



September 10, 2014

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Tegene Baharu
Director of Operations
Office of the Chief Technology Officer
655 15th Street NW
Washington, DC 20005

VIA E-MAIL: tegene.baharu@dc.gov

RE: DC WiFi Access at Potomac Gardens Housing Complex and DC WiFi Service Level Standards

Dear Mr. Baharu:

Advisory Neighborhood Commission (ANC) 6B appreciates the recent commitment of the Office of the Chief Technology Officer (OCTO) to expand DC WiFi access in common areas at the Potomac Gardens Housing Complex (Potomac Gardens). ANC 6B is currently working with the residents and leadership of Potomac Gardens to assess and improve resident access to Internet services. Though Potomac Gardens is a DC WiFi hotspot, service is inconsistent and only available in a very limited area of the complex. Improved access to Internet service will enable residents to more fully participate in the digital economy and the civic life of the City by increasing access to employment information and opportunities; information from government agencies; digitally delivered education and training; and tools to better manage finances and time.

Expansion helps fulfill the original intent of the Federal Government Broadband Initiative, which sought to decrease disparities in Internet access in underserved rural and urban areas. Hopefully, expansion in the Potomac Gardens common areas will be a precursor to providing “last mile” access throughout the complex and a model for expanding access in other underserved parts of the City.

In parallel with planning and implementing expansion at Potomac Garden, ANC 6B requests a meeting with OCTO to discuss the following topics:

- Expected service levels and performance standards for DC WiFi
- The process for improving performance and/or expanding wireless access, both at Potomac Gardens and other DC WiFi hotspots
- The possibility of using Performance Parking Funds to support expansion of WiFi to support specific non-automotive transit improvements

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ANC 6B Letter to Tegene Baharu

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As OCTO finalizes details of the expansion, it is also important that OCTO representatives collaborate closely with the leadership of the District of Columbia Housing Authority (DCHA) and, most importantly, with the residents of Potomac Gardens. Residents of Potomac Gardens have the most insight into how enhanced access can best be configured in the housing complex to maximize benefits for the most residents in a secure and supportable manner. The residents of Potomac Gardens can also help OCTO avoid any hidden pitfalls or less obvious sensitivities.

ANC 6B looks forward to future collaboration with OCTO on solutions for further bridging the digital divide. Commissioner Brian Pate is the Commission's representative in this matter and will coordinate with your staff to schedule a mutually convenient meeting. At a regularly scheduled and properly noticed meeting of ANC 6B, the Commission voted 9 to 0 to approve this letter. Thank you in advance for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "B. Flahaven", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Brian Flahaven
Chair

cc: Mayor Vincent C. Gray
Councilmember Muriel Bowser
Councilmember David Catania
Councilmember David Grosso
Councilmember Tommy Wells
Adrianne Todman, Executive Director, DCHA
Laurie Putscher, Director of Operations Support, DCHA