

## **May 21, 2025, Community Meeting Q&A**

### **Meeting Summary:**

The Northern Bus Garage Reconstruction Project team hosted its virtual spring community meeting on May 21, 2025. During the meeting, the team provided an overview of the project, updates on construction progress, retail design, and environmental management. This Q&A document addresses both the questions that were answered during the meeting and those that remain unanswered. A recording of this meeting is available at [wmata.com/northernbusgarage](https://wmata.com/northernbusgarage).

### **Project Overview and Updates**

**Q: What recent water/sewer line work on 14th Street (WMATA side) caused a lane reduction between Decatur and Crittenden?**

A: Pepco has been actively working on 14<sup>th</sup> St. The work that caused a lane reduction was due to the delivery of a Pepco vault and is not directly associated with the Northern Bus Garage.

**Q: What are the allowed construction hours?**

A: Work hours are from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. on weekdays. Saturday work hours are also 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. There are no work hours for Sundays or holidays without a dedicated permit. We strive to stay within these hours and have reminded everyone working on site of these hours.

**Q: Are infrastructure changes planned at the corner of Iowa, West, and Arkansas due to the construction and existing flex posts? If so, how will they be managed?**

A: There will be no permanent changes to the flex posts at this intersection. There are no permanent changes at the road level because it's all underground utility work.

### **Environmental Management Update**

**Q: Are there any contaminated substances or hazardous waste currently running down Arkansas Avenue that might be impacting the garden? Should we have the soil tested? What are the estimates for air and water pollution after completion?**

A: To answer each part of the question in order:

**Contaminants Near the Garden:** Groundwater and heavier contaminants flow southeast. Wells are in place to detect and intercept any off-site contamination, including anything that might impact Arkansas Avenue. These monitoring wells can be converted to pumping wells for treatment and discharge if needed.

**Soil Testing:** We expect groundwater sampling to conclude this month, with results by late July or early August. Based on those results, we'll work with DOEE to assess risks and determine next steps, which may include further monitoring, more wells, or guidance about soil testing.

**Air and Water Pollution Estimates:** Significant air pollution is not expected due to the electric bus facility. A system is already installed to treat soil vapors under the building, with treated air released under a DOEE permit.

**Q: Does this soil have contaminants in it, and is it safe for growing edible plants?**

A: We are actively collaborating with DOEE and following their guidance on site assessments. After the second round of groundwater sampling is completed and the data are reviewed, we will have a clearer understanding of any potential risks. At this time, the analysis shows no evidence of contaminants migrating off-site towards People's Congregational United Church of Christ. That said, we take community concerns seriously and will continue to investigate and consult with DOEE and the community.

**Q: When will you release a full report concerning air, water, and soil contamination?**

A: The latest soil report for the garage site is nearing completion. It was originally expected in late May, but DOEE requested technical revisions, which we are currently implementing. The long-term corrective action plan for the full site, including a full assessment of air, water, and soil contamination, is anticipated this fall. This timeline reflects DOEE's request to revise our risk assessment following two rounds of groundwater sampling, which we are incorporating into the final report.

**Q: Is there an ombudsman to help residents resolve impact with all the subcontractors?**

A: Yes. **Northern Bus Barn Neighbors**, [admin@cleanbus.org](mailto:admin@cleanbus.org), will reach out to all of our elected officials to solicit their input.

### **What to Expect for 2025 & Beyond**

**Q: Has a vendor been selected for the 150 electric buses through the RFP process—and if so, have the buses been ordered, and what is their estimated arrival date? How are you addressing delays in the charging infrastructure, and how will service levels be maintained if the charging equipment is not operational in time? Are you planning for on-street charging as part of the solution?**

A: While construction of the facility remains on schedule and will allow for onsite bus parking, progress on the charging infrastructure has been delayed due to long lead times for critical electrical components. A vendor for the charging equipment has been selected, and we are finalizing paperwork to confirm delivery dates. Once that is complete, we will announce the vendor and provide an updated schedule at the next community meeting. Battery electric bus procurement is a separate but coordinated process aligned with the facility's overall commissioning timeline. The team is actively exploring options to maintain service levels if the charging infrastructure is not fully in place at launch.

**Q: Which WMATA office handles the real estate and commercial component of the project?**

A: Our real estate office.

**Q: When will decisions be made about retail on 14<sup>th</sup> St.?**

A: We are assessing the impact of the Battery Electric Buses (BEB) on the release of that space as planned in 2027, provided it is acceptable to the city.

**Q: When is the Northern Bus Garage scheduled to open?**

A: Updates will be provided at the next community meeting once impacts from Battery Electric Buses (BEB) are fully realized. We are expecting the original spring 2027 opening date to be delayed.

**Q: What's the status of the lighting along Iowa Ave. and Decatur St.?**

A: We plan to install permanent exterior light fixtures at the north end of the building in 2026.