



WMATA 490MHZ RADIO EQUIPMENT RELOCATION

L'ENFANT PLAZA
300 7TH STREET SW
WASHINGTON, DC 20024



GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
BOARD OF ZONING ADJUSTMENT



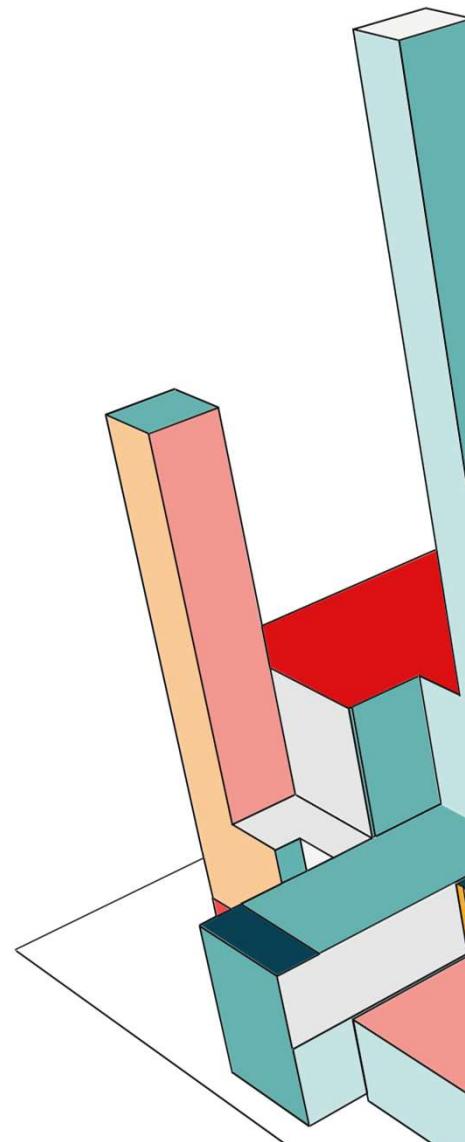
**CASE NO. 21331
SEPTEMBER 10, 2025**

OVERVIEW

BACKGROUND

The Property occupies the entirety of Square 464 and has a total land area of approximately 42,140 square feet. Square 464 is bounded by Virginia Avenue, SW, to the north, 7th Street, SW, the west, D Street, SW, to the south, and Reservation 115 and 6th Street, SW, to the east. The Property is zoned D-5. The mixed-use building at the Property serves as WMATA's headquarters. The building contains offices for WMATA's regional operations as well as ground floor retail uses.

WMATA received a Special Exception from the BZA on October 5, 2022 (Order No. 20799) to install seven building mounted antennas and has maintained and operated these communications antennas at the roof level of its headquarters for use by WMATA's Operations Control Centers ("OCCs") for the Metrorail, Metrobus, and Metro Transit Police Department. These antennas are necessary and integral to OCCs operations. Through OCCs operations, WMATA commands and controls rail, bus, and police operations, all of which are essential to WMATA's core functions and critical to the public health and welfare of residents, workers and visitors to the District of Columbia.



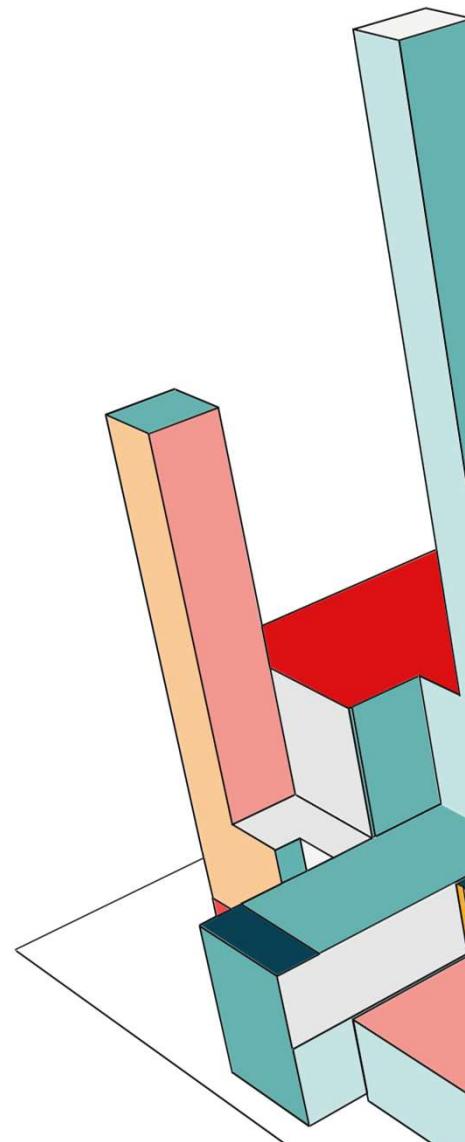
ANTENNAS

To address its operational requirements, WMATA proposes to add two transmission antennas, one receiving antenna, and 2 GPS antennas to decrease the demand load on the existing antennas and continue to provide seamless communication to its core functions.

Each of the transmission antennas will measure approximately 17 feet 5 inches tall and will be mounted along the inside wall of the open rooftop mechanical enclosure with a total of approximately 16 feet 6 inches projecting above the enclosure.

Similarly, the single receiving antenna will measure approximately 17 feet 5 inches and project above the rooftop structure approximately 16 feet 6 inches. This antenna would be mounted along the outside wall of an enclosed portion of the rooftop structure in the same location as the existing antennas, near to the center of the building.

Finally, WMATA is proposing a cluster of 2 GPS antennas to be attached to the interior wall of the rooftop structure and project approximately 1 foot 6 inches about the roof of the structure.



BUILDING MOUNTED ANTENNA REQUIREMENTS

With the application for Order No. 20799, the District of Columbia Zoning Administrator confirmed that the antennas are appropriately categorized as building-mounted antennas given that they all are attached to the walls of the building's rooftop structure, as shown on the attached drawings.

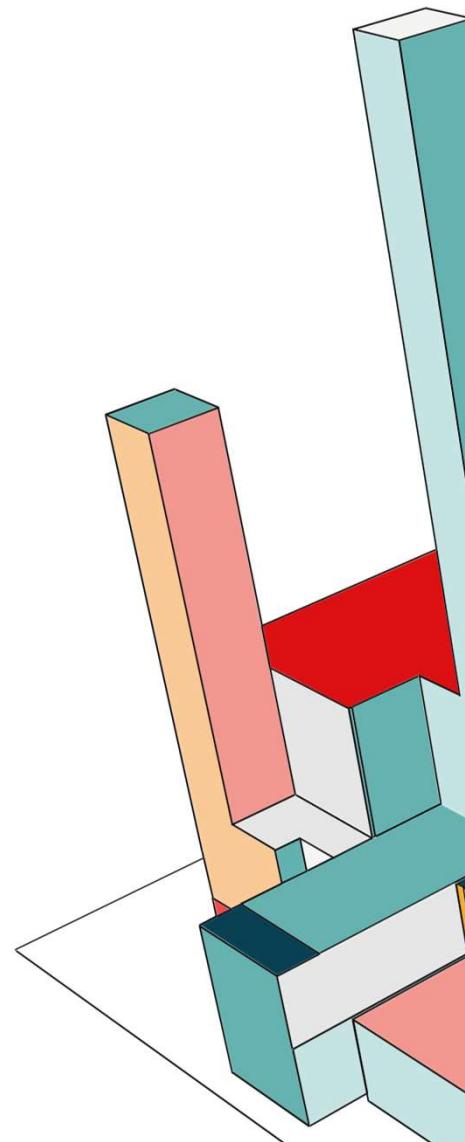
Pursuant to Subtitle C § 1305.1 all building-mounted antennas, shall comply with the following conditions:

- (a) *The top of the antenna shall not extend above the top of the wall, or roof of the building or structure to which it is mounted;*

As shown on the drawings included with this application, the antennas will each extend above the top of the structure to which it is mounted. As a result, the Applicant respectfully requests special exception approval from this requirement, as is further discussed below.

- (b) *Each antenna installation shall be located or screened such that its visibility from public spaces, navigable waterways, historic landmarks, and national monuments is minimized to the greatest practical extent;*

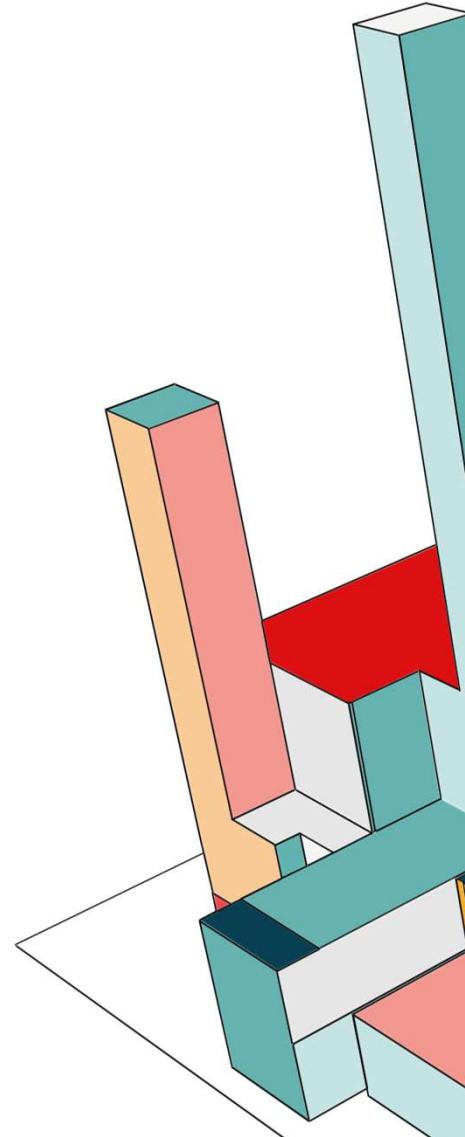
The Property is located in proximity to a number of public spaces, landmarks and navigable waterways, including Hancock Park one block to its northwest, the Eisenhower Memorial and the National Mall a few blocks to its north, and the landmarked HUD headquarters and GSA Regional Office building to its southwest and west, respectively. The Washington Channel is located several blocks to the south.



BUILDING MOUNTED ANTENNA REQUIREMENTS

The antennas are minimized to the greatest practical extent as their unobstructed heights are required in order to transmit and receive critical OPPs communications from all directions of the headquarters building. The antennas all are of the cylindrical pole variety and each measure only approximately 3 inches in diameter. Given their verticality and very slim profile, the antennas are anticipated to be visually unobtrusive. Further, with regard to views from the north, west and south, the building is largely bounded by office buildings of between 7 and 10 stories in height. Notably, both the GSA building and the HUD headquarters contain a number of roof-level antennas that extend well above their rooftop structures. In the case of the GSA building, the antennas appear to be mounted atop the building penthouse and extend a number of stories in height.

Given the Property's location, new construction is reviewed by the United States Commission of Fine Arts ("CFA") pursuant to the Shipstead-Luce Act. As a result, the CFA regulates the height, exterior design, and construction of private and semipublic buildings adjacent to public buildings and grounds of major importance. We have engaged with CFA staff regarding the antennas and CFA responded they had no objection to the application for the additional antennas and also, WMATA is not subject to the review under the Shipstead-Luce Act. See correspondence from 11/21/2024 & 11/22/2024.



BUILDING MOUNTED ANTENNA REQUIREMENTS

- (c) An antenna shall be constructed of materials and colors that blend with the surroundings to the greatest practical extent or shall be screened and/or painted to blend with the surface to which the antenna is attached;

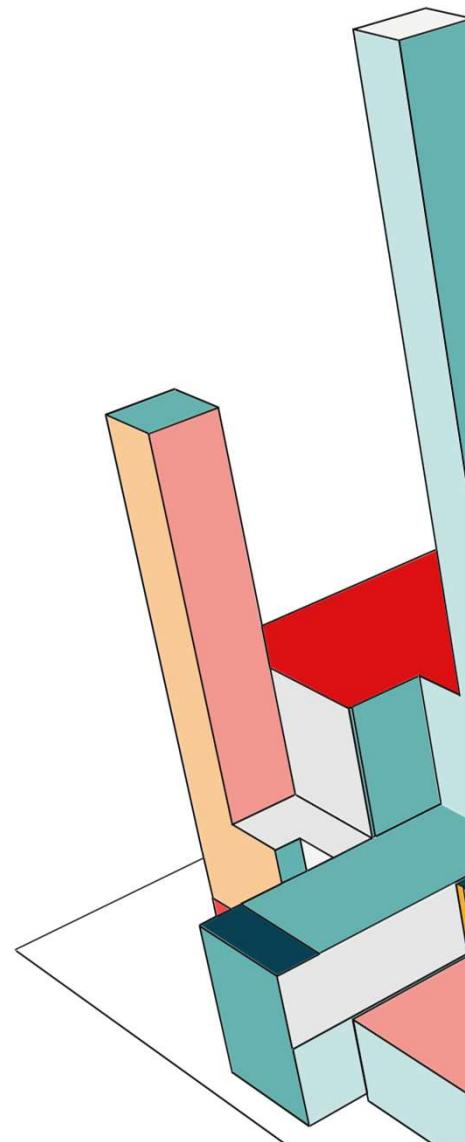
As indicated in the attached drawings, the antennas are proposed to be constructed of materials and colors to blend to the extent practical with their surroundings. The antennas have a very slender upright appearance and will be constructed of a light-colored metal intended to minimize contrast with the background sky. The proposed antennas will be similar in appearance as the existing antennas on the building.

- (d) A building-mounted antenna placed on a penthouse or rooftop structure with a rooftop outdoor recreation space shall be secured from unauthorized access for a minimum vertical distance of ten feet (10 ft.); and

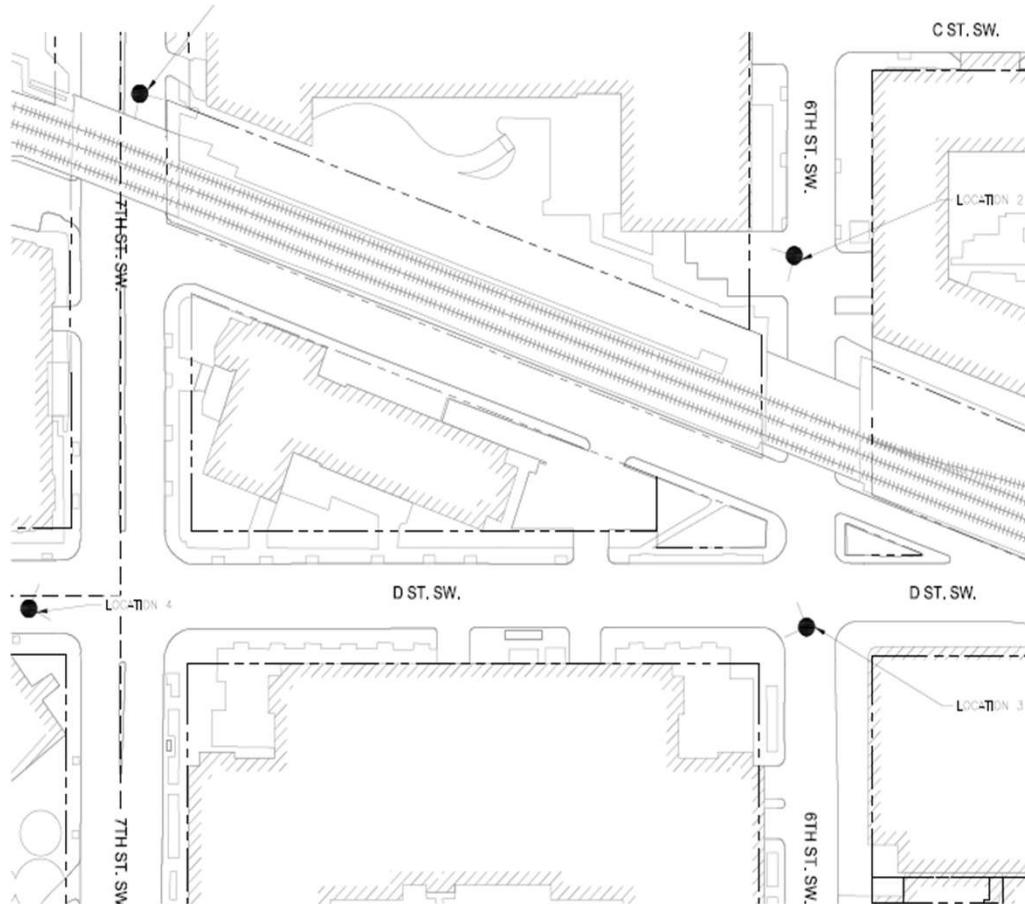
The proposed antenna configuration complies with this requirement as the outdoor recreation space is located at the opposite, west side of the roof, and access from the recreation space to the area of the roof where the antennas are proposed to be installed is blocked by a portion of the enclosed penthouse.

- (e) Any related equipment cabinet or shelter that is not internal to the building or penthouse shall be:
 - (1) Constructed of materials and colors that blend with the building or penthouses or rooftop structures; and
 - (2) Located to reduce its visibility from public space to the greatest practical extent.

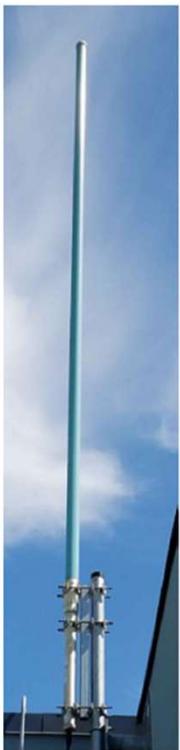
This requirement is not applicable to the Property as there is not any cabinet or shelter proposed for the exterior of the building.



EXISTING AND PROPOSED ANTENNAS



EXISTING AND PROPOSED ANTENNAS



1 TYPICAL ANTENNA
H0003



2 CURRENT ANTENNAS AND GPS
H0003



3 PROPOSED ANTENNAS AND GPS - PHOTO SIM
H0003

EXISTING AND PROPOSED ANTENNAS

