

October 16, 2017

Jonathan D. Rogers
Planning and Sustainability Administration
District Department of Transportation
55 M Street, SE
Suite 500
Washington, DC 20003

RE: Southeast Boulevard and Barney Circle Environmental Assessment

Dear Jonathan Rogers:

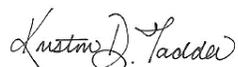
Casey Trees is a Washington, DC-based nonprofit with a mission “to restore, enhance, and protect the tree canopy of the nation’s capital.” To fulfill this mission, we plant trees; monitor the city’s tree canopy; and work with city officials, developers, and residents to prioritize trees. We are committed to helping the District reach its 40 percent tree canopy goal by 2032. Therefore, we appreciate the opportunity to share our vision for a new Southeast Boulevard in ward 6 – the ward with the lowest tree canopy in D.C. We look forward to working with the District Department of Transportation (DDOT) during the environmental assessment (EA) and subsequent design phase to incorporate new trees into a space where none exist today.

In June 2015, the District of Columbia Office of Planning (DCOP) released a [planning study](#) for a new Southeast Boulevard along the decommissioned Interstate 295 right-of-way between Barney Circle and 11th Street Bridge. Along with identifying 15 goals for the future boulevard, including a goal of increasing tree cover, DCOP’s study released 3 possible design concepts showing new blocks between the boulevard’s eastbound and westbound lanes. While design concepts A and B accommodate some green space in these new blocks, residential development is prioritized. Concept C, however, envisions a large neighborhood park in this space.

We believe it is critical to identify the current absence of tree canopy in the EA for Southeast Boulevard. Casey Trees recommends stating the need for a diverse selection of urban hearty trees in this location, and later creating a design that addresses this need. In addition, we suggest adopting DCOP’s design concept C to provide the necessary green space to grow tree canopy and beautify Southeast D.C. In addition to helping the District achieve its environmental goals, these steps will support a more connected citywide ecosystem, manage increased stormwater runoff, and provide shade for park goers.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment. Casey Trees would be happy to work with you to provide tree-related analyses for the Southeast Boulevard EA or design. If you have any questions about these recommendations, please feel free to contact me at ktaddei@caseytrees.org.

Sincerely,



Kristin Taddei

