

Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority
Board Action/Information Summary

☒ Action ☐ Information

Document
Number:
203464

Resolution:
☒ Yes ☐ No

Presentation Name:

Takoma Compact Hearing Staff Report

Project Manager:

Steven Segerlin

Project Department:

CFO

Purpose/Key Highlights:

To obtain Board approval of the Compact Public Hearing Staff Report and amendments to the Mass Transit Plan for proposed changes to Takoma Metro station.

The Board authorized a Compact Public Hearing on proposed changes at Takoma Metro station in July 2022. The hearing was held using a hybrid in-person/virtual method on January 17, 2023. The staff report summarizing the public comments with responses was prepared and published for a ten-day period in April 2023.

- As part of a Joint Development project, Metro's joint developer will construct approximately 434 residential units and 16,000 square-feet by making the following proposed changes to Metro's transit facilities: (i) relocation of the bus loop and Kiss & Ride spaces, (ii) addition of one alighting bus stop, (iii) removal of 144 Kiss & Ride spaces, (iv) addition of a traffic signal on Cedar Street Northwest & Carrol Street Northwest at Takoma Metro station.
- The proposed changes respond the 2021 District of Columbia Comprehensive Plan update that increases development allowances for the site and community feedback about the mixed-use development and open space.
- Board approval of the Compact hearing staff report and amendment to the Mass Transit Plan are required to allow the construction of these improvements.

Interested Parties:

Takoma Metro Associates Limited Partnership.

Background:

In March 2014, the Board approved the execution of a Joint Development Agreement with EYA Development (“EYA”) to develop housing and retail at Takoma station. Despite the Joint Development Agreement being signed in December 2016, Comprehensive Plan ambiguity and unresolved community feedback put the project on hold until 2021, when the DC Council adopted a Comprehensive Plan update increasing development allowances and EYA proposed a new site plan to Metro. From 2021 to 2022, staff coordinated the concept plans with EYA and the District of Columbia (“District”) for the proposed changes to the transit facilities which will enable the development of approximately 434 residential units and 16,000 square feet of retail.

The Board authorized Staff to hold a Compact Public Hearing for Takoma Metro station in July 2022.

The Compact Public Hearing was held on January 17, 2023, using a hybrid virtual & in-person format. There were 736 people who responded to Metro’s request for comment on the proposed modifications. Analysis of the 736 respondents shows 69 percent of respondents support the Takoma project or did not express an objection, and 31 percent oppose the project in some capacity. The most significant concerns related to the proposed reduction in Kiss & Ride spaces, bike and pedestrian conditions, and the development review process. The staff report clarifies that the proposed changes are based on an analysis of existing utilization and future demand to ensure adequate capacity is retained. Regarding bike and pedestrian conditions, the concept plan adds or expands pathways, improves lighting, and modernizes bike parking on site. Finally, the concept plan aligns with long-standing jurisdictional goals and staff notes that any comments on the development plan are addressed in the District’s review process, including through the review of the developer’s Planned Unit Development (PUD) application and Zoning Case 22-36.

As a result, staff recommends approving the Staff Report and amending the Mass Transit Plan to enable the changes to the transit facilities as originally proposed.

Discussion:

Staff held a Compact Public Hearing to gather feedback on proposed changes to transit facilities needed to retain open space adjacent to the station and to enable joint development at Takoma Metro station. Board approval of the Compact Public Hearing staff report and amendment to the Mass Transit Plan are required to allow the construction of these improvements. The capital funds and contractual delivery of these projects will be funded externally. Metro’s role has been, and continues to be, to coordinate the final design and construction activities.

The amendments to the Mass Transit Plan for Takoma Metro station are as follows:

- Relocation of the bus loop and Kiss & Ride spaces

- Addition of one alighting bus stop
- Removal of 144 Kiss & Ride spaces
- Addition of a traffic signal on Carroll Street NW at the bus loop and Kiss & Ride entrance

Funding Impact:

No direct impact on funding.

Previous Actions:

1999 – Board approves issuance of Joint Development solicitation

2005 – Board approves Purchase & Sale Agreement with EYA Development

2007 – First Compact hearing to consolidate parking facilities

2014 – Board approves Joint Development Agreement with EYA

2015 – Second Compact hearing to reduce parking capacity

2021 – DC Council adopts Comprehensive Plan update clarifying and increasing development allowances

2022 – Board approves third Compact hearing to modify the site plan

Next Steps:

2025 to 2027 – Construction of proposed changes at Takoma Metro station

Recommendation:

Approval to: accept the Compact hearing staff report and amendments to the Mass Transit Plan for proposed changes to Takoma Metro station.

SUBJECT: APPROVAL OF PUBLIC HEARING STAFF REPORT AND AMENDMENT OF
MASS TRANSIT PLAN FOR CHANGES AT TAKOMA METRO STATION

RESOLUTION
OF THE
BOARD OF DIRECTORS
OF THE
WASHINGTON METROPOLITAN AREA TRANSIT AUTHORITY

WHEREAS, Compact Section 15 requires the Board of Directors to transmit proposed changes to the Mass Transit Plan to certain enumerated agencies and conduct a public hearing; and

WHEREAS, Resolution 2022-23 authorized staff to hold a public hearing on proposed plans to (i) relocate the bus loop and Kiss & Ride, (ii) add one alighting bus stop, (iii) remove 144 Kiss & Ride parking spaces, and (iv) add a traffic signal on Cedar Street Northwest & Carrol Street Northwest at Takoma Metro Station; and

WHEREAS, A report on the results of the public outreach and public hearing regarding the proposed plans at Takoma Metro Station entitled *Compact Public Hearing Staff Report, Takoma Metro Station Parking and Bus Bay Changes, Staff Analysis of the Public Hearing and Staff Recommendations* ("Takoma Staff Report") (Attachment A), was presented to the public for review and comment; and

WHEREAS, The final draft of the Takoma Metro Station Staff Report includes (i) staff's recommendations that were presented to the public for review and comment on April 11, 2023, and (ii) the comments received during the public comment period;

NOW, THEREFORE, be it

RESOLVED, That the Board of Directors approves the *Compact Public Hearing Staff Report, Takoma Metro Station Parking and Bus Bay Changes, Staff Analysis of the Public Hearing and Staff Recommendations*, as set forth in Attachment A; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the Board of Directors amends the Mass Transit Plan to ((i) relocate the bus loop and Kiss & Ride, (ii) add one alighting bus stop, (iii) remove 144 Kiss & Ride parking spaces, and (iv) add a traffic signal on Cedar Street Northwest & Carrol Street Northwest at Takoma Metro Station, as set forth in Attachment A; and be it finally

RESOLVED, That this Resolution shall be effective 30 days after adoption in accordance with Compact Section 8(b).

Reviewed as to form and legal sufficiency,

/s/

Patricia Y. Lee
Executive Vice President, Chief Legal Officer
and General Counsel

WMATA File Structure No.:

12.7.2 Master Plans/Mass Transit Plan (including transit zone modifications)

Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA)

Compact Public Hearing Staff Report

Takoma Metrorail Station Parking and Bus Bay Changes

Staff Analysis of the Public Hearing and Staff Recommendations

Hearing No. 645
Docket No. R23-01

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1.0 Introduction

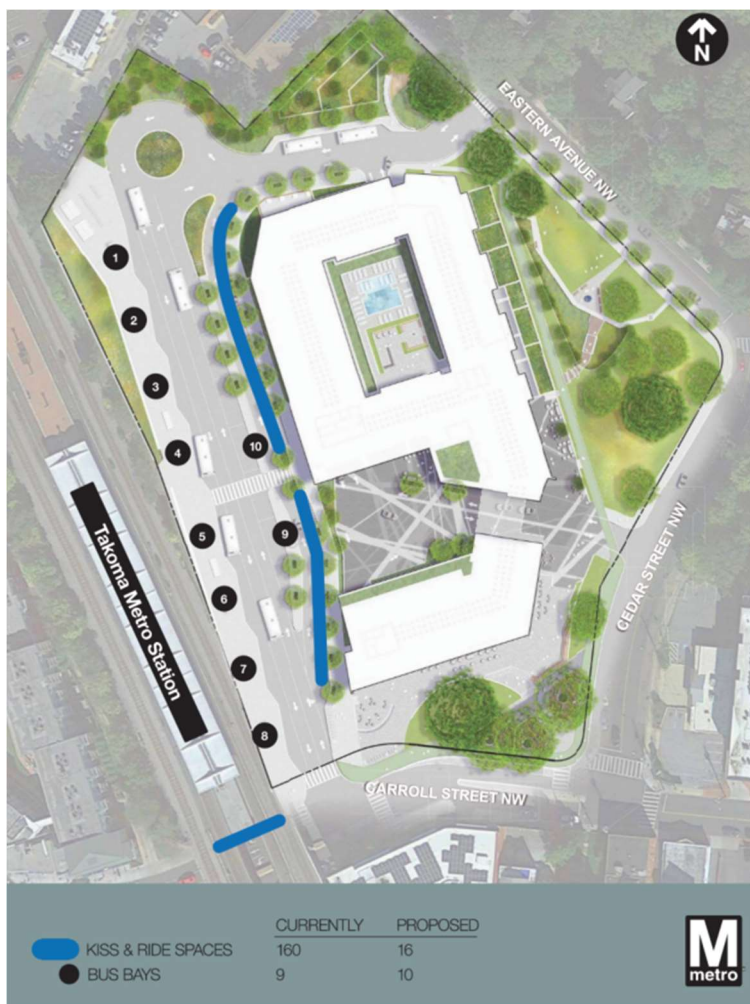
1.1 The Project

WMATA proposes changes (“Project”) to the Takoma Metro Station (“Metro Station” or “Takoma Station”) to enable a joint development project. The Project includes modifications to the parking and bus loop facilities at Takoma Station. The proposed joint development concept is shown in Figure 1 below; more detailed drawings can be found in Appendix G of this report.

Metro obtained public input on the following proposed transit modifications:

- Relocation of the bus loop and Kiss & Ride spaces
- Addition of one alighting bus stop
- Removal of 144 Kiss & Ride spaces
- Addition of a traffic signal on Carroll Street NW at the WMATA bus loop and Kiss & Ride entrance

Figure 1. Proposed Metro Facility Modifications



Takoma Metrorail Station – Parking and Bus Bay Changes Compact Public Hearing Staff Report

Of specific interest to Metro customers are the changes to the transit facilities, station access, and circulation in the vicinity of the Metro Station, which were presented at a public hearing on January 17, 2023. Details of the proposal were provided in the General Plans and the Environmental Evaluation, which included a parking analysis. The Notice of Public Hearing, Environmental Evaluation, and the General Plans were available online at www.wmata.com/plansandprojects beginning December 17, 2022 and are included in Appendices A, E, and F, respectively, of this document.

These documents were also available for inspection during normal business hours at the following locations:

Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority
300 7th Street SW, Washington, DC 20024

1.2 Public Hearing Staff Report

As required by the WMATA Compact, Metro’s organizational document, the public was provided with the opportunity to comment on the Project. Following the guidelines established by WMATA’s Board-approved Public Participation Plan, the following report is a summary of Metro’s public outreach efforts, the Project’s public hearing, comments that were received, and Metro’s response to questions and issues raised by the public about the Project.

This draft report is shared with the public on the [project webpage](#) for review and comment for ten (10) days. Following that review, the report will be finalized and presented by staff to Metro’s Board of Directors, where the Board will make a determination on whether the proposed facility modifications will be accepted as an amendment to Metro’s Mass Transit Plan. The activities and actions Metro takes to prepare and finalize the Public Hearing Staff Report are shown in Figure 2.

Figure 2. Staff Report Process



2.0 Communications and Outreach to the Public

2.1 Overview

Communications and outreach were guided by the requirements for WMATA Compact Public Hearings and Metro’s federally mandated, Board-approved Public Participation Plan (PPP).

Beyond meeting basic requirements for a Compact Public Hearing, Metro followed PPP guidelines to create a targeted communications plan. The plan was designed to collect feedback inclusively and collaboratively with a focus on engaging minority, low-income and Limited English Proficient (LEP) populations.

Most of the communications and outreach efforts outlined in this report occurred during the official public comment period timeframe (**December 17, 2022 through January 27, 2023**).

The final communications and outreach plan included the following efforts:

- Stakeholder communication
- Targeted marketing and media
- In-person outreach
- In-Person and Virtual Compact Public Hearing

Feedback was collected from the following sources during the public comment period:

- Written comments received online and by the Board Secretary’s Office
- Oral testimony received at the In-Person and Virtual Compact Public Hearing

The comments received can be found in Appendix E of this report.

2.2 Stakeholder Communication

Metro sent a targeted email update on December 19, 2022 to 38 individuals representing 34 nearby stakeholders. Recipients included representatives from businesses, community-based organizations, places of worship, hospital and medical services, schools, government facilities and agencies, apartment and residential communities, and schools. Recipients were invited to provide feedback and attend the public hearing. The email included a link to an online survey. A summary of the survey findings can be found in Appendix E of this report. The list of stakeholders who received the targeted email can be found in Appendix B.

2.3 Targeted Marketing and Media

To obtain maximum reach, Metro used targeted marketing, in-person outreach, and media relations campaigns to increase awareness and encourage public feedback.

2.3.1 Project Webpage

The [project webpage](#) on Metro’s website served as the Project information hub and the primary channel for collecting public feedback (Figure 3). Information was presented in English and Spanish, and a variety of content was available for the public to review, including the environmental evaluation and design plans of the proposed changes. Metro’s public hearing was also streamed live on this page and on [YouTube](#).

Figure 3. Project Website



During the public comment period, the project webpage received 1,787 unique views. The average time spent on the page was just over 4 minutes. This webpage will remain online for the duration of the Project to serve as a resource for the public.

2.3.2 Social Media

Metro leveraged its social media following to inform the public about the Project across a variety of channels. In total, Metro’s social media posts resulted in more than 61,000 impressions and more than 2,000 engagements across all platforms (Table 1). Examples of social media content are shown on the following page. On January 12, 17, and 27, Montgomery County DOT tweeted out Metro’s link to the project details, survey, and public hearing.

Table 1. Social Media Engagement Summary

Media	Date	Details
Twitter	1/9/23	• 31,373 impressions • 927 engagements (including 23 retweets, 40 likes, 5 replies) • 334 link clicks
Twitter (second part to thread started on 1/9)	1/14/23	• 8,080 impressions • 120 engagements (including 5 retweets and 9 likes) • 42 link clicks
Facebook	1/9/23	• 1,112 people reached • 20 total engagements (20 reactions, 0 comments, 0 shares) • 15 link clicks
Facebook	1/14/23	• 6,480 people reached • 95 total engagements (73 reactions, 14 comments, 8 shares) • 51 link clicks

Takoma Metrorail Station – Parking and Bus Bay Changes

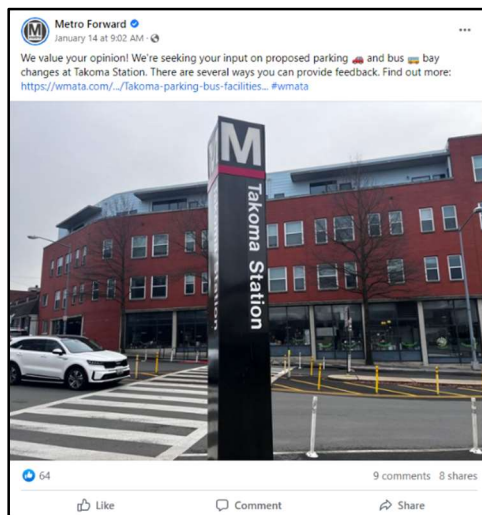
Compact Public Hearing Staff Report

Media	Date	Details
Instagram	1/9/23	7,590 people reached 489 total engagements (470 reactions, 10 comments, 9 shares)
Instagram	1/14/23	6,386 people reached 419 total engagements (407 reactions, 8 comments, 4 shares)
Nextdoor	1/10/23	- Posted to the zip code around the station (20012) 53 impressions

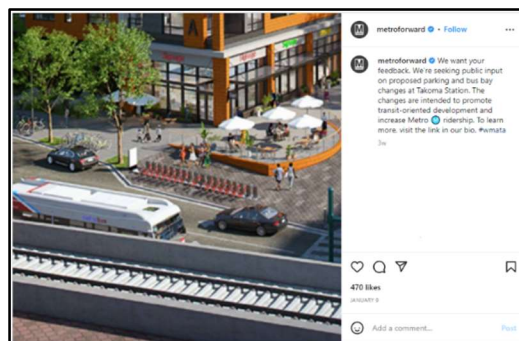
Note: Reach = the total number of people who saw the content (measure is estimated). Impressions = the number of times the content was displayed on a user's screen, no matter if it was seen, clicked, or engaged with or not. Engagements = Likes, comments, and shares.

Social Media Examples

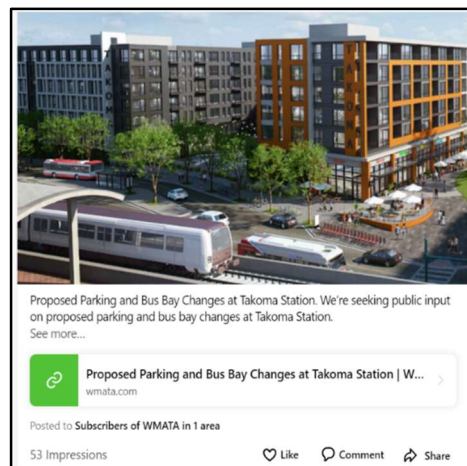
Facebook



Instagram



Nextdoor



Twitter



2.3.3 Print Advertising

Two legal notices were placed in *The Washington Post* prior to the public hearing. Paid advertisements were also placed in publications covering multiple languages based on the station's demographic profile: *Atref*, *El Tiempo Latino*, and *Washington Hispanic*. Table 2 lists the publications and the run dates.

Table 2. Summary of Print Advertisements

Publication	Language	Run Date(s)	Total Est. Impressions
Atref	Amharic	1/6/23	8,000
El Tiempo Latino	Spanish	1/6/23	49,200
The Washington Post	English	12/17/22, 12/24/22	98,400
Washington Hispanic	Spanish	12/23/22	45,000

2.3.4 Signage and Flyers

Information was posted in English and Spanish in and around the Takoma Station to reach rail, bus, and parking customers.

- Digital graphics were posted on the digital displays in the station mezzanine.
- Signs were posted at each bus bay at the station.
- Flyers were distributed to the station manager and throughout the station on January 5, 6, 14, 17, and 18.

We Want Your Feedback on Proposed Parking and Bus Bay Changes at Takoma Station

Metro is proposing parking and bus bay changes to promote transit-oriented development and modernize transit facilities.

Proposed changes include:

- Relocating the bus loop and Kiss & Ride
- Adding one bus stop
- Removing 144 Kiss & Ride spaces
- Adding a traffic signal on Carroll Street NW at the bus loop and Kiss & Ride entrance

There are two ways you can provide feedback:

1. Share your feedback online.
Take the survey, provide written comments, or upload documents by 5 p.m. Friday, January 27, 2023 at wmata.com/plansandprojects.

2. Participate in a Public Hearing.
Tuesday, January 17, 2023 at 6:30 p.m. Metro will host a hybrid Public Hearing with both in-person and virtual participation options.

1. In person:
Takoma Elementary School – Auditorium
7010 Piney Branch Rd NW
Washington, DC
Metro staff will be on-site to answer questions before the Public Hearing.

2. By phone: Call 855-925-2801 and enter meeting code 4773.

3. By video: Advance registration is required.
To register, email speak@wmata.com by 10 a.m. on Tuesday, January 17.
Public feedback will be provided to Metro's Board of Directors as part of the final decision-making process.

Watch or Listen Live
Watch or listen to the virtual public hearing live at on wmata.com/plansandprojects, on YouTube, or by calling 855-925-2801 and entering meeting code 4773.

Public participation is solicited without regard to race, color, national origin, age, gender, religion, disability, or family status. ASL interpretation will be provided. To request other accommodations under the Americans with Disabilities Act, or other language interpretation services (free of charge), contact the Office of the Board Secretary at 202-962-2511 (TTY: 202-962-2033) or send a message to speak@wmata.com as soon as possible, so Metro can make the necessary arrangements before the public hearing date.

Learn More
wmata.com/plansandprojects 202-637-1328

በዚህ ፕላን ላይ የተዘረዘሩት ለጥንቃቄ ማስገባት እና ለጥያቄዎች ማቅረብ ይገባል፡፡ ለተጨማሪ መረጃ ወይም ለማስታወሻዎች ወደ 202-637-1328 ይደውሉ፡፡

Queremos saber su opinión sobre los cambios propuestos en el estacionamiento y la zona para autobuses en la estación Takoma

Metro propone cambios en el estacionamiento y la zona para autobuses para promover el desarrollo orientado al transporte público, aumentar el número de pasajeros y modernizar las instalaciones de transporte público.

Los cambios propuestos incluyen:

- Reubicación del trayecto circular para autobuses y de Kiss & Ride
- Adición de una parada de autobús solo de descenso de pasajeros
- Eliminación de 144 espacios de Kiss & Ride
- Adición de un semáforo en Carroll Street NW en la estación del trayecto circular para autobuses y en la entrada de Kiss & Ride

Hay dos formas en que puede proporcionar comentarios:

1. Envíe sus comentarios por internet.
Realice la encuesta, proporcione comentarios por escrito o cargue documentos antes de las 5:00 p.m. del viernes, 27 de enero 2023 en wmata.com/plansandprojects.

2. Participe en una audiencia pública.
Martes, 17 de enero de 2023 a las 6:30 p.m. Metro llevará a cabo una audiencia pública híbrida con la opción de participar en persona o de manera virtual.

1. En persona:
Takoma Elementary School – auditorio
7010 Piney Branch Rd NW, Washington, DC
El personal de Metro estará en el lugar para responder preguntas antes de la audiencia pública.

2. Por teléfono:
Lláme al 855-925-2801 e ingrese el código de reunión 4773.

3. Por videollamada:
Se requiere inscripción previa. Para registrarse, envíe un correo electrónico a speak@wmata.com antes de las 10 a.m. del martes 17 de enero.
La opinión del público se hará llegar a la Junta Directiva de Metro como parte del proceso de la decisión final.

Vea o escuche en vivo
Mire o escuche la audiencia pública virtual en vivo en wmata.com/plansandprojects, en YouTube o por teléfono al 855-925-2801 e ingresando el código de reunión 4773.

Se solicita la participación pública independientemente de la raza, color de piel, nacionalidad, edad, género, religión, discapacidad o situación familiar. Se proporcionará interpretación de lenguaje de señas estadounidenses (ASL). Para solicitar adaptaciones especiales de conformidad con la Ley para Personas con Discapadades (ADA) u otros servicios de interpretación de idiomas sin cargo, comuníquese con la Oficina del Secretario de la Junta al 202-962-2511 (TTY: 202-962-2033) o envíe un mensaje a speak@wmata.com lo antes posible, para que Metro pueda hacer los arreglos necesarios antes de la fecha de la audiencia pública.

Obtenga más información
wmata.com/plansandprojects 202-637-1328

Printed and digital signs were posted in the station and at bus bays.

2.3.5 Media Relations

Metro issued a press release on January 9, 2023 to encourage public feedback on the project (Table 3).

Table 3. Press Release Summary

Date	Title	Details
1/9/23	Metro seeks public input on proposed parking and bus bay changes at Takoma Station	Metro is seeking public input on the proposed parking and bus bay changes at Takoma Station

2.3.6 In-Person Outreach

Contracted professional bilingual outreach teams, in the yellow Metro-branded outreach aprons, were positioned at Takoma Station mezzanine and bus loop to inform customers and residents about the proposed changes and public hearing and encourage customers to provide comment via the online survey and at the public hearing. The outreach teams distributed a one-page flyers about the project and were equipped with tablets to assist customers with the online survey on-site. In-person outreach took place on the follow days and times:

- Thursday January 5, 6:00 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.
- Friday January 6, 2:00 p.m. – 6:30 p.m.
- Saturday January 14, 10:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.
- Tuesday January 17, 3:30 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.
- Wednesday January 18, 6:30 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.

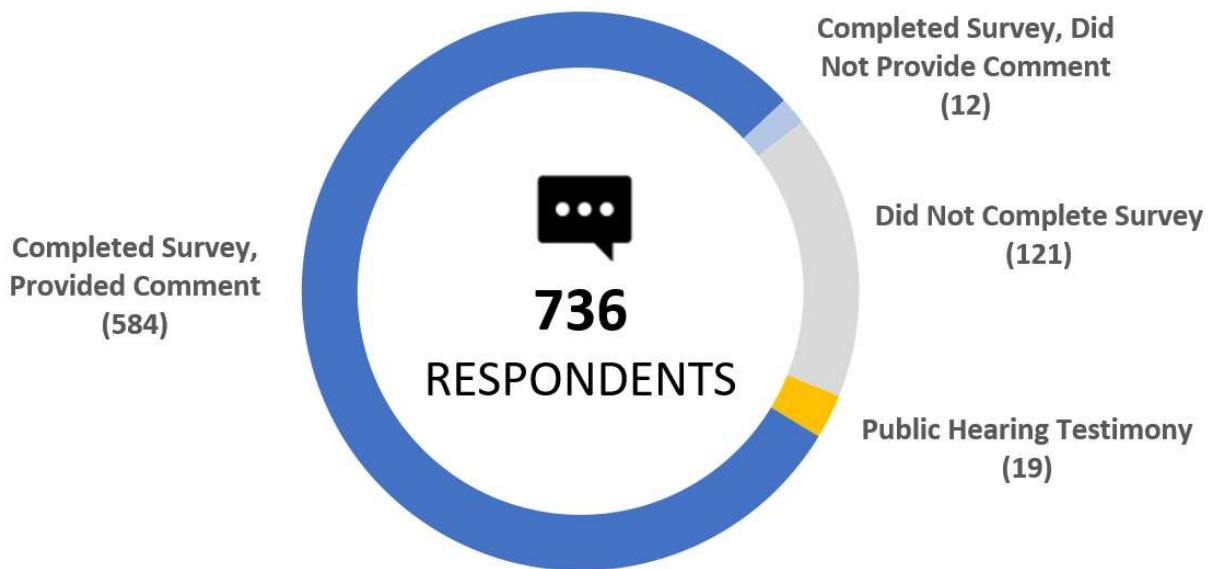


The days and times for the outreach were selected at times of high ridership to reach the maximum number of customers and to coincide with the public hearing to help get customers from the station to the public hearing location. Outreach staff were fluent in English, Spanish, and Amharic and identified by their yellow language button. **Overall, the outreach team interacted with 2,985 customers, including 400 interactions in Spanish and 150 interactions in Amharic and distributed 1,297 one-page flyers.**

2.4 Public Input Results

Metro collected public input during the public comment period through an online survey tool and at an In-Person and Virtual Compact Public Hearing. The survey was started by 717 people, 596 surveys were completed, and 584 survey respondents provided written comments. Additionally, nineteen oral testimonies were presented during the public hearing. See Figure 4. The public comment period was open from 9 a.m. Saturday December 17, 2022, through 5 p.m. Friday January 27, 2023.

Figure 4. Public Input Methods



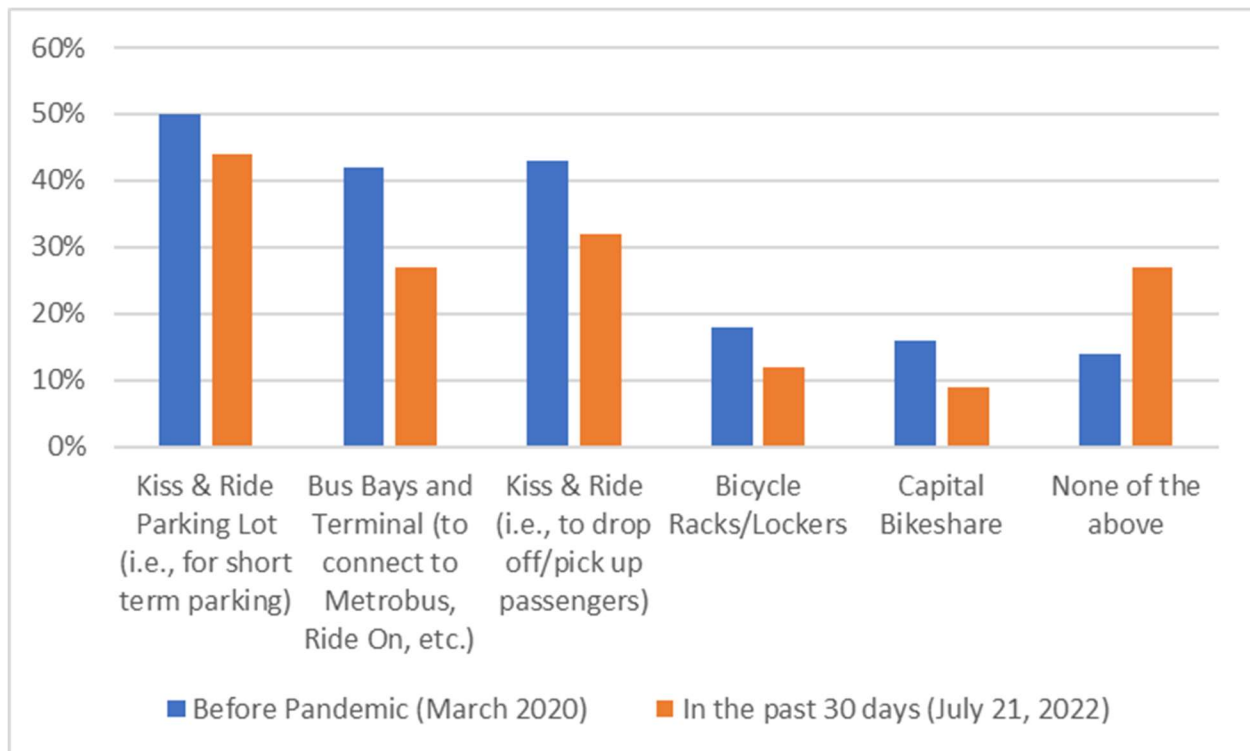
2.4.1 Facilities Used at Takoma Station

The survey asked respondents which facilities they typically used at the Takoma Station before the pandemic (March 2020) and in the past 30 days (Table 4 and Figure 5).

Table 4. Facility Usage at Takoma Station

Facilities Used Takoma Station	Before Pandemic (March 2020) n=557	In the past 30 days (July 21, 2022) n=557
Kiss & Ride Parking Lot (i.e., for short term parking)	50%	44%
Bus Bays and Terminal (to connect to Metrobus, Ride On, etc.)	42%	27%
Kiss & Ride (i.e., to drop off/pick up passengers)	43%	32%
Bicycle Racks/Lockers	18%	12%
Capital Bikeshare	16%	9%
None of the above	14%	27%

Figure 5. Facility Usage at Takoma Station



2.4.2 Survey Demographics

Table 5 shows the percentage breakdown of survey demographics. More than fifty percent of survey respondents were between the ages of 25 and 44. Almost all people responding to the survey identified as white and non-Latino. Sixty percent of respondents lived in single family, detached homes.

Most of the survey respondents (47%) said they live in Takoma Park, MD—more than double the number of respondents who live in Silver Spring, MD (18%). Twelve percent of survey respondents share the Project’s DC zip code (20012), and nine percent live in other DC zip codes. Fourteen percent of survey respondents said they live elsewhere. Figure 6 shows the percentage of respondents by zip code.

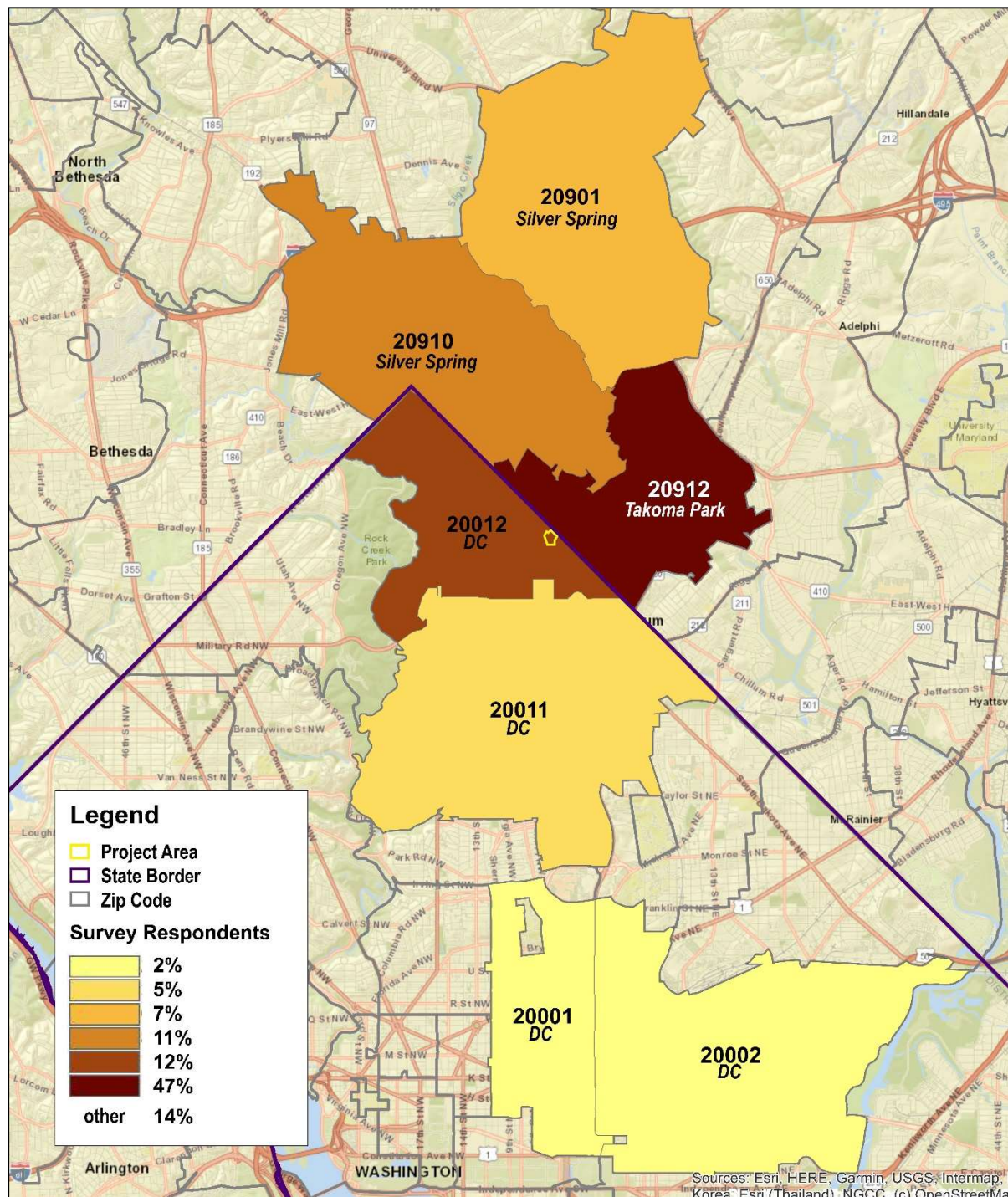
Table 5. Survey Demographics

Age (n=511)	18-24	5%
	25-34	22%
	35-44	31%
	45-54	17%
	55-64	10%
	65+	15%
Gender (n=559)	Male	52%
	Female	45%
	Other	3%
Hispanic or Latino (n=554)	Yes	7%
	No	93%
Race (n=557)	African American or Black	7%
	American Indian or Alaska Native	1%
	Asian	7%
	Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander	1%
	White	78%
	Other	6%
Zip Code (n=548)	20912 (Takoma Park, MD)	47%
	20012 (DC, Project)	12%
	20910 (Silver Spring, MD)	11%
	20901 (Silver Spring, MD)	7%
	20011 (DC)	5%
	20002 (DC)	2%
	20001 (DC)	2%
	Somewhere else	14%
Housing Type (n=596)	Apartment or condominium	25%
	Single family, detached house	60%
	Townhome, attached to other houses	13%
	Other	2%

Takoma Metrorail Station – Parking and Bus Bay Changes

Compact Public Hearing Staff Report

Figure 6. Zip Codes of Survey Respondents



3.0 Summary of the Public Hearing

In-Person and Virtual Compact Public Hearing

The Compact Public Hearing was held on Tuesday, January 17, 2023 at 6:30 p.m. Metro Board Vice Chair Lucinda Babers chaired the hearing. The hearing was a hybrid meeting where staff hosted attendees in-person at Takoma Elementary School Auditorium, 7010 Piney Branch Road, NW, Washington, DC. Others had the opportunity to participate via Zoom or watch a simultaneous live-stream of the hearing on Metro’s website and YouTube page [Metro Forward](#) (Figure 7 and Figure 8). The hearing was viewed on YouTube 210 times, and the recording remains available for reference on Metro Forward.

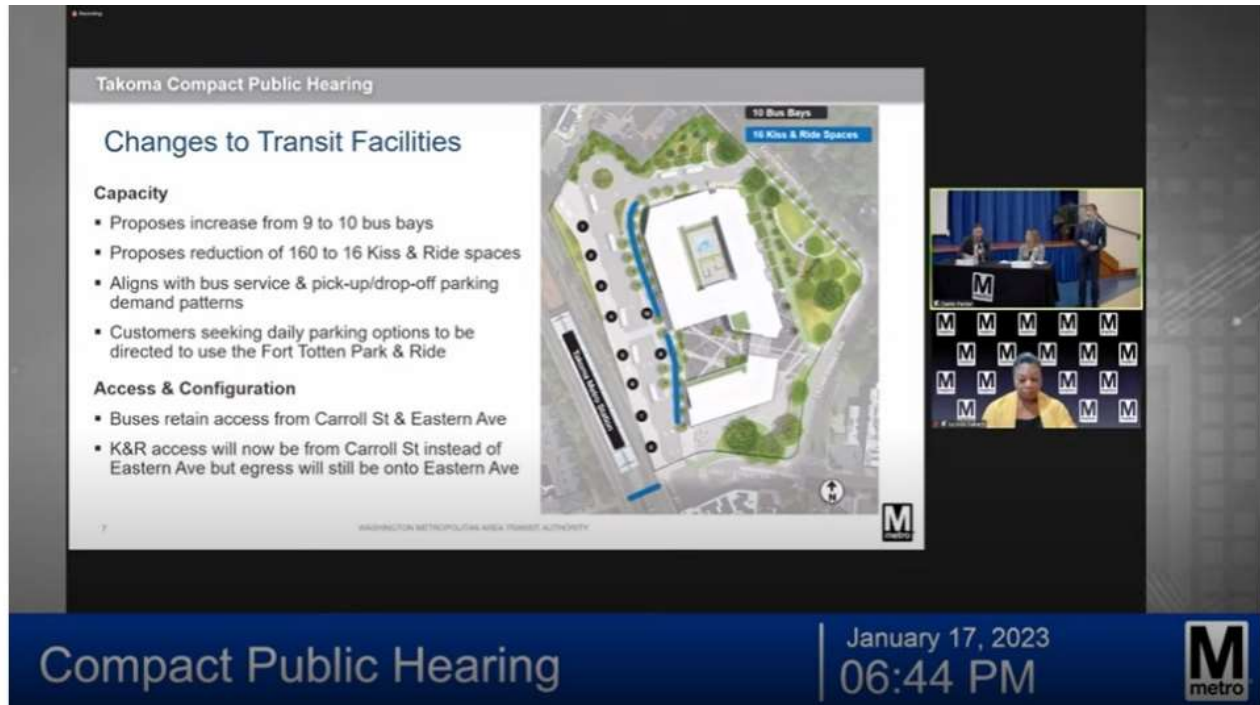
In keeping with Metro’s policy to ensure that a hearing is accessible to as many parties as possible, participants were also able to dial-in by phone and the hearing included live American Sign Language interpretation. The hearing’s recording on YouTube provides captions. The contracted professional bilingual outreach staff were also tasked to install signs from the station to the public hearing and assist Metro staff with various tasks and with any customer language needs at the public hearing.

Following an opening statement by Ms. Babers, Metro staff described the proposed facility changes. Seventeen people provided oral testimony at the hearing in-person and two people provided oral testimony by phone. The staff presentation and script of the public hearing can be found in Appendices B and C of this report.

Figure 7. Takoma In-Person Public Hearing



Figure 8. Screenshot of Takoma Virtual Public Hearing



4.0 Comments Received for the Record

Comments to be considered for the record as part of this process were received through the online survey tool and oral testimony at the public hearing. The public comment period ran from 9 a.m. Saturday December 17, 2022 through 5 p.m. Friday January 27, 2023.

A total of 736 people responded to Metro’s request for comment. Of those, 584 people provided comment through the online survey and 19 individuals provided oral testimony at the public hearing (Table 6 and Figure 9). One comment was written in Spanish, and the remaining were in English.

Table 7 provides a breakdown of the comments by topic. Because some comments contained multiple topics, the numbers shown in

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Table 7 is greater than the total number of actual comments received. Comments made for the public record are provided in Appendix E.

Table 6. Summary of Respondent Opinions

	Number	Percentage
Support	297	40%
Neither	213	29%
Oppose	226	31%
TOTAL	736	100%

Figure 9. Respondent Opinions

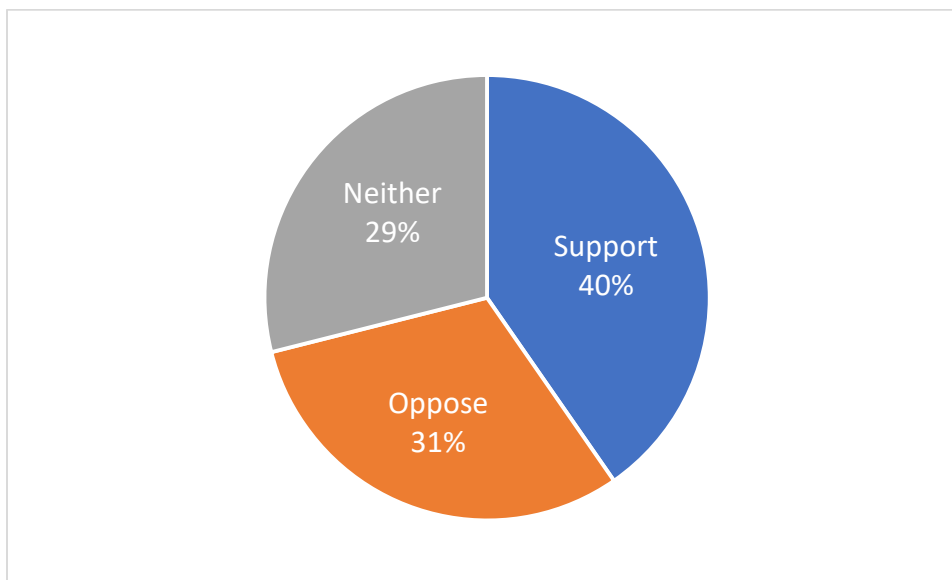


Table 7. Summary of Comments by Topic

Topic	Frequency	Overview
General Support for the Project	297	Comments expressed support of the project
General Opposition to the Project	226	Comments expressed opposition to the project
Kiss & Ride Spaces	292	Comments related to long-term and accessible parking needs at the station; not all these comments were in opposition to the project
Bicycle and Pedestrian Improvements	29	Comments expressed value of providing improved bicycle and pedestrian access to and through the station area
Development Review Process	16	Commenters did not think that Metro’s public hearing and DC’s land development process should be separate
Other Transit Related Comments	20	Comments associated with improvements or priorities Metro and RideOn should focus on
Other Comments	82	These comments were associated with green space, the environmental evaluation, and other topics not related to the above-described categories

5.0 Comments and Responses to Comments Received

The 584 written comments and 19 oral testimonies were categorized into broader, recurring themes. WMATA staff provided responses to the overall concerns and themes expressed below. Additional information is provided in the following sections to include representative comments (see Appendix E for full comment details).

5.1 General Support for the Project

Forty percent of all respondents (297 comments) expressed support for the project. They supported the removal of the 144 Kiss & Ride spaces and relocation of the bus loop. People noted that the surface lot was underutilized and that that more-dense, transit-oriented development next to the station was a more appropriate use for the land and could provide benefits to neighboring areas.

Representative Comments

- *I support the renovation plans, particularly moving the unnecessary parking spaces. I urge WMATA to move forward as quickly as possible to build desperately needed housing and commercial space for our community.*
- *I support changes to the Takoma Park Metro area, especially the removal of parking spaces when that leads to better mix of land use, including affordable housing and better green infrastructure (at the very least from the opportunity to change a swath of impermeable surface to at least some permeable). Takoma Park is a genuinely cool, unique area. It has a lot of draws already. Better pedestrian and bike access and, perhaps most importantly, safety; more control of vehicular traffic, and less vehicular traffic; and more space for mixed retail and housing would only benefit Takoma Park's stability, longevity, and appeal.*
- *The city needs more housing and this would be a great, Metro-accessible place to build it!*
- *Yes. Love the plan.*
- *I support changes to the Takoma Park Metro area, especially the removal of parking spaces when that leads to better mix of land use, including affordable housing and better green infrastructure (at the very least from the opportunity to change a swath of impermeable surface to at least some permeable).*
- *This sounds like an excellent plan!*
- *We need housing for people not cars*
- *This location is perfect for dense, transit-oriented housing. Please ensure that housing and mixed-use commercial development are part of the redevelopment plan.*
- *I would love to see the station updated to reflect its urban context and put the valuable land to more productive use. Count me as a vote for less parking and more housing around the station.*
- *Do it!*
- *This change would make my life much easier and be an overall improvement to our community!! strongly support the development of Metro's underutilized parking lot in Takoma DC. The proposal will create the necessary conditions for Metro to earn far more revenue from its land at the Takoma Metro station than it currently receives through the operation of an underutilized parking lot. We all benefit from a financially healthy public transit system with more riders. The spill-over of additional patrons to Takoma Park businesses will contribute to the financial health of Takoma Park MD and Takoma DC.*

5.2 General Opposition to the Project

Thirty-one percent of respondents (226 comments) expressed opposition to the overall project. Opposing commenters raised several concerns including kiss & ride utilization, green space preservation, safety concerns, and the development review process.

Representative Comments

- *This proposed project is a terrible idea.*
- *I do not support the proposed changes as currently defined. WMATA must do a more systematic and complete analysis of the traffic and environmental impact of the entire development. WMATA must also do more to engage all affected jurisdictions, most notably the neighboring Takoma Park, MD.*
- *I completely oppose this plan without further details.*
- *I'm opposed to the changes to the metro green space. (1) The green space gives much needed breathing room to commuters and strollers. (2) The planned development itself is large and unattractive. (3) The loss of paid parking will discourage Metro riders.*
- *Please do not eliminate all of these parking spaces. This will pose immense challenges for disabled people and those who live too far from the station to walk.*
- *I am opposed to this project. We need to have places to park. I am very concerned about the disabled and those who have long commutes and drive to Metro before embarking on long commutes. This is a terrible plan.*
- *As a resident of Takoma Park I am against the plan as it currently stands. More housing is a great thing to be sure, but it appears to be at the expense of green space and a significant impact on available parking.*

Metro Response: This redevelopment of the Takoma Station presents an opportunity to increase ridership in support of Metro's [Transit Oriented Development](#) and [Joint Development](#) policy objectives but also to help achieve the District's goals as well.

The District of Columbia has been planning redevelopment of this site since 2000 as a mixed-use hub that incorporates open space but with fewer parking spaces and less impervious area. After the District's extensive collaboration and outreach, the resulting [2002 Takoma Central District Plan](#) called for building more housing, mitigating commuter traffic, developing retail opportunities on Carroll Street NW, and improving the pedestrian environment. The proposed joint development project at the Takoma Metro Station is consistent with the goals identified in this Plan as well as [DC Office of Planning's Comprehensive Plan](#) and its [Rock Creek East Area Element](#), which proposes to concentrate economic development activity, employment growth, and new housing, including affordable housing at Takoma Metro station. Additionally, the [Future Land Use Map](#) (FLUM) also proposes an increase in development allowances from moderate to medium density.

5.3 Kiss & Ride Spaces

Respondents provided 292 comments related to parking needs at the station. Most people (233 comments) felt that some sort of long-term commuter parking was needed at the station, and 40 commenters expressed the need for accessible spaces for people with disabilities or limited mobility. Nineteen comments were that expecting customers to park at another station or to take the bus to the Metro station would not be feasible. Also, doubts were expressed about the lot's reported utilization.

It is important to note that not all parking comments were associated with opposition to the project. Sixty-six comments supported or were neutral about the project and expressed the need for some spaces (not necessarily the same number as provided today) to be available for customers at Takoma Station.

Representative Comments

- *Strongly support removing parking and expanding housing in this space.*
- *Remove as much parking as possible, replace with people-oriented infrastructure*
- *I think this plan makes sense, the 160 parking spot lot is a misuse of public land. On the other hand, metro helping along transit-oriented-development would help both the environment, as well as make financial sense.*
- *Please develop the land, the parking is mostly unused. But please keep a convenient kiss and drop area*
- *It is extremely helpful to have daily parking available at the Metro station, as it is a quick 10 minute drive from my residence and the RideOn buses are not reliable or timely. I strongly encourage Metro to reconsider the plan to remove the parking lot and identify alternatives for retaining some amount of daily spots at the station. If no parking remains available, I implore Metro to attempt to work with RideOn to improve and increase the bus availability and reliability. Thank you for your consideration.*
- *The recent changes to allow all day parking at the station have been extremely helpful to cut my commute time and make riding the metro more convenient. With the elimination of these parking spots, I will likely not ride the metro as often (currently 4 times a week). Please figure out a way to include parking spots for metro commuters as part of the building development. I assume there will be a parking garage for the people who will live in the complex, so building additional (paid) spots for commuters should be possible.*
- *I would support a proposal that removes 1/3 of the parking, but this proposal goes too far. I use the parking lot regularly, and though it is usually not at full capacity, removing all the spaces would create a major inconvenience. Saying we can go to Fort Totten is not realistic since their parking is 20 minutes away and often full.*
- *I strongly object to Metro's decision to eliminate all parking at the site. Your description of the current 144 spaces as 'Kiss and Ride' spaces is absolutely false, and contributes to the lack of trust of our community in your communication about this project. At a minimum, please consider retaining some parking for senior citizens and people living with disabilities. I do support the overall development plan, and I support reducing the number of parking spaces - just not eliminating entirely.*

Metro Response: The proposed change to remove 144 Kiss & Ride spaces in the surface lot is based on an evaluation of current and future parking demand for the Takoma Station as detailed in the Environmental Evaluation. The Project does not eliminate the facility but will reconstruct and replace approximately 16 total spaces adjacent to the Metro station as on-street spaces. This includes two on-street ADA spaces adjacent to the crosswalk, near the station entrance.

The private development adjacent to the Metro facilities will also include retail parking and the [Planned Unit Development \(PUD\) application](#) anticipates parking spaces that will exceed the zoning minimum. These spaces are not Metro-owned or operated but can be utilized by the public for longer-term parking to access station area retail or to ride Metro. adjacent mixed-use joint development is undergoing the District’s entitlements processes for jurisdictional approval of the number of developer-built parking spaces as part of the joint development. Updates, including the latest project traffic study, will be posted to the development’s [Zoning Case page](#).

Regarding concerns about longer-term parking options recommended at Fort Totten Station, Staff will share these comments with Metropolitan Transit Police Department (MTPD) for consideration.

5.4 Bicycle and Pedestrian Improvements

Twenty-nine comments discussed the value of providing improved bicycle and pedestrian access to and through the station area and provided comments on activities and actions they would like to Metro and others make as part.

Representative Comments

- *I would encourage you all to keep parking minimized and work to make getting to the station by bike, bus, or foot easier and safer.*
- *This sounds great! DC needs transit oriented housing and this is a perfect opportunity. New residents will enliven the takoma community! Please make sure the pedestrian access is good and incorporate as many units as possible.*
- *Whatever happens in this space must: *Improve bicycle mobility, access and safety in a way that connects to existing bicycle infrastructure in the city.*
- *Please consider those who bike and walk to and from this station. There aren't any bike lanes at the station, and there's a large hill up to the silver spring section of the MBT. And the parking lot cars enter the road right near the bottom of the hill and there's no stopping the cars coming down the hill. Makes me nervous when I ride my bike from the station up to the MBT.*
- *I would also strongly request that WMATA do everything possible to promote pedestrian and cyclist safety around the Metro station - any intersection redevelopments should prioritize buses, pedestrians, and cyclists, with cars a distant afterthought. Additionally, WMATA should seek out opportunities to add secure bicycle parking to any developments. I would ride my bicycle to take the Metro much more often if there were secure, high-capacity bicycle storage protected from the weather, like that currently being planned by the county for the Bonifant-Dixon garage near Silver Spring station.*

Metro Response: The Project will enhance pedestrian and bicycle access to the Metro Station by removing the large Kiss & Ride surface lot and replacing with new sidewalks and shared use paths designed to promote a safe and inviting environment for pedestrians and cyclists—goals consistent with the District’s [Bicycle Master Plan](#) and [Pedestrian Master Plan](#).

5.5 Development Review Process

A secondary concern raised in the comments (16 comments) was the separation of Metro's process and DC's land development process. Commenters expressed that it was inappropriate to decide what happens to WMATA's facilities without a full understanding and evaluation of what would go up in its place.

Representative Comments

- *I do not support the proposed changes as currently defined. WMATA must do a more systematic and complete analysis of the traffic and environmental impact of the entire development.*
- *I'm not pleased with this plan. There is insufficient detail to the plan, NO information on any proposed development, and there was NO information provided to Takoma Park residents, who would be most impacted by the changes, other than this recent posting. Most of DC is on the other side of the tracks and wouldn't even be impacted by any changes. It's insulting that you would work with younger people in DNCs in DC but ignore Takoma Park residents and station users in this way. It is also ridiculous to divorce any changes to the bus and parking from any proposed development.*
- *THIS NARROW PROPOSAL -- A SLICE OF A LARGER PROJECT -- SHOULD NOT BE CONSIDERED WITHOUT THE REST OF THE PIE. NO PRIOR PROPOSAL FOR "DEVELOPMENT" AT THE TP METRO WAS DELIBERATED IN SUCH A "SLICED" MANNER. DOING SO CALLS INTO QUESTION THE LEGITIMACY -- AND LEGALITY -- OF WMATA VIS-A-VIS "DEVELOPMENT" AT THE TP METRO STOP.*

Metro Response: These comments are outside of Metro's scope in the Compact Public Hearing and will be shared with the District of Columbia for consideration. The public can further comment on the development plan through the District's development review process, see [Zoning Case 22-36](#).

5.6 Transit Related Comments

Commenters provided suggestions not related specifically to the proposed project. These 20 comments included suggestions to increase reliability of the bus service that serves Takoma station, especially if long-term parking will be reduced; have Metro provide more amenities for pick-up/drop-off customers; install in-route electric bus vehicle infrastructure; crack down on fare evasion; and focus on fixing the existing system before taking on new projects.

Representative Comments

- *If you're taking away that many parking spaces in an already parking constrained part of town, then there needs to be much more investment in local transportation options. I completely support the need to prioritize public transport over driving, but that doesn't happen simply by eliminating parking. Especially at a time where people already don't see Metro as a reliable option. There needs to be complementary investment in public transport access. This metro stop already has few buses that serve it, a situation that is much worse in off-peak hours.*
- *12, 13, 25 the bus services are so bad. Invest on map that actually works. The buses should not leave too early, they don't even stop.*
- *We need to consider benches with covers to keep those waiting out of rain and snow. We also need to consider placement of garbage cans around the loop to prevent litter.*
- *Focus on fixing the metro - lower crime, increase reliability. Stop taking on new projects until you get the baseline down.*
- *Concerned that there are no plans for en-route electric bus charging infrastructure. Implementing at least EV ready infrastructure in conjunction with this redesign is the most responsible use of long term financing to support stated goals of carbon emission reductions.*
- *It is incredibly frustrating to see people regularly jump the turnstile without agents or anyone visibly doing anything to prevent people from breaking the law and not paying. I understand the agents don't have the authority to enforce this. I've traveled and lived in major metropolitan areas around the world and I've never seen such flagrant disregard for paying the metro fare. Simultaneously, the metro is one of the most expensive urban metro systems I've ever taken. It is unfair that I am directly with my fares and indirectly with my taxes supplementing people who are breaking the law.*

Metro Response: These comments are outside of Metro's scope in this Compact Public Hearing and will be shared with the respective Metro departments for consideration.

5.7 Other Comments

There were 82 comments that were not related to the issues discussed above. They included statements about green spaces and tree preservation, traffic analysis, stormwater management, safety within the new development, bus exhaust, the Environmental Evaluation, and activities and outcomes that should be a part of any development project, including affordable housing.

Representative Comments

- *Please keep the trees/natural vegetation for the wildlife!!! I also worry that this project will make surrounding areas extra hot.*
- *Importantly- and this should be key to any redevelopment- as much green space should be retained as possible, including saving the large mature trees in the current green space and along the Metro tracks. I've seen to many developments where the entire area was clear cut to facilitate construction. This need not be the case and it should be made a priority to save as many of the large trees as possible.*
- *The stormwater runoff is already bad, it better not get worse*
- *I was also shocked there hasn't been a traffic study to analyze the impact of the proposed changes on surrounding streets. The traffic light you want to install at the Carroll St., NW entrance to the Metro station could have a disastrous effect on the nearby Blair Road/Cedar Street/4th Street NW intersection, a frequent site of accidents that's rated an "F" by DC's transportation department. It is foolhardy to proceed with that traffic light without analyzing its effect on surrounding streets, and factoring in traffic from the apartment proposed on the site as well as all the other apartment buildings under construction in the area...*
- *I've spoken with a lot of people in Takoma/MD and some have said: -I don't see how I will feel safe walking through the complex at night after work when it's dark (females) - It looks like a bad idea (Ride On bus driver) -- I think you should ask the drivers their opinions as well as the residents and developers.*
- *Another issue never mentioned is trapped exhaust. When I walk to the metro about 8 am in the mornings, there are often 10 metro buses idling. Their fumes are released into the surrounding open area and filtered by over 200 trees. Where are the buses going to idle when there is no place for them on metro's site? And what will the air quality be near those buses, to be hemmed in on the side by an enormous retaining wall unrelieved by any grass slope or trees, and a 7-story apartment building on the other?*
- *I would oppose this project unless: 1) at least 20% of the proposed new housing units are set aside as affordable housing units for the long term, AND 2) the new apartment buildings have at least a couple of dozen parking spaces within the building, AND 3) the new apartment buildings have some retail space, community space, or other amenity that would help offset their impact on neighborhood resources.*

Metro Response: Matters related to the development plan are addressed in the District of Columbia review process, including through the review of the developer's [PUD application](#) and [Zoning Case 22-36](#).

The District is responsible for evaluating the scale of development and its impact on public facilities. This includes and is not limited to the evaluation of the development's green space, traffic impacts, stormwater design, housing affordability, and parking.

The proposed joint development project provides an open space design that considers existing heritage trees on site, and further details can be found in the Developer's PUD application. Tree preservation is a District of Columbia development review matter through DDOT's Urban Forestry Division.

The Developer will complete a traffic study as the District's development and entitlements process continues and will be posted on the project's [Zoning Case 22-36](#) page. Additionally, the Project site is being designed to account for the latest stormwater management requirements as defined by DOEE, which includes the addition of bioretention facilities—that do not exist today—that capture and temporarily store surface rain runoff on-site, where it is filtered and slowly reintroduced to the municipal system. As a result, on-site stormwater conditions will be significantly improved in the new design.

6.0 Responses to Comments Received on the Draft Public Hearing Staff Report

Comments received on the draft Public Hearing Staff Report can be found in Appendix I. The draft Public Hearing Staff Report was posted on Metro’s website on Tuesday April 11, 2023, and the public comment period closed 5:00 p.m. Friday April 21, 2023.

Seventy-five comments were received. Fourteen comments (19%) expressed support for the project. The remaining comments discussed:

- Different perspectives on the parking space classifications
- Preference for more parking
- Desire to preserve additional open space
- Status of joint development traffic study
- Interest to reduce the scale of the proposed development
- Funding and construction method for changes to the transit facilities
- Questions about the District of Columbia’s development review process and the Compact hearing analysis related to development impacts

Metro Response: The parking spaces at the Takoma Metro station are classified as Kiss & Ride spaces as shown in the [station vicinity map](#). Kiss & Ride signage at Takoma Metro station and system-wide, has varied over time as Metro has applied various strategies to maximize utilization and revenue collection at these facilities (e.g., ParkMobile, etc.).

The proposed Kiss & Ride capacity was determined through an evaluation of parking utilization trends using ParkMobile transaction data and customer survey data. This information was provided in the Environmental Evaluation published at least 30-days prior to the Compact hearing and is also included in Appendix F of the Staff Report. Metro customers desiring longer-term parking can use the Park & Ride facility at Fort Totten Metro station or the public parking spaces in the adjacent mixed-use development. See the developer’s [Planned Unit Development \(PUD\) application](#) for more details on their parking program, including ADA spaces. It anticipates delivering approximately 67 spaces, which is 48 spaces more than the minimum zoning requirement of 19 spaces (pending approval by the District of Columbia).

Regarding open space, the developer’s [Planned Unit Development \(PUD\) application](#) proposes to reconfigure and upgrade the existing 1.5-acre area into a neighborhood amenity. The future size is roughly two acres, which is slightly larger than the current condition. It will include passive recreational areas along Eastern Avenue NW and an activated retail and transit plaza facing Carroll Street. The landscaped open space provides a buffer between the development and existing single-family homes.

The Joint Developer has completed a Comprehensive Traffic Review (CTR) in close coordination with the District Department of Transportation. This review includes a Transportation Demand

Management (TMD) plan as well as a complete assessment of the additional traffic signal at Carroll Street NW. The CTR can be found in Appendix J.

As for the scale of the proposed development, the District of Columbia has been planning redevelopment of this site since 2000 as a mixed-use hub that incorporates open space and less impervious area. After the District's extensive collaboration and outreach, the resulting [2002 Takoma Central District Plan](#) called for building more housing, mitigating commuter traffic, developing retail opportunities on Carroll Street NW, and improving the pedestrian environment. The proposed joint development project at the Takoma Metro station is consistent with the goals identified in this plan as well as the [District's Comprehensive Plan Update](#) and [Rock Creek East Area Element](#), adopted in 2021, that proposes to concentrate economic development activity, employment growth, and new housing, including affordable housing at Takoma Metro station. The Comprehensive Plan also included a new [Future Land Use Map](#) (FLUM) that increased in development allowances from moderate to medium residential density. The public can further comment on the development plan through the District's development review process, see [Zoning Case 22-36](#).

Metro funds will not be used to construct the new facilities. The Joint Developer will be funding and constructing the proposed changes to the transit facilities.

The Compact public hearing materials included the most recent information available about the development project with references and links to the PUD [application](#) and [Zoning Case 22-36](#), which includes more detailed information. These documents cover the potential impacts associated with the development plan, staff reports from the District's agencies, and public testimony or other related documents addressing public input. The feedback from the Compact public hearing about the changes to the transit facilities are used for coordination with the District on the final design details and development approvals.