

# Government of the District of Columbia

## Department of Transportation



### d. Planning and Sustainability Division

#### MEMORANDUM

**TO:** District of Columbia Zoning Commission

**FROM:** Meredith Soniat *MS*  
Acting Associate Director

**DATE:** December 6, 2024

**SUBJECT:** ZC Case No. 24-01 – Howard University Map Amendment

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#### PROJECT SUMMARY

Howard University (the “Applicant”) seeks approval of a Map Amendment to rezone the property generally located on the east side of Georgia Avenue, NW, from Euclid Street south to Florida Avenue, from the RA-2, PDR-2, and the PDR-3 zones to the MU-9A and MU-10 zones. The property to be rezoned is more specifically identified as:

- Square 3060, Lots 830 and 839
- Square 3064, Lots 44, 45, 826, and 837
- Square 3065, Lots 829–831, 833, and 834
- Square 3074, Lot 11
- Square 3075, Lot 807
- Square 3078, Lots 17, 26–28, and 30.

The property consists of approximately 1,157,379 square feet of land area (approx. 26.56 acres) and is governed by the 2020-2030 Howard University Central Campus Master Plan, approved by the Zoning Commission (ZC) as ZC Case No. 20-08. The site primarily consists of the Howard University Hospital, the Howard University College of Medicine, Howard University auxiliary services, and various retail uses. Figure 1 below shows the site area of affected properties proposed for rezoning.



- The proposed MU-9B and MU-10 (Mixed-Use – Medium to High Density) zones would allow for approximately 4,617 more residential units, 563,479 square feet more retail, and 3,100,474 square feet more office on the property than the maximum allowed in the existing RA-2, PDR-2, and the PDR-3 zones and will no longer allow for approximately 3,736,490 square feet of production, distribution, and repair uses;
- The increased density is expected to generate a significant increase in the amount of transit, biking, walking, and vehicle trips;
- The additional vehicle trips generated by the increased density could have a significant impact on the roadway network, and a Comprehensive Transportation Review (CTR) or some other transportation analysis will be required as the Applicant finalizes plans for the site;
- The site is adjacent to priority transit, and DDOT encourages the Applicant to minimize the amount of off-street parking provided with any future redevelopment proposals. Per DDOT's January 2022 *Guidance for Comprehensive Transportation Review*, ideally the development would provide no more than 0.35 vehicle spaces per unit (1 per 3 units);
- DDOT is undertaking the Georgia Avenue NW Bus Priority Project focused on improving bus operations and safety on Georgia Avenue between Barry Place and Eastern Avenue;
- Any development proposals for the site will need to account for long-term bicycle parking storage rooms, either below- or at-grade in easily accessible locations from building lobbies, as well as short-term bicycle parking, as required by Title 11 of the *District of Columbia Municipal Regulations (DCMR)* Subtitle C, § 801 and Title 18 of the *DCMR* § 1214;
- The site currently has access to public alleys. When the site redevelops, it is expected that all loading, trash pick-up, and vehicle parking will take place from the site's alley network or from internal streets, outside of the public right-of-way (ROW);
- DDOT will not support any new curb cuts to the property from Georgia Avenue, NW. The Applicant will be required to close existing curb cuts to Georgia Avenue and restore the sidewalk furnishing zone; and
- The Applicant should minimize curb cuts along 5<sup>th</sup> Street NW, 6<sup>th</sup> Street NW, W Street NW, Bryant Street NW, and Howard Place NW within the site; and
- The proposed rezoning would support nearby transit and generate additional foot traffic to support nearby businesses. This is consistent with DDOT's approach to infill sites which should be dense, compact, transit-oriented, and improve the public realm.

## RECOMMENDATION

DDOT has no objection to the approval of the requested Map Amendment.

## CONTINUED COORDINATION

Given the achievable matter-of-right density possible on the subject property if the rezoning is granted, it is expected that the Applicant will coordinate with DDOT on amendments and further processing applications to the Howard University Central Campus Master Plan and the permitting process on the following actions to minimize impacts of a future development proposal on the transportation network:

- Depending on the final development program and if any future relief is requested from the Board of Zoning Adjustment (BZA) or Public Space Committee (PSC), a Comprehensive

Transportation Review (CTR) study or some other transportation analysis may be required as future applications for further processing are submitted to the ZC;

- A new or supplemental TDM Plan may be required for a rezoned property within the site area if is removed from the Howard University Campus Plan area in the future, the contents of which will be commensurate with the land use, parking supply, and scale of future development, in accordance with the January 2022 *Guidance for Comprehensive Transportation Review*;
- When the property ultimately develops, the site should be designed so that loading occurs without trucks performing backing maneuvers through sidewalk space. Also, coordinate with DDOT on an appropriate Loading Management Plan (LMP), if necessary;
- Submit a detailed curbside management and signage plan to DDOT, consistent with current DDOT policies. If meter installation is required, it will be at the Applicant's expense;
- Coordinate with DDOT's Urban Forestry Division (UFD) and the Ward 1 Arborist regarding the preservation of any existing Heritage Trees or Special Trees on the property. According to the District's [Tree Size Estimator map](#), the property has approximately 5 Special Trees, with many additional Special and Heritage Trees in surrounding public rights of way; and
- Continue coordination with DDOT on the public space design elements noted in the Streetscape and Public Realm section of this report.

## TRANSPORTATION ANALYSIS

### Mode Split and Trip Generation Comparison

DDOT conducted a trip generation analysis for the site to compare the transportation impacts of industrial, residential, and commercial development scenarios under the existing RA-2, PDR-2, and the PDR-3 zones to the MU-9A and MU-10 zones. To complete the analysis, DDOT first assessed the theoretical maximum development potential of the site based on current and proposed zoning.

The existing RA-2 zone allows a portion of the site to be developed with residential use and a variety of other non-residential uses. The existing PDR-2 zone allows for a portion of the site to be developed with moderate-density production, distribution and repair (industrial, including heavy commercial, and manufacturing uses) and commercial uses, while the PDR-3 zone allows a medium-density level of these uses. If rezoned to MU-9B and MU-10, the site could potentially achieve a 7.8 FAR for a mixed-use development assuming an Inclusionary Zoning (IZ) bonus. It is estimated that a maximum of 5,805 residential units, 3,100,474 square feet of office, and 563,479 square feet of retail could be constructed on-site if the rezoning to MU-9B and MU-10 is granted, as compared to the estimated 1,188 residential units and 3,736,490 square feet of Production, Distribution, and Repair (PDR) uses under RA-2, PDR-2, and PDR-3.

While the site is governed by the 2020-2030 *Howard University Central Campus Master Plan* which envisions new hospital and academic uses on the site, a specific development has not been proposed and these are just estimates of a potential development based on lot size, lot coverage, FAR, by-right uses, and building heights allowed by zoning, which DDOT obtained from the Office of Planning Set Down Report ([Exhibit 12](#)). Granting the rezoning would not lock in the development program estimated in this report since the MU-9A and MU-10 zones allow for a wider range of uses and the site may include additional constraints that will affect the amount of developable space.

To determine the number of trips generated by each scenario, DDOT utilized the rates published in the *ITE Trip Generation Manual, 11<sup>th</sup> Edition*, webtool. A non-auto mode share ranging from 50% to 75% was assumed based on the site's existing and proposed land uses and proximity to Priority Transit and Metrorail. Table 1 below presents a summary of DDOT's estimate of vehicle and person trips for each development scenario.

As shown below, development of the site with the maximum residential, office, and retail development potential will generate approximately 2,588 vehicle trips in the weekday morning commuter peak hour and approximately 2,847 vehicle trips during the weekday evening commuter peak hour, as compared to the approximately 1,599 trips in the weekday morning commuter peak hour and approximately 1,399 vehicle trips during the weekday evening commuter peak hour that could be generated under max build-out under existing zoning. This represents a significant increase in vehicle trips on the transportation network.

**Table 1 | Trip Generation Comparison**

| Development Scenario  | Estimated Development Program  | AM Peak Person Trips | PM Peak Person Trips | AM Peak Vehicle Trips | PM Peak Vehicle Trips |
|---|--|----------------------|----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| <b>Maximum Build-out under Existing Zoning</b><br><b>RA-2, PDR-2, PDR-3</b> | 1,188 Residential Units<br>0 SF Retail<br>0 SF Office<br>3,736,490 SF PDR                | 3,781                | 3,413                | 1,559                 | 1,399                 |
| <b>Maximum Build-out under Proposed Zoning</b><br><b>MU-9B and MU10</b>     | 5,805 Residential Units<br>563,479 SF Retail<br>3,100,474 SF Office<br>0 SF PDR          | 8,957                | 11,426               | 2,588                 | 2,847                 |
| <b>Net Change Existing vs Proposed Zoning</b>                               | 4,617 Residential Units<br>563,479 SF Retail<br>3,100,474 SF Office<br>-3,736,490 SF PDR | +5,175               | +8,013               | +1,029                | +1,448                |

#### Vehicle Parking, Bicycle Parking, and Loading Requirements

Since the site is located within ¼ mile of the 79 Metrobus Priority Corridor Network routes, DDOT encourages the Applicant to take advantage of the allowable 50% reduction in the parking minimum, per Title 11 of *DCMR*, Subtitle C, § 702.1(a), when the site redevelops.

According to DDOT's January 2022 *Guidance for Comprehensive Transportation Review*, a site this proximate to priority transit should provide no more than 0.35 spaces per residential unit (1 space per 3 units). The presence of surplus parking has the potential to induce demand for additional driving on the roadway network. If the project has 20 or more residential units and a curb cut, the Applicant will be required during public space permitting to commit to a TDM plan, the contents of which will be determined at that time and will be influenced by the amount of off-street parking provided. The Applicant will need to meet the requirements for electric vehicle (EV) charging infrastructure in

accordance with the Comprehensive Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Access, Readiness, and Sustainability Amendment Act of 2024, which goes into effect in 2027.

The project must meet all bicycle parking requirements. DDOT encourages the Applicant to meet or exceed the bicycle parking, showers, and lockers requirements of Title 11 of the *DCMR* Subtitle C § 800 and Title 18 of *DCMR* § 1214. Long- and short-term bicycle parking should be designed in accordance with the 2018 DDOT *Bike Parking Design Guide*. As required by zoning, at least 50% of long-term bicycle parking spaces must be located horizontally on the floor or easily accessible on the bottom level of a two-tier rack system. Additionally, DDOT requires at least 5% of spaces to be designed for cargo and larger bikes (10 feet by 3 feet rather than 6 feet by 2 feet) and 10% of spaces to be served by electrical outlets for e-bikes and scooters.

If the redevelopment proposal triggers loading requirements, the Applicant must ensure that there is no backing of trucks across the sidewalk and that all movements through sidewalk space are head-in/head-out with turns occurring on private property or an alley. Where an alley is available, access must be provided via the alley. If the project has more than three (3) residential units, the Applicant must contract a private trash collection service. Trash must be stored on private property out of the view of the sidewalk and collected from the alley or parking lot. Move-ins and move-outs should occur from a loading berth or off-street parking space or alley. Future residents may also obtain “emergency no parking” signs through DDOT’s Transportation Online Permitting System (TOPS) to reserve an on-street parking space for move-ins/move-outs.

Note that the exact zoning requirements for vehicle parking, bicycle parking, and loading will be determined by the Department of Buildings (DOB) and will be based on the specific development ultimately proposed.

### **HERITAGE AND SPECIAL TREES**

According to the District’s [Tree Size Estimator map](#), the property has no Heritage Trees and approximately 5 Special Trees, with many additional Special and Heritage Trees in surrounding public rights of way. DDOT expects that the Applicant coordinate with the Ward 1 Arborist regarding the preservation and protection of existing Heritage, Special, and small street trees, as well as the planting of new street trees, in bioretention facilities or a typical expanded tree planting space, if proposed.

Heritage Trees have a circumference of 100 inches or more and are protected by the Tree Canopy Protection Amendment Act of 2016. With approval by the Mayor and DDOT’s Urban Forestry Division (UFD), Heritage Trees might be permitted to be relocated. As such, the Applicant may be required to redesign the site plan to preserve the Non-Hazardous Heritage Trees. Special Trees are between 44 inches and 99.99 inches in circumference. Special Trees may be removed with a permit. However, if a Special Tree is designated to remain by UFD, a Tree Protection Plan (TPP) will be required.

### **STREETSCAPE AND PUBLIC REALM**

When the site develops or there are any substantial renovations to future buildings, the property owner will be expected to rehabilitate streetscape infrastructure between the curb and the property lines, in line with District policy and practice. This includes curb and gutters, street trees and landscaping, streetlights, sidewalks, and other appropriate features within the public rights of way bordering the site.

Specifically, listed below are potential access and public space issues that the Applicant should be aware of and continue to coordinate with DDOT, when the site develops:

- All vehicular site access, as well as loading facilities and trash pick-up, must be via the existing public alley network or internal streets;
- No new curb cuts to the property from Georgia Avenue should be proposed. Existing curb cuts on Georgia Avenue should be closed and green space restored;
- If the redevelopment proposal triggers loading requirements, ensure there is no backing of trucks across the sidewalk and all movements through sidewalk space are head-in/head-out;
- New buildings fronting Georgia Avenue should be sited to ensure all sidewalk clear paths are a minimum of 8 feet wide and tree boxes a minimum of 4 feet wide;
- Install concrete curb extensions on the corners surrounding the site where an on-street parking lanes exist and ensure all curb ramps and crosswalks are up to modern standards;
- Ensure any pedestrian entrances to a future multi-family building are at-grade with the public sidewalk so that no stairs or ramps are required in public space;
- Provide a plan showing the detailed design of the long-term bike storage room that meets the requirements of Title 11 of *DCMR* §800, Title 18 of *DCMR* §1214, and *DDOT Bike Parking Guide* best practices;
- In accordance with the District’s policy prohibiting right-turn on red movements at signalized intersections, install No Right Turn on Red signage at each signalized intersection surrounding the site;
- During permitting, submit a Curbside Management Plan for all public streets surrounding the site showing existing and proposed signage and curbside designations;
- Any existing Cobra Head-style streetlights along the site perimeter should be replaced with either Washington Globe or Decorative Tear Drop-style streetlights. Exact style to be installed will be determined at the time of permitting.

DDOT encourages the Applicant to participate in a Preliminary Design Review Meeting (PDRM) with the Office of Planning and DDOT to discuss the public space design when a future development is proposed.

In conjunction with the *District of Columbia Municipal Regulations (DCMR)*, DDOT’s *Design and Engineering Manual (DEM)* and the *Public Realm Design Manual* will serve as the main public realm references for the Applicant. DDOT staff will be available to provide additional guidance during the public space permitting process.

AC:eo