

May 9, 2023, Community Meeting Q and A

Metro has prepared the below Questions and Answers (Q&A) addressing comments raised at the May 9, 2023, community engagement meeting on the Northern Bus Garage Reconstruction Project. Representatives for the Department of Energy and Environment (DOEE) were in attendance and responded to community questions. Several of these topics have been addressed at prior community meetings for this Project.

Project Overview

Q: There has been increased activity at the site during demolition, will Metro share noise and vibration reports with the community?

A: Once the raw data from our monitors have been analyzed and formatted, we will share a summary of the monthly reports on the Project website – wmata.com/northernbusgarage.

Q: When will Metro share the floor plans that includes the retail space, community room and Metropolitan Transit Police (MTPD) satellite office?

A: The design and layout for the new Northern Bus Garage was shared in the November 17, 2020, [presentation](#) to the community. We can revisit the topic at a future community meeting, as necessary.

Q: What is Metro doing to address the issue of employees and contractors parking in the neighborhood?

A: We have secured offsite parking for project-related employees and contractors. All project-related staff are advised not to park in the community. If they are found to be parking in the neighborhood, they will receive a warning for a first offence. If they are found to violate the project parking policy a second time, disciplinary action, which could include permanent removal from the project, will be enforced.

Q: What opportunities does the project provide for local business owners and craftsmen?

A: Small business owners interested in participating in Metro's Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) Program and the Small Business Program can find more information on our [Small Business Programs Office](#) webpage. Our contractor, Clark Construction, also engages the local workforce through their employment processing center.

Q: When will the generators on Arkansas Avenue and 14th Street be removed?

A: The generator will be removed once Pepco is able to establish permanent power to the site. While we are working in close coordination with Pepco, we do not have an exact date of when that will be. Pepco is experiencing a backlog on transformer orders needed to complete the service installation.

Q: Why can't we get the meeting presentations ahead of the meeting?

A: When possible, Metro posts the meeting presentations the day before a scheduled community meeting. The presentation for the May 9, 2023, community meeting was posted to the website on May 8, 2023.

Environmental Management

Q: Why isn't Metro testing for chlorinated solvents across Iowa Avenue?

A: We have only detected chlorinated solvents on the southern part of the site, specifically along Buchanan Street, between 14th Street and Arkansas Avenue. Testing in the northern part of the site did not detect chlorinated solvents. We are working with DOEE to define further testing requirements, if any.

Q: How is Metro addressing historical contamination at the site, is there a way to estimate the age of contaminants?

A: In general, it is difficult to estimate the age of contaminants. The contamination that we are seeing today is reflective of the history of the site. We know in the garage's history there were some releases related to the underground storage tanks. Those incidents were investigated, and the leaking underground storage cases were closed with DOEE. We are working in partnership with DOEE to ensure that any remaining contamination at the site is appropriately remediated (proposed remediation activities were [presented](#) in detail at the June 14, 2022, community meeting).

Q: Who are you working with at DOEE?

A: As related to the Northern Bus Garage Reconstruction Project, we are working closely with DOEE's Land Remediation and Underground Storage Tank groups. The [Land Remediation](#) team remediates cases related to groundwater and soil – which includes chlorinated solvents. The [Underground Storage Tank](#) group has oversight of remediation related to underground storage tanks.

Q: How can the community continue to engage with DOEE on this projects, is there a public comment period?

A: The public can contact DOEE by visiting doee.dc.gov or by calling 202-535-2600.

Q: Will there be underground fueling tanks at the site to support Metro Transit Police Department (MTPD) vehicles?

A: The MTPD substation will be a smaller satellite office and will be used primarily for administrative tasks. Northern Bus Garage will not have any fueling infrastructure, only electric vehicle (EV) charging options for Metro EVs.

Q: Why hasn't the Supplemental Site Assessment (SSA) been provided to the community?

A: The SSA remains under review by DOEE, once it has been approved for release by DOEE it will be posted to the project site. As we have done in the past, an email will be sent to the project's community e-mail distribution list once the SSA is publicly available.

Zero-Emission Bus

Q: What is an articulated bus?

A: An articulated bus is a bus constructed with two or more rigid sections linked by a pivoting joint (articulation) to connect the two sections. These buses can pivot around a central point when turning.

Northern is designed to store standard length buses (approximately 40 feet in length) and articulated buses (approximately 60 feet in length).

Q: Northern will reopen with a fully electric fleet. How many of those buses will be articulated?

A: The reconstruction of the garage will allow us to increase the number of articulated buses at Northern when it reopens. In our current design, approximately half of the spaces are for articulated buses. However, we will finalize this number as the design progresses.

Q: What safety measures will Metro take to protect pedestrians and cars traveling along 14th Street, where articulated buses will enter and exit the garage?

A: The intersection at 14th Street NW and Decatur Street, where buses will exit the garage, will remain a signalized intersection and all of the existing equipment will be updated to the latest District Department of Transportation (DDOT) standards and will include pedestrian lights, audible signals for the visually impaired, etc.

Q: Will the electric buses be able to provide the same level of service that we are seeing today? How will Metro ensure electric buses remain charged to serve longer routes?

A: To ensure Metro can continue to provide reliable service to customers as we introduce electric buses, we will model the routes we expect to operate from Northern Bus Garage. This will help us to understand how the battery electric buses will perform. What we learn from the route modeling will inform our bus planning and scheduling.

Q: Will Metro be able to procure 150 electric buses by 2027 when the garage reopens?

A: We are strategically timing our bus procurement processes to align with the dates we expect to have the infrastructure to support and operate electric buses – allowing us to operate battery-electric buses when Northern reopens.

Q: Has Metro given any thought to on-street charging?

A: Metro is evaluating potential locations to deploy en-route charging, including partnership opportunities with other regional transit agencies to share charging infrastructure.

Q: Are you in discussions with Pepco to determine where the energy to charge the electric buses will come from?

A: We are working with Pepco to make sure that we have adequate electrical services to fully power the garage and expect our electric buses to run on grid power.

Q: Is Metro considering renewable energy as a resource for powering the facility?

A: [Sustainability](#) is a key component of Metro's [Strategic Transformation Plan](#), which identifies an objective for Metro to increase the percentage of electricity consumption from renewable sources to 100% by 2033. Additional information about Metro's sustainability efforts can be found on wmata.com/sustainability.

Art in Transit

Q: Has Metro given any thought to having a museum at the garage to commemorate the history of the community?

A: We are exploring multiple opportunities to incorporate the community and the history of the facility at the new Northern Bus Garage. As part of our Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with the DC Office of Historic Preservation, we will:

- Incorporate signage that tells the history of the car barn; and
- Include some of the original streetcar rails, salvaged from the garage, into an interpretive site along the sidewalk on 14th Street NW.

Additionally, we will work closely with the community as we plan for the permanent artwork at the garage.

Q: The Art in Transit temporary banner does not reflect the 16th Heights Community, what will Metro do to fix that?

A: The temporary artwork banners were designed to provide a brief history of the 14th Street car barn and the evolution of transportation over the years - including the diversification of the transportation workforce. We will continue to work with the community to ensure the permanent artwork is reflective of the community and garage's history.

Q: The banner on fair employment practices which featured A. Philip Randolph was not installed with the rest of the banners, why?

A: The banner featuring A. Philip Randolph was inadvertently missed in the print and installation process. When the community brought the issue to our attention, we reacted immediately to install the banner.