



District of Columbia Government  
Advisory Neighborhood Commission 6A  
Box 75115 Washington, DC 20013



June 9, 2017

The Hon. Phil Mendelson  
Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia  
1350 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W., Suite 504  
Washington, DC 20004

Re: Request to restore funding to ensure the success of the streetcar line

Dear Chairman Mendelson:

At a regularly scheduled and properly noticed meeting<sup>1</sup> on June 8, 2017, our Commission voted 7-0 (with 5 Commissioners required for a quorum) to send this letter asking you and your colleagues to restore the funding that the Mayor provided and that the Council's Transportation Committee unanimously recommended be included in the Budget to allow for the planning and completion of the eastern end of the H Street/Benning Road streetcar line east to the Minnesota Avenue metro station, and western end through downtown, as communicated in past unanimous votes of our Commission to the Council and the Mayor on a number of occasions. We ask that you replace the funding in the Budget that the Council is scheduled to review on Tuesday, so that you do not further disrupt the ongoing planning being done by DDOT and do not unnecessarily undermine the success of the streetcar and communities like ours that are counting on it.

Our Commission is extremely concerned about reports that you stripped funding from the budget at the last moment with no public notice, undermining the Administration's and the Council's longstanding commitment to ensuring the viability of this streetcar line via the extension through downtown. Given the investment the District has already made in establishing the H Street/Benning Road line, the demonstrated use of the service that far exceeds projected ridership estimates, and the tremendous growth that our neighborhood is experiencing, we ask that the Council restore its commitment to the completion of this important transportation project.<sup>2</sup> Simply put, our community and those to our east require improved public transportation and the streetcar is the best way to meet the needs of our growing neighborhoods.

The streetcar project has spurred a tremendous amount of investment along the H Street and Benning Road corridors and has given our community hope that the city is committed to initiatives that promote economic development and enhanced public transit options for our long-neglected and underserved part of the District.<sup>3</sup> In addition, our ANC and others nearby have welcomed much new residential

---

<sup>1</sup> ANC 6A meetings are advertised electronically on the [anc6a-announce@yahoogroups.com](mailto:anc6a-announce@yahoogroups.com), [anc-6a@yahoogroups.com](mailto:anc-6a@yahoogroups.com), and [newhilleast@yahoogroups.com](mailto:newhilleast@yahoogroups.com), at [www.anc6a.org](http://www.anc6a.org), and through print advertisements in the Hill Rag.

<sup>2</sup> Incomplete reviews of pending development along the H Street and Benning Road corridors demonstrate that the need for additional public transportation here will grow dramatically over coming years, with already 1500 residential units scheduled to deliver soon.

[http://dc.urbanturf.com/articles/blog/1458\\_new\\_units\\_are\\_on\\_tap\\_for\\_the\\_h\\_street\\_corridor/10720](http://dc.urbanturf.com/articles/blog/1458_new_units_are_on_tap_for_the_h_street_corridor/10720)

<sup>3</sup> Recent estimates note over \$750 million in real estate investments made along the eastern portions of the H Street corridor due to the anticipated delivery of the streetcar in this otherwise transit challenged area.

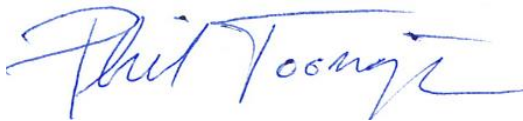
<http://urbanplacesandspaces.blogspot.com/2015/12/dc-and-streetcars-4-from-standpoint-of.html>

development, which brings with it a tremendous amount of population density and demands for residential parking and transportation, along the H Street corridor and surrounding areas with the understanding that the city's long-term vision is to provide a viable streetcar line for area residents. A reversal of the streetcar expansion plan undercuts many assumptions built into development plans for our community, would pose significant transportation issues for an already poorly served area for decades to come, and send a very poor message to our community.

Funding to complete the long planned eastern and western ends of the H Street/Benning Road streetcar line were included in the Mayor's draft budget and in the budget that unanimously was passed out of the Council's Transportation Committee. There is no evidence in the Council record that there was any dissent regarding the proposed funding that the Mayor and the Transportation Committee recommended for this project. Nonetheless, and with no notice to the public or the affected communities who rely on the streetcar to serve the ever growing demand for public transportation, it was unceremoniously stripped from the budget that the Council was presented to enact the night before the Council vote. Such lack of process and transparency undermines confidence in the Council's budget process and the well-reasoned committee-led consideration that the Council provides to matters of public importance and unnecessarily omits any opportunity for District residents and their locally elected representatives to be heard. Our Commission has previously voted unanimously to request that the Mayor and the Council complete the eastern and western ends of streetcar line and reiterates that request with our latest vote herein. We appreciate the leadership of the Council's representatives from Ward 6 and Ward 7 as well as the Transportation Committee Chair in working to ensure the success of the streetcar and we hope that we can count on your support as well.

We therefore urge you to keep the Council's commitment to the completion of this streetcar line and restore funding for it so it can serve as a viable form of transit for residents in our neighborhood and others throughout the District. Thank you for considering our concerns about this critical matter for our community and for your leadership. Please do not hesitate to contact me at [philanc6a@gmail.com](mailto:philanc6a@gmail.com) to discuss this matter further. We look forward to hearing from you and to working together to ensure the successful use of the streetcars in the District.

On behalf of the Commission,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Phil Toomajian".

Phil Toomajian  
Chair, Advisory Neighborhood Commission 6A

cc: Mayor Muriel Bowser  
Members of the D.C. Council  
ANC7C, ANC7D, ANC6C, ANC6E, AND5D, ANC2A, ANC2B, and ANC2F  
Director Leif Dormsjo, D.C. Department of Transportation