



City of Takoma Park

Department of Housing & Community Development

COUNCIL MEMORANDUM

DATE: April 26, 2023

TO: Mayor & City Council, City of Takoma Park

CC: David Eubanks, Acting Deputy City Manager
Daryl Braithwaite, Director, Public Works
Rosalind Grigsby, Planning & Development Services Manager
Alexander Freedman, Planner

FROM: Ira Kowler, Acting Director, Housing & Community Development

SUBJECT: Takoma Metro/Takoma Station Redevelopment Update

BACKGROUND

In Spring 2022, the firm EYA proposed a redevelopment plan for the 6.7-acre parcel owned by the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA), bordered by Eastern Ave NW, Cedar Street NW, and Carroll Street NW, adjacent to the Takoma Metro Station. In alignment with WMATA's 10-Year Strategic Plan for Joint Development around its MetroRail stations, the project, known as Takoma Station, adds transit-accessible, affordable housing, along with new retail shops, public green space, pedestrian infrastructure, and WMATA facilities circulation.

The proposed development of the site is divided into two processes.

1. Mixed-Use Development on the Metro Station Parking Lot: The primary project is managed by EYA, and its scope includes all of the residential, commercial, green space, and parking elements of the project. As of their April submittals to the DC Office of Zoning, the Takoma Station project includes:
 - 434 units of housing (15% affordable, but possibly up to 33% depending on DC tax abatement program);
 - 17,000 square feet of ground-level retail;
 - 1.8 acres of public open space;
 - 163 residential parking spaces;
 - 67 retail parking spaces (metered, available to the public for any use).
2. Reconfiguration of the WMATA Bus Bays and Drop-Off: WMATA manages the second process, which focuses only on the reconfiguration of the WMATA bus bays and Kiss-and-Ride spaces. The changes proposed include:
 - 10 WMATA bus bays (one more than exists at present);
 - 16 Kiss & Ride spaces;



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- 0 WMATA-managed parking spaces

PROJECT COMPONENTS

The City's Housing and Community Development (HCD) Department supports the broad goals of activating a large, underutilized parking lot into a mixed-use development that will bring new housing, retail opportunities, and green space to benefit City residents. Based on current public submissions and the forthcoming DC and WMATA development review processes, the Department does not have any major concerns about the project at this time. However, HCD is aware that various components of the project will impact the City and its residents and will continue to provide residents updates on key points in the development review process and recommend additional action as necessary. A brief summary of these components based on publicly available documents is provided below.

Stormwater Management

The existing parking lot has no stormwater management on the site. Any future development would need stormwater facilities approved by the DC Department of Energy & Environment (DOEE). In the current Planned Unit Development (PUD) submission, the project team proposes a variety of stormwater strategies including green roofs and bioretention facilities. Based on an initial review of the environmental impact data in the PUD submission and the requirements of DOEE by the City's Civil Engineer, staff have no current concerns over the project's stormwater impacts and believe the project could result in an improved stormwater impact. The City will continue to monitor more detailed stormwater management proposals that are submitted during the development review process.

To stay engaged on Stormwater Management Review: DOEE provides Stormwater Management Regulations and a Stormwater Management Guidebook that outline design requirements and plan review for large development projects. Stormwater management will be reviewed as a portion of the DC Zoning approval process. Current stormwater impacts can be seen in the PUD submission.

Parking

There are currently 160 WMATA-managed Kiss & Ride parking spaces in the Takoma Metro parking lot¹. In their April submission to the DC Office of Zoning, the project team proposes 163 residential parking spaces and 67 metered, public parking spaces, including legally mandated Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) handicapped spaces. Based on their environmental evaluation, which showed only 107.4 customers used the Kiss & Ride facility

¹ This count includes 3 motorcycle spaces and 6 ADA-compliant handicap spaces (both of these space types are non-metered)



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through an average weekday, WMATA is not proposing any WMATA-managed parking spaces. A summary table of existing and proposed parking is provided below:

	Current	Proposed
Publicly Available, Metered Spaces	151	67
ADA-Compliant Handicap Spaces	6	TBD
Residential Parking Spaces	N/A	163

Since residential parking will be limited to DC residents living on the site, the City has reviewed the impacts of the smaller number of publicly available spaces and any potential spillover effects in Takoma Park from the overall parking footprint. Based on the City Council's priorities for an Environmentally Sustainable Community and the values highlighted in the City's 2019 Sustainability and Climate Action Plan, the City is seeking to reduce vehicle miles traveled and lowering the City's overall climate impact. Much of HCD programming is focused on developing transit-alternatives such as pedestrian and bike improvements to allow residents to access the Metro Station and local retail. Based on WMATA's evaluation of current Kiss & Ride usage, along with the City's investment in transit alternative infrastructure and programming, HCD has not identified any issues of concern regarding adverse parking impacts for City residents attempting to access the Metro or shop and dine in Main Street Takoma. Additionally, the existence of residential parking permitted areas on the City streets near the project should protect neighboring residents from potential adverse street-parking impacts from the lower numbers of public parking spaces on the site.

To stay engaged on Parking: Parking changes will be assessed as part of both the WMATA Compact Development Review (for changes to the Kiss & Ride parking options) and the DC Zoning review for residential and public parking on the project site. Current WMATA parking findings can be seen in the Environmental Evaluation. Project parking proposals can be found in the zoning case information.

Traffic Impacts

The proposed project will create 434 new units of housing, approximately 17,000 square feet of new retail, and add additional parking spaces in the greater Takoma Park area. Thus, the project will have an impact on vehicular and other transit traffic on City streets. The City of Takoma Park does not have funding or expertise to conduct an independent traffic analysis. For development projects within City boundaries, traffic analysis would be



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managed by Montgomery County. In DC, as other jurisdictions, traffic analysis is required as a part of any development review and permitting process for large developments. DC Department of Transportation staff have confirmed that the study area for the Takoma Station traffic study will include intersections in neighboring jurisdictions such as Takoma Park and are coordinating with the Montgomery County Department of Transportation (MCDOT). As with a development inside City boundaries, HCD will defer to the expert advice of MCDOT and other partners to review the traffic analysis and provide feedback for next steps.

To stay engaged on Traffic: Traffic impacts will be reviewed as part of the DC Zoning approval process. Staff will provide updates from DC DOT on how the official development review process on traffic analysis will impact the City and necessary next steps.

Project Design

The project proposes a zoning change to consolidate the site into a single, mixed-use zone. Currently the site is a mix of three different mixed-use and residential zones ([MU-4](#), [NC-2](#), and [RA-1](#)). The requested new zoning is [MU-5A](#). When paired with the PUD bonus, which allows greater density in exchange for increased unit affordability, the requested zoning would allow up to 90 feet in building height, although the proposed design tops out at 76 feet. The project plans for 1.8 acres of open space, including a public green space adjoining the City boundary at Eastern Avenue. Based on current plans, HCD welcomes the opportunity to increase housing opportunities and bring additional amenities to Takoma Park residents.

To stay engaged on Project Design: Residents can monitor any proposed site zoning changes through DC Zoning and the PUD process. Project height, density, and development requirements will be governed by the site's zoning and overlay districts or exemptions.

STAY INVOLVED

Since the proposed Takoma Station project is outside the boundaries of the City of Takoma Park, the City and staff have no official regulatory review during the development process. However, the City will continue to monitor, analyze, and provide updates and feedback on the project design as it continues through the various review processes. Residents are encouraged to monitor and participate in the DC and WMATA development review processes. Interested residents should be aware of three key upcoming processes in particular:

- **Hearing: WMATA Board Vote on the Development Compact**
 - *Meeting Date:* TBD (planned for mid-May)
 - *Meeting Location:* Metro Headquarters (300 7th St SW, Washington, DC)



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- *To Submit Comments:* Submit comments in-person at the meeting, or via audio or video recordings that can be submitted using the instructions on [WMATA's Public Comment web page \(LINK\)](#).
- At this meeting, the WMATA Board will make a final determination about whether to approve the proposed changes to WMATA's bus and kiss-and-ride configuration, based on review of the Draft Staff Report.

- **Hearing: DC Historic Preservation Review Board**
 - *Meeting Date:* May 25 or June 1
 - *Meeting Location:* Virtual (access the link [here](#): <https://planning.dc.gov/node/1654111>)
 - *To Submit Comments:* Submit written public comments, or register to testify in real-time on the meeting at the [HPRB's agenda page](#).
 - At this meeting, the DC HPRB will review EYA's full project proposal for compliance with historic preservation regulations in DC.

- **Hearing: DC Zoning Commission**
 - *Meeting Date:* June 15 at 4:00 PM
 - *Meeting Location:* Virtual (links for the meeting are not yet posted to the [DCZC web page](#); the meeting details appear to be posted one week out.)
 - *To Submit Comments:* Follow the instructions for how to testify during the meeting on the virtual hearings website: <https://dcoz.dc.gov/service/watch-live-virtual-zcbza-hearingsmeetings>

For more information on these projects and their ongoing process, visit their project pages:

- [DC Zoning Case Report Page \(DCOZ\)](#)
- [Takoma Station project page \(EYA\)](#)
- [Takoma Joint Development project page \(WMATA\)](#)
- [Stormwater Management Guideline and Protocols \(DOEE\)](#)