HUCP Testimony

The District Department of Transportation supports the enhancement of our institutions of higher learning. Howard University is an important historic and cultural asset to this City, and its development is vital to the growth of the District of Columbia as a whole. However, DDOT is aware of the potential impacts that such an initiative may have, and is committed to ensuring that such development causes as few negative effects on the transportation network as possible.

On June 23, 2011 the Applicant submitted its initial Transportation Impact Study to DDOT. After continuous communication with DDOT, the Applicant submitted an updated version of the study on October 28, 2011. Through DDOT's analysis, which included cooperation and input from the Applicant and other stakeholders, potential problem areas have been identified and addressed in detail in DDOT's November 23, 2011 supplemental report to the Zoning Commission. I will now briefly speak to those identified areas and summarize the approaches that DDOT believes will be most effective:

Georgia Avenue

The Applicant's Transportation Impact Study suggests that Georgia Avenue will experience significant delays at intersections along the campus frontage by the year 2021 during both the morning and afternoon peak hours with the addition of Howard University's Campus Plan. DDOT believes that the most realistic mitigation option would be some variation of a restriction on left-hand turns at the intersections of Barry Place, Bryant Street, W Street, and V Street.

It should be noted that DDOT was awarded federal grant money last year to implement a bus-only lane on Georgia Avenue, between Florida Avenue and Barry Place, as part of the District's "Great Streets" initiative with the idea of serving the high number of transit users in the area. Since DDOT is currently in the design stage of the Georgia Avenue bus-only lane, there will be continued coordination between the Applicant and Agency to determine the best way to address left-turn restrictions and other operations along Georgia Avenue.

Curbside Management

In the Applicant's Traffic Impact Study, there are recommendations to adjust curbside regulations to ease traffic flow at two intersections:

- Restricting on-street parking on the southbound approach at Sherman Avenue and Barry Place during the morning peak periods; and
- Removing two to three parking spaces along the eastbound approach at Georgia Avenue and Barry Place to install a new left turn lane once the bus lane project progresses.

DDOT appreciates attention to these locations in the study report, but is not yet sure whether impacts will be attributable to the University. DDOT recommends that no action be taken now,

and would like Howard University to re-examine these intersections through further processing applications.

4th and College Streets, NW

The Applicant has also determined that the Campus Plan will generate additional vehicular and pedestrian traffic at the intersection of 4th and College Streets NW, creating both traffic and safety concerns. DDOT agrees with the Applicant that the installation of a new traffic signal will be an appropriate mitigation effort. It is the understanding of DDOT that the traffic signal construction will be the responsibility of the Applicant, and will be completed in advance of the opening of the first of the two proposed Residence Halls.

Capital BikeShare Program

As both DDOT and the Applicant expect to see an increase in bicycling demand as a consequence of the Transportation Demand measures in Campus Plan and current trends in the District, the Applicant has committed to installing at least one new Capital BikeShare station in the center of campus. DDOT is supportive of this initiative and encourages the Applicant to consider additional stations as the Campus Plan progresses. Locations for this station and other potential stations include the intersection of W Street and Georgia Avenue, the intersection of 4th Street and Bryant Street, and the intersection of 6th Street and Howard Place.

Parking

As for parking, the proposed Campus Plan seeks to reduce the existing amount of parking at 2,295 spaces to 1,400 by the year 2021. DDOT believes that the parking demand for the Howard Campus could be significantly lower, and supports a reduction to 1,100 spaces based upon the Applicant's Transportation Demand Management plan, the expectation of transportation mode splits, and current parking lot occupancy rates.

While DDOT does not anticipate a substantial spillover of vehicles on public parking in surrounding neighborhoods, the Agency does recognize the demand that such development could place on surrounding residential streets. DDOT therefore requires that the Applicant conduct periodic reviews of impacts to residential parking, and as necessary, propose measures to manage curbsides in light of future conditions. If impacts to the surrounding neighborhoods prove unacceptable, as determined by DDOT and relevant community stakeholders, the Applicant will be responsible to fund changes to curbside regulations or transportation demand management measures.

Transportation Demand Management

Consistent with any large-scale development or Campus Plan, DDOT has required the Applicant to produce a Transportation Demand Management Plan, consisting of strategies and programs that will help achieve both a highly efficient and sustainable use of transportation

facilities. The Applicant has submitted a thorough plan, which details existing conditions on campus, current TDM practices, and proposed additional measures. DDOT commends the Applicant's depth and quality of the TDM work.

Since the writing of the DDOT report to the Zoning Commission, the Applicant and DDOT teams met together to discuss and refine TDM commitments. DDOT has recommended the following, which have been agreed to by the University:

- Improve Howard Shuttle Service operations, particularly connections to Metro;
- Increase the use of SmartBenefits, particularly among faculty and staff, to raise the transit mode split for campus;
- Add bicycle parking based on demand as determined by the Applicant as the Campus Plan progresses,
- Fund and install at least one Capital BikeShare station;
- Create a clear set of TDM targets / indicators for campus;
- Designate a dedicated TDM Coordinator, required to report annually on travel data and TDM targets to DDOT and goDCgo staff.

Lastly, DDOT fully supports doubling the cost of annual faculty and staff parking permits, but believes it should be done for all permits and lots, not just those defined as "high-demand." DDOT understands this is not the University's intent at this time, but argues that a uniform raise would be more effective and not induce drivers to switch lots.

East-West Connectivity

Finally, the Applicant deserves recognition for establishing key east-west streets through the Howard University Campus to improve neighborhood linkages. By taking into account recommendations from the Duke Small Area Plan and the Lower Georgia Avenue Greet Streets Plan, the Applicant was able to incorporate such improvements throughout its proposal, including the reconnections of Bryant Street between Georgia Avenue and Sherman Avenue; W Street between Georgia Avenue and 9th Street NW; and College Street between Georgia Avenue and 6th Street NW.

This element of the campus plan, in particular, is an achievement for local connectivity, and Howard's collaboration with the city is a model of how private and public actors can work together to improve the urban fabric.

Conclusion

In conclusion, based on careful analysis of Howard University's Campus Plan application, DDOT supports the proposed developments on Howard Central Campus, provided that the suggested traffic mitigation efforts occur. DDOT also expects continued interaction and cooperation with the Applicant to ensure that there are appropriate responses to any adverse

impacts that the development plan may cause. DDOT commits to continuing its collaboration with both the Applicant and the surrounding community as the plan moves forward.