



Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority

# **COMPACT PUBLIC HEARING STAFF REPORT**

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

**June 17, 2020**

## Table of Contents

<b>1.</b>	<b>INTRODUCTION.....</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1	The Joint Development Project.....	1
1.2	Effect of Joint Development Project on Metro Parking .....	1
1.3	Parking Utilization .....	2
1.3.1	<i>Is one-for-one replacement parking needed?</i> .....	3
1.3.2	<i>Can parking demand be satisfied at another Metrorail station?</i> .....	4
1.3.3	<i>Is past parking utilization predictive of future utilization?</i> .....	4
1.4	Factors that could Diminish Future Parking Demand .....	4
1.4.1	<i>The Grosvenor Turnback</i> .....	5
1.4.2	<i>Parking at White Flint or Twinbrook Metrorail Stations</i> .....	6
1.4.3	<i>Effect of the Coronavirus pandemic</i> .....	6
<b>2.</b>	<b>COMMUNICATIONS AND OUTREACH TO THE PUBLIC .....</b>	<b>6</b>
2.1	Targeted Marketing & Media .....	7
2.2	Website .....	7
2.3	Paid Advertisements and Social Media Tactics .....	8
2.4	Sign Postings .....	8
2.5	Media Coverage .....	9
2.6	Docket Viewing.....	9
<b>3.</b>	<b>PUBLIC INPUT RESULTS.....</b>	<b>9</b>
3.1	Public Hearing .....	9
3.2	Public Survey and On-Line Comments .....	9
3.3	Demographics .....	12
3.4	Comments Received For The Record Via The Survey And At The Public Hearing .....	12
<b>4.</b>	<b>COMMENTS AND WMATA STAFF RESPONSES TO COMMENTS RECEIVED.....</b>	<b>13</b>
4.1	Build the Western Addition.....	13
4.2	Do not build the western garage expansion at all .....	16
4.3	Defer a decision on the western addition .....	17
<b>5.</b>	<b>RESPONSES TO COMMENTS RECEIVED ON THE PUBLIC HEARING STAFF REPORT .....</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>6.</b>	<b>COMMENTS RECEIVED AFTER THE CLOSE OF THE PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD.....</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>7.</b>	<b>OTHER INFORMATION FOR THE PUBLIC RECORD .....</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>8.</b>	<b>STAFF RECOMMENDATION .....</b>	<b>17</b>

## APPENDICES

Appendix A	Notice of Public Hearing
Appendix B	Public Hearing Presentation Materials
Appendix C	Public Hearing Transcript
Appendix D	Transcribed Written Comments from Public Outreach
Appendix E	Fall 2019 Survey Results
Appendix F	Charts Summarizing Parking Utilization, March-June 2019
Appendix G	Environmental Evaluation
Appendix H	Notice of Public Hearing Staff Report [to be added after Staff Report is issued for public comment]
Appendix I	Comments Received on the Public Hearing Staff Report [to be added after Staff Report is issued for public comment]

## 1. INTRODUCTION

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

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

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

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

### 1.1 The Joint Development Project

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

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

### 1.2 Effect of Joint Development Project on Metro Parking

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

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

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

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

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

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

### 1.3 Parking Utilization

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

By way of background, the Metro garage and the surface parking lot at Grosvenor-Strathmore contained a total of 1,893 parking spaces ("**Original Parking Count**"): 1,485 parking spaces are in the garage and 408 were in the surface parking lot. As of the date of this Compact Hearing Staff Report, a small portion of the surface parking lot has already been removed for the construction of the southern addition. If and when the surface parking lot is entirely removed and if the western garage addition is not built, there will be a total



approximately 1,697 parking spaces at Grosvenor-Strathmore, all of them in the parking garage; that would reduce the station's parking capacity to approximately 90% of the Original Parking Count.

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

### *1.3.1 Is one-for-one replacement parking needed?*

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

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

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

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

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

Breaking that down further by specific weekdays:

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

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

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

### *1.3.2 Can parking demand be satisfied at another Metrorail station?*

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

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

### *1.3.3 Is past parking utilization predictive of future utilization?*

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

## **1.4 Factors that could Diminish Future Parking Demand**

The eventual shortage of parking capacity at Grosvenor-Strathmore indicates that the parking to be supplied by the western addition of the parking garage will be needed at some point in time – at least unless there

are counteracting factors that could lead to a reduction in demand. There are three possible counteracting factors that are easily identifiable:

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

#### 1.4.1 *The Grosvenor Turnback*

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

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

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

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

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

---

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

#### *1.4.2 Parking at White Flint or Twinbrook Metrorail Stations*

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

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

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

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

#### *1.4.3 Effect of the coronavirus pandemic*

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

## **2. COMMUNICATIONS AND OUTREACH TO THE PUBLIC**

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

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

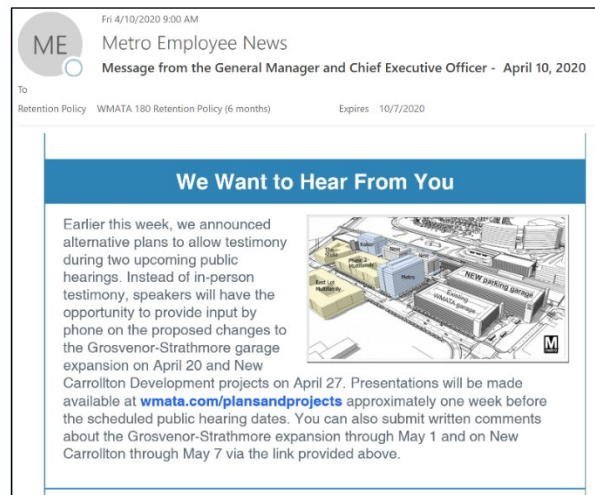
- Stakeholder communication
- Targeted marketing & media
- Telephone public hearing on Monday, April 20, 2020

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

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

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

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



## 2.1 Targeted Marketing & Media

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

## 2.2 Website

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

- The webpage received views from 586 unique viewers. 53% of views were directly from wmata.com and 13% came from the Facebook event page.
- The webpage included a link at the top to a translated page in Spanish, which received 42 views from 35 unique viewers.
- The 40-page Environmental Evaluation was available for review on the webpage, and the webpage included information about how to provide feedback, including the link to the on-line survey/feedback form and the call-in details for the telephone public hearing.
- As a response to the coronavirus pandemic, the in-person open house was cancelled. Instead, a form was placed on the English and Spanish project pages where customers could send questions to Metro. Four questions were submitted.

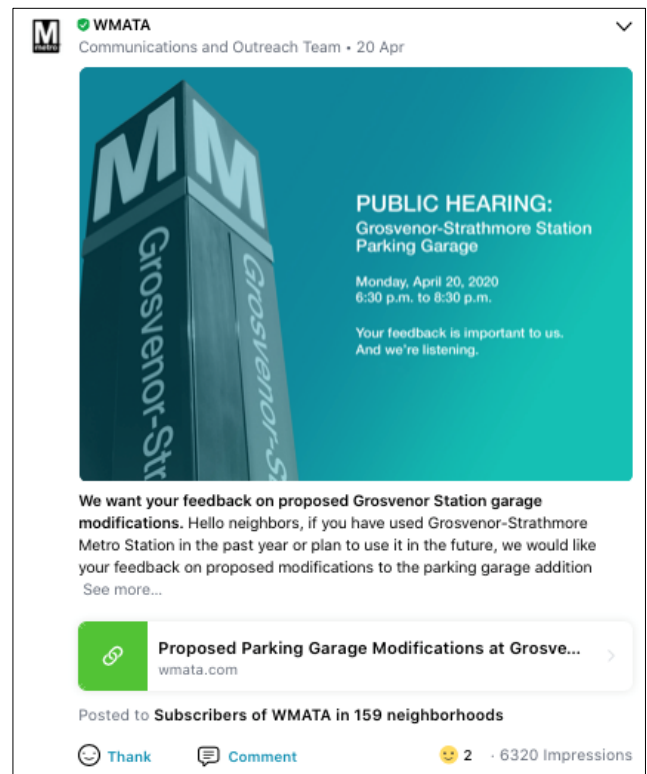


### 2.3 Paid Advertisements and Social Media Tactics

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

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

### 2.4 Sign Postings



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

## 2.5 Media Coverage

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

## 2.6 Docket Viewing

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


## 3. PUBLIC INPUT RESULTS

### 3.1 Public Hearing

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

### 3.2 Public Survey and On-Line Comments

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






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

### PUBLIC HEARING COVID-19 UPDATE

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

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


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

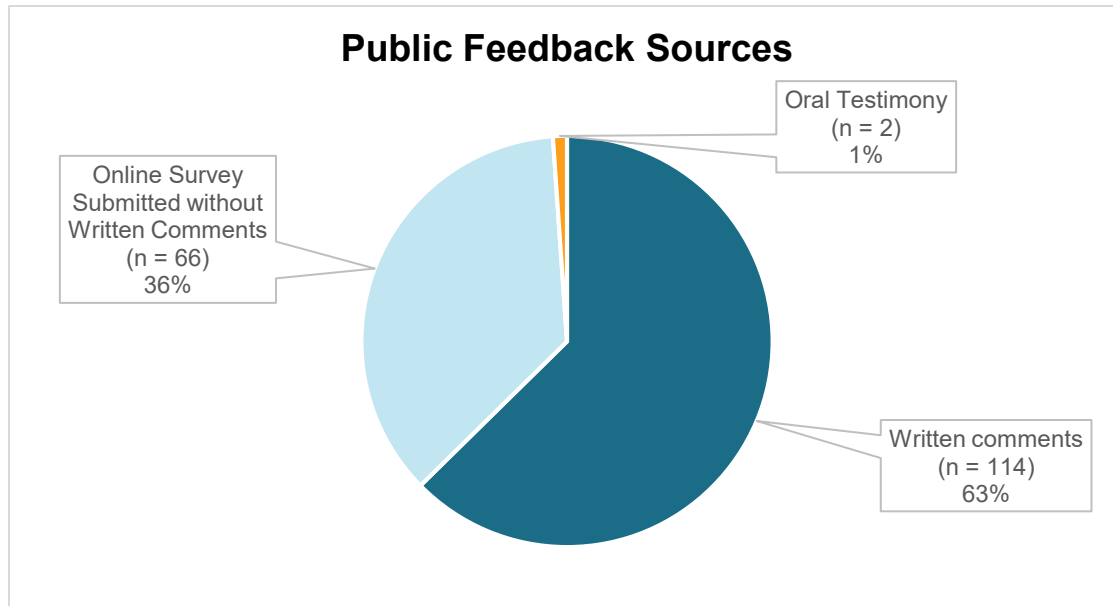
-  Complete the planned construction of the Phase 2 garage expansion.
-  Cancel the construction of the Phase 2 garage expansion, reducing the number of on-site parking spaces at Grosvenor-Strathmore Metrorail Station by approximately 194.
-  Wait to make a decision about completing or canceling the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

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

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

Public participation is voluntary without regard to race, color, national origin, age, gender, religion, disability, or family status. If you require special accommodations under the Americans with Disabilities Act or translation services (free of charge), contact the project team at 202-587-2077 or 202-587-2078. Questions are available at [wmata.com/plansandprojects](https://wmata.com/plansandprojects) or by email at [metropublichearing@dmv.com](mailto:metropublichearing@dmv.com)





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

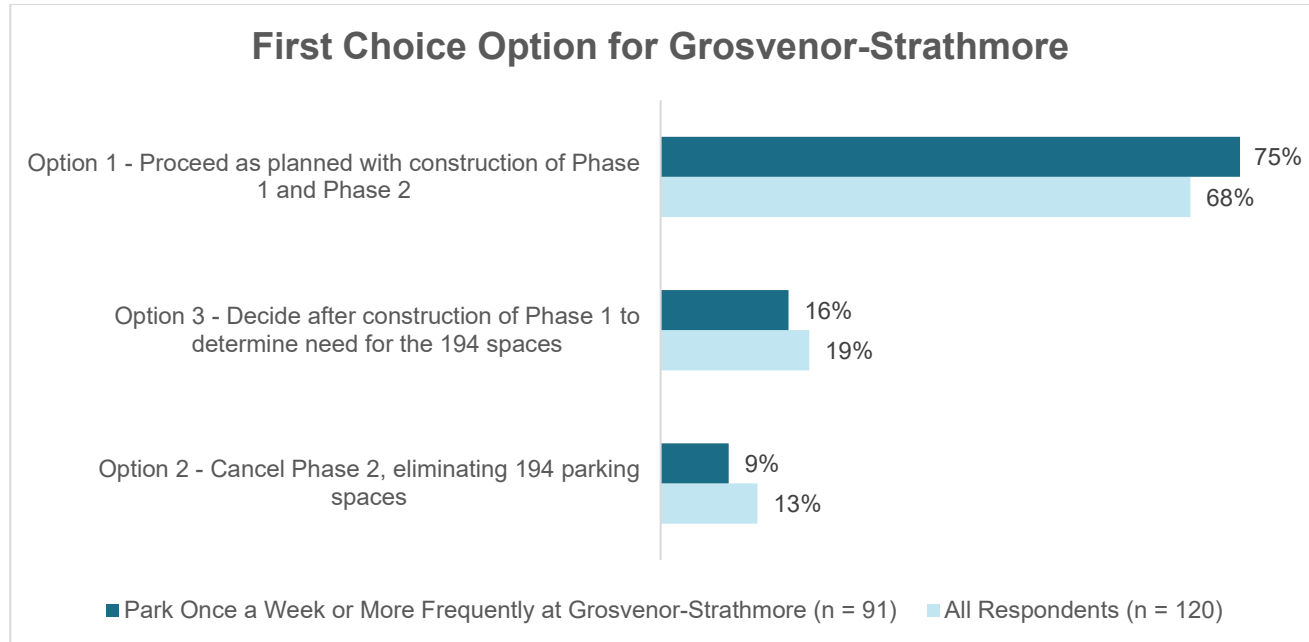
1. Cancel the construction of the western addition to the garage, ultimately (after the surface parking lot is fully removed) reducing the number of on-site parking spaces at the Grosvenor-Strathmore Metrorail Station by approximately 188.
2. Wait to make a decision about completing or canceling the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

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

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

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





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

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

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

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

### 3.3 Demographics

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

#### **4. COMMENTS AND WMATA STAFF RESPONSES TO COMMENTS RECEIVED**

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

##### **4.1 Build the Western Addition**

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

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

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

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

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

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

- 8:15 a.m. (1)
- 8:15-8:30 a.m. (2)
- 8:30 a.m. (16 – this was the time stated by those submitting comments based on the same form)
- “Before 9:00 am” and “close to 9:00” (2)
- Daytime Washington Nationals games (1)
- “Going to Strathmore” (1)

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

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

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

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

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

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

instead of taking Metrorail; 67% of the respondents reporting difficulty in finding parking at Grosvenor-Strathmore continued to access Metrorail by some other means — e.g. driving to another Metrorail station, parking on the street or finding another way to get to Metrorail.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

#### **4.2 Do not build the western garage expansion at all**

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

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

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

- More generally, we should discourage driving in light of climate change.

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

#### **4.3 Defer a decision on the western addition**

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

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

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

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

Six comments were received on the Public Hearing Staff Report after it was circulated for public review and comment. All six comments reiterated the positions cited previously that the western garage expansion should be built now for various reasons. Some of the comments raised new points about the hearing process itself or other issues related to this decision. See **Exhibit I** for those additional comments and Staff’s responses.

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

No comments were received after the close of the public comment period for review of the preliminary Public Hearing Staff Report.

### **7. OTHER INFORMATION FOR THE PUBLIC RECORD**

No other information has been provided.

### **8. STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

Staff recommends that construction of the proposed western addition of the Grosvenor-Strathmore parking garage be deferred until the need for it can be better determined. Deferral of the decision would enable WMATA to determine any effect on parking utilization at Grosvenor-Strathmore from: (1) the end of the

“Grosvenor turnback;” (2) the availability of parking at other Metrorail stations to absorb any overflow from Grosvenor-Strathmore; and (3) the effects of the coronavirus pandemic and the possible impact of increased teleworking on transit ridership. Reconsideration can be done at any time because the area that would be used for the western addition remains under WMATA’s control.



**APPENDIX A**  
**NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING**



# **Notice of Public Hearing**

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

### **Docket R20-01**

#### **Purpose**

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

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

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

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

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

For more information please visit  
[wmata.com/plansandprojects](https://wmata.com/plansandprojects)





## **PURPOSE OF THE PUBLIC HEARING**

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

## **HOW TO REGISTER TO SPEAK AT THE PUBLIC HEARING**

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

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

## **HOW TO SUBMIT WRITTEN STATEMENTS**

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

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

## **WHAT IS PROPOSED**

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

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

Metro is therefore seeking comment on the following options:

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

## **REFERENCE MATERIAL AVAILABLE FOR INSPECTION**

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

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

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

## **WMATA COMPACT REQUIREMENTS**

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

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

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

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

**Purpose**

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

Hearing No. 631  
Monday, April 20, 2020

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

**Hearing Call-in Number: 202-962-1901**

**Número telefónico para la audiencia: 202-962-1906**

**(TTY) 202-962-2033**

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

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

For more information please visit  
[wmata.com/plansandprojects](http://wmata.com/plansandprojects)

## **APPENDIX B**

### **PUBLIC HEARING PRESENTATION MATERIALS**

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

## **APPENDIX C**

### **PUBLIC HEARING TRANSCRIPT**

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

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

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

#### **From Jane Lyons of the Coalition for Smarter Growth:**

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

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

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

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

Thank you for your consideration.



## **APPENDIX D**

### **TRANSCRIBED WRITTEN COMMENTS FROM PUBLIC OUTREACH**

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

April 20, 2020

---

WMATA Board of Directors  
600 5<sup>th</sup> St NW  
Washington, DC 20001

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

Dear Chair Smedberg and Directors:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Sincerely,

Jane Lyons  
Maryland Advocacy Manager  
Coalition for Smarter Growth



WMATA Board of Directors  
600 5<sup>th</sup> Street NW  
Washington DC 20001

April 26, 2020

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

Dear WMATA Directors:

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

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

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

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

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

Our position is unchanged.

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

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

Sincerely, Thank you.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

REASONS FOR AND AGAINST PROPOSED OPTIONS:

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

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

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

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



**MONTGOMERY COUNTY PLANNING DEPARTMENT**  
THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

April 30, 2020

WMATA Board of Directors  
600 5<sup>th</sup> Street NW  
Washington, DC 20001

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

Dear WMATA Directors:

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

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

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

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

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

Our reasons for this recommendation are as follows:

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

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

Sincerely,

Gwen L.M. Wright  
Planning Director

Director's Office, 301-495-4500, Fax: 301-495-1320  
8787 Georgia Avenue, Silver Spring, Maryland 20910  
[www.MontgomeryPlanning.org](http://www.MontgomeryPlanning.org)

# STRATHMORE

May 1, 2020

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

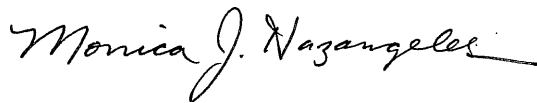
To WMATA Board of Directors,

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

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

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this input.

Regards,



Monica Jeffries Hazangeles  
President and CEO

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



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

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

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

### **BUILD THE WESTERN GARAGE EXPANSION NOW**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

21. I support building the garage as planned. It is impossible to get a regular space in the mornings at Grosvenor after 8:30 am. The station has been assessed in the past and is at 99% occupancy. Grosvenor Metro station needs more spaces, not fewer. Moreover, lots of added development is

---

planned in the area, including near Wildwood and WMAL, which will lead to more people needing to drive to the station. It makes no sense to cut spaces at Grosvenor or to force drivers further away from the city. Moreover, the parking spaces were part of the deal for the new development on the former Metro parking lot. It is shocking that Metro would considering rescinding on that promise to the community.

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

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

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

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

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

---

Metro parking lot. It is shocking that Metro would considering rescinding on that promise to the community.

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

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

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

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

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

---

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

38. Parking is a PROBLEM !!!!!

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

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

---

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

---



51. We were promised these parking spots and we need them! It is too hard to find a parking space on weekdays after 8:30. This region is growing fast — cutting the number of parking spots by 50% would hurt.
52. What the heck metro!! You can't back out of your agreement with the community, finish what you started!! The kiss and ride problem is temporary and something that can be mitigated, the shortage of parking would be permanent!!
53. While I have not had difficulty finding space during the pandemic (so the survey should have been revised to reflect the 30 day time frame) I did before the pandemic, particularly during the construction period. I have had problems finding spaces at both White Flint and Grosvenor and we need more Metro parking not less!
54. With too few spots to begin with it is hard to imagine a plan that doesn't involve completing Phase 2. Why would you build more homes and reduce parking? The people near the metro won't park there for sure but the rest of us still will park. I am not sure what exactly you are trying to achieve.
55. You must not reduce parking spots at Grosvenor - it is used both by workers and public using Metro. There are no other nearby stations with space.

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

56. Are you out of your mind? More expansion of apartments just on top of the metro? And, still impede the ability for those needing to park at the metro to get to work is just too much.
57. As a daily Grosvenor metro rider and parker, I urge Metro to honor its commitment to the community by proceeding as planned with the construction of the Phase 2 garage expansion. It is outrageous that Metro would consider reducing the number of available parking spaces by 194. Grosvenor needs more parking spaces, not less! Completing Phase 2 of the garage expansion will only return the number of parking spaces to their original number, not add additional needed parking spaces. In addition, due to the turnover of single family homes to younger working families and planned residential development at Wildwood, White Flint, Rock Spring, WMAL, Pooks Hill, etc., the need for parking at the Grosvenor Metro will only increase over time. Metro should recognize the urgent need for parking at Grosvenor and complete Phase 2 of the garage expansion.
58. As Montgomery County and the area around Grosvenor station will be developed more and more people coming into the county in future, we MUST HAVE ENOUGH PARKING so people CAN ride METRO.....If you don't have enough parking, then people will continue to drive into DC .....I don't use it very much but lots of people I know and in my neighborhood use it to get to work daily.
59. Complete the planned construction of the Phase 2 garage expansion. As housing near the station gets more dense, the need for parking will only increase over time. Complete the original plan. Don't reduce the number of parking spaces.
-



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

---

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

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

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

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

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

#### **DON'T BUILDING THE WESTERN GARAGE EXPANSION AT ALL**

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

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

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

92. We do not need more parking spaces.

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

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

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

---

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

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

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

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

**COMMENTS ON METRO SERVICE NOT RELEVANT TO THE PROPOSED GARAGE EXPANSION**

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

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

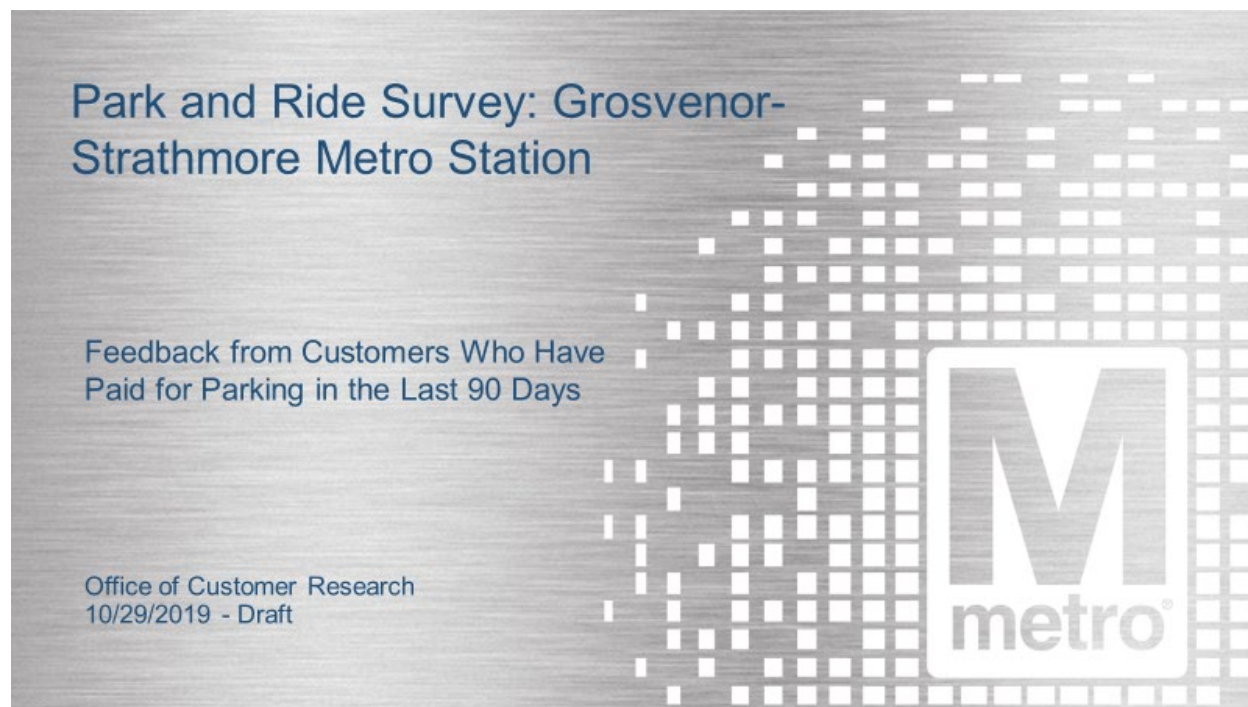
**OTHER**

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

---

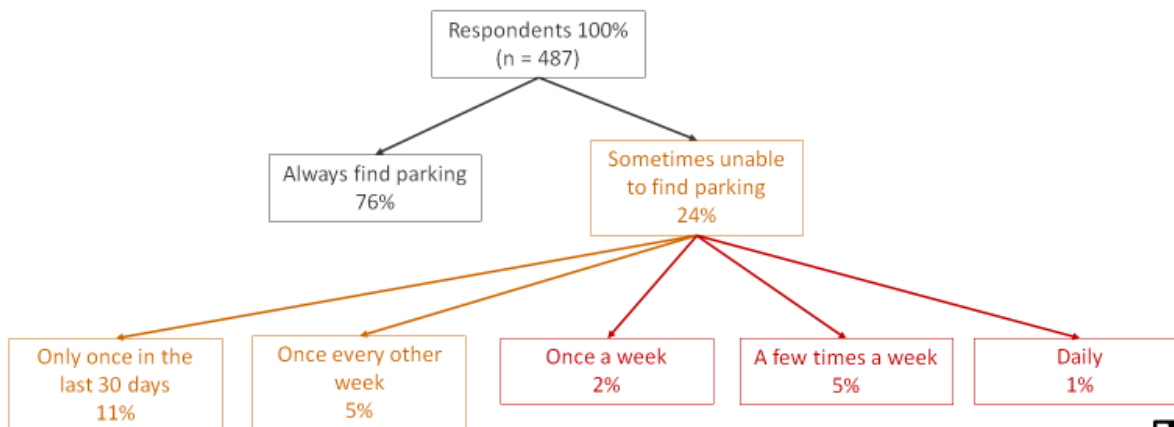
## APPENDIX E

### FALL 2019 SURVEY RESULTS



#### To what extent riders are currently having trouble finding parking at the station

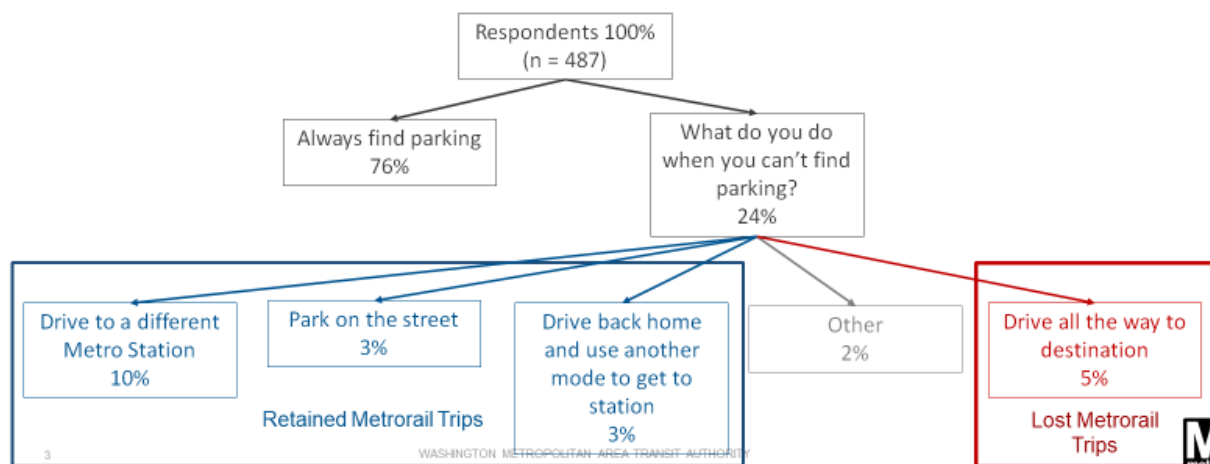
Even with the high utilization of parking, most customers do not have a problem finding a spot with the current number of parking spaces. However, a quarter of customers are unable to find a parking spot at least once a month and 8 percent have trouble finding a spot at least once a week.





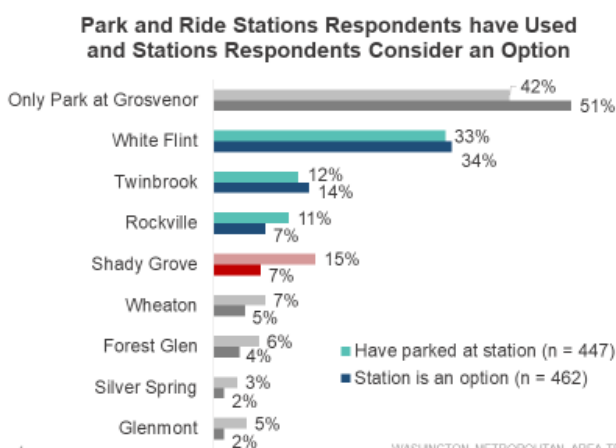
### What do riders do when they are unable to find a parking spot

5% of respondents (21% of those unable to park in the past 30 days) report driving all the way to their destination when unable to find parking, representing lost Metro trips. Conversely, 16% of respondents (69% of those unable to park in the last 30 days) report driving to another Metro Station, parking on the street, or finding another way to reach the station, representing trips retained by Metro.



### Would riders park at another station in the corridor

Encouragingly, 58% of respondents have parked at another park and ride station within the corridor, indicating that a large proportion of customers currently parking at Grosvenor-Strathmore are at least familiar with the alternatives.



1 in 3 respondents having parked at White Flint and 12% at Twinbrook. When asked which other stations are an option, similar proportions select White Flint and Twinbrook.

Notably: 15% have parked at Shady Grove, but only 7% consider it to be an option. This discrepancy could point to Grosvenor-Strathmore customers having tried Shady Grove and found that it was not a good alternative for whatever reason.



## APPENDIX F

### CHARTS SUMMARIZING PARKING UTILIZATION, MARCH-JUNE 2019

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

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

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

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

**APPENDIX G**

**ENVIRONMENTAL EVALUATION**



# Grosvenor-Strathmore Joint Development Environmental Evaluation

---

Prepared by:



Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority

February 2020

---

*This page is intentionally left blank.*

---

## Table of Contents

<b>1.</b>	<b>INTRODUCTION .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>2.</b>	<b>EXISTING SITE DESCRIPTION.....</b>	<b>10</b>
2.1	Metrorail .....	10
2.2	Metrobus / Ride-On Bus .....	10
2.3	Park & Ride .....	11
2.4	Kiss & Ride.....	11
2.5	Pedestrian and Bicycle Access .....	11
<b>3.</b>	<b>PROJECT DESCRIPTION .....</b>	<b>12</b>
3.1	Park & Ride Structure .....	12
3.2	Kiss & Ride Area .....	13
3.3	Pedestrian and Bicycle Access .....	13
3.4	Bus Loop .....	14
3.5	Joint Development .....	16
<b>4.</b>	<b>PROJECT IMPACTS .....</b>	<b>18</b>
4.1	Land Acquisitions and Displacements .....	19
4.2	Transportation .....	19
4.3	MD 355 BRT .....	20
4.4	MCDOT Dockless Vehicle Programs.....	20
4.5	Metro Operations and Facilities .....	21
4.6	Land Use and Zoning.....	23
4.7	Planning Consistency.....	27
4.8	Neighborhoods and Community Facilities .....	28
4.9	Environmental Justice Populations .....	30
4.10	Cultural Resources.....	31
4.11	Public Parklands and Recreation Areas .....	31
4.12	Wetlands and Waters of the U.S.....	32
4.13	Floodplains.....	35
4.14	Water Quality .....	36
4.15	Air Quality.....	36
4.16	Forest .....	36
4.17	Threatened and Endangered Species .....	37
4.18	Utilities.....	37
4.19	Safety and Security.....	38
4.20	Hazardous and Contaminated Materials .....	38
4.21	Noise and Vibration.....	38
4.22	Secondary and Cumulative Impacts .....	39
4.23	Construction Impacts .....	39
<b>5.</b>	<b>PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT .....</b>	<b>40</b>
<b>6.</b>	<b>REFERENCES.....</b>	<b>41</b>

## List of Figures

Figure 1: Project Location .....	3
Figure 2: Existing Site and Transportation Facilities .....	7
Figure 3: Proposed Modified Reconfiguration of Existing Park & Ride Garage .....	8
Figure 4: Site Plan Showing the Proposed Modified Garage Expansion Project .....	18
Figure 5: Joint Development Concept.....	19
Figure 6: General Concept Plan Showing Division of Site Between Transit and Development Area .....	20
Figure 7: Bicycle and Pedestrian Circulation Plan .....	24
Figure 8: Existing Land Use .....	24
Figure 9: Existing Zoning .....	24
Figure 10: Neighborhoods and Community Facilities .....	29
Figure 11: Wetlands and Waters of the U.S. ....	33
Figure 12: Floodplains.....	35

## 9. INTRODUCTION

The Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) entered into a Joint Development Agreement with Fivesquares JDA at Grosvenor Metro, LLC (Fivesquares) on March 8, 2018, as amended on June 6, 2018, for the redevelopment of the 14.7-acre Grosvenor-Strathmore Metro Station property (see **Figure 1** for project location). The redevelopment proposes to include residential, retail, educational/performance, parking, open space and placemaking elements, along with potential office or hotel uses. WMATA and Fivesquares have commenced construction of an addition to the existing WMATA garage and a related re-configuration of existing WMATA operations in order to facilitate the future transit-oriented development. (As discussed below and elsewhere in this report, other transit services on the site, such as Metrorail and the Kiss & Ride, will continue to be provided.)

This report is an evaluation of a proposed modification to the current plan for the WMATA-approved facilities, mostly related to commuter parking, on the site (the Garage Expansion Project). That modification, it is was to be approved, would be a change to WMATA's "mass transit plan" (which is discussed below). The Garage Expansion Project as previously adopted by WMATA and therefore part of WMATA's "mass transit plan" includes the redevelopment of existing WMATA facilities – the removal of the Park & Ride surface parking lot, the expansion of the existing Park & Ride garage to replace all of the surface parking, building enhanced pedestrian and bicyclist facilities, reconfiguring the Kiss & Ride, constructing a new secure Bike & Ride station, and related improvements. The modification now under consideration would be now replace just over half, but not all, of the surface parking spaces (while retaining the capability of replacing those surface parking spaces in the future); the remainder of the Garage Expansion Project would not be affected by the proposed modification.

For purposes of this Environmental Evaluation, the Garage Expansion Project does not include the private sector development proposed for portions of the overall site not being used for transit operations; that private development is outside the scope of WMATA's "mass transit plan" and therefore not relevant to the change to WMATA's "mass transit plan" addressed in this Environmental Evaluation.

The Joint Development Solicitation for the joint development project that gave rise to the Garage Expansion Project was completed in 2013. It proposed to replace the existing 408 space Park & Ride surface lot with an equivalent Park & Ride garage expansion replacing all 408 spaces. The change now being considered is whether to instead construct an expansion of the existing parking garage large enough to accommodate *all or just over half* – 219 -- of the 408<sup>2</sup> surface parking spaces that will be removed. (Note: if a decision is now made to not replace all of the surface parking spaces at this time, that does not mean WMATA can't later build the spaces now not being replaced. The area in which those spaces would be located will remain available for a further expansion of the garage.)

Deciding to replace only 219 of the 408 spaces in the surface parking lot would reduce parking capacity at the Grosvenor-Strathmore Metro Station by 189 spaces, even if it would be possible to add the remaining spaces later. A material reduction in parking capacity is a change in WMATA's "mass transit plan." For purposes of this report, WMATA's "mass transit plan" is the master plan outlining the transit facilities WMATA provides. Under the terms of the WMATA Compact -- the interstate agreement between the Commonwealth of Virginia, the District of Columbia and the State of Maryland that created and governs WMATA -- a proposed change in WMATA's "mass transit plan" requires that the matter be studied before the WMATA Board of Directors can adopt such a change.

---

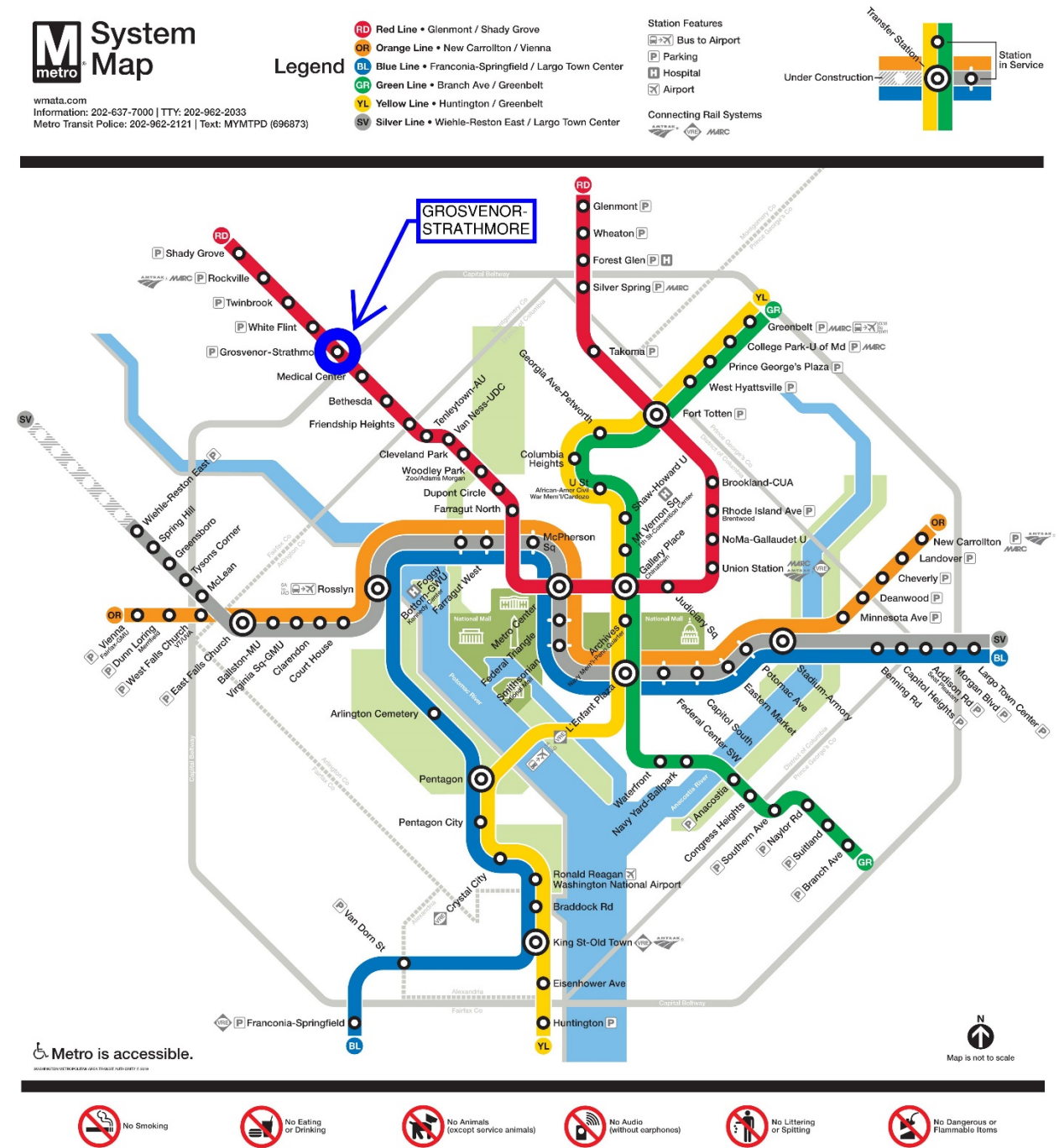
<sup>2</sup> The number of parking spaces stated in this Environmental Evaluation are approximate. This is particularly true of the number of spaces proposed for the expansion wings to be added to the existing Park & Ride garage. The actual parking space count in the current surface Park & Ride lot has been variously stated as 408, now believed to be the correct count, and 412. The projected number of 219 parking spaces to be added in the southern expansion -- already under construction -- of the Park & Ride garage or the 194 parking spaces in the proposed western expansion of the Park & Ride garage -- for a total of 413 replacement spaces (compared to the 408 surface parking spaces currently on the site) -- are based on construction plans but the actual number may vary depending on the circumstances of the expansion(s) as built.



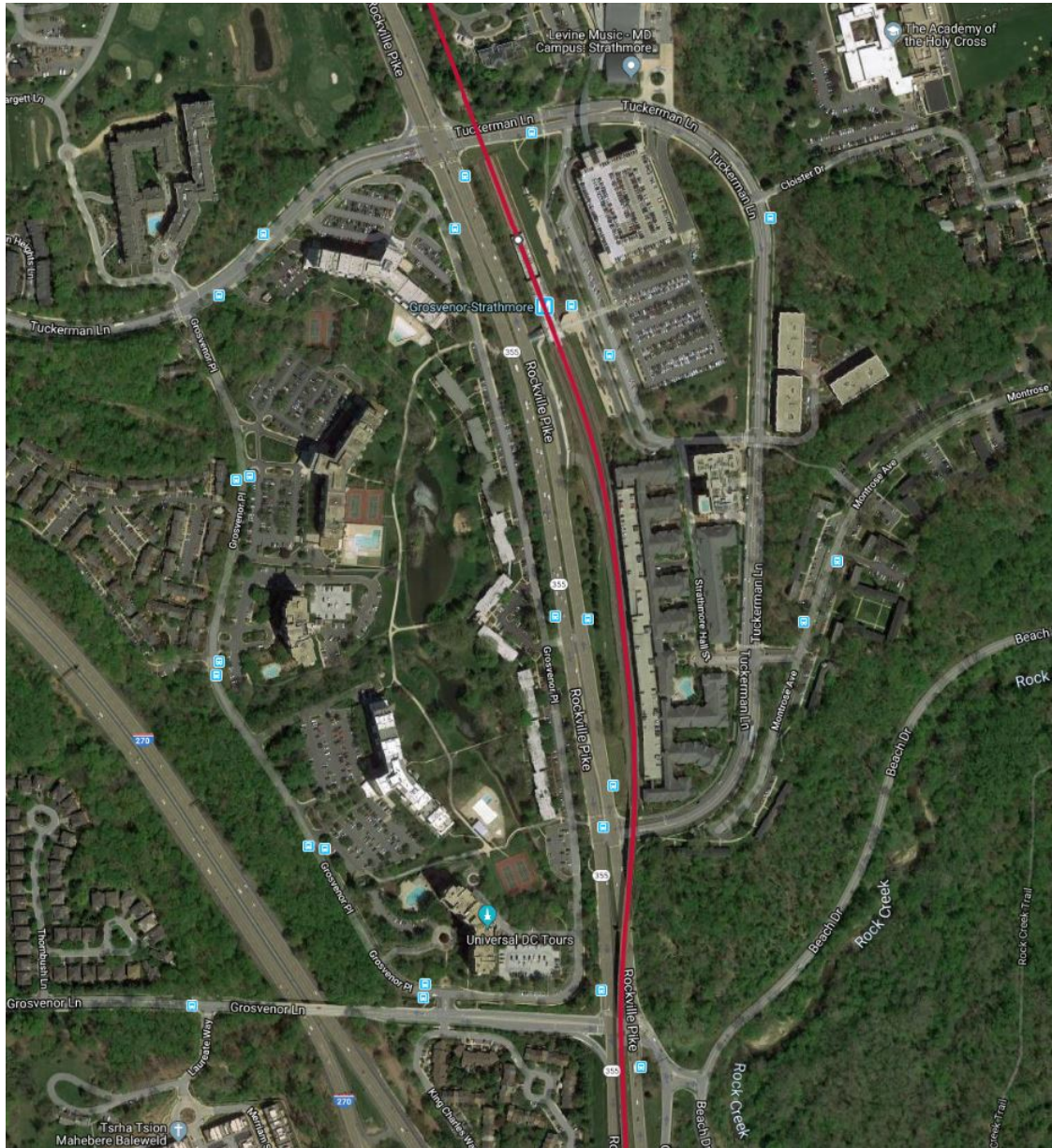
The focus of this document is, therefore, to evaluate the potential environmental effects of the reduction of the Park & Ride garage expansion within the context of the larger development project. To support WMATA Compact requirements, specifically WMATA Compact Section 14(c)(1), this Environmental Evaluation describes the Garage Expansion Project and documents the potential effects of the reduced Park & Ride garage expansion on the human and natural environment in terms of transportation, social, economic, and environmental factors.

To provide the opportunity for public comment on the Garage Expansion Project, a public hearing will be held. Based on the conclusions of this evaluation, coordination with state and local agencies, and comments from the public, the WMATA Board of Directors will decide the number of parking spaces to be constructed in the Garage Expansion Project.

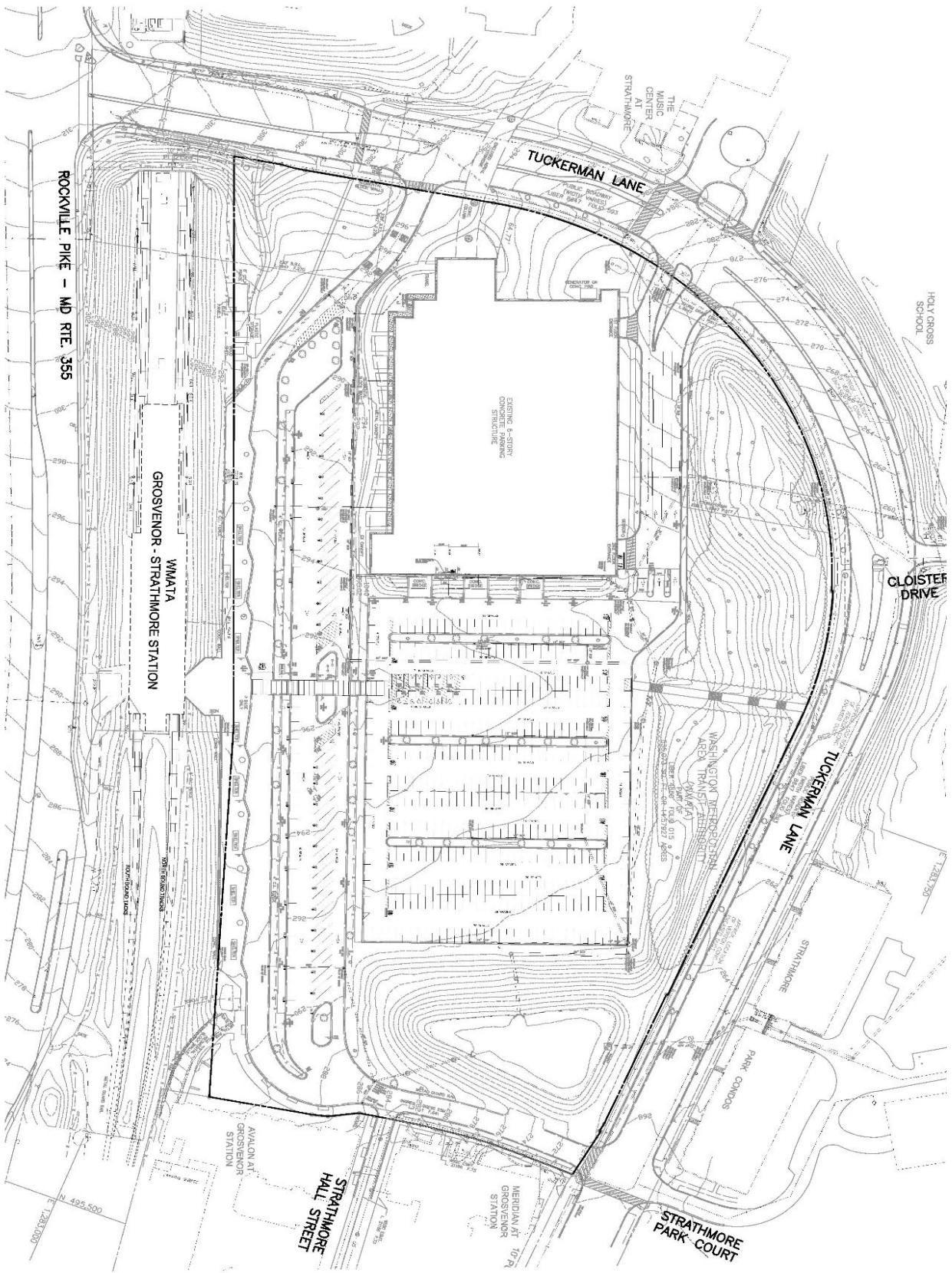
Figure 1: Project Location



**Figure 2: Existing Site and Transportation Facilities**









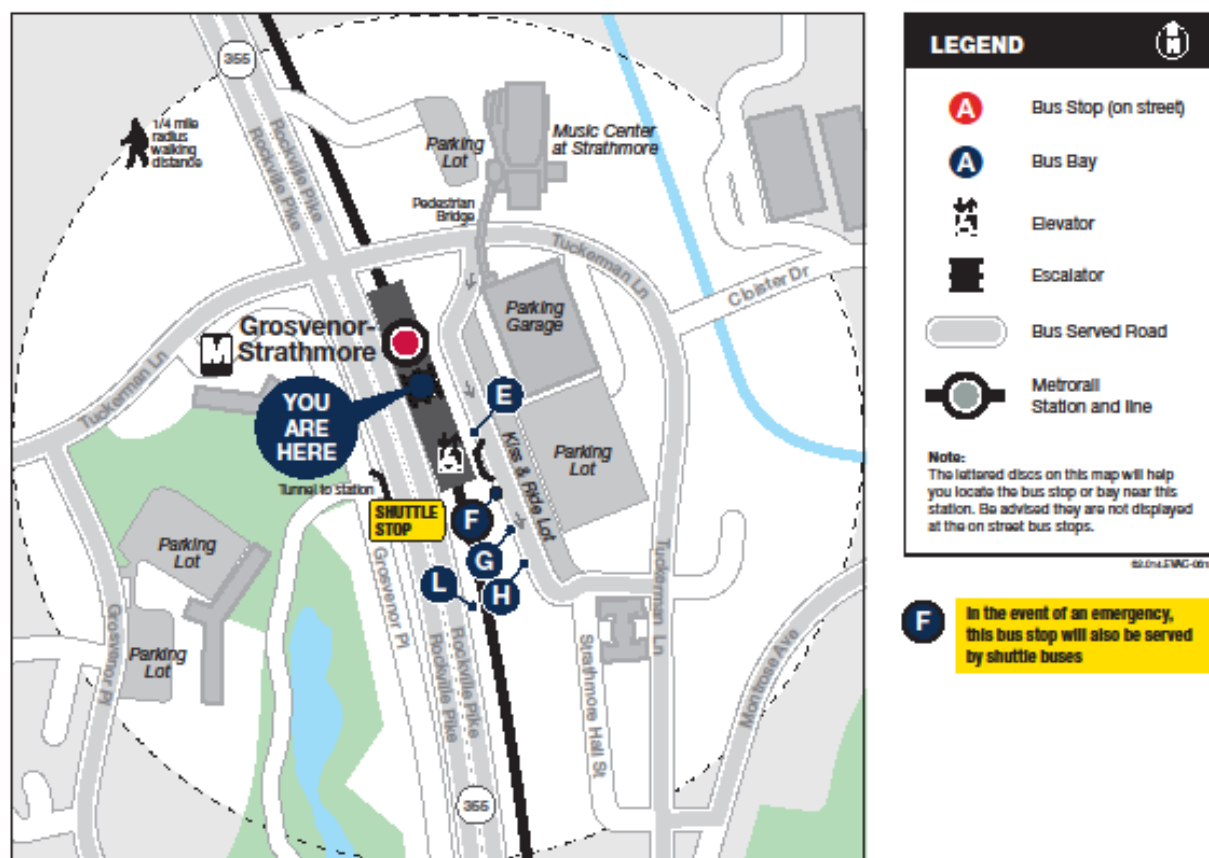
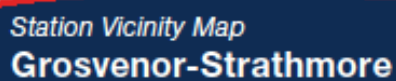














## 10. EXISTING SITE DESCRIPTION

WMATA operates the Grosvenor-Strathmore Metrorail Station in the North Bethesda area of Montgomery County, Maryland, for the Metrorail Red Line service.

In addition to Metrorail service, WMATA currently operates a Park & Ride 6-level parking garage with 1,484 spaces, a surface-level Park & Ride lot with 408 parking spaces, a surface-level Kiss & Ride lot with a total of 106 parking spaces, and a bus loop with 10 bus bays serving Montgomery County Ride-On bus lines and the Rock Spring Shuttle. Also, there are 75 reserved spaces in the Park & Ride parking garage serving the Strathmore Music Center, and taxi curbside spaces for approximately 3 vehicles. An overview of the existing transportation facilities and site conditions are shown in preceding **Figure 2** (above). The Grosvenor-Strathmore Metrorail station garage is located at 5300 Tuckerman Lane, Bethesda, Maryland 20852 in the Grosvenor Metro Station Policy Area.

As described in more detail in future sections of this report, there are a Montgomery County pilot dockless vehicle program, forthcoming bicycle facilities, infrastructure improvements, and future transit services planned to connect WMATA passengers with bus rapid transit. The bus rapid transit projects are sponsored by either Montgomery County or the State of Maryland, not by WMATA. At various times there have been proposals for bus rapid transit on Route 355 (Rockville Pike) running from Bethesda north to Clarksburg, and for the North Bethesda Transitway running from Westfield Montgomery Mall to Tuckerman Lane and Route 355 (Rockville Pike). Those bus rapid transit projects are independent of WMATA and WMATA's own operations. They are not part of the study addressed in this Environmental Evaluation.

### 10.1 Metrorail

The Metrorail Red Line operates between the Shady Grove Metrorail Station north of Grosvenor-Strathmore on the eastern spur of the Red Line and the Glenmont Metrorail Station on the eastern spur of the Red Line. Both of those termini stations are, like the Grosvenor-Strathmore Metrorail Station, located in Montgomery County, and the Red Line route between them runs through the District of Columbia.

In recent years, average daily Metrorail boardings at Grosvenor-Strathmore have varied from a low of 5,181 per weekday in 2016 to a high of 5,948 per weekday in 2009. Boardings for the first 10 months of 2019 averaged 5,352 per weekday. These ridership numbers place the Grosvenor-Strathmore Metrorail Station in the middle of the station-by-station ridership information compiled by WMATA for each Metrorail Station. Entries to the Grosvenor-Strathmore Metrorail Station are predominantly in the morning rush hours, and exits are predominantly in the evening rush hours.

### 10.2 Metrobus / Ride-On Bus

Four Montgomery County Ride-On bus lines serve the Grosvenor-Strathmore Metro Station site. Those bus lines operate under contract with the County's Department of Transportation. There is currently no Metrobus service at the Grosvenor-Strathmore Metrorail Station.

ROUTE	DESTINATION	MONDAY TO FRIDAY				SATURDAY		SUNDAY	
		AM RUSH	MIDDAY	PM RUSH	EVENING	DAY	EVENING	DAY	EVENING
<b>RIDE ON-MONTGOMERY COUNTY</b>									
<b>6</b>	Parkside	30	30	30	30	--	--	--	--
<b>6</b>	Montgomery Mall Transit Center	30	30	30	30	--	--	--	--
<b>37</b>	Wheaton	--	--	30-35	--	--	--	--	--
<b>37</b>	Potomac Community Center	30	--	30	--	--	--	--	--
<b>46</b>	Montgomery College, Shady Grove	15-20	15	15-20	20-40	20-25	20-45	20-30	20-45
<b>46</b>	Medical Center	20-25	15	20-25	25-35	20-25	25-30	20-50	30

96	Montgomery Mall Transit Center	10-15	30	10	30	--	--	--	--
	Rock Spring Park Express	10	--	10	--	--	--	--	--

Source: WMATA and County Ride-On Bus and North Bethesda Transportation Center service schedules

### 10.3 Park & Ride

The existing Park & Ride garage and surface lot shown in preceding **Figure 2** provide 1,484 and 408 parking spaces respectively, for a total of 1,892 Park & Ride spaces at Grosvenor-Strathmore. These spaces include all-day parking spaces (51 of which are accessible spaces), a designated motorcycle parking area, and 75 spaces that are Strathmore Music Center “Reserved” spaces.

The current Park & Ride surface parking lot provides 408 of those parking spaces; eventually all those spaces will be completely removed, although some of them may remain in operation for some time, depending on the pace of development that displaces them. The WMATA Park & Ride southern garage expansion, now under construction, will add 219 spaces. See **Figure 3** below. The western Park & Ride garage expansion would add another 194 spaces, if constructed. The southern and western garage expansions combined would create 413 parking spaces, thus replacing all the surface parking lot’s spaces and possibly adding five more parking spaces.

The Park & Ride facilities at Grosvenor-Strathmore are popular and among the more heavily utilized parking facilities operated by WMATA. Utilization rates are generally around 90%. Daily parking data collected by WMATA for March thru June 2019 demonstrates there were nine of those 40 weekdays at over 95% utilization. With only a few exceptions, the maximum utilization occurs between 10:30 am - 2:45pm, after the typical commuter peak period. In the three-month period referenced in above, only April 2, 3, 4, 9 and 10 had an expanded utilization time period between 9:00am - 4:15pm.

### 10.4 Kiss & Ride

The existing Kiss & Ride area is a long, linear lot located between the bus loop to the west and the parking facilities to the east. The Kiss & Ride area is currently split in the center by the Metro Station entrance for pedestrians entering from the Park & Ride facilities as shown in preceding **Figure 2**. The Kiss & Ride lots include 74 short-term metered spaces, 3 driver attended ‘A’ spaces, and 4 accessible spaces. Additional amenities include a covered seating shelter, trash receptacles, and lighting for riders waiting for private vehicles.

### 10.5 Pedestrian and Bicycle Access

Bicycle riders and pedestrians access the Metrorail Station via streets, sidewalks, and the tunnel under Route 355 (Rockville Pike). The Route 355 pedestrian tunnel allows access from the adjacent Grosvenor Park community and other communities to the west as shown in **Figure 3**. Tuckerman Lane has five-foot-wide striped bike lanes on both sides of the street from the southern Tuckerman / Route 355 intersection to the WMATA Park & Ride entrance. From the Tuckerman / Route 355 South intersection, bicyclists can access the Rock Creek Park trail via the sidewalk connection adjacent to Route 355.

Bike amenities at the station currently include 60 bike racks and 52 secure bike lockers. Ten of those racks are located across Rockville Pike at the western entrance to the Route 355 tunnel. Most of the bike racks and all the lockers are located at or near the main Metro Station entrance. As part of the Garage Expansion Project, WMATA expects to add a secure indoor Bike & Ride facility accommodating approximately 100 bicycles; this Bike & Ride is currently expected to be located adjacent to the bus loop opposite the parking garage.

One of the current Montgomery County non-auto transit programs offers both docked and dockless bikeshare. It is anticipated that a Capital Bikeshare station will be added to the overall site as part of the private development project (not by WMATA). Montgomery County is a member of the regional Capital

Bikeshare system. County bikeshare stations connect riders to thousands of bikes throughout Montgomery, Arlington and Fairfax Counties, the City of Alexandria and Washington, D.C.

On June 1, 2019, the Montgomery County Department of Transportation expanded the dockless e-bike program while also testing the introduction of dockless e-scooters to areas east and west of the original pilot area, which includes the Grosvenor-Strathmore Metrorail Station site. The County is conducting a demonstration project with up to four selected companies to deploy dockless bikes and e-scooters at no cost to the County. The demonstration project will run for six months with an option for extension.

## **11. PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

The purpose of the proposed modification of the Garage Expansion Project is to re-evaluate a particular aspect of the Joint Development Agreement between WMATA and Fivesquares. More specifically, the issue is whether the 219-space Park & Ride southern garage expansion currently underway will alone meet WMATA's immediate needs for parking consolidation based on current conditions and trends, or whether the additional 194 spaces that could be built in a western expansion of the existing garage are also needed. This Environmental Evaluation is a summary of current conditions and trends evaluated for WMATA to make that decision.

The current project consists of the following actions:

- Construction of Park & Ride southern garage expansion of 219 spaces
- Reconfiguration of the Kiss & Ride lot
- Construction of a 100-space Bike & Ride station
- Security upgrades to the existing garage

The estimated cost of the foregoing work is approximately \$24-25 million.

The portion of the Garage Expansion Project that is the subject of this evaluation includes the following actions:

- Construction of a Park & Ride western garage expansion of 194 spaces
- Further reconfiguration of the Kiss & Ride lot
- Reconstruction of the existing Arts Walk improvements

The estimated cost of the foregoing additional work is a minimum of \$12 million (and likely higher).

As previously mentioned, the results of any decision to not build the western garage expansion can be monitored and, if it is determined at a later date that the construction of the Park & Ride western garage expansion and its 194 spaces parking capacity is needed, that garage expansion can be built later; the area proposed for the western garage expansion remains available to WMATA. There are also alternative cost-effective solutions that can be implemented by WMATA. For instance, there are other stations farther north on the Red Line that are potential locations for any commuter parkers who cannot find parking at Grosvenor-Strathmore. The most likely alternative option is at White Flint. White Flint, the next Metrorail Station to the north, is approximately 1.3 miles away on Maryland Route 355 (Rockville Pike), the same road on which Grosvenor-Strathmore is located, and at present usually has hundreds of available parking spaces. Twinbrook, the next Metrorail Station north of White Flint, is located one block off Maryland Route 355 (Rockville Pike) and usually has substantial parking vacancy.

### **11.1 Park & Ride Structure**

The existing Park & Ride parking structure is now being expanded to add 219 parking spaces. There is no change to how and where vehicles will enter the Park & Ride structure from Tuckerman Lane to the north. The current exit lanes, also leading to Tuckerman Lane to the north, are being retained, but an additional exit lane is being added. That additional exit lane will initially also exit to Tuckerman Lane to the north but,

if the private development is built, it will then exit to the south along an internal road toward Strathmore Hall Court.

### **3.1.1 Transportation Demand Management (TDM)**

The Grosvenor-Strathmore Metrorail Station is in the North Bethesda Transportation Management District, which promotes strategies to increase the Non-Automotive Driver Mode Share (NADMS). The NADMS is the percentage of commuters who travel to their worksite by means other than single-occupant vehicle.

The area's current NADMS (41 percent) is comparable to downtown Bethesda (42 percent) and is higher than White Flint (31 percent). The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission's Approved and Adopted Grosvenor-Strathmore Minor Master Plan set a higher NADMS goal for this area because of this area's proximity to Metrorail and the planned bus rapid transit route. In addition, mixed-use redevelopment at the Metro station will provide more opportunities for walking, biking, and riding transit. The NADMS goal will be achieved through a combination of land use and zoning requirements, transit improvements, and supportive transportation demand management programs, such as shuttles and bike sharing. The Approved and Adopted Grosvenor Strathmore Minor Master Plan also recommends reducing the number of parking spaces to encourage a reduction in single-occupancy vehicle travel. The goal is to achieve a blended 50 percent NADMS by 2040 for this Master Plan area.

The proposed private development project at Grosvenor-Strathmore supports the foregoing recommendations of the Approved and Adopted Grosvenor Strathmore Minor Master Plan for the Grosvenor-Strathmore Metrorail Station site. By making the development project possible, the Garage Expansion Project supports the foregoing recommendations as well, but the Park & Ride garage itself is not affected by the foregoing recommendations.

## **11.2 Kiss & Ride Area**

The existing Kiss & Ride area is currently larger than its usage requires. It would be reconfigured to consolidate parking and provide additional area for the future private development. The Kiss & Ride area will include:

- Spaces for 3 taxis, four shuttles, and nine standard vehicles; and
- Parking spaces for 48 standard vehicles, 20 motorcycles, and 11 accessible spaces.

## **11.3 Pedestrian and Bicycle Access**

As noted in **Section 3.1.1** above, this area of Montgomery County is located within the North Bethesda Transportation Management District, which has established goals for reducing auto-dependency and increasing NADMS commuter trips. The Montgomery County Bicycle Master Plan recommends both long-term and short-term bicycle parking for the Grosvenor-Strathmore Metrorail Station in addition to what is typically provided via the proposed individual residential buildings (Montgomery County Zoning Ordinance Section 59.6.2.4.C). Those recommendations are outlined in the Table below and will be implemented concurrently with the Garage Expansion Project and the anticipated private development project.

In addition to the bicycle parking spaces that will be provided by the private developer for the proposed individual private buildings on the site (ranging between approximately 590-648 bicycle parking spaces), the Bicycle Master Plan proposes 350 long-term ("long term" meaning full day) and 100 short-term spaces related to the Grosvenor-Strathmore Metrorail Station.

The Bicycle Master Plan bases the projected bicycle parking on an assumed "catchment area" for the Grosvenor-Strathmore Metrorail Station that ranges between 0.5 and 2.0 miles based on the existing road network. The 0.5-mile catchment area represents the comfortable walking distance to a transit station and the 2.5-mile catchment area reflects a 10-15-minute commuting trip for most people. The number of parking spaces is based on a 6.5% goal of AM peak trips arriving by bicycle, based on guidelines from the Association of Pedestrian and Bicycle Professionals (APBP). APBP recommends providing long-term

parking spaces for 5% of AM peak hour boardings and providing short-term parking spaces for 1.5% peak hour boardings.

<b>Description <sup>(1)</sup></b>	<b>Bike Parking</b>	<b>Long-term <sup>(2)</sup></b>	<b>Short-term</b>	<b>Cumulative Total</b>
Existing WMATA Bike Parking	88	38	50	88
Phase I (w/WMATA garage expansion) Bike & Ride station	100	100		188
Phase II WMATA Bike & Ride station <sup>(3)</sup>	100	100		288
Capital Bike Share Station <sup>(5)</sup>			19	
Remaining Bike Facilities <sup>(4)</sup>	143	112	31	1046
<b>Bike Parking Spaces</b>	<b>Totals</b>	<b>936</b>	<b>110</b>	<b>1046</b>

- (1) Note: Building bike parking requirements for the private development is determined at the time of Site Plan approval. These numbers are estimates based on current density estimates for each proposed building and using one of the optional configurations for proposed Buildings 4 and 6.
- (2) For the proposed buildings, the quantities are based on Zoning Ordinance Section 59.6.2.4.C requirements for long-term parking.
- (3) Expansion of Bike & Ride station to 200 spaces. WMATA currently plans to build the first Bike & Ride capacity of 100 bicycle parking spaces but has not committed to building this second phase.
- (4) Remaining bike parking quantities are based on Bicycle Master Plan recommendations. Per the Bicycle Master Plan, long-term biking can be provided via bicycle stations, bicycle rooms, bicycle lockers, or bicycle racks.
- (5) Capital Bikeshare station is not included in bicycle parking totals.

The Strathmore Square Preliminary Plan shows three potential locations for future long-term bicycle facilities: a location next to the initial Bike & Ride; a location within the WMATA garage; or a location close to the Metrorail Station entrance. The final location will be determined in coordination with WMATA at the time of site plan approval.

The timing of installation of the bicycle facilities will be determined in coordination with the Transportation Management District through the Transportation Management Agreement and will be based on demand.

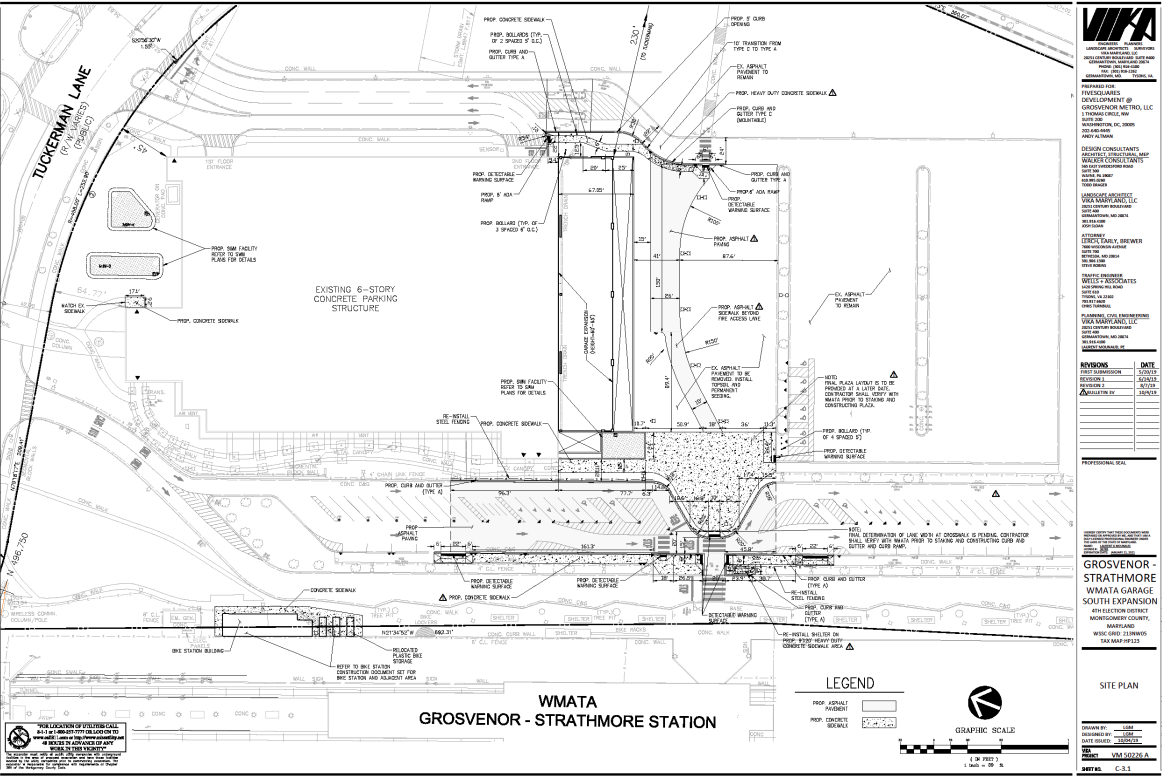
## 11.4 Bus Loop

Neither the Garage Expansion Project nor the anticipated private development project will impact the bus loop, beyond temporary impacts during construction.

Figure 3: Proposed Modified Reconfiguration of Existing Park & Ride Garage



Figure 4: Site Plan Showing the Proposed Modified Garage Expansion Project





## 11.5 Joint Development

“Joint development” is a term used by the Federal Transit Administration to refer to private development on transit agency property that has a synergistic effect with the transit facilities. In this case, the proposed joint development would construct a new mixed-use development which the County-approved Preliminary Plan refers to as “Strathmore Square.” **Figure 5** below illustrates both the proposed joint development and replacement transit facilities (if only the southern expansion of the Park & Ride garage is constructed). Strathmore Square will include up to 1,905,219 square feet of development, with up to 317,537 square feet of commercial uses and up to 1,746,451 square feet of residential uses. The Grosvenor-Strathmore Metrorail Station property will be subdivided in a manner that emphasizes walkability, sustainability, and efficient circulation, with commercial space, residences and green space. Current and replacement transit facilities will remain in place along a linear alignment adjacent to the Metrorail Station.

**Figure 5: Joint Development Concept**



### 3.5.1 Background – Grosvenor-Strathmore Metrorail Station Redevelopment

The Grosvenor Strathmore Metrorail Station is located on the Red Line, two stops north of Bethesda, and one stop south of White Flint and the Pike & Rose community. The 14.7-acre station property is bounded by Rockville Pike (Maryland Route 355) to the west, Tuckerman Lane to the north and east, and Meridian at Grosvenor Station to the south. WMATA has entered into a Joint Development Agreement with Fivesquares with the goal of creating a mixed-use transit-oriented development to be known as Strathmore Square on a portion of the Metrorail Station property. The property is surrounded by multi-family residential uses, the Music Center at Strathmore, and a significant amount of off-site tree and forest coverage,

including Rock Creek Park. Despite the high-quality development located to the south and east of the site (better known as Grosvenor Village and Strathmore Park), which are were approved as part of the first phase of joint development at this Metrorail Station, the area lacks a true sense of place. To fill that gap, the proposed redevelopment of the Metrorail Station property will have a mixed-use, predominately residential center consistent with the recommendations of the Approved and Adopted Grosvenor Strathmore Minor Master Plan.

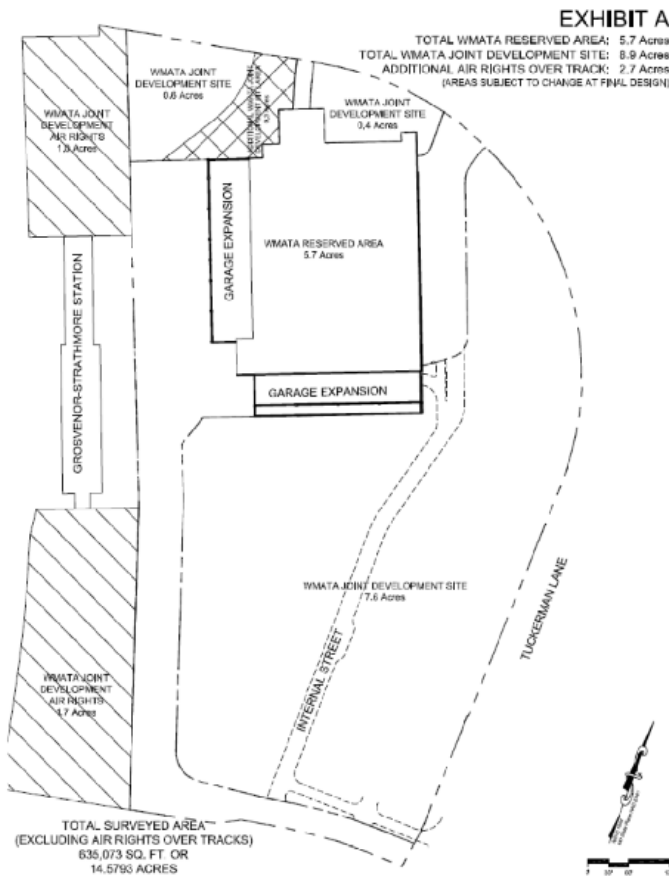
### **3.5.2 Joint Development Agreement**

The Joint Development Agreement commits the developer to the construction of the Garage Expansion Project transit facilities described in the previous section and enables the developer to construct a mixed-use, transit-oriented development on the Grosvenor-Strathmore Metrorail Station property. The general concept showing areas reserved for WMATA's continuing operations and future mixed-use development is identified in **Figure 6** below.

The Joint Development Agreement also states that the developer is responsible for compliance with all applicable federal and Maryland environmental laws, rules, regulations, ordinances, judicial or administrative decrees, orders, decisions, authorizations and permits.



**Figure 6: General Concept Showing Division of Site Between Transit and Development Area**



## 12. PROJECT IMPACTS

This Chapter evaluates the potential environmental effects of the Garage Expansion Project, which consists of the replacement (or non-replacement) of WMATA facilities described in Chapter 3. The potential environmental effects of the proposed future private mixed-use development are not included in this Environmental Evaluation, except as those impacts relate to the cumulative impacts of the Garage Expansion Project and separate adjacent development projects on transportation analyzed in **Section 4.22**. The environmental and other impacts of the private development project are mostly beyond the scope of this Environmental Evaluation, which is concerned with WMATA facilities, and are for the most part overseen by Montgomery County and the State of Maryland.

## **12.1 Land Acquisitions and Displacements**

This joint development is a collaboration between WMATA and Fivesquares. WMATA will retain ownership and control of its own facilities and operations to include Metrorail, a bus loop, an expanded Park & Ride structure, and a Kiss & Ride lot. WMATA will also retain ownership of the remainder of the land (with certain possible exceptions). Fivesquares will be allowed to redevelop the parts of the site on which WMATA will not be operating, consistent with **Figure 6** above, to achieve this mixed-use, transit-oriented development.

No additional land acquisition is required as part of the Garage Expansion Project. Except for some reduction of the Kiss & Ride area, no WMATA facilities would be permanently displaced. The existing Kiss & Ride facilities would be redeveloped as part of the joint development. Other WMATA facilities may be temporarily re-routed and/or relocated in minor ways during construction of the joint development.

## **12.2 Transportation**

### **12.2.1 Parking**

As part of the Garage Expansion Project, the developer is expanding the existing Park & Ride garage to the south, reconfiguring the Kiss & Ride lot, and removing the Park & Ride surface lot. The WMATA Park & Ride capacity will ultimately total approximately 1,703 spaces if only the southern garage expansion is constructed, a decrease of approximately 189 parking spaces from the current 1,892 parking spaces in the current garage and surface parking lot. If the western garage expansion is built, the total WMATA Park & Ride capacity would increase by approximately five parking spaces compared to the current capacity of 1,892 parking spaces.

If the western garage expansion isn't also built, there will be an overall net loss of 189 Park & Ride spaces compared to current capacity of the existing garage and surface parking lot. This loss of 189 Park & Ride spaces will leave the Park & Ride capacity at almost exactly 90% of its current capacity of 1,892 spaces. A review of parking utilization data from March – August 2019 indicates that the Grosvenor Park & Ride facility typically does not reach 90% utilization of its current 1,892 spaces until after 10:00 AM. Thus, even if the western expansion of the garage is not constructed and the overall capacity of the site is reduced by 189 parking spaces, the Park & Ride facility will adequately accommodate current demand during the peak commuter period of 7:30-9:30 AM.

The adjacent Strathmore Music Center has an agreement with WMATA to utilize the Park & Ride facilities for event parking. The main concert hall at the Strathmore Music Center has a 1,976 maximum seating capacity. Strathmore Music Center has its own onsite parking totaling approximately 102 spaces. Given that many Music Center patrons and employees arrive by Metrorail, by bus or in groups of two or four persons sharing a vehicle, it is not anticipated that there will be a shortage of parking for Strathmore Music Center if the Park & Ride capacity is reduced to approximately 1,703 parking spaces.

### **12.2.2 Traffic**

A Preliminary Plan for Strathmore Square was approved by the Montgomery County Planning Board on June 27, 2019. That Preliminary Plan allows for the joint development of up to 317,537 square feet of non-residential space and up to 2,218 residential dwelling units. This private development is anticipated to generate approximately 727 vehicle trips and a total of 1,418 person trips during the AM peak hour. During the PM peak hour, the development is anticipated to generate 905 vehicle trips and a total of 1,767 person trips.

In the course of building Strathmore Square, Fivesquares will construct an internal private street that will connect the existing driveway from Tuckerman Lane to the north providing access to the WMATA Park & Ride garage to a point aligning with Strathmore Hall Street. This new internal roadway will provide an additional access and egress route to and from the Park & Ride garage.

Other transportation programs/initiatives by Montgomery County Department of Transportation (MCDOT) and the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission (M-NCPPC) include:

- Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) along Maryland Route 355 (Rockville Pike).
- The expansion of the dockless bikes and e-scooters pilot program to include the Grosvenor-Strathmore Metrorail Station area.
- A safe and connected bicycle network.
- North Bethesda Transportation Management District (TMD) that provides services to employers, employees, residents and visitors in Grosvenor, White Flint, Twinbrook, Executive Boulevard and Rock Spring Park to assist with achieving the congestion reduction objectives for the area.

These programs/initiatives are part of the County's commitment to increase the NADMS within the Grosvenor-Strathmore Metro Area Minor Master Plan to support the approved mixed-use high-density development at the Metrorail Station through the provision of more opportunities for walking, biking, carpooling/car sharing, bike and scooter sharing, and telework/alternative work schedules.

Traffic analyses conducted in association with the approval of Strathmore Square indicate that the proposed roadway network will adequately accommodate traffic volumes anticipated with the full build-out of the proposed mixed use development and that the area roadway network would operate within the Montgomery County congestion standard for the Grosvenor Metro Station Policy Area. Because no increase to the overall trip generation of the combined Strathmore Square/Grosvenor-Strathmore Metrorail Station property is anticipated due to the proposed reduction in size of the Park & Ride garage expansion, no negative impact to the area roadway network is anticipated and the roadway network would continue to operate within the Montgomery County congestion standard for the Grosvenor Metro Station Policy Area.

### **12.3 MD 355 BRT**

The Montgomery County Department of Transportation (MCDOT) is studying options for a new bus rapid transit (BRT) service along Maryland Route 355 (Rockville Pike) called FLASH. MCDOT held open houses on June 26 and 27, 2019 for the public to learn more about [FLASH on MD 355](#), and see the results of the extensive evaluation and preliminary engineering of the alternatives, including ridership, benefits, impacts, and estimated costs.

At this point, the preliminary engineering phase is complete and MCDOT is starting the first stage of engineering plans for the BRT (i.e. 30% plan design). There is no timeframe for commencing construction and it is anticipated to be a minimum of 5 years.

Bus rapid transit along the Maryland Route 355 (Wisconsin Avenue/Rockville Pike/Frederick Road) corridor would provide upgraded, frequent, and reliable service between downtown Bethesda and Clarksburg. It is anticipated that the distance between stops on the bus rapid transit system would be considerably shorter than the 1-2-mile distances between Metrorail Stations in the Bethesda-Shady Grove corridor. This bus rapid transit service would thus provide an additional option, both separate from Metrorail and also possibly feeding Metrorail, for people traveling the Maryland Route 355 corridor.

### **12.4 MCDOT Dockless Vehicle Programs**

As noted earlier, Montgomery County offers both docked and dockless bikeshare. As a member of the regional Capital Bikeshare system, the County anticipates adding a Capital Bikeshare station with the first phase of residential development, <https://nbtc.org/bicycling-walking/dockless-vehicles/>.

## **12.5 Metro Operations and Facilities**

Transit-oriented joint development at the Grosvenor-Strathmore Metrorail Station is expected to increase overall ridership at the Grosvenor-Strathmore Metrorail Station, and on the overall Red Line. WMATA's algorithm for predicting ridership from any given development project near a Metrorail station predicts an increase in Red Line ridership of 4,233 boardings per weekday if and when the private development project achieves full build-out (which is itself predicted to require more than 10 years).

Any increase in ridership at Grosvenor-Strathmore Metrorail Station due to new employment, retail, or residential opportunities is not expected to be large enough to cause any significant impact on either Grosvenor-Strathmore Metrorail Station or general Metrorail operations or crowding. As previously noted, the Grosvenor-Strathmore Metrorail Station is currently only in the middle-of-the-pack among station ridership, indicating significant available capacity. WMATA's internal evaluations of train car passenger loads, station escalator and stair capacity, platform pedestrian level of service, and station evacuation times indicate that this Metrorail Station would continue to operate within acceptable levels of service.

An increase in ridership would make better use of existing Metrorail capacity because of the ability of residents, employees and retail patrons to utilize Metrorail without requiring a parking space. If the private sector development project increases "reverse commuting" during rush hours (i.e. commuting against the general flow of inbound commuters in the morning and outbound commuters in the evening), the gain in Metrorail ridership would be even more beneficial because those "reverse commuters" would be riding trains that are significantly emptier and would not increase passenger loads (crowding) in the main direction of commuter travel.

### **12.5.1 Bus Routes**

Neither the Garage Expansion Project nor the private development project has any impact on bus facilities or operations, other than temporary impacts on some bus bays during construction.

### **12.5.2 Pedestrian and Bicycle Access & Facilities**

The Montgomery County Bicycle Master Plan (approved on November 27, 2018 by the Montgomery County Council and adopted by the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission on December 19, 2018) has the goal of providing a safe and connected bicycle network intended to make bicycling a viable transportation option.

The joint development plans for Strathmore Square include improved pedestrian and bicycle access to the Grosvenor-Strathmore Metrorail Station and enhanced facilities within the site, including a 100-space secure WMATA Bike & Ride station, additional bike racks, and Capital Bikeshare stations located near the Metrorail Station entrance.

Figure 7: Bicycle and Pedestrian Circulation Plan





## 12.6 Land Use and Zoning

The site was rezoned CR 3.0, C-0.5, R-2.75, H-300' and CR-0.5, C-0.25, R-0.5, H-300' in connection with Sectional Map Amendment (SMA) H-127, in accordance with the Approved and Adopted Grosvenor Strathmore Metro Area Minor Master Plan. Section 59-3.1.6 of the Montgomery County Zoning Ordinance indicates that Multi-Unit Living, Townhouse Living, Hotel, Retail/Service Establishment (up to 50,000 square feet), Restaurant, Office and associated surface/structured parking are permitted uses in the CR zone.

The overall site is subject to, and is in substantial conformance with, the goals and recommendations of the Approved and Adopted Grosvenor Strathmore Minor Master Plan. See **Figure 8** below for the existing land use pattern and zoning maps.

Bordering the overall site to the north is the Music Center at Strathmore, zoned R-60. Directly abutting the development site to the west is the Grosvenor-Strathmore Metrorail Station, zoned CR-0.5, C-0.25, R-0.5, H-300'. Beyond the Metrorail Station is Maryland Route 355 (Rockville Pike). Abutting the site to the south are various multi-family residential developments, zoned CR 7.25, C-0.25, R-7.25, H-180' and CR-0.5, C-0.25, R-0.5, H-40'. And, opposite the development site on the east is Tuckerman Lane, with single-family homes (zoned TMD) buffered from the site by a stream valley and a large forested area, condominium residential units (known as the Strathmore Park Condominium), and a private school known as the Academy of Holy Cross, all zoned R-20.

**Figure 8: Existing Land Use**

*Source: MERLIN-MD State GIS mapping*

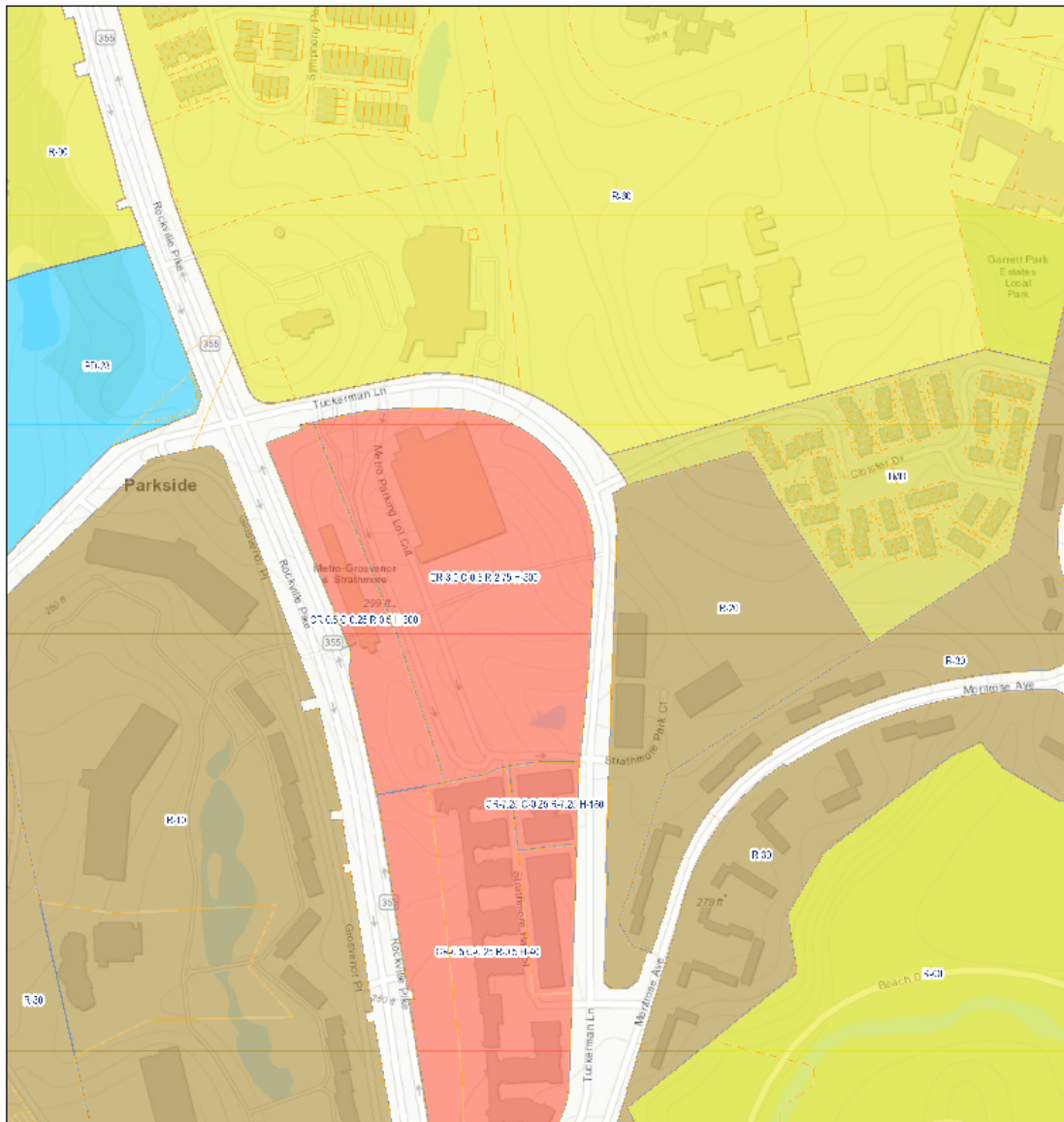


**Figure 9: Existing Zoning**





# mcAtlas\_exportmap



October 16, 2019

County Boundary

Zoning blocks

Agricultural

Rural

Residential Estate

Residential (R-200)

Residential (R-40/60/90)

Townhouse

Multi-Family

Neighborhood Retail

General Retail

Commercial Residential Neighborhood

Commercial Residential Town

Commercial Residential

Office

Life Sciences

Industrial Light

Industrial Medium

Industrial Heavy

Planned Development

Overlay Zones

Overlay TDR

1:4,514

0 0.04 0.08 0.16 mi  
0 0.05 0.1 0.2 km

Sources: Esri, HERE, Garmin, Intermap, increment P Corp., GEBCO, USGS, FAO, NPS, NRCAN, GeoBase, IGN, Kadaster NL, Ordnance Survey, Esri Japan, METI, Esri China (Hong Kong), (c) OpenStreetMap contributors, and the GIS User Community.

CGM

County of Fairfax, MNCPPC, VITA, Esri, HERE, Garmin, INCREMENT P, USGS, EPA, USDA | The University of Vermont Spatial Analysis Laboratory created this map with funding from the Maryland-National Capital

## 12.7 Planning Consistency

There are multiple applicable local plans that the currently proposed joint development project must comply with, including:

### **M-NCPPC Approved Grosvenor-Strathmore Metro Area Minor Master Plan, January 2018.**

As previously noted, the proposed private joint development project substantially complies with the goals and recommendations of the Approved and Adopted Grosvenor Strathmore Minor Master Plan. The Approved and Adopted Grosvenor Strathmore Minor Master Plan recognizes that the area is largely residential in character and seeks to protect the adjacent residential neighborhoods from any negative impacts of future development.

Enhanced pedestrian and bicycle connectivity are also a major goal of the Approved and Adopted Grosvenor Strathmore Minor Master Plan. The private development project will implement a series of transportation infrastructure improvements – such as better pedestrian connections across the site, better bicycle access around the site and Capital Bikeshare stations on the site, and the private internal road that will improve north-south vehicular connectivity from the WMATA parking garage's entry road to the southern end of the site -- that will improve access both on-site and connectivity to the surrounding neighborhoods. The private development project also will help achieve the Approved and Adopted Grosvenor Strathmore Minor Master Plan's goal of decreasing reliance on single-occupant vehicle trips by providing a substantial amount of additional residential development directly adjacent to the Grosvenor-Strathmore Metrorail Station and in close proximity to nearby institutional uses (including the National Institutes of Health, Walter Reed National Medical Center, Suburban Hospital and the Uniformed Services Universities of the Health Sciences). The private development project also will employ various Transportation Demand Management strategies and WMATA's own construction program will provide a large Bike & Ride station near the entrance to the Metrorail Station to help achieve this vision. A draft Transportation Management Agreement between Fivesquares and Montgomery County was included as part of the Preliminary Plan submission.

The Approved and Adopted Grosvenor Strathmore Minor Master Plan also recommends the expansion of the existing parking garage by 412 spaces in replacement of the existing surface parking spaces that will be eliminated over time with the construction of future phases of the private development project. It is that recommendation – the replacement of 412 parking spaces – that WMATA is now considering not following by replacing only 219 of those parking spaces.

The Approved and Adopted Grosvenor Strathmore Minor Master Plan also seeks to increase the amount of green space and the sustainability of the Plan area. The proposed private development project proposes to accomplish that goal by adding green space on the joint development site, utilizing modern stormwater management techniques and reducing single-occupancy vehicle usage by residents of the site. That is more fully addressed in the Preliminary Plan previously approved by the M-NCPPC.

### **MCDOT Grosvenor-Strathmore Bicycle and Pedestrian Priority Areas Final Report (BIPPA), June 2015.**

The Grosvenor-Strathmore BIPPA report recommended safety and infrastructure improvements in this area, some of which have been completed by Montgomery County, some of which are in planning, and some of which have been incorporated into the Bicycle Master Plan and/ or the Grosvenor-Strathmore Master Plan. The private development project complies with the goals and recommendations of the BIPPA Report.

### **M-NCPPC Approved Bicycle Master Plan, November 2018.**

The joint development complies with the referenced Bicycle Master Plan, which is the most recent bicycle plan for the area enacted by M-NCPPC.

## **M-NCPPC Approved Countywide Transit Corridors Functional Master Plan, November 2013.**

The joint development is not directly impacted by the Countywide Transit Corridors master plan but accounts for the proposed future North Bethesda transitway that terminates at the intersection of Route 355 and Tuckerman Lane.

### **12.8 Neighborhoods and Community Facilities**

The site is in North Bethesda, in Montgomery County, Maryland. Immediately to the west of the site, across the Metrorail tracks, is Maryland Route 355 (Rockville Pike). South of the site is the interchange with I-495 (the Beltway) and the I-270 northbound spur. The site is in the vicinity of several neighborhoods and community facilities, as shown in **Figure 10**.

The residential area east of the site includes the neighborhoods of Parkside, Strathmore Park Condominiums, Stoneybrook and the Towns of Garrett Park and Kensington. The residential area west of the joint development site is known as Grosvenor Park. Immediately north of the site is Strathmore Music Center and Symphony Park. To the immediate south are the Meridian at Grosvenor and Avalon residential developments.

The following Montgomery County public schools serve this site:

- Walter Johnson High School
- Tilden Middle School
- Garrett Park Elementary School

Within a half-mile of the site, the following schools and recreation facilities are present:

- The Academy of Holy Cross
- Georgetown Preparatory School
- Garrett Park Elementary School
- Rock Creek Park & Trail
- Fleming Local Park
- The Bethesda Trolley Trail

The proposed joint development project would not create a physical barrier within a neighborhood, isolate a portion of a neighborhood, or have a direct impact on a community facility or access to a community facility. If anything, the joint development project will improve connectivity within the affected area, including connectivity to the Grosvenor-Strathmore Metrorail Station.

Traffic volumes are expected to increase as a result of the proposed private development project, but all intersections would continue to operate within the County's congestion standard in the Grosvenor Metro Station Policy Area (see **Section 4.2.2**).

The Garage Expansion Project itself, whether as currently in effect or as proposed to be modified, will not have any effect on school capacity, will not have any effect traffic volumes in the area (unless less than all of the current surface parking spaces are replaced, in which case traffic volumes may decrease by an incremental amount), and will not create a physical barrier within a neighborhood, isolate a portion of a neighborhood, or have a direct impact on a community facility or access to a community facility.



Figure 10: Neighborhoods and Community Facilities



## 12.9 Environmental Justice Populations

The following section identifies minority and low-income populations (collectively Environmental Justice Populations) in the project area and assesses any potential disproportionately high and adverse impacts to those identified populations.

### 12.9.1 Identification of Environmental Justice Populations

A half-mile radius around the Grosvenor-Strathmore Metrorail Station site was used as the study area boundary to analyze the presence of Environmental Justice Populations; all U.S. Census block groups that fell within the half-mile boundary were included, except for two block groups that were eliminated from analysis because no residences were located within them. Montgomery County as a whole was selected as a comparison area for the Environmental Justice analysis. Minority and low-income statistics were then analyzed at the Census block group level using population and income data from the U.S. Census Bureau's American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates (2009-2013).

**Table 1** lists the percentages of minority and low-income residents in the half-mile project study area in comparison to Montgomery County overall. Approximately 18.6 percent of the study area population belongs to a minority group, which is lower than Montgomery County (34.1 percent). Additionally, just over 5 percent of the study area is low-income, which is lower than Montgomery County (6.7 percent). The study area thus has lower minority and low-income percentages than Montgomery County overall.

**Table 1: Minority and Low-Income Population by Block Group**

Census Tract	Minority			Low-Income		
	Total Population	Minority Population	Percent	Total Population	Low-Income Population	Percent
Montgomery County	989,474	337,672	34.1%	98,1082	66,004	6.7%
Half-Mile Radius Study Area	15,128	2,812	18.6%	14,760	749	5.1%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates (2009-2013).

**Table 2** provides a breakdown of the minority groups present within the study area. The largest minority groups within the study area are Hispanic/Latinos (11.3 percent), Asians (9.4 percent), and Black/African Americans (5.8%). The aggregate percentage of these three groups plus American Indian and "Other" minorities (29.9 percent) within the study area is lower than in Montgomery County overall (51.6 percent).

**Table 2: Minority Population by Block Group**

Minority Group	Project Study Area		Montgomery County	
	# of residents	% of Total population	# of residents	% of Total Population
<b>Minority Total</b>	<b>4,517</b>	<b>29.9%</b>	<b>510,807</b>	<b>51.6%</b>
Black or African American	881	5.8%	166,210	16.8%
American Indian	12	0.1%	1,655	0.2%
Asian	1,417	9.4%	138,468	14.0%
Other	502	3.3%	31,339	3.2%
Hispanic or Latino	1,705	11.3%	173,135	17.5%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates (2009-2013).

### 12.9.2 Assessment of Disproportionately High and Adverse Impacts

There is no anticipated human environmental impact, including health, economic, and social impacts, of either the Garage Expansion Project (whether as it currently exists or as it is proposed to be modified) or the overall joint development project on the identified minority and low-income populations within the study area. No adverse impacts to neighborhoods, community facilities, air quality, noise, vibration or traffic are anticipated as a result of either the Garage Expansion Project or the joint development project. Taking these factors into account, the Garage Expansion Project and the joint development project would not have “disproportionately high and adverse effects” on identified Environmental Justice Populations.

To the contrary, the proposed joint development project would improve access to transit for the surrounding neighborhoods, including Environmental Justice Populations. The planned pedestrian and bicycle improvements would have a beneficial impact by creating spaces specifically designed for pedestrians and bicyclists and to improve safety. The proposed improvements would also increase the overall connectivity of the pedestrian and bicycle network in the area around the site.

Also of note, the Approved and Adopted Grosvenor Strathmore Minor Master Plan requires residential development to provide a minimum of 15% of the residential units in the community as Moderately-Priced Dwelling units (MPDUs), as the highest priority public benefit (unless the site is required to dedicate land for a school site, which is not the case here). The Strathmore Square private development project is anticipated to provide a minimum of 15% MPDU units. The Garage Expansion Project itself is not affected by the MPDU requirement, nor does the Garage Expansion Project affect the MPDU requirement.

### 12.10 Cultural Resources

M-NCPPC does not identify any historic architectural resources within the overall project site listed in the National Register of Historic Places or State of Maryland. Across Tuckerman Lane to the north there is a Montgomery County designated historic site, the Strathmore Corby Estate Mansion; it will not be affected by either the Garage Expansion Project or the joint development project.

### 12.11 Public Parklands and Recreation Areas

Rock Creek Park and Fleming Local Park, shown in **Figure 10** above, are the only parklands or recreation centers located within a mile of the Grosvenor-Strathmore Metrorail Station. No parks or recreation areas would be impacted by either the Garage Expansion Project or the joint development project.

## **12.12 Wetlands and Waters of the U.S.**

Rock Creek Park and unnamed stream tributaries are located across Tuckerman Lane, to the east of the overall project site (see **Figure 11** below). These streams are considered Waters of the U.S. under the Clean Water Act and implementing regulations (40 CFR 230.3). These nearby streams recently underwent stream restoration work performed by the Montgomery County Department of the Environment. These streams are tributaries to Rock Creek. Maryland Department of Natural Resources mapping data do not indicate any wetlands on the overall project site.

No wetlands are directly impacted by the Garage Expansion Project or the joint development project.

**Figure 11: Wetlands and Waters of the U.S.**





# ArcGIS Web Map



10/16/2019, 2:59:14 PM

Wetlands - National Wetlands Inventory

Estuarine

Lacustrine

Marine

Palustrine

Riverine

Wetlands - Linear - Special State Concern

Wetlands - Polygon - Special State Concern

Wetlands - Polygon - Department of Natural Resources

Estuarine

Lacustrine

Marine

Palustrine

Riverine

Wetlands - Linear - Department of Natural Resources

Estuarine

Palustrine

Riverine

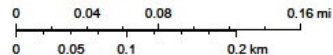
High Resolution Imagery 2016-2017

Red: Band\_1

Green: Band\_2

Blue: Band\_3

1:4,514



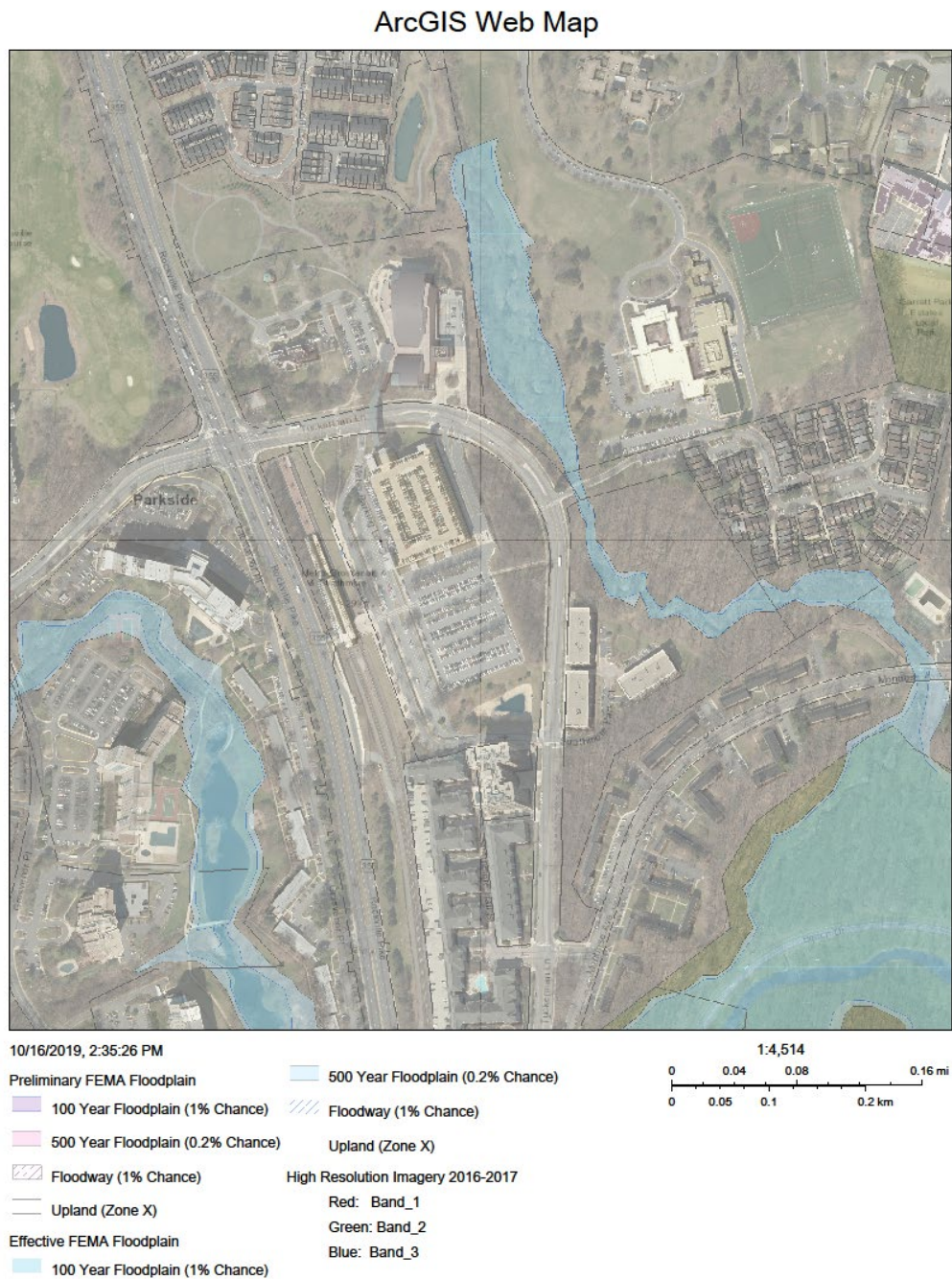
MD iMAP, DNR, USFW, Sources: Esri, HERE, Garmin, Intermap, increment P Corp., GEBCO, USGS, FAO, NPS, NRCAN, GeoBase, IGN, Kadaster NL, Ordnance Survey, Esri Japan, METI, Esri China (Hong Kong), (c) OpenStreetMap contributors, and the GIS User

Web AppBuilder for ArcGIS  
County of Fairfax, MNCPPC, VITA, Esri, HERE, Garmin, INCREMENT P, USGS, EPA, USDA | MD iMAP | MD iMAP, DoIT | MD iMAP, USDA | MD iMAP, USGS | MD iMAP, COMMERCE, DHCD, MDP, MHT, MDOT,

## 12.13 Floodplains

Neither the Garage Expansion Project nor the joint development project is located in the current 100-year floodplain, as indicated in **Figure 12** below.

**Figure 12: Floodplains**



MD iMAP, MDP, SDAT, Sources: Esri, HERE, Garmin, Intermap, increment P Corp., GEBCO, USGS, FAO, NPS, NRCAN, GeoBase, IGN, Kadaster NL, Ordnance Survey, Esri Japan, METI, Esri China (Hong Kong), (c) OpenStreetMap contributors, and the GIS User

Web AppBuilder for ArcGIS  
County of Fairfax, MNCPPC, VITA, Esri, HERE, Garmin, INCREMENT P, USGS, EPA, USDA | MD iMAP | MD iMAP, DoIT | MD iMAP, USDA | MD iMAP, USGS | MD iMAP, COMMERCE, DHCD, MDP, MHT, MDOT,



## **12.14 Water Quality**

The Garage Expansion Project is not anticipated to affect the water quality of the adjacent streams and wetlands.

The Garage Expansion Project and the overall joint development project will satisfy all requirements of Chapter 19 of the Montgomery County Code. The Garage Expansion Project itself and the overall joint development project will result in significant improvements to the treatment of stormwater management on-site.

The proposed development is subject to the Maryland Stormwater Management Act of 2007 and Montgomery County Bill No. 40-10 which requires managing stormwater runoff by using "Environmental Site Design" (ESD) to the "Maximum Extent Practicable". ESD utilizes small scale stormwater management practices, non-structural techniques, and better site planning to mimic natural hydrologic runoff characteristics and minimize the impact of development on water resources.

Currently, the site is over 40% existing impervious and therefore meets the Maryland Department of the Environment criteria for redevelopment. There is an existing stormwater management pond on-site and stormwater is currently conveyed via a closed system (storm drainpipe) to the pond, which ultimately discharges to Rock Creek. The concept stormwater management plan for the site incorporates the State's / County's Environmental Site Design to the Maximum Extent Practicable according to the latest revision to Chapter 5 of the Maryland Department of the Environment Stormwater Management Design Manual. In the ultimate condition, the proposed stormwater management plan will allow for the removal and replacement of the less-efficient existing stormwater pond with planter-box style micro-bioretenion facilities and green roof(s). These ESD techniques have been deemed to be applicable and most suitable to the joint development project due to existing and proposed site constraints.

Mandatory Referral No. MR-2018026 for the Garage Expansion Project included stormwater management via two (2) micro-bio retentions (planter-type) located adjacent to the parking garage, two (2) micro-bio retentions (at-grade facilities) located along Tuckerman Lane, and two (2) underground stormwater management storage and treatment systems located beneath the Kiss & Ride area. As part of the private development project, ESD devices such as bio planters will be provided along the proposed location for the future internal street to treat runoff from that street. Additional stormwater management facilities will be provided, on a phased basis, in connection with the proposed redevelopment.

The site is not in a Special Protection Area, so no separate water quality monitoring plan is required. Sediment and Erosion Control Plans are required to be approved prior to commencement of land disturbance activities onsite and will be prepared and approved for the Garage Expansion Project and for the joint development.

## **12.15 Air Quality**

The Grosvenor-Strathmore Metrorail Station is in Montgomery County, Maryland, which is part of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency-defined Metropolitan Washington Air Quality Designation Area.

The Greater Metropolitan Washington area is currently designated as a nonattainment area for 8-hour ozone (O<sub>3</sub>) and annual average particulate matter less than 2.5 microns (PM<sub>2.5</sub>). The Metropolitan Washington area is in attainment for all other pollutants including carbon monoxide (CO), particulate matter less than 10 microns (PM<sub>10</sub>), nitrogen dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>), sulfur dioxide (SO<sub>2</sub>), and lead (Pb).

## **12.16 Forest**

The site is subject to the requirements of Chapter 22A of the Montgomery County Code. A Natural Resources Inventory/ Forest Stand Delineation No. 4-19990610 was prepared for the site and approved by

M-NCPPC on November 20, 1998. In connection with the previous Mandatory Referral review (No. MR-00201), a new Forest Conservation Plan was approved for the site. The previous Forest Conservation Plan required approximately 1.74 acres of existing forest on the site to be placed in a Forest Conservation Easement and 1.40 acres of reforestation was to occur offsite; Montgomery County has assumed responsibility for fulfilling the off-site reforestation requirement. The modifications proposed by the new Mandatory Referral application (MR-2018026) did not trigger any additional forest conservation requirements.

Given the low quality of the forest on the site and the County's goals and objectives as expressed through the Approved and Adopted Grosvenor Strathmore Minor Master Plan, all afforestation and reforestation requirements are proposed to be satisfied through either payment of a fee-in-lieu or an off-site forest bank. Based on the overall Forest Conservation Worksheet, 4.94 acres of reforestation/afforestation will be required. Mitigation for any specimen trees not within the forest will be provided on-site in connection with the phase of the private development project that relates to their removal.

Fivesquares, not WMATA, will be responsible for implementing the approved forest conservation plan for any impact to forest stands resulting from the private development project.

## **12.17 Threatened and Endangered Species**

The approved Natural Resource Inventory plan (4-99061) on 11/20/1998 has a statement by Michael E. Slattery of the Maryland Department of Natural Resources, Wildlife and Heritage Division that "there are six endangered or threatened species known which have occurred in the vicinity of the site if the conditions are appropriate."

These are the 6 potential species that are listed on the approved Natural Resource Inventory plan.

### **SCIENTIFIC NAME (COMMON NAME)**

*Diacyclops palustris* (A Cyclopoid Copepod)

*Agalinis fasciculata* (Fascicled Gerardia)

*Calystegia spithamea* (Low Bindweed)

*Gentiana villosa* (Striped Gentian)

*Pyrola virens* (Greenish flowered Pyrola)

*Antennaria solitaria* (Single-headed Pussytoes)

While the search returned six species, it is not expected that their habitat will be affected as construction will not occur within the protected forest area. The Garage Expansion Project does not disturb any onsite forest areas.

## **12.18 Utilities**

The Garage Expansion Project is not anticipated to significantly impact existing utilities which serve the project site and adjacent neighborhoods, including water, sewer, storm drain, electric and natural gas services. The private development project will require new utility connections to serve the site that will be evaluated in detail and installed with future residential buildings. Below is a summary of existing and proposed utility services within and adjacent to the overall site:

- **Sewer** – Existing sanitary sewer lines are located under Tuckerman Lane and Strathmore Park Court. There is existing capacity to serve the site based on the approved hydraulic analysis from WSSC. New connections will be installed to serve the future residential buildings.
- **Water** -- An existing 10-inch water line runs under Tuckerman Lane with a current connection and fire hydrant that serve the Park & Ride garage structure. There is

existing capacity to serve the site based on the approved hydraulic analysis from WSSC. New connections will be installed to serve the future residential buildings.

- **Electric** – The Grosvenor-Strathmore Metrorail Station is already served by Potomac Electric Power Company (PEPCO). PEPCO will also provide power to the joint development project. The main feed for electric power will be extended from the facilities located along Maryland Route 355 (Rockville Pike). Working with PEPCO, Fivesquares has confirmed the availability of service for the Garage Expansion Project as well as the future residential development.
- **Natural Gas** – Washington Gas will provide service from the existing gas main located along Tuckerman Lane to the joint development project.

### **12.19 Safety and Security**

In addition to the transportation facilities and operations described in **Section 4.2**, WMATA would be responsible for the provision of police and/or security presence at WMATA-operated facilities. As WMATA is already currently responsible for existing facilities and operations at the Grosvenor-Strathmore Metrorail Station, no significant impact on facilities or operations is expected. WMATA is not responsible for, and is not, providing police and/or security services to the private development project.

The first phase of the development has been reviewed and approved by the Montgomery County Fire Marshal and meets the local regulatory requirements for fire access. There are two local Bethesda Fire Department stations, located at 6700 Democracy Boulevard and 9041 Old Georgetown Road.

### **12.20 Hazardous and Contaminated Materials**

Hazardous and contaminated materials include oil and other hazardous substances that present an imminent and substantial danger to the public health and the environment.

The Phase I Environmental Site Assessment that was completed by Hillis-Carnes in November 2016 included a review of databases which monitor compliance with the federal and state laws. No records for the overall project site were identified through the database search. Based on this Phase I Environmental Site Assessment search, the overall project is not expected to encounter any hazardous or contaminated materials.

### **12.21 Noise and Vibration**

Existing noise sources within and adjacent to the overall project site are dominated by motor vehicle traffic along Maryland Route 355 (Rockville Pike), Metrorail and bus traffic. No increased impact on existing noise sensitive receptors is anticipated as a result of the Garage Expansion Project. Noise impacts and required sound attenuation for the future residential buildings will be evaluated when those buildings are designed. Metrorail operations will not be affected at all and, aside from some temporary effects during construction and the planned reduction in size of the Kiss & Ride area, the existing bus routes and Kiss & Ride circulation through the site will continue in the same manner.

Fivesquares, not WMATA, is solely responsible for quantifying and mitigating noise and vibration impacts from the private development project, including those to the future residences and uses constructed as part of the joint development. This includes following the relevant Montgomery County Guidelines for Noise Impacts in Land Use Planning & Development (M-NCPPC June 1983) and Code of Maryland regulations (COMAR 26.02.03.02) which establish residential noise standards.

## **12.22 Secondary and Cumulative Impacts**

### *4.22.1 Secondary Impacts*

No adverse secondary impacts are anticipated as a result of the Garage Expansion Project or the private development project. Secondary impacts of the private development project will result from the increase in permanent residents and workers at the private development site. The joint development's housing, commercial, and office uses will increase the overall resident and employee population of the North Bethesda area and contribute to a marginal increase in economic activity in the site's vicinity, including demand for goods, services, and housing. Metrorail is expected to see an increase in ridership from the joint development project.

### **4.22.2 Cumulative Impacts**

Cumulative impacts associated with other reasonably foreseeable activities within the vicinity of the Garage Expansion Project would primarily be associated with the transportation impacts from other nearby development projects. The significant projects are already included in the analysis for the Strathmore Square Preliminary Plan approval. The cumulative transportation impacts will consist of the incremental impacts of the joint development project added to the impacts of these separate projects.

#### *4.22.2.1 Traffic*

The long-term adverse cumulative traffic impacts that are anticipated due to the joint development project were considered and approved with the Strathmore Square Preliminary Plan. The necessary mitigation measures proposed for the joint development project are outlined in that approval and will be completed concurrently with the future development phases.

The joint development project is expected to contribute to short-term adverse construction impacts caused by construction vehicles blocking lanes and intermittent road closures, and those impacts will be reviewed and approved with detailed construction design and maintenance of traffic plans.

None of the foregoing affects, or is affected by, the Garage Expansion Project itself. If the same number of commuter parking spaces are maintained at the Metro Station, commuter traffic generated by the Park & Ride garage is expected to remain the same as currently. If there is a reduction in commuter parking at the Metro Station as a result of adopting the proposed modification of the Garage Expansion Project, there may be an incremental reduction in Park & Ride-generated commuter traffic.

#### *4.22.2.2 Transit*

No long-term adverse cumulative impacts to transit services or facilities are anticipated from the private development project. The joint development project would contribute to an increase in Metrorail ridership at the Grosvenor-Strathmore Metrorail Station (see **Section 4.5**) and an increase in bus ridership on routes serving the station. Train car passenger loads, station escalator and stair capacity, platform pedestrian level of service, and station evacuation times were assessed. The analysis found that all aspects of Metrorail service would continue to operate within acceptable levels of service.

Parking for the private development project will be provided by the developer separately from the WMATA Park & Ride garage.

None of the foregoing affects, or is affected by, the Garage Expansion Project.

## **12.23 Construction Impacts**

Construction of the Garage Expansion Project and the private development project will not close the Grosvenor-Strathmore Metrorail Station to passengers at any time. During construction, all modes of



access will be maintained. Phased construction will allow WMATA to retain operations within the bus loop, Park & Ride, and Kiss & Ride facilities via temporary arrangements on the portions of the site not under construction.

Construction noise may be a concern to surrounding neighborhoods. The presence of green areas – specifically the on-site forested area, the Rock Creek stream valley land between the site and the neighborhoods of Parkside and Stonybrook -- will serve as a buffer to mitigate the effect of noise to those residences. All construction activities must adhere to noise control regulations as established in the Montgomery County Code of Ordinances, Maryland noise standards, and WMATA design criteria.

### **13. PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT**

WMATA will keep the public informed about the Garage Expansion Project through public outreach. A public hearing in accordance with the WMATA Compact will be scheduled for March or April 2020. The subject of this hearing will be the proposed reduction of, or deferral in providing, the 194 parking spaces that would be constructed in the western expansion of the existing WMATA parking garage. (The private development project is not the subject of this particular hearing.) This hearing will provide the public with the opportunity to comment. Notice of the public hearing will be published in the *Washington Post* as required by the WMATA Compact. A public hearing staff report summarizing comments received at the hearing with staff responses will be released for public review and comment.

WMATA will collect comments from the public through the following ways:

- Online at [wmata.com](http://wmata.com)
- The public hearing.

In addition to the WMATA Compact public hearing to be conducted by WMATA, Fivesquares and WMATA have had a highly coordinated effort and made significant public outreach efforts in support of the joint development entitlement approvals. Below is a list of the significant outreach and milestone accomplishments:

- WMATA Joint Development Solicitation (to solicit development interest from developers) in 2012
- Fivesquares was selected as joint development partner with the approval of the WMATA Board of Directors in 2013
- M-NCPPC Minor Master Plan Amendment public kick-off meeting July 7, 2016
- Studied community input and develop initial concept<sup>3</sup>
- Fivesquares has sponsored numerous public workshops and meetings, and has met with multiple groups of neighbors, and has over 1,000 followers on its social media site
- M-NCPPC approved Minor Master Plan Amendment July 2017
- Retail pop-up pilot integral to Fivesquares' vision, Spring & Fall 2017
- County Council approved Minor Master Plan Amendment December 2017
- Sectional Map Amendment approved by County Council April 2018
- Mandatory Referral Plan submitted by WMATA to M-NCPPC May 2018
- Mandatory Referral M-NCPPC Hearing July 19, 2018
- Sketch Plan community meeting led by Fivesquares July 2018
- Sketch Plan M-NCPPC hearing November 8, 2018

- Preliminary Plan submission by Fivesquares to M-NCPPC in January 2019
- Preliminary Plan approval by M-NCPPC in June 2019

## **14. REFERENCES**

M-NCPPC. Approved Bicycle Master Plan, November 2018.

M-NCPPC. Approved Countywide Transit Corridors Functional Master Plan, November 2013.

M-NCPPC. Approved Grosvenor-Strathmore Metro Area Minor Master Plan, January 2018.

MCDOT Grosvenor-Strathmore Bicycle and Pedestrian Priority Areas Final Report (BIPPA), June 2015.

WMATA Amended Joint Development Agreement, June 6, 2018.

ESA Phase I study dated November 2016 prepared by Hillis-Carnes Engineering Associates, Inc.

U.S. Census Bureau. American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates (2009-2013).

## **APPENDIX H**

### **NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING STAFF REPORT**



## **Public Hearing Staff Report**

### **Docket R20-01:**

## **Proposed Modifications to Parking Garage Addition at Grosvenor-Strathmore Metro Station**

### **PUBLIC HEARING REPORT AVAILABLE FOR INSPECTION**

Notice is hereby given that the Public Hearing Staff Report on the Proposed Modifications to the Parking Garage Addition at Station is available for review and comment from June 18, 2020. The document addresses comments on the proposal received via the telephone public hearing held on April 20, 2020, as well as comments received during the public comment period. This comment period on the Public Hearing Staff Report is your opportunity to make sure your comments were accurately characterized in the Staff Report, and send clarification if desired. Comments on the Public Hearing Staff Report will be accepted **until 9 a.m. on Monday, June 29, 2020.**

The report is available online at: [wmata.com/plansandprojects](http://wmata.com/plansandprojects).

Copies of the staff report can also be requested to be mailed to you. Please email [WMATAHearingReport@wmata.com](mailto:WMATAHearingReport@wmata.com) or call (202) 962-2511 to make this request.

### **HOW TO SUBMIT WRITTEN COMMENTS ON THE PUBLIC HEARING REPORT**

Written statements and exhibits must be received by **9 a.m. on Monday, June 29, 2020**, and may be emailed to [WMATAHearingReport@wmata.com](mailto:WMATAHearingReport@wmata.com), or mailed to the Office of the Secretary, Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority, 600 Fifth Street, NW, Washington, D.C. 20001. Please reference "Grosvenor Parking" in your submission. All comments received become a part of the public record, which may be made available to the public and may be posted, without change, to [wmata.com](http://wmata.com), including any personal information provided.

## **APPENDIX I**

### **COMMENTS RECEIVED ON THE PUBLIC HEARING STAFF REPORT**

The following comments were submitted by members of the general public in response to the opportunity to post comments about the draft Staff Report after the initial public hearing process concluded. All comments are reprinted verbatim and in full without editing except for some very light editing for punctuation and spelling.

1. I would prefer Option to continue the parking garage construction as planned. To permanently remove 192 parking spaces is not realistic and a ridiculous proposal really given the large volume of commuters that use Grosvenor-Strathmore Metro station. One can't get a parking spot in the garage if they arrive after 9 am as it is.

*Staff response: This comment reiterates the issues previously raised by this and other public commenters. Staff has addressed those issues – including the utilization of the Grosvenor-Strathmore parking facilities at 9 am -- in the body of this Staff Report.*

2. I read with dismay about the plan to permanently remove 200 parking spaces at the Grosvenor metro. I am a resident of a Maryland neighborhood near the Grosvenor metro station and many times would arrive at the metro station to find the parking lot full. You must have quantitative data showing that on weekdays there is a shortage of parking spaces. Lessening the number of spaces will only exacerbate this problem.

Furthermore, the metro station is often used to provide parking for Strathmore events and similarly the lot and garage are full for those events.

Decreasing the number of spaces will serve to decrease ridership of public transportation overall.

Please reconsider the decision to permanently remove the 200 spaces and return to the original plan which was to relocate the 200 surface space to the parking garage.

*Staff response: (1) This commenter is correct that “WMATA must have quantitative data showing that on weekdays there is a shortage of parking spaces.” That data is addressed in the body of the Staff Report in the sections noting peak utilization by day and by quarter-hour for March-June 2019. The Staff Report notes that on Tuesdays-Thursdays, and on half of the Mondays, during non-peak hours utilization of the Grosvenor-Strathmore parking facilities exceeds the capacity that would exist after the temporary surface parking is removed and if the western garage expansion is not built. (2) That parking data never indicated any problem with parking availability for Strathmore events, unless this commenter is referencing mid-day events, and the Music Center at Strathmore submitted a letter to the public hearing that the potential reduction in parking capacity did not cause it any concern.*

3. I support additional parking at Grosvenor Metro.

I am a retiree who relies on Metro for trips into the city and often find limited to almost non-existent parking past morning rush hour.

It never ceases to surprise me that out of one side of its mouth, Montgomery County wants to encourage people to use public transportation, and out of the other side makes recommendations to cut metro parking and expand highways and create toll lanes.

Please, please build much needed additional parking to support Montgomery County citizens.

Please note, one flyer Metro issued says the deadline is 9 a.m. on Monday, June 29, but when I clicked to read the actual proposal, it reads that the deadline for public comment has ended. Seriously, behavior such as this gives an impression that public feedback is not really wanted. If notices were posted at Metro, I would like to remind all involved that there has been a pandemic going on and metro use is all but nil. I am grateful a Nextdoor member posted something on this, otherwise I would never have known about it.

*Staff response: (1) This commenter's observation about "limited to almost non-existent parking past morning rush hour" is borne out by data cited in the Staff Report, at least on Tuesdays-Thursdays and half of Mondays. The question then becomes whether addressing that non-peak demand of 50-150 cars three days a week and on half of Mondays is worth spending \$11+ million dollars. (2) The statement that Montgomery County "makes recommendations to cut metro parking" is not borne out by this Staff Report. It depends on who one views to be "the County." The Montgomery County Planning Department has advocated not building the western expansion, but it is an independent body (the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission), not part of the County government itself. The Montgomery County Department of Transportation, which is part of the County government, has advocated building the western garage expansion. (3) Regarding the confusion about the deadline for commenting, there are sequential deadlines. The latest and final deadline for public comment was indeed "9 a.m. on Monday, June 29" and this comment was submitted on time to meet that deadline, i.e. the end of the comment period for commenting on the draft Staff Report that followed the public hearing period. The earlier deadline that is referenced in this comment was presumably the comment period for the earlier public hearing itself.*

4. Recently, WMATA staff held a poorly publicized and poorly attended virtual hearing on the expansion of the Grosvenor parking garage to accommodate the loss of the surface lot. In part as a result of this hearing, staff recommended delaying the project indefinitely. Two hundred parking spaces will be lost at Grosvenor if the addition is not completed. This is not an acceptable outcome for several reasons.

First, this process was flawed. Only 2 people attended the hearing. They deserve applause for doing so, because there was very little notice to anyone of the rescheduled date. It's a pandemic, many people are telecommuting and Grosvenor metro station was closed. Any signs posted on Metro regarding the hearing may be the usual means of notice, but clearly they would not have been seen by the temporarily displaced commuters.

Second, the reasoning of the report was flawed. The lot is full for all intents and purposes around 8 am. Commuters cannot wait until 10 am for reserved spaces to open. Driving to White Flint during a

normal rush hour adds 15 minutes to most commutes. In addition, the report does not account for development in the region. For example, Toll Brothers is planning 309 single family homes, for which the closest metro is Grosvenor. That development is not in walking distance, nor easily busable to Grosvenor. And that development example is just 1 of many. The lot is already full, and the cars will still keep coming.

Third, the staff report almost completely disregards the promise WMATA made to the neighborhood as part of the approval process for the proposed development on the surface lot. You promised to recreate the parking spaces that would be lost on the Grosvenor site at the Grosvenor site. If WMATA takes the approach of renegeing on promises to neighbors, future development plans should become quite difficult.

Although I think we could all understand a "pandemic pause," the path forward for WMATA should be a plan to follow through on its promise to the neighborhood and build the 200 spaces. If not, Metro ridership from Grosvenor station will become a less viable commute option for the surrounding neighbors.

*Staff response: (1) With regard to the process of this public hearing, WMATA regrets that the pandemic made it impossible to have the traditional in-person public hearing for this matter. However, that does not mean that "this process was flawed." As stated in the Staff Report, Metro used a variety of ways to notify constituents of the new date due to the pandemic, including updated information on Metro's website, updated signs posted in the station and garage, and advertisements on NextDoor and Facebook. County officials and stakeholders were also notified and pushed this information out to their constituents. Nor does the scarcity of in-person comments indicate a flawed process. The public hearing process in this case, in keeping with WMATA practice, offered the opportunity for online comments as well. With over 100 online comments submitted (plus the simultaneous online survey responses), participation was quite robust. (2) The comment states "The lot is full for all intents and purposes around 8 am." As noted previously in this Public Hearing Staff Report, that statement is not borne out by the actual parking counts conducted at 8:00 am during March-June 2019, which showed the parking facilities at Grosvenor-Strathmore were only approximately half-full at that hour; see **Exhibit F** of this Staff Report for the data. (3) Staff disagrees that the "the staff report almost completely disregards the promise WMATA made to the neighborhood as part of the approval process for the proposed development on the surface lot." That issue was discussed (see page 15), as are the later-arising circumstances that led Staff to reconsider WMATA's initial assumption.*

5. I recently heard that it is possible that the Grosvenor metro may be losing 200 spaces because of a last minute change.

While I don't drive to the metro on a daily basis I do know there are several parents at my kids' bus stop who always need to rush off because they say if they don't get there at a certain time they can't find a space.

It's hard to use public transportation when you need to build on time for the possibility of not having a space.

While I suspect someone found a stat that says some spaces are underutilized I can't see how losing spaces in the short term or longer term as population grows is a good idea.



Please make sure the we don't lose any spaces and I would argue for adding more if possible.

Please ensure Grosvenor parking addition is completed. Area is growing and parking gets filled especially when you consider reserved parking.

I've had to get up early everyday to make sure I get parking for over a decade. To begin and not complete is really not considering the development in the area.

*Staff response: This comment reiterates what many other commenters have said about the availability, or lack of availability, of parking at Grosvenor-Strathmore. As the Staff Report notes, the complaints about the unavailability of parking during primary commuter hours are not consistent with the actual quarter-hour by quarter-hour parking counts for representative four-month period of March-June 2019.*

6. Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Staff Report Docket R20-01 on the Grosvenor Metro Station Parking Garage.

The Report makes four mistakes that must be addressed. First, the Report fails to take into account the long-term trend of drastic population increases in the Grosvenor area. Second, the Report fails to account for the fact that upward pressures unrelated to the pandemic demand building the parking lot now. Third, the Report misunderstands how commuters have reacted to the parking shortages at the Grosvenor Metro. And fourth, the Report fails to address the reputational harm that will accrue to WMATA by ignoring a handshake deal it had with the local community. If WMATA nonetheless decides on delay, WMATA must also reserve space for building the addition in the future, and take action to ameliorate the impacts on the Grosvenor community.

First, the Report only analyzes factors that could diminish, but not increase, parking demand in the future. The Grosvenor area has repeatedly made the news for overcrowded schools, for needing to build a new high school to accommodate the increasing population, and for having a huge number of new housing units planned to be built – for example, WMAL, Wildwood, Pooks Hill, and others – that will introduce thousands of new residents to the commuting area just beyond walking distance from the Grosvenor Metro. The Report fails to account for this well-documented trend, and makes no attempt of any kind to examine long- or short-term housing statistics or commuting patterns. The Report also ignores the fact that many of these housing units are already being built, and that the increase is happening now. The Report's failure to document any kind of study on this relevant, easily researchable, and very concrete fact renders the Report, and any decision based upon it, arbitrary and capricious.

Second, as a corollary to the point above, it is not sufficient to simply point to potential reductions from the pandemic and the Grosvenor turnaround and ignore upward pressures on parking at Grosvenor. The planned housing developments are still being permitted and built – even while the pandemic continues. In order to assess whether delay makes any sense, WMATA would need to conduct a study of whether the downward pressures will outweigh the upward pressures on parking on Grosvenor at the time when the garage is completed. If the population and housing upward pressures may outweigh the downward pressures, then the only reasonable course is to continue with the original plan.

Third, the Report fails to recognize that because the Grosvenor parking garage is already well-known for filling up right now, many commuters are already driving into the city because they could not rely on an

unreliable parking situation. I know such people, and in fact, have had to turn around at the Metro and be late to work several times because no spaces were available in the parking garage. So the current situation already results in many people driving into the city instead of taking Metro. Unfortunately, the Report failed to identify, report on, or even ask about such already-pushed-out drivers, so its analysis of impacts is understated. Moreover, as the Report notes, if the parking lot is not built, the parking lot would exceed capacity on most days, and as early as 9:15am – a time that many parents with kids arrive at the Metro. The Report also notes that two-thirds of commuters would not drive to an alternative station. So the practical upshot is that the current situation (excepting the pandemic) already pushes large numbers of commuters out of the Metro system. Delaying building the garage will only exacerbate that trend.

Fourth, the Report fails to adequately assess the reputational impact on WMATA that would accrue if WMATA reneged on its handshake deal with the community. When WMATA proposed the Grosvenor development on the old parking lot, a primary concern of the community was that the new development would reduce parking at the Metro. WMATA sold the Grosvenor development to the community by telling the community that it would *increase* parking at the Metro, not decrease it. To decrease parking after such representations would be a flagrant breach of trust by a public-serving organization. WMATA should hold to its promise to the community it serves. The question is not whether there is a legal commitment to build the addition; no one thought that was necessary when the plans were crystal clear and the promisor was WMATA. To sell a development to the community by promising to increase parking spaces and then effectively *decreasing* them by indefinitely postponing construction when an excuse arises is not worthy of WMATA's good name.

WMATA should carefully assess each of the above questions and do further studies before considering changing the original plan.

If WMATA nonetheless concludes that deferring building the parking lot is the right course, it would be wrong for that to be WMATA's only decision. Rather, WMATA should make two further decisions.

First, in line with Montgomery County's request, WMATA should permanently, and in a legally binding fashion, reserve the space next to the garage for future building of an addition.

And second, WMATA should recognize that any present-value savings in the short-term should be used to ameliorate the potential harm to the community while the delay occurs. The money should be used to encourage and subsidize programs aimed at supporting commuters who can alter their methods of arriving at the Grosvenor Metro, including on a pilot basis. For example, many commuters would be able to use electric scooters or electric bikes if they were more reliably available at the Metro and in the surrounding area. Now, there are so few available on a daily basis that they are unusable by more than a handful of commuters. WMATA should use at least some of the freed-up money to develop an infrastructure for commuters who can use means of transit other than cars.

Thank you for your consideration.

*Staff Response: (1) The first and second comments are that "the Report fails to take into account the long-term trend of drastic population increases in the Grosvenor area" and references general "upward pressures" on demand. There were various general comments to this effect during the public hearing process. As noted in the body of the Staff Report there were few, if any, references to actual projects, although there were references to potential projects in a fairly wide area in that part of Montgomery County. One earlier comment in this Exhibit references 309 single-family homes. Should commuter*

*parking demand at Grosvenor-Strathmore make it appropriate to build the western expansion to the parking garage, that expansion could always be built in the future if Staff's recommendation to defer a decision now is adopted. The area that was proposed to be used for the western expansion is currently in use for transit purposes (the Kiss & Ride) and the County-sponsored "Arts Walk," and is not and never was proposed for private development. (2) The third comment refers to the heavy utilization of the parking facilities and the hours at which the parking facilities fill – issues that have been addressed in the Staff Report -- and raises a new claim of "already pushed-out drivers." The parking data for March-June 2019 and the survey of Grosvenor-Strathmore parking customers conducted in Fall 2019, addressed in the Staff Report, did not indicate that a problem of "pushed out drivers" exists except to a very minor degree, which is addressed in the Staff Report. If the Board believes that such a significant unmet demand exists now or in the future, the Board may elect to have the western garage expansion built at any time. The comment also cites to the Staff Report itself for the proposition "that two-thirds of commuters would not drive to an alternative station." That is an accurate restatement of that portion of the Staff Report, but it actually substantiates the Staff Report's recommendation of deferring a decision on the proposed western expansion to see what future demand is: after all, if one-third ( $1/3^{\text{rd}}$ ) of the parking customers at Grosvenor-Strathmore would drive to an alternative station the logical conclusion is that any foreseeable supply-demand problem at Grosvenor-Strathmore would solve itself at no cost to WMATA if those customers simply do what they profess themselves willing to do, i.e. relocate to another station. (3) The comment also refers to "the reputational harm that will accrue to WMATA by ignoring a handshake deal it had with the local community." Staff notes the concern but also notes that the Montgomery County Planning Department, the agency with whom WMATA staff must deal on projects of this type, has advocated that WMATA not build the western garage expansion. Further, in bringing this matter to the Board of Directors WMATA staff has simply discharged its duty to take changed circumstances into account in evaluating a capital project; WMATA is no different than any other decision-making person or entity in this regard. With respect to the alleged promise to increase parking spaces, this is the first WMATA staff has heard of that, at least with respect to commuter parking. (It is true that overall parking capacity would increase at this Metro Station if the development project was built, but that increase is because the development will provide its own parking, not because commuter parking capacity was ever proposed to be increased.) (4) Finally, there was a new comment that "the present value savings in the short-term should be used to ameliorate the potential harm to the community," particularly by providing electric bicycles and scooters. Aside from the issue of whether there is indeed "potential harm" and how it would be ameliorated, Staff notes that WMATA has not been and is not in the business of providing electric (or non-electric) bicycles and scooters. That said, a Capital Bikeshare station has been called for as part of the County's approval of the private development project (not as part of the garage expansion project) at Grosvenor-Strathmore and, in addition to the more customary bike racks, WMATA anticipates building a WMATA-operated covered Bike & Ride facility at this Metro Station.*