

August 14, 2026

VIA IZIS

D.C. Zoning Commission
Office of Zoning
441 4th Street, N.W., Suite 200-S
Washington, D.C. 20001

Re: Z.C. Case No. 26-07: Application of CQ Metro Land LLC (“Applicant”) for Design Review Approval of Proposed Buildings located in the Northern Howard Road (“NHR”) Zone – Lot 1039 in Square 5860 (the “Property”) – Prehearing Statement

Dear Chairman Hood and Members of the Zoning Commission:

Pursuant to 11-Z DCMR § 401.5, the Applicant hereby submits this prehearing statement. On June 18, 2026, the Applicant submitted the above-referenced application for Design Review of a new hotel building located on the Property (i.e., “Parcel 7”) within the Bridge District development in Washington, D.C. (the “**Application**”). The proposed building will contain approximately 86,181 square feet of gross floor area (“**GFA**”), encompassing approximately 160 guest rooms and approximately 4,000 square feet of GFA devoted to hotel function rooms and commercial adjacent space (bar / lounge and meeting room) (the “**Project**”). The Project will have an overall density of approximately 3.59 FAR and will be built to a maximum height of ninety-nine (99) feet, not including mechanical penthouses (elevator overrun and stair towers) and other roof structures. The Project will include one (1) 30-foot loading berth and at least nine (9) long-term bicycle parking spaces. The Project will not provide any on-site vehicular parking.

The following information is provided below and attached hereto:

- Updated plans and drawings (**Exhibit A**);
- Update on ANC and community engagement;
- Information on relationship between NHR Zone requirements and prior Planned Unit Development (“**PUD**”) for the Bridge District;
- Transportation Statement (**Exhibit B**); and
- Updated request for design flexibility.

I. Updated Plans and Drawings

Attached hereto as **Exhibit A** is a set of select updated plans and drawings that reflect refinements made to the Project since the initial submission in response to comments received from ANC 8A and the community (“**Updated Plans**”), **which shall replace Sheets A2.02, A5.01, and A6.01 – A6.04 of the plans and drawings previously submitted to the case record at Exhibits 3G1-3G4.**

Since submitting the Application, the Applicant has continued its engagement with ANC 8A, OP, DDOT, and other community stakeholders. During this engagement, the Applicant received comments regarding (i) providing additional access to the hotel’s bar / lounge area, and (ii) enhancing the ground-level treatment of the hotel’s east façade along the WMATA access road.

Regarding access to the hotel’s bar / lounge area, as noted in the initial Application, the bar / lounge will be available to both hotel guests and visitors that are not staying in the hotel, and thus will be available to the community. During its engagement with the community, the Applicant was asked whether an additional entry door could be added along the hotel’s south façade that leads directly into the bar / lounge area. As shown on Page 1 of the Updated Plans, in response to the community the Applicant has added a separate entrance that leads into the bar / lounge area. The proposed location of the new entrance is the only viable option due to the limited accessible frontage along the hotel’s southern façade, the subsurface infrastructure constraints, and the site’s topography, which significantly slopes down from east to west.

Regarding ground-level treatment of the hotel’s east façade, as shown on Pages 2–6 of the Updated Plans, in response to the community and OP the Applicant has expanded the green screen proposed along the east and south facades of the Project. In addition, the Applicant has identified portions of the east and north facades that can accommodate one or more murals. Together, the expanded green screen and mural(s) will add greater visual interest, soften these edges of the Property, and further integrate the Project into its surroundings. Of note, for the mural areas, the Applicant intends to solicit proposals from Ward 8 artists for design and installation of the artwork. Consistent with the Applicant’s general context-sensitive approach to the building architecture and material palette, the Applicant’s goal for any mural or artwork is that it will draw inspiration from the surrounding context of Popular Point and the historic Anacostia community.

II. Update on ANC and Community Engagement

The Applicant has continued its engagement with ANC 8A and the broader community. Specifically, the Applicant appeared before ANC 8A to present the Project on two occasions, June 2, 2026, and July 7, 2026. At the meeting on July 7, 2026, the ANC and community provided comments and questions regarding the proposed Project design, the Design Review process, and the Applicant’s community engagement efforts. Certain ANC members also commented on the lack of a community benefits agreement (“**CBA**”) covering the Project, which is addressed further below. Following the July 7th ANC meeting, the Applicant followed up with Commissioners on two occasions to offer additional opportunities to meet and discuss the Project design and any other topics and will continue to do so. Additionally, the Applicant is hosting two (2) Ward 8 community meetings relating to the Project, one on August 23rd and one on August 27th, to provide community members with further opportunities to review the Project design and share feedback.

With respect to the proposed Project layout and program, the ANC inquired whether the hotel would contain ground floor retail space for local brick and mortar retailers and whether the hotel would contain vehicle parking. Regarding process, the Applicant addressed questions about the community's involvement in the Project by summarizing its longstanding efforts to engage and coordinate with a wide range of community stakeholders, including ANC 8A, ANC 8C, the Anacostia Business Improvement District (“**BID**”), Anacostia Coordinating Council, Historic Anacostia Block Association, Cedar Tree Academy Public Charter School, and local businesses and religious leaders. The community also asked construction-related questions regarding air pollution, dust, noise, and traffic, and questions related to economic benefit, workforce standards, and anti-gentrification efforts being taken by the Applicant. The Applicant responded to these issues and noted that they are further addressed in the racial equity evaluation that is included in the Application case record (in Exhibit 3 of the case record).

III. Information on relationship between NHR Zone requirements and prior Planned Unit Development (“PUD”) for the Bridge District

During the July 7th ANC meeting, there were questions raised regarding the lack of a CBA covering the Project. As discussed below, the NHR Zone itself creates a significant set of requirements that the Project achieves, and the Project will significantly benefit the surrounding community as a result. However, the provision of additional “benefits” is not required by the Design Review regulations or process. Notwithstanding this, the Project will provide public benefits that will accrue to the surrounding Anacostia community, as detailed below. In addition, the Applicant has a long track record of community engagement and delivering an array of projects, investments, and programs beneficial to this community and intends to continue to do so.

The Former Bridge District PUD

There is a lengthy history relating to development of the Bridge District that, without knowing this history, might cause one to overlook the significant community benefits being delivered through the NHR zoning regulations themselves, and the Applicant's continued voluntary commitment to numerous other benefits and engagements. In April 2018, the Commission approved a PUD and related Zoning Map amendment to MU-9 for the majority of the Bridge District (Z.C. Case No. 16-29), which did not include the Property. That PUD was appealed in June 2018, and, during the pendency of the appeal, the PUD was extinguished in May 2019. Throughout the PUD process, the Applicant was actively engaged with ANC 8A in discussions regarding the establishment of a CBA. Early drafts of the CBA reflected commitments that aligned with the public benefits required under the former PUD. However, the parties were not able to finalize a CBA.

The NHR Zone Effectively Codifies the Former PUD Benefits

Following the extinguishment of the PUD, the D.C. Office of Planning (“**OP**”) brought forward a zoning text and map amendment that created the NHR zone in September 2019 (Z.C. Case Nos. 18-18 and 18-19). Despite the PUD being extinguished, the newly established NHR Zone effectively hard-coded the substance of the former PUD's public benefits as zoning requirements, as reflected both in the zone's stated purposes and specific standards. The stated purposes of the NHR zone include assuring a mixture of residential and commercial uses with suitable height, bulk, and design; providing for increased height and density associated with

increased affordable housing; requiring preferred ground-level retail and service uses along Howard Road, S.E.; and developing Howard Road as a pedestrian- and bicycle-friendly street connected to Metro and the broader neighborhood. On affordable housing specifically, the NHR zone requires that twelve percent (12%) of residential gross floor area (and the equivalent of eight percent (8%) of any residential penthouse habitable space) be set aside for affordable housing, with at least 25% of that set-aside reserved for households at or below 50% of the Washington, D.C. Median Family Income (“**MFI**”) and the remainder at or below 60% MFI. The NHR zone also requires that 100% of ground floor street frontage along Howard Road be devoted to preferred uses, including retail and service uses, among others. On sustainability, the NHR zone requires each building to achieve LEED Gold certification and to install an on-site renewable energy system generating at least one percent (1%) of each building’s estimated total energy needs. For certain lots within the zone, the regulations go further and establish, for example, more stringent requirements for rooftop solar energy generation and stormwater retention capacity. The required design review process functions like the design review aspect of a PUD. The NHR zone’s design review criteria likewise ensured superior architectural design, and that proposed development minimizes conflict between vehicles, bicycles, and pedestrians.

The NHR zone also carries forward former PUD and CBA-style commitments that could not be hard-coded as NHR zone development standards, but for which the Commission still wanted a mechanism within the legal confines of the Zoning Regulations to encourage applicants to follow. This includes the requirements for each NHR zone design review application to report on: (i) coordination efforts with the Department of Employment Services (“**DOES**”) regarding apprenticeship and training opportunities during construction and operation, (ii) efforts to include Ward 7 and Ward 8 businesses in contracts, (iii) efforts to provide retail and commercial leasing opportunities to small and local businesses (especially in Ward 8), and (iv) coordination with the State Archaeologist regarding potential archaeological resources and recognition of local Anacostia history.

The NHR Zone is Already Delivering Significant Public Benefits

The former PUD offered a variety of public spaces, new publicly accessible private streets, well-designed streetscapes, and underground utilities, while the NHR zone imposes mandatory Commission Design Review with criteria aimed at ensuring mixed use, connectivity, pedestrian safety, environmental sustainability, and superior architecture. As of today, five (5) of the seven (7) Bridge District parcels have completed the Design Review process, each integrating superior architecture and landscaping, and providing significant public benefits to east of the Anacostia River communities. Indeed, one need only compare the housing and retail programs of the former PUD and what is already being delivered under the NHR zone to see that the community has received greater benefits under the NHR zone. Specifically, on housing, the former PUD provided approximately 700 units with a ten percent (10%) affordable housing set aside at 50% and 60% MFI. By comparison, to date a total of approximately 1,848 units of housing have been constructed or approved under the NHR zone, of which twelve percent (12%) are set aside as affordable housing at 50% and 60% MFI, with significantly more three (3)-bedroom affordable units compared to what was required under the former PUD. Regarding ground floor retail, the former PUD provided approximately 52,120 square feet of retail GFA, while the five (5) parcels that have undergone NHR design review will provide a combined approximately 77,779 square feet of retail GFA, not including the approximately 4,000 square foot bar / lounge area within the proposed

hotel in the Project and the ground floor retail that will be provided in the future development on Parcel 6.

Applicant's Ongoing Commitments and Outreach; “Benefits” of the Project

Even without a CBA, the Applicant has continuously adhered to many of the hiring, workforce development, and internship commitments that would typically be found in a CBA. Coordination on these commitments has continued for all Bridge District projects. To date, the Applicant has hired eight (8) Ward 8 youth as interns and has partnered with a Ward 8 workforce development organization to help working mothers obtain OSHA and flagger certifications. The Applicant also provides space on its construction site to a minority-owned subcontractor in support of a building trades apprenticeship program designed to increase local employment on site; through that partnership, twelve (12) electrical apprentices from Wards 5, 7, and 8 were employed on Phase 1 of the Bridge District. The Applicant has further awarded approximately \$12 million in construction contracts to nine (9) local construction companies to date.

These components are in addition to the broader community benefits the Applicant continues to deliver through its ongoing commitment to development within the District and the Bridge District, which has produced substantial new community-serving amenities, market-rate housing, deeply affordable rental and for-sale housing, and environmental improvements both within the Bridge District and in other areas of Ward 8, such as Congress Heights. The Applicant has also continued to establish itself as a trusted and engaged member of the Ward 8 community through regular and sustained engagement with a broad range of community organizations, residents, and community leaders, and through its continued financial support to the community via sponsorship of community events and participation on community boards, commissions, advisory boards, and councils. As part of a temporary placemaking strategy from 2023-2025 (referred to by the Applicant as “Phase 0”), the Applicant engaged local creatives and business owners to deliver no-cost community events, activations, and art installations, producing more than 50 events. Following community feedback, the Applicant partnered with the Historic Anacostia Block Association to sponsor the purchase of sixteen (16) pet waste stations, which were installed by DDOT in Anacostia in the Spring of 2026. The Applicant has also adjusted its retail leasing strategy to offer shorter-term retail agreements and deal terms that are more favorable to small and growing businesses. Under this approach, the Applicant has partnered with two (2) local businesses, Café Cino and FlowWell, and continues to work closely with both by providing technical assistance as well as marketing and public relations support, with the goal of helping these businesses grow and transition into permanent retail space at the Bridge District. The Applicant intends to apply this model to identify additional Ward 8 businesses as future retail opportunities become available.

Relating to the Property, although public benefits are not required by the Design Review regulations relevant to this case and are not required for Design Review projects in the District, the Project will provide significant public benefits that will accrue to the surrounding Anacostia community. Specifically, the hotel project will provide construction jobs, direct and indirect permanent jobs, hotel occupancy taxes, a local hotel option for Anacostia residents and visitors, increased visibility of Anacostia history and culture, increased visitation and spending at local Anacostia and other east-of-the-river businesses, expansion of tourism beyond the Monumental Core, and support for the future redevelopment of Poplar Point through increased use and activation of Poplar Point and Anacostia Park. Additionally, the Project will convert a vacant

parcel into an active destination, including a landscaped public plaza that will connect the Anacostia Park bicycle and pedestrian trail directly into the Bridge District and the surrounding Ward 8 community.

IV. Comprehensive Transportation Review

In consultation with DDOT, the Applicant has prepared a Transportation Statement (the “**Statement**”) summarizing the potential impacts of the Project on the surrounding transportation network and including recommended measures to mitigate potential impacts through various Transportation Demand Management (“**TDM**”) strategies and a Loading Management Plan (“**LMP**”). A copy of the Statement is attached as **Exhibit B**, which has also been provided to DDOT. Overall, the Statement concludes that the Project will not have a detrimental impact on the surrounding transportation network. As detailed in the initial Application statement, the Applicant is seeking zoning relief to provide no on-site vehicle parking, which the Statement finds acceptable as most guests and workers are expected to use the nearby Anacostia Metrorail station and three (3) high-frequency Metrobus routes rather than drive to the Property. Pick-up and drop-off activity by ride-hailing services and taxis is also found not to adversely affect the network because it will be accommodated through a dedicated driveway/loop along the site’s frontage. The Statement likewise concludes that the requested relief to provide one (1) loading berth instead of the required two (2) berths will not affect the surrounding network given the development’s operational needs and comparable-site data.

On mitigation, the Statement recommends a TDM plan that is intended to promote non-vehicular travel, including designating transportation coordinators and providing bicycle parking, showers, and lockers. It also includes measures such as posting non-automotive travel information on the hotel’s website and in the hotel lobby and promoting commuter benefits and bikeshare programs. Separately, a LMP is proposed to mitigate impacts from the reduced number of loading berths, including a designated dock manager who schedules deliveries and coordinates with vendors to avoid conflicts. The recommended mitigation measures also include curbside management through a dedicated pick-up/drop-off driveway and loop designed to keep vehicles from obstructing travel lanes or the adjacent sidewalk.

The Applicant is still in the process of coordinating with DDOT regarding the proposed loading facilities and LMP for the Project. As part of that coordination, DDOT has requested additional information on how the single proposed loading berth is sufficient to meet the hotel’s anticipated loading demand, and whether the single minimum-sized berth near the WMATA access road could lead to unloading trucks blocking the access road or any nearby public right-of-way. In response, the Applicant has explained that the development is not expected to generate loading demand requiring more than one (1) 30-foot berth because the hotel will be a select-service facility with no full-service restaurant, ballroom, or banquet facilities, and that deliveries will be scheduled and managed by the hotel operator through dock-management protocols so that unloading trucks will not block the WMATA access road or nearby public right-of-way. The Applicant has further explained to DDOT that the single-berth design is a direct response to site constraints from the DC Water Anacostia River Tunnel, storm sewer infrastructure, related easements, and the site’s significant grade change. After thoroughly studying these constraints relative to the hotel’s loading and access needs, the Applicant stated that it believes the single-berth design on the east side of the building is the only solution that maintains DC Water’s access corridors. Additionally, the Applicant further explained that the single loading berth, together with

providing no on-site parking, will minimize conflicts between vehicles, bicycles, and pedestrians, consistent with the NHR Zone design review criteria. Based on this information, the Applicant believes the proposed loading facilities are sufficient and adequately balance the need for adequate loading capacity against the vehicular, bicycle, and pedestrian traffic anticipated along the east side of the hotel as the surrounding area develops further.

As noted above, the Applicant continues to coordinate with DDOT on the proposed loading facilities and other transportation aspects of the Project. The outcome of this coordination may result in the need to adjust the Statement that is attached hereto. If such is the case, the Applicant will resubmit the Statement prior to the public hearing on the Project, along with any motion that is required to allow the revised Statement to be entered into the record.

V. Updated Request for Design Flexibility

The Applicant has made every effort to provide a level of detail that conveys the architectural design of the Project and only requires minimal flexibility from the requirements of the Zoning Regulations. Nonetheless, some design flexibility is necessary to address potential issues that arise during construction and other issues that are unique to the Project and Property or cannot be anticipated at this time. As part of the initial Application, the Applicant included an initial list of design flexibility that revised and added to the standard list of flexibility that is automatically included in Zoning Commission orders in contested cases that authorize the construction or alteration of a building or structure under Subtitle Z § 702.15.

Since then, the Applicant has been engaged in discussions with the District regarding potential adjustments or realignments to the WMATA access road that runs along the east side of the Property and connects Howard Road to Poplar Point. These potential adjustments or realignments to the access road could result in the need to adjust the streetscape design and ground floor frontages of the Project, particularly along the east side of the proposed hotel. As such, to accommodate adjustments that may be necessary, the Applicant is requesting slightly revised language to the area of flexibility relating to streetscape design and ground floor frontages. The following list contains the Applicant's revised flexibility, which contains the areas of flexibility from the standard list set forth in Subtitle Z § 702.15 that are applicable to the Project, as modified and supplemented to address certain unique aspects of the Project. The revisions made to the Applicant's flexibility request since submission of the initial Application are shown in **bold underline**:

Interior Components: To vary the location and design of all interior components, including partitions, structural slabs, doors, hallways, columns, stairways, atria, and mechanical rooms, provided that the variations do not change the exterior configuration of the building as shown on the plans approved by the order;

Exterior Materials – Color: To vary the final selection of the colors of the exterior materials based on availability at the time of construction, provided such colors are within the color ranges shown on the plans approved by the order;

Exterior Details – Location and Dimension: To make minor refinements to the locations and dimensions of exterior details that do not substantially alter the exterior configuration of the building or design shown on the plans approved by the order. Examples of exterior

details would include, but are not limited to, doorways, canopies, railings, and skylights. This flexibility shall also include the ability to add, remove, or adjust the location and dimension of egress doors and pathways in order to comply with applicable fire and life safety codes;

Streetscape Design: To vary the location, attributes, and general design of the approved streetscape within adjacent public right-of-way and the WMATA-owned access road, to comply with the requirements of, and the approval by, the DDOT Public Space Division and/or WMATA and to accommodate such variations on the project property, as may be required or necessary due to any changes to the area;

Signage: To vary the font, message, logo, and color of the approved signage, provided that the maximum overall dimensions and signage materials are consistent with the signage on the plans approved by the order and are compliant with the DC signage regulations;

Sustainable Features: To vary the approved sustainable features of the project, provided the total number of LEED points achievable for the project does not decrease below the minimum required for the LEED standard specified by the order;

Landscape Materials: To vary the final selection of landscaping materials utilized based on availability at the time of construction;

Number of Hotel Guest Rooms: To provide a range in the approved number of hotel guest rooms of plus or minus ten percent (10%);

Roof Elements: To vary the roof plan as it relates to the green roof areas, solar panels, and mechanical equipment planters, provided that no relief is required; and

Ground Floor Frontages: To vary the final design of the ground floor frontages of the building, including the location and design of entrances, show windows, and signage, in accordance with the needs of the hotel and/or commercial adjunct operator **and to make related changes along such building frontage to accommodate potential reconfigurations of the WMATA-owned access road or a replacement thereof to the east of the Property.**

The Applicant looks forward to presenting the Project to the Commission at the public hearing on September 14, 2026.

Sincerely,

/s/
Jeff C. Utz

/s/
Shane L. Dettman, Urban Planner

Certificate of Service

The undersigned hereby certifies that copies of the foregoing document will be sent by electronic mail to the following addresses on August 14, 2026.

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