

Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority
Board Action/Information Summary

☒ Action ☐ Information

MEAD Number:
201881

Resolution:
☒ Yes ☐ No

TITLE:

Compact Public Hearing Staff Report - College Park

PRESENTATION SUMMARY:

Staff will summarize and seek approval of a Compact public hearing report on the removal of the 530-space surface parking lot at the College Park-U of Md Metro Station in favor of a joint development project. The removal of the surface parking lot was approved by the Board in 2003. Staff will also seek re-approval of the amendment of the Mass Transit Plan.

PURPOSE:

Staff seeks Board action to:

- Approve the Compact Public Hearing Staff Report for proposed changes to the Mass Transit Plan at the College Park-U of Md Metro Station; and
- Re-approve amendments to the General Plans and Adopted Regional System, also known as the Mass Transit Plan, at the College Park-U of Md Metro Station.

DESCRIPTION:

In July 2016, the Board approved the selection of Gilbane Development Company (Developer) for a joint development project at College Park-U of MD Metro Station, and authorized Metro staff to execute a non-binding Term Sheet with the Developer. In February 2017, the Board authorized staff to execute a Joint Development Agreement (JDA) and hold a Compact public hearing on the removal of a 530-space surface Park & Ride lot at the College Park-U of Md Metro Station. The public hearing was held on April 24, 2017.

Staff now seeks Board approval of the Compact public hearing staff report, as well as re-approval of the amendment to the Mass Transit Plan to remove the surface parking lot.

Key Highlights:

- A 1290-space parking garage was constructed in 2005 to replace the surface lot and make way for joint development. Given the passage of time since 2005, staff deemed it necessary to re-engage the public in the discussion about the removal of the surface parking

- The most common public hearing feedback received was: (1) majority support for transit-oriented development at the station, (2) concerns about the adequacy of parking with the removal of the lot, and (3) a preference for parking in a surface lot over a garage.
- Metro staff has confirmed the adequacy of parking capacity in the garage to accommodate the current demand at the station. Metro staff recommends the Board's re-approval to remove the 530-space surface parking lot.

Background and History:

The College Park-U of Md Metro Station includes a five-bay bus loop, 530-space surface Park & Ride lot, and a 1,290-space Park & Ride garage. It also includes a Kiss & Ride, a taxi stand and a secure 100-space Bike & Ride facility. The Metro station is adjacent to a MARC commuter rail station and the Maryland Transit Administration is planning to construct a Purple Line stop immediately south of the east entrance to the Metro station.

In anticipation of joint development, the State of Maryland and Prince George's County financed construction of a 1,290-space garage to replace and expand the number of spaces lost at the surface Park & Ride lot. On January 16, 2003, the Board approved amending the Mass Transit Plan to remove the surface parking lot and add the new garage. The garage opened for service in 2005. The Board directed that the surface parking lot was to remain in service on a "temporary basis" until it was needed for Joint Development.

Since 2005, there have been several unsuccessful attempts to offer the site for joint development. The newest solicitation issued in July 2015 and amended in September 2015 was successful and received four competitive bids. In July 2016, the Board approved the selection of Gilbane Development Company.

The Developer proposes to develop approximately 430 residential units and 11,900 square feet of ground floor retail. The Developer agreed to a 98-year capitalized ground lease for \$14.2 million, plus provisions for Metro to receive additional payments from capital events; e.g., when the Developer sells its interest in the project or refinances the project. The development plan does not require any replacement of transit facilities, since the garage is already constructed.

On February 23, 2017, the Board authorized staff to execute a Joint Development Agreement (JDA) and hold a new Compact public hearing on removal of the surface lot.

The Compact public hearing was held on April 24, 2017 at the College Park City Hall. Metro staff implemented a Public Participation Plan, to raise awareness of the proposed action and the public hearing and to gather public input through a survey. In all, 107 individuals and organizations provided comments via the hearing, written testimony, and the survey. Three people testified at the hearing – all in favor of the action. Several major themes emerged in the testimony, which are discussed below.

Metro staff drafted a Compact Public Hearing Staff Report, which summarizes the public outreach process, the testimony and public input received, responses to the major issues raised by the public and staff's recommendation to the Board. The draft Compact Public Hearing Staff Report was then posted on Metro's internet and distributed to public locations, for further review and comment. The final draft report is now provided to the Board for approval. A summary of the key issues is provided below in the Discussion section.

Discussion:

- Themes raised at the public hearing and in the survey responses were: parking, development and bicycle/pedestrian issues.
 - **Adequacy of parking capacity** – 17 comments were received about the sufficiency of parking capacity in the garage. *Metro staff response:* WMATA tracks paid transactions at its parking facilities. For the past three years, the paid utilization for the College Park-U of Md Metrorail Station has averaged 56% (FY14-16) of capacity, or an average of 1,019 transactions per day. With the removal of the 530-space surface lot, the 1,290 spaces in the parking garage are sufficient to accommodate an average of 1,019 daily parkers.
 - **Preference for surface parking** - 20 comments expressed a preference for using surface parking rather than a garage. *Metro staff response:* Staff acknowledges the general consumer preference for surface parking, particularly in suburban settings where customers are not accustomed to using garages on a regular basis. As communities urbanize, however, structured parking becomes more prevalent. Metro operates 26 parking structures in the Washington region. Of the 59,267 commuter spaces Metro owns in the region, 65 percent (38,951 spaces) are in structures. In many cases, these garages were constructed in suburban areas to accommodate joint development or parking expansion.
 - **Development** – 31 comments expressed support for plans to replace the surface parking lot with transit-oriented development (TOD), for economic, environmental and place-making reasons (adding amenities to the station area). 13 comments expressed opposition and/or concern about development, such as general concerns about growth or particular concerns such as traffic. *Metro staff response:* Metro's Joint Development Program seeks to promote TOD, to generate revenues and ridership for Metro and encourage revitalization and sound growth in the communities Metro serves. Metro's developer partners are required to follow the local government's land-use plans and processes for development review and permitting.
- The proposed action received written support from the County Executive's Office and the County Councilmember representing the area.
- By re-approving the proposed changes to the Mass Transit Plan, Metro will continue to move forward with the joint development project, as proposed by Gilbane Development. The TOD project is expected to generate \$14.2 million in real estate revenues for Metro, as well as 350 new riders. No ridership losses are expected as a result of removing the surface parking lot, since there is adequate parking in the garage on site.

FUNDING IMPACT:

The proposed project will result in a \$14.2 million upfront payment to Metro. Future revenues are also anticipated, since Metro will receive a share of proceeds from future capital events. Additionally, the project is expected to have a net positive annual operating budget impact of more than \$400,000 once completed, due to the annual ridership revenues resulting from the joint development. No loss in parking revenue is expected.

Project Manager:	Andrew J. Scott
Project Department/Office:	Office of Real Estate and Parking

TIMELINE:

Previous Actions	<p>January 2003 - The Board amended the Mass Transit Plan to include the construction of a 1,290 space garage to replace the 530-space surface parking lot and expand parking capacity by 700 parking spaces.</p> <p>June 2005 - The Board approved the opening of the parking garage and the continuing use of the surface lot on a temporary basis until the land was needed for joint development.</p> <p>2003-2014 – Two unsuccessful joint development solicitations were issued.</p> <p>July 2015: Metro issued a third Joint Development Solicitation.</p> <p>April 2016: Metro staff selected Gilbane Development Company as the developer, subject to Board approval and FTA concurrence.</p> <p>July 2016: The Board approved the selection of Gilbane Development Company and authorized staff to negotiate and execute a non-binding Term Sheet.</p> <p>February 2017: Board authorized staff to execute a Joint Development Agreement, and hold a Compact public hearing on the removal of the surface parking.</p>
Anticipated actions after presentation	<p>Summer/Fall 2017: Negotiate a ground lease and associated easements to implement the joint development project, consistent with the JDA.</p> <p>Spring 2018: Close on the ground lease. (The Developer anticipates beginning construction in 2018.)</p>

RECOMMENDATION:

- Approve the Compact Public Hearing Staff Report for proposed changes to the Mass Transit Plan at the College Park-U of Md Metro Station; and
- Re-approve amendments to the General Plans and Adopted Regional System, also known as the Mass Transit Plan, at the College Park-U of Md Metro Station.

SUBJECT: APPROVAL OF PUBLIC HEARING STAFF REPORT ON REMOVAL OF SURFACE PARKING LOT AT THE COLLEGE PARK-U OF MD METRO STATION AND APPROVAL OF CHANGES TO THE GENERAL PLANS AND THE ADOPTED REGIONAL SYSTEM

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

WHEREAS, Changes to the Adopted Regional System (ARS) require Board of Directors approval; and

WHEREAS, In Board Resolution 2017-05, the Board of Directors authorized staff to negotiate and execute a Joint Development Agreement with the Gilbane Development Company for the development of a portion of the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority's (WMATA) property at the College Park-U of Md Metro Station (College Park Joint Development Site), and to hold a public hearing under the WMATA Compact to evaluate the removal of the 530-space surface parking lot on the College Park Joint Development Site; and

WHEREAS, WMATA conducted the public hearing on April 24, 2017, and the record remained open for comments until May 4, 2017; and

WHEREAS, Prior to and following the public hearing, substantial English-language and Spanish-language public outreach was conducted by WMATA staff to inform the public of the proposed changes at the College Park Joint Development Site, including pop-up events and brochure distribution, stakeholder communication, targeted marketing and media and an Open House and Public Hearing. Feedback was collected through comment cards in English and Spanish at pop-up events and "car drops," online comment forms in English and Spanish, verbal public comments during the Public Hearing and written statements submitted to the Board Secretary's Office; and

WHEREAS, A report on the results of the public outreach and the public hearing entitled "Public Hearing Staff Report: Docket R17-01: Proposed Changes to Metro Facilities at College Park-U of Md Metrorail Station" was presented to the public for review and comment on June 8, 2017; and

WHEREAS, The public comment period closed on June 19, 2017 and the Staff Report has been supplemented accordingly; and


WHEREAS, The updated Staff Report was provided to the Board of Directors for review and the Board of Directors has considered this information; now, therefore be it

RESOLVED, That the Board of Directors approves the attached Staff Report; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the Board of Directors amends the General Plans and the ARS, also known as the Mass Transit Plan, to remove the existing surface Park & Ride lot at the College Park-U of Md Metrorail Station; and be it finally

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

Reviewed as to form and legal sufficiency,



Patricia Y. Lee
General Counsel

WMATA File Structure No.:
12.7.2 Master Plans/Mass Transit Plan