



ADVISORY NEIGHBORHOOD COMMISSION 3C
GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
CATHEDRAL HEIGHTS • CLEVELAND PARK
MASSACHUSETTS AVENUE HEIGHTS • MCLEAN GARDENS
WOODLAND-NORMANSTONE • WOODLEY PARK

Single Member District Commissioners

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February 3, 2017

The Honorable Jack Evans, Chairman, and Members of the Board
Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority
600 5th Street, NW
Washington, DC 20001

Dear Mr. Evans and Members of the Board,

I am writing on behalf of Advisory Neighborhood Commission 3C09, which borders Wisconsin Avenue between Woodley Road and Porter Street. Based on comments that I have received from constituents in my single member district I urge you to forego eliminating 37 bus service and to reconsider raising bus fares by 25 cents. These proposals are contained in the FY18 WMATA draft budget.

The 37 bus is a fast, limited stop service that was created to relieve over-crowding on the 30 series buses during weekday morning and evening rush hours. According to WMATA data and resident feedback the 37 is a success. It carries nearly three times more riders than WMATA expects on a bus line. The 37 demonstrates that District residents will use metrobus when it is efficient, reliable, and affordable.

Bus service is designed to implement several District public policies. We are an inclusive city that promotes connecting residents to all parts of the city. We also value improving the environment and reducing congestion by encouraging residents to replace private car travel with public transit. The latter goal has been difficult to achieve, but the responsive decision by WMATA to create the 37, a more efficient rush hour bus option, shows that drivers will choose public transit when it meets their needs.

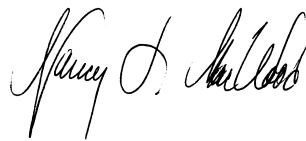
The nearly 600 people who ride the 37 on average each day are unlikely to wait for the 30-series bus if the 37 is eliminated. At a special ANC 3C meeting earlier this week on a different subject, residents volunteered that the 30 buses were always packed and it was not unusual for numerous buses to bypass waiting riders. Why would residents going to work or coming home from work choose to wait for an unpredictable amount of time for a bus? Isn't it more likely that these residents have already found the metro inconvenient and that they will decide that driving is the best option? That means hundreds of people who converted to public transit could be driving again.

I also urge you to reconsider a bus fare increase. The bus system most effectively connects people around the city. It is used by many fixed income seniors and lower income residents, who prefer it to metrorail for many reasons and who rely on it to get to jobs and services. While costs for housing and services continue to rise in the District, incomes are not keeping pace for a majority of DC residents. A 25-cent increase per ride may not seem like much to some people but if we want to maintain a diverse city that strives to ensure a basic quality of life for all, our District WMATA representatives should consider the equity of this increased financial burden on some of our bus riding citizens. No doubt similar issues are present in the neighboring jurisdictions.

I am well aware of the financial and other challenges faced by WMATA that this budget seeks to address. There are increased inconveniences that are proposed and probably should be approved that will result in cost savings. Eliminating a high-ridership bus service because fares fall short of cost recovery goals is an incomplete evaluation of the 37's overall benefit. Raising bus fares that will have a disproportionate impact on lower income and fixed income riders could add public transit to the list of unaffordable necessities.

Thank you for the opportunity comment on these proposals to the FY18 WMATA budget. I wish you wisdom as you continue the multi-faceted effort to provide the region with a safe, reliable, and affordable public transit system.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Nancy J. MacWood". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Nancy" being the most prominent.

Nancy J. MacWood
Commissioner, ANC 3C09