

April 20, 2020

WMATA Board of Directors
600 5th 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