



COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
JOHN A. WILSON BUILDING
1350 PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE NW
WASHINGTON, DC 20004

JANESE LEWIS GEORGE
Ward 4 Councilmember
Chair of the Committee on
Facilities and Family Services

COMMITTEE MEMBER
Committee on Transportation and the Environment
Committee on Executive Administration and Labor
Committee on Public Works and Operations

January 27, 2023

Randy Clarke
General Manager, Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA)
300 7th St SW
Washington, DC 20024

Dear General Manager Clarke:

As the Ward 4 Councilmember, I write to **express my strong support** for WMATA's proposed changes to the transit facilities at the Takoma Metro Station (Docket R23-01). Having reviewed the environmental report and general plans for changes to the facilities, as well as monitoring public comment at the recent public hearing held at Takoma Elementary on January 17, I believe this project will confer significant benefits to the surrounding community. Please associate my comments with the position of ANC 4B, including Chair Alison Brooks (4B08), Commissioner Evan Yeats (4B04), Commissioner Erin Palmer (4B02), and former Commissioner Geoff Bromaghim in support of this proposal. As the Advisory Neighborhood Commission for this area, ANC 4B has conducted an extensive community engagement and public input process to ensure that residents' voices are heard and shape this proposal for the better.

The planned Takoma Station Development will enhance the affordability and livability of Takoma Park. The new development, which will replace an under-utilized surface parking lot, includes over 400 units of new residential housing, at least 62 of which will be affordable and six which will be three-bedroom units affordable at the "extremely low-income" level for households earning less than 30% of the area median income. At a time when our community, the District, and the entire DC region are facing a housing affordability crisis that is driving widespread displacement, these new proposed housing units – especially deeply affordable and family-sized apartments – are desperately needed. Importantly, the developer has an application to the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD)'s HANTA tax abatement program that could significantly increase the number of affordable units at the Takoma Metro Station Development, particularly the number of deeply affordable and multibedroom units. I am urging DHCD to grant the abatement in order to accomplish this goal.

Further, the development includes new retail space, safer pedestrian facilities, modern bike storage, and improved bus-route accessibility that will improve the value and function of the site. The proposal also includes expanded green space for the public – an amenity of immeasurable value in our urban environment. I also appreciate the consideration of the project's impacts on stormwater management, sustainability through solar energy, and environmental justice. Further, I concur with the designers that the plan is consistent with the District's Comprehensive Plan, especially that the Takoma Metrorail station is a key location for transit-oriented mixed-use development.

Thank you for the opportunity to share my support for this proposal and thank you for your ongoing work to improve transit accessibility and development in Ward 4 and throughout the region.

Sincerely,

Janeese Lewis George
Ward Councilmember
Chair, Committee on Facilities & Family Services