



February 17, 2025

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**VIA IZIS**

Anthony Hood, Chairperson  
D.C. Zoning Commission  
441 4th Street, NW, Suite 200S  
Washington, DC 20001

**RE: ZC Case No. 24-21  
Applicant's Supplemental Statement**

Chairperson Hood and Honorable Members of the Commission:

The Applicant D.C. Department of General Services (the “**Applicant**”), on behalf of the D.C. Department of Corrections (“**DOC**”), files the following supplemental information pursuant to Subtitle Z § 401.5 in advance of the Commission’s hearing on the subject application.

As set forth in the case record, the Applicant seeks mandatory design review and approval of a new correctional facility (the “**Project**”) at 1900 Massachusetts Avenue SE (Lot 826, Square 1112E) (the “**Property**”) in the Hill East (HE) zone district. As part of the application, the Applicant also requests special exception relief to provide a large scale government use (Subtitle § 412.1(b)), area variance relief from a Hill East design requirement pertaining to building entrances along a primary street in the HE zones (Subtitle K § 420.5), and waivers from HE zone design standards for ground floor frontage dedicated to preferred uses (Subtitle K § 417.1(e)) and the amount of building frontage extending to the property line (Subtitle K § 419.3).

**I. Updated Architectural Plan Set**

On November 21, 2024, the Applicant presented the conceptual design to the U.S. Commission of Fine Arts (“**CFA**”) and received comments and proposed revisions.<sup>1</sup> Since filing the zoning application, the Applicant has worked to revise the architectural plan set in response to comments from CFA. Accordingly, the Applicant is enclosing an updated architectural plan set (“**Updated Plans**”) at **Exhibit A**.

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<sup>1</sup> CFA has jurisdiction to review the Project because the Property is owned by the District of Columbia government. The Applicant submitted revised plans to CFA on February 6, 2025 and will be presenting for a second time to CFA on February 20, 2025.

While the massing and footprint of the Project generally remains the same, the Applicant wishes to highlight the following architectural and design changes:

- **Scrim Feature**

A defining feature of the Project is the perforated metal scrim that functions as a layer of the building façade. As originally proposed, the scrim was broken up by a series of horizontal leaves to create visual interest. However, the CFA expressed concern that the scrim may appear “cage-like” and defensive, which is inapposite of the Project goals to provide a place for healing and architecture that meaningfully connects to the Hill East neighborhood. Additionally, CFA noted that the proposed scrim material – CorTen steel – can darken over time and may not retain the intended copper hue.

In response to these comments, the Applicant has revised the scrim design and materiality. Specifically, the amount of scrim panels are reduced and the pattern of scrim panels have been altered. The horizontal leaves that break up the scrim have also been adjusted to be more responsive to interior programming. The goal of these revisions is to increase transparency through the scrim to the window wall while maintaining the scrim as a key design feature of the Project.

To address the potential darkening of the scrim, the Applicant has chosen to replace CorTen steel with painted aluminum. The new façade material ensures the proposed copper hue will remain.

- **Window Wall Materiality**

In addition to the scrim, the Project’s façade is comprised of an interior security wall and a window wall. Since filing the application, the architectural team has continued to refine the materiality and rhythm of the security wall and window wall. The Updated Plans provide new detail on types of glazing, how the glazing is configured through the building, and precedent images.

There will be four types of glazing treatment: vision glazing, a white frit, grey film, and opaque panel. *See Exhibit A*, Sheets 56-58. The type of glazing that will be used for each section of the building is responsive to the adjacent programming needs. The intent is to allow for the balancing of security and privacy needs with the provision of light and air for staff and residents.

For example, the lobby and administrative offices will have translucent vision glazing on both the security and window wall because these areas are either public-facing or for office workers/correctional staff only. By comparison, housing units will have a white frit on the security wall and either grey film or opaque panel on the window wall to ensure resident privacy while also allowing access to natural light.

- **Columns**

The Updated Plans revise the painted steel columns located throughout the Project’s façade. Previously, the columns extended above the roofline with a tapered point. However, CFA commented that this architectural feature could invoke a “spike” on top of a fence. As such, the

Updated Plans reflect the columns concluding at the roofline and remove the tapered look for a uniform column from the base of the building to the roof.

- **Mechanical Penthouse Screen**

The Project's mechanical penthouse screening has been adjusted. Previously, the penthouse was screened with a variation of the scrim paneling to present as a more uniform concept. The Updated Plans distinguish the mechanical screening by changing the material to a white metal panel.

- **Landscape/Public Space Design**

Finally, in response to CFA comments, the Updated Plans propose a more simplified and unified approach to the Project's landscaping design along the Massachusetts Avenue frontage. *See Exhibit A*, Sheets 20-21, 37-41. In the original application, the Applicant proposed angled retaining walls with breaks for landscaping to spill out toward the street, sloping berms and several benches for seating.

The Updated Plans provide continuous retaining walls with no breaks, with the walls situated to run generally parallel with public space. There is now a stepped terrace toward the base of Building 2 rather than a sloped berm. The number of benches have been decreased, with the benches now concentrated by the Project's entry point. The revised landscaping concepts are continued up into the gap between Building 1 and Building 2.

Further, the Updated Plans provide a refined planting schedule with simplified planting placement. Instead of a more diffuse planting array, the Updated Plans offer a uniform approach. Walking pathways have been altered from curvilinear to linear. The entrance sign and flag pole have also been shifted west closer to the northwest corner of Building 1.

The short-term bicycle parking has been consolidated and shifted from two spots at curb edge along Massachusetts Avenue to one spot that is recessed in the streetscape retaining walls. *See Exhibit A*, Sheet 16. The Project continues to provide the required 12 short-term bicycle parking spaces.

- **Removal of Separate Staff Entrance**

Previously, the Project proposed a separate staff entrance in Building 1 along the Massachusetts Avenue façade. The Updated Plans remove the separate entrance, with the general public and staff to enter the Project through the same entrance at the northwest corner of Building 1.

- **Changes to Development Data**

The Updated Plans provide modest changes to Building 1's square footage and building height. Building 1 has been expanded by 1,295 sq. ft. at the southeast side of the building facing the existing CTF. The first level had previously been recessed in this location, but is now consistent with the floors above. The building height of Building 1 has also been adjusted from 90 ft. to 88 ft. due to a decrease in the floor-to-ceiling height of the fifth floor. Finally, there is

now 409 parking spaces in the below-grade garages, an increase of three spaces from the original plans.

## **II. Additional Detail on Bed Count**

Within the application, the Applicant outlined that there will be a total of 958 beds in the two new buildings comprising the Project. These beds will function to replace the beds at the existing Central Detention Facility (“CDF”), which will be discontinued. As noted, the Project will be connected to Correctional Treatment Facility (“CTF”), which the Applicant intends to renovate.

However, as the overall renovation plans continue to take shape, the projected number of beds in the renovated CTF building was not elaborated. The Applicant can now confirm that CTF will have approximately 1,186 beds after being renovated. This means that the total number of beds between the Project and CTF will be 2,144 beds.<sup>2</sup>

## **III. Revisions to Bioretention**

The plans proposed new bioretention features, re-grading, widening and improvements to the access road at the southwest corner of the Property between the existing CTF building and the Congressional Cemetery. The new bioretention area along with the widened access road requires removal of several trees that function as a visual buffer from the Congressional Cemetery.

After speaking with members of the Congressional Cemetery and members of ANC 6B, the Applicant has revised the width of the service road and moved the stormwater management plan to provide more room to replant buffering trees along the shared lot line with Congressional Cemetery. These revisions required a narrowing and repaving of the internal access road at the southern end of the Property and a reconfiguration of the bioretention area. The Applicant will plant new trees on the southern and western side of the access road. The revised stormwater management plan can be found in the Updated Plans. *See Exhibit A*, Sheets 91, 98.

## **IV. Comprehensive Transportation Review**

The Applicant is enclosing a Comprehensive Transportation Review for the Project, which was prepared by Gorove Slade, the Applicant’s transportation consultant. *See Exhibit B*. The Comprehensive Transportation Review includes a proposed Transportation Demand Management plan. The report is being provided to the Department of Transportation and the ANC’s.

## **V. Community Outreach**

The Applicant has continued to conduct extensive community outreach in connection with the Project. Overall, the Applicant has attended and presented at **23 community and stakeholder meetings** in connection with the Project. The following is a summary of points of engagement, with underlined dates occurring after the filing of that application:

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<sup>2</sup> There are currently 2,009 beds at CDF and CTF; however, the number of beds fluctuates and these facilities have a total operating capacity of 3,564 residents.

- **ANC 7F (6):** May 21, 2024; June 18, 2024; October 15, 2024; December 17, 2024<sup>3</sup>; January 21, 2025; January 30, 2025<sup>4</sup>
- **ANC 7D (4):** June 11, 2024; October 8, 2024; November 19, 2024 (Zoning Committee); January 14, 2025
- **ANC 6B (3):** September 9, 2024; January 9, 2025 (Zoning Committee); January 14, 2025 (vote of support)
- **Council for Court Excellence Meetings (2):** October 18, 2023; May 8, 2024; February 20, 2025
- **Jails & Justice Task Force Meeting (2):** May 16, 2024; February 20, 2025
- **Advocacy Virtual Information Session (1):** May 29, 2024
- **Community Information Session (2):** June 27, 2024; November 14, 2024; March 4, 2025
- **Capitol Hill Restoration Society:** February 5, 2025
- **Historic Congressional Cemetery:** February 18, 2025

As noted, ANC 6B voted in support of the Project at its January public meeting. The Applicant continues to work with ANC 7D and ANC 7F in order to garner support for the Project. The Applicant expects to attend ANC 7F's public meeting on February 18, 2025 and ANC 7D's public meeting on March 11, 2025. The Applicant will update the Commission at the public hearing.

## **VI. Outline of Witness Testimony with Expert Resumes**

The following witnesses will testify on behalf of the Applicant at the public hearing:

- Thomas Faust, Director of D.C. Department of Corrections
- Michelle Wilson, Deputy Director of Administration for D.C. Department of Corrections
- Allam Al-Alami, Operational Manager, Capital Construction Division, D.C. Department of General Services

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<sup>3</sup> The Applicant attended this meeting at ANC 7F's request. However, the ANC ultimately did not have sufficient time on the agenda for the Applicant to present.

<sup>4</sup> The January 30, 2025 meeting was a non-public meeting to discuss the Project between DGS, DOC and ANC 7F Commissioners.

- David Cheney, Project Architect from CORE Architecture + Design. Mr. Cheney will be proffered as an expert in architecture and design. Mr. Cheney's resume is attached at **Exhibit C**.
- Tamara Clarke, Project Architect from CGL Companies. Ms. Clarke will be proffered as an expert in architecture and programming for correctional facilities. Ms. Clarke's resume is attached at **Exhibit C**.
- Erwin Andres, Traffic Consultant from Gorove Slade. Mr. Andres will be proffered as an expert in traffic and transportation. Mr. Andres' resume is attached at **Exhibit C**.

Testimony outlines for each witness are attached at **Exhibit D**.

## **VII. Conclusion**

The Applicant thanks the Commission for its consideration of this filing and looks forward to the public hearing on March 17, 2025.

Sincerely,  
COZEN O'CONNOR



Meridith H. Moldenhauer



Eric J. DeBear

**Certificate of Service**

I HEREBY CERTIFY that on this 17<sup>th</sup> day of February, 2025, a copy of this Supplemental Statement with attachments was served, via email, on the following:

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