

PUBLIC HEARING STAFF REPORT

STAFF ANALYSIS OF THE PUBLIC HEARING AND STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS

**PROPOSED SOUTHERN AVENUE BUS GARAGE
REPLACEMENT
PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY, MARYLAND**

Hearing No. 581
Docket No. R12-02
January 2013

**WASHINGTON METROPOLITAN AREA TRANSIT AUTHORITY
(WMATA)**

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WASHINGTON METROPOLITAN AREA TRANSIT AUTHORITY
DRAFT PUBLIC HEARING STAFF REPORT
REVIEW OF PUBLIC HEARING TESTIMONY AND STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS
PROPOSED SOUTHERN AVENUE BUS GARAGE REPLACEMENT
PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY, MARYLAND

HEARING NO. 581
DOCKET NO. R12-02

This report presents the staff analysis of the public hearing held on December 17, 2012, including material submitted for the public hearing record. Included in this report are recommendations from various WMATA staff concerning the Southern Avenue Bus Garage Replacement. Included in this report are the following sections:

1. Background
2. Summary of the Public Hearing
3. Summary of the Staff Presentation
4. Supplemental Correspondence Submitted for the Record
5. Compact Article VI Section 15 - Other Agency Review and Comments
6. Responses to Comments Received for the Record
7. Responses to Comments Received on the Public Hearing Draft Staff Report
8. Comments Received After the Close of the Public Comment Period
9. Other Information for the Public Record
10. Summary and Alternatives Comparison

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| Appendix A | Notice of Public Hearing |
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1 BACKGROUND

The Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) is considering the replacement of the existing Southern Avenue Bus Garage, located at the intersection of Southern Avenue and Marlboro Pike, in the area of Prince George's County, Maryland, that borders the District of Columbia. The location of the existing facility is shown in **Figure 1**. The replacement of the Southern Avenue Bus Garage would enable the continuation and improvement of bus service to communities throughout the District of Columbia and the southern portion of Prince George's County by accommodating modern Metrobuses and providing for future increases in system capacity. This action would further the vision and existing plans adopted by WMATA by supporting Metrobus ridership growth and network expansion.

In 2009, WMATA started the process of evaluating potential expansion possibilities for the existing Southern Avenue Bus Garage. Before planning was complete, WMATA received an unsolicited proposal from a private developer offering a new possible location for replacing the Southern Avenue Bus Garage. After receiving this proposal, WMATA issued a Request for Proposals (RFP) and received one additional proposal.

During 2011, WMATA worked with the two proposers to develop and evaluate two alternative sites to the existing Southern Avenue Bus Garage. Both sites and a rebuild-in-place option for the existing Southern Avenue Bus Garage were evaluated in an Environmental Assessment (EA). The EA was released to the public for comment in June 2011 and a public hearing was held in July 2011 (Docket R11-02, Public Hearing No. 563). Numerous comments on each alternative were received. WMATA has continued to work with the proposers to further refine the proposed sites and program requirements. Due to changes during 2012, WMATA prepared an Environmental Evaluation (EE) to document the impacts of the revised alternatives.

In addition to the changes proposed for each alternative, one proposer during 2012 withdrew its proposal. In previous documentation, this site was referred to as Site B, Westphalia Road. That site is no longer being considered by WMATA for the replacement of the Southern Avenue Bus Garage.

As such, the 2012 EE documents the following changes that have occurred since the publication of the June 2011 EA:

- Changes in the program requirements;
- Changes in Site A (Rena Road);
- Changes to Site C (Rebuild-in-place); and
- Site B is no longer being considered.

To comply with the WMATA Compact, a new hearing process was initiated and new docket number (Docket R12-02) and public hearing number (Public Hearing No. 581) were assigned.

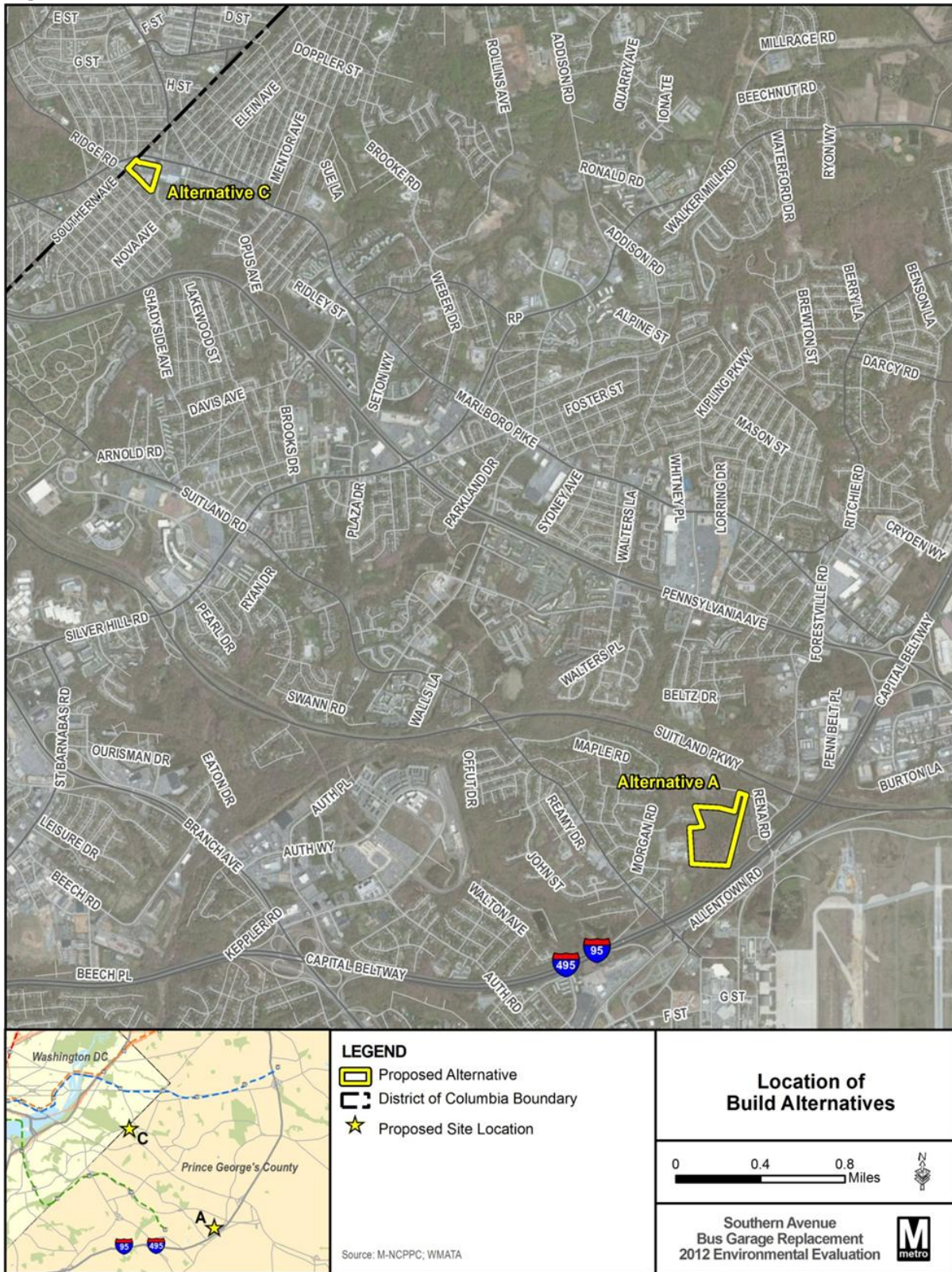
1.1 Proposed Action

The proposed action is to construct and operate a new WMATA bus garage that would replace the existing Southern Avenue Bus Garage on its current site or at another identified site to accommodate more storage capacity and incorporate modern features to service modern buses. **Figure 2** shows the locations under consideration.

Figure 1: Existing Location of Southern Avenue Bus Garage



Figure 2: Location of Build Alternatives



Alternative A (Rena Road)

Build Alternative A is located in Prince George's County, Maryland, northwest of the Joint Base Andrews Naval Air Facility and southwest of the intersection of Suitland Parkway and the Capital Beltway (I-95/I-495). The closest intersection is Rena Road and Forestville Road. The proposed 35-acre proposed site is part of a larger 83-acre industrial development complex known as Andrews Federal Campus. Vacant land, which is proposed as part of the larger industrial development, exists to the north of the site; the Forest Village Apartment complex is located adjacent to and east of the site; a wooded area exists south of the site; and municipal facilities exist to the west of the site (Imagine Foundation II @ Morningside (public charter school) and Benjamin D. Foulois Creative and Performing Arts Academy). Figure 3 shows the location of Build Alternative A.

The site proposed for Build Alternative A is located within an approved industrial park, known as Andrews Federal Campus (AFC). The overall development of the AFC was not evaluated in the previous EA or the 2012 EE. Only the portion of the industrial park that would be developed for the purpose of a WMATA facility was assessed. Since the publication of the 2011 EA, construction has begun on the overall industrial park.

The proposal for Build Alternative A documented in the 2012 EE differs from that what was analyzed in the 2011 EA in the following ways:

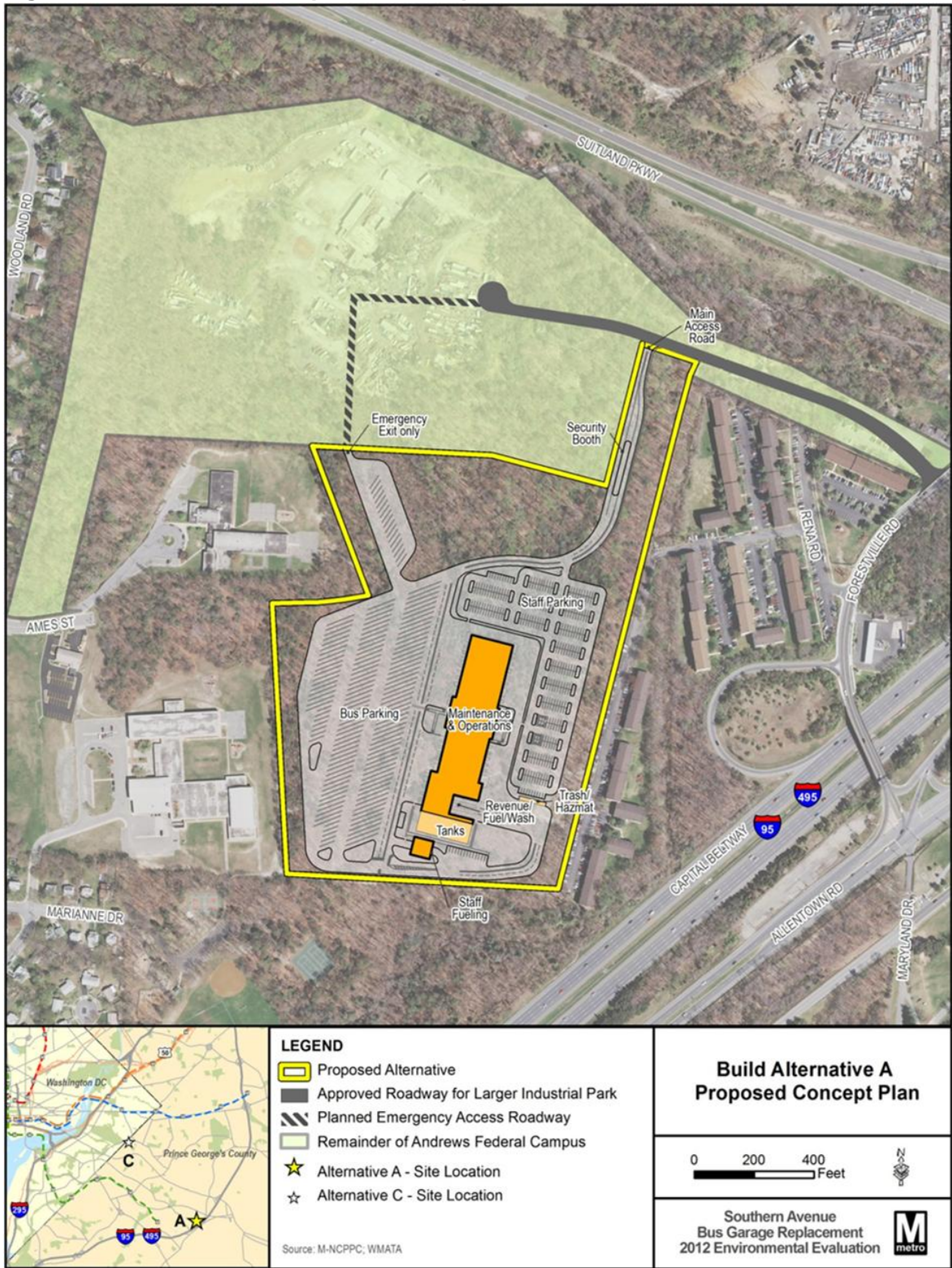
- Proposed site was previously documented as wooded and undeveloped and now the site has been cleared, grubbed and graded;
- AFC industrial park was undergoing the local planning approval process during the 2011 EA and has now been approved;
- Relocation of the primary access road from Rena Road to a new industrial access road directly off of Forestville Road;
- Relocation of the emergency access road from a proposed extension of Ames Street to an emergency access road through an adjacent parcel located within the AFC industrial park; and
- Revised footprint to accommodate reduced fleet.

As noted above, the proposer for Build Alternative A relocated the primary access road to the overall AFC. Instead of accessing the development from Rena Road, as previously proposed, the proposer is providing a new industrial access road off of Forestville Road. In addition, Rena Road would be extended by the developer to the industrial access road to provide a stop-controlled outlet for the residents of Forest Village Apartments. The industrial access road would provide the primary access for the WMATA facility located within the industrial park. The WMATA facility would not use Rena Road for any of its operations. The construction of the industrial access road is not considered a WMATA project impact. However, traffic generated by the WMATA site is considered as a project-related impact and is documented in the 2012 EE. While the plan proposed accommodates the minimum 150 bus requirement, this site has the potential to expand up to 250 buses. As such, the 2012 EE documents a footprint and a 250 bus operation to account for the possibility of future expansion. Figure 4 shows the concept plan for Alternative A.

Figure 3: Location of Build Alternative A



Figure 4: Alternative A Proposed Concept Plan



Emergency access to the bus garage site would be provided via the northwest portion of the WMATA property and into the larger Andrews Federal Campus, connecting to the primary Andrews Federal Campus industrial access road and out to Forestville Road. Currently, the developer has not identified a tenant for the land north of the proposed WMATA site; however, when a tenant is identified, the developer will ensure an unrestricted easement through this parcel be provided for the WMATA site. The Site A proposal no longer considers the extension of Ames Street through the Town of Morningside for emergency access.

Build Alternative A includes a combined maintenance and administration building. The building would provide for fare collection, standard fueling, wash facilities, maintenance bays, and parts storage. The site initially could accommodate 192 bus parking spaces and 214 employee parking spaces. Additional parking for 15 support vehicles would be provided adjacent to the employee parking on the eastern side of the site. Stormwater management would be provided via a shared on-site facility as part of the larger 83-acre development. A guard booth and security fencing along the perimeter of the site would be provided.

The site provides for expansion of the maintenance building to accommodate future repair bays and up to 58 additional bus parking spaces and 116 employee parking spaces, for a total capacity of 250 buses and 392 employee parking spaces.

Alternative C (Rebuild in place – Southern Avenue)

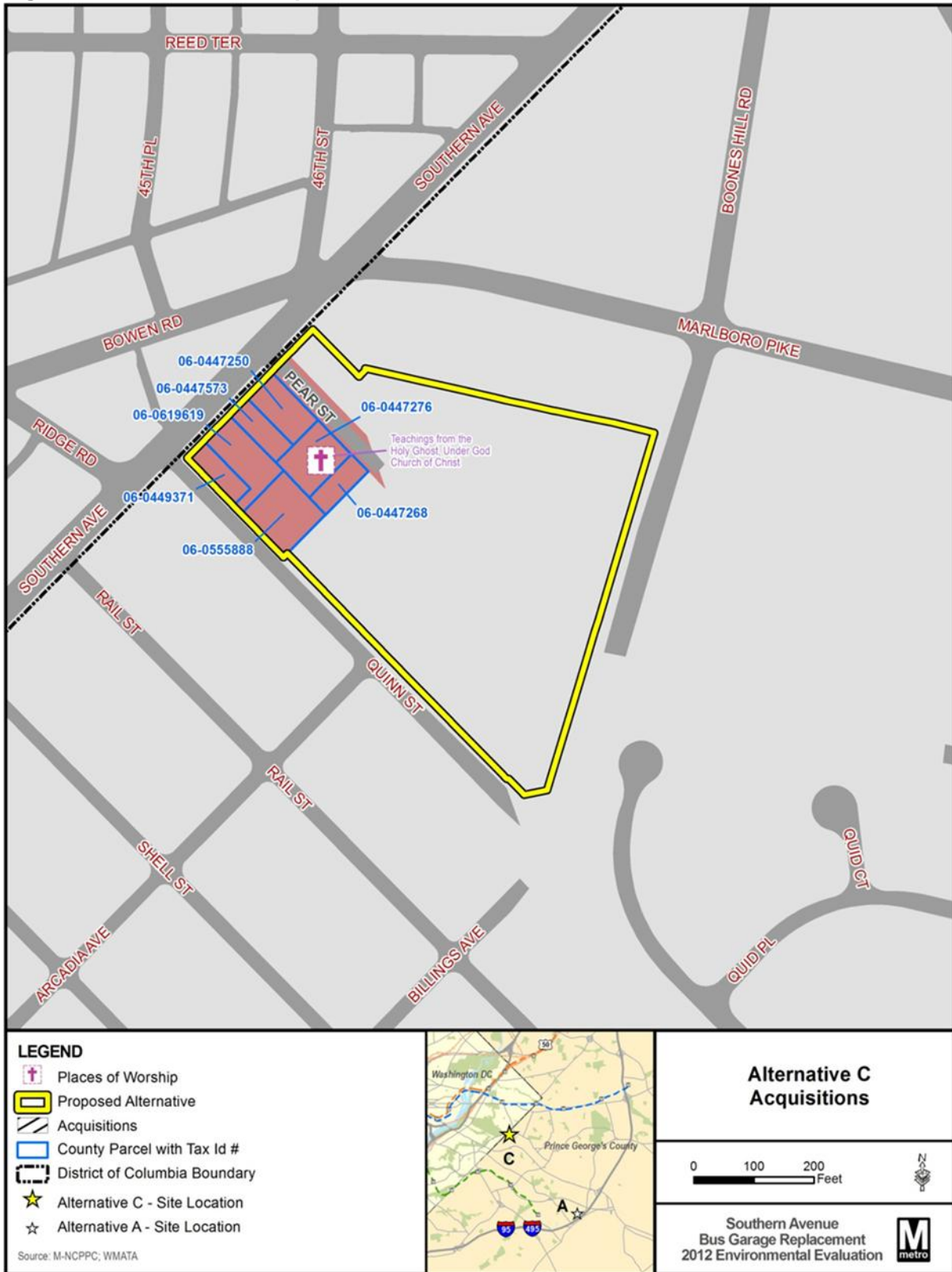
Build Alternative C is at the same location as the existing Southern Avenue Bus Garage (See Figure 1). Under this build alternative, the existing bus garage would be demolished and rebuilt on an expanded site of approximately 7 acres. Expansion of the site would require property acquisition of seven adjacent parcels of land and a small road (Pear Street) currently used for WMATA emergency access as shown in Figure 5. During construction, all functions of this facility would be temporarily relocated to the Shepherd Parkway Bus Garage until completion.

The design program for Build Alternative C being analyzed in the 2012 EE differs from the alternative analyzed in 2011 in the following ways:

- Reduction in the bus facility capacity from 250 standard buses to 153
- Reduction in non-revenue parking spaces from 376 to 230
- Removal of 27 commercial parking spaces along Marlboro Pike
- Removal of retail space along Marlboro Pike proposed in the 2011 EA
- Removal of CNG facilities
- Relocation of the emergency access road from Marlboro Pike to Quinn Street

Build Alternative C includes a rebuilt bus garage that would accommodate 153 buses and 230 non-bus parking spaces (employee and non-revenue vehicles). As proposed, three separate structures would be built: an administrative and operations building that includes a two-story parking structure for 138 buses on the lower level and 215 employee parking spaces on the upper level; a one-story maintenance building; and a one story fuel and wash building. Space for an additional fifteen buses is provided in the maintenance bays and additional at-grade parking for twelve non-revenue vehicles and three visitor spaces is provided onsite. Access for buses would be provided via Boones Hill Road. A separate employee entrance is proposed from Southern Avenue, at the current location of Pear Street. Emergency access would be provided along the southeastern WMATA property boundary, entering from Quinn Street.

Figure 5: Alternative C Acquisitions



Site security will be provided by a guard house at the Boones Hill Road entrance and perimeter fencing. Figure 6 provides the concept plan for Build Alternative C.

1.2 Environmental Evaluation and General Plans

WMATA's 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 the Prince George's County/Southeast District of Columbia area around the site 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 WMATA's Compact.

As part of its project approval process, WMATA prepared an Environmental Evaluation to provide the public, local governments, and environmental agencies with a description of the potential effects of the proposed Southern Avenue Bus Garage Replacement upon the human and natural environment. The Environmental Evaluation was prepared to provide the environmental documentation required under the WMATA Compact. Public notices were placed in the *Washington Post* on November 16 and November 23, 2012, to make known the availability of the Environmental Evaluation and details of the Public Hearing and comment period, and was also available on WMATA's website (see **Appendix A** for the Notice of Public Hearing). The Environmental Evaluation and General Plans are available online at www.wmata.com/hearings and www.southernavebusgarage.com. The document was available for inspection during normal business hours at the following locations as of Friday, November 16, 2012:

WMATA
Office of the Secretary
600 Fifth Street, NW, Room 2D-207
Washington, DC 20001

Suitland Community Center
5600 Regency Lane
Forestville, MD 20747

Fairmount Heights Library
5904 Kolb Street
Fairmount Heights, MD 20743
301-883-2650

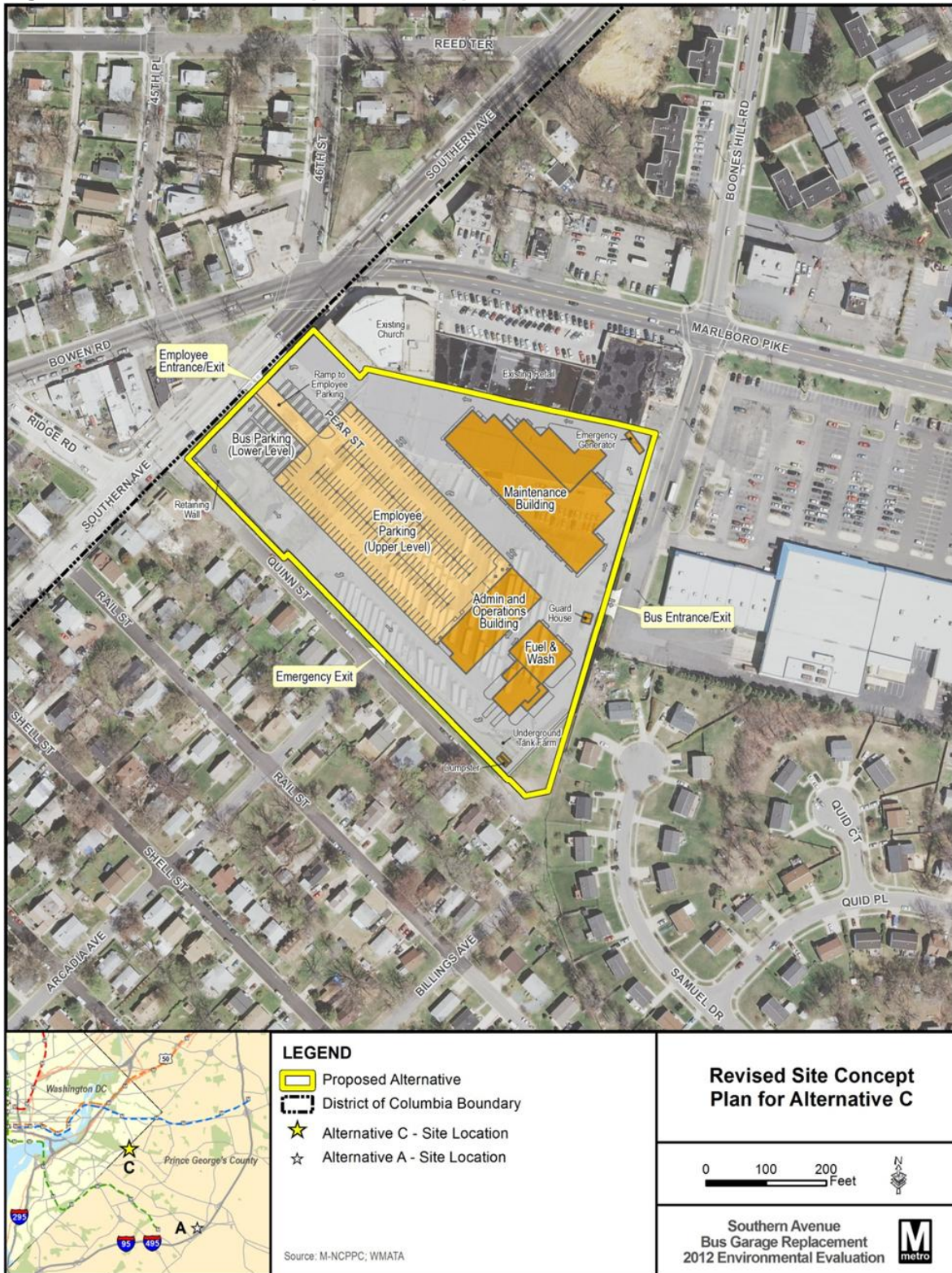
Morningside Matthew P. Rosch Municipal Center
6901 Ames Street
Suitland, MD 20746

Oakcrest Community Center
1300 Capitol Heights Blvd
Capitol Heights, MD 20743

John E. Howard Community Center
4400 Shell Street
Capitol Heights, MD 20743

Hillcrest Heights Library
2398 Iverson Street
Temple Hills, MD 20748

Figure 6: Alternative C Proposed Concept Plan



2 SUMMARY OF THE PUBLIC HEARING

The Public Hearing was held on Monday, December 17, 2012, at the Andrew Jackson Academy, 3500 Regency Parkway, Forestville, Maryland. Before the hearing an informal open house was held for members of the public from 6:30 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. The hearing was chaired by WMATA Assistant General Manager of Bus Services Jack Requa, and was convened at 7:00 p.m. (See **Appendix B** for the Public Hearing transcript.) Accompanying Mr. Requa for the presentation were John Thomas and Jim Ashe (WMATA).

Mr. Requa made the opening statement, explaining that the hearing was convened to solicit comments from the public on the Southern Avenue Bus Garage Replacement Environmental Evaluation. He explained that the hearing would begin with a staff statement, followed by statements from public officials (5 minutes each) and others who had signed up to speak (3 minutes each). He indicated that written testimony could be submitted to WMATA via the following methods:

- E-mail to writtentestimony@wmata.com
- Fax to 202-962-1133
- Mail to Office of the Secretary, Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority, 600 Fifth Street, NW, Washington DC 20001

Following this introduction, the WMATA staff presentation was given by Mr. Thomas. The staff presentation is summarized in Section 3 of this report.

The background and supporting documentation available at the hearing included the following:

- Copies of the Notice of Public Hearing
- Copies of the Environmental Evaluation
- Copies of the General Plans for each alternative
- Presentation boards illustrating the location of build alternatives, site concept plans, and site renderings

The following individuals testified at the hearing:

- Mayor Karen Rooker, Town of Morningside
- Kyung Jeon, resident
- Gwen Bowman, President of Bradbury Heights Boulevard Civic Association
- Dandria Green, resident
- Clifton Brown, resident

Mr. Requa concluded the public hearing at 7:23 p.m.

3 SUMMARY OF THE STAFF PRESENTATION

Mr. Thomas began the presentation by stating that WMATA is proposing to replace the 89-year old WMATA Southern Avenue bus garage located in Prince George's County either on its current site or on another identified site. He provided a brief background on the project history, changes to the proposed bus garage replacement program requirements and that the proposer for Alternative B had withdrawn its proposal and that location is no longer under consideration. Mr. Thomas stated that two alternatives are currently under consideration for the replacement:

- Alternative A would relocate the bus garage to a new site southwest of the intersection of Suitland Parkway and the Capital Beltway.
- Alternative C would rebuild and expand the existing site.

The presentation continued with a description of the purpose of the Environmental Evaluation and the public hearing. Mr. Thomas then presented the concept plans, plan renderings, and potential environmental effects for each alternative. He explained the modifications for each of the alternatives shown. Alternative A has changed the primary entrance to be directly off of Forestville Road, instead of Rena Road as previously proposed. Alternative A's emergency access road has been relocated to be within the Andrews Federal Campus and not use an extension of Ames Street through Morningside. Potential environmental effects for Alternative A include minor traffic delays resulting from an increase in vehicular traffic (buses and employees), changes in the visual environment, temporary construction-related effects, cumulative effects combined with other development within the Andrews Federal Campus resulting in traffic, noise, residential displacements and loss of forested area.

Mr. Thomas explained the modifications to Alternative C to include a reduced footprint and change in the emergency access to be on Quinn Street. Potential environmental effects for Alternative C include minor traffic delays resulting from an increase in vehicular traffic (buses and employees), requires a Special Exception, acquisition of seven parcels abutting the existing facility's parcel owned by WMATA, displacement of five businesses, one church, and the occupants of one residence, potential for noise impacts, mitigation of recognized environmental conditions, and temporary construction-related effects.

The presentation ended with a description of the process for submitting written testimony.

A copy of the presentation is provided in **Appendix D**.

4 SUPPLEMENTAL CORRESPONDENCE SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD

The Public Hearing record remained open until December, 28, 2012, at 5:00 pm.
Correspondence was received from the following individuals:

- Kyung C. Jeon and Jin Jeon
- Steve Strauss, Deputy Associate Director, District of Columbia Department of Transportation

Appendix C provides the supplemental correspondence received.

5 COMPACT ARTICLE VI, SECTION 15 – OTHER AGENCY REVIEW AND COMMENTS

As part of the previous documentation and necessary updates to the documentation, WMATA contacted relevant local, state and federal agencies to solicit input on the proposed bus operations and maintenance facility in Prince George’s County, Maryland. Federal and State agencies were contacted to identify any potential areas of concern under their jurisdiction. Agencies contacted in the development of the previous 2011 EA and 2012 E are listed in **Table 1**. Agency correspondence is included in **Appendix E**.

Table 1: Agency Correspondence

| Resource Area Coordination | Agency | Date Contacted | Agency Response | Determination | Correspondence Letter |
|----------------------------|--|----------------|---------------------------|---|-----------------------|
| Cultural Resources | Maryland Historic Trust | 04/14/2011 | 04/26/2011; 07/06/2011 | No effect on historic properties, including archeological resources | Appendix E |
| Coastal Zone | Maryland Department of the Environment | 04/05/2011 | No response | Presumed Consistent | Appendix E |
| Endangered Species | U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service | 12/28/2010 | 02/01/2011 | No endangered or threatened species identified | Appendix E |

In addition to soliciting the input of government agencies, valuable feedback was sought from members of the public and organizations that have an interest in the project. **Table 2** lists the public meetings and presentations made to community organizations in regards to the build alternatives. As shown in the table, a supplemental mailing was also sent to the residents of the Forest Village Apartment Complex to ensure that they were aware of the proposed project.

WMATA sent a mailed notice of the public hearing to the WMATA-required notification list. In addition to required mailings, WMATA also physically posted notice of the public hearing on properties adjacent to each of the proposed alternatives. A copy of the notice of the public hearing is included in **Appendix A**.

Table 2: List of Public Meetings and Presentations on Build Alternatives

| Alternative Presented | Organization | Outreach Venue | Type of Meeting | Date (mm/dd/yyyy) |
|-----------------------|--|---|-----------------|-------------------|
| Alternative A | Prince George's County Council | Prince George's County Municipal Center | Presentation | 02/07/2011 |
| | Prince George's County Executive's Staff Meeting | Prince George's County Municipal Center | Presentation | 02/08/2011 |
| | Town of Morningside Town Council | Morningside Matthew P. Rosch Municipal Center 6901 Ames Street Suitland, MD 20746 | Town Meeting | 02/15/2011 |
| | Skyline Civic Association | Skyline Elementary School 6311 Randolph Road Suitland, MD 20746-3700 | Board Meeting | 03/15/2011 |
| | The Honorable Mel Franklin, District 9 County Council Member | Skyline Elementary School 6311 Randolph Road Suitland, MD 20746-3700 | Presentation | 03/21/2011 |
| | Residents of Forest Village Apartments | Mailing | Mailing | 04/25/2011 |
| Alternative C | Prince George's County Council | Prince George's County Municipal Center | Presentation | 02/07/2011 |
| | Bradbury / Boulevard Heights Civic Association Meeting | John E. Howard Community Center 4400 Shell Street Capitol Heights, MD 20743 | Meeting | 06/06/2011 |

6 RESPONSES TO COMMENTS RECEIVED FOR THE RECORD

The following five people spoke at the hearing:

- Karen Rooker, Mayor of the Town of Morningside
- Kyung Jeon, resident
- Gwen Bowman, president of Bradbury Heights Boulevard Civic Association
- Dandria Green, resident
- Clifton Brown, resident

In addition, one of the parties who spoke at the public hearing also submitted written comments for consideration by WMATA. Both oral and written comments by these commenters are reflected here.

Following the public hearing, additional parties submitted written comments to WMATA via mail, hand delivery or email. These additional parties include:

- Kyung C. Jeon and Jin Jeon
- Steve Strauss, Deputy Associate Director, District of Columbia Department of Transportation

Generally, the issues noted at the meeting and sent via written testimony to WMATA are grouped by alternative, then by commenter and are addressed in this section. Comments from the District Department of Transportation are presented at the end of this section.

A. Alternative A

K. Rooker, Mayor Town of Morningside

[Again as in the first meeting that you had, we are in opposition of moving the bus depot to Alternative A, which is the Rena Road area.]

[.....And with the garage being there, with the large gas tanks and all of the other things it takes to run that stuff, we're going to get again with the noise and the air pollution...]

[...Not only that, the location is still very close to two very used public elementary schools, and also backs up to a very used park in the area.]

[Although we are very happy that the plans have been changed to have the emergency route no longer go through Ames Street which would cut through the Town of Morningside and put extra wear and tear on those streets that are paid for by our constituents, I just have to let you guys know that we're still vehemently opposed to this being placed near the Rena Road area.]

Summary

Ms. Rooker, on behalf of the Town of Morningside, expressed that the Town is still opposed to WMATA choosing Alternative A to replace the existing Southern Avenue Bus Garage. She reiterated the proximity of the proposed facility to several public uses, including schools and a park. She also raised concerns the community has over increased noise and air pollution as a result of the bus garage being placed within the Andrews Federal Campus.

Response

WMATA appreciates the concerns expressed by the Mayor of the community adjacent to Alternative A. WMATA staff is reviewing each alternative in terms of their potential effects and benefits on each community and environment. The concerns expressed will be considered by the WMATA Board of Directors in selecting a preferred alternative.

D. Green

[I'm more impressed with the proposal for the site in the Andrews Campus area because it appears that they have done a really good job in identifying ways not to adversely impact the existing community.]

Summary

Ms. Green believes Alternative A is a better fit for the surrounding community.

Response

Thank you for the input. The Board of Directors will consider the comment when it makes its decision.

B. Alternative C

K. Jeon, resident

[Alternative C for expansion of the bus garage will result in the demolition and loss of our workplace and our home. Our hope is to continue to be a vital part of this community, but Alternative C puts into jeopardy everything we have worked so hard towards.]

[...I also wanted to mention that the revised Alternative C reduces its imprint as the presentation from Mr. Thomas shows, but it still wipes us off the map, our business as well as our residence, and few other businesses and homes, as well. So I, I don't know if you all have plans in place for us, but what does it that mean for us?]

[...so it's a plea really at this point to WMATA to please take this into consideration, and to please take Alternative C off the list of locations being considered for this bus garage replacement project. And please consider another suitable location so that we can continue to work and live our lives.]

[. . .on the contrary, Alternative C will have a very devastating impact on those who work and live in the Southern Avenue area to be overtaken. Although this revised Alternative C is expected to have a reduced imprint on those impacted, the plan continues to jeopardize our work and home. Being one of several that may be displaced if Alternative C is selected, we want you to know how distressing and upset we are.]

[Alternative C will result in the demolition and loss of our workplace and our home. our hope is to continue to be a vital part of this community. But Alternative C puts into jeopardy everything we have worked so hard towards.]

[And we are very frightened of what the future holds for us, if you take away our place of work and our investments. Even if WMATA will develop an Acquisition and Relocation plan for those being displaced, should Alternative c be chosen, this does little to ease our concern and worry about the future, as displacement will result in us being uprooted from our community and workplace, which has been integral to our lives for decades.]

[It is extremely difficult to understand why this project would need to result in displacement of even a single person or workplace, when another suitable location is available that would not have such an adverse impact.]

[Attached please find the signatures of persons who live and work in the Southern Avenue area, requesting that Alternative C not be selected for the proposed replacement bus garage.]

G. Bowman, President of Bradbury Heights Boulevard Civic Association

[...89 years, that's an awful long time for one neighborhood to have dealt with the buses and the traffic, and the fumes, and houses being very close to them.]

[So, on behalf of the Civic Association, I would speak vehemently against it continuing to be there. And the alternative site in Morningside looks very pleasing to the eye, and I can understand the Mayor's objection to it because that's where she lives. But then if she understands that this close proximity where it is now and the residents of the Capitol Heights, in

the Capitol Heights area, and for it to have been there 89 years, then it's time for it to leave. So, we would like for you to take the other site.]

D. Green, resident

[The area that I live in is residential. We don't need that kind of activity in our area because of the kind of activity in our area because of the kind of problems we have with the overflow of parking. I don't know whether they have – I understand that they are supposed to have an employee parking space, but the employees opt to park behind the residential property which also is the back parking lot for the shopping center, Coral Hills.]

C. Brown, resident

[...I'm interested in more or less to set up the things that you have now, only two things that I kind of – about the traffic on Southern Avenue and coming down on Marlboro Pike, but I think that could be corrected good.]

[...So, if some of the things that you have is corrected, that would be really nice for me to let you use that area, what I have.....And for my jurisdiction and control of it, I'd be like for you to use what you have in there.]

Summary

Several residents in the vicinity of Alternative C came out to speak on the proposal for the rebuild-in-place option. Most were opposed to Alternative C, stating that their community has dealt with the bus garage and its effects on the community for a long time, and that they felt it was time for the bus garage to be elsewhere. One gentleman, however, stated his support for the revised proposal for Alternative C, indicating that as shown it the problems with the current facility could be corrected with the new revised proposal.

Response

WMATA appreciates the concerns expressed by the surrounding residents to Alternative C. WMATA also appreciates the support of the revised proposal. The concerns expressed will be considered by the WMATA Board of Directors in selecting a preferred alternative.

The design for Alternative C includes a garage to accommodate all parking needs such that employees will not need to park in the surrounding neighborhoods.

Federal law requires the organization responsible for project-required relocation of businesses and residents pay the costs of the relocation. In this case, those costs would be borne by WMATA if Alternative C is selected.

C. District of Columbia Comments

S. Strauss, Deputy Associate Director

[The District Department of Transportation strongly supports the replacement of the Southern Avenue bus garage in order to provide bus riders in the District and Prince George's County with better maintained and more reliable bus service. Additionally we support the garage replacement in order to provide a modern, more efficient facility for WMATA employees and one that will operate using fewer resources.]

Response

WMATA appreciates the support.

S. Strauss, Deputy Associate Director

[DDOT requests that the final analysis of the two replacement garage sites, Alternate A (Rena Road) and Alternate C (Southern Avenue) provide analysis of the following four issues in order that the WMATA Board of Directors may make a fully informed decision on siting.

First, an analysis of the projected annual increase in deadheading miles, if any, from the selection of the Rena Road site. Second, a comparison of the anticipated annual operating costs of the two different facilities, assuming 150 bus capacity at each location. Third, an assessment of the accessibility of the two locations by public transportation for current and potential employees, and fourth, a discussion of the ancillary economic development impact or potential from a new garage at each site.]

Summary

Commenter requests information about four issues.

- Deadheading miles associated with the change in location,
- Comparison of annual operating costs for the two alternatives,
- Assessment of accessibility by public transportation for employees, and
- Discussion of ancillary economic development impact or potential.

Response

Responses are provided below, by topic.

Deadheading miles

Each time a bus garage is re-located, WMATA revises the associated assignment of buses so that the garage will serve bus routes proximate to the new location. The most recent example of this was seen with the opening of the Shepherd Parkway Bus Garage as the replacement for the former Southeastern Bus Garage. A preliminary estimate is that the deadheading costs would be approximately \$1 million per year, if Alternative A were selected. If Alternative C were selected, no difference in deadheading costs is anticipated.

Operating costs

No difference in the operating costs for the two alternatives has been identified for either of the alternatives under consideration. However, it is anticipated that a new LEED-Silver facility would cost less to operate than the existing 89-year old aging facility.

Accessibility

No difference in access to public transportation between the two alternatives was documented in the EE.

The Alternative A area is served by the K12 bus line and nearby J12 and J13 lines, while the Alternative C area is served by the J11, J12, and J13 lines, as well as several running along Southern Avenue.

Finally, most bus garage employees have shifts that start before, or end after, time periods when transit service is available.

Ancillary Economic Development

Economic development associated with a new bus garage, beyond a few local retail establishments, is not anticipated under either alternative. See Sections 3.18.4 and 3.18.5 for additional discussion.

7 RESPONSES TO COMMENTS RECEIVED ON THE PUBLIC HEARING STAFF REPORT

Placeholder

8 COMMENTS RECEIVED AFTER THE CLOSE OF THE PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

No additional comment was received.

9 OTHER INFORMATION FOR THE PUBLIC RECORD

No other information has been provided.

10 SUMMARY AND STAFF RECOMMENDATION

WMATA is proposing to replace the existing Southern Avenue Bus Garage due to the age of the facility as well as its inability to accommodate modern equipment. Two options are being considered: Alternative A (Rena Road) which would build a new bus garage at a new location in Prince George's County Maryland in an approved industrial park; and Alternative C (rebuild-in-place), which provides for an expanded facility on the current location.

Alternative A is proposed off of Forestville Road in Prince George's County Maryland. It is within five miles of the existing facility. The site proposed for Alternative A is within an approved industrial park, known as the Andrews Federal Campus. Primary access to the site would be from Forestville Road via an industrial park access road. Emergency access to the site would be provided within the larger Andrews Federal Campus and out to Forestville Road. As proposed, the site could accommodate a total capacity of up to 250 buses and 392 employee parking spaces. Potential environmental effects identified for Alternative A include:

- Minor increases in traffic delays due to an increase in bus and employee traffic;
- Changes in the visual environment;
- Temporary construction-related effects; and
- Potential to contribute to cumulative effects when combined with the effects of the larger Andrews Federal Campus development including traffic, noise, residential displacements, and loss of forested area.

Alternative C is proposed at the same location as the current facility. However, the facility would be expanded and would require acquisition of seven properties. As proposed, Alternative C could accommodate approximately 150 buses and 230 non-bus parking spaces (employee and non-revenue vehicles). Primary bus access to the site would be along Boones Hill Road, while employee access would be directly off of Southern Avenue, just past Quinn Street. Emergency access would be provided via Quinn Street. Potential environmental effects identified for Alternative C include:

- Minor increases in traffic delays due to an increase in bus and employee traffic;
- Property acquisitions: five businesses, one residence, one church and a small roadway (Pear Street);
- Potential for noise impacts;
- Mitigation of recognized environmental conditions; and
- Construction-related effects.

10.1 Staff Recommendation

A staff recommendation will be provided after the closure of the comment period for the Public Hearing Staff Report. WMATA will take into consideration all comments received, results of the Environmental Evaluation, General Plans and cost proposals for each alternative before making a recommendation on the preferred alternative.