

Access to Rhode Island Ave. Metro Station: FACT SHEET

While investments in pedestrian access to the Rhode Island Ave. Metro station remain uncertain for this difficult site, a large, costly parking garage moves forward, despite its limited benefits to WMATA, transit riders, surrounding residents, and D.C. taxpayers. Instead of paying for the \$8 million Metro replacement parking with a TIF (as proposed), a TIF could benefit D.C. taxpayers and Metro riders more if it was used to pay for a \$2 million pedestrian bridge and pedestrian access improvements.



- **Residents of the moderate income neighborhood of Edgewood, on the west side of the railroad tracks adjacent to Rhode Island Avenue Metro station, identify poor pedestrian access as a major problem.** Everyday, thousands of residents and students cross the CSX railroad tracks to take practical but dangerous shortcuts to and from the Metro station.
- **Joint Development of the 387 space Metro surface parking lot provides an opportunity to implement WMATA's new Joint Development policy favoring transit-oriented development, pedestrian-originated trips, and parking flexibility.** Since the Rhode Island Ave. Metro station opened as the terminus of the original Red Line in 1976, greater parking facilities have been offered at more distant suburban sites. The planned New York Ave. station – between Rhode Island Ave. and Union Station -- will offer no parking. If land costs are included, a park & rider costs the system a net \$6/day to subsidize.ⁱ [Bus riders cost the District \$3/day]. Research indicates that the cost of adding a new rider is cheap via pedestrian & bicycle improvements, and relatively expensive for structured parking.ⁱⁱ
- **The Joint Development project, by Mid-City Urban, LLC will provide approximately 1279 transit trips a day through new residential and retail uses.**ⁱⁱⁱ This is a substantial increase over the ridership generated by the existing 387 parking spaces.
- **WMATA, despite its new Joint Development policy, is requiring 1:1 replacement of commuter parking.** WMATA argues that because most parking spaces are used when priced at \$2/day, all parking should be replaced. 50-60% of the cars that park in the parking lot are from outside D.C. Re-assessing the opportunity costs of replacement parking versus other investments to generate ridership for this inner urban station has never been considered by WMATA.
- **Mid-City Urban is asking the District of Columbia to pay for the WMATA parking. The cost is approximately \$8 million.**

- **Edgewood neighborhood residents are very supportive of pedestrian bridge to link the Metro station to the planned Metropolitan Branch Trail, creating safe new connections for west side residents.** Residents have also requested an improved pedestrian environment along Rhode Island Avenue. The potential increase in ridership from improved pedestrian connections to the 900-unit mixed income Edgewood Terrace Apartments and other west side residences has not been evaluated.
- **Instead of the District of Columbia subsidizing construction of 387 commuter parking spaces for \$4 million in capital costs, and ongoing subsidies for operating costs, we propose that the City & WMATA evaluate the most cost-effective access investments, across all modes, that would increase ridership to the station.** In particular, the potential increase in pedestrian-originated trips from investments in a pedestrian bridge and pedestrian improvements along Rhode Island Ave., should be compared against the ridership generated by park & riders, and the capital, operating and land development opportunity costs.
- Community Contacts:
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 - Jeff Tumlin, transportation consultant, Tel. 415-284-1544
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 - Allen Greenberg, Federal Highway Administration, parking pricing & multi-modal access planning expert, 202-366-2425
 - Cyril Crocker, Deputy Mayor's Office of Economic Development, Tel. 202-727-8813
 - Gregory Walker, Finance & Program Development (commuter parking capital & operating costs), Tel. 202-962-1818
 - Denton Kent, WMATA – heads Joint Development, insists on 1:1 Parking replacement for RI Ave. Project
 - Councilmember Jim Graham, Vice Chair WMATA, wrote letter favoring considering reducing parking replacement at RI Ave. JD and support for the pedestrian bridge concept. (I can fax you the letter)

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ⁱⁱ Tumlin

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