



**TESTIMONY OF DAVID FIELDS, AICP IN SUPPORT OF THE
HOWARD UNIVERSITY CAMPUS MASTER PLAN
December 5, 2011**

Introduction

Good evening, members of the Zoning Commission, District agencies, and members of the community. My name is David Fields. I am a transportation planner and a Principal with Nelson\Nygaard Consulting Associates. We are a firm that specializes in helping communities achieve their greater goals via multimodal transportation planning. We have created successful Transportation Demand Management plans for universities across the country and recently assisted DDOT in developing their current recommendations for TDM in the Development Review Process. The Howard University TDM Plan conforms to these recommendations.

Our methodology for developing the TDM Plan included the following five steps:

1. Identify the projected campus growth including physical and demographic expansions planned for the Central Campus in the Howard University Campus Master Plan.
2. Evaluate the conditions of existing pedestrian, bicycle, and transit networks, as well as planned improvements and comparisons to best practices, to assess the quality of non-driving access to Central Campus destinations.
3. Quantify how, and how frequently, faculty, staff and students are getting to and around the Central Campus, and where they are coming from. This included an on-line survey of Howard's students, faculty, and staff as well as a series of focus groups that further identified specific patterns and opportunities. A key finding from these efforts is that less than 10% of students primarily commute by driving, compared to 64% among faculty and 57% among staff.
4. Review what the University currently is doing to manage current and future travel patterns.
5. Recommend TDM strategies, including parking plans, based on DDOT's recommended approaches and best practices from across the country.

Existing Howard University TDM Strategies

Howard University is already committed to a series of investments and services that have proven successful in reducing vehicle travel and parking demand in campus settings, including:

- Operation of the Howard University Shuttle Bus Service at no charge for the University's faculty, staff, students, and visitors to and from the Central Campus, various parking lots, dormitories, other University based locations, and between the Shaw/Howard University and the Brookland/CUA Metro stations.

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- Managing parking demand by requiring payment to park and not allowing freshman to purchase permits.
- Accommodating 45% of the total University enrollment in Howard's Residence Life system
- Supporting the District's Capital BikeShare system by hosting and encouraging use of an on-campus bike-share station.
- Accommodating carsharing with nine vehicles located within the boundaries of the Master Plan, seven of which are within a short walk of the Lower Quadrangle; and
- Participation in WMATA's SmartBenefits program that allows employers to provide transit-commuting to employees' SmarTrip® cards.

National TDM Best Practices

One of the most effective approaches to transportation planning is to identify where successful practices have been implemented at comparable institutions, evaluating them for what worked best, and adapting them to a new location. For Howard University, the University of Washington in Seattle and the University of Chicago were identified as comparable urban universities with successful TDM programs. Princeton University was also included, as their TDM program makes the most of significant transit access and proximity to many major urban areas in the Northeast Corridor.

TDM Initiative in the District

In 2009, DDOT completed a study of ways to better incorporate TDM into the development review process. One of the outcomes of that study was a matrix of required and optional TDM actions for new development. Which actions would be required versus optional would vary based on the number of net, new, peak-hour vehicle trips projected for the development.

Howard University TDM Plan

Coupled with the best practices from urban universities across the country, the DDOT recommended practices provide a useful framework for organizing the Howard University TDM Plan. Since the Campus Plan Transportation Analysis projects 149 net, new, peak-hour auto trips at full build-out, the HU TDM Plan includes all commitments which would be required of development projected to generate between 50 and 200 net, new, peak-hour auto trips. These are those commitments:

1. Bus Stop Maintenance During Construction

Howard University will continue its practice of coordinating with any transit operator to plan stop and alignment changes, and cover all related expenses, if needed.

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2. Bicycle Parking

Howard University will install new bicycle parking facilities in keeping with the ratios identified by OP in the current Zoning rewrite initiative and DDOT design guidelines for bike parking facilities to match the phases in the Campus Plan.

- Phase I will include 84 long-term and 123 short-term spaces to be developed within three years;
- Phase II will include an additional 87 long-term and 301 short-term spaces to be developed within three to five years; and
- Phase III will include an additional 91 long-term and 113 short-term spaces to be developed within five to seven years.

The TDM plan includes two exceptions to the bicycle parking plan:

- The University will count every installed Capital BikeShare space as 3 short-term spaces.
- If surveys indicate that new facilities fail to regularly reach 50% occupancy, bike parking for similar new uses will be built to 50% of the standard ratio.

3. Unbundling of Parking Costs

Unbundling refers to the practice of building owners separating the lease/purchase of parking spaces from the lease/purchase of building space. To the extent that new, HUCMP buildings house non-University tenants (retail space, for example), these tenants will be given an option to purchase or lease parking spaces separately, rather than have spaces included in their tenancy lease. This will provide each tenant the opportunity to reduce their tenancy costs by reducing their use of on-site parking.

The DDOT TDM matrix suggests that rates for unbundled parking be set no lower than the lowest rates within one quarter-mile of the development site. A survey of nearby, off-street commercial facilities as of September, 2011 identified monthly rates between \$145 and \$185. Based on this information, a monthly charge of \$145 per space would be set as the current base charge for non-University tenants occupying future HUCMP facilities.

For land uses owned and utilized by the University, unbundling is not applicable.

4. Post and Publicize TDM Commitments

Howard University will make the final TDM Plan available for download on the University's Parking and Shuttle webpage. The commuter benefits it identifies, and the timeline for implementation, will be publicized to all faculty, staff, and students via the OPSO website and other University media.

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5. Identify a TDM Leader

Howard University will identify a TDM Coordinator, who will oversee the implementation of the TDM Plan, including its specific TDM action commitments, and serve as the University's TDM contact for DDOT/Zoning enforcement. Contact information for this position will be updated at least annually and subsequent to any changes.

6. Transportation Information Kiosks

Howard University will install at least one Information Kiosk during each of the first five years of HUCMP execution. These will be installed at strategic locations across the campus, such as the entrances to bookstores, dining halls, dormitory buildings, and administrative buildings. Information will be regularly restocked and updated.

7. Weblinks to Commuter Support Websites

The University's Parking and Shuttle webpage currently provides links to the Capital Bikeshare program and Zipcar's Howard University homepage.

Howard University will add similar links including:

- CommuterConnections.com
- goDCgo.com
- Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority
- DDOT's Washington, DC Bicycle Map
- Washington Walks
- Nearby bicycle vendors and service providers

8. Provide Location for Bike-share Program Station/Kiosk

The University has provided prominent, Central Campus space for a Capital BikeShare station since the fall of 2010. The Campus Plan suggests three locations for potential new bike-share stations on campus. Howard University will work with Capital BikeShare staff to explore options for adding new bike stations on the Central Campus.

9. Operate a Shuttle Service to Metro

Howard University will continue to execute and improve the existing Howard University Shuttle Bus System, including service to area Metrorail stations.

10. Parking Demand Management

The HUCMP identifies a significant upgrade in campus parking facilities; shifting from the current inventory of surface lots to one that consists of parking structures. This is

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part of the HUCMP vision of creating a more walking-oriented Central Campus, where the visibility of parking facilities is minimized, as is the frequency of driveways and the conflict points they create within the Central Campus's pedestrian networks. The University will couple this change in supply with the investments in alternative-modes as described above, as well as pricing strategies. Howard University will increase the price of its annual parking permits by 100% for the 2012/13 school year in parking facilities with demand over 80%. Parking facilities with utilization under 80% will remain at current rates. The result will be a shift to the underutilized lots, resulting in a more efficient use of the complete parking supply.

Howard University will use the incremental revenue gains from the proposed price increase to fund additional the TDM actions and alternative-mode benefits to help current drive-commuters adjust to reduced parking options and increased parking costs — while also benefiting the majority of commuters who rely primarily on non-driving modes.

Howard University will also conduct annual travel surveys to determine on-going travel patterns and explore additional TDM measures if necessary to further manage demand.

Conclusion

The Howard University Campus Master Plan is built on a vision of modest growth and limited impacts to the community and, particularly, the transportation system. Learning lessons from national best practices and utilizing DDOT's recommendations for successful TDM, Howard University's TDM Plan will be the next best practice from which institutions across the District and the country can learn. By reducing the parking supply, setting the price for the remaining parking based on demand, and offering a range of alternative commute options, Howard's TDM Plan will shift the emphasis of its subsidized-commute benefit away from parking toward more sustainable modes — and, in the process, offer its commuters a diverse package of transportation-benefit options to choose from. The result will be a more sustainable transportation system, supporting both the Campus Plan and the community.