



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



March 13, 2015

Mayor Muriel Bowser  
Executive Office of the Mayor, Sixth Floor  
1350 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.  
Washington, DC 20004

Re: Ensuring the success of the District's Streetcar Program

Dear Mayor Bowser,

At a regularly scheduled and properly noticed meeting<sup>1</sup> on March 12, 2015, our Commission voted 8-0 (with 5 Commissioners required for a quorum) to send this letter of support for the extension of the H Street/Benning Road streetcar line east to the Minnesota Avenue or Benning Road metro station, and west to Georgetown, as communicated to our Commission on several occasions in plans presented by DDOT, as well as to request your attendance or that of your Director of Transportation to discuss the status of the project with us at our April 9 or May 14 meetings.

Our Commission is extremely concerned about recent reports that suggest that your administration's commitment to ensuring the viability of this streetcar line via the extension through downtown is waning. Given the considerable investment the District has already made in establishing the H Street/Benning Road line and the tremendous revitalization our neighborhood is experiencing, we would be deeply disappointed if there are plans to abandon this longstanding commitment. Simply put, our community requires improved public transportation and the streetcar is the best way to meet the needs of our growing neighborhood.

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<sup>1</sup> ANC 6A meetings are advertised electronically on the listserves [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.

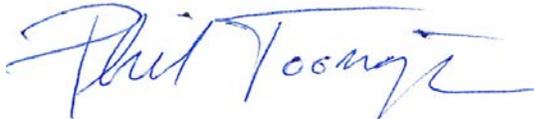
The streetcar project has spurred a good deal of investment along the H Street corridor and has given our community hope that the city is committed to initiatives that promote economic development and enhanced public transit options for our long-neglected and underserved part of D.C. In addition, our ANC and others nearby have welcomed much new residential 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 ANC, would pose significant transportation issues for an already poorly served area, and send a very poor message to our community.

We understand that your office and the new leadership at DDOT should undergo a thoughtful examination of the streetcar program, and that issues with the current execution of the project should be resolved, but we hope there is a sincere desire to move forward rather than scrap the long promised extension of the current line. The 2.2 miles of track that make up the H Street/Benning Road line requires meaningful connections to the east and west to be a viable transportation option for most users. Failing to extend the H Street/Benning Road line would render the current line of limited use to our community and other District residents and could jeopardize the District's current investment in this initiative. We urge you to maintain prior commitments to our community by moving this project forward, not backward.

Additionally, we are concerned about the delay in getting the current H Street/Benning Road line operational. We understand that there are bureaucratic hurdles to overcome when undertaking a large, new project like this, but months of testing seems excessive by any standard. Seeing the streetcars go up and down the corridor with no passengers has been frustrating for our community. We hope that there is a concerted effort to resolve any testing documentation issues quickly and to gain the necessary approvals to begin passenger service as soon as possible. We trust that you will take the necessary steps to ensure the success of the DC Streetcar by making this happen and by completing the line's long promised extension soon.

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 or our Vice-Chair and Transportation and Public Space Committee Co-Chair, Omar Mahmud at mahmud6a01@gmail.com to discuss this matter further and to make arrangement to share your plans for the streetcar with our community. We look forward to hearing from you and to working together to ensure the successful return of streetcars in the District.

On behalf of the Commission,



Phil Toomajian  
Chair, Advisory Neighborhood Commission 6A

Cc: Leif Dormsjo, Director, D.C. Department of Transportation  
Edward Mills, III, Interim Director, D.C. Fire and EMS  
Phil Mendelson, Chair, D.C. Council  
Mary Cheh, Chair, Committee on Transportation and the Environment  
Charles Allen, Councilmember Ward 6  
Vincent Orange, David Grosso, Anita Bonds, Elissa Silverman  
Councilmembers At-large