



# WASHINGTON METROPOLITAN AREA TRANSIT AUTHORITY

## Remarks by Charlie Scott, Senior Government Relations Officer Status of Silver Spring Transit Center Remediation

Before the Montgomery County Council

May 8, 2014

Good afternoon and thank you for the opportunity to be here at today's Council session. My name is Charlie Scott and I am Metro's Senior Government Relations Officer for Maryland.

Since the Council's last update on the Silver Spring Transit Center, the Report of the Independent Advisory Committee Regarding the Silver Spring Transit Center has been completed and Montgomery County has presented to Metro a proposal for remediation of shear and torsion stresses.

I will address this latest information, but first I will reiterate Metro's longstanding position regarding acceptance of this project: Metro intends to operate the Silver Spring Transit Center and will continue to work with Montgomery County during the remediation of design and construction deficiencies. Once the facility is operational, routine operations and maintenance costs will be borne by Metro. Long term, extraordinary maintenance costs – those in excess of routine costs – will not be funded by Metro. In order to recommend WMATA Board acceptance of this facility, Metro will require that a new agreement, solely between the County and Metro, be put in place to adequately protect Metro from the liability and expense associated with these long-term conditions.

Turning to the Report of the Independent Advisory Committee, Metro has reviewed the report and has serious concerns about the safety issues raised as well as the findings of significant technical deficiencies. Metro will not accept the SSTC with conditions that threaten both the safety of the general public and the efficiency of Metro's transit operations. Montgomery County must take corrective action to remedy these hazardous conditions before presenting the SSTC to Metro for acceptance.

Specifically, the Committee found there are several safety issues which may result from the identified deficiencies, including: that there is a likelihood that repaired cracks will reopen and new cracks will appear over the lifetime of the facility; that

the cracking could immediately reduce the structural load and interfere with the structural integrity of the SSTC; and that voids in concrete coupled with temperature cycling could result in spalling from vulnerable soffit areas, which could pose a local safety hazard for the general public using the SSTC. These conditions are unacceptable to Metro as they pose unacceptable safety risks to our patrons. Metro concurs with the recommendation for “inspection of all vulnerable soffit areas, and repairs as appropriate, prior to opening the facility for public use.”

Additionally, the report highlights a concern that Metro has mentioned many times before regarding cracking and the limitations of the Latex-Modified Concrete overlay. Metro agrees that the Latex-Modified Concrete overlay “can be expected to alleviate only the current top-of-slab cracking and insufficient concrete cover over post-tensioning conduits and reinforcing steel”. The report further states: “However, some of these old active cracks or new cracks that form in the substrate under the LMC will likely radiate up through the LMC. To address these cracks in the LMC will require that an active long-term maintenance program be put in place.” Metro concurs with that analysis. A program to provide routine inspections and perform required repairs will be part of the agreement that Metro will finalize with the County.

To address shear and torsion stresses, the Independent Advisory Committee has recommended that such work be performed prior to opening the facility. Metro recognizes that the County has received differing professional opinions regarding this specific issue and respects the County’s desire to follow the recommendations of the Independent Advisory Committee. Of particular concern is the potential for spalling of concrete resulting from any failure and the hazard such spalling could pose to patrons in the facility. The report also discussed the “invasive” nature of repairs to address shear and torsion stresses. Metro concurs that these repairs, implemented correctly, pose minimal risks to the post-tensioning and existing beams and structures. Metro notes that it is critical that such repairs are performed with precision, and Metro will require final drawings and specifications in order to accept this proposed remediation. Additionally, following completion of these repairs, an additional inspection will be required to assess if any damage has been done to the facility.

Lastly, Montgomery County has shared its interest in performing these shear and torsion repairs to address the long-term durability of the transit center. Metro notes that addressing this issue is significant, but does not, in and of itself, address all long-term durability issues associated with the SSTC. Metro will require a long-term maintenance fund to address all issues that have been noted in the many previous reports.

I want to reiterate that Metro remains committed to this project and process, and will continue to participate in the remediation efforts. From early concept development through design and construction, and today; Metro continues to be engaged with the County on this project. Metro wants to operate and maintain the SSTC and to provide the level of service expected by the region. At the same time, Metro wants to make sure we will not unnecessarily burden our riders and the region with increased maintenance costs. With that goal in mind, we look forward to continued collaboration with the County.