

**GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION**



d. Infrastructure Project Management Administration

June 06, 2013

Shyam Kannan
Managing Director
Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority
600 Fifth St, NW
Washington DC 20001

Ref.: Union Station to Georgetown Alternative Analysis

Dear Mr. Kannan:

Director Bellamy has forwarded me your letter dated May 14, 2013 (copy attached) regarding K Street NW and your request for an H and I St Contraflow bus lanes analysis to be conducted with the ongoing Union Station to Georgetown Alternative Analysis (USG AA). I would like to thank you for indicating your support for our premium transit efforts along the K Street corridor and providing us your comments on the USG AA.

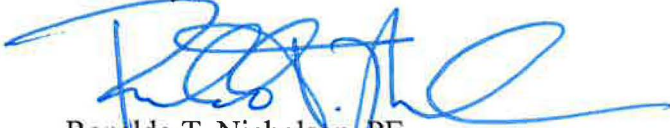
DDOT continues to develop and improve a balanced multi-modal transportation network for the District of Columbia and is always appreciative of the support provided by WMATA. In DDOT's efforts to improve this multi-modal system, The One City Line and K Street Transit Way are two of the main priorities. As you are aware K Street Transit Way has been coordinated and planned for years with the citizens, business and local/ federal agencies as well as WMATA. We concur with WMATA's determination that a comprehensive review is required to successfully implement K Street Transit Way, One City Line and other proposed projects in the downtown area to include H and I bus lanes.

USG AA has taken an initial and high level approach to including the H and I bus lanes analysis by using the COG Travel Demand Model to analyze future multi-modal transportation conditions. Because automobile capacity reductions on H and I Street are already coded in the Travel Demand Model, our future conditions assume the greatest extent of travel impacts. In addition, in response to WMATA comments early in the USG AA process, DDOT extended the study area to include H Street NW in order to be compatible with the efforts on the H and I bus lanes. Additional consideration will come from DDOT's MoveDC effort, Citywide TMP, and further technical reviews that shall be included in the pending environmental review of the One City Line to obtain the necessary approvals under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and other relevant laws.

The results produced thus far by the WMATA H and I study show an improvement in travel times for buses, but there is a need for further evaluation because of the potential impacts of removing loading areas, parking spaces, eliminating turning movements and other operational changes. “Contra flow” operations, in particular introduce a number of challenges to safety and operations of the multi-modal transportation network. As part of the USG AA there has been particular concern raised by the business community about the loss of parking associated with each alternative, but particularly Alternative 2, which would eliminate approximately 840 spaces along the route. As noted above, DDOT is studying and developing strategies for mitigating the construction impacts of the One City Line. The transit strategy will require both changes in the current transit environment along the corridor as well as the need for travel way capacity along adjacent east-west routes. Thus, without a detailed operational analysis for the H and I bus lanes and a transportation management plan during construction of the One City Line, DDOT cannot support introducing “Contra flow” conditions on H and I streets at this time, and independent of a larger coordinated effort with the K Street Transit Way and the One City Line.

Please contact Faisal Hameed, Manager Project Development and Environment Division at faisal.hameed@dc.gov for any additional comments. DDOT looks forward to our continued collaborative efforts with WMATA on these important projects.

Sincerely,



Ronaldo T. Nicholson, PE
Deputy Director/Chief Engineer

Cc: Terry Bellamy, (DDOT)
Carl Jackson, (DDOT)
Sam Zimbabwe (DDOT)
Faisal Hameed (DDOT)
Steve Strauss (DDOT)
J. Requa (WMATA)



May 14, 2013

Terry Bellamy
Director, District Department of Transportation
55 M Street, SE, Suite 400
Washington, DC 20003

Dear Director Bellamy,

Metro (WMATA) leadership wishes to express support for DDOT's initiative to enact transit improvements along K Street, NW.

To ensure the success of the initiative, we would also recommend that WMATA and DDOT work together to:

1. Provide an enhanced bus service on H Street NW to improve on-time performance, reduce bus travel times, remove the majority of buses from I Street NW, and improve travel speeds for auto drivers;
2. Provide supplementary bus service to mitigate construction impacts of the proposed premium transit; and
3. Collaborate to jointly explore bus improvement alternatives.

In support of this comprehensive approach, it will be important to include the following aspects in your current Alternatives Analysis:

- Ensuring that the Alternatives Analysis includes modeling the bus improvements recommended above, such as contraflow bus service on H Street, NW in the downtown core. As improvements to the east-west connections for Metrobus are directly related to any transit investments along K Street NW, conducting these analyses in concert makes sure that the Alternatives Analysis is technically-sound.
- Exploring ways to overcome potential operational friction between buses and streetcars, and solutions that either segment the service classes (i.e., local vs. limited stop) or the alignments (i.e., separate alignments for streetcar vs. buses).

By copy of this letter, Metro formally requests that the Alternatives Analysis include in its traffic analysis at least the preliminary recommendation of "Contraflow Lane on H Street" from the H and I Streets Bus Lane Study, to provide a comprehensive assessment of transit investments in the downtown area.

**Washington
Metropolitan Area
Transit Authority**

600 Fifth Street, NW
Washington, D.C. 20001
202/962-1234

*By Metrorail:
Judiciary Square-Red Line
Gallery Place-Chinatown
Red, Green and
Yellow Lines*

*A District of Columbia
Maryland and Virginia
Transit Partnership*

the DC Circulator, with approximately 30 buses per hour during the AM and PM Peak hours; and I Street has 60 buses per hour in the peak hours and is highly congested with major bottlenecks at 17th St. As noted above, Metrobus in this corridor serves different markets and carries higher ridership than the premium transit alternatives under evaluation. Therefore, Metro would not recommend Alignment 2.

Upon internal review, Metro would recommend Alignments 1 or 3, both of which run primarily on K Street. The advantage of these alignments is that they would provide service to the underserved K Street segment between New Jersey Ave NW and 7th Street NW. Routing the transit service along K Street for this segment would provide greater transit access and mobility to residents and businesses in newly redeveloping areas.

Consideration for the Interactions between Limited-Stop Streetcar and Local Buses

Metro planners note that both Metrobus and DC Circulator stops are shown at more frequent intervals than proposed streetcar stops proposed in Alternatives 1 & 2, as seen in Attachment A. Since streetcars are unable to move around obstacles in their travel lanes, the study methodology needs to model the friction between more frequently stopping buses and longer stop spacing streetcars in the transit and traffic analysis, which it currently does not do.

Metro would suggest that the best solution to this dilemma is to either have the streetcar act as the local service and have the Circulator or Metrobus act as the limited stop service, going around the streetcar when necessary; or operate streetcar and bus service along separate alignments to avoid friction between bus and streetcar. Metro would also like to note that many of the buses traveling in the K Street corridor have very different origins and destinations from the proposed Premium Transit routes, making their replacement by streetcar or premium bus infeasible.

Mitigation of Transitway Construction Impacts on Bus Service

Once implemented, the K Street transitway and the H Street contraflow bus lane will collectively bring significant improvements to transit operation efficiency and service reliability; however during the construction phase of the K Street transitway, temporary lane closure and modifications of traffic operations could adversely impact bus operations and passengers using K Street, which are already affected by traffic congestion currently.

Metrobus services using K Street and H/I Streets are among the region's most frequent lines, with more than 50 buses on K Street and 70 buses on H and I Streets in the peak hour. Additionally, DC Circulator and commuter buses from Maryland and Virginia access both corridors.