proposed parking garage modifications at the Grosvenor-Strathmore Metrorail Station.

The Department was pleased to work closely with WMATA during the recent Grosvenor-Strathmore Metro Area Minor Master Plan Amendment process, which concluded in December 2017. We are also pleased that elements of the plan are being implemented so quickly by WMATA – particularly construction of the Phase 1 addition to the existing parking structure. When this is complete, the existing surface parking lot will be available to allow this Metrorail Station area to continue its transformation into a walkable, sustainable neighborhood with housing, limited retail and significant open space.

We understand that WMATA is considering different options of how to proceed with the Phase 2 garage addition. In addition to proceeding with the addition, WMATA is considering two other options:

- Cancel the construction of the Phase 2 garage expansion, reducing the number of on-site parking spaces at Grosvenor-Strathmore Metrorail Station by approximately 194.
- Wait to make a decision about completing or canceling the construction of the Phase 2 garage expansion until after the Phase 1 garage expansion is fully operational in late 2020 and a full parking demand evaluation can be completed.

The Planning Department urges WMATA to cancel the construction of the Phase 2 garage expansion.

Our reasons for this recommendation are as follows:

- WMATA's decision to no longer use Grosvenor-Strathmore as a turnback station. This means that riders who may have clustered at Grosvenor-Strathmore will be more evenly distributed across other stations to the north and less commuters from the Upcounty will be driving on Rockville Pike to get to Grosvenor-Strathmore.
- The build out of the Grosvenor-Strathmore Metro Area Minor Master Plan will result in a neighborhood that is walkable and bikeable so that more transit users – particularly those in the “last mile” area – will be able to get to Metrorail Station without using cars.
- Reducing parking in TOD neighborhoods is a best practice.

I hope that you will consider our comments. We look forward to working with you on this project and many other TOD projects in Montgomery County.

Sincerely,

Gwen L.M. Wright
Planning Director

STRATHMORE

May 1, 2020

Office of the Secretary
Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority
600 Fifth Street N.W.
Washington, DC 20001
Via On-line Submission at: <https://grosvenorpublicinput.questionpro.com/>
RE: Grosvenor-Strathmore Metro Station

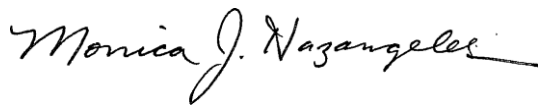
To WMATA Board of Directors,

As a community partner with WMATA and Fivesquares and a neighbor of the Grosvenor-Strathmore Metro Station, we have been made aware of Metro's consideration of multiple options regarding the Phase 2 garage expansion of the Grosvenor-Strathmore Metro Station.

None of the options currently under consideration by WMATA should impact Strathmore's ability to serve its patrons who visit the 1976-seat Concert Hall and Education Center, the historic Mansion, or the 16-acre campus. We greatly value our ability to offer our patrons a convenient, safe, and affordable parking experience. It has become a hallmark of Strathmore.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this input.

Regards,



Monica Jeffries Hazangeles
President and CEO

5301 Tuckerman Lane, North Bethesda, MD 20852 | 301.581.5100 | **STRATHMORE.ORG**

The following comments were submitted by members of the general public in response to the opportunity to post comments about the proposal. All comments are reprinted verbatim and in full without editing except for some very light editing for punctuation and spelling.

For convenience of reference, the comments have been organized by WMATA staff into general categories; that said, many of the comments – particularly those supporting the construction of the western garage expansion -- straddle more than one subcategory.

Note that, for purposes of this exercise, respondents were not informed that most of the parking spaces in the surface parking lot would remain in operation for the foreseeable future. The alternatives posed assumed that all surface parking spaces would be removed, so that the only decision was whether to replace all 408 surface parking spaces with additional garage parking or to reduce the overall parking capacity at Grosvenor-Strathmore by 10.4%.

BUILD THE WESTERN GARAGE EXPANSION NOW

The following comments fall into the general category that WMATA promised to build the western expansion and, as expressed in the first comment in the next category below, “a deal is a deal.”

1. How dare METRO let developers do a bait and switch with parking at Grosvenor station. Build who was promised!!!
2. You must complete phase 2 of the garage expansion. That was the agreement and you cannot do a bait and switch now. Metro received funds from the developer for this purpose and it is unethical to not go forward with ensuring that we will not lose almost 200 parking spaces. The garage fills up by 8-8:30am every weekend [sic – presumably “weekday” was meant] morning and folks are fighting over the last few spots.

The following comments fall into the general category that the existing parking capacity at Grosvenor-Strathmore is insufficient.

3. A DEAL IS A DEAL. Metro committed to replacing all of the parking at Grosvenor as a condition of the expansion. It is unacceptable to impose a bait-and-switch now. Grosvenor is already nearly impossible to find a space at. You have to either pay for reserved, arrive after 10, or get up at the crack of dawn. With it being one of the most in-demand parking stations, reducing the available space is unthinkable and unacceptable.
4. As the metro system is currently underutilized due to covid, take advantage of this time and complete the construction. Losing 194 parking places is too much. We need them
5. Completely replacing all of the parking spaces as quickly as possible is the only option. It is already very stressful to know that there is a good chance there will not be parking when I arrive at the station. The lack of parking has led my family to at times not use metro.

6. Finish it - this industry shows how Metro can mess things up with all due respect - it is often hard to find a space for concerts and this mess should be finished ASAP - this is a growing area and less spaces does not help.
7. Grosvenor is the closest metro parking facility to my home (and closest metro parking facility to my job in dc). It is always crowded. Losing valuable parking spaces will push me to drive to DC rather than go to ride Metro.
8. Grosvenor metro needs more, more, more parking. The garage parking needs to be built as planned, as promised to residents and commuters of which I am both. Currently the parking spaces are full by 7:30/8am. We need more. For everyone's sake. And that's with current residential. We all know more are coming. The station has been assessed in the past and is at 99% occupancy. Also, parking spaces were part of the deal for the new development on the former Metro parking lot. It is disheartening and frankly scary as a commuter, that Metro would considering rescinding on that promise.
9. Grosvenor parking is in high demand. I often park on the street (Tuckerman) because I know that the parking deck is already full to capacity.
10. I am unable to park at the current garage after 8:15 or 8:30. If we lose 194 spaces, it will be difficult to park if you do not arrive before 7:00. On the days that I drive to White Flint, after not being able to park at Grosvenor, it does not appear that there are 194 open spaces there.
11. I can't use Grosvenor because it's always full, and I don't want to have to add 20 minutes to my hour-long commute downtown to further north to White Flint.
12. I have always preferred the surface parking to the garage. Still do. The longer it is available, the better for me. But I would not want to see fewer spaces at Grosvenor that might make it more difficult for me to park there. That would be the worst result.
13. I have on more than one occasion (not within the last 30 days) tried to find parking at Grosvenor only to find none available and had to leave the garage. Suffice it to say, my schedule was delayed in addition to the obvious inconvenience. This seems absurd and is a deterrent in taking metro altogether. This is exactly one of the primary reasons that feed into my decreased use of metro.
14. I have to get to metro early to get a space. We need more spaces there so it's not a competition to get there as early as possible to get a space.
15. I live in old town Kensington and work in Dupont Circle. Grosvenor is the closest metro stop for me. I already travel 8 stops between Grosvenor and Dupont, I have no desire to drive farther from my home and add more metro stops by using the White Flint (also under construction) or Twinbrook garages. Getting home will take even longer than it does now. In the morning, my door-to-door commute is 50 min. In the evening, it's 60 min. due to rush hour traffic. Using a metro station farther away will only increase my overall commute time.
16. I regularly get one of the last one of those 194 spaces in the surface lot, which will be eliminated in Phase 2. I am very upset to hear that WMATA is even considering abandoning the phase 2 expansion of the garage to replace these spaces. The lot already fills to capacity EVERY weekday. I only get a space

by getting there by 7:20am - my husband is forced to drive many days when he cannot find a spot at 8:30, after getting our kids on the school bus. We moved to this area and bought our house based on the availability of parking at Grosvenor Metro - in fact, I put my name on a waitlist for priority parking in 2001 - any day now, maybe I'll hear from you all. The idea that WMATA would even consider eliminating spaces is very upsetting. Since the replacement of those spaces were promised when the land was sold, it's a betrayal of WMATA's promise to this community to abandon that plan now.

17. I support building the garage as planned. It is impossible to get a regular space in the mornings at Grosvenor after 8:30 am. The station has been assessed in the past and is at 99% occupancy. Grosvenor Metro station needs more spaces, not fewer. Moreover, lots of added development is planned in the area, including near Wildwood, Pooks Hill Marriott and WMAL, which will lead to more people needing to drive to the station. It makes no sense to cut spaces at Grosvenor or to force drivers further away from the city. Moreover, the parking spaces were part of the deal for the new development on the former Metro parking lot. It is shocking that Metro would considering rescinding on that promise to the community.

[Note: Comments #18-#31 are verbatim, or nearly verbatim, the same. They appear to come from different e-mail addresses, however, and so are counted as separate comments.]

18. I support building the garage as planned. It is impossible to get a regular space in the mornings at Grosvenor after 8:30 am. The station has been assessed in the past and is at 99% occupancy. Grosvenor Metro station needs more spaces, not fewer. Moreover, lots of added development is planned in the area, including near Wildwood and WMAL, which will lead to more people needing to drive to the station. It makes no sense to cut spaces at Grosvenor or to force drivers further away from the city. Moreover, the parking spaces were part of the deal for the new development on the former Metro parking lot. It is shocking that Metro would considering rescinding on that promise to the community.

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23. I support building the garage as planned. It is impossible for commuters to get a regular space in the mornings at Grosvenor after 8:30 am. The station has been assessed in the past and is at 99% occupancy. Grosvenor Metro station needs more spaces, not fewer. Moreover, lots of added development is planned in the area, including near Wildwood and WMAL, which will lead to more people needing to drive to the station. It makes no sense to cut spaces at Grosvenor or to force drivers further away from the city. Moreover, the parking spaces were part of the deal for the new development on the former Metro parking lot. It is shocking that Metro would considering rescinding on that promise to the community.

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29. I support building the garage as planned. It is impossible to get a regular space in the mornings at Grosvenor after 8:30 am. There are folks in this household who work from home for a small business and go to meetings downtown, so the time going to the metro is variable. Expecting people in the community to drive north for the chance to get a parking spot and then get on metro to go back south adding to unbillable time is rude and unconscionable after had promised to make the spots available here. It isn't just a matter of 'use another station' you are not thinking about how people actually live, make a living they don't have time to go driving around town to find parking - which is both time consuming and further puts more cars on the roads, or cars going further to other parking lots, when someone is trying to make the mass transit choice. This station has been assessed in the past and is at 99% occupancy. Grosvenor Metro station needs more spaces, not fewer. Moreover, lots of added development is planned in the area, including near Wildwood and WMAL, which will lead to more people needing to drive and use parking at the station. It makes no sense to cut spaces at Grosvenor or to force drivers further away from the city, to areas that are also having new development and will have further parking pressure, and again add more cars on the roads for longer amounts of time rather than getting them on mass transit quickly. Moreover, the parking spaces were part of the deal for the new development on the former Metro parking lot. It is shocking that Metro would considering rescinding on that promise to the community.

30. I support building the garage as planned. It is usually impossible to get a regular space in the mornings at Grosvenor after 8:15 or 8:30am. Grosvenor Metro station needs more spaces, not fewer. Moreover, lots of added development is planned in the area, including near Wildwood and WMAL, which will lead to more people needing to drive to the station. Please do not let temporarily decreased ridership during the state of emergency influence your decision. Thank you.

31. It is impossible to get a regular space in the mornings at Grosvenor after 8:30 am. As Metro well-knows, the station has been assessed in the past and is at 99% occupancy. Grosvenor metro station needs MORE spaces, not fewer. Moreover, a HUGE amount of added development is happening in the

area, including near Wildwood and WMAL, which will lead to more people needing to drive to the station. It is incomprehensible that Metro would consider cutting spaces at Grosvenor. Driving miles in the wrong direction is not a plausible option. Moreover, this was part of the deal for and a selling point of the new development on the former Metro space. It is shocking that Metro would be considering rescinding on that promise to the community.

32. It's always crowded for parking at that Metro station, in particular it can be difficult to find handicap parking close to the Metro entrance and/or the bridge to Strathmore. The population in the area is probably going to continue to grow. It would be nice for Metro to look ahead and meet the demand before it gets stressful to passengers. I also don't understand how Metro could get halfway through a project without fully understanding the needs. The whole idea of thinking about canceling the project halfway through makes me wonder about how Metro is being managed overall.

33. It's impossible to find spaces now. Reducing parking is stupid. Typical WMATA.

34. Metro made a bargain with the community when it sold off the surface parking lot for development that included maintaining these 194 parking spaces. The garage is always full to capacity for non reserved customers. (And to reserved customers after 10 am, too) I do not work a typical work day, and I would ride Metro more often if it were at all possible to rely on parking at Grosvenor. There is considerable future residential development planned for the areas of Montgomery County closest to Grosvenor Metro, so the parking situation is not going to improve, but get worse in the short term. The number of parking spaces should be maintained, as promised. Failing to provide adequate access to public transportation makes suburban communities like ours less desirable places to live and impacts Metro ridership.

35. More parking is needed. Cancelling Phase 2 doesn't address where current customers will be expected to park.

36. My husband and I are seniors and we generally use the parking garage to go to theater in DC in the evenings after 6:00. However, I often get asked to do freelance work in DC before noon and have turned it down - which severely has limited my work life - because there is never parking - except reserved parking - before 10 am. To further reduce parking at Grosvenor is absurd!! Please do not do this reduction.

37. Parking at Grosvenor unfortunately has always been a problem. I arrive to the garage by 8:15 am Monday-Friday, and it takes me just as long to search for a spot as it does for me to drive from my home only 1.5 miles away. Typically, there are only a few spots left at the very top of the garage. This has been my experience for the past 10 years. I can't imagine what anyone who arrives to the garage any later than me does.

38. Parking is a PROBLEM !!!!!

39. So it is stupid to take away parking spaces when already there is not enough parking.

40. Spaces are already tight at Grosvenor. Eliminating the surface lot and not replacing the lost spaces would be similar to what the garage was like during the rehabilitation phase where most of one floor of the garage was closed at any time. I have to put my son in the school bus. During that time, by

the time I got to the metro, the garage was full at least once per week. It was miserable. We should not go back to that miserable situation, especially at a time when metro is trying to increase ridership.

41. The closer to 9 you arrive at Grosvenor-Strathmore, the harder it is to find a parking spot. Please don't take away close to 200 parking spots that are used by commuters every day.

42. The developer and Metro have made promises to the community as to the development at Grosvenor-Strathmore. If the garage expansion, promised by the developer and Metro in selling the development to the community disappears, what other promises will be broken in the name of economics? As to the loss of spaces, my experience has been that the shortfall occurs during daytime National games and some activities at Strathmore. Getting a parking space during a daytime Nationals game will become extremely difficult if the spaces are lost.

43. The frustration and time involved to drive to other stations to see if they have parking is not acceptable, therefore I am against canceling Phase 2. Additionally, since I need the Strathmore/Grosvenor lot parking availability on days I work at Strathmore (there's very restricted parking there for staff) reducing the on-site parking spaces by 194 would mean I couldn't get to work from my house.

44. The only reason I often don't have trouble parking is because I time my workday to arrive after 10:00. I can't always do this and when I don't find a space can be iffy. Please complete Phase 2 as planned. We can't afford to lose spaces.

45. The parking lot is already full on normal commuting days. A drop in the need for parking spaces, particularly with additional development, seems highly unlikely.

46. There is an insufficient number of spaces available to access Metrorail as it currently stands, particularly if you arrive after 8 am. To use other Metro parking lots would require commuters in North Bethesda and surrounding neighborhoods to drive away from the city in order to get on the train to go into the city.

47. There is demand for parking spaces at Grosvenor Metro and by reducing the amount of parking spaces, people will be forced to then drive to their workplaces. No one has time to drive to other areas in hope they can find a parking space when they are pressed for time to get to work. Please don't appeal to the demands of the developers. You need ample parking at Metro for the surrounding community!

48. To even consider reducing the amount of parking spaces at this station, is totally ridiculous. Please don't do this. It is extremely difficult to find a parking space as it is.

49. We need more parking spaces, not less. I would hope that you can redesign Phase 2 to actually increase the number of spaces at Grosvenor.

50. We need parking at Grosvenor - don't back out of your promise. Parking already fills before 9 am, with fewer spaces, it will be crazy. In addition, the garage is the expected parking place for Strathmore events. We don't want those people clogging the neighborhoods.

51. We were promised these parking spots and we need them! It is too hard to find a parking space on weekdays after 8:30. This region is growing fast — cutting the number of parking spots by 50% would hurt.

52. What the heck metro!! You can't back out of your agreement with the community, finish what you started!! The kiss and ride problem is temporary and something that can be mitigated, the shortage of parking would be permanent!!

53. While I have not had difficulty finding space during the pandemic (so the survey should have been revised to reflect the 30 day time frame) I did before the pandemic, particularly during the construction period. I have had problems finding spaces at both White Flint and Grosvenor and we need more Metro parking not less!

54. With too few spots to begin with it is hard to imagine a plan that doesn't involve completing Phase 2. Why would you build more homes and reduce parking? The people near the metro won't park there for sure but the rest of us still will park. I am not sure what exactly you are trying to achieve.

55. You must not reduce parking spots at Grosvenor - it is used both by workers and public using Metro. There are no other nearby stations with space.

The following comments fall into the general category that more development is proposed for the area and therefore parking capacity at Grosvenor-Strathmore must be maintained.

56. Are you out of your mind? More expansion of apartments just on top of the metro? And, still impede the ability for those needing to park at the metro to get to work is just too much.

57. As a daily Grosvenor metro rider and parker, I urge Metro to honor its commitment to the community by proceeding as planned with the construction of the Phase 2 garage expansion. It is outrageous that Metro would consider reducing the number of available parking spaces by 194. Grosvenor needs more parking spaces, not less! Completing Phase 2 of the garage expansion will only return the number of parking spaces to their original number, not add additional needed parking spaces. In addition, due to the turnover of single family homes to younger working families and planned residential development at Wildwood, White Flint, Rock Spring, WMAL, Pooks Hill, etc., the need for parking at the Grosvenor Metro will only increase over time. Metro should recognize the urgent need for parking at Grosvenor and complete Phase 2 of the garage expansion.

58. As Montgomery County and the area around Grosvenor station will be developed more and more people coming into the county in future, we MUST HAVE ENOUGH PARKING so people CAN ride METRO.....If you don't have enough parking, then people will continue to drive into DCI don't use it very much but lots of people I know and in my neighborhood use it to get to work daily.

59. Complete the planned construction of the Phase 2 garage expansion. As housing near the station gets more dense, the need for parking will only increase over time. Complete the original plan. Don't reduce the number of parking spaces.

60. Due to more population in the surrounding community, reducing the total number of parking spaces is not feasible.
61. Grosvenor metro is used by many in the surrounding community, and density is only increasing in the area. Driving and parking at Grosvenor makes sense for me but driving in the opposite direction to Twinbrook would increase the time needed to pick up children after school due to traffic on Rockville Pike so much that I will not bother taking Metro. It would be easier to drive and, given the increasing fares at Metro and the garages at Metro) not much more expensive either.
62. Historically, Grosvenor has been a popular parking location and I have had much trouble parking in past years. With all the proposed residential growth in the area, in the long term, more parking is needed at Grosvenor.
63. It would be hugely problematic for metro to offer less parking at Grosvenor Strathmore. There is very large amount of housing development around in the Bethesda, N. Bethesda and White Flint sectors. Those residents, like myself, depend on metro for transit to work. With a growing population in this area there will be increasing demand for already limited parking at Grosvenor. Using other transit options to arrive at metro is not realistic for many metro riders because of necessity of picking up kids at child care or because of later arrival times in the evening when bus and other transit is less available. If I couldn't park at Grosvenor, I would either park on adjacent streets or drive into work,
64. New development already in pipeline will make additional parking needed rather than less. Looks like additional projects in North Bethesda area will be proposed and increase demand for parking.
65. Our area is growing, this will not change. The parking is needed. Anything that makes it convenient and cost effective to take public transportation is needed. The construction has been an inconvenience but I would like you to finish and when it's done, it's done.
66. Parking is already challenging and with a large number of housing projects underway within a close radius of the metro it is clear parking will be more strained. If we want people to metro rather than drive we need to make parking accessible at metro. A lack of parking will also inevitably mean people parking illegal on the street and by nearby homes.
67. Prior to the new development, there were already not enough spaces to park. Given that, It makes literally no sense to reduce the number of parking spaces by almost 200. The money has been allocated and should be spent. Montgomery County is constantly approving more housing development especially in the area of Grosvenor. The demand for parking will only increase, and clearly it would be less expensive to continue with the parking expansion now rather than start a completely new project at some time in the future. I honestly can't even believe this is up for debate. What happened to the money already received for this project?
68. Purple line will impact ridership and recent additional housing Grosvenor lane (Mansion), Tuckerman, etc. plus ridership will change after Covid-19.
69. We use the parking at Grosvenor every day and eight mkredeveloenf [sic] around North Bethesda it just gets more crowded. Please build out phase 2.

70. With more housing in the area, more parking spaces - not less - will be needed at this station. It is ridiculous to consider reducing the number of available parking options. More spaces are actually needed to accommodate the increase in residences being planned for the area.

71. You are building more dwellings on the metro lot and planning to take away parking. With new construction all around on Rockledge, Grosvenor Lane, etc. you want to reduce parking. That means more cars on the street, more money for UBER/Lyft and taxi cabs. Yet metro claims to be broke. This is absurd.

The following comments fall into the general category supporting construction for to support Metrorail ridership, or because Metro needs more parking generally, or for no specified reason.

72. Availability of parking spaces is critical to utilizing Metrorail. Without being able to rely on an available parking, it is necessary to plan inconvenient ways to get to work. Or to completely revise one's schedule. The proposal to reduce the number of parking spaces is outrageous.

73. Complete the planned construction of the Phase 2 garage expansion.

74. I agree we need more parking and I'm not opposed to family units with limited garage parking ONLY. I disagree with any adding retail because of its location.

First my concerns about the Parking: We do need added commuter parking. My concern is the residential parking will overtake the commuter parking. The fees need to dramatically increase for those that do not use the metro or attend Strathmore in the evening. A metro card reader that reads a metro card at ENTRY and exit would help. For those that do not get their cards scanned via the metro or Strathmore- a high daily fee could be accessed.

My Second concern is the development of any retail: This will cause additional vehicle traffic to an intersection that is always congested during rush hour and could endanger pedestrians in an area that already has traffic problems. Between the hours of 5:00-7:00 PM there is currently severe traffic backup and vehicles blocking the intersection during the weekly evening rush hours. Barely a day goes by when this CURRENTLY isn't an issue. Reason is the close proximity of 3 high traffic road systems (all within one city block) - Tuckerman Lane, Wisconsin Ave/Rockville Pike and the 8 lane 495 Beltway exit lanes. This is future complicated by those leaving the late afternoon activities of Strathmore (mostly children) who need safe passage to get to their destination at this same intersection. Least we forget those trying to exit the Metro garage at Grosvenor/Strathmore as commuter traffic. Please DO NOT ADD RETAIL WHICH WILL ENCOURAGE THOSE COMING TO THE PARKING GARAGE DURING RUSH HOUR FOR SHOPPING OR DINNER.

75. I believe Metro owes the promise it made to this community by building both phases 1 and 2 as planned. As more people honor the use of public transit to reduce congestion in downtown DC, increase public health benefits of walking/bicycling and traffic pollution overall caused by cars, it's imperative that you give suburban commuters like us a chance to get to metro rail safely and on time from our suburban neighborhoods (where buses and walking cannot get us to the Grosvenor metro station in a sustainable, safe and timely way). We need to park our cars at Grosvenor so that we can continue to provide metro rail with the ridership it needs to thrive.

76. If I can't find parking, it deters me from using metrorail to go downtown on business and pleasure.
77. If you want to encourage Metro ridership, you should reconsider this Private Development Project. Less parking will make it harder to consider using the parking at the station in the future for either using the Metro or going to Strathmore.
78. It's hard enough to find parking at destinations, making it difficult to have a routine at metro stations, makes metro useless.
79. Metro should not cancel this project nor should they wait to make a decision - they have the funding and need to complete the parking garage as designed.
80. Parking is already challenging at this metro stop. Parking should be optimized to encourage residents to metro into the city rather than drive.
81. Parking is essential or we will drive downtown, to Bethesda etc. we must support public transportation. I can't imagine parking ever not being critical at all hours and days at Grosvenor. And, by the way, why and under what conditions was the surface parking sacrificed for private purposes? Why don't the private beneficiaries of the parking lot land pay for the construction of replacement garage parking?
82. Please do not reduce parking.
83. Reducing parking at Grosvenor will force many of us to re-evaluate the use of Metro. Plans should proceed to Phase 2 to ensure adequate parking.
84. Reducing the number of parking spaces is an absolutely abhorrent idea. I am in favor of expanding the parking structure to include an additional 194 spaces above what has been there previously.
85. The community was promised no net loss of parking when this project was approved by the Planning Board and the County Council. For the developer and WMATA to change the terms of what was promised is a bad faith action. Providing parking at Grosvenor-Strathmore will facilitate more utilization of the Metro, not less. Further, given the economic downturn and the low cost of fuel, construction materials, and financing via bonds, now is the time for local government entities like WMATA, and developers who have cloaked themselves in the mantle of responsibility like Five Squares, to invest in public infrastructure. I am adamantly opposed to shrinking the scope of this project as it was presented to the community and to local government for approval.
86. The Most Expensive Metro Ride in the entire World and downtown parking cost at rural areas just to use the metro and still a horrible service. This Metro Management Really Needs to be replaced. Average commuter's cost is almost \$15-\$20 day. (\$500-\$600 month - this is more than average income in many countries of the world _ Imagine 3 -4 people can get together and get a LIMO RIDE for everyday commute instead of using everyday ...And surveying about the 2nd Parking LOT...yes - do it PLEASE.

87. The parking is needed for metro rail access and Strathmore Arts Center. Access to metro rail is a top priority for the area to keep cars off the roads. While there are ride-on busses their routes and schedules are often not workable. Ours stops at 7:30 pm and none on Sunday.

The following comments fall into the general category that WMATA should build the western garage expansion now because construction costs are low and/or because the garage expansion could then be constructed with less inconvenience to Station operations.

88. Construction really slows everything down. I think one phase of expansion will be a big boost and adding more construction on top of those will be an inconvenient delay.

89. The project has already been approved and started. Just finish the job.

DON'T BUILDING THE WESTERN GARAGE EXPANSION AT ALL

The following comments fall into the general category that the western garage expansion should not be built at all.

90. Cars are deleterious to transit. The Grosvenor area should be made more walkable. Don't build any new parking.

91. I have never seen the garage or surface lot full or even close to it. I think there will be a sufficient number of spaces available once phase 1 is complete. The money can be better spent elsewhere. And as mentioned there are multiple nearby stations, all of which also offer parking.

92. We do not need more parking spaces.

DEFER A DECISION TO DETERMINE WHETHER DEMAND WARRANTS BUILDING THE WESTERN GARAGE EXPANSION

The following comments fall into the general category of deferring a decision, whether because of the anticipated effect of the coronavirus pandemic on Metro ridership and therefore parking demand or for other reasons.

93. By all means complete your planned Phase 1 garage expansion first. But do not make a final decision on moving forward with full phase 2 until phase 1 is complete and a sufficient evaluation time period has passed to properly determine whether phase 2 is needed now or can wait until a later date. But do complete whatever preliminary pre-phase 2 necessary and integration into phase 1 to make phase 2 more efficient and cost effective whether implemented now or later.

94. Don't think the spaces will be needed for a long time.
95. Give the significant expense of building structured parking, Metro should not be diverting capital funds from actual transit needs unless there is irrefutable evidence that the Phase 2 garage is worth it in terms of ridership and net environmental impact.
96. Given changes in teleworking and use of metro, it may be prudent to see what level of demand will be for additional garage once existing garage project is finished.
97. I believe it makes the most sense to wait and see how traffic patterns change, especially given the changes coming in the near future to the immediate area (Strathmore Square itself, the MD 355 BRT, etc.).
98. I expect that parking needs will be dramatically affected by the change in work travel as a result of the pandemic. There is no way to know now who and how many will work from home. It is important for people to be able to access public transportation and if it becomes obvious that expansion will limit the total miles driven, then I think this is a wise future solution but I don't believe we know that yet. Wherever parking is constructed, it should be WIRED FOR EV CHARGING even if the charging stations are not installed in first phase. This is a significant cost savings over wiring post construction.
99. I think this area is going to continue to grow as more building development occurs in the White Flint area and Grosvenor neighborhoods which will result in more people relying on metro. This is why I ranked the complete Phase 1 first. However, I am supportive also of completing Phase 1 and then again assessing the need. There are many planned projects to provide for more buildings to live in this area which is why I believe there will be an increase in the number of people riding on metro.
100. It's not yet clear whether the additional spaces will be needed.
101. I think Metro needs to evaluate the need for parking at the station as well as other available parking options. The garage and lot fill up very quickly on weekdays. As someone who parks there before taking the train, the construction going on now creates a longer walk to the station from the garage. That isn't terrible - but when people drive by to drop off passengers, they rarely follow the signs (sometimes they use the bus lane) and I have almost been hit a few times trying to cross in the cross walk. I want Metro to see how phase 1 affects us first.
102. If normal times post Covid return, we need all the parking spaces that are possible. Not less. But perhaps after Covid there will be more telecommuters than before, and that would reduce the parking need. Who knows?
103. It is better for the Metro system, users and general traffic optimality, if the situation is first evaluated, along with completion of Phase I.
104. Many new homes are being added in this area. While I think it is OK to postpone the start of the second expansion, the plans should not be scrapped. The parking will eventually be needed. While I still plan to ride rail, I will not take Ride-On bus anymore since the coronavirus. I would prefer to drive in my own car to rail and wait for a train that is not overcrowded. The buses are a definite no. Too small of a space with too many people.

105. Phase 1 can be completed now, then phase 2 should be put on hold BUT NOT canceled until covid-19 isn't a problem. Ridership is currently down anyway.

COMMENTS ON THE DEVELOPMENT PROJECT NOT RELEVANT TO THE PROPOSED GARAGE EXPANSION

106. Montgomery county has been overdeveloped with multi-family dwellings. All schools are beyond capacity, parking spaces nonexistent, especially next to metro stations. It is quite irresponsible to stick more houses in a space where parking for commuters should have been.

COMMENTS ON METRO SERVICE NOT RELEVANT TO THE PROPOSED GARAGE EXPANSION

107. Before the COVID-19 pandemic the situation with overcrowding on the WMATA trains from Grosvenor to DC was unbelievable and it was basically a very uncomfortable way to get to work in DC after 7:15 AM. I understand that you want to increase ridership, but what is the plan post COVID-19 to manage the train service capacity required for this area. Will there be more trains in the AM to meet demand?

108. Outside spots are needed for those who have Handicapped placards since the garage is too far to walk for those of us who are over 70 and have disabilities.

OTHER

109. You haven't given us enough information to make a proper decision.

APPENDIX E

FALL 2019 SURVEY RESULTS

APPENDIX F

CHARTS SUMMARIZING PARKING UTILIZATION, MARCH-JUNE 2019

MARCH	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
8:00 am peak	45-49%	49-55%	51-53%	49-51%	31-40%
9:00 am peak	76-78%	80-85%	79-82%	80-81%	53-64%
Days 89% peak use reached	3 out of 4	4 out of 4	4 out of 4	4 out of 4	0 out of 4
Hours of 89% peak use	Never earlier than 11:00 am, never later than 1:45 pm	Never earlier than 9:30 am, never later than 4:00 pm	Never earlier than 10:00 am, never later than 3:30 pm	Never earlier than 10:00 am, never later than 4:15 pm	None
Highest peak use	90%	97%	94%	99%	76%

APRIL	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
8:00 am peak	35-47%	48-53%	44-53%	41-51%	26-38%
9:00 am peak	58-76%	76-84%	68-82%	62-81%	40-64%
Days 89% peak use reached	1 out of 4	4 out of 5	3 out of 4	3 out of 4	0 out of 4
Hours of 89% peak use	10:30 am - 2:00 pm	Never earlier than 9:15 am, never later than 4:30 pm	Never earlier than 9:45 am, never later than 4:30 pm	Never earlier than 10:00 am, never later than 3:30 pm	none
Highest peak use	89%	99%	97%	94%	74%

MAY	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
8:00 am peak	45-47%	51-53%	49-57%	47-53%	35-38%
9:00 am peak	54-76%	78-81%	76-82%	78-82%	53-62%
Days 89% peak use reached	1 out of 3	3 out of 3	4 out of 4	3 out of 3	0 out of 3
Hours of 89% peak use	12:00 pm - 12:45 pm	Never earlier than 10:00 am, never later than 2:45 pm	Never earlier than 10:00 am, never later than 3:15 pm	Never earlier than 10:00 am, never later than 3:45 pm	none
Highest peak use	89%	93%	93%	93%	74%

JUNE	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
8:00 am peak	43-48%	49-53%	49-53%	48-53%	34-41%
9:00 am peak	73-78%	78-83%	79-84%	79-83%	56-64%
Days 89% peak use reached	3 out of 4	4 out of 4	4 out of 4	4 out of 4	0 out of 4
Hours of 89% peak use	Never earlier than 10:15 am, never later than 3:00 pm	Never earlier than 9:30 am, never later than 4:00 pm	Never earlier than 9:30 am, never later than 4:00 pm	Never earlier than 9:30 am, never later than 4:00 pm	none
Highest peak use	92%	97%	98%	98%	80%

APPENDIX G

ENVIRONMENTAL EVALUATION

APPENDIX H

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING STAFF REPORT

[to be added after Staff Report is issued for public comment]

APPENDIX I

COMMENTS RECEIVED ON THE PUBLIC HEARING STAFF REPORT

[to be added after Staff Report is issued for public comment]