

## TECHNICAL MEMORANDUM

To: Noah Hagan  
Erkin Ozberk  
DDOT – PSD

Cc: Agyei Hargrove  
Michelle Wilson  
Madeline Williams  
DGS  
DOC  
Cozen O'Connor

From: Erin Lin  
Ashley Orr, PE  
Erwin Andres, PE

Date: August 26, 2024

Subject: 501 New York Avenue NW – Transportation Statement

### Introduction

This memorandum presents a Transportation Statement for the Board of Zoning Adjustment special exceptions relief case (BZA Case No. 21177) for the proposed enlargement of the existing conforming large scale government use located at 501 New York Avenue NW in the Mount Vernon Triangle neighborhood of Washington, DC. Figure 1 identifies the regional site location within the District, and Figure 2 displays an aerial image of the site.

The Project Site is located on a triangular-shaped lot and is bounded by 5<sup>th</sup> Street NW to the east, New York Avenue NW to the south, 6<sup>th</sup> Street NW to the west, and L Street NW to the north. The existing building, a two-story structure plus basement, has most recently served as the home of the Metropolitan Police Department (“MPD”) Traffic Safety and Specialized Enforcement Branch but has recently been vacated in preparation for the proposed use. Previously, various MPD units utilized the site, including Major Crash Investigations, Motor Carrier Inspections, and Youth Services Division. The existing building already includes 19 holding cells that, as recently as 2017, were used to hold detainees prior to arraignment in DC Superior Court. As the MPD headquarters located at the Henry J. Daly Building (300 Indiana Avenue NW) is to be renovated, the Department of General Services (“DGS”), on behalf of the Department of Corrections (“DOC”), is pursuing special exception relief for an interior-only renovation of the existing building to increase the number of holding cells from 19 to 46 in order for the site to be used on a temporary basis as the Central Cell Block (“CCB”).

The Project Site provides vehicular access via two (2) existing curb cuts located on L Street NW and New York Avenue NW. Waste collection vehicles access the site via L Street NW. The vans transporting detainees will access the site via the curb cut on L Street NW and exit the site via New York Avenue NW. Pedestrian access is along the site’s frontage on New York Avenue NW.

The proposed renovation of the Project includes the following:

- 46 holding cells; and
- 27 employees, with nine (9) employees per shift.

The purpose of this Transportation Statement is to:

- Review existing conditions of the site, including vehicular network, multimodal transportation facilities, and curbside management, adjacent to the site, as well as site operations; and

- Review the proposed project's on-site transportation components including site operations, trip generation, and site access and circulation.

The findings of this study conclude that:

- The vehicular network surrounding the Project Site is well-developed, supporting a high volume of car traffic to and from the site;
- The Project Site is well-integrated into a robust multimodal network, including public transit as well as bicycle and pedestrian routes, which could support alternative transportation modes. However, given the nature of previous and proposed building uses, which are heavily reliant on vehicular access for security and operational purposes, these multimodal options are not expected to noticeably reduce the site's vehicle traffic impact;
- Both existing curb cuts are vitally important to the secure operation of the site and use of the sallyport. As such, both curb cuts are proposed to be maintained;
- The existing off-street and on-street parking designated for police use only is required to support the operational needs of the proposed use, and are sufficient to satisfy the proposed parking and staging demand. DOC has committed to work with MPD on a staging plan that will mitigate traffic concerns and ensure no van queuing occurs in public space outside of the curbside areas that have been designated for police parking only;
- Based on information provided by DOC on employee shift times, the average daily headcount of detainees, and operational patterns concerning the transport of detainees to and from the facility, the proposed site is expected to generate a maximum of 96 vehicle trips per day, with between three (3) to five (5) inbound trips and three (3) to five (5) outbound trips occurring in the AM peak hour, and zero (0) inbound trips and zero (0) outbound trips occurring in the PM peak hour. As compared to ITE Trip Generation estimates for the site's previous use, the proposed use is expected to experience a substantial net decrease in peak hour and daily trips;
- A heavy majority of the site's vehicular activity is expected to occur outside of peak hours, thereby limiting the site's impact on the transportation network during commuter periods;
- The proposed project will ensure head-in/head-out van maneuvers through public space; and
- The proposed Project will have negligible impact on the surrounding transportation network as it generates fewer trips compared to existing conditions.

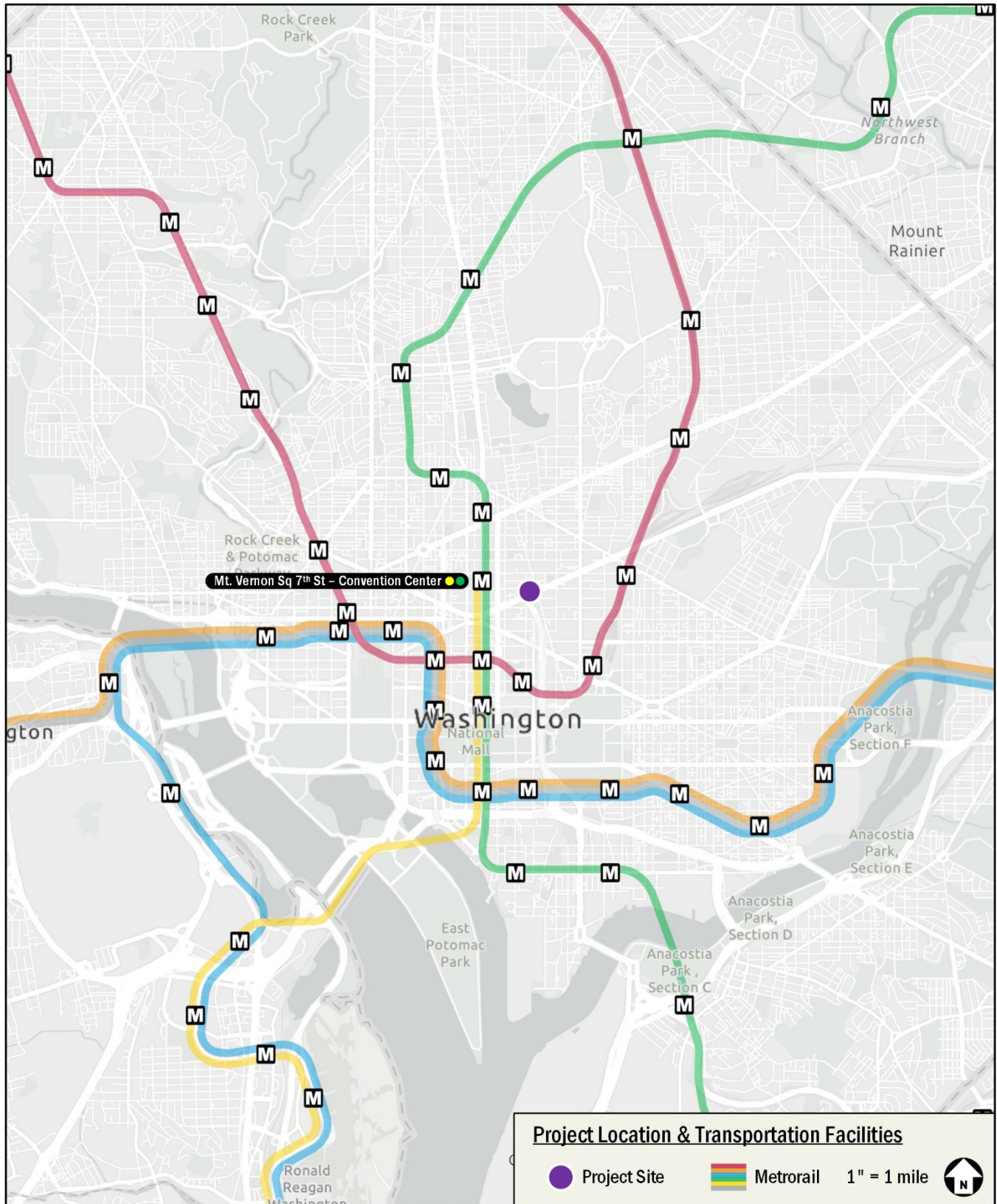


Figure 1: Project Location & Transportation Facilities





Figure 2: Site Aerial

---

## Existing Conditions

This section reviews the vehicular, transit, bicycle, and pedestrian facilities, as well as the existing site operations and the curbside management in the vicinity of the Project Site. The Project Site is located in a D-4-R zone in the Mount Vernon Triangle neighborhood, a mixed-use area with a blend of commercial, residential, religious, and institutional uses. This zone permits high-density development with a focus on residential and retail uses. The Walter E. Washington Convention Center is one block to the west of the Project Site. Additionally, the Project Site is near Chinatown to the south, known for its cultural landmarks and the Capital One Arena.

### ***Vehicular Network***

The vehicular network surrounding the Project Site is well-developed, supporting a high volume of car traffic to and from the site. The Project Site benefits from its proximity to several major arterial roads, including Massachusetts Avenue NW and New York Avenue NW, both of which, along with nearby I-395, provide direct access to key destinations throughout the District and the surrounding region.

Additionally, the Project Site is well-integrated into a robust multimodal network, including public transit as well as bicycle and pedestrian routes, which could support alternative transportation modes, as discussed in the next section. However, given the nature of previous and proposed building uses, which are heavily reliant on vehicular access, these multimodal options are not expected to noticeably reduce the site's vehicle traffic impact.

### ***Multimodal Facilities***

The Project Site is well-served by five (5) Metrobus routes – WMATA Routes 70, 74, 79, D4, and P6. The closest Metrorail station to the site is the Mt. Vernon Square 7<sup>th</sup> Street – Convention Center Metrorail station, which is served by the Green and Yellow Lines, and is located approximately 0.2 miles from the site. Service for the station Monday through Thursday is between 5:23 AM and 11:49 PM, between 5:23 AM and 12:49 AM Monday through Friday, 7:23 AM to 12:49 AM on Saturday, and 7:23 AM through 11:49 PM on Sunday. The robust pedestrian network surrounding the site connects the site to these transit facilities.

The site is located within 0.25 miles of protected bicycle lanes along K Street NW and bicycle lanes along 5<sup>th</sup> Street NW. There are four (4) Capital Bikeshare stations located within a quarter mile of the Project Site. These bicycle facilities connect the site to the greater network throughout the District.

### ***Curbside Management***

Existing curbside uses adjacent to the Project site were reviewed in accordance with the approved scope as shown in Figure 3. Existing curbside uses along the northern, southern, and western frontages of the Project Site are dedicated for police vehicle parking only. Along the south side of L Street NW, the north side of New York Avenue NW, and the east side of 6<sup>th</sup> Street NW, parking is restricted for police vehicle use at all times. Due to the over 42-foot curb-to-curb pavement width along this block of L Street NW, vehicles back in and park perpendicular to the curb, while parking on 6<sup>th</sup> Street NW and New York Avenue NW is parallel. The curbside spaces on the west side of 6<sup>th</sup> Street NW and the south side of New York Avenue NW allow parallel parking outside of 4 PM to 6:30 PM between Monday and Friday.

There are no proposed changes to the curbside management along the adjacent blocks of the Project site as part of this interior renovation.

### ***Existing Site Operations***

The existing site has been used by units in the MPD over the past 50 years and has, at times, been used as a holding facility for detainees prior to arraignment in DC. Most recently, the site was occupied by the MPD Traffic Safety and Specialized Enforcement Branch. The building houses 19 currently-unused holding cells on the ground floor and basement level. Each cell is double occupancy for a total capacity of 40 detainees.

---

Four (4) perpendicular off-street surface parking spaces are designated for police vehicles only. While this off-street parking is technically in directly adjacent public space, it appears and functions as part of the subject property. As such, for the sake of this report, these off-street spaces will be referred to as “on-site.” Overflow parallel parking occurs along the jersey barrier on the north side of the parking lot. Additional on-street parking spaces for police vehicle use only are provided along the site’s frontage on L Street NW, New York Avenue NW, and 6<sup>th</sup> Street NW.

The Traffic Safety and Specialized Enforcement Branch is staffed 24 hours a day, Monday through Friday, with weekend shifts as needed. Staff shift times are from 5:30 AM to 2 PM, 1:30 PM to 10 PM, and 9:30 PM to 6 AM, with officer turnover occurring outside of typical peak periods. With 15 employees per shift, a total of 45 officers are expected on-site daily. In addition to their daily commutes, these officers generate additional vehicular activity throughout the day as they travel to and from the site in response to traffic incidents across the District. The frequent travel results in a higher overall traffic impact than what might typically be projected from a standard government office.



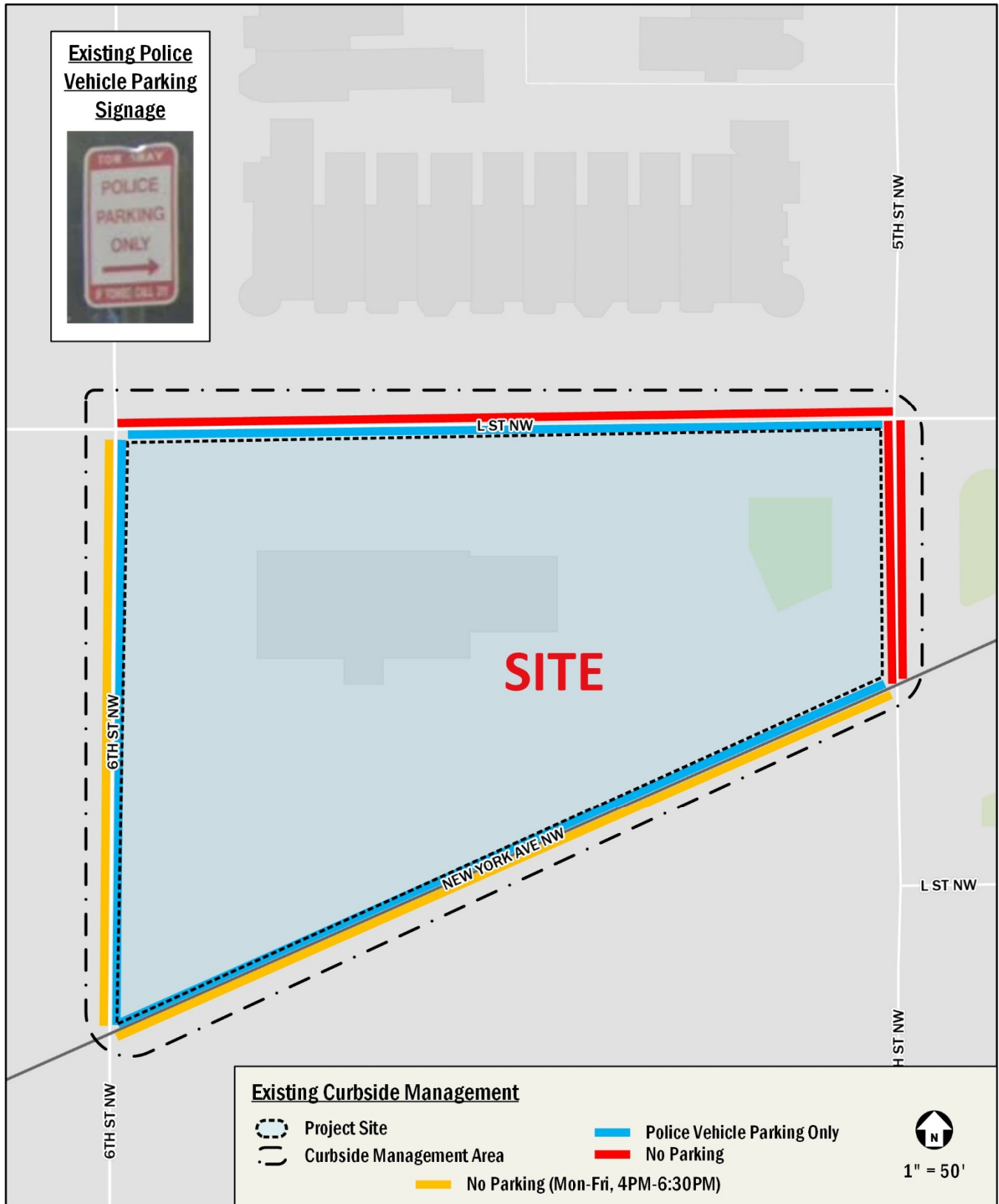


Figure 3: Existing Curbside Management

## Proposed Site Operations

### ***Proposed Site Operations & Access***

The Applicant proposes to renovate the interior of the existing building to increase its holding-cell capacity, transforming it into a facility capable of accommodating up to 85 detainees across 46 holding cells. The facility will be staffed 24 hours per day by approximately nine (9) DOC employees per shift, a reduction from the 15 MPD officers per shift currently assigned to the Traffic Safety Division. Three (3) employee shifts will take place from 5 AM to 1:30 PM, 1 PM to 9:30 PM, and 9 PM to 5:30 AM, and staff turnover will take place outside of peak periods. With nine (9) employees per shift, a total of 27 officers are expected on-site daily. Access to the facility will be strictly limited to DOC staff, law enforcement personnel, and a limited number of service contractors and maintenance personnel as required, with no visitors permitted. Food deliveries (which are done using a Ford Transit Connect van) will occur once daily.

Based on information received by DOC, an average daily headcount of 25 to 38 detainees is expected. DOC estimates that 10 to 15 MPD transport vehicles will access the site randomly throughout the day to deliver new arrestees from Police Districts across DC. While the average number of detainees per vehicle is difficult to predict and will likely vary from day to day, based on the average daily headcount, an average of two (2) to three (3) detainees are expected per vehicle. Vehicles transporting arrested individuals will enter the site through the existing curb cut on L Street NW, unload in the secure sallyport<sup>1</sup> located on the east side of the building, and exit via the existing curb cut on New York Avenue NW. Both existing curb cuts are vitally important to the secure operation of the site and use of the sallyport. As such, both curb cuts are proposed to be maintained.

The facility is designed for short-term detention, with detainees held for only 12 to 24 hours before being transferred to court each day beginning at 9 AM, except on Sundays. DOC utilizes 2024 Ford Transit 250 Cargo Vans, which have a maximum capacity of 10 passengers, to transport detainees to court. DOC staff will work to place as many individuals in each van as possible, except for individuals with special accommodation or restrictions who may need to be transported individually.

Transportation of detainees will be carefully managed, with DOC and MPD vans consolidating the transfer process. Specifically, DOC has committed to work with MPD on a staging plan that will mitigate traffic concerns and ensure no van queuing occurs outside of the curbside areas that have been designated for police parking only. Based on the information provided by DOC, at least two (2) vans will be staged on-site at all times: one near the sallyport entrance off New York Avenue NW, ensuring the curb cut remains unblocked, and another in a reserved on-street parking space. Similar to the process described above for delivering new arrestees to the site, vans will enter the site through the existing curb cut on L Street NW and enter the sallyport where secure loading of detainees will occur. The surface parking lot on-site will be used for staging vehicles as needed and can support up to four (4) vehicles as they wait to enter the sallyport. In addition to the perpendicular vehicle parking on L Street NW, New York Avenue NW and 6<sup>th</sup> Street NW have the capacity to support up to eight (8) cargo vans at any one time, well exceeding the expected number of vans the CCB will require for normal operation of the site. The Applicant will work with DDOT during the Public Space permitting process to ensure that the existing curbside management signage is appropriate.

### ***Site Trip Generation***

#### ***ITE Trip Generation***

The Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE) provides a widely recognized methodology for estimating trip generation to assess the transportation impact of a development and offers a standardized approach to predict the number of vehicle trips generated by various land uses. For this analysis, the ITE Trip Generation serves as the foundation for calculating weekday peak hour trip generation, and provides a conservative look at potential traffic impacts generated by the site during AM and PM

---

<sup>1</sup> A sallyport is a secure entryway that consists of a series of doors or gates. Merriam-Webster Dictionary (2024).