

Final Environmental Impact Statement

Appendix F3b

Comments on the SDEIS



U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Railroad Administration

March 2024

APPENDIX F3b

**INDEX OF COMMENTERS ON THE SUPPLEMENTAL DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT
(SDEIS)**

Comments are provided as received. In comments from individuals, personal identifying information (other than names), such as addresses, phone numbers, or email addresses, has been removed. Responses to the comments are provided in Appendix F3c.¹

Within each category, commenters are listed in alphabetical order, along with: Comment ID; where to find the comment in Appendix F3b (this document); and where to find the response or responses in Appendix F3c.

The number of commenters and the number of comments do not coincide. Some commenters submitted more than one comment. Conversely, some comments were submitted collectively by more than one individual or organization.

COMMENTS	COMMENT ID	Comment in Appendix F3b, Page(s) No.	Response(s) in Appendix F3c, Page(s) No.
Federal Agencies			
US Department of the Interior (DOI)	DOI_0706	1-3	123
US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)	EPA_0706	4-9	121-123
Federal Transit Administration (FTA)	FTA_0706	10-11	124
National Capital Planning Commission (NCPC)	NCPC_0706	12-15	123-124
District Government; District, State, and Regional Agencies			
Advisory Neighborhood Commission (ANC) 6C	ANC 6C_0706	16-19	125-127
Commissioners ANC 6C01 (Christy Kwan), 6C03 (Jay Adelstein), 6C02 (Leslie Merkle), C607 (Tony Goodman)	ANC6_Add'l_0706	20-21	127-128
Councilmember Charles Allen	CM Allen_0706	22-24	124-125
District Department of Transportation (DDOT)	DDOT_0706_Cover DDOT_0706_ByLine	25-26 27-32	129 132-138
District of Columbia Office of Planning (DCOP)	DDOT_0706_ByLine	32-33	138-139
Maryland Transit Administration	MTA_0630	34-36	128-129
Virginia Railway Express	VRE_0706	37-39	130
Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA)	WMATA_0706	39-40	131

¹ Comments that specifically pertained to Section 106 documentation were considered and addressed separately in the context of the Section 106 consultation process. These comments are included in Attachment 1 of the Programmatic Agreement (PA) for the Project (Appendix 4 of the FEIS).

COMMENTS	COMMENT ID	Comment in Appendix F3b, Page(s) No.	Response(s) in Appendix F3c, Page(s) No.
Public Commenters: Groups and Organizations			
Akridge	Akridge_0620	42-44	173
	Akridge_0706	45-82	174-179, 183
American Bus Association	ABA_0627	83-86	144
	ABA_0706	87-93	145-148
Amtrak	Amtrak_0706	94-95	141
Capital Trails Coalition	CTC_0706	96-98	150-152
Capitol Hill Restoration Society	CHRS_0706	99-101	148-149
Coach USA/Megabus	Coach_0627	102-104	143
Coalition for Smarter Growth	CSG_0706	105-108	149-150
Committee of 100 on the Federal City	C100_0706	109-143	157-164
Federal City Council	FC2_0627	144-146	152
	FC2_0705	147-150	152-153
Greater Washington Partnership	GWP_0706	151-152	153
Greyhound	Greyhound_0627	153-155	142
National Trust for Historic Preservation	NTHP_0706	156-166	154-155
NoMA Business Improvement District	NoMA BID_0706	167-169	153-154
Virginians for High Speed Rail	VHSR VTA_0622	170-171	164
Virginia Transit Association	VHSR VTA_0622	170-171	164
Washington Area Bicyclist Association	WABA_0706	172-174	155-157
Washington Union Station Intercity Bus Coalition	BusCarriers_0706	175-178	142-143
Public Commenters: Individuals			
Anonymous	PI_0627_002	179	170
Ra Amin	PI_0627_005	180-181	182
Karthik Balasubramanian	PI_0614_002	182-183	167
Louise Brodnitz	PI_0614_001	184	167
Xavier Domenico	PI_0618	185	169
Gregory Dun Osborne	PI_0514	186	166
Hannah Follweiler	PI_0517_002	187	167
Izzy Gholl	PI_0515_002	188	167
Sean Gilliam	PI_0517_001	189	167
Bruce W. Hain	PI_0706	190-192	172-173
Christine Healey (former Commissioner ANC 6C01)	ANC6_Add'l_0706	19-20	
Gene Hunt	PI_0616_002	193	169
Ken Jarboe	PI_0628_003	194-195	180
Jake Lighter	PI_0515_001	196-197	166
	PI_0628_001	198	180

COMMENTS	COMMENT ID	Comment in Appendix F3b, Page(s) No.	Response(s) in Appendix F3c, Page(s) No.
Chase Matthew	PI_0627_004	199-200	182
Kevin Moore	PI_0702	201	170
Ennis Parker	PI_0513	202	166
Jazmin Pilar	PI_0521	203	167
Ashton Rohmer	PI_0616_001	204-205	168
James A. Smailes	PI_0706_001	206-207	170-171
Gail Sullivan	PI_0627_001 PI_0627_003	208-210 211-214	169-170 181-182
Lisa Turner	PI_0628-002	215-216	180



IN REPLY REFER TO:

United States Department of the Interior

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
Office of Environmental Policy and Compliance
Custom House, Room 244
200 Chestnut Street
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19106-2904

July 6, 2023

4112.1
ER 23/0192

Amanda Murphy, Deputy Federal Preservation Officer
Office of Railroad Policy and Development
USDOT Federal Railroad Administration (MS-20)
1200 New Jersey Avenue SE
Washington, DC 20590

RE: Comments on Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement (SDEIS), Draft Programmatic Agreement, and Draft Section 4(f) Evaluation for the Washington Union Station (WUS) Expansion Project, Washington, DC.

Dear Amanda Murphy:

The U.S. Department of the Interior (Department) has reviewed the SDEIS, Draft Programmatic Agreement, and Draft Section 4(f) Evaluation for the Washington Union Station Expansion Project. The Department offers the following comments for your consideration.

The Department understands that the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) prepared a SDEIS, Draft Programmatic Agreement, and Draft Section 4(f) Evaluation for the WUS Expansion Project. Columbus Circle (Circle), a property owned by the United States and administered by the National Park Service (NPS) through National Mall and Memorials Park is near the project site. Upon review of the SDEIS, the NPS understands that there are no impacts to the Circle and no permits needed from the NPS therefore the NPS has no federal action. In fact, the Preferred Alternative includes minor beneficial impacts by facilitating access to the Circle from the station, making it easier and safer for pedestrians to reach. The Department has reviewed the Draft Section 4(f) Evaluation and submits the comments below in accordance with provisions of the National Transportation Act of 1966, as amended 23 U.S.C. 138 and 49 U.S.C. 303, referred to as Section 4(f), and the applicable regulations at 23 C.F.R. 774, and other regulations and guidance.

The Department understands that the project is proposed by the Union Station Redevelopment Corporation, in coordination with the National Railroad Passenger Corporation (Amtrak) with the purpose to support current and future long-term growth in rail service and operational needs; achieve compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) and emergency egress requirements; facilitate intermodal travel; provide a positive customer experience; enhance integration with the adjacent neighborhoods, businesses, and planned land uses; sustain

WUS's economic viability; and support continued preservation and use of the historic station building.

There are numerous Section 4(f) properties in the vicinity of the project including WUS itself. The FRA prepared a Draft Section 4(f) evaluation to determine whether there were any feasible and prudent alternatives to the use of the Section 4(f) properties, and whether the action includes all possible planning to minimize harm to the property resulting from the use.

The Section 4(f) use of WUS, the WUS Historic Site, and the Railroad Express Agency (REA) Building in the Preferred Alternative would result primarily from the reconstruction of the rail terminal and construction of the Project elements within the rail terminal. This includes Concourse A and a train hall, adjacent to the north elevation of the historic station building, which would require the demolition of the existing Claytor Concourse; and the H Street Concourse along the old H Street alignment and current H Street Tunnel, including the part within the REA Building historic property boundary. Column removal in the First Street Tunnel and the associated demolition of part of the floor of the Retail and Ticketing Concourse would further affect the physical fabric of the WUS historic station building. An alternative that would avoid these impacts would need to leave the rail terminal, Claytor Concourse, First Street Tunnel, and the eastern end of the H Street Tunnel in their existing condition. This would preclude the construction of new concourses and train hall and keep WUS from being able to adequately accommodate projected future ridership.

Because the Project elements are needed together to meet the project's Purpose and Need, all Action Alternatives include use of the WUS, the WUS Historic Site and the REA Building. The Department concurs that there is no prudent and reasonable alternative that would avoid a Section 4(f) use.

As such, the Department recognizes that the proposal will have an adverse effect to historic properties and that FRA identified actions to minimize and mitigate harm within this Draft Section 4(f) Evaluation. Upon review of the Draft Section 4(f), the Department agrees that there is no feasible and prudent alternative, as defined in 23 CFR 774.17, to the "use" of land outlined in this Supplemental DEIS. We also concur with the findings of the least harm analysis and that while the Preferred Alternative will have impacts to Section 4(f) resources, most of these impacts will be mitigated through measures implemented as part of the Section 106 Programmatic Agreement.

For continued coordination with the NPS, please contact Joel Gorder, Acting Deputy Associated Regional Director – Lands and Planning at 1100 Ohio Drive S.W., Washington, D.C. 20242. Mr. Gorder can be reached by phone at (202) 510-3294 or email joel_gorder@nps.gov.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,

JOHN NELSON

Digitally signed by JOHN
NELSON
Date: 2023.07.06 11:50:03
-04'00'

John Nelson
Regional Environmental Officer

cc: Joel Gorder, NPS

Electronic Distribution: info@WUSstationexpansion.com



**UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
REGION III**

Four Penn Center
1600 John F. Kennedy Boulevard
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19103-2852

July 6, 2023

Ms. Amanda Murphy
Deputy Federal Preservation Officer
Office of Railroad Policy and Development
USDOT Federal Railroad Administration (MS-20)
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590

Re: Washington Union Station Expansion Project Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement, Washington, D.C. CEQ #20230065

Dear Ms. Murphy,

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has reviewed the above-referenced document pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and Section 309 of the Clean Air Act (CAA). The CAA Section 309 role is unique to EPA. It requires EPA to review and comment publicly on any proposed federal action subject to NEPA's environmental impact statement requirement.

The U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) prepared a Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement (SDEIS) that evaluates the potential environmental impacts associated with the new Preferred Alternative F for the Washington Union Station (WUS) Expansion Project (Project). The Project is proposed by the Union Station Redevelopment Corporation (USRC) in coordination with the National Railroad Passenger Corporation (Amtrak) (Project Proponents). The SDEIS supplements the Project's June 2020 Draft Environmental Impact Statement (2020 DEIS). The SDEIS evaluated six Action Alternatives (Alternatives A through E and Alternative A-C) and identified Alternative A-C as the Preferred Alternative. On September 27, 2020, EPA provided comments on the 2020 DEIS regarding, but not limited to, traffic and congestion, Covid-19 impacts on ridership and demand, and air quality. FRA developed the new Preferred Alternative F in response to public and agency comments on the 2020 DEIS. FRA determined that design changes included in Preferred Alternative F altered the Project's potential environmental impacts as analyzed in the 2020 DEIS.

The SDEIS evaluates the potential impacts of the Preferred Alternative F and No-Action Alternative and identifies the measures FRA is proposing to adopt to avoid, minimize, or mitigate adverse impacts. The SDEIS states the purpose of the Project is to support current and future long-term growth in rail service and operational needs; achieve compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) and emergency egress requirements; facilitate intermodal travel; provide a positive customer experience; enhance integration with the adjacent neighborhoods, businesses, and planned land uses; sustain WUS's economic viability; and support continued preservation and use of the historic

station building. The Project is needed to improve rail capacity, reliability, safety, efficiency, accessibility, and security for both current and future long-term railroad operations at WUS.

EPA found the SDEIS to be comprehensive; however, we have identified environmental concerns and deficiencies in the NEPA analysis to be addressed in the Final EIS (FEIS). The attached detailed comments include recommendations related to estimating and disclosing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and addressing impacts to communities with environmental justice concerns. Additional analysis, disclosure, and clarification are recommended to strengthen the assessment of impacts

Thank you for the opportunity to review the SDEIS for this project. We look forward to seeing FRA responses to our comments in the FEIS. If you have any questions or concerns regarding the comments provided, please feel free to contact lead NEPA reviewer, Joy Gillespie, at Gillespie.Joy@epa.gov or (215) 814-2793

Sincerely,

JOY GILLESPIE

Digitally signed by JOY
GILLESPIE
Date: 2023.07.06 13:47:06
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For Tim Witman
Acting Environmental Assessment Branch Chief
Office of Communities, Tribes and
Environmental Assessment

Enclosure

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Enclosure

Washington Union Station Expansion Project Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement (SDEIS)

Greenhouse Gas Emissions and Resiliency

- 5.7 *Greenhouse Gas Emissions and Resilience* states: “Major GHGs include carbon dioxide (CO₂), methane (CH₄), nitrous oxide (N₂O), and fluorinated gases (such as hydrofluorocarbons and perfluorocarbons). The primary pollutant of concern from sources related to human activity is CO₂, which is the most abundant and influential GHG.” EPA finds FRA’s GHG emissions analysis is based on calculating CO₂ emissions to represent GHG emission from the Project instead of using the averaging factor CO₂e. EPA encourages FRA to base the analysis on CO₂e, a standard unit for measuring carbon footprints¹. This would also be consistent with section 5.18 *Cumulative Impacts*, where GHG emissions are cited as CO₂e.
- EPA finds the GHG emissions analysis in the SDEIS was not informed by the Council of Environmental Quality (CEQ) Interim NEPA Guidance on *Consideration of GHG Emissions and Climate Change*. On January 9, 2023, the CEQ published interim guidance to assist federal agencies in assessing and disclosing climate change impacts during environmental reviews.² CEQ developed this guidance in response to EO 13990, *Protecting Public Health and the Environment and Restoring Science to Tackle the Climate Crisis*. This interim guidance was effective immediately. CEQ indicated that agencies should use this interim guidance to inform the NEPA review for all new proposed actions and for evaluations in process, as agencies deem appropriate, such as informing the consideration of alternatives or helping address comments raised through the public comment process. EPA recommends the Final EIS (FEIS) apply the interim guidance as appropriate, to ensure robust consideration of potential climate impacts, mitigation, and adaptation issues.
- The process of making cement has a large carbon footprint. EPA recommends FRA include in the FEIS an evaluation of the GHG emissions and impacts of cement manufacturing for the Project.

Environmental Justice (EJ)

- Executive Order (EO) 14096, *Revitalizing Our Nation’s Commitment to Environmental Justice for All* (2023)³ was not considered in the SDEIS. EO 14096 builds upon the commitments in EO 12898, *Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations*, EO 13985, *Advancing Racial Equity and Support for Underserved Communities Through the Federal Government*, and EO 14008, *Tackling the Climate Crisis at*

¹ Carbon dioxide equivalent or CO₂e means the number of metric tons of CO₂ emissions with the same global warming potential as one metric ton of another greenhouse gas and is calculated using Equation A-1 in 40 CFR Part 98.

² <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2023/01/09/2023-00158/national-environmental-policy-act-guidance-on-consideration-of-greenhouse-gas-emissions-and-climate>

³ <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2023/04/26/2023-08955/revitalizing-our-nations-commitment-to-environmental-justice-for-all>

Home and Abroad. all of which we recommend be considered in the FEIS. As a member of the White House EJ Interagency Council, EPA understands the DOT has a robust Environmental Justice program with resources and subject matter experts (SMEs) that can assist with refining the Project's EJ Analysis to ensure that current EOs are considered and incorporated. If FRA needs assistance and has not already, please consider contacting DOT SEMs such as Carolyn Nelson, Director of Environmental Policy & Justice Division, Office of Planning & Analytics.

- EPA finds that conclusions such as "...all passengers would be equally affected. Congestion would also affect all road users, not only bus riders. While there would be an impact on EJ communities, it would not be disproportionately high and adverse," which was stated under section 5.17.1.1 *Transportation*, fail to acknowledge that even though the impact will be felt by everyone in the community, this impact may potentially impact communities with EJ concerns more adversely due to extra stressors and hurdles they experience that others in the general population may not. For example, where others may be able to avoid or mitigate this impact by having the option to work from home or pay the expense to use another transportation option, that might not be the case for an individual in the affected community of EJ concerns. Please consider when evaluating impacts on communities of EJ concern that even though the impact might be felt universally, the degree of impact may be felt more acutely in an EJ community. EPA request FRA consider this, revise your impact analysis, and consider mitigation measure to address these impacts where appropriate.
- EPA appreciates the effort FRA has made to reach out to the surrounding community, especially those of EJ concerns. Please provide in the FEIS the actions taken as result of those conversations and any specific EJ mitigation measures that were developed as a result.
- Regarding traffic, EPA notes that several assumptions are being made when predicting the future flow of traffic during construction and the potential for construction-related congestion to impact communities of EJ concerns. EPA encourages FRA to monitor traffic patterns throughout the construction phases and its impact on the community. We encourage any necessary changes to traffic flow as a result of observations or community feedback be made in a timely manner. Providing the community with a point of contact during construction is recommended.

Mitigation Measures/Project Commitments

- EPA finds many of the mitigation measures mentioned in the SDEIS have not been fully developed and/or coordinated with other agencies to determine potential strategies and reduce Project impacts. EPA recommends FRA provide a brief description of each specific mitigation measure in the FEIS and/or Record of Decision (ROD) for increased transparency and understanding of steps that will be taken to avoid and minimize Project impacts.
- EPA appreciates USRC's ongoing commitment to targeted EJ community outreach. EPA finds the SDEIS does not identify mitigation measures or project commitments with specific EJ considerations. Please include in the environmental consequence EJ section of FEIS and/or ROD the results of targeted EJ community outreach efforts and include in the project commitment

section any specific mitigation measures that were developed as a result of these EJ outreach efforts.

From: [Murphy, Amanda \(FRA\)](#)
To: [Union Station Expansion](#)
Cc: [Osterhues, Marlys \(FRA\)](#); [Bottiger, Barbara CTR \(FRA\)](#); [Johnson, Kathryn \(FRA\)](#)
Subject: FW: Washington Union Station Expansion Project SDEIS - FTA comments
Date: Thursday, July 6, 2023 3:36:05 PM

Amanda Murphy
Deputy Federal Preservation Officer
Federal Railroad Administration

From: Krofft, Heidi (FTA) <heidi.krofft@dot.gov>
Sent: Thursday, July 6, 2023 2:50 PM
To: Murphy, Amanda (FRA) <amanda.murphy2@dot.gov>; Decker, Bradley (FRA) <bradley.decker@dot.gov>
Cc: Keeley, Laura (FTA) <laura.keeley@dot.gov>; Koenig, Daniel (FTA) <daniel.koenig@dot.gov>
Subject: Washington Union Station Expansion Project SDEIS - FTA comments

Good afternoon Amanda,

FTA has reviewed the Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement, Draft Section 4(f) Evaluation and the Draft Section 106 Programmatic Agreement for the Washington Union Station Expansion Project. We do not have any specific comments on the documents at this time.

However, given the potential for FTA funds to be applied to a portion of the project in the future, FTA is requesting to be an invited signatory to the Section 106 Programmatic Agreement and a signatory to the Record of Decision.

A formal letter will follow next week.

Thank you,
Heidi

Heidi E. Krofft, RPA
Environmental Protection Specialist
U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Transit Administration, Region III
1835 Market Street, Suite 1910
Philadelphia, PA 19103-4124
215-656-7053



U.S. Department
of Transportation
**Federal Transit
Administration**

REGION III
Delaware, District of
Columbia, Maryland,
Pennsylvania, Virginia,
West Virginia

1835 Market Street
Suite 1910
Philadelphia, PA 19103
215-656-7100
215-656-7260 (fax)

July 11, 2023

Amanda Murphy
Federal Rail Administration
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue SE
Washington, DC 20590

Re: Washington Union Station Expansion Project Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact
Statement – Cooperating Agency and Signatory

Dear Ms. Murphy:

The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) has reviewed the Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement (SDEIS) for the Washington Union Station Expansion Project. The SDEIS supplements the Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the Project that was published in June 2020 and presents a new Preferred Alternative and environmental impacts. Distinctive features of the new Preferred Alternative include an east-west train hall; a bus facility to the north of, and parallel to, the train hall, and integrated into the structural deck above the rail terminal; and a below-ground pick-up/drop-off and parking facility accessed via ramps on G Street and First Street NE. The FTA understands that the Preferred Alternative may include conceptual transit improvements.

Based on the inclusion of conceptual transit elements, FTA accepted FRA's invitation to become a cooperating agency pursuant to 23 CFR 771.111(d) and has been participating in the NEPA process for the project. Given the potential for FTA to provide future grant assistance to recipients that operate out of Washington Union Station, FTA would like to adopt the Washington Union Station Expansion Project EIS and SDEIS pursuant to 23 USC § 139(c)(5) and is requesting to jointly issue the FEIS/ROD with FRA.

Additionally, FTA is requesting to be a signatory to the Section 106 Programmatic Agreement in order to fulfill any future Section 106 responsibilities.

Please continue to coordinate with FTA as the NEPA process continues. You may contact Ms. Heidi Krofft at Heidi.Krofft@dot.gov should you have any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

Laura Keeley
Director, Planning and Program Development
FTA Region III



IN REPLY REFER TO:
NCPC FILE No. 7746

July 6, 2023

Ms. Amanda Murphy
Deputy Federal Preservation Officer
Office of Railroad Policy and Development
U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Railroad Administration (MS-20)
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590

Re: Comment of Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement –
Washington Union Station Expansion Project

Dear Ms. Murphy:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on the Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for the Washington Union Station Expansion Project (Project). The Union Station Redevelopment Corporation (USRC), in coordination with the National Railroad Passenger Corporation (Amtrak), has proposed expanding and modernizing the multimodal transportation facilities at Washington Union Station, while preserving the historically significant station building. The Project includes reconstructing and relocating tracks, developing new concourse facilities, maintaining multimodal transportation services, and improving and expanding infrastructure and other facilities.

National Capital Planning Commission (NCPC) staff appreciates the on-going coordination with the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) regarding the Project, and we look forward to continued collaboration through the remainder of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process, Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) process, and ultimately the Commission's review and approval of the project. NCPC is a cooperating agency as part of the project to satisfy the Commission's own NEPA compliance requirements because of its approval over projects on federal land. The historic station, existing parking structure, and bus facilities are located on federal (FRA) land.

The primary goal of the project is to support current and future growth in rail service and to support multimodal connectivity for Washington, DC and the National Capital Region well into the 21st Century. Union Station is an important historic resource and is a gateway into the National Capital,

and therefore the function, design and experience of the facility impacts the first impression for visitors. At the same time, the station is a critical transportation hub for residents and workers. Policy language in the 2019 federal Transportation Element of the *Comprehensive Plan for the National Capital* expresses support for the expansion of high speed and high capacity passenger rail to improve inter-city connectivity across the eastern United States, with Washington Union Station as a regional hub. The Commission has expressed support for the overall project purpose, including accommodating future growth in rail service; improving accessibility and egress; enhancing the user experience; enhancing integration with surrounding uses; sustaining the station's economic viability; and preserving the historic train station.

As noted in the Memorandum of Understanding executed in 2016, NCPC is the central planning agency for the federal government in the National Capital Region. Pursuant to 40 U.S.C. § 8722(d), NCPC has zoning authority for projects on federal land in the District of Columbia. As such, NCPC's review of this project will be comprehensive and will continue through 50-70 percent design development.

The Commission reviewed initial concept plans for the project in January 2020 and provided a series of requests to help facilitate future project reviews. These included substantially reducing parking, focusing on the overall urban design quality of the project, and facilitating improved coordination among District agencies, project proponents and the adjacent private air rights owner, Akridge. The Commission also reviewed staff comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) in July 2020, with a particular focus on parking. NCPC is a cooperating agency for NEPA purposes and a consulting party under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA).

FRA submitted a revised concept for Commission review in July 2022. The project proponents worked to address comments they received through the DEIS process, including those from NCPC at the initial concept review. The revised concept was altered in several significant ways, including: a parking program reduction of nearly 50 percent from the previous concept (equal to a 65% reduction from current parking); relocation of the parking and new pick-up/drop-off area underground; and reconfiguration of the bus facility in an east-west orientation to align with the new train hall with an additional pick-up/drop-off area. Due to the substantial changes, the Commission supported the revised concept, particularly the parking program reduction and relocation, as well as the reconfiguration of the bus facility, along with other improvements to access and urban design, and also commended the applicant for developing a new plan that was responsive to NCPC and other stakeholder feedback.

The 2020 DEIS evaluated six Action Alternatives (Alternatives A through E and Alternative A-C) and identified Alternative A-C as the initial Preferred Alternative. After review of public and agency comments on the 2020 DEIS, FRA paused the NEPA process. During the pause, FRA and the Project Proponents developed the new alternative (Alternative F) which also reflects the revised concept NCPC reviewed. In July 2022, FRA designated Alternative F as the Preferred Alternative and re-initiated the NEPA process. FRA determined that, relative to the alternatives

analyzed in the 2020 DEIS, the new Preferred Alternative included significant changes with potential to alter the project's environmental impacts. Therefore, FRA prepared a Supplemental DEIS (SDEIS) to evaluate the new alternative. Staff has reviewed the SDEIS and provides the following comments:

Staff Comments

- Overall, the SDEIS is thorough and evaluates the potential impacts resulting from the proposed preferred alternative. The alternative is consistent with the concept the Commission reviewed and supported in July 2022.
- Major beneficial operational impacts of the alternative include an expansion of rail capacity and ridership, new and improved pedestrian access and circulation, new and improved bicycle access and infrastructure.
- Major adverse operational impacts include increased traffic volumes, increased greenhouse gas emissions, and impacts to historic and cultural resources.
- Temporary constructions impacts will also result from the project.
- NCPC staff will continue to coordinate with FRA and other consulting parties regarding the development of a Programmatic Agreement (PA) that is being prepared to resolve known adverse effects on historic properties pursuant to Section 106 of the NHPA. The PA will include avoidance, minimization, and mitigation strategies, as well as a design review process with guidelines. The content and applicability of the guidelines will need further development. NCPC will be a signatory to the PA.
- Staff recommends the applicant continue to work with stakeholders to further minimize or mitigate transportation impacts due to construction activities and project implementation. We support the development of transportation demand and management strategies, in coordination with the District Department of Transportation.
- Staff recommends the applicant continue to work with bus operators in the development of the dynamic management approach for the bus facility. The applicant should also continue coordination with transit, hop-on/hop-off, and sightseeing buses that will require curb space across the site.
- As project plans are further developed, it will be helpful to better understand what entities or agencies will be responsible for the various components and mitigation measures, to ensure the project is cohesive and designed in a comprehensive manner.
- Staff requests that FRA provide copies of the comments received on the SDEIS prior to the next Commission review, along with a summary of responses. This will assist in NCPC understanding any outstanding issues.

Next Steps

The expansion project is a critical multimodal infrastructure investment in the nation's capital. NCPC will continue to work with FRA on the EIS and review process. As the process advances, we request FRA provide an updated schedule and a request FRA outline next steps and how it

anticipates responding to all comments. Again, we appreciate the coordination of FRA on this important and complex project. If you have any questions or would like to further discuss the review process or the Commission's actions thus far, please do not hesitate to contact me or Matthew Flis at matthew.flis@ncpc.gov or (202) 482-7236.

Sincerely,

Diane Sullivan

Diane Sullivan
Director, Urban Design and Plan Review Division

cc: Anita Cozart, Director, DCOP
Everett Lott, Director, DDOT
Thomas Luebke, Secretary, U.S. Commission of Fine Arts
David Maloney, State Historic Preservation Officer, DCOP



Government of the District of Columbia
**Advisory Neighborhood
Commission 6C**

July 6, 2023

Ms. Amanda Murphy
Deputy Federal Preservation Officer
Office of Federal Rail Policy and Development
USDOT Federal Railroad Administration (MS-20)
1200 New Jersey Avenue SE
Washington, DC 20590

VIA EMAIL TO: info@WUSstationexpansion.com

Re: Washington Union Station Expansion Project: Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement, Draft Programmatic Agreement, Draft Section 4(f) Evaluation

Dear Ms. Murphy,

Advisory Neighborhood Commission 6C appreciates the opportunity to provide comments on the Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement (SDEIS), Draft Programmatic Agreement and Draft Section 4(f) Evaluation for the Washington Union Station Expansion Project.¹ **ANC 6C strongly supports the overall goals of this important and much needed project and has closely monitored its progress.**

As stated in testimony to the National Capital Planning Commission on July 5, 2022, ANC 6C is very pleased with the significant adjustments that have been made in the project design since the release of the previously proposed Alternative A-C in 2020. These improvements include the greatly reduced parking program located with a Pick Up/Drop Off (PUDO) facility below grade; the enhanced, one-level bus station located close to the train hall; the opportunity for a central, open public space south of H Street NE; and the better integration of the multimodal facility into the existing and planned neighborhoods, including more desirable circulation routes in and around the station for vehicles, buses, pedestrians and bicyclists. We thank the FRA for its efforts to make these changes.

While ANC 6C thus supports the SDEIS's revised Preferred Alternative F and appreciates the detailed mitigation measures found in the draft documents, ANC 6C nevertheless urges additional measures be included and clarifications made.

¹ On June 14, 2023, at a duly noticed and regularly scheduled monthly meeting with a quorum of seven out of seven commissioners and the public present via videoconference, the Commissioners voted 7-0 to adopt the views expressed in this letter.

Ensure continued consultation and coordination with ANCs: In developing mitigation measures and meeting project commitments, as set forth in Chapter 7 of the SDEIS, project sponsor Union Station Redevelopment Corporation (USRC) should be specifically directed to consult and coordinate with ANC 6C on matters having an impact on the residents, businesses, and establishments east of the station.² Individuals in this community will be hit hard by the project's construction and will experience the impact of the station's expanded operations.

ANC 6C as their representative is thus an appropriate body with which to coordinate and consult concerning mitigation measures related to transportation management, noise and vibration, and expanded station operations. In particular, USRC should be required to consult with ANC 6C in the development of the Integrated Construction Transportation Management Plan, the development of traffic mitigation measures for intersections in the study area, and the Bus Facility Operations Plan.

Celebrate and enhance the Station as an architectural landmark. The historic Washington Union Station is not only a crown jewel within the ANC 6C area, but also a celebrated architectural masterpiece for the nation as a whole. ANC 6C urges that additional steps be taken to integrate the landmark building into the overall station complex to ensure its continued vitality, including restoration of more of the building's historic fabric and natural lighting, as well as improvement of the east and west terminations of the truncated historic passenger concourse, and restoration of the Columbus Plaza fountains.

As ANC 6C has previously testified, the historic station should retain its primacy as the symbolic and functional center of the larger multimodal facility and its role as a gateway to the nation's capital should be maintained. ANC 6C also encourages the station to include benches for residents and visitors to rest and enjoy the architectural beauty of the station.

Enforce future parking restrictions and other measures related to pick up/drop off operations. Once the expanded station is operational, there must be vigorous enforcement of parking restrictions and other measures to ensure that the below ground PUDO facility anticipated to accommodate about half of station-related PUDO *actually* handles at least half of station-related PUDO. Furthermore, on-scene monitoring, signage and public outreach should be adopted to ensure the PUDO locations in front of Union Station and along 2nd Street NE do not become congested with noise and air-quality impacts adversely impacting the Capitol Hill Historic District.

USRC should be directed to have a plan for ensuring efficient PUDO, involving all vehicles, both during construction and when the expanded station is fully operational. USRC should be responsible for adjusting this PUDO plan as conditions warrant.

Ensure safe accommodations during construction. ANC 6C appreciates design modifications made during the development of the SDEIS's Preferred Alternative F to

² ANC 6C recommends USRC be similarly required to consult and coordinate with ANC 6E, the representative of communities to the west of the station.

increase safety for bicyclists and pedestrians in and around Washington Union Station. While the additional access points, ramps, and vehicle circulation design modifications will be beneficial, ANC 6C urges that traffic management measures in and around the station be continually evaluated during construction and when the expanded station is fully operational with safety concerns being the top priority. ANC 6C strongly supports requiring USRC to work with Amtrak to use construction trains to assist with hauling away excavation materials, to mitigate the potential use of up to 120 daily trucks in the neighborhood, which would greatly impact the safety of pedestrians and bicyclists.

In addition, USRC should ensure robust, hardy treatments for safe accommodations during construction since this is a long-term project. Emphasis on the construction management plan should be placed on safety, rather than the efficient movement of private and for-hire vehicles.

Include future bicycle facilities, such as long-term storage and showers. ANC 6C supports the proposed measures to improve the experience of bicyclists in and around Union Station, including increased bicycle parking and storage, and greatly increased bikeshare availability. To further enhance multimodal use of Union Station, ANC 6C urges creation of a bicycle facility at the station on par with bicycle facilities found at train stations in Europe. Long-term bicycle storage facilities should be included for intercity and long-distance train and bus passengers accessing the station by bicycle.

ANC 6C also recommends consideration of providing shower facilities alongside restrooms for commuters and other travelers in Union Station. Lastly, future bicycle networks around the station should ensure the safety of bicyclists using the heavily-used First Street NE cycle track and where bicyclists navigate around Columbus Circle.

Strongly discourage the use of extra 15 bus slips except in the most extraordinary circumstances. ANC 6C objects to the utilization of the H Street deck and removal of PUDO for 15 additional charter bus slips except in all but the *most* extraordinary circumstances (i.e., no more than once or twice a year). The H Street deck should not be used for bus slips 5 to 10 times a year as contemplated in the draft documents. Neither should the H Street deck be used for predictable or routine events such as the Cherry Blossom Festival or yearly political demonstrations. If the newly enhanced bus facility proves inadequate to provide bus slips for charter buses bringing out-of-town visitors to especially large events, then USRC, the bus carriers, DDOT, and the Mayor's Office of Special Events should find parking and PUDO areas for charter buses at locations adjacent to Blue-Orange-Silver-line Metro stations, such as Stadium-Armory and L'Enfant Plaza, thereby lessening bus traffic congestion experienced by District residents near Union Station.

It should be noted that charter bus passengers such as these from out-of-town have no need for a multimodal connection to Amtrak, VRE or MARC trains. Their travel experience in the District would in fact be enhanced by having direct access to the three Metro lines running closest to the Capitol, the National Mall, and the Tidal Basin, rather than navigating a transfer to the Blue-Orange-Silver lines via the Red line.

Ensure that USRC has sufficient resources. ANC 6C urges that USRC have sufficient resources and authorities to execute both project management and expanded operations successfully. In order for this project to be completed successfully, USRC should have the levels of staff and funding necessary to carry out the responsibilities it is being assigned, including when the expanded station is operational.

Delegate authorities to shorten timeline. Likewise, ANC 6C urges that U.S. Department of Transportation authorities be delegated directly to USRC or to the lowest appropriate USDOT level in order to ensure the construction timetable is as streamlined as possible. If there are ways to bring this long-overdue infrastructure improvement project to a safe and successful completion in fewer than 13 years, ANC 6C strongly recommends those approaches be adopted to shorten the impact of the construction on the nearby communities.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on these draft documents. ANC 6C remains committed to working with all parties to ensure the Washington Union Station expansion project through to completion.

Sincerely,



Mark Eckenwiler
Chair, ANC 6C

Cc: Congresswoman Eleanor Holmes Norton
Mayor Muriel Bowser
Council Chairman Phil Mendelson
Council Member Charles Allen

July 6, 2023

Ms. Amanda Murphy
Deputy Federal Preservation Officer
Office of Federal Rail Policy and Development
USDOT Federal Railroad Administration (MS-20)
1200 New Jersey Avenue SE
Washington, DC 20590

VIA EMAIL TO: info@WUSstationexpansion.com

Re: Washington Union Station Expansion Project Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement, Draft Programmatic Agreement, Draft Section 4(f) Evaluation

Dear Ms. Murphy,

We are current commissioners and a former commissioner of Advisory Neighborhood Commission 6C. We endorse ANC 6C's comments on the draft Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement (SDEIS), Draft Programmatic Agreement and Draft Section 4(f) Evaluation for the Washington Union Station Expansion Project ("the documents"), adopted on June 14, 2023. We strongly support the overall goals of the Washington Union Station Expansion Project and the Revised Preferred Alternative ("Preferred Alternative F").

However, based on the discussion held during the Consulting Parties meeting of June 29, 2023, we wish to associate ourselves with the comments made by the representatives of the DC State Historic Preservation Office ("SHPO") and the private air rights developer. We thus wish to make the following points expanding upon previous comments and testimony made by ANC 6C concerning the project:

1. Our support for the Expansion Project is predicated on the actual implementation of Preferred Alternative F. Preferred Alternative F is the product of an extensive consultation process with stakeholders and embodies the best approach for meeting the complex goals of this extraordinary and much needed project to create a transportation center well-integrated into a thriving neighborhood within our nation's capital.
2. As noted by the DC SHPO, the Programmatic Agreement should incorporate specific references to Preferred Alternative F to serve as a guide for future implementation of the Station Expansion Project and as the benchmark for determining whether future actions are consistent with, or differ from, what was agreed upon in the Section 106 process.

3. The central civic space north of Washington Union Station found in the preferred alternative is of critical importance to fully realizing the benefits of the Expansion Project, in terms of mitigating the impact on the historic station and in developing a vibrant civic area north of the station. As noted by the DC SHPO, there should be a commitment within the documents on the part of the FRA and the Project Sponsor to work with the private developer and other applicable parties and review agencies to ensure the central civic space is fully realized according to plan.
4. Furthermore, the FRA should make a commitment to reorder the air rights boundaries north of the station between the federal government and the private developer to ensure an integrated development of the air rights and open spaces according to the plan envisioned in Preferred Alternative F. We agree with the private developer that the public benefits associated with Preferred Alternative F cannot be met if the FRA attempts to develop its private air rights independently, or chooses not to develop them at all.
5. Likewise, we believe there should be a commitment in the documents to the development of a consolidated air rights development plan to achieve a cohesive and viable approach to the myriad of remaining issues that must be addressed as the Station Expansion Project and the Burnham Place project move forward.

Preferred Alternative F promises substantial public benefits for which ANC 6C has long advocated, and minimizes many potentially adverse impacts, but these public benefits are dependent upon Preferred Alternative F actually being implemented. We urge the documents reflect a commitment from the FRA to realize the public benefits as intended.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the documents.

Sincerely,

Christy Kwan
Commissioner, ANC 6C01

Christine Healey
Former Commissioner, ANC 6C01

Jay Adelstein
Commissioner, ANC 6C03

Tony Goodman
Commissioner, ANC 6C07

Leslie Merkle
Commissioner, ANC 6C02

Cc: Congresswoman Eleanor Holmes Norton
Mayor Muriel Bowser
Council Chairman Phil Mendelson
Council Member Charles Allen



**COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
THE JOHN A. WILSON BUILDING
1350 PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE, NW
WASHINGTON, DC 20004**

Charles Allen
Councilmember, Ward 6
Chairperson
Committee on Transportation and the Environment

Committee Member
Business and Economic Development
Health
The Judiciary & Public Safety

July 6, 2023

Amanda Murphy
Deputy Federal Preservation Officer
Office of Federal Railroad Policy and Development
USDOT Federal Railroad Administration (MS-20)
1200 New Jersey Avenue, S.E.
Washington, DC 20590

VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL

RE: Comments of D.C. Councilmember Charles Allen to the Washington Union Station Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement

Dear Ms. Murphy:

I represent Ward 6 on the Council of the District of Columbia – which includes Union Station – and I also serve as the Chair of the Council’s Committee on Transportation and the Environment. I am writing to express my strong support for the revised proposed concept for the Union Station Expansion Project in the Federal Railroad Administration’s (“FRA”) Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement. Union Station is one of our region’s major transportation hubs, and it should be treated as such. The proposed concept creates a modern vision of expanded transportation options, well-integrated into the surrounding neighborhood, and it is the design that Union Station deserves. I encourage FRA and all stakeholders to continue to work together to see this vision to fruition.

In 2019 and 2020, along with Advisory Neighborhood Commission (“ANC”) 6C and scores of other stakeholders, I expressed grave concerns with the previous proposed design. It is clear that FRA listened and responded to our concerns. With the recent revisions, I believe the SEP can now achieve the potential that this unparalleled opportunity affords the District and our region.

First, the proposal includes a substantial reduction and underground relocation of station parking spaces, aligning with the District Office of Planning’s recommendation. Specifically, the revised proposal includes 400 to 550 spaces for station parking and rental cars. Reducing parking at the station is crucial to encouraging travelers to use transit and other modes other than cars to reach the station. The removal of the proposed garage also opens the opportunity for world class parks, plazas, and commercial activity outside a dramatic and attractive train hall.

Second, the proposal incorporates a large-scale, underground facility for taxis, rideshare, and cell

phone waiting areas. Even prior to the station's expansion, Columbus Circle and the surrounding streets currently have significant vehicle congestion during peak periods. Adding a convenient, off-street area for people to connect with their driver makes sense. More staging areas will increase rideshare carpooling opportunities and decrease the presence of cars circling and parking in our neighborhoods.

Third, the proposed intercity and charter bus station is now centrally located, attractive, and fully integrated into the multimodal passenger facility. Whereas the previous plan required buses to exit east along H Street, the revised configuration routes buses toward North Capitol Street—a much safer and neighborhood-friendly strategy. With regards to the intercity busses coming through Union Station, I want to emphasize that the bus slips should be used efficiently, so that the space dedicated to busses in the station does not sit unused, as it often does today.

Fourth, the plan greatly improves bicycle and pedestrian access at the station's perimeter. An attractive and graciously proportioned bicycle and pedestrian path parallel with First Street NE will provide safe access from Columbus Circle up to H Street. The proposal also shows seating and gathering opportunities at both sides of the historic building—a major improvement from the existing car-dominant conditions.

While I see much to celebrate, I would also like to offer my suggestions to ensure that we do not squander the once-in-a-century opportunity before us.

First, I encourage FRA to ensure that at all steps of the process moving forward, ANC 6C and other local stakeholders are called on to provide input about the design and the construction process. While Union Station is a national and regional architectural icon and important transportation connection, it is also a building in the middle of a vibrant neighborhood. The redevelopment of Union Station provides the District a great opportunity to add to this neighborhood and create a beautiful civic space, but only if local stakeholders continue to have a strong voice in the process.

Second, and relatedly, I urge FRA to lead a thoughtful, inclusive process of aligning the air rights and private development surrounding Union Station. While the plans for a redesigned Union Station are stunning, allowing the structure itself to remain an island from the rest of the neighborhood will be a massive missed opportunity. Thoughtfully combining the planned private development around Union Station with the plans for the station will maximize opportunities for the economic development in the District and for dynamic civic spaces for the community.

Third, to ensure that the project is developed and eventually run in the most efficient manner, I encourage FRA, going forward, to clarify Union Station Redevelopment Corporation's role as the Project Sponsor. A well-supported Project Sponsor that can work closely with federal, local, and neighborhood-level officials will ensure that there is one clear vision for a vibrant station and thoughtful connections to the neighborhood.

In short, I am extremely pleased with the revised plan for Union Station's expansion. I am encouraged by the broad support the project revisions have received from stakeholders so far, and I look forward to hearing more from additional constituents. Thank you for considering my perspectives on this critically important project. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me or my Chief of Staff, Kate Mitchell, at kmitchell@dccouncil.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Charles Allen". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Charles" being more prominent than the last name "Allen".

Councilmember Charles Allen, Ward 6
Chairperson, Committee on Transportation & the Environment
Vice Chair, Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments

cc: Chairman Phil Mendelson, Council of the District of Columbia
Councilmember Christina Henderson, At-Large
Councilmember Matthew Frumin, Ward 3
Councilmember Janeese Lewis George, Ward 4
Councilmember Zachary Parker, Ward 5
Mark Eckenwiler, Chair, Advisory Neighborhood Commission 6C

Government of the District of Columbia

Department of Transportation



July 6, 2023

Amanda Murphy
Acting Federal Preservation Officer
Federal Railroad Administration
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590

Subject: Washington Union Station Expansion Project SDEIS Comments

Dear Ms. Murphy,

The District Department of Transportation (DDOT) appreciates the opportunity to participate in the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) process as a Cooperating Agency for the Washington Union Station Expansion Project (SEP). DDOT supports the expansion of Union Station as a major multimodal transportation port for the District and recognizes the value of additional train capacity to the District.

DDOT greatly appreciates the close coordination between the Project Sponsors and DDOT to address comments made by DDOT and others about the DEIS alternatives. DDOT supports the Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement (SDEIS) Preferred Alternative, Alternative F, which includes:

- A reduction in the proposed parking program (1,600 spaces to 400-550 spaces);
- The replacement of the above ground parking garage with below-grade parking;
- An east-west oriented bus parking deck;
- A centralized below-ground pick-up and drop-off facility; and
- Enhanced pedestrian and bicycle access and storage.

With this letter, DDOT summarizes our comments on the SDEIS. Detailed comments are attached in Attachment 1, which includes comments from the DC Office of Planning.

While the SEP will be transformational, it will have adverse impacts on the transportation network which require mitigation. The long planning horizon for the SEP combined with DDOT's focus on near-term improvements to transit and bicycle infrastructure in the vicinity of Union Station mean the project's negative impacts outnumber the readily identifiable

transportation mitigations. As such, a highly robust Performance Monitoring Plan (PMP) with specific and meaningful commitments, including a defined level of financial obligation, is needed. DDOT considers the PMP to be a centerpiece of the SEP's mitigation approach. The currently proposed language for the PMP lacks sufficient details, triggers, and commitment levels needed to adequately mitigate anticipated transportation impacts. Further, defined timelines for the delivery of transportation mitigations identified in the SDEIS are needed to ensure the mitigation is aligned with the expected timing of the impact. Coordination with DDOT prior to the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) to better define the PMP and mitigation timeline is required.

The SEP's construction represents a massive undertaking that is expected to last for approximately 13 years. The construction scale and duration will result in negative impacts in the District, particularly for nearby residents and businesses. Every effort needs to be taken to avoid, minimize, and mitigate these impacts.

DDOT strongly encourages the Project Proponent to commit to removing construction spoils via rail to significantly reduce truck traffic impacts to and from WUS. Additionally, construction-related closures to transportation facilities, especially sidewalk and bicycle infrastructure such as the Metropolitan Branch Trail, must be minimized, and District law requires Safe Accommodations (DCMR 24-3315).

The SEP has benefited from close coordination between the Project Sponsors and DDOT. As the project progresses to the FEIS and design advances, continued collaboration will be critical for ensuring that the project continues to maximize benefits and reduce impacts to the District. Engagement with DDOT and the private air-rights development to ensure shared access, coordinated design and circulation of private transportation facilities, and implementable mitigation strategies that benefit the broader network will be expected, along with needed consistency of the SEP with DDOT's ongoing H Street Bridge project.

Thank you again for the opportunity to partner with FRA as a Cooperating Agency and review and comment on the SDEIS. We look forward to continuing to work together to address the multi-modal needs of the District. Please reach out to Jonathan Rogers from my staff (jonathan.rogers2@dc.gov or 202-369-7931) with any questions.

Sincerely,



Anna Chamberlin
Associate Director
Planning and Sustainability Division

Attachment 1

Washington Union Station Expansion Project SDEIS DDOT (

Date Comments Provided: **7/6/2023**
 Reviewers: **DDOT**

ID	Agency	File or Chapter or Section	Line or Table or Figure Number	Comment
	DDOT	Appendix S-2	Line 44	Is the pull-out lane described here the existing lay-by/inset parking lane on the west side of the street? DDOT does not support widening this lane to facilitate truck movements because doing so would narrow the existing sidewalk.
	DDOT	Appendix S-2	S.8.2 & S.8.3	Note that final locations of Capital Bikeshare stations are subject to approval by DDOT.
	DDOT	Appendix S-2	232-234	This text is unclear, particularly the reference to two commercial loading spaces on the "left side" of the segment. It is unclear if the area described is presently the location of a large Capital Bikeshare station within DDOT ROW. DDOT does not support the reduction in the bikeshare station. Further, any commercial loading to support Union Station should be located within the station.
	DDOT	Supplemental Draft EIS, 6.	3712-3713	Not clear what this sentence means. It needs to be rephased for clarity.
	DDOT	Supplemental Draft EIS, 6.	3714	For portions of the trail on 2nd NE, safe accommodations would be required during the period of closure
	DDOT	Supplemental Draft EIS, 5.	1018	For the bicycle ramp, the bike volumes are very high and would likely warrant a separate facility for bicyclists and pedestrians.
	DDOT	Line 1299	5.5.3.4	I appreciate the added detail around the accommodation of intercity and charter bus operations in an interim facility during phase 3 and 4 of construction, but I don't see DC Circulator buses specifically noted. I would propose that plans for allowing urban transit buses to operate in the center lanes of Columbus Circle (as described in 5.5.1.8, line 1063-1065) move forward prior to Union Station construction so there is a space for them. This will need to be coordinated with DDOT's Transit Delivery Division (Bus Priority and DC Circulator).
	DDOT	5.5.1.7	1011	Please clarify that the Project will be responsible for providing 100 Capital Bikeshare docks with locations subject to DDOT approval. As a supplement or alternative to the 100 docks, a commitment by WUS to staff a CaBi corral during peak periods may reduce the need for overall CaBi docks. A CaBi corral would require an MOU including funding with DDOT.
	DDOT	5.5.1.7	1011	Coordinate siting of Capital Bikeshare station with Greg Matlesky (greg.matlesky@dc.gov) and ensure there is a 120V/240V electric hookup for any station location. Stations are solar-powered today, but CaBi has plans to electrify stations in the near future.

	DDOT	5.5.1.7	1011	Ensure the 900 long-term bicycle parking spaces abide by the design and spacing standards stipulated in the DC Bike Parking Guide and Zoning regulations. While we have mandates that at least 50% of required bicycle parking be horizontal on the ground, I would recommend more than that to ensure accessibility for more folks. If using double-tier racks, recommend using racks with hydraulic-assist lift systems to more folks can use them. Also recommend dedicating at least 5% of spaces (45 spaces) for cargo or other oversized bicycle parking. These spots typically measure at 10'x4' (compared to 6'x2' for a typical bicycle). Also recommend including secure ebike charging facilities, which can be standard plugs in the wall to secure charging 'lockers' where folks can store and charge their battery.
	DDOT	5.5.1.7	1011	Highly recommend following the Dutch model (NS) on long-term storage at major railway hubs and have a staffed, secure bicycle parking area along with a bicycle repair and supply shop, or at the very least fix-it stands for routine maintenance.
	DDOT	General	General	DDOT-TESD acknowledges the findings of major adverse impacts on traffic operations, and that the project proponents will work with DDOT on a Performance Monitoring Plan to develop, evaluate, and implement mitigation strategies that facilitate access and reduce impacts to traffic operations.
	DDOT	5.5.1.12	1220-1221	Can further explanation be provided on why some study area intersections experience improvements in LOS? This is counter-intuitive given the large increases in traffic volumes associated with the Preferred Alternative.
	DDOT	Appendix S-2	Figure S-14	Final design of the First Street ramp will be determined as part of the public space permitting process for the curb cut. In the FEIS, please address a) what are the expected vehicular traffic volumes on the First Street ramp, and how will conflicts with pedestrians and cyclists be managed? b) how are SB left turns proposed to be prohibited c) explore whether parking can be removed on the west side of the street in favor of widening the east side sidewalk in order to provide better site lines between site traffic and bicyclists.
	DDOT	5.9.1.1	ning, Land Use, Developme	small typo: acronym for Production, Distribution, and Repair zone is "PDR"
	DDOT	7	Mitigation, strategy #28	Specific timelines are needed for the delivery of the these improvements. Please coordinate with DDOT to address this comment prior to the FEIS.
	DDOT	5.5.1.5	Loading	The document states that one additional loading area would be sufficient to meet a 75% increase in demand for loading dock slips. Where does that number come from? How much are the existing ones being used? Are they underused and is that impacting the relating percentage estimate?
	DDOT	5.5.3.5	Loading	Impacts of construction on loading will be significant. Has a location of a temporary facility to transfer and screen large loads into smaller loads been considered?
	DDOT	Pg. 185, 7-7. 29	Mitigation and Commitme	DDOT's routing tool will not consider construction detours.
	DDOT	7	Mitigation, strategy #12	Note that closures should be minimized, particularly for impacts to sidewalk and bike infrastructure such a the MBT, and District law requires Safe Accommodations (DCMR 24-3315).

DDOT	7	Mitigation, strategy #15	As noted in DDOT's DEIS comments, DDOT finds that a significant overall reduction in traffic volumes will be necessary to reach a sustainable level. DDOT continues to predict that a major transit investment, such as a new WMATA tunnel, will be needed to achieve the additional passenger capacity to support a mode shift away from vehicle trips. DDOT agrees with the commitment for continued engagement with WMATA's planning effort on the determination of a Preferred Alternative that will support non-auto trips at WUS. DDOT also requests the Project Proponent continues to advocate for the planning, design, and implementation of this long-term project.
DDOT	7	Mitigation, strategy #18	Add language that USRC is responsible for implementation of the Bus Facility Operations Plan including the staffing and technology costs of deploying the dynamic management system.
DDOT	7	Mitigation, strategy #19	Add language that USRC is responsible for implementation of any new curbside bus PUDO.
DDOT	7	Mitigation, strategy #22, bullet 1	DDOT supports the inclusion of a pedestrian crossing study and pedestrian improvements at the front of the station. Please note that Columbus Circle is owned by NPS. Accordingly, please add NPS as an agency that USRC will coordinate with on any changes that impact Columbus Circle.
DDOT	7	Mitigation, strategy #22, bullet 4	Clarify how LOS F intersections are defined. Will the determination be made based on the FEIS analysis or the Performance Monitoring Plan analysis?
DDOT	7	Mitigation, strategy #23	Additional detail is needed. Specifically, a geography/limits of facilities eligible for consideration for upgrading must be identified. Additionally, a better definition is needed for what it means to upgrade facilities. Bicycle facility improvements should include raising facilities to sidewalk level, adding pre-cast concrete and poured in place concrete protection, and converting conventional bike lanes & intersections to protected facilities. Please coordinate with DDOT prior to the FEIS to address this comment.
DDOT	7	Mitigation, strategy #25, bullet 1 and 2	Adjustments to this mitigation language are needed to ensure it has the desired intent of addressing bus overcrowding and delays. Center lanes should be used exclusively for transit buses, including boarding, alighting, and layover space. These exclusive uses will ensure bus service is not delayed by other traffic and meet bus operational needs.
DDOT	7	Mitigation, strategy #25, bullet 4	Note any bus shelters and street furniture are subject to DDOT approval via public space permit.
DDOT	7	Mitigation, strategy #25, bullet 5	Additional detail is needed. Specifically, a geography/limits must be identified for facilities eligible for implementation. Please coordinate with DDOT prior to the FEIS to address this comment.

DDOT	7	Mitigation, strategy #28, 2nd bullet	<p>DDOT considers the Performance Monitoring Plan to be a centerpiece of the Project's mitigation approach. This mitigation as proposed is too vague and needs to be more prescriptive and better defined. In particular, the Performance Monitoring Plan needs to establish:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - a frequency and duration of PMPs during and post-construction - identify performance targets throughout each phase of construction and post-construction, and define impacts - determine a framework for how specific mitigations are selected - identify a specific financial amount for mitigations <p>All of the above considerations need to be commensurate with the expected multimodal impacts identified in the EIS. See Appendix D of the January 2022 DDOT CTR Guidelines for examples of how a PMP can be structured. https://ddot.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/ddot/CTR%20Guidance%20-%20January%202022%20Version%202.0.pdf. Please coordinate with DDOT prior to the FEIS to address this comment.</p> <p>Due to the PMP's importance, DDOT recommends making the PMP a standalone mitigation in the Table.</p>
DDOT	7	Mitigation, strategy #29	As previously articulated, DDOT very strongly encourages the project to maximize opportunities to haul construction spoils on rail to minimize truck impacts to the surrounding neighborhoods and broader road network.
DDOT	3	3.2.2.5	The sporadic use of the east and west ramps need to be better defined. Include a description of what happens to the pedestrian and bike traffic on the western ramp when it is used for vehicular circulation. An operational analysis of the use of these ramps for vehicular traffic needs to be included in the FEIS to identify the physical infrastructure, personnel, and management techniques to facilitate the safe and efficient use of the ramps.
DDOT	7	Mitigation #19	Coordinate with DDOT prior to FEIS on locations for hop on/hop off buses. Identifying a satisfactory location is a responsibility of the Project Proponent. Private space is strongly preferred. Public space would require DDOT approval, and options are highly likely to have negative impacts (e.g. removal of parking) that have not been identified in the SDEIS and would require mitigations by the Project Proponent.
DDOT	3.3	Figure 3-1	The SDEIS is silent on the existing Bicycle Center. Please coordinate with DDOT prior to the FEIS to discuss this facility and its incorporation into the WUS project.
DDOT			Per DDOT's DEIS comments, to reach acceptable traffic movement on H Street Bridge with three signalized intersections, DDOT recommends a one-way circulation pattern on the internal service road network that restricts turns into and out of the SEP (and air-rights development) to right-turns or through movements only. The final circulation network can be finalized during public space permitting, but these types of assumptions may help with managing traffic impacts.
DDOT			Per DDOT's DEIS comments, the internal service road network should meet certain standards for quality of service. These should include sufficient vehicle queue space (that does not spill onto H Street), drop-off zones, internal connections, and minimum 10-foot wide sidewalks.

DDOT				Per DDOT's DEIS comments, DDOT requests that the following be included to assess sensitivities to different circulation concepts: 1. Microsimulation analysis; 2. Multiple scenarios for internal circulation, particularly related to pick-up and drop-off; 3. Multiple demand scenarios to achieve an acceptable LOS; and 4. Modeling with the cycletrack maintained on the east side of 1st Street NE.
DDOT	S2		S-2	All loading is expected to be accommodated with head-in/head-out movements per the DDOT Design and Engineering Manual.
DDOT	7		Table 7-1	There is no information regarding the timing of implementing the mitigations. Please add timing of mitigations prior to the FEIS. All non-construction related mitigations should all be installed prior to opening of the first phase of WUS. All construction related mitigations should be timed to align with the expected impact. Timing of mitigations is not included in Table 5-48 of Section 5 of Appendix C35 as previously indicated by the SEP team.
DDOT	5.5.1.12		General; Trip Generation and Circulation	As we have previously commented, the internal roadway and curb-cuts will be share-use by WUS and the third party air-right development, thus, the impact from both sources should be co-managed and mitigated together. As the project advances, the Project Proponents are expected to coordinate with the Air Rights Developer to maximize shared use of curb cuts, collective mitigations, and co-management of private transportation facilities.
DDOT	Appendix S2		S-10	The cost of constructing the G Street ramp must be covered by the Project Proponents.
DDOT	3.4		Table 3-3	Per DDOT's DEIS comments, the WUS project must be fully consistent with DDOT's H Street Bridge project.
DDOT				The new loading access will require a DDOT permit. DEM standards for loading access, including head-in/head out movements will be required.
	Appendix S2		Figure S-2	DDOT preference is for the loading access to align with Parker Street to reduce impacts to 2nd Street. Are there Burnham Wall impacts from this new driveway?
DDOT				Clarify what happens to the existing west ramp. Is it demolished? Does the greenway re-use the ramp? Note that vehicular access to the old ramp will not be permitted due to the adjacent new west ramp.
	Appendix S2		Figure S-6	
DDOT				Additional details needed to understand the east intersection's design relative to the adjacent driveway and H Street Bridge project.
	Appendix S2		Figure S-6	
DDOT				What is the demand for the RT from the front of WUS to NB First Street? Can this movement be eliminated to simplify the intersection and reduce conflicts with the cycletrack?
	Appendix S2		Figure S-11	
DDOT				Impacts to the WMATA Red Line bridge are unclear. Will the bridge need to be rebuilt?
	Appendix S2		Figure S-12	
DDOT				How will access to the REA garage and loading dock be accommodated?
DDOT		7	Mitigation #27	The SDEIS assumes about 50% of PUDO traffic will use the underground facility. Accessing the underground facility requires traversing some of the most congested intersections within the study area, which will likely result in vehicular traffic diverting to PUDO areas accessed via less congested intersections. PUDO operations needs to be included in the PMPs to ensure that actual PUDO behavior is aligned with the splits assumed in the SDEIS.

	DDOT	Env. Consequences, 5-62; Appendix S2, S-3 Page 8		<p>The federal law creating Union Station specifically preserved certain streets, including H Street NE, as public space. In the District, public space goes vertical to the center of the earth and into space. Altering those streets will require compliance with District law and regulation. Under District law to utilize any portion of the H Street, NE alignment for the H Street Concourse requires either a Partial street closure or a permit. Since the street is not closed, the land cannot be transferred or used through a "property transaction" and the FEIS must acknowledge and commit to the requirements for the Project's use of this space.</p> <p>Any use of the space must accommodate the H Street bridge including the need to access this space for ongoing bridge maintenance. A survey should be included to show in detail what portion of the H Street Concourse lies within the H Street, NE public space.</p> <p>Mitigation Section does not commit to working with DDOT on compliance with the necessary statutory requirements for the partial closures and/or dedication of public</p>
	DDOT	Executive Summary ES.5		H Street Concourse - does not acknowledge what is currently public space. A survey is required to understand what the impacts will be to the public space.
	DDOT	p.6		Connections to "H Street Bridge" would require Public Space committee approval.
	DDOT	p.6		Unclear how existing public space of H Street, NE will relate to "H Street Deck" and whether a dedication is planned to add it to public space (a defined term in the District) or whether what's intended is a public gathering space.
	DDOT	E.S 6.2.2		Does not adequately discuss the adverse impacts to the historic L'Enfant Plan and specifically the proposed ramps and new intersections on the public streets surrounding Union Station. If the adverse effect is not discussed then mitigation is not
	DDOT	E.S 6.2.2 Page 12		Mitigation Section does not commit to working with DDOT on compliance with the necessary statutory requirements for the partial closures and/or dedication of public space. The federal law creating Union Station specifically preserved certain streets and altering those streets will require compliance with District law and regulation.
	DDOT	E.S. Page 16		Cultural resources - does not include mitigation and/or commitment to preserving street layout created by L'Enfant Plan.
	DDOT	Appendix S2, S-3 Page11		H Street Bridge is part of the H Street, NE public space and is commonly referred to as the overpass because it passes over the Amtrak rail yard. Connections to the public space, whether to the overpass, of historic H Street, NE passing under the rail yard require public space permits and must be approved by the Public Space Committee.
	DDOT	Appendix S2,page 18		H Street Concourse would require either a public space permit or a partial street closure. The failure to discuss the the requirements for use is a deficiency.
	DDOT	Appendix S2, Page 22		Construction methods - does not discuss the precautions that will be taken to protect the H Street, NE overpass pilings.
	DC Office of Planning		5	<p>5.9.2.1</p> <p>Section 5.9.2.1 - Indirect Operational Impacts: Potential Federal Air Rights Development states that the Preferred Alternative "would have no indirect operational impacts on zoning, or development; property ownership..." Then in the next paragraph it goes on to describe how the Federal air rights would need to be rezoned and control or ownership of the property transferred.</p> <p>These could be couched as beneficial impacts, but they are impacts. OP requests clarification of the potential indirect operational impacts of the Federal air rights development.</p>

	DC Office of Planning		5 5.7.2	<p>Section 5.7.2 Indirect Operational Impacts should place greater emphasis on the beneficial aspects of the preferred alternative. The District's Comprehensive Plan notes that by accommodating urban growth and creating a highly livable city, the region would realize environmental benefits:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Development is not spread out; b. The city is more walkable, bikeable, transit-able, and more attractive to residents; <p>and</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> c. Vehicle Miles Travelled (VMT) is minimized. <p>The section indirectly mentions these benefits. OP would prefer that the benefits are elaborated on and the conclusion of "major adverse indirect operational impacts on</p>
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June 28, 2023

Ms. Amanda Murphy
Deputy Federal Preservation Officer
Office of Federal Railroad Policy and Development
USDOT Federal Railroad Administration (MS-20)
1200 New Jersey Avenue SE
Washington DC 20590

Dear Ms. Murphy:

The Maryland Department of Transportation Maryland Transit Administration (MDOT MTA) appreciates the opportunity to comment on the Washington Union Station (WUS) Expansion Project Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement (SDEIS). With all three Maryland Area Regional Commuter (MARC) Train services terminating at WUS, alongside multiple MDOT MTA Commuter Bus routes that terminate in the vicinity of the station, and a commitment to extend MARC service to Northern Virginia, this project is a critical piece of the long-term planning for how Marylanders travel to and from Washington for jobs, opportunities, and experiences in the nation's capital, the larger Metropolitan Washington region, and Maryland.

We appreciate the work that FRA and the Project Sponsor have undertaken to develop a Preferred Alternative with regional support and a balanced multimodal program. We echo the sentiment expressed by the region's Congressional delegation calling for the prompt completion of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process so that further planning and design activities can commence in concert with stakeholders. To inform both the completion of NEPA through the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) and Record of Decision (ROD) and the planning and design activities to follow, we offer the below comments:

Operational Planning:

- The track and platform and operational plans incorporated in the Preferred Alternative provide for long-term growth of the MARC system. We look forward to working more closely with the Union Station Redevelopment Corporation (USRC) and Amtrak to refine the operating assumptions as the project moves forward.
- To facilitate this growth, the continued planning must include sufficient flexibility and appropriate operational assumptions for MARC needs. Those needs include adequate accommodation for train layover, storage, and inspection to support existing and future levels of MARC service. MARC would appreciate additional information regarding planning assumptions for these activities.

Ms. Amanda Murphy
Page Two

- MARC anticipates that diesel locomotives will remain a critical piece of the fleet beyond the WUS horizon year of 2040. Accommodations for diesel locomotives, and any required exhaust infrastructure due to overbuild and station elements, must be maintained within the rail planning.
- MARC plans to make investments to support alternative train storage locations along its commuter rail corridors. As these investments create capacity within the WUS terminal, MARC is developing strategies for a proposal to key stakeholders to leverage such capacity for increased MARC service consistent with our long-term plans and the vision incorporated in the SDEIS. We look forward to continued coordination with Amtrak on this issue as design and planning advance.
- MARC-to-Metrorail connections are a critical piece of the multimodal experience at WUS. We support the SDEIS's commitments to further advance circulation improvements at the Metrorail station and encourage refinement of that program as part of the next stage of design and planning.

Run-Through Service:

- Maryland has strong interest in the implementation of through-running regional rail service. MDOT MTA has recently signed a framework agreement with Virginia Passenger Rail Authority (VPRA) to advance through-running. While the SDEIS incorporates some Penn Line through-running, we understand that Amtrak has evaluated additional through-running opportunities through a separate study. As planning for WUS advances, we will need to coordinate further with USRC, Amtrak, VPRA, and Virginia Railway Express (VRE) on strategies for further advancement of through-running. Those conversations should include additional modeling to develop a shared set of assumptions for through-running operations, confirming operational and infrastructural needs for through-running, and identifying opportunities for facilitating regional trips through "cross-station" transfers when one-seat through-running is not provided.

Construction Period:

- The region is making major investments to improve passenger rail. While Virginia aims to unlock capacity through the Long Bridge Project, Maryland is working closely with our partners at Amtrak to advance the Frederick Douglass Tunnel, BWI 4th Track, and other projects to enhance service. At the same time, MARC plans to implement incremental new service in the near-term as possible. As a result, MDOT MTA believes that shared assumptions about how the construction period at WUS will operate is critical.

Ms. Amanda Murphy
Page Three

- As indicated in the SDEIS (Section 5.5.3.1), four daily MARC trains would be cancelled during Phases 2 and 4 of construction. Post-NEPA planning should work to identify opportunities to avoid these cancellations and identify adequate accommodations for MARC passengers if none are possible.
- Further, the Frederick Douglass Tunnel MOU envisions new MARC service coming online in the 2030s as a result of that project. MDOT MTA expects that the construction period operations at WUS will permit this service and other growth planned before the WUS 2040 horizon year so that the traveling public can benefit from these critical service enhancements. The construction period will also need to account for the types of operational requirements, including layover, storage, and inspection, noted above. The FEIS should incorporate commitments to refine the construction-period rail modeling in coordination with MARC and VRE to address these considerations.

Thank you again for the opportunity to review the SDEIS at this critical milestone for Washington Union Station. MDOT MTA looks forward to continued coordination with FRA, USRC, and Amtrak as planning advances. If you have any questions regarding these comments, please contact Ms. Kate Sylvester, Deputy Administrator and Chief Planning, Programming, and Engineering Officer at 410-767-3889 or at ksylvester@mdot.maryland.gov. Ms. Sylvester will be happy to assist you.

Sincerely,



Digitally signed by
Holly Arnold.
Date: 2023.06.28

Holly Arnold
Administrator

cc: Mr. Amit Bose, Administrator, FRA
Ms. Jennifer Mitchell, Deputy Administrator, FRA
Mr. Stephen Gardner, CEO, Amtrak
Mr. Doug Carr, CEO, USRC
Mr. DJ Stadtler, Executive Director, VPRA
Mr. Rich Dalton, CEO, VRE
Mr. Joe McAndrew, Assistant Secretary for Planning and Project Development, MDOT
Mr. Paul Wiedefeld, Secretary, MDOT
Ms. Kate Sylvester, Deputy Administrator, MDOT MTA

July 6, 2023

Ms. Amanda Murphy
Deputy Federal Preservation Officer
Office of Federal Railroad Policy and Development
USDOT Federal Railroad Administration (MS-20)
1200 New Jersey Avenue SE
Washington, DC 20590
Transmitted to info@wusstationexpansion.com

Dear Ms. Murphy:

Please accept these comments from Virginia Railway Express (VRE) on the Washington Union Station (WUS) Expansion Project Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement (SDEIS). The improvements identified in the WUS Expansion Project (the Project or SEP) and coordinated implementation of those improvements with VRE short- and long-term expansion plans, are crucial to enable VRE to transition from a commuter rail to a regional rail provider as envisioned in the VRE System Plan.

The refinements to the Project Elements evaluated in the SDEIS focus on the parking facility, bus facility, station pick-up and drop-off, pedestrian and bicycle access, and urban design. The enhancements to those elements in response to stakeholder feedback are appreciated. Those Project Elements, however, support the core function of WUS as a rail terminal. That function and the purpose of the Project to support current and future long-term growth in rail service and operational needs in a safe and accessible setting should be the primary consideration as this important project is advanced.

VRE offers the following comments to inform the completion of the Final EIS (FEIS) and Record of Decision as well as subsequent planning, design, and construction activities to implement the Project.

- I. Platform and track plans and operational plans incorporated in the SEP Preferred Alternative provide for long-term VRE growth consistent with VRE's adopted System Plan. Ongoing design and construction of the Preferred Alternative platform, track, and internal station circulation and access to the run-through level platforms should be closely coordinated with existing VRE service and VRE implementation plans for service expansion to ensure long-term growth needs continue to be accommodated.

2. Other planned WUS Terminal Infrastructure (TI) improvements, outside the scope of the SEP, should be closely coordinated with the design and construction of the run-through level improvements as well as VRE to ensure consistency with VRE growth assumptions. This includes adequate accommodation for train layover, storage, and inspection to support existing and future VRE service.
3. VRE anticipates its locomotive fleet will remain a diesel-powered fleet through calendar 2030 at a minimum. Accommodation for diesel locomotives, and any required exhaust infrastructure due to the SEP improvements and/or overbuild must be incorporated in ongoing planning and design of both.
4. No VRE through-running trains to Maryland are assumed in VRE's adopted System Plan. VRE is currently analyzing future service markets; those analyses assume, however, that VRE-served regional travel needs between northern Virginia and Maryland destinations along the MARC Penn, Camden and/or Brunswick Lines through calendar 2030 at a minimum can be met by more closely coordinating VRE and MARC service at WUS in tandem with expanded concourses and other WUS improvements assumed in the Preferred Alternative.
5. Ongoing design and construction of the SEP improvements to the run-through platforms should be closely coordinated with existing and planned VRE, Amtrak/Amtrak Virginia, and MARC service plans including adopted VRE System Plan service, Amtrak/Amtrak Virginia levels of service as outlined in the Transforming Rail in Virginia and DC2RVA service plans (i.e., 12 daily Amtrak Virginia trains plus Amtrak long distance trains and SEHSR trains), and potential MARC run-through service associated with the recently signed framework agreement between the Maryland Transit Administration (MTA) and the Virginia Passenger Rail Authority (VPRRA). Coordination should include modeling or other analyses to confirm operational and infrastructure requirements to accommodate all operators' long-term service needs.
6. The Draft EIS (DEIS) indicates Construction Phasing and Sequencing would keep a minimum of three low-level, run-through platforms in operation at all times, which is necessary to adequately maintain VRE, long-distance train operations, and regional run-through service. Ongoing design and construction phasing should not tie planned VRE service expansion to the SEP construction timeline. Further discussion and clarification of the following is requested:
 - Will sufficient capacity be available during construction of the run-through platform and track improvements (i.e., three low-level platforms) to accommodate planned VRE service expansion during construction?
 - Does SEP rail terminal capacity at the run-through platforms and tracks provided during the phased construction of those improvements, also accommodate planned Amtrak/Amtrak Virginia and MARC service expansion?

7. Footnote No. 8, Chapter 2, Purpose and Need, VRE System Plan 2040 link in the footnote of the June 2020 DEIS no longer directs the reader to the correct location for the VRE document. The corrected link is <https://www.vre.org/about/studies-and-reports/2040/>.

Thank you for the opportunity to review the SDEIS for the WUS Expansion Project. VRE looks forward to ongoing coordination and collaboration with the Federal Railroad Administration, Amtrak, Union Station Redevelopment Corporation, and other rail stakeholders as this important project advances. If you have questions regarding these comments, please contact Christine Hoeffner, VRE Director of Planning and Environmental Policy at choeffner@vre.org or 703-838-5442.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Rich Dalton". The signature is stylized and includes a large, sweeping flourish at the end.

Rich Dalton
Chief Executive Officer

cc: Mr. Amit Bose, Administrator, Federal Railroad Administration
Mr. Stephen Gardner, CEO, Amtrak
Mr. Doug Carr, CEO, USRC
Ms. Holly Arnold, Administrator, Maryland Transit Administration
Mr. DJ Stadtler, Executive Director, VPRA



July 6, 2023

Amanda Murphy
 Deputy Federal Preservation Officer
 Office of Federal Railroad Policy and Development
 USDOT Federal Railroad Administration (MS-20)
 1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
 Washington, DC 20590

Dear Ms. Murphy:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Washington Union Station (WUS) Expansion Project's Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement (SDEIS). On behalf of the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA or Metro), I am transmitting Metro's comments on the document.

Metro and WUS continue to be essential to the National Capital Region's transportation system. The Metrorail station at WUS sees some of the highest number of overall boardings and has the highest average morning peak boardings in the Metrorail system, attesting to its continued value as a critical inter-modal hub. As such, WMATA reiterates its support for the vision for a modernized and expanded WUS to provide the critically needed capacity boost for mainline rail travel for one of our region's historic treasures.

WMATA appreciates the progress in the design approach that has occurred between the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) and SDEIS and acknowledges the incorporation of WMATA's comments submitted to the DEIS. As this project progresses into the Final Environmental Impact Statement and further design development, WMATA emphasizes the continued need for direct and sustained engagement between USRC and WMATA to proactively address the following three critical areas of coordination that remain essential to the success of the project and the inter-modal relationship between WUS and the Metrorail system:

- **Circulation Improvements to Metrorail Red Line Station**

As noted in the SDEIS, crowded circulation conditions between the WMATA platform and North Mezzanine are likely to further degrade under the Preferred Alternative due to increased volumes associated with the project. WMATA appreciates USRC's commitment to funding a new station capacity study and contributing to identified improvements. We further emphasize the need for early engagement with USRC to realize and/or preserve opportunities to implement needed circulation improvements as part of the WUS Expansion.

- **Construction Impacts to Metrorail Red Line**

In addition to the need for a Construction Transportation Management Plan to mitigate construction impacts, work within the WMATA zone of influence requires thorough design review and WMATA approval. The introduction of a potential ramp

**Washington
 Metropolitan Area
 Transit Authority**

300 7th Street, SW
 Washington, DC 20024
 202-962-1234

wmata.com

*A District of Columbia,
 Maryland and Virginia
 Transit Partnership*

Ms. Amanda Murphy
Page 2

from G Street underneath the Metro tracks will require significant coordination and understanding of potential impacts on WMATA facilities.

- **Impacts to Metrobus**

WMATA notes the various mitigation measures proposed to address bus overcrowding and delays. WMATA and USRC need to work together to develop a clear plan to address Metrobus service and customer connections as a part of project development to ensure a feasible approach is identified early to protect service and access during construction and that leads to a coordinated plan that improves bus intermodal connections in the final WUS built condition.

- **Blue/Orange/Silver (BOS) Study Metrorail Alternatives**

A BOS Preferred Alternative could act as a vital component in addressing Metro capacity impacts identified in the SDEIS. The coordination required on BOS between WMATA and USRC relates not only to mitigating the identified capacity impacts, but very specifically to ensuring that the WUS Preferred Alternative does not affect the BOS tunnel alignment and new Union Station connection options, including the proposed alignment to run under the H Street concourse. The proposed underground parking and pick-up/drop-off facilities introduce new elements that need to be studied within the context of the potential Metro tunnel structure and addressed to not preclude potential alignments and station connections. We look forward to coordinating closely with USRC on this issue so that both projects can progress with compatible approaches that optimize the opportunities for inter-modal connections.

WMATA appreciates the opportunity to comment on the SDEIS and looks forward to continuing to work with USRC and the Federal Railroad Administration on this critical infrastructure project. If you have any questions regarding these comments, please contact Jonathan Parker at jhparker@wmata.com.

Sincerely,

Thomas Webster
E013885 WMATA

Digitally signed by Thomas
Webster E013885 WMATA
Date: 2023.07.06 19:07:59
-04'00'

Thomas Webster, Executive Vice President, and
Chief Planning and Performance Officer
Planning and Performance

Cc:

Allison Davis, WMATA
Regina Sullivan, WMATA
Ann Chisholm, WMATA
Seth Garland, WMATA
Marc Biondi, WMATA
James Ashe, WMATA
Jeff Winstel, WMATA
Jonathan Parker, WMATA
John Magarelli, WMATA



601 Thirteenth Street, NW, Suite 300 North, Washington, DC 20005
T 202.638.3000 Akridge.com

June 20, 2023

Mr. Paul Nissenbaum
Associate Administrator for Railroad Development
Federal Railroad Administration
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Mr. Nissenbaum:

We are writing to encourage FRA to clearly state at forthcoming public engagements what we believe is intended, and in fact implicit in the May 12, 2023 Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement (SDEIS): that the Preferred Alternative depends on a unification and exchange of private and federal air rights. Please note that we are not asking FRA for a binding commitment at this time, but rather only to clarify that the Preferred Alternative, and its associated public benefits, depends on a unification and exchange of those development rights occurring.

As you are aware, the 2020 Union Station Expansion Project (SEP) DEIS plan encountered opposition by local, public, private and federal stakeholders. One of the material issues raised by approval authorities (National Capital Planning Commission (NCPC), DC State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), the District of Columbia City Council, and others) was the lack of integration between the SEP and private air rights development. As a result, these approval authorities asked FRA to collaborate with Akridge to resolve shortcomings of the 2020 DEIS plan and to demonstrate how the SEP and air rights development would be integrated.

In 2021 Akridge agreed to collaborate to resolve the concerns raised by the 2020 DEIS. Along with the FRA, Union Station Redevelopment Corporation and Amtrak, we coordinated on the development of what became the new Preferred Alternative in the SDEIS. This Alternative includes the use of half (about three acres) of Akridge's property south of H Street. Akridge agreed to advance and support this Alternative provided that the excess federal air rights property (two acres which are not needed for station functions directly because of SEP use of Akridge property) would be exchanged with Akridge in return for use of its property. In fact, when we began our collaboration with FRA, all parties agreed to ignore property lines in order to develop the best SEP possible with a complementary air rights vision. In doing so, Akridge did not favor our existing property rights within the planning process. We even accepted that, even with an exchange, our future development rights in total could decrease.

At the same time, Akridge has frequently communicated to FRA that in order for the SEP to achieve the public benefits desired by stakeholders, all air rights development must be planned and executed under unified ownership. Without such consolidated control, the viability of all air rights development is at risk. We believe that FRA has recognized this to be the case and, as noted, the Preferred Alternative rests on such an exchange as a practical matter and could not move forward without it.

As you are well aware, there are compelling reasons that make a property exchange and integrated air rights development essential to its feasibility:

- **Approvals and Public Engagement** – one primary developer must plan and propose a cohesive air rights development plan. Proposed building massing, sight lines, view corridors, open space

AKRIDGE

Invested.

character, and circulation patterns must be comprehensively planned and described to approval agencies and the public. Project reviewers will already face the challenge of assessing SEP and air rights components under separate processes and standards. Splitting the air rights development and open space reviews (if this would even be possible) would require three separate public reviews, all within overlapping site areas.

- **Technical Complexity** – air rights development will be placed atop a layer cake of supporting functions and station program. Consolidated air rights planning strategies must be employed to address: ventilation, security, threat and risk management, parking, loading, utility provisioning, stormwater management, structural and foundation design, construction phasing and impact mitigations, sustainability and resilience, private financing, and many other fatal flaw level project implementation matters. Independent sponsorship of multiple air rights properties would yield redundant infrastructure and prohibitively complicated coordination.

The SDEIS also references a large inventory of substantial public benefits which arise in the SEP only as a direct result of a viable, unified air rights development plan. Some of these benefits include: a naturally-lit bus facility directly integrated with the Train Hall; a symmetrical public space commensurate with the station's historic and architectural significance; and extensive skylighting above the two-block long central concourse. In the SDEIS FRA states these project elements directly address important stakeholder concerns and minimize or eliminate potential adverse impacts. For example, with respect to land use impacts, the document states:

“The potential future transfer and development of the Federal air rights would have a major beneficial impact on land use in the Project Area. It would replace an automobile-focused use with residential and commercial uses more consistent with their surroundings, including the private air rights development. As such, it would become part of a new vibrant neighborhood to the north of WUS, within which the expanded station would be seamlessly integrated” (SDEIS at 5-66).

Akridge is deeply concerned that the SDEIS does not identify an unambiguous intent by FRA to unify air rights development and to do so via a property exchange in order to ensure these project benefits are realized. The FRA recognizes that private air rights owned by Akridge are required to accommodate the Preferred Alternative and recognizes too that federal air rights would be available for transfer and development. However, the document describes such transfer as “potential,” and does not explicitly state that an exchange of air rights with Akridge and unified development is an essential prerequisite for the SDEIS Preferred Alternative to move forward. We are confident that you would agree that the public benefits described in the SDEIS are not achievable absent such an integrated plan.

Further, the SDEIS states that the adverse impact resulting from the removal of 2.9 acres from Akridge's property is “minor” because the coordination between FRA and Akridge in the development of the Preferred Alternative results in “ensuring that, although sizable, the reduction would not preclude developing the remaining air rights” (SDEIS at 5-62). Stated differently, this passage claims that independent development of the federal and private air rights parcels is feasible and acceptable to Akridge. This statement is clearly incorrect as Akridge has frequently conveyed to FRA that separate development is not feasible and certainly not acceptable to Akridge. Given that absent unified ownership, all air rights development is infeasible, property impacts of an independent development scenario would be among the most “major” impacts assessed in the EIS, and the benefits described above would not be realized.



We also note that throughout the past three years, the FRA has extensively engaged with many stakeholders to refine the Preferred Alternative to mitigate or avoid adverse impacts to other parties. In these cases, specific programmatic changes have been made and other options foreclosed. These changes or mitigations are now documented without qualification or ambiguity in the SDEIS. We believe that the feasibility of air rights development, creation of a central civic space, and avoidance of major property impacts are of sufficient public value to warrant clear assurance that FRA intends to unify and integrate the air rights properties, as we understand FRA anticipates.

In short, Akridge has and continues to support the SDEIS Preferred Alternative provided that the FRA demonstrates its intention to consolidate control of the air rights development through a property exchange. So that we may continue what we believe has been a constructive engagement with FRA, we ask that FRA eliminate the ambiguity that its SDEIS has created on the property exchange and development issue. Specifically, we ask that FRA clarify at forthcoming public meetings and engagements its intention to unify ownership and development of the air rights through a property exchange. Doing so will allow all stakeholders, including Akridge, to evaluate the new Preferred Alternative with clarity around the feasibility of the air rights development and its integral presence and benefits.

We appreciate your continued engagement in this important subject and, in advance of the forthcoming public meetings, are eager to meet this week to continue discussions.

Sincerely,

Matthew J. Klein
President and CEO

CC: David Valenstein, Senior Advisor to the Deputy Secretary, USDOT
Allison Fultz, Chief Counsel, Federal Railroad Administration
Doug Carr, CEO, Union Station Redevelopment Corporation
Stephen Gardner, CEO, Amtrak



601 Thirteenth Street, NW, Suite 300 North, Washington, DC 20005

T 202.638.3000 Akridge.com

July 6, 2023

Ms. Amanda Murphy
Deputy Federal Preservation Officer
Office of Federal Rail Policy and Development
USDOT Federal Railroad Administration (MS-20)
1200 New Jersey Avenue SE
Washington, DC 20590

Via Email To: info@WUSstationexpansion.com

**RE: Washington Union Station Expansion Project Supplemental Draft
Environmental Impact Statement Comments**

Dear Ms. Murphy,

Enclosed please find Akridge's comments in response to the subject document referenced above. As you know, Akridge is a private real estate firm with ownership of air rights property adjacent to and within the property considered for public uses for the Washington Union Station Expansion Project. As such, Akridge is uniquely impacted by the proposed project. Our comments are organized into two components:

- A. Comment Narrative
- B. Comment Matrix

The Comment Narrative addresses the topics of most critical concern to Akridge. The Comment Matrix includes corrections, clarifications and other discrete comments on the SDEIS.

Thank you for your review and consideration of our comments and recommendations.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "David Tuchmann".

David Tuchmann
Senior Vice President, Development

Comment Narrative

Executive Summary

Akridge supports the selection of Alternative F, provided that the Final EIS (FEIS) and/or Record of Decision (ROD) includes an unequivocal statement that implementation of this Alternative requires a consolidation of air rights development ownership and control under one entity. With the unification of such ownership and control, this Alternative provides a solid framework for a world-class transportation facility and the complementary sustainable, transit-oriented, urban development (Burnham Place) planned by Akridge. Absent a commitment in the FEIS which directs the SEP sponsor, the Union Station Redevelopment Corporation (USRC), to pursue acquisition of the private air rights required for the SEP in exchange for excess federal air rights that would be productively used by Akridge, the magnitude of adverse impacts of the federal undertaking described in the SDEIS would be severely understated.

Even with a unification of air rights development sponsorship, implementation of Alternative F will have significant adverse impacts on the air rights that should be acknowledged and addressed in any Final EIS and ROD. Some of these impacts, which are described in this Comment Narrative, can be significantly mitigated or avoided if the FEIS contains additional commitments or mitigation measures by USRC. The adverse impacts of the SEP on Akridge and its planned air rights development fall within the following categories:

1. Project Implementation
2. Urban Design and Station Architecture
3. Multi-Modal Planning and Operations
4. Historic Preservation and Programmatic Agreement
5. Construction and Phasing

1. Project Implementation

A Unification and Property Exchange of the Federal Air Rights with the Private Air Rights is Required for SEP Implementation

Akridge recommends that the FEIS and Record of Decision (ROD) make clear that a unification effectuated by an exchange of private and federally-owned air rights will be required for implementation of the Preferred Alternative F. If FRA concludes the station owner or the project sponsor will require new or additional permissions or authorizations to carry out these actions, such permissions or authorizations should be described in the Final EIS and/or ROD. If final documentation does not include a clear expression about an exchange of air rights and the permissions or authorizations on which such an exchange (or like form of property transfer) would be planned to occur, Akridge will conclude, and other interested parties will likely conclude, that the development of air rights and related open spaces in accordance with the concepts shown in the Preferred Alternative will not occur.

As FRA is aware, the Preferred Alternative in the 2020 Union Station SEP DEIS encountered opposition by local, public, private and federal stakeholders. One of the material issues raised by approval authorities (National Capital Planning Commission (NCPC), DC State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) and the DC City Council) was the lack of integration between the SEP and private air rights development. As a result, these approval authorities asked FRA to collaborate with Akridge to resolve shortcomings of the 2020 DEIS plan and to provide clarity around how the SEP and air rights development would be integrated.

In 2021 Akridge agreed to collaborate with the FRA to resolve the concerns raised by the initial DEIS. Together with the FRA, project sponsor USRC and Amtrak, what became Alternative F in the SDEIS was collaboratively developed. This alternative plainly contemplates the use of approximately half (2.9 acres) of Akridge's property south of H Street. Akridge agreed to advance this concept and make that property available during collaboration provided that the excess federal air rights property (two acres which are not needed for station functions because of SEP use of the Akridge property) would be exchanged with Akridge in return for use of its property. Akridge repeatedly reiterated the need for such a property exchange during design workshops, in writing and during meetings with FRA (see record of such communications in Exhibit A).

In fact, when Akridge began collaborating with FRA, all parties decided to ignore the existing property lines in order to develop the best SEP possible with a complementary air rights vision. In doing so, Akridge *did not favor our existing property rights* within the planning process. We never assessed the feasibility or value associated with developing a portion of the air rights. We collaborated in good faith and expressed a willingness to explore concept plans which placed SEP program and circulation functions on our property. We even accepted that with a new concept configuration and property exchange, our future development rights (in terms of total footprint acreage) could decrease.

During this time, Akridge communicated to FRA that in order for the SEP to achieve the public benefits desired by stakeholders, such an exchange of federal air rights with Akridge must be incorporated into the Preferred Alternative plan and all air rights development must be planned and executed under unified control. In spite of this robust record of multi-year communication between Akridge and FRA, the SDEIS does not identify an intent by the FRA to unify air rights development via a property exchange. In fact, the SDEIS disappointingly appears to do the opposite. In numerous places (SDEIS at XIV, 5-62, 5-136 and 7-11, Appendix C3S at 9-4, 9-13 and 18-13) the document presents as a 'default' implementation strategy the direction that USRC acquire 2.9 acres from Akridge for "just compensation," and that FRA will then decide whether or not to dispose of its excess air rights – to Akridge or to any other party. In

Consulting Parties Meeting #15 (June 29, 2023), FRA representatives further rendered ambiguous the unification of air rights development by stating that FRA was exploring if FRA possesses “the authorities” to dispose of its air rights, which Akridge believes it clearly does (and “authority” was never previously raised as a concern by FRA in discussions with Akridge).

Further, the SDEIS also confusingly notes that the federal air rights could be developed by the federal government. If FRA believes there is a viable scenario under which FRA (or a third party other than Akridge) can develop the federal air rights, that was not plainly stated in the SDEIS, and we assume it is not FRA’s intent. That should be clarified in the FEIS and ROD, which should eliminate any ambiguity on this point.

There are numerous compelling reasons that make an air rights exchange and integrated air rights development essential to be able to implement both the SEP and adjacent Akridge projects. The SDEIS seems to recognize this, albeit not unambiguously. Reasons that unifying air rights development is essential include:

- **Approvals and Public Engagement** – one primary developer must plan and propose a cohesive air rights development plan. Proposed building massing, sight lines, view corridors, open space character, and circulation patterns must be comprehensively planned and described to approval agencies and the public. Project reviewers will already face the challenge of reviewing SEP and private air rights components under separate processes and standards. Splitting the air rights development reviews (if this would even be possible) would require three separate public reviews (Burnham Place, the SEP, and another third party air rights project), all within overlapping site areas.
- **Technical Complexity** – air rights development will be placed atop complex layers of supporting functions and station program. Consolidated air rights planning strategies must be employed to address: ventilation, security, threat and risk management, parking, loading, utility provisioning, stormwater management, structural and foundation design, construction phasing and impact mitigations, sustainability and resilience, private financing, and many other fatal flaw level project implementation matters.

Development of the remaining private air rights and the excess federal rights by a party other than Akridge is not feasible. The SDEIS states that the adverse impact resulting from the removal of 2.9 acres from Akridge’s property is “minor” because the coordination between FRA and Akridge in the development of the Preferred Alternative results in “*ensuring that, although sizable, the reduction would not preclude developing the remaining air rights*” (SDEIS at 5-62). Stated differently, this passage claims that independent development of the federal and private air rights parcels is feasible and acceptable to Akridge. This statement is clearly incorrect as Akridge has frequently conveyed to FRA that separate development is not feasible and certainly not acceptable to Akridge. Given that absent unified development, all air rights development is infeasible, property impacts of an independent development scenario would be among the most “major” impacts assessed in the EIS, and the benefits described above would not be realized.

The SDEIS references a large inventory of substantial public benefits which arise in the SEP only as a direct result of a viable, unified air rights development plan. These same benefits are described as FRA’s strategies which address important stakeholder concerns and minimize or eliminate potential adverse impacts. For example, benefits referenced in the SDEIS include:

The potential future transfer and development of the Federal air rights would have a major beneficial impact on land use in the Project Area. It would replace an automobile-focused use with residential and commercial uses more consistent with their surroundings, including the private air rights development. As such, it would become part of a new vibrant neighborhood to

the north of WUS, within which the expanded station would be seamlessly integrated.” Draft SEIS at 5-66.

The FEIS should make clear that these benefits can only be achieved through unified development of the air rights and a related exchange with Akridge. The FRA has extensively engaged with many other stakeholders to refine the Preferred Alternative to mitigate or avoid adverse impacts. In these cases, specific programmatic changes have been made and planning and design alternatives foreclosed. These changes or mitigations, including the size and location of the bus and PUDO facilities, accommodation of tour and charter buses, bicycle facilities, and vehicular circulation, were made during the course of developing the revised Preferred Alternative, and are now documented in the SDEIS as core, required elements.

Akridge submits that the feasibility of air rights development and the creation of a central civic space, with functional connections from H Street to the Train Hall, are similarly core elements of the Preferred Alternative and priorities for DC SHPO in the 106 Programmatic Agreement. Akridge may take responsibility for design and implementation of the central civic space, as the SDEIS states. However, *FRA and USRC are the parties responsible* under the current regulatory regime for ensuring any federal property required for such purposes will be unified with private air rights property to enable such a space to exist.

However, while the SDEIS reflects the advantages of relying on a unified air rights development strategy in order to achieve project benefits and minimize impacts, it also creates uncertainty by reflecting FRA’s desire to maintain optionality and flexibility regarding the use of its air rights. The FEIS should eliminate any doubts about development of the air rights by making clear, as we believe FRA intends, that property unification and an exchange be ensured so that Alternative F’s benefits and mitigations are made achievable.

As noted, Akridge has been and continues to be highly supportive of the SDEIS Preferred Alternative provided that this alternative includes a commitment to consolidated control of the air rights development through a property exchange. Again, it is critical that the FRA eliminate any ambiguity that its SDEIS has created on the property exchange and development issue. It can do so at this point in the process by making clear that FRA intends to engage in an air rights property exchange and to support unified development of those exchanged air rights. Incorporating this mitigation in the FEIS will allow all stakeholders, including Akridge, to move forward on work with the FRA to implement the Preferred Alternative.

Recommended Changes:

- Clearly state in the FEIS/ROD that achievement of the Preferred Alternative will require a unification and exchange of air rights, and stipulate that the station owner and project sponsor will pursue these actions. If the station owner or project sponsor requires additional permissions or authorizations to effectuate these actions, the ROD should describe these requirements and an intention to procure them.
- Correct the misrepresentation of Akridge’s position regarding the viability of an independent development (SDEIS at 5-62). A “major” land use impact can be avoided only if the FEIS includes clear commitments per the above bullet.
- Reference air rights unification and property exchange in the Programmatic Agreement

USRC Requires Expansive New Resources and Authorities

The SDEIS assigns hundreds of new responsibilities, mitigation measures, stipulations, and requirements to USRC. In order to effectively fulfill these roles and commitments, USRC will require near term funding to support the hiring of new staff and execution of planning and design efforts.

Recommendation

- As the owner of Union Station, USDOT/ FRA should commit in the FEIS and/or ROD to lead the process of identifying and securing this near term funding from Congress. Without such a commitment, consulting parties and other stakeholders will be justifiably concerned about the feasibility of USRC's ability, as the project sponsor, to fulfill the commitments detailed in the SDEIS.

2. Station and Urban Design

Overview

The urban design concept at the deck level shown in Alternative F includes:

- An air rights project that provides a setting for the new train hall and historic station, and facilitates pedestrian and vehicular access to the train hall
- A circulation network that provides vehicular access to the bus facility and train hall PUDO
- A central open space that provides for skylights to the station's central concourse below
- Station head houses at H Street that provide pedestrian access to the concourses and trains below
- East and west ramps between the historic station and H Street that provide pedestrian and bicycle access to the air rights, and a valuable open space and urban design feature

The collaboration process between the FRA and Akridge led to the development of these components and features. While Akridge supports this framework, the SDEIS does not acknowledge or document the impacts to Akridge's property associated with the Alternative. Some of these impacts include:

- Lost Development Opportunity
 - Elevating the air rights deck an additional 10+ feet to accommodate the bus facility. This concession eliminated a full floor of any potential air rights buildings in a large area south of H Street and eliminated potential air rights parking and service areas
 - Shifting air rights buildings north to accommodate an east-west train hall and bus facility eliminated potential building sites in locations with the most valuable views of the Capitol Building
 - Station element configurations (including the bus facility) require suboptimal locations and reductions in size of air rights loading and parking, thereby increasing management costs and reducing user convenience
- Circulation

- The train hall PUDO area (including when used temporarily for bus functions) will have significant negative visual, pedestrian safety, acoustic, and air quality impacts on the air rights
- Assigning station PUDO and bus functions to the east service road severely limits the use of this road for any private air rights functions
- Temporary use of the central road for shuttle buses will displace air rights vehicular uses, leading to operational accommodations and compromises
- Central Space
 - The head houses fronting H Street provide beneficial and important station access points for the neighborhood and air rights, but potential impacts to the air rights remain if the massing and design of these features is incompatible with air rights buildings.
 - Skylights above the concourse and bus facility will obstruct deck level pedestrian and vehicular circulation and sight lines to building frontage
- Rail
 - Track configuration imposes a rigid structural grid on the air rights with little opportunity for modification to accommodate varying building types and functions.
- Train Hall
 - The largest feature of the SEP will have major positive and potentially adverse impacts on the air rights. Its scale, character, quality, materials, access points, interior program and amenities, and types and locations of vertical circulation elements will all directly impact the value of the air rights development

In addition, numerous technical components of the combined SEP and air rights will have to undergo further study and refinement during the post-NEPA implementation process, including structural systems, track and bus facility ventilation, emergency power, storm water management, utilities infrastructure, and rail noise and vibration. Without intensive coordination, these technical components may negatively impact air rights project viability, and the quality of urban design and architecture.

Recommendations:

To avoid or minimize the impacts above, we recommend the FEIS include:

- Commitment to a unification and exchange of property as described above in Section 1. A property exchange would minimize these impacts. Please note that attempting to compensate Akridge for the use of its property by means other than an exchange of development rights would not minimize or avoid these impacts.
- USRC to develop a plan post-FEIS for ongoing project design and engineering that includes coordination, collaboration, document sharing, and schedule alignment with the private air rights developer for elements shared or which have impacts between the SEP and the air rights, including open space, architectural, technical, and transportation components as applicable.
- Include pedestrian entrances on the east and west facades of the train hall.
- Design guidelines and review processes developed for either the SEP or any air rights development should recognize that relationships *between and among* a) SEP elements, b) air

rights elements, and c) existing conditions and resources should all be considered cohesively to maximize public and project benefits.

3. Multi-Modal Planning

Rail, Streetcar, Metrorail, Metrobus, and Intercity Bus

Intercity and commuter rail passengers, bus passengers, neighborhood residents and businesses, and residents, employees, and occupants and visitors of the new air rights development all will require effective multi-modal transportation options, with convenient access and adequate capacity. Growth in rail and bus ridership will result in increased demands for other modes of travel to and from the station. These modes include for-hire vehicles, private vehicles, Metrorail, Metrobus, streetcar, pedestrian and bicycle facilities. In order to avoid negative impacts to the air rights development, facilitating safe and efficient access to local transportation resources for both station and air rights users as well as the surrounding neighborhood will be required.

Growth in any single transportation use or development program that is out of balance with overall available transportation resources and infrastructure, or any specific use that relies too heavily on any one or two particular transportation modes, has the potential to disrupt the viability and function of other uses at or adjacent to Union Station. The SDEIS estimates and predicts that several street intersections in the station area will be over capacity, and that the Metro Red Line Station will also be over capacity by 2040.

Inadequate capacity for critical transit services or failures at key intersections near the air rights development would have significant negative impacts on future building occupants and on the value of the development.

Recommendations: Multi-modal Facilities Data Collection

The SDEIS identifies several multi-modal elements that will require ongoing study and management during the SEP's construction and operation. Recognizing that planning assumptions and mode splits utilized in the SDEIS are estimates, and actual mobility patterns will change over time, on-going multi-modal data collection should be part of required mitigations for the SEP.

This effort would entail collecting capacity and demand information for each transportation mode at WUS, including daily and peak hour ridership, and peak hour vehicle trip counts. Continuing and periodic data collection will be critical to minimizing impacts and managing ongoing, additional investments in infrastructure in and around the station. Addressing multi-modal choke points or failures will only be possible with robust and period data collection.

- Specifically, USRC should develop a transportation performance monitoring plan (PMP), including a detailed methodology for collecting multi-modal data and reporting guidelines. The data collection should include daily and peak hour ridership for each transit mode, peak hour vehicle, pedestrian, and bicycle counts, and peak hour queues at critical PUDO locations (including the train hall, Columbus Circle, First Street, Second Street, and below-grade).
- Data collection should occur on a sufficient number of days to identify seasonal, weekly, daily, and hourly fluctuations. Any anomalies such as special events and construction or other disruptions should be identified in the PMP.

- The plan should include, where necessary, safeguards for ensuring privacy of proprietary information such as ridership numbers of individual private transportation companies, and other private or proprietary information that may be gathered.
- USRC should facilitate the collection of usage data and forecasts on a periodic basis from the facility's transportation service providers (i.e., Amtrak, MARC, VRE, Metrorail, Metrobus, intercity and tour bus, Streetcar, FHV, parking, and rental car facilities, bikeshare, bike storage and rental). Where possible each provider should provide origin and destination data.

Vehicular Circulation and Station PUDO

In the Preferred Alternative, the air rights deck level south of H Street is conceived as a shared vehicular circulation system utilized by station PUDO, intercity buses, and air rights vehicular access. Akridge appreciates FRA's efforts to coordinate this circulation system with us and believes that with further coordination, the road network represented in the Preferred Alternative can effectively balance SEP and air rights vehicular uses. However, accommodating peak loads of station PUDO will be a significant and important challenge to address.

Multi-modal and destination facilities (i.e., airports, rail stations, stadiums and concert venues) around the country have routinely failed to efficiently and safely accommodate PUDO activities. Reasons for these failures include inadequately or poorly located program areas, insufficient investment in best practice research and planning, insufficient data availability to enable planning, and insufficient advanced coordination with private operators (Uber, Lyft, etc.). At WUS, a comprehensive plan for all the PUDO facilities will be critical to ensure their success. This includes the train hall PUDO which has the potential to have functional and aesthetic impacts on the air rights (see Section 2 above).

Recommendations: Deck Level Vehicular Circulation Planning

Use of the east and west service roads for bus and station PUDO has the potential to limit capacity available for air rights needs, as evident in the traffic modeling results for the east and west road intersections with H Street. The traffic analysis in the SDEIS identifies potential long-term capacity problems at the east and west station PUDO and bus facility access roads where they intersect with H Street. Since these roads are shared with the air rights, and are currently located either partially or completely within air rights property, Akridge believes that a process for long-term management of traffic impacts at these intersections should be required.

Additionally, an effective management plan for use of the public roadways for PUDO (such as First and Second Streets) is essential to limit congestion around the station and the private air rights development and promote safety for more vulnerable road users such as pedestrians and bicyclists.

- Specifically, USRC should develop a plan for integrated management of all station PUDO facilities, with a goal of balancing facility use so as not to create congestion and back-up at the two large above-ground facilities at Columbus Circle and the Train Hall. The PUDO management plan should include dedicated PUDO zones, active management, changeable signage, use incentives, and restrictions on PUDO types causing congestion at any one location.
- Ongoing measurement of the PUDO queues at the Train Hall, Columbus Circle, and First and Second Streets should be included in the PMP.
- USRC to limit overflow events (where buses utilize the Train Hall PUDO loop and/or the central road (shuttle bus only) to a maximum of 10 times annually. Uses beyond ten times would require engagement and approval by key stakeholders including the air rights owner.

Pedestrian and Bicycle Circulation

Pedestrian and bicycle circulation is a critical component of the air rights plan. Integration of the air rights development with the station expansion plan is critical to ensure seamless connectivity and to promote safe, secure, and efficient connections to the multi-modal transportation options offered by WUS. No less important is the need to preserve and facilitate pedestrian and bicycle access to the air rights development and WUS from the surrounding neighborhoods. Such access includes the train hall and historic station, the central concourse, the H Street head houses, and access via the east and west ramps. Akridge supports the Preferred Alternative's approach to prioritizing pedestrian and bicycle circulation on the east and west ramps connecting the H Street deck level with Columbus Circle and the station.

Recommendations: Pedestrian and Bicycle Planning

Akridge believes that additional pedestrian and bicycle connections should be explored to provide further active transportation benefits for the SEP and air rights development, particularly north of H Street. Improved connectivity from H Street to bicycle facilities on K Street, First Street, and/or Second Street should be explored further.

- USRC should work with DDOT and the private air rights developer to explore the feasibility of additional pedestrian and bicycle connections to one or more of K Street, First Street, and Second Streets, NE, at the north end of the air rights, which likely will require some joint use facilities at the potential utilities building on the REA site, or potentially through portions of the rail terminal.
- USRC should work with DDOT and the private air rights developer to ensure the existing and planned bicycle networks (through and around the station and air rights development), bikesharing station locations, and public and private bicycle storage locations are holistically planned and implemented.

4. Historic Preservation and Programmatic Agreement

Our comments on the SDEIS Appendix D2 Draft Programmatic Agreement ("PA") are provided here. As explained below, implementation of the PA, as currently drafted, could have potentially significant impacts on the air rights owned by Akridge (referred to herein as the "Private Air Rights"), thereby affecting Akridge's ability to pursue and complete the air rights development. Akridge accordingly requests that the PA be revised to address our concerns/comments below.

The PA's Relationship to the Private Air Rights

To the extent that any actions implementing the terms of the PA relate to, impact, or have the potential to influence the air rights development, Akridge requests that the PA expressly provide that Akridge is to fully participate in those actions. Akridge is the owner of the Private Air Rights that are to be developed in a manner compatible with the Washington Union Station Expansion Project ("Project"). Akridge understands that FRA's implementation of the Project may result in FRA acquiring some portion of Akridge's Private Air Rights, and in exchange, FRA may transfer some portion of the Federal Air Rights to Akridge. This would result in the consolidation of air rights (not otherwise used for the Project) into Akridge's ownership, for private development by Akridge. The consolidation of air rights in this manner is necessary to ensure viability of the air rights development, for the reasons set forth in Akridge's comments further above.

For these reasons, Akridge requests that FRA ensure Akridge's full participation in implementing any portion of the PA relating to, impacting or that may influence the air rights development. Doing so will ensure compatibility between the private air rights development and the Project. Such coordination is already occurring with respect to development of the Project, underscoring the need for Akridge to also directly participate in actions implementing the PA. In furtherance of this request, Akridge intends to sign the PA in accordance with Section III.F.2 of the PA. Akridge assumes that doing so will provide it with equal footing to other Signatories. If that is not the case, Akridge respectfully requests to be invited by FRA to be a Signatory to the PA. Should this request not be granted by FRA, Akridge nonetheless requests to fully participate in actions implementing the PA, as set forth in this comment and the subsections that follow.

While it is crucial for Akridge to participate in implementing the terms of the PA, Akridge believes that doing so does not cause the Private Air Rights to be part of the "Undertaking" that is the subject of the PA. Nor, as a result of any such consultations, do the terms of the PA apply to any portion of the Federal Air Rights upon transfer to Akridge.

A Definition for Washington Union Station Historic Site Should be Added

The term "Washington Union Station Historic Site" first appears in a Whereas clause, but is not defined anywhere in the PA. Given that the WUS Historic Site is subject to consultations under the PA, Akridge believes that it must be explicitly defined to delineate the scope of such consultations. Akridge recommends that the definition of WUS Historic Site be based on the SHPO's determination of eligibility form for the WUS Historic Site, which includes Columbus Plaza, Terminal Rail Yard, and 302 First Street Tunnel. The definition for WUS Historic Site should expressly exclude the Private Air Rights and Federal Air Rights, given those are not part of the WUS Historic Site and also are not properties eligible for listing. *See also* Akridge's comments in Subsection H below.

Historic Preservation Covenant

Section VI.A.1 of the PA sets forth a consultation process to establish the language of a historic preservation covenant to be included in any Federal Air Rights that may be transferred by FRA. Akridge, as the party that may be receiving a portion of those Federal Air Rights, requests that it participate in any process, including consultations, to develop any historic preservation covenant. Akridge's full participation is needed to ensure compatibility of the historic preservation covenant with the air rights development, as explained above.

At a minimum, Akridge requests that any historic preservation covenant be identical to, or fully consistent with, the language of the historic preservation covenant that currently appears in Akridge's Private Air Rights deed. This will ensure that the covenants can be applied in a consolidated, uniform manner for purposes of the air rights development. In support of this request, Akridge notes that the historic preservation covenant appearing in its existing Private Air Rights deed provides SHPO with broad authority to take into account historic preservation concerns relating to the air rights development.

Design Review for the Project

Akridge requests to participate in any and all actions implementing Section VI.A.2 of the PA, which concerns the design review for the Project. The Project and the federal and private air rights have many coordinating elements, including the train hall, head houses at H Street, and the skylights over the central concourse. The Design Review scope outlined in Section VI.A.2.d is also very broad and includes

numerous project elements located at the deck level within the air rights, such as the bus facility, H Street Head House, central concourse skylights, and “project elements on the deck.”

As a result, any design review process for the Project under Section VI.A.2 of the PA must account for the air rights development, and Akridge’s full participation in the design review process is therefore critical. The fact that the NCPC and CFA reviews of the Project to date have accounted for both the Project and the air rights development, supports the need for the air rights (and Akridge) to be part of this process. This is further supported by the SDEIS, which frequently states that the private air rights developer is responsible for the design and implementation of public spaces including the central plaza.

Akridge also believes that the Federal Air Rights must be subject to the design review consultations under Section VI.A.2 of the PA. The design review for the Project must take into account the Federal Air Rights for the reasons described above. Any design review occurring without consideration of the Federal Air Rights would be insufficient.

Design Guidelines for the Federal Air Rights

Akridge requests that it participate in any and all actions implementing Section VI.A.3 of the PA. As explained above, it is anticipated that FRA will transfer a portion of the Federal Air Rights to Akridge, and hence, any design guidelines applicable to those air rights may extend to Akridge’s use of those Federal Air Rights for purposes of its air rights development. Akridge’s participation in discussing, drafting, and finalizing the design guidelines is also needed in light of the close relationship between the Project, Federal Air Rights, and Akridge’s air rights development, as explained above.

Akridge also believes that Section VI.A.3 should address both the Project and the Federal Air Rights. Reasonable design guidelines cannot be developed for the air rights alone; the design guideline must also take into account and address the Project, given the shared elements (which are noted in the section above). A comprehensive set of design guidelines for both the Project and air rights development would include station facilities, open spaces in the air rights, and spaces shared between the station and air rights. This integrated approach will best help to achieve historic preservation and design goals of the Project and air rights development. Once again, the air rights developer, Akridge, should fully and directly participate in the development of the design guidelines.

HABS/HAER Documentation Plan

Akridge notes that many of the contributing resources identified in Section VI.A.4 will be demolished in order to facilitate the Project. Demolition of non-historic resources, as well as ground disturbing activities in areas not impacting historic resources, will be required for preliminary exploration and construction. Akridge believes that the PA should acknowledge/note these facts.

Design Percent Completion

Several provisions of the PA refer to documentation requirements that apply on or prior to a certain percent (35%, 60%, 90%) of design completion. *See* Sections VI.A.4.c, Sections VI.A.5.b, Sections VI.A.6.a, Sections VI.A.7.b, Sections VI.A.8.b, and Sections VI.A.9.e. Akridge also recommends that the timing and contents of any documents required to be prepared and submitted at these milestones be further clarified in the PA.

Nomination of WUS Historic Site to NRHP

Akridge disagrees with any WUS Historic Site designation that includes air rights (private or federal). No existing historic architecture or infrastructure elements are located within the Private Air Rights or Federal Air Rights. The air rights thus are not eligible for listing on the NHRP and cannot be part of the WUS Historic Site designation. Akridge recommends that Section VI.A.7 accordingly be revised to explicitly make clear that the WUS Historic Site excludes any and all air rights.

Exclusion of Air Rights from PA Plans

Akridge requests that the PA clearly state that any Federal Air Rights that may be transferred to Akridge are excluded from the Protection and Signage Plan under Section VI.A.8 and the Construction Noise and Vibration Plan referenced in Section VI.A.9. At a minimum, Akridge should fully participate with respect to the development of these plans as they may relate to the air rights development.

Clarification on Section VI.B

Because the Private Air Rights held by Akridge are not part of the Undertaking, Akridge assumes that the Project Sponsor's obligation to comply with Section VI.B (concerning requirements to identify archaeology resources prior to ground disturbing activities) does not extend to or relate in any way to the air rights development. To the extent that is not the case, Akridge – as the air rights developer – should be provided the right to participate in any actions implementing Section VI.B.

Project Modification and Design Changes

Section VII of the PA provides that the Project Sponsor is to notify the Signatories and Consulting Parties of any modifications to the Undertaking or changes to the Project that may result in additional or new effects on historic properties. Any such changes have the potential to affect the air rights development. Akridge thus requests to also be notified of any such modifications or changes and be consulted to determine the appropriate course of action. Akridge also requests that additional language be added to Section VII to define the baseline design that will be used to determine whether any modifications or changes have occurred that require further consultation under Section VII.

5. Construction and Phasing

The schedule and phasing sequence proposed for Alternative F have severely negative impacts on the private air rights project, as well as on Union Station users and the neighborhoods surrounding the station. Most of the impacts identified in the SDEIS relate to noise and vibration, as well as dust and construction traffic. However, an analysis of potential impacts on the viability of the air rights project is not provided, and economic impacts on the air rights are not identified or quantified. Other economic impacts to neighboring businesses and properties may occur from an extended construction duration, and are similarly not examined.

Following issuance of the FEIS, it will be critical in order to mitigate construction impacts to air rights development as well as station users and surrounding residents and businesses, for USRC to collaborate with Amtrak, Akridge and others to explore alternative construction and phasing measures which deliver project benefits sooner and shorten the overall duration.

The construction phasing and methods of construction identified in the 2020 DEIS (which we assume remain similar to those proposed for Alternative F), pose the following challenges for the air rights development:

- Overall Project Construction Duration
 - The proposed 13 year overall duration for construction would prevent the air rights buildings from commencing construction for nearly nine years from initiation of SEP construction. With funding for each proposed phase unlikely to be continuous, the proposed plan could yield the first air rights building delivery 15 or more years from now.
 - Neither the 2020 DEIS nor the 2023 SDEIS identifies precedent terminal infrastructure projects necessary to begin construction of the SEP. These projects along with potential delays accounting for the reconstruction of the H Street Bridge could push construction commencement out several years further.
- Construction methodology
 - The four phase methodology includes phase lines which are not conducive to delivering air rights buildings, and this methodology also requires waiting for the very end of the project to open some of the most important SEP facilities (bus station, First Street Concourse, MARC track improvements)
 - While potentially feasible, the location of a temporary bus facility on the deck would pose considerable impacts to the air rights development

Recommended Mitigation: Construction Implementation Study

To address these significant construction impacts, Akridge recommends:

- USRC to undertake a construction implementation study (and subsequent studies as necessary) to identify means for mitigation of construction impacts and shortening of construction timelines, with coordination and collaboration with the private air rights developer and Amtrak. Such a study should be required as a post-FEIS mitigation measure, as opposed to a pre-FEIS requirement so as not to unduly delay completion of the NEPA process. Goals of this study should include:
 - Commence preparation work and the first phase of the SEP at the earliest possible date
 - Build the SEP in as few years as possible
 - Deliver high-value and strategic SEP project elements earlier within SEP construction
 - Commence air rights vertical construction within the fewest number of years of the SEP construction start feasible
 - Provide new tracks and platforms in accordance with enhanced rail operations, including early delivery of needed improvements such as ADA-compliant, low-level run-through platforms
 - Reduce project costs through shortened construction durations and other means
 - Minimize construction-based risks (cost escalation, change orders, schedule delays, safety risks)
 - Optimize the durations and types of disruptions to deliver the greatest amount of public benefit most quickly
 - Reduce noise, inconvenience and disruptions in the areas surrounding the station
- Study scope to accomplish these goals should include:

- Greater use of temporary track work, use of off-site real estate for staging and lay-down, alternative work sequencing, hybrid excavation concepts combining both open cut and top-down excavation techniques, and other measures
- Analysis of integrated construction approaches for the air rights and station projects combined
- Immediate steps for collection of additional required data or determination of existing conditions including below-grade conditions
- Investigation of alternate locations in which temporary parking and/or bus facilities can be provided
- Exploration of greater use of work trains instead of dump trucks

Comment Matrix

We have included specific comments about various analyses, data and statements in an attached Comment Matrix. These comments are organized to follow the specific chapters and appendices of the SDEIS, and noted with the following characterizations:

Corrections: Information in the SDEIS that we believe is in error and needs correction

Clarifications: Information that is unclear to us and should be considered for modification in the FEIS to avoid confusion

Recommendations: Specific recommendations for additional mitigation measures or changes to SDEIS text and mitigations

Comments: Notes on elements in the SDEIS that we believe are worth commenting on, but which we do not suggest be re-analyzed or modified in the FEIS

Exhibit A

Record of Communications

Matt Klein

From: Matt Klein
Sent: Friday, May 26, 2023 5:06 PM
To: Nissenbaum, Paul (FRA); allison.fultz@dot.gov; David Valenstein (david.valenstein@dot.gov)
Cc: David Tuchmann; Coburn, David (DCoburn@steptoe.com); Michael Friedberg (mike.friedberg@hklaw.com)
Subject: FRA - Akridge Property letter proposed changes - 5.26.23
Attachments: 23-0526 Property Letter Proposed Changes (002).docx

Paul, Allison, and David –

Thank you very much for your time this afternoon. As discussed, attached are our suggested edits to the April 18 letter. I am hopeful that these adjustments find an acceptable balance.

Very happy to discuss.

Enjoy the holiday weekend.

Best,
Matt

Matthew J. Klein President and CEO
601 Thirteenth Street, NW, Suite 300, Washington, DC 20005
T 202.624.8612 E mklein@akridge.com Akridge.com

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U.S. Department
of Transportation
Federal Railroad Administration

1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, D.C. 20590

April 18, 2023

VIA EMAIL

Akridge
Attn: Matthew Klein, President and CEO
601 Thirteenth Street, NW, Suite 300
Washington, DC 20005
MKlein@akridge.com

Dear Mr. Klein:

The Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) appreciates the recent discussions about the Washington Union Station Expansion Project (SEP) and Akridge's development project. As you are aware, the United States of America, acting through FRA, owns the Washington Union Station historic station building and Claytor Concourse; the parking garage, bus facility and underlying real property; and a portion of the rail terminal north of the historic station building. As a result, FRA is the lead agency preparing the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the proposed SEP.

All SEP action alternatives, which FRA identified through a robust alternatives evaluation process including public and stakeholder coordination, require portions of Akridge property for SEP elements or access. The SEP action alternatives also include the creation of various amounts of developable air-rights within Federal property, which FRA may potentially develop, lease, transfer, or dispose of. The SEP action alternatives identify some air-rights that would be used for development and open spaces, while other areas are needed for circulation that complements the expanded station complex.

Moving forward, as project delivery conversations begin in earnest, FRA, the Union Station Redevelopment Corporation (USRC), and Akridge can consider a range of options to structure air-rights ownership and control for development. Potential property transactions might involve property purchase and sale, property exchanges, or other commitments of property rights, ~~which may include continuing Federal (or USRC) interest in air rights development.~~

FRA recognizes the potential benefits of a unified approach to air-rights development including integrated project reviews and approvals, coordination of vehicular, bicycle and pedestrian circulation elements, and construction and engineering efficiencies. ~~Recognizing that you prefer a property exchange, at~~ At the appropriate time, FRA will consider making ~~intends to~~ make portions of the Federal air rights not necessary for the SEP available for commercial buildings and related public spaces as part of an exchange for the portions of Akridge property that are required for SEP elements or access. This intention to exchange property is non-binding.



**U.S. Department
of Transportation
Federal Railroad Administration**

**1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, D.C. 20590**

Progress at Washington Union Station is an important priority for FRA and the U.S. Department of Transportation. FRA looks forward to continuing to work with USRC and Akridge to address the complexities associated with advancing the station and air rights development projects.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at 202-493-6312.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Paul Nissenbaum".

**Paul Nissenbaum
Chief Development Officer and Associate Administrator
Office of Railroad Development**

Matt Klein

From: Matt Klein
Sent: Thursday, March 16, 2023 5:11 PM
To: Valenstein, David (FRA)
Cc: David Tuchmann
Subject: RE: Draft letter
Attachments: FRA property letter - draft edits 3.16.23.docx; FRA property letter - draft edits 3.16.23 clean.docx

Hi David –

I apologize that I am delayed in providing you draft edits to your proposed property letter – these suggested edits are attached (both red line and clean). I think these edits are all pretty self-explanatory, but would very much welcome the opportunity to discuss at your convenience. Should also footnote that we have not, at this point, had our attorney review – will probably need to go through this step at some point, but wanted to prioritize business intent.

Thanks,
Matt

Matthew J. Klein President and CEO
601 Thirteenth Street, NW, Suite 300, Washington, DC 20005
T 202.624.8612 E mklein@akridge.com Akridge.com

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From: Valenstein, David (FRA) [mailto:david.valenstein@dot.gov]
Sent: Friday, February 24, 2023 3:37 PM
To: Matt Klein <MKlein@akridge.com>
Subject: Draft letter

Matt, For our call. Thanks.

David Valenstein
Senior Advisor to the Deputy Secretary
Office: (202) 493-6368
Mobile: (202) 689-4319



U.S. Department
of Transportation
Federal Railroad Administration

1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, D.C. 20590

February 15, 2023

VIA EMAIL

Akridge
Attn: Matthew Klein, President and CEO
601 Thirteenth Street, NW, Suite 300
Washington, DC 20005
MKlein@akridge.com

Dear Mr. Klein:

The Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) appreciates the recent discussions about the Washington Union Station Expansion Project (SEP) and Akridge's development project. As you are aware, the United States of America, acting through FRA, owns the Washington Union Station historic station building and Claytor Concourse; the parking garage and bus facility and underlying real property; and a portion of the rail terminal north of the historic station building. As a result, FRA is the lead agency preparing the Environmental Impact Statement for the proposed SEP. All SEP action alternatives, which FRA identified through a robust alternatives evaluation process including public and stakeholder coordination, require portions of Akridge property for SEP elements or access. With the use of such property, the SEP can optimize and fulfill important project objectives.

The SEP action alternatives also include the creation of various amounts of developable air-rights within Federal property, ~~which FRA may potentially develop, lease, transfer, or dispose of.~~ The SEP use of Akridge property is a materially contributing factor to the creation of the Federal air-rights property. FRA has determined that these air-rights are best suited for development, circulation, and open space uses which will complement the expanded station complex. FRA and other key project stakeholders recognize the important benefits of consolidating the oversight and planning of all air-rights development areas. These benefits include better clarity in the project review and approval process, coordination of vehicular, bicycle and pedestrian circulation, and construction and engineering efficiencies.

Moving forward, as project delivery conversations begin in earnest, FRA, the Union Station Redevelopment Corporation (USRC), and Akridge ~~can~~ should consider a range of options to structure air-rights ownership, use rights, and control for development. ~~Potential property transactions might involve property purchase and sale, property exchanges, or other commitments of property rights, which may include continuing Federal (or USRC) interest in air-rights development.~~ Both horizontal and vertical property lines would be considered and likely adjusted. ~~FRA understands that Akridge prefers a property exchange and to cohesively plan for the Federal and private air rights development~~ FRA and Akridge share a mutual intent of completing a transaction that equitably exchanges Akridge property rights, use or access required by FRA for control and use of developable air-rights within Federal property. FRA and Akridge both recognize this shared intent is conceptual and non-binding.

Progress at Washington Union Station is an important priority for FRA and the U.S. Department of Transportation. FRA looks forward to continuing to work with USRC and Akridge to address the complexities associated with advancing the station and air-rights development projects.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at 202-493-6312.

Sincerely,

Paul Nissenbaum
Chief Development Office and Associate Administrator
Office of Railroad Development

Matt Klein

From: Matt Klein
Sent: Thursday, October 27, 2022 2:34 PM
To: paul.nissenbaum@dot.gov
Subject: FW: WUS property MOU - draft
Attachments: fra mou draft 5.24.22.docx

Hi Paul

I hope all is well. I wanted to follow-up on the property matters relative to Washington Union Station Expansion Project (SEP). There has been no activity on this matter since our call last June.

This continues to be a priority for us, Paul, as the SEP consumes such a significant portion of our project. I believe that, one way or another, the FRA is going to have to resolve the open matter of how it will obtain the property that is included in the SEP. We have been fielding questions on this by stakeholders and expect this will become even more visible as the EIS moves toward completion.

We continue to be big cheerleader for the recent FRA work around the revised Preferred Alternative and are pleased with how well this new plan has been received by the key stakeholders. The property exchange continues to be an open sensitivity. As discussed last June, not necessarily looking for a definitive agreement at this point. Our draft was an attempt to provide a simple outline of expectations. As with many things involving the SEP, I recognize that there may be no established precedent for how FRA approaches this subject. With good will and effort, I believe this subject can be advanced in an acceptable manner.

Would welcome opportunity for meeting/call to discuss how we might advance.

Thanks, Paul.

Best,

Matt

From: Matt Klein
Sent: Tuesday, May 24, 2022 10:40 AM
To: diana.lopez@dot.gov; Nissenbaum, Paul (FRA) <paul.nissenbaum@dot.gov>; jamie.rennert@dot.gov; David Valenstein (david.valenstein@dot.gov) <david.valenstein@dot.gov>
Cc: David Tuchmann <dtuchmann@akridge.com>
Subject: WUS property MOU - draft

Diana, Paul, Jamie and David

First, I want to again convey our appreciation for the work that David Valenstein has put forth over the last year in shepherding the evolution of the WUS SEP. We are well aware of the breadth of the stakeholder perspectives that needed to be balanced to make progress on an updated Concept Plan. I am eager to see the latest results of this work product as it is unveiled in June.

Many months ago, we discussed the need to advance discussions around how we deal with the property matters that are created as a result of the WUS SEP. During this discussion, we committed to generate an initial draft of a Memorandum of Understanding (attached) that would frame our understanding and expectation around a path forward in resolving these property matters.

We look forward to discussing this draft at your earliest convenience.

Best,

Matt

Matthew J. Klein President and CEO
601 Thirteenth Street, NW, Suite 300, Washington, DC 20005
T 202.624.8612 E mklein@akridge.com Akridge.com

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Matt Klein

From: Matt Klein
Sent: Tuesday, May 24, 2022 10:40 AM
To: 'diana.lopez@dot.gov'; Nissenbaum, Paul (FRA); 'jamie.rennert@dot.gov'; David Valenstein (david.valenstein@dot.gov)
Cc: David Tuchmann
Subject: WUS property MOU - draft
Attachments: fra mou draft 5.24.22.docx

Diana, Paul, Jamie and David

First, I want to again convey our appreciation for the work that David Valenstein has put forth over the last year in shepherding the evolution of the WUS SEP. We are well aware of the breadth of the stakeholder perspectives that needed to be balanced to make progress on an updated Concept Plan. I am eager to see the latest results of this work product as it is unveiled in June.

Many months ago, we discussed the need to advance discussions around how we deal with the property matters that are created as a result of the WUS SEP. During this discussion, we committed to generate an initial draft of a Memorandum of Understanding (attached) that would frame our understanding and expectation around a path forward in resolving these property matters.

We look forward to discussing this draft at your earliest convenience.

Best,
Matt

Matthew J. Klein President and CEO
601 Thirteenth Street, NW, Suite 300, Washington, DC 20005
T 202.624.8612 E mklein@akridge.com Akridge.com

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MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

THIS MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING (“MOU”) is made as of [____], 2022 between (i) the Federal Railroad Administration (“FRA”) and (ii) Burnham South, LLC, Burnham Central, LLC and Burnham North, LLC (collectively, “Akridge”).

Recitals:

A. The US Department of Transportation, through FRA, owns the historic Union Station building, its garage, and certain air rights and other rights related thereto (“FRA Property”). FRA is supporting a process to expand, modernize and enhance Union Station, to include a train hall, parking in a new below-grade facility, a new bus facility, pick-up and drop off facilities, bike connectivity and ancillary roads and support facilities (collectively, “SEP”). Portions of the FRA Property are leased by FRA to Union Station Redevelopment Corporation (“USRC”), and Amtrak (“Amtrak”) owns and leases certain rights and interests related to Union Station and the adjoining tracks. USRC and Amtrak are the proponents of the SEP.

B. In 2006, pursuant to Section 9102 of the Balanced Budget Act of 1997, Akridge acquired from the General Services Administration certain air rights north of Union Station for private commercial development (“Akridge Property”). Akridge is developing the Akridge Property as a mixed-use, transit-oriented project known as Burnham Place (“Burnham Place”). Burnham Place is a private development, not subject to FRA approval or review.

C. In June, 2020, FRA published a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (“DEIS”) for the SEP. As part of its review of the DEIS, the National Capital Planning Commission (“NCPC”) (a cooperating agency important to the NEPA process in the National Capital Region) requested that FRA work more closely with Akridge to ensure that FRA’s plans for the SEP and Akridge’s plans for Burnham Place are optimized. FRA and Akridge executed the Washington Union Station Expansion Project Collaboration Agreement dated January 13, 2021 (“Collaboration Agreement”). Pursuant to the Collaboration Agreement, FRA developed a program and plan for the SEP that maximizes the public benefits of the SEP while managing impacts of the SEP on Burnham Place.

D. FRA considered the extensive inventory of comments received as part of the DEIS public comment period as well as input from stakeholders received throughout the process of generating an updated concept plan. The current draft concept plan is attached to this MOU as Exhibit A (“Concept Plan”). The Concept Plan envisions an expanded and revitalized Union Station as a multi-modal transportation hub that will serve residents in and visitors to the Nation’s Capital for decades to come.

E. Implementation of the Concept Plan and achievement of the related public benefits would require that portions of the Akridge Property be incorporated into the SEP (whether by transfer of title, lease, grant of easements or other rights and encumbrances). As a result, the Concept Plan would significantly reduce the potential development density of the Akridge Property and impose material encumbrances on the Akridge Property. At the same time, the Concept Plan results in portions of the FRA Property becoming unnecessary for

implementation of the SEP. These excess portions of the FRA Property could be incorporated into the Akridge Property (whether by transfer of title, lease, grant of easements or other rights and encumbrances) so as to offset the adverse impacts of the SEP on the Akridge Property.

F. Akridge seeks to reach a fair and equitable agreement with FRA on the terms and conditions pursuant to which FRA would receive portions of the Akridge Property to incorporate into the SEP in exchange for transferring excess portions of the FRA Property to Akridge for use in connection with the development of Burnham Place.

G. This MOU sets forth certain preliminary understandings between FRA and Akridge, with the objective of establishing general principles and a framework that will enable each party to continue to advance the development of its respective project.

Understandings:

FRA and Akridge have reached the following preliminary understandings:

1. SEP Concept Plan. The Concept Plan is attached to this MOU as Exhibit A. FRA and Akridge acknowledge that the Concept Plan will require further modification and refinement as the program, site plan and design for the SEP is more fully defined by FRA during NEPA and other federal review processes, and as the plan for Burnham Place is more fully developed and refined by Akridge. Following execution of this MOU, FRA and Akridge will continue to work together pursuant to the Collaboration Agreement to ensure that the development of each project can continue to advance while managing the adverse impacts that each project may have on the other.

2. Framework Agreement and Exchange.

a. FRA and Akridge acknowledge that development of the SEP as contemplated by the Concept Plan requires the use by FRA or its designees of portions of the Akridge Property. FRA's use of such portions of the Akridge Property significantly enhances the design, passenger and visitor experience, functionality and efficiency of the SEP. Akridge and FRA will work together to determine the specific rights (collectively, "Akridge Rights") that are necessary to support such use. Such Akridge Rights may include the acquisition or leasing of air rights from the Akridge Property, the grant of easements and rights of way over the Akridge Property, and/or other encumbrances on the Akridge Property.

b. FRA and Akridge further acknowledge that the Concept Plan developed by FRA in connection with the SEP will result in portions of the FRA Property becoming unnecessary for implementation of the SEP, and therefore excess property. Such excess FRA Property and/or the right to use the same (collectively, "FRA Rights") may include the acquisition or leasing by Akridge of air rights from the FRA Property, the grant of easements and rights of way over the FRA Property, and/or other encumbrances on the FRA Property. [Given the multiple adjacencies and complexity of the respective FRA and Akridge projects, it is impractical for a third party to control the excess FRA Property.]

c. In order to make the Akridge Rights available to the SEP, and to manage the resulting adverse impacts on the Akridge Property, FRA and Akridge will pursue an exchange of the Akridge Rights for the FRA Rights (“Exchange”). The Exchange will allow FRA and Akridge each to continue the independent development of its respective project, while at the same time strategically managing the impacts that each project has on the other.

d. Promptly following execution of this MOU, FRA and Akridge (with the involvement of such other Union Station stakeholders as may be appropriate) will negotiate the terms and conditions of an agreement (“Framework Agreement”) that establishes the general terms and conditions of the Exchange. The Framework Agreement will include the following:

(i) A schedule of milestones for drafting, negotiating, finalizing and executing an agreement that provides the terms and conditions of the Exchange;

(ii) A process for finalizing the scope of the Akridge Rights and the FRA Rights that will be the subject of the Exchange, and the nature of those legal rights (fee simple, lease, easement, etc.) and other related property agreements that will be necessary to complete the exchange and enable the execution of each project;

(iii) A process for establishing fair and equitable terms and conditions for the Exchange, including the valuation of the Akridge Rights and the FRA Rights to be exchanged; and

(iv) A process for including USRC, Amtrak and other stakeholders as necessary to finalize the Framework Agreement and timely complete the work streams contemplated by the Framework Agreement.

4. Other Stakeholders. FRA and Akridge acknowledge that the involvement and cooperation of USRC, Amtrak and other stakeholders will be required to advance the development of the SEP and Burnham Place projects. FRA will endeavor to promote and coordinate the support and involvement of USRC, Amtrak and any other federal interests in such process. If FRA assigns or delegates control of any portion of the FRA Property, or if Akridge assigns or delegates control of any portion of the Akridge Property, such assignment or delegation will be subject to the understandings set forth in this MOU.

5. Not Legally Binding. This MOU does not confer any rights upon FRA, Akridge or any other individual or entity and is not intended to create any rights, benefits or other responsibilities, either substantive or procedural, nor is it enforceable at law or equity by either party against the other, including the United States, its agencies its officers or any other person.

The undersigned acknowledge that they have reviewed the foregoing MOU and agree to the terms and conditions set forth therein. Modifications to this MOU will be coordinated with and approved in writing by the undersigned.

FRA:

Federal Railroad Administration

By: _____

Name: _____

Its: _____

Akridge:

Burnham South, LLC, Burnham Central, LLC, and
Burnham North, LLC

By: _____

Name: Matthew J. Klein

Its: Authorized Signatory

List of Exhibits:

Exhibit A Concept Plan

Exhibit A
Concept Plan

[NTD: Attach Concept Plan as of execution of MOU]



601 Thirteenth Street, NW, Suite 300 North, Washington, DC 20005
T 202.638.3000 Akridge.com

June 20, 2023

Mr. Paul Nissenbaum
Associate Administrator for Railroad Development
Federal Railroad Administration
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Mr. Nissenbaum:

We are writing to encourage FRA to clearly state at forthcoming public engagements what we believe is intended, and in fact implicit in the May 12, 2023 Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement (SDEIS): that the Preferred Alternative depends on a unification and exchange of private and federal air rights. Please note that we are not asking FRA for a binding commitment at this time, but rather only to clarify that the Preferred Alternative, and its associated public benefits, depends on a unification and exchange of those development rights occurring.

As you are aware, the 2020 Union Station Expansion Project (SEP) DEIS plan encountered opposition by local, public, private and federal stakeholders. One of the material issues raised by approval authorities (National Capital Planning Commission (NCPC), DC State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), the District of Columbia City Council, and others) was the lack of integration between the SEP and private air rights development. As a result, these approval authorities asked FRA to collaborate with Akridge to resolve shortcomings of the 2020 DEIS plan and to demonstrate how the SEP and air rights development would be integrated.

In 2021 Akridge agreed to collaborate to resolve the concerns raised by the 2020 DEIS. Along with the FRA, Union Station Redevelopment Corporation and Amtrak, we coordinated on the development of what became the new Preferred Alternative in the SDEIS. This Alternative includes the use of half (about three acres) of Akridge's property south of H Street. Akridge agreed to advance and support this Alternative provided that the excess federal air rights property (two acres which are not needed for station functions directly because of SEP use of Akridge property) would be exchanged with Akridge in return for use of its property. In fact, when we began our collaboration with FRA, all parties agreed to ignore property lines in order to develop the best SEP possible with a complementary air rights vision. In doing so, Akridge did not favor our existing property rights within the planning process. We even accepted that, even with an exchange, our future development rights in total could decrease.

At the same time, Akridge has frequently communicated to FRA that in order for the SEP to achieve the public benefits desired by stakeholders, all air rights development must be planned and executed under unified ownership. Without such consolidated control, the viability of all air rights development is at risk. We believe that FRA has recognized this to be the case and, as noted, the Preferred Alternative rests on such an exchange as a practical matter and could not move forward without it.

As you are well aware, there are compelling reasons that make a property exchange and integrated air rights development essential to its feasibility:

- **Approvals and Public Engagement** – one primary developer must plan and propose a cohesive air rights development plan. Proposed building massing, sight lines, view corridors, open space

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character, and circulation patterns must be comprehensively planned and described to approval agencies and the public. Project reviewers will already face the challenge of assessing SEP and air rights components under separate processes and standards. Splitting the air rights development and open space reviews (if this would even be possible) would require three separate public reviews, all within overlapping site areas.

- **Technical Complexity** – air rights development will be placed atop a layer cake of supporting functions and station program. Consolidated air rights planning strategies must be employed to address: ventilation, security, threat and risk management, parking, loading, utility provisioning, stormwater management, structural and foundation design, construction phasing and impact mitigations, sustainability and resilience, private financing, and many other fatal flaw level project implementation matters. Independent sponsorship of multiple air rights properties would yield redundant infrastructure and prohibitively complicated coordination.

The SDEIS also references a large inventory of substantial public benefits which arise in the SEP only as a direct result of a viable, unified air rights development plan. Some of these benefits include: a naturally-lit bus facility directly integrated with the Train Hall; a symmetrical public space commensurate with the station's historic and architectural significance; and extensive skylighting above the two-block long central concourse. In the SDEIS FRA states these project elements directly address important stakeholder concerns and minimize or eliminate potential adverse impacts. For example, with respect to land use impacts, the document states:

“The potential future transfer and development of the Federal air rights would have a major beneficial impact on land use in the Project Area. It would replace an automobile-focused use with residential and commercial uses more consistent with their surroundings, including the private air rights development. As such, it would become part of a new vibrant neighborhood to the north of WUS, within which the expanded station would be seamlessly integrated” (SDEIS at 5-66).

Akridge is deeply concerned that the SDEIS does not identify an unambiguous intent by FRA to unify air rights development and to do so via a property exchange in order to ensure these project benefits are realized. The FRA recognizes that private air rights owned by Akridge are required to accommodate the Preferred Alternative and recognizes too that federal air rights would be available for transfer and development. However, the document describes such transfer as “potential,” and does not explicitly state that an exchange of air rights with Akridge and unified development is an essential prerequisite for the SDEIS Preferred Alternative to move forward. We are confident that you would agree that the public benefits described in the SDEIS are not achievable absent such an integrated plan.

Further, the SDEIS states that the adverse impact resulting from the removal of 2.9 acres from Akridge's property is “minor” because the coordination between FRA and Akridge in the development of the Preferred Alternative results in “*ensuring that, although sizable, the reduction would not preclude developing the remaining air rights*” (SDEIS at 5-62). Stated differently, this passage claims that independent development of the federal and private air rights parcels is feasible and acceptable to Akridge. This statement is clearly incorrect as Akridge has frequently conveyed to FRA that separate development is not feasible and certainly not acceptable to Akridge. Given that absent unified ownership, all air rights development is infeasible, property impacts of an independent development scenario would be among the most “major” impacts assessed in the EIS, and the benefits described above would not be realized.



We also note that throughout the past three years, the FRA has extensively engaged with many stakeholders to refine the Preferred Alternative to mitigate or avoid adverse impacts to other parties. In these cases, specific programmatic changes have been made and other options foreclosed. These changes or mitigations are now documented without qualification or ambiguity in the SDEIS. We believe that the feasibility of air rights development, creation of a central civic space, and avoidance of major property impacts are of sufficient public value to warrant clear assurance that FRA intends to unify and integrate the air rights properties, as we understand FRA anticipates.

In short, Akridge has and continues to support the SDEIS Preferred Alternative provided that the FRA demonstrates its intention to consolidate control of the air rights development through a property exchange. So that we may continue what we believe has been a constructive engagement with FRA, we ask that FRA eliminate the ambiguity that its SDEIS has created on the property exchange and development issue. Specifically, we ask that FRA clarify at forthcoming public meetings and engagements its intention to unify ownership and development of the air rights through a property exchange. Doing so will allow all stakeholders, including Akridge, to evaluate the new Preferred Alternative with clarity around the feasibility of the air rights development and its integral presence and benefits.

We appreciate your continued engagement in this important subject and, in advance of the forthcoming public meetings, are eager to meet this week to continue discussions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "M. Klein", is written over the word "Sincerely,".

Matthew J. Klein
President and CEO

CC: David Valenstein, Senior Advisor to the Deputy Secretary, USDOT
Allison Fultz, Chief Counsel, Federal Railroad Administration
Doug Carr, CEO, Union Station Redevelopment Corporation
Stephen Gardner, CEO, Amtrak

Document	Section	Page/Line	Classification	Comment
SDEIS	ES.5	Page v 79-81	Correction	Our understanding is that no trains, or portions of trains, would be located inside the train hall.
SDEIS	3.1	Page 3-3 Note 14	Correction	Akridge air rights start 70'-80' above sea level, not "above the tracks" as stated
SDEIS	3.3	Page 3-12 Line 315-320	Correction	Akridge's program for the air-rights shows 2.7M total (private air rights and federal property); Out of the 2.7M, approx. 2.2M are private air-rights and approx. 500,000 are federal SF. Akridge's program for hotel totals 385,000 SF (not 608,000 SF) with a total of 453 keys (253 south of H Street and 200 north of H Street)
SDEIS	5.5.1.1	Page 5-20 Line 867-871	Clarification	Per operations modeling in previous DEIS appendices Akridge understands that private rail cars will not be allowed in the terminal during its reconstruction.
SDEIS	5.5.1.4	Page 5-23 Line 936-940	Recommendation	Add to mitigation measures that USRC to incorporate measures to ensure that regular PUDO traffic normally accommodated at the train hall can be effectively diverted to the below-ground PUDO facility during the identified special events occurring 5 to 10 days a year. Measures should include a goal that station PUDO traffic does not divert onto the air rights streets and disrupt air rights resident, tenant, loading, and emergency vehicle circulation.
SDEIS	5.5.1.6	Page 5-24 Line 984-986	Comment	Akridge's belief is that the below grade PUDO facility is expected to significantly improve pedestrian conditions at street level by removing high traffic volume from immediately adjacent to the station
SDEIS	5.5.1.6	Page 5-24 Line 989-991	Recommendation	Pedestrian access should also be provided on the east side of WUS, either at the existing retail concourse, the historic headhouse, or at the new train hall
SDEIS	5.5.1.9	Page 5-28 Line 1080-1082	Comment	Akridge and DCOF studies noted availability of up to 5000 off-site parking spaces. These could be available for use during construction, or similar to air travel, could provide long-term parking for passengers using parking search apps (as is likely already occurring at Union Station).
SDEIS	5.8	Page 5-55 Line 1711- 1713	Clarification	The analysis apparently does not include comparative estimates for vehicular travel replaced by increased use of bus and rail (reducing carbon emissions), and also take into account an estimate of greening the grid and transformation to an electrified vehicle fleet, in assessing energy use? The SDEIS shows adverse impacts on energy resources, but does is account for these major changes that will occur by project completion? Clarification of the estimates that were used in the assessment for these items would assist in future studies of GHG impacts.
SDEIS	5.9.1.3	Page 5-64 Line 1874-1878	Comment	Beneficial impacts will be enhanced/ensured if station spaces have useful, neighborhood serving retail and if the station is used for circulation between neighborhoods and does not become a barrier separating neighborhoods.
SDEIS	5.12.1.2	Page 5-94 Line 2372-2376	Comment	The Preferred Alternative would have a moderate or even major beneficial visual impact on First Street, NE, with removal of the upper and non-original portion of the Burnham wall between the historic station and H Street. This would allow the original Burnham Wall in this location to be restored to its original height and configuration, or very close to the same. This result, along with the proposed setbacks from First Street, NE for new buildings in the federal air rights, would potentially result in a net beneficial physical impact to the Burnham Wall and station setting.
SDEIS	5.12.2	Page 5-97 Line 2502-2523	Comment	A number of factors can determine whether there will be a moderate adverse visual impact of the Federal air rights on the U.S. Capitol Dome viewshed, including the massing and character of the federal air rights buildings, and the material, reflectivity, variety, scale and arrangement of the buildings. The simple metric of visible/not visible should not be the singular defining definition of impacts, when the factors noted here are at least as determinative of impacts, if not more so. With appropriate design, the potential may exist that the Federal air rights could have a minor or moderate beneficial visual impact compared to the existing parking garage north of the historic station building.
SDEIS	6.6.3.2	Page 6-9 3889-3890	Comment	FRA should determine and state in the FEIS if the location of the access portal in the western wall providing access to and from below-grade parking is in the original Burnham Wall or in a portion that was reconstructed when the power plant was demolished.
SDEIS	7.1	Page 7-3 Table 7-1 No. 13	Clarification	The determination of rescheduling or cancellation is unclear in terms of their frequencies and durations; whether one type of cancellation vs another may have greater or lesser impacts. The FEIS should clarify that schedules and cancelations offer potential flexibility for construction phasing and the impacts of any particular one of these can be minor or major
Appendix C3aS	Supplemental Visual Assessment	General	Recommendation	Arkidge suggests adding a qualifying note within the SDEIS Appendix C3aS stating that the private air-rights massing shown for the purposes of the Aesthetics and Visual Quality was provided by Akridge as indicative and illustrative of only one potential air-rights massing scenario.
Appendix C3aS	Supplemental Visual Assessment	View 1	Comment	Akridge appreciates the note that "the aesthetic and visual impact changes as one approaches WUS." From many vantage points, views are framed and obscured by buildings, trees and other stationary streetscape features. One conclusion is clear, when approaching the historic station from the south – from First St NE, Delaware Ave NE, and Louisiana Ave NE – a large expanse of the façade and vaulted roof of the historic station is only revealed when approaching close to Columbus Circle. From this in-close proximity, the air-rights behind the Washington Union Station are largely, if not completely, obscured by the historic station's grand façade (with the air rights massing in Alternative F, visibility of the air rights from within or on the edges of Columbus Circle would occur only at its far east and west ends, where a view of the side of Union Station can be seen). The Preferred Alternative, which places SEP program within the southernmost areas of existing private air rights, effectively pushes private air-rights development significantly further north, thereby decreasing air-rights visibility from south of the historic station compared to the no-action alternative.
Appendix C3S	1.7	Page 1-12 Line 249	Correction	The table shown is incorrect. Private air rights square footages are shown with the Federal Air Rights Development square footage.
Appendix C3S	5.4.1.1	Page 5-10 Line 967	Correction	Akridge's program for hotel totals 385,000 SF (not 608,000 SF) with a total of 453 keys (253 south of H Street and 200 north of H Street)

Appendix C3S	5.5.1.4	Page 5-30 Line 1364-1370	Comment	Akridge is concerned that extended use beyond 5 to 10 times annually could impact circulation for the air rights. There needs to be additional considerations including but not limited to intersection function and pedestrian flow. A system will need to be established for future negotiation/prevention of expansion of this proposed use.
Appendix C3S	5.5.1.12	Page 5-44 Line 1698-1702	Recommendation	Recommend for USRC to work with the air rights developer on traffic modeling and planning for H Street intersection mitigation measures.
Appendix C3S	NA	Page 5-71 Table 5-48	Recommendation	Add note that the H Street bus stops need to be coordinated with Akridge due to limited sidewalk space, security elements, and potential bicycle infrastructure needed in these areas.
Appendix C3S	NA	Page 5-72 Table 5-48	Recommendation	Verify that MPD and DPW would have adequate staffing for long term enforcement of PUDO zones on First Street and Second Street.
Appendix S1	1.1	Page 2 Line 31-34	Comment	Akridge concurs with the FRA program of approximately 500 spaces on one-level below grade.
Appendix S2	NA	General	Comment	Akridge understands that the SDEIS, as a document describing and assessing the environmental impacts of the Station Expansion Project, is necessarily focused on the proposed public project and is largely silent on surrounding urban design and private air-right integration. As Akridge has emphasized throughout the EIS process, the whole should be greater than the sum of its parts, with the parts including SEP, Columbus Circle, the historic station, the surrounding city and private air-rights.

Union Station, are you taking the seating out? Where will people sit when you do your revising here and making it look better? Will I have benches that I can sit in, because if my train is not leaving right now, people are standing up? So when you build the new ones, will they be standing? That's it.

MR. EDWARDS: Thank you very much. Before I call the next person, Mr. Court Reporter, we have a list that we will give you with the spelling of everyone's name in the order they appeared. Is that right? Okay. Thank you.

Next, Brandon Buchanan.

MR. BUCHANAN: All right. Thank you very much, and thank you for holding this event here this evening in this historic facility. My name is Brandon Buchanan. I am with the American Bus Association, located here in Washington, D.C. And we represent the over-the-road bus industry, about 800, both charter and tour, as well as inner city, site seeing, transit, all of the forms of bus travel, as well as the destinations they go, including this one, Union Station. So we've helped to promote bus parking here at Union Station for over a

decade.

Looking at the alternatives, we believe that the plan needs at least 60 spaces for both inner-city bus travel, as well as tour bus as -- and other bus usage. We note that the research and the data included in the proposals does understate all other bus transportation, other than inner-city bus, as well as a massge (sic) amount of information being left out.

Also, when you have projections of growth, looking at over 30 percent of growth, it seems unusual to have a proposal, then, that decreases the amount of available spaces that's not in line with the projected growth. And so, again, we'd love to see more spaces made available. D.C. has been promoting -- aggressively marketing bus parking here at Union Station since 2017, and the economic impact of those groups coming to the station to utilize its facilities that also take cars off the road to decrease congestion on our roadways. And to support inner-city transportation do provide a benefit to us overall.

Overall, in general, the D.C. parking inventory has decreased since the original projections in

2016, and so we would love to support and enhance those few that we have. We would also note that motor coach industry is a avenue for environmental justice that this administration is currently endorsing. Most of our passengers come from underserved or underrepresented communities. And so we think that one --

MR. EDWARDS: One minute.

MR. BUCHANAN: -- way to provide essential transportation, not just to our traveling public, but to the public overall, including train passengers standing in as emergency train service providers, partnering with Amtrak -- on the Amtrak Throughway Program. Partnering with the airlines to provide bus bridges or even local transit, as well. And so we love that Union Station serves a dual role as a transportation hub and parking facility, but we also want to ensure that it continues to be a sustainable transportation solution and economic driver and a supporter of small, family-owned businesses, which many of our members are.

Lastly, but not least, we note that the plan did not really include accommodation for electronic -- or electric commercial motor vehicles, and we would love to

see that incorporated into the revised proposal. Thank you for your time, and we look forward to supporting sustainability and helping Union Station grow.

MR. EDWARDS: Thank you. All right. I just want to say that I have four folks signed up, four remaining folks. I'm going to call them, but if you are interested in making a comment, please hold your hand up, and one of our colleagues will come around and get your name, and we'll add you to the list.

Next, Don Rodriguez.

MR. RODRIGUEZ: Thank you very much. My name is Dan Rodriguez. I'm serving as Vice President of Public Affairs on behalf of Coach USA and its subsidiary, Megabus. I'm also the -- in the position of President of the Bus Association of New Jersey. Together, we bring millions of people on our buses to Washington, D.C.'s Union Station. For many of our passengers, our buses are the most affordable travel option to various locations from New York, New Jersey, Connecticut, and even as far as Boston. Since its inception in 2006, Megabus alone has served over 55 million passengers. Each day, tens of thousands of people continue to rely on our services,



July 6, 2023

The Honorable Pete Buttigieg
Secretary
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, D.C. 20590

RE: Washington Union Station Expansion Project – Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement and Draft Section 4(f) Evaluation

Dear Secretary Buttigieg:

On behalf of the American Bus Association (ABA), I submit the following comments to the Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement and Draft Section 4(f) Evaluation or SDEIS, issued by the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) on May 12, 2023, in support of the Washington Union Station Expansion Project (the Project) proposal by the Union Station Redevelopment Corporation (USRC), in coordination with Amtrak.

The ABA is a trade association representing the private intercity bus/motorcoach industry along with the larger group tour and travel industry, for over 90 years. The ABA has over 3,800 members, including bus/motorcoach operators who operate nearly 65% of the equipment on the road, providing all manner of bus services, including scheduled service, charter and tour, commuter operations and airport shuttle service. The ABA's tour and travel members are tour and travel companies, convention and visitors' bureaus (CVBs), destinations and attractions, including many based in the District of Columbia, including the USRC and Amtrak. The ABA and its members play a vital role in promoting travel and tourism throughout North America, and particularly in the Washington, D.C. area.

The President & CEO of ABA, Peter Pantuso, recently served on the U.S. Department of Transportation's (USDOT or Department) National Advisory Committee on Travel and Tourism Infrastructure, which developed the National Travel and Tourism Infrastructure Strategic plan that the Department is currently in the process of updating. As you know, the purpose of the update is to support reviving the travel and tourism industry in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic by promoting intermodal connectivity and investment across all modes of transportation.¹ The ABA believes the Project plays a key role in USDOT's revival effort, to serve as the premier model for intermodal

¹ Fed. Reg. Vol. 88, No. 106, Friday, June 2, 2023 – National Travel and Tourism Infrastructure Strategic Plan; Request for Comment.

redevelopment projects.

The ABA has closely followed the progression of the Project for the past 10 years, participating in multiple hearings, meetings and comment submission opportunities. The Project is a high priority for the group tour and travel industry due to its strategic location in the nation's capital, a premier travel and tourism destination and its impact on the local economy of Washington, D.C. We support ABA members' interest, including the USRC and Amtrak, in modernizing and expanding the National Capital Region's principal *intermodal transportation* hub to better serve the region. However, the *intermodal nature* of Union Station, and the need for the Project to *facilitate intermodal connections*, including connections between rail, transit, intercity bus, taxis, ride-share, and others forms of surface transport, cannot be overstated. The facilitation of intermodal connections between these various modes must be a priority of any modernization project. For this reason, ABA continues to participate in this environmental review process, strongly voicing the need for intercity bus operations, including parking, to remain robust and fully integrated in the facility as part of the final Project.

Initially, we commend FRA for pausing the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process and responding to comments on the 2020 Draft Environmental Impact Statement and Draft Section 4(f) Evaluation by developing a new alternative and issuing the SDEIS. This action lends credibility to the federal environmental review process, ensuring public feedback and stakeholder input are validly considered and incorporated into the process, as intended by the statute. Because the Station plays such an important role in the national transportation network, even beyond its local importance to the D.C. area, it is critical for the development of this Project to account for the needs of a multitude of interests, not only in terms of transportation services, but also in terms of environmental sustainability and supporting equitable access for rural, underprivileged and minority communities. With these interests and goals in mind, and along with information provided by ABA in prior comment submissions in this matter, we offer the following additional comments and request the Project sponsors to reconsider the availability of motorcoach parking capacity, in support of environmental sustainability and equitable access goals for our diverse passenger population.

A. CAPACITY

Although ABA is pleased FRA and the project sponsors developed a new Preferred Alternative (PA) in the SDEIS, referred to as Alternative Action F, ABA believes it still does not meet the District's needs in terms of bus/motorcoach services. The new PA does include bus facility integration, and appears to provide for more direct intermodal transfers between bus and rail operations. However, based on the number of slips identified, parking and service forecasts, the PA still does not sufficiently provide for both current and future intercity bus needs for the District.

In previous comments,² ABA and its local tourism partners made specific recommendations to FRA regarding bus parking. Bus parking is a major challenge for the District, as it is used not only by intercity scheduled service operators, but also sightseeing operations, commuter bus operations, downtown shuttle bus operations and charter bus operations. Adequate parking facilities for these various operations are necessary for an urban environment to ensure safe bus/motorcoach operations³,

² ABA Comments, Sept. 28, 2020

³ One specific safety need parking facilities address is the ability provided for drivers to take a break within the framework of their DOT-mandated hours of service and garner needed rest and relaxation from their duties.

reduction of climate damaging emissions, and facilitation of traffic flow, particularly as the number of urban street users has multiplied. As well, sufficient parking facilities support critical revenue generation, both for Union Station and the District.

The USRC frequently notes the economic impact of motorcoach driven tourism is more than \$35 million annually, to Union Station. So, it is surprising the PA actually reduces Union Station bus vehicle parking, which will have a significant economic impact to its revenue stream. Further, Motorcoaches are responsible for an estimated \$810 million direct economic impact annually in the District of Columbia, and nearly 11,000 jobs.⁴ Many of the groups visiting Union Station for parking are charter operators, who are visiting on day trips, with their groups eating lunch or dinner within Union Station and then going on to their next stop location and returning to their origination point several hours away. For this reason, we note, in recent years USRC has increased its efforts to actively market the availability of parking slots for charter bus operators. Based on these facts, ABA does not believe the data relied upon in the SDEIS to support the PA is sound or accurately reflects the current of future parking needs for bus/motorcoach operations at Union Station.

Additionally, we note the SDEIS does not take into account the reduction of motorcoach parking inventory elsewhere in the District, which increases the reliance and need for bus/motorcoach parking at Union Station. George Mason University⁵ and the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments⁶ have concluded studies demonstrating that more than 1,000 private buses pass through the District of Columbia on a daily basis. This number increases to over 2,000 buses per day during the peak tourism season, February through June. Yet, over time the District's motorcoach parking inventory has declined from a high of almost 800 bus parking spaces⁷ throughout the city to now less than 500⁸. While a few metered parking spaces have been added in recent years, the motorcoach parking inventory has decreased overall since 2016, and free parking has largely been eliminated. Further, less than half of this current inventory is close to drop-off points, convenient or easily accessible (10 minutes travel time or less) to the downtown core or the National Mall. Because bus/motorcoach parking demand is at a premium, locations like Union Station are essential to ensuring buses continue to visit. Washington needs safe places to park and drivers need time to rest, in-line with hours of service requirements. Union Station is perfectly positioned to fill this need. The Project must be considered holistically within the context of commercial motor vehicle operations within the entire District. We believe a dynamic management system at Union Station, per the PA, could be successfully implemented as a solution to the long-term problem of accessible, reservable parking for buses/motorcoaches operating in the downtown core. However, to be successful it must begin with a sufficient number of slips to manage appropriately.

⁴ Delpy Neirotti, L. (2002). *Bus Tours and Bus Passengers: Impact on Local Economies*. Washington, DC: George Washington University.

⁵ Margaret Daniels, P. G. (2015). *National Mall and Memorial Parks Tour Bus Study*. Washington, DC: National Park Service.

⁶ Cambridge Systematics. (2015). *Regional Bus Staging, Layover, and Parking Location Study*. Washington, DC: Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments.

⁷ DC Department of Transportation. (2011). *DC Motorcoach Action Plan*. Washington, DC: DC Department of Transportation.

⁸ <https://godcgo.com/motorcoach/> (updated 2017)

Also, an updated annual study by DePaul's Chaddick Institute⁹ of intercity bus operations chronicles a significantly higher percentage of annual passenger growth in the fixed route intercity segment than that cited in the SDEIS. The SDEIS projects 27% growth between now and 2040, yet the Chaddick Institute chronicles, despite the pandemic, a near 25% year-over-year passenger growth in the 2021-2023 period. Even if conservatively estimated, using the more traditionally aligned 5-8% growth range annually, it would show a 75% growth curve by 2040.

Anecdotally, we also note that at least 5 new intercity fixed route carriers entered the market over the past 4 years, and it would be imprudent to assume there would not be others during the timeframe through 2040. New intercity motorcoach destinations originating from Washington, DC, have started to emerge, including the Southern and Central Virginia oriented (ROX and Virginia Breeze), Nashville (Napaway), new options to New York City (the Jet) and potential for others in the wings to emerge (e.g. Charlotte, Orlando, etc.). A study of intercity curbside permits requests over the past 4 years in Washington, D.C., would provide a good assessment of bus service growth in the region, and provide a basis for evaluating future growth and parking slip space need at Union Station. Consider for example, New York City, where they have seen a significant increase in curbside intercity permits, increasing from around 400 in 2019 to nearly 750 permitted spots now. This is an example of the explosive growth potential for motorcoach operations. We believe that a survey of permitted curbside spots over time could be a key indicator for future growth (if there is opportunity for expansion) at terminal facilities.

Based on current operations and projections from publicly available data, we believe the PA does not provide sufficient parking facilities for bus/motorcoach needs serving the city, taking into account both scheduled and non-scheduled, public and private bus/motorcoach operations. ABA urges the sponsors to reconsider the PA and maintain and continue to provide for a minimum of 60 available bus/motorcoach slips to serve the needs of the District and beyond.

B. SUSTAINABILITY

Universally identified across federal agencies, the transportation sector is one of the largest contributors to greenhouse gas emissions. Federal legislation, policy and funding is being directed toward this challenge on an unprecedented scale.

One of the most underappreciated benefits of motorcoach travel is environmental sustainability. In traveling by motorcoach, on average 35 to 40 cars are displaced from roadways, with a load of 55 passengers who decide to ride the bus rather than drive. This benefit is multiplied with double-decker motorcoaches capable of carrying up to 81 passengers. Further, these benefits are enhanced by the evolution of more environmentally friendly fuels, such low-sulfur diesel fuel and more restrictive emissions requirements.

As the SDEIS is intended to evaluate the environmental impacts of a project, environmental sustainability should be accorded significant weight. Under this consideration, the environmental benefits provided by bus/motorcoach travel through a reduction in congestion and pollution, particularly in a congested urban area, should not be underestimated. Travel by "green modes," particularly in light

⁹ Schweiterman, Joseph. (2022). "[Routes to Recovery: 2022 Outlook for the Intercity Bus Industry](https://las.depaul.edu/centers-and-institutes/chaddick-institute-for-metropolitan-development/research-and-publications/Documents/2022%20Outlook%20for%20the%20Intercity%20Bus%20Industry,%20v1.2%20(1).pdf)." February 24, 2022. Chaddick Institute. [https://las.depaul.edu/centers-and-institutes/chaddick-institute-for-metropolitan-development/research-and-publications/Documents/2022%20Outlook%20for%20the%20Intercity%20Bus%20Industry,%20v1.2%20\(1\).pdf](https://las.depaul.edu/centers-and-institutes/chaddick-institute-for-metropolitan-development/research-and-publications/Documents/2022%20Outlook%20for%20the%20Intercity%20Bus%20Industry,%20v1.2%20(1).pdf)

of current climate concerns, should be encouraged. Motorcoaches are the greenest and most efficient form of surface transportation.¹⁰ Motorcoaches realize 239.8 passenger miles per gallon, as compared to 85.2 passenger miles per gallon for Amtrak and 27.9 passenger miles per gallon for cars. Motorcoaches also release only 43 grams of CO₂ per passenger mile, as compared to 147 grams for Amtrak and 368 grams for cars. Motorcoach emissions and fuel economy are continuing to improve, particularly in light of the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) on-going efforts through updates to emission requirements and the Greenhouse Gas Phase 3 rulemaking. These requirements have had a significant impact on new engines beginning in 2021, and will continue to do so for generations. These vehicles were designed to have a 24% or greater reduction in their already low CO₂ emissions. Yet we note, neither the DEIS and the SDEIS addressed or took into account these various emission improvements or EPA requirements. Nor did the documents credit or acknowledge the bus/motorcoach operations for the pollution and congestion reduction benefits achieved by removing so many cars from the road. These calculations and environmental benefits should be both identified and incorporated into any final EIS.

Also, as previously mentioned, motorcoaches emit the lowest average amount of grams of CO₂ per passenger mile of any mode including Amtrak, transit buses and single passenger vehicles. However, when there is insufficient parking available, forcing buses/motorcoaches to circulate the city streets in "creep mode" (roaming around the city streets at low speed), both traffic and the air quality of is negatively effected. Buses operating in creep mode use more fuel (generally double) and emit at least 50% more nitrogen oxides (NO_x) when driving at low speed in urban traffic than when idling. This adds more than 375 gallons more fuel burned and emissions of more than 22 pounds of excess NO_x annually, for only one hour/day of circulating¹¹. The District has a strict 3 minute idling law, and thanks to the success of annual outreach efforts by ABA, the DC Department of Transportation, Union Station and Destinations DC, the motorcoach industry is very familiar with the law and rarely found to be out of compliance. Parking eliminates idling for motorcoaches and improves safety. We would suspect that the same cannot be said for Amtrak or transit bus operations. Motorcoaches would gain a significant environmental benefit by being afforded increased parking locations.

Further, with the interest in zero emissions commercial vehicles and efforts to transition commercial fleet operations on an unprecedented timeline, we do not see similar reflections or acknowledgement of these types of operations integrated into the Project. We strongly recommend the SDEIS address this consideration. The current Administration recently published proposals encouraging adoption and incorporation of such technology into commercial fleet operations by 2040 if not earlier (EPA-HQ-OAR-2022-0985 – Greenhouse Gas Emissions Standards for Heavy-Duty Vehicles—Phase 3). These vehicles are currently available for commercial purchase and are being steadily incorporated into an increasing number of fleet operations.

Every motorcoach visiting Union Station contributes to the goal of improving the environment, whether by taking cars off the road and reducing congestion, or by improved air quality. ABA believes the SDEIS needs to take these benefits into account and encourage greater use of travel by bus/motorcoach by ensuring the final PA provides sufficient parking facilities.

C. EQUITABLE ACCESS

¹⁰ Union of Concerned Scientists. (2008). *Getting There Greener: The Guide to Your Lower-Carbon Vacation*. Cambridge, MA: Union of Concerned Scientists.

¹¹ Lowell, D. (2008). *Updated Comparison of Energy Use and Emissions From Different Transportation Modes*. Concord, MA: MJ Bradley & Associates.

Throughout the duration of this Administration, equitable access for the diverse populations throughout America has been a focus for a variety of initiatives including transportation. Following the publication of Executive Order No. 13985 (EO 13985), this has increasingly been put into practice through the policies encompassed in the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA), the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) as well as the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL). A fundamental tenant included in each of these pieces of legislation is that transportation infrastructure has great potential to build community wealth and strong local economies and support long-time residents and businesses. We believe that the same holds true with Union Station. The passengers carried historically by fixed route intercity bus providers trend towards being predominantly drawn from underserved communities¹², including serving as the only form of interstate transportation to people residing in rural communities.

Motorcoaches and intercity fixed route transportation have a place at Union Station. It provides an opportunity for the station to live up to the principles incorporated in EO 13985, but also to the principle of access for all that permeates throughout the federal government today. For example, although this is an FRA-led project, within the recently updated circular for joint development (FTA 7050.1B) from the Federal Transit Administration (FTA), it states that one of their major goals is to “enhance the effectiveness of public transportation and be related physically or functionally to public transportation, or establish new or enhanced coordination between public transportation and other transportation.” We hope that this project will embrace that ideal, especially since public transportation is included in the project plan and intercity buses often provide public transportation. Whether it is working under contract to public transit agencies, operating via a working relationship with Amtrak as Amtrak Thruway Service providers, standing in the shoes of the airlines/rail/transit in the case of a breakdown or providing a “bus bridge” shuttle or daily commuter bus service, motorcoaches participate as public transportation providers.

We believe that in providing service to underserved communities, as evidenced by the recent expansion of service linking rural areas to Washington DC’s Downtown core through the Virginia Breeze¹³, there is more opportunity for innovation that will emerge in the coming years. It’s with an eye towards this innovation that we ask the Project not to reduce the Union Station Bus Deck footprint below 60 spaces. Finally, we are confident that motorcoaches can spur economic development for underserved communities, bringing people to needed employment, spurring innovation and attracting tourist investment. We hope that this intermodal project will continue to encourage each of those ideals outlined in EO 13985 as well as continue to support small-family owned businesses in supporting motorcoach operations and growth.

In closing, we have high hopes for a redesigned Union Station and would like it to serve as the crown jewel in facilitating future motorcoach passenger growth (as highlighted in the National Travel and Tourism Infrastructure Strategic Plan 2020-2024) and promoting intermodalism as well as public-private partnership. We do believe that the Project currently relies on bad data, ignores current growth trends, minimizes consideration of the environmental and economic benefits that the motorcoach industry provides, and potentially limits equitable access to all populations. **The ABA supports a plan for Union Station that includes a Bus Deck with at least 60 slots for motorcoaches and an indoor passenger staging area immediately adjacent to the Bus Deck.**

¹² <https://www.jtlu.org/index.php/jtlu/article/view/419> (2015)

¹³ <https://ggwash.org/view/86290/virginia-defies-odds-with-new-intercity-bus-route> (2022)

We appreciate your willingness to listen to public comment and work with your existing tenants to craft a design that is workable for current operations and hope that you will continue to listen to help shape operations in the future, 2040 and beyond. We believe that this is the most successful avenue to make sure that future growth is considered for all of our passengers including those who view the motorcoach as the only affordable and environmentally responsible way to travel.

The bus industry appreciates your interest in continuing to provide intermodal opportunities for the entire passenger transportation industry, but we hope that you won't forget the charter and tour bus segment in the intermodal redevelopment plan. Thank you for the opportunity to provide comment, and for your partnership and engagement throughout this process. We also would like to thank the USRC and the Bus Parking Deck personnel for being a valued member of our Association and an active participant in outreach to the over-the-road bus industry.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Brandon Buchanan". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Brandon Buchanan
Director of Regulatory Affairs

AMTRAK
383 West 31st Street, New York, NY 10001
chan.ju.kwon@amtrak.com | Tel 123-456-7890



July 6, 2023

Amanda Murphy
Deputy Federal Preservation Officer
Office of Federal Railroad Policy and Development
USDOT Federal Railroad Administration (MS-20)
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590

RE: Amtrak Comments on Washington Union Station Expansion Project Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement

Dear Ms. Murphy:

Amtrak has received the Washington Union Station Expansion Project (SEP) Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement (SDEIS) and commends the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) for reaching this milestone. Amtrak is fully prepared to actively engage and collaborate with Union Station Redevelopment Corporation (USRC), District of Columbia (DC), commuter rail partners, transportation operators in the region, and local and federal agencies.

This is a project of regional and national significance that will provide capacity for anticipated growth along the Northeast Corridor (NEC) and locations south, for decades to come. As the nation's intercity railroad operator, and owner of the NEC right of way, Amtrak can provide leadership for the delivery of new railroad infrastructure –drawing upon our extensive technical knowledge and partnerships with the State of Maryland and the Commonwealth of Virginia as commuter rail operators at Washington Union Station (WUS) - to ensure the SEP meets the rail transportation goals. Amtrak is also equipped to offer insights from the passenger experience to inform WUS modernization plans.

Amtrak appreciates FRA's efforts to incorporate the extensive range of public feedback received during the comment period for the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) released June 2020, into a revised preferred alternative that reflects stakeholder goals. The preferred alternative identified in the SDEIS, Alternative F (Preferred Alternative), reflects not only Amtrak's previous comments that were made in regard to the DEIS but also the diverse stakeholder groups that continue to support improvements at WUS.

We support the reduction in the total number of parking spaces in the Preferred Alternative. The SDEIS plans for between 400 and 550 parking spaces for long-term and short-term parking. WUS is ideally situated in the middle of the District of Columbia (DC) with multiple means of access, and Amtrak encourages our passengers to access our stations, especially in urban areas, via modes of transportation other than single occupancy private vehicles. The Commonwealth of Virginia, in partnership with Amtrak and others, is investing over \$3 billion in rail infrastructure over the next decade. Congestion pricing has recently been introduced on the highways in Northern Virginia in an effort to curtail use of automobiles within the region. The State of Maryland also continues to explore capacity and service improvements for their commuter rail services.

The Preferred Alternative provides a location for bus and pick-up/drop-off facility which maximizes the use of the air rights for future development potential. This is an improvement from the previous alternative, however maintaining bus operations will be difficult during construction due to the east-west orientation and circulation of the bus traffic. FRA and project proponents should coordinate with DC to



explore alternative locations for bus operations during construction of the SEP, as well as a permanent location for long term bus layovers.

Additionally, the SDEIS has a significant amount of mitigation measures that are attributed to the Project Sponsor, - USRC. Amtrak recommends the FRA engage with USRC, Amtrak, and other potential funding partners and stakeholders prior to Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) issuance to ensure that the Project Sponsor has all the necessary resources, staffing and funding required for its success.

The SEP will result in the full reconstruction of all tracks and platforms located at WUS to be compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, as amended (ADA), as well as modern rail standards. This will not only create a more efficient and effective rail terminal but will also provide capacity increases to support the tremendous growth that is planned along Amtrak's NEC and National Network. While the overall number of tracks at WUS will be reduced, SEP will allow for more than double the number of rail passengers and trains that we experience today for both Amtrak and our commuter rail partners. By both lengthening and widening the platforms, operational efficiencies can be captured to accommodate more trains and quicker turn times. Amtrak is also in favor of the proposed Train Hall that would span all tracks and platforms complemented by a central spine, west concourse, and H Street concourse to allow for station users to flow through and access WUS in a more efficient manner.

Amtrak looks forward to a FEIS and Record of Decision that provides enhanced rail and transportation services, facilities, and access at WUS while also fostering a successful urban development above the rail terminal. As a project proponent, we stand ready to continue our work and partnership with FRA and others to ensure the future success of this important and exciting project.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Jeannie Kwon".

Jeannie Kwon

Amtrak

Vice President, Stations, Capital Delivery

Cc: Laura Mason, Amtrak
Dennis Newman, Amtrak
Anna Lynn Smith, Amtrak



July 6, 2023

Amanda Murphy
Deputy Federal Preservation Officer
Office of Federal Railroad Policy and Development
USDOT Federal Railroad Administration (MS-20)
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590

Re: Public Comment to the Washington Union Station Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement (SDEIS)

Dear Ms. Murphy,

The Washington Union Station Expansion Project (Project) presents a critical opportunity for people who bike and walk to enhance not just connectivity to and around the station, but to the region as a whole. An opportunity of this magnitude requires a bold vision, modern and innovative thinking, and dedication to the highest and best standards of planning and design. Importantly, projects of this scope need the full support of key stakeholders in order to garner the political and financial underpinning required to make the project a reality.

The Capital Trails Coalition is aligned with key stakeholders actively supporting efforts to reduce conflicts with vehicles in and around the station, minimize the number of people driving to and from and parking at the station, and create an exceptional multimodal experience that truly enhances and promotes access for all. This Project is of particular interest to the Coalition as the connection along the Metropolitan Branch Trail to Louisiana Avenue to the National Mall represents important connections for the regional trail network, as well as to national trails such as the East Coast Greenway from Maine to Florida.

The Capital Trails Coalition is a collaboration of more than 80 public and private organizations, agencies, and community groups across six jurisdictions, working to complete a nearly 1,000-mile interconnected network of multi-use trails in the National Capital Region. The Coalition's founding members include Rails-to-Trails Conservancy, Washington Area Bicyclist Association, and the National Park Service, and our membership includes Federal City Council and several advisory members, including the District Department of Transportation.

We support Preferred Alternative F as the best design option to move forward and thank FRA for considering comments received through the public comment process. Along with implementing Alternative F, we further encourage FRA to address and mitigate the impact to bicycle and pedestrian safety in the final EIS and final design, including to:

1. Ensure Safe Accommodations for People Walking and Biking During Project Construction

The construction impacts to the First Street NE cycletrack and the Metropolitan Branch Trail on Second Street, propose to close facilities for a combined period of more than five years during Phases 1 and 4. Though the DEIS claims that only a small portion of the eight-mile Metropolitan Branch Trail will be impacted, removing any continuity disrupts the seamless, low-stress option that a multi-use trail should provide to people walking and biking. Thousands of daily users rely on the Metropolitan Branch Trail as a direct route to get to Union Station or to pass by it along their planned route. Any proposed closure or

detour of the Metropolitan Branch Trail or First Street Cycletrack must provide safe accommodations for trail users that offers a comparable level of safety, as required by DC law and DDOT regulations.

2. Upgrade the Metropolitan Branch Trail on the East Side

The regional Metropolitan Branch Trail, which will eventually connect trail users between Union Station and Silver Spring, Maryland and to trails and transit across the region, runs along both First Street, as an in-street protected bike lane, and on Second Street as a sidewalk-level multi-use trail. Since the trail is not yet fully built out, it does not offer seamless connections to the rest of the District's trails and the regional network.

Notably, between G Street NE and K Street NE, the Second Street "trail" exists as a signed route on the sidewalk. Under Alternative F, this area is designated as a pickup, dropoff area on narrow sidewalks, but it does not appear to note the multi-use trail. The trail should be redesigned and rebuilt to modern multi-use trail standards from G to K Streets NE with appropriate design to reduce conflicts in front of the Second Street concourse entrance.

At Columbus Circle, the Metropolitan Branch trail stops just short making useful connections at the bottom of the ramp at F Street near the existing Capital Bikeshare station. This sidewalk space should be redesigned to extend the multi-use trail to connect to Massachusetts Avenue.

3. Address conflicts at the First Street Loading Dock

Under the existing design, the First Street loading dock is located directly behind the two-way protected bike lane on First Street, which serves as a high-volume branch of the regional Metropolitan Branch Trail. Delivery trucks regularly park in or block the protected bike lane and sidewalk rather than use the loading dock, interrupting the otherwise safe, low-stress bicycle route for thousands of daily trail users. This obstruction forces people on bikes using the protected lanes to dismount, climb the curb, and enter the travel lane to get past the obstructing vehicle. This constant conflict puts the most vulnerable road users at risk, and persists as a daily structural reality of commercial operations under the current design.

The protected bike lane/multi-use trail and loading dock should be redesigned to eliminate this conflict point, including by widening the bike lane and adding permanent, substantial mid-lane barriers to prevent entry by motor vehicles. As other loading docks are constructed, the loading docks with less likelihood of user conflict should be prioritized for daily activities.

4. Create Seamless Bicycle Connections for Trail Users at Columbus Circle

The SDEIS notes that the front of Union Station will continue to be the main access point for pedestrians and bicyclists, yet, the proposed roadway reconfiguration is focused on automobile circulation. Not addressing the transportation needs of people on bikes and pedestrians would be a missed opportunity and would leave a permanent hole in DC's low stress bicycle network, leaving gaps in connections to local and regional trails. To access or traverse this space, people who bike need safe, protected infrastructure dedicated for bicycles. To mitigate this negative impact, we call on FRA to:

- Collaborate with DDOT to add a curb-separated protected bike lane on Massachusetts Ave between North Capitol Street to 2nd Street NE,
- Collaborate with DDOT to add a direct, intuitive, and safe bike connection from the 1st Street NE protected bike lane to planned protected bike lanes on E Street NE and Louisiana Avenue, with elements of a protected intersection, and

- Designate a two-way east-west bicycle connection north of the Union Station fountain to directly connect First Street and the F Street Metropolitan Branch Trail that avoids conflicts with vehicle traffic.

5. Provide Secure, Longer-Term Bicycle Parking

The inclusion of secure, accessible bike parking within the station design will encourage more people to consider biking to Union Station. With the planned connections to the bicycle network, bicycling to an intercity train or bus will be convenient, but passengers will need a dependable, secure facility to leave their bicycle behind without concerns about theft. A secure bicycle parking facility should have controlled access, continuous monitoring by staff and video, and be accessible with a step-free, roll-in, access point from either First or Second Street. Additionally, an area should be designated for bicycle assembly/disassembly, including with tools (such as a fix-it stand) to support tourism by bicycle and train.

The Washington Union Station Expansion Project is of critical and significant importance to the region. The Capital Trails Coalition is dedicated to ensuring the success of this Project for regional residents and visitors as we work toward completing the Capital Trail Network. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Kalli Krumpos
Manager, Capital Trails Coalition

**Capitol Hill
Restoration
Society**



VIA E-MAIL

July 6, 2023

Amanda Murphy
Deputy Federal Preservation Officer
Office of Railroad Policy and Development
USDOT Federal Railroad Administration (MS-20)
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590

Re: Washington Union Station Expansion Project:
Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement (SDEIS)

Dear Ms. Murphy,

The Capitol Hill Restoration Society (CHRS) responded to the December 2022 Draft Final Supplemental Assessment of Effects to Historic Properties Report (SAOE) in a letter dated February 6, 2023. In that letter we took exception to the determination of “no adverse effect” to the Capitol Hill Historic District (CHHD).

We continue to believe there is a very high probability of adverse effects to this residential neighborhood by the Federal undertaking, especially regarding vehicular traffic at an expanded Union Station. ANC6C and the National Trust expressed similar concerns. It is critical to understand that the blocks immediately East of Union Station are overwhelmingly residential in nature. Excessive traffic degrades the quality of life of a residential neighborhood in a fundamentally different way than areas dominated by commercial and institutional uses.

The March 2023 SAOE retains a determination of “no adverse effect” to the CHHD despite the contrary assessment of several Consulting Parties. Section 2 “Description of the Preferred Alternative” (and Pages 17 - 21 in particular) describes vehicular circulation around the Station. Section 7.2 of the SAOE (Page

108-109) outlines the Avoidance, Minimization, and Mitigation Strategies. These sections acknowledge the high potential for an adverse effect to the CHHD due to induced traffic and some of the measures the Preferred Alternative proposes to minimize and mitigate these adverse effects.

Nevertheless, the SAOE on Page 21 concludes that “the Preferred Alternative would result in traffic conditions within the Capitol Hill Historic District that are very similar to those that would occur even if the Project was not constructed.” It is impossible to justify that assessment. In addition to the massive Federal and private air rights projects, the 2012 Washington Union Terminal Master Plan envisions a tripling of passengers at WUS (Appendix A, Page 17).

There is more than ample justification to warrant a determination of adverse effect to the Capitol Hill Historic District. We re-state our objection to a determination of “no adverse effect”. Lines 90 through 99 of the Draft Programmatic Agreement (PA) provide little assurance that neighborhood concerns will be given serious attention within a project of this magnitude.

We predict severe congestion along Second Street NE from the addition of a fourth PUDO activity. In the immediate area, PUDO activity for Kaiser Health, Logan School and Station House already have proved to be problematic. We also predict gridlock traffic conditions for the intersection of 3rd and H Streets, NE. At a minimum, the Project Sponsor should be required to engage real-time traffic management that employs GPS or similar navigation technology to direct traffic away from the residential neighborhood. The Programmatic Agreement promises to “coordinate” response to emerging traffic problems among the various involved agencies. However, there appears to be little commitment to traffic mitigation strategies, and no accountable party committed to take action to resolve potential congestion when it inevitably arises, both during and after construction.

We stress that Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act requires stakeholder consultation at all steps of the design process to mitigate adverse effects. The Programmatic Agreement needs to include a process for continued meaningful public oversight by interested parties, including the existing “Consulting Parties”. We support the concerns of the Committee of 100 on the Federal City regarding Section 106.

Finally, we wish to record once again our long-standing objection to restricting the EIS to the Federal undertaking with minimal attention to the H Street Bridge and the Federal and Akridge air rights projects. Had the Union Station project been designed as an integrated whole, a far more engaging project could have been

achieved for the estimated \$8.8 billion cost of the Federal portion alone. For example, restoring H Street to its pre-1970s location below the rail yard would open tremendous design opportunities; construction and cost savings; as well as restore the urban fabric harmed by the bridge approaches. However, this was never given serious consideration. We believe that the Preferred Alternative F cannot be fully implemented as outlined without clear enforceable coordination and commitments from all involved parties.

The placement of passenger waiting areas and related circulation below the rail yard is a sad counterpoint to the grand spaces of the historic station and runs counter to what has been done in numerous, modern European train stations. *It is also likely to be a more costly solution.* For the amount of money and effort required, we can and should do better.

Sincerely,



Angie Schmidt, President
Capitol Hill Restoration Society

cc: Charles Allen, Council Member, Ward 6
Andrew Lewis and David Maloney, DC Office of Historic Preservation
Sara Bronin, Advisory Council on Historic Preservation
Mark Eckenwiler, Chair, ANC6C
Eric Hein, Committee of 100 on the Federal City
Robert Nieweg, National Trust For Historic Preservation

see that incorporated into the revised proposal. Thank you for your time, and we look forward to supporting sustainability and helping Union Station grow.

MR. EDWARDS: Thank you. All right. I just want to say that I have four folks signed up, four remaining folks. I'm going to call them, but if you are interested in making a comment, please hold your hand up, and one of our colleagues will come around and get your name, and we'll add you to the list.

Next, Don Rodriguez.

MR. RODRIGUEZ: Thank you very much. My name is Dan Rodriguez. I'm serving as Vice President of Public Affairs on behalf of Coach USA and its subsidiary, Megabus. I'm also the -- in the position of President of the Bus Association of New Jersey. Together, we bring millions of people on our buses to Washington, D.C.'s Union Station. For many of our passengers, our buses are the most affordable travel option to various locations from New York, New Jersey, Connecticut, and even as far as Boston. Since its inception in 2006, Megabus alone has served over 55 million passengers. Each day, tens of thousands of people continue to rely on our services,

including members of Congress and their families, and countless congressional and federal staffers and employees. They frequently choose our buses to travel to New York or Boston, whether it's for a Broadway show or to visit a friend and family.

However, there are also many individuals who come to Washington, D.C. for various reasons, sometimes for the first visit to our nation's capital. I recently noticed a large number of schoolchildren exploring the city. Additionally, there are hundreds of thousands of visitors who come to witness the cherry blossoms, explore the national landmarks, museums, and, of course, the halls of Congress.

Before the concrete is poured, we ask that we have a written commitment guaranteeing no fewer than 39 permanent and dedicated bus slips on the bus deck, with an additional 15 slips on the flag deck to accommodate increased demand during surge and peak times for authorized operators. We ask that this area be secured and overseen by Union Station --

MR. EDWARDS: One minute.

MR. RODRIGUEZ: -- personnel. When Union

Station was established, it was intended to be an intermodal facility, providing equal access and opportunities for both buses and trains. We sincerely hope that this will continue to be the case, as millions of individuals who rely on our service will not settle for anything less. I appreciate the opportunity to address you today on this significant matter, which is an important issue, not only to Coach USA and Megabus, but the other bus operators who depend on a safe and secure facility for our valued customers. Thank you.

MR. EDWARDS: Thank you. And I apologize for misstating your name.

L. Miller Brooks.

MS. BROOKS: Thank you. Can you hear me? Am I -- I'm going to hold this because of height constraints. All right. Thank you. I'm Laura Miller Brooks, the Director of Transportation and Infrastructure for the Federal City Council, and I'll be providing remarks on behalf of the Federal City Council.

The expansion of Union Station represents the single greatest economic development and transportation opportunity for the District of Columbia and the region

July 5, 2023

Amanda Murphy
Deputy Federal Preservation Officer
Office of Federal Railroad Policy and Development
USDOT Federal Railroad Administration (MS-20)
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590

Re: Comment on the Washington Union Station Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement

Dear Ms. Murphy:

The Coalition for Smarter Growth is a 26-year-old non-profit and our mission is to advocate for walkable, bikeable, inclusive, and transit-oriented communities as the most sustainable and equitable way for the Washington, DC region to grow and provide opportunities for all. The expansion and redesign of Union Station represents one of the most important land use and transportation decision in the DC region in recent memory and is a 100-year decision that we must get right.

Our shared vision must be bold, it must put rail and bus transit, biking, and walking first, and it should turn Union Station into a truly transit-oriented center at the heart of our city. For this reason, we could not support the proposed project outlined in the FRA's Draft EIS (DEIS) Preferred Alternatives A-C in 2020. Since then, the FRA, USRC, and Amtrak have revised the project design to address the concerns we and others raised in 2020. Thank you.

Today, the new project vision defined in the FRA's Supplemental Draft EIS (SDEIS) Preferred Alternative F presents a bold vision for the next century of Union Station's existence and success, and will gain broad public and political support. The revised SDEIS Preferred Alternative includes major improvements we support the FRA including in the Final EIS:

- **Right-sized parking located below-grade:**
We applaud the FRA for reducing the station's reliance on automobiles in the SDEIS by lowering the maximum parking spaces from 1,600 to 550-400 parking spaces. The creation of a centralized below-grade vehicle facility will more effectively support parking, pick-up and drop-off, and rental car demand.
- **Modernized and efficient PUDO (Pick-Up and Drop-Off):**
The centralized PUDO area prioritizes pedestrians and cyclists and maximizes the efficiency of Transportation Network Companies (TNCs) by reducing idling and vehicle miles traveled (VMT)

to and from the station. The SDEIS Preferred Alternative F creates new access points to the station with the creation of below-grade PUDO facilities, reduces congestion in and around Columbus Circle, and increases access to station platforms from PUDO areas for customers.

- **Bus facility better integrated with minimized impacts to the street network:**

The bus facility presented in the SDEIS will enhance multimodal access, and civic and economic opportunities for Union Station and the District. The new design will significantly improve the passenger experience for the projected 3 million intercity bus riders traveling through Union Station annually by 2040. We appreciate the FRA's designation of 38-39 bus slips, 15 additional bus slips for high-capacity events, and the central location of the bus facility in the SDEIS Preferred Alt. F. We fully support maintaining this facility's size and location in the Final EIS.

- **Improved bicycle facilities:**

We applaud the FRA for incorporating bicycle access, bicycle and bike share parking, and programming as important components of the SDEIS Preferred Alternative. We also believe that the SDEIS's proposed plans for parking, PUDO, and the bus facility mitigate unsafe interactions between vehicles and vulnerable road users. We commend the FRA for addressing safety concerns regarding bike lanes and pedestrian zones throughout the construction.

- **Beautiful, fully- integrated urban design:**

The station elements of the SDEIS Preferred Alternative F create a truly world-class multimodal transportation facility. The SDEIS incorporates design elements that support the iconic entry to the station from the north, and open spaces that will serve the public and benefit the neighborhoods that surround the station. By eliminating the above-grade parking facility, the SDEIS enables the development of a vibrant urban environment for both residents and visitors, and ties back together the neighborhoods on the two sides of the station. By making possible significant air rights development the design will help maximize transit ridership and support activities that tie the legal and regulatory center of our nation with our financial center of New York City and all of the other economic hubs along the Northeast and Southeast Corridors.

We strongly support these changes to the SDEIS Preferred Alternative F, and we encourage the FRA to include these important improvements and project elements in the Final EIS. However, some elements of the project remain insufficiently analyzed or not addressed in the SDEIS. We call on the FRA to address the following in the Final EIS to ensure the project's success:

- **Include run-through service for Virginia Railway Express (VRE):**

The SDEIS identifies future service "from" MARC's Penn Line "to" VRE's Fredericksburg and Manassas' lines, but should also explicitly include connecting run-through service for VRE. Providing a one-seat ride from Virginia into Maryland via VRE will further interconnect the region's economy and greatly enhance the quality of life of Virginia's commuters along the I-95 and I-66 corridors.

- **Unify the federal and public air rights to ensure full delivery of public benefits:**

Successfully achieving air rights development is critical to maximizing rail and transit ridership, knitting the city back together in the area north of the station, creating a vibrant and dynamic community, enhancing the value of the station, and expanding the city's tax base. However, the SDEIS Preferred Alternative F lacks critical definition of responsibility and coordination between the private air rights developer Akridge, and the FRA-owned federal air rights development parcel, as specified in the SDEIS. This ambiguity and lack of ownership of the FRA's role in funding and coordinating the deck to support federal and air rights development raise questions about the overall viability of any development and significantly reduces the overall benefits that could be delivered by the SEP. Despite the promise of best-in-class urban design in the SDEIS's images and renderings of Preferred Alternative F, the FRA does not fully articulate or acknowledge the federal government's role in facilitating, funding, and coordinating air rights development. Specifically, it remains unclear what specific measures the FRA is undertaking to overcome the obstacles posed by the fragmented federal and private air rights, which could hinder the area's development.

We also believe that the Final EIS should revise the No-Action Alternative. The current No-Action Alternative includes the development of private air rights but fails to consider the irreversible negative consequences of pursuing this development independently from the SEP. If the air rights development proceeds without the SEP, it will eliminate any opportunity to address the existing accessibility and safety concerns of the station or adequately meet the future rail capacity requirements, possibly rendering these issues unsolvable indefinitely.

- **Clarify and solidify USRC's role as Project Sponsor for effective delivery of the SEP:**

We applaud the FRA for designating USRC as the Project Sponsor of the SEP in the SDEIS. An empowered and well-resourced USRC will ensure there is a single point of authority for taking the SEP through the design and construction of this mega-project. However, to ensure USRC's success in this role, we encourage the FRA to define the Project Area authority that USRC will oversee for the design and construction and to identify the authorities and resources that the FRA and Amtrak will provide to support the effective delivery of the SEP. We believe that the FRA must take these steps to ensure that USRC has the necessary staffing and financial resources to implement the project expeditiously.

Additionally, the SDEIS highlights the need for regional investment in the SEP as a result of the reduced parking revenue to sustain USRC's operations. However, we believe that regardless of the implementation of the SEP, USRC is already unable to rely on parking revenues to sustain operations of the historic station. We encourage the FRA to broaden the rationale for USRC to identify new revenue sources for reasons beyond the loss of parking revenue, and the need for regional investment due to the benefits of expanded rail and bus service facilitated by the SEP.

Once again, we thank the FRA for the work to make the changes in the SDEIS. We hope that the FRA will continue to expedite completion of the environmental review process by issuing a ROD for the SEP by

January 2024. We also hope that the project's anticipated timeline of 13 years can be streamlined and expedited to align with Virginia's historic passenger rail investments in the Transforming Rail in Virginia program, and to address the urgent need to slash greenhouse gas emissions from transportation.

The Washington Union Station project must be a national and regional priority. It is essential for strengthening the rail connections for the Northeast and Southeast rail corridors, supports a unified commuter rail network in the Capital Region, and will provide significant economic, transportation, and job creation benefits for the region. We look forward to the transformation of our Nation's Station into the vibrant multimodal hub we need for the next century.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Stewart Schwartz". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Stewart" being more prominent than the last name "Schwartz".

Stewart Schwartz
Executive Director

The Committee of 100

on the Federal City



Building on 100 Years of Planning Advocacy

Via email to all and via mail to Ms. Murphy

July 6, 2023

Ms. Amanda Murphy
Deputy Federal Preservation Officer
Office of Federal Railroad Policy and Development
USDOT Federal Railroad Administration (MS-20)
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Ms. Murphy:

Enclosed are comments by the Committee of 100 on the Federal City (C100) on the Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement (SDEIS), Draft Programmatic Agreement, and Draft Section 4(f) Evaluation for the Washington Union Station Expansion Project released by the Federal Railroad Administration on May 12. The main comment refers to two Appendices. While they are included in the email transmission, I could not reduce them to page size for the written submission.

As you will see, our response (including the Appendices) is extensive and reflects the comments of subject matter experts here within C100. We stand ready to discuss these comments with the appropriate officials. Please let me know at the email listed below and I will arrange a meeting.

This project is important to the City, the Region and the Nation and we want to help ensure that the solution is the best possible.

Thank you,

Shelly Repp
Chair, Committee of 100 on the Federal City
chair@committeef100.net; 202-494-0948

Cc:
info@WUSstationexpansion.com

Founded 1923

Chair

Shelly Repp

Vice-Chair

Nancy MacWood

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David Marlin

Laura Richards

Andrea Rosen

Lance Salonia

Marilyn Simon

Jim Smailes

Kirby Vining, *ex officio*

945 G Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20001
www.committeef100.net
info@committeef100.net

Cc's continued

pmendelson@dccouncil.us
callen@dccouncil.us
mfrumin@dccouncil.gov
marcel.acosta@ncpc.gov
anita.cozart@dc.gov
andrew.trueblood@dc.gov
Everett.lott@dc.gov
David.Maloney@dc.gov
Anna.chamberlin@dc.gov
richard.jackson2@dc.gov
matthew.flis@ncpc.gov
joseph.jakuta@dc.gov
claskowski@dccouncil.gov
parisa@empowerdc.org
caphrs420@gmail.com
erikmhein@gmail.com
monte.edwards@verizon.net
jasmailes@gmail.com
tluebke@cfa.gov

The Committee of 100

on the Federal City



Comments Concerning the Union Station Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement

July 6, 2023

The Committee of 100 on the Federal City provides these comments concerning the May 12, 2023, Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement (SDEIS) that supplements the June 2020 Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the Washington Union Station Expansion Project. Washington Union Station is a historic national treasure, a potentially powerful economic driver for the city, a critical piece of the nation’s transportation infrastructure, and an indispensable asset to help our region solve our nation’s transportation challenges of the 21st century. These comments, together with the comments of others reveal critical issues that must be addressed to provide a competent, safe, environmentally responsible, and practicable expansion of Union Station that will better serve rail needs beyond 2040. The Committee of 100 has grave concerns about many key aspects of the proposal including (but not limited to) treatment of passenger and commuter rail operations, faulty analysis of environmental emissions and the impacts of those emissions on adjacent neighborhoods, decisions based on out of date and inaccurate data, as well as failure to account for how Amtrak, Mark and VRE plan to operate. We recommend strongly that this process not proceed to its conclusion until these issues are satisfactorily answered or corrected. These are neither minimal nor inconsequential matters and must be resolved before progressing to a Final Environmental Impact Statement.

Executive Summary

The SDEIS assesses a proposed expansion of the Station proposed by Union Station Redevelopment Corporation (USRC) in coordination with National Railroad Passenger Corporation (Amtrak) that would cost \$8.8 billion and require 14 years to build. The SDEIS evaluates substantial and welcomed changes including (among others) restoration of the historic station house, revitalization of the commercial spaces, relocation of the parking garage, a below-grade bus garage, and other changes affecting vehicular transportation as well as bicycle and pedestrian access. However, in terms of rail operations, the proposal falls significantly short because of the SDEIS’ adoption of the outdated 2020 DEIS.¹ Even when this project began, those

¹ SDEIS, App C3S, page 5-10 *Intercity and Commuter Railroad*

“Amtrak, Metropolitan, MARC, and VRE operations in the Preferred Alternative are those described in the *Terminal Infrastructure (TI) Report* (Appendix B of the 2020 DEIS). “

data and projections were outdated and flawed, and now, three years later, are even more so. Consequently, the SDEIS falls short of meeting the projected needs of rail passengers and the project stakeholders. The Committee of 100 has repeatedly emphasized that rail transportation must enjoy “top” priority in any plan for the proposed Union Station Expansion Project. Therefore, major amendments are needed in the SDEIS to meet this goal. The following is a summary of the detailed comments that follow.

A. Data on which DEIS and thus the SDEIS are Based are Significantly Outdated

Many source documents on which the 2020 DEIS relied upon were prepared as early as 2013 and last accessed by Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) in 2017 and not reviewed by FRA in preparing the SDEIS. Thus, the SDEIS reaches its planning projections on faulty and now inaccurate and outdated data. This must be rectified.

B. Passenger Rail Projections Are Understated

MARC, VRE and Amtrak have all projected they will operate more trains and serve more customers. But the SDEIS does not account for these projections.

C. Separation of Passenger and Freight Rail Is Not Acknowledged

Plans have been developed by Amtrak, CXS, MARC, and VRE that will permit far greater volumes of passenger and commuter rail traffic by meeting the long-anticipated goal of not intermixing passenger and commuter rail with freight rail operations. This change in operations is ignored.

D. The Proposed Trackage is Inadequate for Projected Growth

Union Station was built with 33 tracks. In order to accommodate 30-35-foot-wide platforms, the SDEIS calls for 19 tracks. The need for more tracks must be evaluated, as well as whether such wide platforms are required.

E. Thru-Running Commuter Trains is Not Given Priority

MARC thru-running to Virginia and VRE thru-running to Maryland are inadequately addressed. No VRE trains to Maryland are proposed and only 8 MARC trains thru-running to Virginia are addressed. Track constraints on two MARC lines (Brunswick and Camden) largely prevent thru-running to or from those parts of Maryland are ignored. Alternative options that would allow more thru-running should be considered.

F. Planned Passenger Rail South of Union Station is Not Accounted For

The SDEIS assumes that Acela high-speed rail will have dedicated tracks and platforms within Union Station, serving only the north. We recognize that Amtrak has no plans for Acela south of Union Station, but Amtrak is planning to provide higher speed rail south of Union Station in the future. The SDEIS does not address how that will be accommodated within Union Station in terms of platforms and tracks.

G. Environmental Impacts are Seriously Understated.

The environmental impact calculations have such weaknesses as not identifying how the No-Action emission levels were obtained, not considering Construction emissions, and not considering emissions from increased switching use of the Ivy City rail yard (as discussed in section H). Correcting these weaknesses will change the increased nitrogen oxides (NO_x) emissions levels resulting from the expansion project from below the EPA National Ambient Air Quality Standards' Conformity determination threshold to above it.

H. Harmful Diesel Emissions From Switching Operations are Ignored

Operation of the Ivy City Rail Yard is essential to the operations of Union Station. The switcher engines, critical to the “work” of the Station, are outdated and emit twice the harmful emissions of the combined operations of Amtrak, MARC and VRE at Union Station. But this critical issue is not addressed in the SDEIS because FRA wrongly defined the project area to exclude the Ivy City Rail Yard. The emissions from the Ivy City Rail Yard must be included. This critical environmental issue affecting Ivy City, Trinidad, and Gallaudet residents cannot be ignored. It is not separable.

I. Diesel Emissions Under the Proposed Deck are Not Accounted For

Decking over the tracks will result in an enclosed 20-acre “Train Shed”. The resultant train shed will inevitably trap significant levels of concentrated emissions from the diesel locomotives. Those concentrated emissions will affect the area within Union Station, and if fans are used to exhaust the emissions, they will inundate the air-rights development to be built on the deck as well as much of the North of Massachusetts Avenue (NOMA) and Capitol Hill neighborhoods. This must be mitigated and accounted for in the SDEIS.

J. Inadequate Revenue for Union Station Operations is Not Recognized

Currently, the Union Station Redevelopment Corporation provides operations, maintenance and historic preservation of Union Station. The great majority of the revenue to accomplish that comes from the parking garage. But the existing garage will be closed and then demolished resulting in no revenue during construction. And, after construction the revenue from the new, smaller garage - 450 rather than the 1600 parking spaces assumed in the 2020 DEIS— revenue will be greatly reduced. The SDEIS provides no discussion of how to replace this revenue stream.

K. Impacts on Neighborhood Multi-Modal Transportation Will be Adverse

Vehicular traffic flow within the station and the surrounding neighborhood is already poor. As renovations proceed, traffic is expected to get worse. Improving travel conditions are part of the traffic mitigation studies to be coordinated between USRC and DDOT. However, the traffic analysis reveals that several of the surrounding intersections will still experience unacceptable congestion. The Committee of 100 recommends more attention be devoted to traffic congestion, and that mitigation

should begin sooner rather than later. Improvements along North Capitol Street and in Columbus Circle should not be delayed. Continuous traffic monitoring around the station will be needed to identify adjustments at intersections as necessary.

L. Current Plans and Specification are Insufficiently Developed to Assess Project Impacts on the Historic Station and Neighborhood. Stakeholder Consultation Should Be Broadened. While it is agreed that the project will have an adverse impact on the historic station and immediate neighborhood, the details remain so general that effective comments on potential historic preservation impacts are not feasible at this time. To address this, a Programmatic Agreement has been proposed – however most of design process will exclude current stakeholders/consulting parties with decisions limited to signatories. Because so many details of the project are to be deferred to the future, this is wholly unacceptable and does not meet the intent of Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act in that it eliminates meaningful consultation. The Programmatic Agreement should include consultation with stakeholders as a part of the process.

Important Procedural Note

Both the 2020 DEIS and this SDEIS were prepared by the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA). The Committee of 100 and others submitted comments to the FRA critical of how rail operations were treated in the 2020 DEIS.² The FRA did not respond to those comments and now, over three years later, the FRA proposes to not respond to those comments until after this proceeding is concluded and both the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) and the Record of Decision (ROD) are issued.³ Under such procedures, neither the C100 nor others will have an opportunity to respond to how their comments concerning the 2020 DEIS or this SDEIS will be treated in the Final Environmental Impact Statement. The Committee of 100 strongly recommends that the Final Environmental Impact Statement needs to comprehensively address these concerns. We respectfully request that the FRA provide a period of 60 days after issue of the FEIS to allow comments on the FEIS and then allow sufficient time for the FRA to fully respond to those comments in its Record of Decision (ROD) so that the FRA may validly certify, as required by Council on Environmental Quality's National Environmental Policy Act regulations, in the ROD that it considered all of the alternatives, information, and analyses, and objections

² The C100 comments and others, a total of over 100 comments were submitted on September 8, 2020. Because there has been no response to those 2020 comments, some of them are included in these comments, with appropriate updates.

³ SDEIS, page xxi.

“Pursuant to the *Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act* of 2015 (FAST Act), FRA plans to issue a single document consisting of the FEIS and ROD, which contains the Final Section 4(f) Evaluation and the Final PA. The FEIS will respond to all substantive comments received from the public and agencies on both the 2020 DEIS and this SDEIS.”

submitted by public commenters for consideration by the lead and cooperating agencies in developing the FEIS.⁴

Comments Concerning Rail Operations

A. Data on which DEIS and thus the SDEIS are Based are Significantly Outdated

The DEIS references the source documents it relied on in several sections.⁵ But those source documents were prepared as early as 2013 and last accessed by the FRA in 2017 and not reviewed by FRA in preparing the SDEIS. The DEIS' conclusions and, thus, the SDEIS' conclusions are therefore outdated. The DEIS ignores three different plans for the rail system south of Union Station that will affect Union Station operations in the years encompassed by this EIS:

1. The plan that resulted from the December 2019 Agreement between CSX and the Commonwealth of Virginia that the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT) will build, own and operate the new two-track Long Bridge river-crossing as well as substantial CSX trackage in Virginia.⁶
2. The Long Bridge FEIS plans to add a fourth track between the Long Bridge and 12th Street SW (FEIS issued September 2, 2020).
3. The L'Enfant Station Expansion Plan will add a fourth track between 12th Street and the entrance to the First Street Tunnel. It is projected to be completed in 2029.⁷

These three plans will result in the long-sought separation of passenger and freight rail operation south of Union Station. This momentous change in rail operations will transform our rail system into a more modern, efficient and inclusive rail network that will better serve the DC region and

⁴ 40 CFR 1500.3(b)(4).

⁵ Federal Railroad Administration. *NEC FUTURE Tier I Final Environmental Impact Statement*. http://www.necfuture.com/tier1_eis/feis/. Accessed June 6, 2017.
Virginia Railway Express. *2014. System Plan 2040*. <http://www.vre.org/vre/assets/File/2040%20Sys%20Plan%20VRE%20finaltech%20memo%20combined.pdf>. Accessed June 6, 2017.
Maryland Transit Administration. 2013. *MARC Growth and Improvement Plan Update: 2013 to 2050*. https://mta.maryland.gov/sites/default/files/mgip_update_2013-09-13.pdf. Accessed June 6, 2017.

⁶ The Long Bridge EIS ROD states at page 2-1: "It is anticipated that the Project will become the responsibility of the new Virginia Passenger Rail Authority, which formed on July 1, 2020, once that body has the staff capable of administering the Project. Should there be a change in Project sponsorship, the new Project Sponsor will assume DRPT's responsibilities."

⁷ The L'Enfant Station Expansion was originally planned for completion in 2023 (Long Bridge DEIS, page 3-16), but the completion date has been extended to 2029.

the East Coast rail network. But this dramatic change in rail operations is completely ignored in the Union Station SDEIS. In fact, the 2020 DEIS not only ignores that change in operation but states the contrary – that passenger and commuter rail operations south of Union Station will continue to be controlled by CSX (Appendix B, page 23):

The 2040 simulation retains operating variability for trains arriving from the south, given assumed continued ownership and dispatch by freight railroads in the future.
[emphasis added]

This description of rail operations is wrong and the planning projections that result from it grossly understate the number of trains that will operate south of Union Station. The Virginia/DRPT and Long Bridge expansion projects are projected to be completed in five years (Long Bridge FEIS, page 1-7) and the VRE L'Enfant Station expansion by 2029. All three projects will be in service during the 14 years required for the Union Station expansion and must be taken into account in plans for the Union Station Expansion.

B. Passenger Rail Assumptions Are Understated

A foundational element of the Union Station expansion must be anticipating and responding to predicted growth in passenger and commuter rail traffic over the next 17 years and beyond. Accurately forecasting that increase is critical. The estimates of the number of trains found on pages 24-25, Appendix A3, [*Final Concept Development and Evaluation Report*], are broken out among Service Providers (Amtrak, MARC, VRE) and further between Peak Hours and Full Day Totals. These projections are critical—underlying most every future physical and service decision covered by this important document. These numbers must be credible and based on documented data. Such appears not the case in the 2020 DEIS and by incorporation, the SDEIS. (1) Some are thinly sourced, if at all. (2) Those estimates provided are derived from varying projection dates—Amtrak's numbers are derived from *Operating Plans for 2030+* (which purports to project to 2039); MARC projections are based on data applicable only through 2029; and **no** documentable projections for VRE are cited whatsoever. (3) Projections cited in Table 7-1 of Appendix B, [*Terminal Infrastructure Report*] are apparently based on the estimates presented in Appendix A3. However, the 2020 DEIS does not explain how they were determined. Is there an algorithm that is not disclosed in the DEIS? The Table 7-1 projections appear low. There is no logical progression from the projections in Appendix A3 to the projections in Table 7-1 of Appendix B. MARC, VRE, and Amtrak each plan for significant increases in the number of trains at Washington Union Station over the next 20 years. The DEIS's numbers must be credible, well sourced, and within the same time frame. They are not.

C. Separation of Passenger and Freight Rail Is Not Acknowledged

The plans and projects now in progress to separate passenger from freight rail operations south of Union Station will allow a very large increase in the number and frequency of passenger trains because they can operate faster and be spaced more closely if passenger and freight operations are not intermixed and controlled by CSX as is now the case on these SW tracks. New York City's Penn Station illustrates the benefits of separating passenger from freight operations. The track arrangement for Penn Station is similar to DC rail operations south of Union Stations, and like DC's First Street rail tunnels, is served by two tunnels (the North River Tunnels) under the Hudson River. In both cases, there are two tunnels with one rail track in each tunnel, one entering and one exiting the rail stations. The contrast is clear: DC's First Street tunnels now carry a total of about 6 trains per peak hour, under the control and scheduling of CSX,⁸ whereas NYC's North River Tunnels accommodate up to 24 trains per hour in each direction, a total of 48 trains in a peak hour, requiring very precise scheduling and control. This passenger-only operation south of Union Station would allow an eight-fold increase in passenger and commuter rail traffic south of Union Station. It is essential to account for this capacity increase in planning the expansion of Union Station to accommodate trains arriving from and serving the south.

D. The Assumed Trackage is Inadequate for Projected Growth

Because of the significant under-projections based on outdated assumptions and information, the DEIS Preferred Alternative assumes too few tracks – a total of 19 revenue tracks.⁹

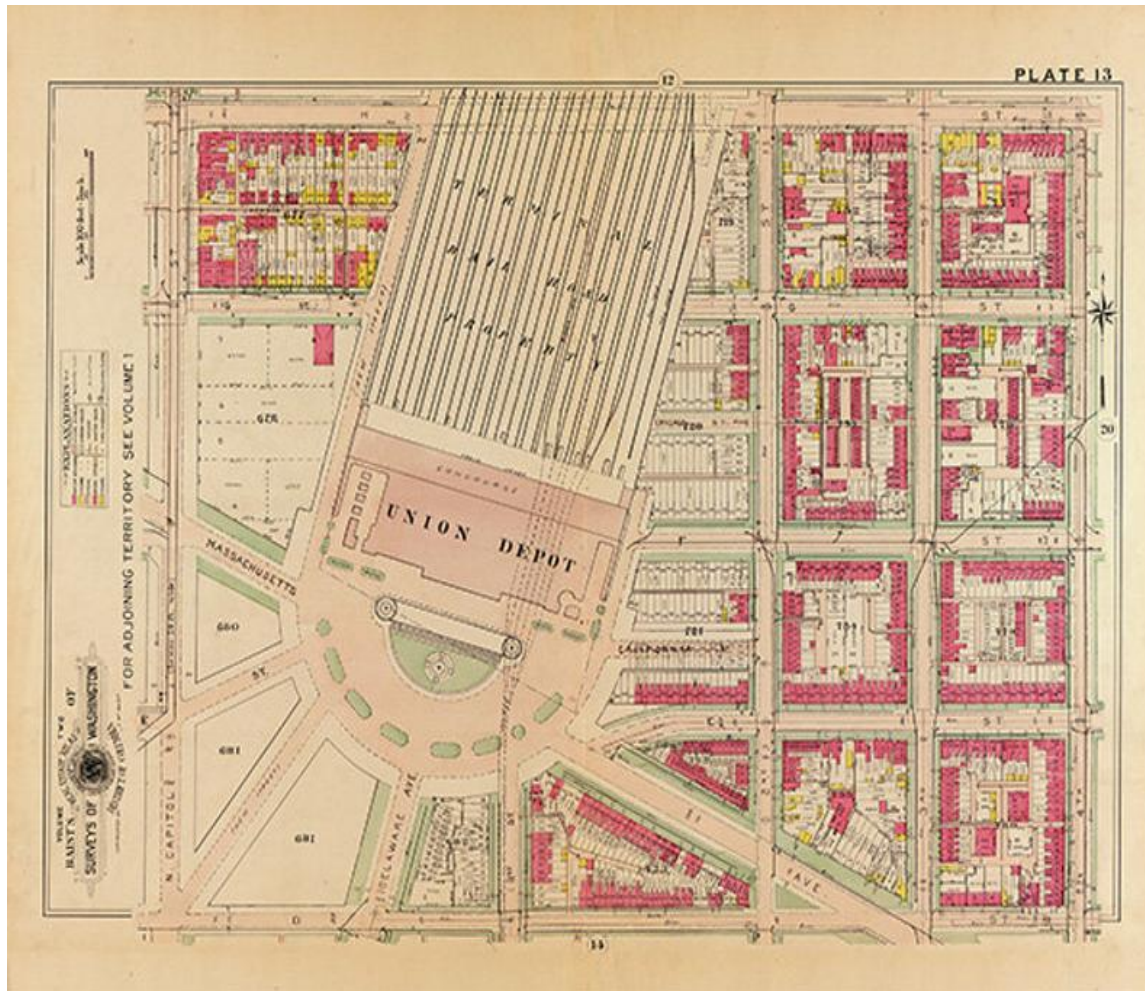
Union Station originally had a total of 33 revenue tracks:¹⁰

- 24 stub-end tracks ran north of Union Station on the upper level
- 9 run-through tracks on the lower level.
- 2 non-revenue tracks that terminate on the lower level that are labeled “mail tracks.”

⁸ As of 2016, during morning and afternoon peaks 6 passenger trains per hour depart or arrive at Union Station for points south. *DC Rail Plan*, page 3-35.

⁹ SDEIS, Chapter 3, page 3-10: “...replace the existing tracks and platforms with 19 new tracks: 12 stub-end tracks on the west side and seven run through tracks on the east side, along with associated platforms.”

¹⁰ *Union Station Historic Preservation Application*, page 8, dated 2012, jointly sponsored by C100 and DC Preservation League.



The DEIS' Preferred Alternative would provide only 19 revenue tracks:

- 12 stub-end tracks serving rail operations north of Union Station
- 7 run-through tracks.¹¹

The reduced number of tracks is, in large measure, determined by the much wider platforms that are proposed. All of the current platforms are less than 20-feet wide, and many are obstructed by columns supporting the parking garage or the H Street Bridge. Widening the platforms to accommodate capacity growth and safety standards requires realigning and re-spacing the station tracks that reduces the number of revenue tracks¹² A key unaddressed issue in the plans, but must the platforms be as wide as 30 to 35 feet?¹³

¹¹ SDEIS, Chapter 3, page 3-10.

¹² 2012 *Union Station Expansion Plan*, page 3.

¹³ DEIS, Appendix A-3a, pages 128-189.

Even Amtrak's *Union Station Master Plan* issued eleven years ago called for more tracks -- 22 -- and estimated that by 2030 those 22 tracks would be at capacity. The plan called for:

- 12 west-side stub tracks (page 13)
- 8 east-side run-through tracks under the First Street tunnel to points south would have to be reconstructed
- 2 new run-through tracks (p. 4 and 10) that by 2030 were estimated to be at capacity
- 6 - 9 new additional below grade tracks after 2030 to serve new rail operations north of Union Station.¹⁴

The DEIS eliminated the 2 proposed run-thru tracks and the 6-9 additional tracks proposed to accommodate new rail service ¹⁵

Amtrak's *Union Station Master Plan* was issued in 2012. But by now, eleven years later, Amtrak, VRE and MARC have developed expansion plans that would greatly increase the number of trains and the number of rail passengers using Union Station, including plans for high speed rail south of Union Station.¹⁶ The State of Virginia and VRE have recently acquired over 100 miles of CSX track, and will pay for, own and control the new Long Bridge Potomac River rail crossing, construct a new fourth track in SW and thru-run its trains through Union Station into Maryland. Likewise, MARC plans to run its trains into Virginia.¹⁷

¹⁴ 2012 *Union Station Master Plan*, page 13:

“Demand for rail services will rise to the level where the practical capacity of these facilities is reached. This could happen as early as 2030, depending on the pace of growth and investment in overall rail system capacity. To provide for this future capacity the Master Plan allows for the development of a new lower level of tracks and platforms in a zone beneath the west side stub tracks that can be excavated to create six additional station tracks (or up to nine if needed for additional capacity).

* * *

The lower track level would be connected to the Northeast Corridor main line by means of a bored tunnel from Union Station northeast to the vicinity of the Anacostia River.”

¹⁵ 2020 DEIS, page ES-9: “The nine eliminated preliminary concepts included below-grade tracks [the 2012 Union Station Master Plan proposed these below-grade tracks would be located in the area below the west-side stub tracks] that Amtrak determined it did not need to meet its operational requirements.”

¹⁶ The Record of Decision for *Southeast High Speed Rail Washington, DC to Richmond Virginia*, issued September 5, 2019. Note that while the DC to Richmond High Speed rail plan included Washington, DC in its title, it in fact ended at the south end of the Long Bridge and did not address the Long Bridge or how to get to Union Station. (http://dc2rvrail.com/files/3115/6803/2848/DC2RVA_ROD_05Sept2019.pdf). The Long Bridge FEIS resolves that discontinuity. On the Virginia side, the new two-track bridge would “tie into the four tracks at RO Interlocking proposed by the concurrent DC to Richmond Southeast High-Speed Rail (DC2RVA) project.” (ROD at page 2-7). This high-speed rail plan for Virginia is connected to the SW tracks that serve Union Station, but high-speed rail south of Union Station is assumed to not exist in the Union Station DEIS.

E. Thru-Running Commuter Trains are Not Given Priority

For a number of years, MARC and VRE discussed the benefits of thru-running VRE trains to Maryland and MARC trains to Virginia.¹⁸ The Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments, Transportation Planning Board (TPB) issued a 2020 report prepared by Foursquare,¹⁹ that run-through rail service would have a positive impact on the labor pool by expanding access both for businesses and employees²⁰ and could alleviate capacity issues on Metrorail as well as issues with crowding and congestion on platforms at Union Station and other busy transfer points.²¹ The Foursquare Report further concluded that a substantial number of people travel each day in each direction between the MARC and VRE service areas, and in the future, the potential for run-thru trips will increase considerably.²²

The DEIS and the SDEIS pay little attention to the critical thru-running commuter trains issue that will greatly increase the number of trains going through Union Station and reduce the need for MARC and VRE to find mid-day parking for their trains until they are needed for the evening rush-hour. It assumes that no VRE trains will thru-run when, in fact, VRE trains currently thru-run through Union Station to reach the Ivy City train yard where they are parked during mid-day, until their return to service for the afternoon/evening commute back to Virginia. VRE awaits only an agreement with Amtrak and MARC to thru-run to Maryland, and once that is accomplished, the VRE ridership using Union Station will increase substantially.

The DEIS assumes that only 8 of the MARC's 57 daily Penn Line trains will thru run to Virginia,²³ and that no trains from MARC's Brunswick or Camden Lines will thru run. The reason for not including trains from the Brunswick and Camden Lines is apparently because the DEIS does not assume any modification of the Brunswick and Camden line tracks coming into

¹⁷ High speed rail south of Union Station will be further enhanced by the recent announcement to extend high speed rail from Richmond to Raleigh. <https://www.usnews.com/news/best-states/virginia/articles/2020-09-21/grant-to-help-north-carolina-buy-rail-for-high-speed-service>.

¹⁸ In May 2014, MARC and VRE announced they are planning a true regional rail partnership to thru-run MARC to L'Enfant Station and on to Virginia and to extend VRE from Union Station into Maryland. <http://www.nbcwashington.com/news/local/MARC-VRE-Discuss-Regional-Rail-Partnership-259457971.html>.

¹⁹ *Market Assessment and Technical Considerations for VRE-MARC Run-Through Service in the National Capital Region*, Foursquare Integrated Transportation Planning, June 2020.

²⁰ Nearly three-quarters of the District's workforce commutes from outside the District while one-third of the District's residents reverse commute to jobs outside the District (DC State Rail Plan, page 4-2).

²¹ Foursquare Report, page 13.

²² *Id.*, page 42. Also, MARC is now developing a plan, scheduled to issue in July of this year, that will expand ridership on its Brunswick Line by 50%: <https://www.mta.maryland.gov/marc-brunswick-study>

²³ Eight MARC trains is the same number used for the early Long Bridge expansion studies that FRA adopts for this Union Station FEIS with no discussion or analysis.

Union Station. Only the Penn Line has direct access to the First Street Tunnel. The connecting thru-running tracks are practically inaccessible to MARC’s Brunswick Line and to a lesser extent, the MARC Camden Line because of the current track configuration. For Brunswick and Camden Line trains to access the 1st Street Tunnel, trains must traverse the entirety of Union Station’s “throat” from west to east over multiple interlockings.

MARC Service Area



The Committee of 100 recommends that the DEIS be expanded to evaluate how to reconfigure the Brunswick and Camden tracks so they can access the First Street Tunnel. Reconfiguration not only could permit Brunswick and Camden trains to thru-run to Virginia, but also would allow VRE trains to thru-run to substantial parts of Maryland. Because the Camden and Brunswick lines are owned by CSX, catenaries are prohibited, and the MARC trains on those lines use diesel locomotives. VRE will likely not convert from diesel to electric locomotives for some time. Thus, in terms of thru-running, the Brunswick and Camden trains could thru-run to Virginia and VRE could thru-run to serve College Park, Silver Spring, Rockville, Frederick, and farther west.

F. Planned Passenger Rail South of Union Station is Not Accounted For

The upper-level stub-end tracks (Tracks 7-20) are used by MARC and by Amtrak’s Acela Express, Northeast Regional, Vermonter, and Capitol Limited trains (DEIS, Chapter 2, page 2-5).

The DEIS states that at least four (4) tracks must have 1200-foot platforms for future Acela HSR service (including future growth).²⁴

The 2012 *Union Station Master Plan* (page 13):

“...provides that future tracks from the lower level of Union Station could be extended to the south, enabling extension of high-performance high-speed rail service to Virginia, North Carolina, and the Southeastern United States.”

High speed rail south of Union Station is not discussed or even acknowledged in the DEIS nor does it address efficiencies and greatly increased numbers of passenger and commuter trains that will result from separating passenger and freight operations south of Union Station. But it does take into account operational efficiencies and more frequent train service for passenger and commuter trains operating north, on the Northeast Corridor.²⁵ The DEIS recognizes the efficiencies of controlling the rail tracks north of Union Station for passenger operations (rather than inter-mixed passenger/freight operations) but does not recognize those efficiencies for tracks south of Union Station.

The Committee of 100 (as is likely the entire East Coast) is keenly interested in higher-speed, high-performance rail south of Union Station – not Acela high speed -- but higher speed than is now available south of Union Station. The C100 recognizes that Acela high speed is not possible south of Union Station in the foreseeable future, in large part because of the expense of electrification, the cost of new rolling stock, the need for curve and realignment improvements and other track improvements, the need to provide by-passes to avoid conflicts with freight operations, and other track upgrades. But with the recent actions of the state of Virginia and VRE to acquire over 100 miles of CSX tracks and build, own, and control a new Potomac River rail bridge, the track upgrades to accommodate higher-performance higher-speed rail will be practicable in the future and must be anticipated. And the higher speed can be achieved with the new Siemens ALC-42E dual powered locomotives that Amtrak will acquire for use on the NE Corridor (see subpart I) – they will provide the higher speed rolling stock. Thus, higher speed rail will be possible and likely south of Union Station in the future.

The Committee of 100 is concerned that plans for the expansion of Union Station, and the SDEIS, fail to address how this higher-speed high-performance rail south of Union Station will be accommodated in the track and platform configurations within Union Station.

²⁴ 2020 DEIS, Appendix A-3, page 24.

²⁵ 2020 DEIS, Appendix B, page 23: “The 2040 simulation retains operating variability for trains arriving from the south, given assumed continued ownership and dispatch by freight railroads in the future. In contrast, the 2040 simulation assumes much more reliable operation for trains arriving from the north, given the significant NEC reliability investments represented by NEC FUTURE” [emphasis added].

G. Environmental Impacts are Seriously Understated.

Throughout the SDEIS, the change in emissions is computed as:

$$\begin{aligned} & \text{Preferred-Alternative emissions} \\ & \text{minus} \\ & \text{No-Action Alternative emissions} \\ & \text{Equals: Change in emissions} \end{aligned}$$

Change in emissions is then compared to a threshold air quality standard to reach the conclusion that there is minimal or no adverse effect. This is the wrong way to look at the issue, as it is the actual, rather than the incremental emissions, that will be experienced. But the SDEIS uses the incremental change to determine whether the emissions exceed the *de minimis* air quality thresholds. Appendix C3S- Supplemental Environmental Consequences Technical Report, page 6-5 shows:

Table 6-1. Preferred Alternative Mesoscale Inventory

Source	CO	NO _x	VOC	PM ₁₀	PM _{2.5}
	tpy	tpy	tpy	tpy	tpy
Motor Vehicle Emissions	67.7	4.4	34.8	4.5	0.9
Locomotive Emissions	29.8	61.4	2.0	1.0	1.0
Total Preferred Alternative Emissions	97.5	65.8	36.8	5.6	1.9
No-Action Emissions	78.4	30.6	35.4	5.1	1.3
Net Change in Emissions attributable to the Preferred Alternative¹	19.1	35.2	1.4	0.5	0.6
De Minimis Threshold²	-	100	50	-	-

1. Calculated by subtracting total No-Action Alternative emissions from total Preferred Alternative emissions.

2. Applicable only to NO_x and VOC.

In the above table, the Motor Vehicle and Locomotive emissions for NO_x under the Preferred Alternative are combined, resulting the total Preferred Alternative emission level of 65.8 tons per year (tpy), shown on the third line. The fourth line of the tables shows the No-Action Emissions level of 30.6 tpy that is subtracted from the Preferred Alternative emissions level to obtain the Net Change shown on the 5th line. But how the No-Action emission levels were obtained is not explained. This same methodology is applied to VOC and the Net Changes in each are then compared to the *de minimis* threshold levels for NO_x and VOC, and because it is lower, the SDEIS concludes (Appendix C3S, page 6-5):

For both NO_x and VOC, the net increase attributable to the Preferred Alternative (35.2 tons per year [tpy] of NO_x and 1.4 tpy of VOC) is below the applicable *de minimis* threshold (100 tpy and 50 tpy, respectively), indicating that the proposed Federal activity would not cause new violations of the NAAQS, increase the frequency or severity of NAAQS violations, or delay timely attainment of the NAAQS or any interim milestone. Therefore, adverse indirect impacts on ambient air quality would be minor.

This incremental increase is combined with the estimated emissions that will occur during the 14 years of construction.²⁶ In the case of NO_x, this results in 97.9 tpy. Because this total is below the *de minimis* level of 100, the SDEIS concludes that the Preferred Alternative would not cause any violation of the NAAQS.

Arithmetically this is correct, but it is the total of direct and indirect NO_x emissions area caused by the Federal action that must be considered:²⁷ for NO_x this would be 65.8 tpy for the Preferred Alternative from Table 6.1 plus the 62.7 tpy for the Construction emissions from Table 6-4, amounting to 128.5 tpy. This would exceed the NAAQ threshold level of 100 tpy - the *de minimis* air quality threshold for NO_x would be exceeded.

Further, the combination of Preferred Alternative NO_x emissions (65.8 tpy from Table 6-1) plus the Construction NO_x emissions (62.7 tpy from table 6-4) do not include the total effect of the expansion. As explained in subpart H of these comments, the switch engine operations at the Ivy City Rail Yard are essential to the operation of Union Station and need to be taken in account in evaluating the proposed expansion of Union Station. The most recent quantification of the NO_x emission at the Ivy City rail yard (Appendix B, attached to these C100 comments) amount to 112 tpy. If, as discussed in section H of these comments, the use of the Ivy City Rail Yard will likely double under the Preferred Alternative, then, assuming that NO_x emission from the rail yard will, proportionally, double, the incremental NO_x emissions from the yard would be 112 tpy. Combining the Ivy City NO_x emissions increment (112 tpy) with the SDEIS' stated project Total Preferred Alternative NO_x emissions increment (97.9 tpy) means that the NO_x emissions would be as high as over 201 tpy - far exceeding the NAAQ air quality NO_x threshold of 100 tpy. . A refinement of the Ivy City Rail Yard calculation would compare the Yard's usage (and, hence, proportionally, NO_x emissions) under the Preferred Alternative to the Rail Yard's use under the No-Action Alternative. With the emissions increment not considering the Rail Yard being just 2.1 tpy below the NAAQS threshold, an increase in Rail Yard usage of just 1.9% (= 2.1 / 112) or more under the Preferred Alternative, a highly likely outcome, would result in the project's exceeding the NO_x threshold. The FRA should conduct such a detailed analysis in revising its SDEIS and adjust its conclusions accordingly.

²⁶ SDEIS, Appendix C3S, page 6-8.

Table 6-4. Combined Annual Operational and Construction NO_x and VOC Emissions

Component	NO _x	VOC
	tpy	tpy
Construction Emissions	62.7	7.7
Maximum Net Change in Annual Operational Emissions attributable to the Preferred Alternative	< 35.2	< 1.4
Maximum Combined Preferred Alternative Operational and Construction Emissions	< 97.9	< 9.1
<i>De Minimis</i> Thresholds	100	50

²⁷ [40 CFR 93.153\(b\)](#)

A similar analysis of the carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions is based on Table 7-5 of SDEIS Appendix C3S, below, and its associated narrative in Section 7.5.2.5, Summary of CO₂ Emission Estimates, as well as the narratives in Section 7.7.1.1, GHG (greenhouse gases) Emissions, (within Section 7.7, Avoidance, Minimization, and Mitigation Evaluation, within Section 7 Greenhouse Gas Emissions and Resilience), and in Section 8.7, Avoidance, Minimization, and Mitigation Evaluation (within Section 8, Energy Resources).

Table 7-5. Total Estimated Changes in Annual CO₂ Emissions in the Preferred Alternative

Source	CO ₂ Emissions (Metric Tons/Year)	Percentage of 2019 Total Inventory	Percentage of 2032 Target
Stationary Sources -WUS	9,791	0.14%	0.21%
Stationary Sources -WUS	-6,859	0.1%	0.15%
Potential Federal Air Rights Development	3,661	0.05%	0.08%
Mobile Sources	9,247	0.13%	0.20%
Total Additional Emissions	15,840	0.22%	0.34%
Total Emissions No-Action Alternative	70,846 ¹³⁹	0.99%	1.54%
Increase relative to No-Action Alternative	22%	-	-

As the SDEIS table notes, the Preferred Alternative is estimated to yield a 22% increase in CO₂ emissions compared to the No-Action Alternative; representing about a quarter to a third of a percent of the District's CO₂ emissions inventories in 2019 and 2032, respectively. While the relative inventory increases may be numerically modest, they must be viewed in light of the District's related Carbon Free DC²⁸ and Clean Energy DC²⁹ plans that, together, set carbon neutrality as a goal to be met just five years after the 2040 planning horizon year for the Union Station Expansion. C100 concurs with the SDEIS Appendix Section 7.5.2.5's note that, "In this context, any net increase in CO₂ emissions would be a major adverse impact."

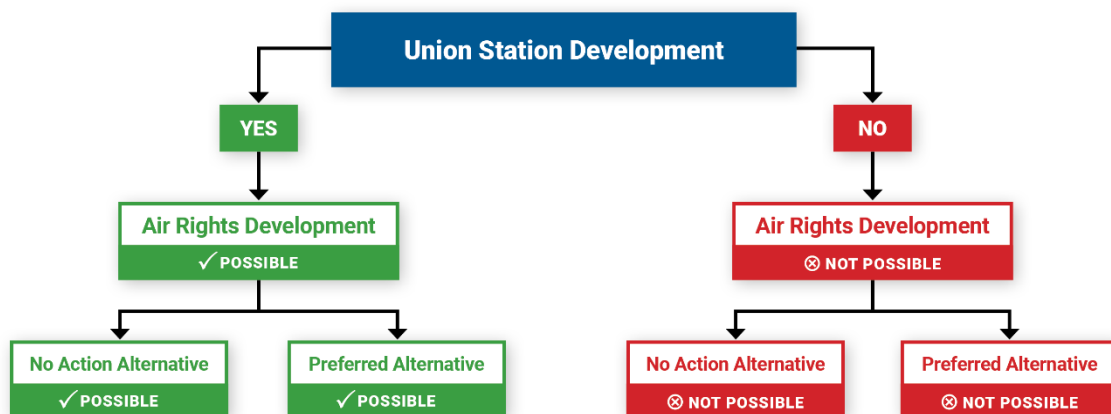
Accordingly, C100 supports the FRA's proposal that the USRC prepare a Life Cycle Assessment of the project's total GHG emissions and identify measures and strategies to reduce energy consumption and associated GHG as much as possible, using measures described in Section 8.7 and as appropriate, other such measures.

It should be remembered that, to build the Air-Rights development, a deck is needed above the rail tracks. Supporting the deck requires multiple support columns, the placement of which requires a defined configuration of rail tracks. In turn, the configuration of the new rail tracks requires the design and construction of the Union Station Expansion. In other words, **unless**

²⁸ <https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/034104405ef9462f8e02a49f2bd84fd9>

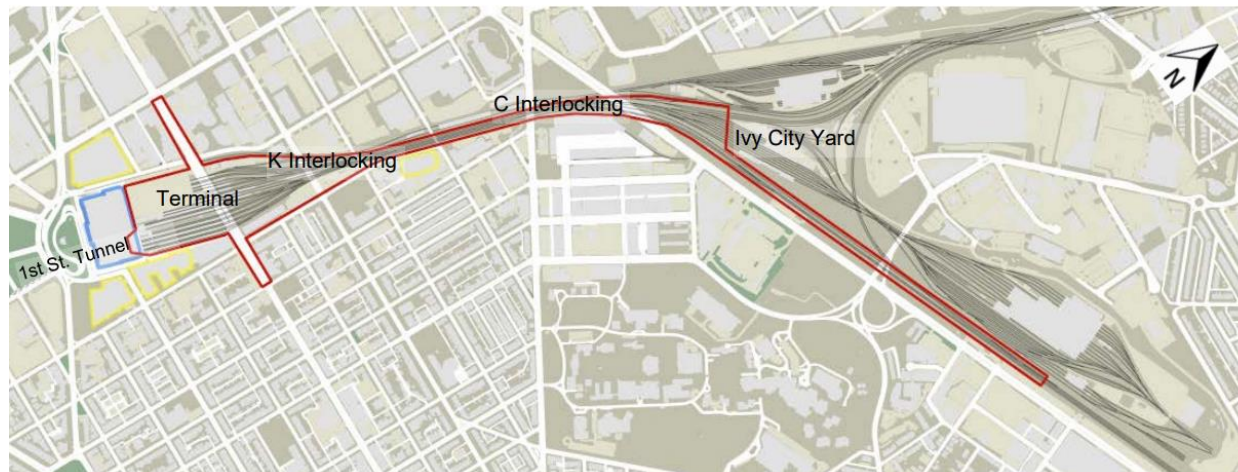
²⁹ <https://doee.dc.gov/cleanenergydc>

there is a Union Station Expansion, there can be no Air Rights development, as illustrated in the following flowchart.



H. Harmful Diesel Emission From Switching Operations are Ignored

The Ivy City tracks are adjacent to New York Avenue. On the other side of New York Avenue are the Crummell School at Kendall and Gallaudet Streets, NE that is planned to be redeveloped³⁰ and residential developments such as the Ivy City Hecht Warehouse at 1401 New York Avenue, NE.³¹

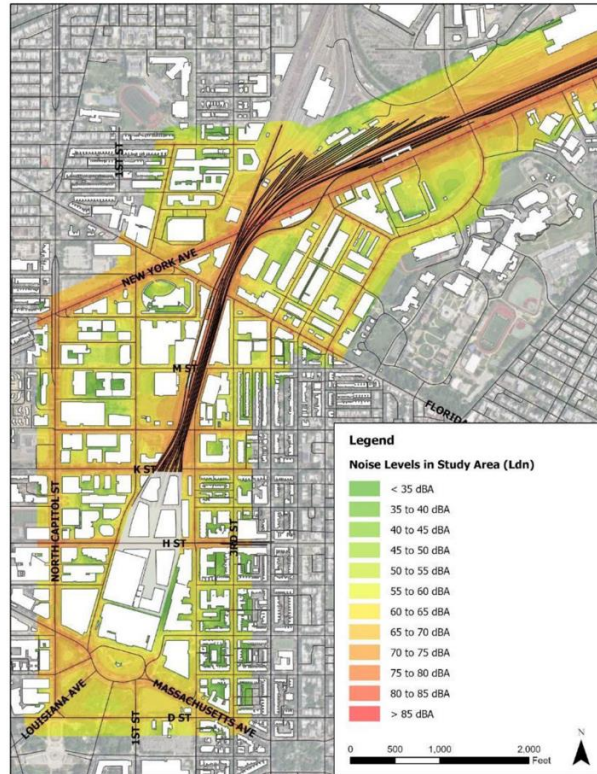


³⁰ DMPED is seeking proposals to redevelop Crummell School that, if implemented, would increase the number of people at the Crummell School site, who would be affected by air quality. [Mayor Bowser Hosts Annual March Madness | DC](#) (2021) - mentions Crummell School redevelopment. [Alexander Crummell School - Wikipedia](#)

³¹ Hecht Warehouse at Ivy City apartments are already open. <https://hechtwarehouse.com/> [Hecht Warehouse at Ivy City is a pet-friendly apartment community in Washington, DC](#)

The 2020 DEIS acknowledges expansion of the Ivy City Rail Yard (Exhibit B, page 10), and the SDEIS includes noise and vibration emanating from the Ivy City Rail Yard (Chapter 5, page 5-70).

Figure 5-3. Preferred Alternative Operational Noise Levels



However, air pollution from diesel switchers is **not** included. Logically, this air pollution must be included. Noise and vibration end when the source is switched off, but air pollution persists and spreads. In its rules on power plant emissions EPA recognizes that polluted air moves from its source and uses a 3-mile radius to measure effects.³² See EPA, Clean Air Power Programs, *Power Plants and Neighboring Communities*, [Power Plants and Neighboring Communities | US EPA](#). Certainly, the polluted air emanating from the nearby Ivy City Rail Yard must be included in an environmental impact analysis. DC's Department of Environment and Energy (DOEE) has quantified the diesel emissions that result from switching and moving trail equipment to, from, and within the Ivy City Rail Yard,³³ the total emissions from switching is 10,024.7 tons per year.

³² The three-mile radius dispersal area is for polluted air from power plants, with generally tall smoke stacks that result in wide dispersal areas. For the Ivy City Rail Yard, the dispersal area would be smaller, but would in all likelihood encompass the surrounding area at least as far as Ivy City, Trinidad,

³³ DOEE's Excel spread sheets entitled "Ivy City Switcher Engine Emission COG" is included as Appendix A to these C100 comments.

Emissions (tpy) from Diesel Switching at Ivy City Rail Yard

<u>Pollutant</u>	<u>IvyCity-Amt</u>	<u>IvyCity-Mrc</u>	<u>IvyCity-Vre</u>	<u>Switching</u>
CO	14.1	9.7	3.0	26.8
CO ₂	5,142.8	3,622.4	1,112.8	9,878.0
NO _x	62.2	38.9	11.9	112
VOC	4.1	2.9	0.9	7.9

The main reason for the high level of emissions from the Ivy City Rail Yard is due to the fact that most of the nine switcher engines are old (five of them are 1950's models). Because of the challenges in starting the diesel engines and the need for warm-up prior to use, the switchers are started in the morning and idle all day. Most importantly, there is no discussion of what will happen to switching operations at Ivy City Rail Yard in 2030 and beyond when passenger and commuter rail operations are projected to more than double. *Appendix B fails to explain that diesel emissions from switcher activity will also likely more than double by 2030.*

DC's Department of Environment and Energy (DOEE) has also quantified the diesel emissions that result from the operation of Amtrak, MARC and VRE within Washington, DC,³⁴ the total emissions from diesel locomotive operations is 4,868.7 tons per year.

Emissions (tpy) from Diesel Locomotive Operations

<u>Pollutant</u>	<u>Amtrak</u>	<u>Marc+VRE</u>	<u>Operations</u>
CO	3.7	8.9	12.6
CO ₂	1411.3	3380.4	4791.7
NO _x	21.6	40.1	61.7
VOC	1.1	1.6	2.7

The plan to expand Ivy City Rail Yard to accommodate more VRE trains is described at page 10 of Appendix B of the 2020 Union Station DEIS.³⁵ The Appendix B description acknowledges the expansion is due to Amtrak needing to use rail yard space that has been leased by VRE. The

³⁴ DOEE's Excel spread sheets entitled "2020 Draft NEI DC Rail Inventory Summary" that provides the basis for the above table is attached to these comments as Appendix B. This is the DOEE report to NEI, the [National Emissions Inventory](#), prepared under the *Air Emissions Reporting Rule*. The report is done every three years. 2020 is the most current; it is marked draft because the 2020 NEI has not yet been published. The term "CSX Yard" refers to the Benning rail yard. Class I Line Haul represent the CSX emissions from CSX trains traveling from the Long Bridge, across SW, thru the Virginia Avenue Tunnel and on to the Benning Rail Yard and thus they do not pass through the Union Station train shed.

³⁵https://railroads.dot.gov/sites/fra.dot.gov/files/202006/Appendix%20B_Terminal%20Infrastructure%20Report_WUSDEIS_pdfa.pdf.

expansion to accommodate VRE is immediately adjacent to New York Avenue (where the Circus Train used to park). There is no discussion of what will happen to switching operations at Ivy City Rail Yard in 2030 and beyond when passenger and commuter rail operations at Union Station are projected to more than double. Appendix B fails to explain that diesel emissions from switcher activity will also likely more than double.

Recall that the Crummell School space was recently proposed to be used for tour bus parking. Under the plan, passengers on carriers such as *Boltbus* and *Megabus* would be picked up and dropped off at Union Station, but the buses would idle in Ivy City until needed. Largely because of citizen outrage and opposition to the diesel emissions that the tour buses would produce, *Empower DC*, an activist group, filed a lawsuit on behalf of Ivy City residents. In rejecting the bus depot proposal, the judge expressed concern over the city's apparent failure to conduct an environmental impact assessment, in an area where people enjoy sitting on their porches and many residents suffer from respiratory problems.³⁶ This is the same community that is on the other side of New York Avenue from the Ivy City Rail Yard.

It is essential that FRA learn from the Ivy City court ruling forbidding location of the bus depot adjacent to the Crummell School in Ivy City due to environmental impacts. If diesel emissions from buses are a concern, why aren't diesel emissions from trains (that are expected to more than double with the Union Station expansion) a concern? And why doesn't that concern warrant a meaningful discussion in the Union Station Infrastructure report?³⁷ Diesel emissions from switching operations amounted to over 10,000 tons of pollutants per year in 2017 (more recent information is not currently available). That discussion should also address why diesel locomotives are being used for switching when Ivy City has electric catenaries that could power electric switching engines.³⁸ And battery powered switch engines that do not require electric catenaries are now in use in other rail yards.³⁹

Appendix B, the Infrastructure Report of the November 2020 Washington Union Station DEIS, needs to be redone to competently address:

- Diesel emissions from increased activity at the Ivy City Rail Yard.
- Environmental benefits of using electric switchers at Ivy City Rail Yard.

³⁶ https://www.washingtonpost.com/national/health-science/ivy-city-tired-of-being-a-dc-dumping-ground-takes-on-gray-over-bus-depot/2012/08/12/7442e968-d804-11e1-b8ce-16e9caa8b86a_story.html "Crummel School." Wikipedia; Internet; accessed 30 Sept. 2022.

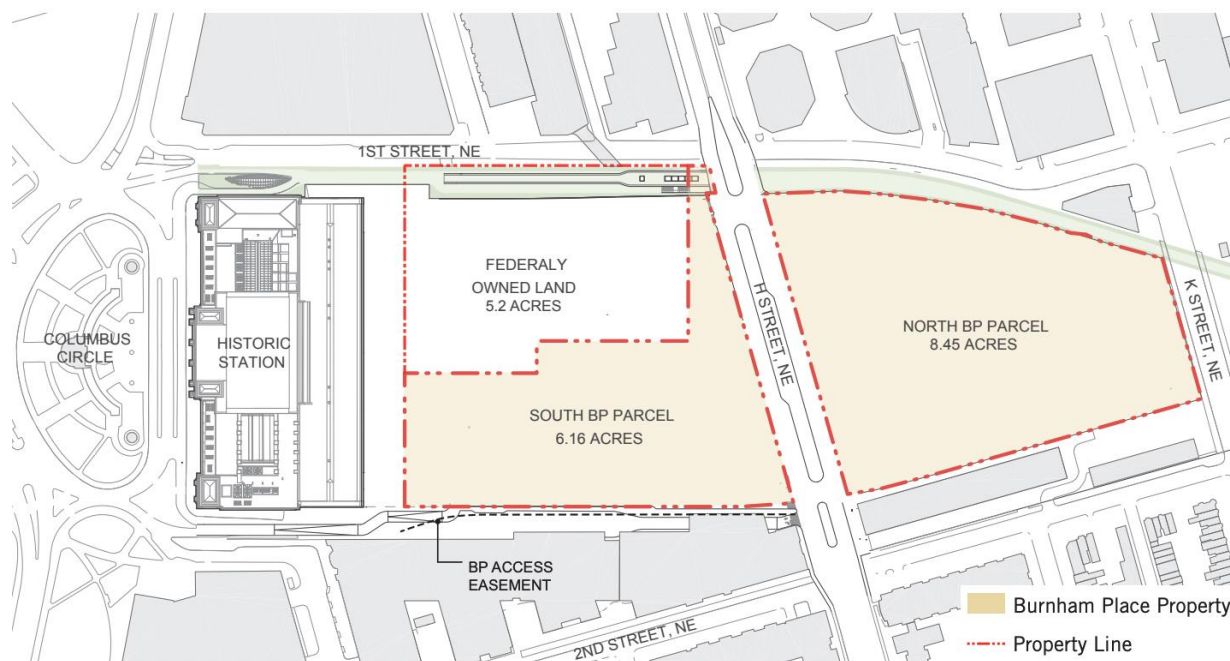
³⁷ Appendix B – Washington Union Station, Infrastructure DEIS Report, November 2019

³⁸ <https://electrek.co/2022/01/31/union-pacific-buys-ten-more-all-electric-locomotives-this-time-from-caterpillar-inc-s-progress-rail-investing-over-100-million-in-total/>

³⁹ Audi's factory in Ingolstadt, Germany is now using plug-in electric switching engines that recharge while at rest and run for up to 2 hours on its battery power. autoevolution.com/news/audi-unveils-plug-in-hybrid-diesel-locomotive-to-be-used-in-ingolstadt-101547.html

I. Diesel Emissions Under the Proposed Deck are Not Accounted For

The Union Station Expansion will consist of decking over the tracks, extending north from Union Station, as far as K Street which, added to the current tracks under Union Station, results in a 20+-acre trainshed:



The 2012 design for the train shed required separation of the tracks for diesel and electric locomotive and provided for “heavily ventilated quarters” for the diesel locomotives.⁴⁰

But the 2019 DEIS abandoned this design, without explanation, stating:⁴¹

A decision was made not to designate specific platform tracks for use by specific service, and there will be no distinction between passenger trains powered by diesel locomotives and those powered by electric locomotives. Early version of the Terminal configuration showed barriers or walls between the designated platform berths of trains using electric and diesel locomotives. The purpose of this barrier was to provide a means of isolating and ventilating the diesel exhaust, separating them from the remainder of the Terminal

⁴⁰ When announced in 2012, the HOK-designed train shed doubled the train capacity of Union Station and planned to separate diesel from electric train operations, stating: “The new train shed will house electric-powered trains, with diesel engines relegated to their own, more heavily ventilated, quarters beneath the station.” https://www.architectmagazine.com/design/on-the-boards/amtrak-unveils-hoks-design-for-washington-d-c-s-union-station_o

⁴¹ **5.2.2.1 Separation of Diesel and Electric locomotives.** Appendix B – Washington Union Station Terminal, Infrastructure ERIS Report, November 2019

that berthed electric powered trains. This can be shown in many of the superseded Terminal configurations (for example, between tracks #4 and #5 in Option 1).

The reason for abandoning this design is not explained. Nationally, diesel locomotives emit millions of tons of carbon dioxide annually and produce air pollution that leads to \$6.5 billion in health costs nationwide, resulting in an estimated 1,000 premature deaths each year. These deaths and adverse health impacts disproportionately affect communities that are located near rail yards and railways.⁴² The greenhouse emissions that produce that pollution are more concentrated in enclosed structure such as train stations, train sheds and train tunnels.

Penn Station, the main rail station in New York City and the busiest transportation facility in the Western Hemisphere, is located below street level. Due to the lack of proper ventilation in the tunnels and station, only electric locomotives and dual-mode locomotives operating on electric power are allowed to enter Penn Station.⁴³

The new Frederic Douglas Tunnel in Baltimore was redesigned in response to neighborhood protests that plans to replace the Baltimore and Potomac Tunnel with a new tunnel would result in air pollution from an exhaust shaft near a school and residential area.⁴⁴ In response to those concerns, a new tunnel will be built exclusively for electrified passenger rail service. It will accommodate Amtrak trains as well as all MARC Penn Line commuter trains, which will be electric powered.⁴⁵ This will preclude the need for a ventilation facility for harmful diesel train emissions on the edge of a residential neighborhood.⁴⁶

The Preferred Alternative design in the current SDEIS for is a 20-acre enclosed train shed with exhaust fans to ventilate the space below the Akridge deck and the expanded train station

⁴² <https://newscenter.lbl.gov/2021/11/23/big-batteries-on-wheels-can-deliver-zero-emissions-rail-while-securing-the-grid/>

⁴³ *National Transportation Safety Board Docket Management System*. February 22, 2016. p. 209.

⁴⁴ Protesters rally against proposed Baltimore and Potomac Tunnel Project diesel vent outside elementary school – Baltimore Sun, Sep 04, 2018 <https://www.baltimoresun.com/maryland/baltimore-city/bs-md-ci-amtrak-tunnel-replacement-20180904-story.html>

⁴⁵ Amtrak and MARC propose to use Siemens ALC-42E dual-powered locomotives on the NE Corridor. They consist of an ALC-42 diesel-electric locomotive with an auxiliary power vehicle (APV) that contains a pantograph and transformers. On electrified tracks, the APV will draw power from overhead lines which will be fed to the traction motors in the locomotive. Outside electrified territory, the ALC-42E will function as a typical diesel-electric locomotive.

⁴⁶ The result will be that all Amtrak and MARC trains on the Penn line entering Union Station from the north will be electric powered. Page 3-29 of the 2020 Long Bridge EIS shows 44 Amtrak trains and 8 or more MARC trains would pass through Union Station and on to the SW tracks and new Long Bridge by 2040.

(SDEIS, App. C3S, page 5).⁴⁷ The fans would need to exhaust 30,000 cfm of concentrated diesel exhausts into the air rights development that will be built on the deck as well as much of the NoMa and Capitol Hill communities. If diesel exhaust from the Baltimore and Potomac Tunnel were so harmful and objectionable to the surrounding community that they required the design of a new electric-only tunnel, why should diesel exhausts from the 20-acre train shed be allowed to inundate the NoMa and Capitol Hill communities?

J. Inadequate Revenue for Union Station Operations is Not Recognized

Monthly car parkers currently provide much of the income for the operations, maintenance and historic preservation of Union Station. Parking revenue sustains the Station's economic viability and supports USRC's continued preservation and use of the historic building (2020 DEIS, Appendix A6, pages 2-3):

Parking at WUS provides more than 70 percent of USRC's operating revenue. It supports station retail, office, and event uses, which facilitate the operation of the station as part of the retail lease agreement and contribute to WUS's civic role as a vibrant public space and visitor destination.

Parking revenue is used for the preservation and rehabilitation of the historic station building. As a major reliable source of revenue, parking is needed for the continuation of station preservation and operation activities.

Further, the 2014 Audit Report concerning Union Station, prepared by DOT's Office of Inspector General, explained that (page 2):

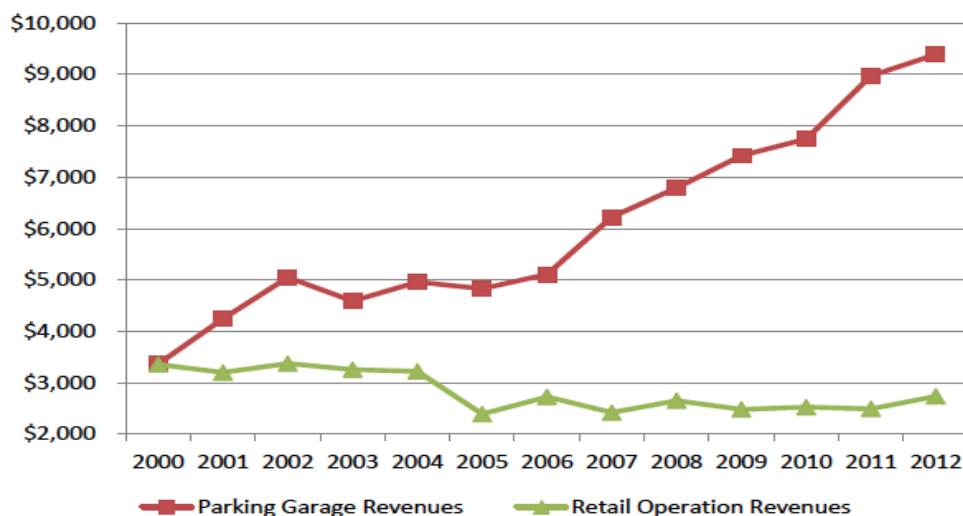
DOT and FRA have relied on USRC to effectively manage Union Station. However, USRC has not adequately planned for Union Station's future.

And the principal reason for this inadequacy is the fact that USRC has relied primarily on revenue from the parking garage to support its operation (2014 Audit Report, page 10):

While revenues from garage operations have increased, revenues from commercial operations have decreased over the past few years. Specifically, between fiscal years 2000 and 2012, parking revenues increased from \$3.4 million to \$9.4 million, while commercial operations revenues decreased from \$3.4 million to \$2.7 million (see Figure 1).

⁴⁷ The decking of those spaces covers over 20-acres and will be 70 feet high - a volume of (20 acres x 43,560 sq ft/acre x 70 ft high) = 61 million cubic feet. Three air change per hour would mean that the fans would have a total capacity of over three million cfm. For comparison Eastern Market's South Hall, with a volume of 544,00 cubic feet, uses roof-mounted exhaust fans that have a combined capacity of about 30,000 cfm to achieve 3 air changes per hour. Eastern Market requires 38 rooftop fans to accomplish this. If Union Station uses the same size exhaust fans, about 100 fans would be required.

Figure 1. Parking and Retail Revenues for Fiscal Years 2000 Through 2012, in thousands of dollars



The C100 supports the need for USRC to have a reliable source of income for its operations, maintenance and historic preservation activities. In the near term, no parking revenue will be available once the extant parking garage is demolished and for several years thereafter during the 14-year period of track realignment and deck construction.

A plan is needed for how to provide an alternative to parking revenue for USRC to continue to operate and maintain Union Station during the 14-year period the expansion is underway. Since the USRC is designated the Project Manager for the 14-year expansion – will the payment to USRC for serving as Project Manager also include a payment for USRC’s management and operation of Union Station?

In the future, parking revenue will be reduced once a smaller garage is built, but there will be about 80,000 square feet of new retail space that is estimated to produce \$8.2 -10.1 million annually (2020 DEIS, Appendix C – *Supporting Retail Information for Concept Development*, page C-10). After the Union Station expansion is complete, will USRC be able to use rental from the new retail space that for its operation, maintenance and historic preservation or will it be necessary to negotiate a new master lease with Ashkenazy Acquisition Corporation (or its successor)? It may be time to investigate charging train operators for use of the station as airports charge airlines.

Comments Concerning Non-Rail (WMATA, Streetcar, Bicycle, Pedestrian, and Bus and Vehicle) Transportation

Introduction

Overall, the analysis of transportation impacts on the preferred alternative for Union Station has been very thorough and the mitigation measures proposed are reasonable and reflect the need to continually monitor traffic in the vicinity of the station and make adjustments at intersections as necessary. Traffic flow within the station and the surrounding neighborhood is already poor, with significant delays and congestion throughout the day. As the renovation project proceeds, traffic is expected to get worse. Efforts to improve travel conditions are part of the traffic mitigation studies to be coordinated between USRC and DDOT. Specific comments on various areas are addressed below.

Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) Metrorail: Metrorail ridership during peak hours is already significant, with platform crowding during peak periods. The analysis projects that by 2040 demand for Metrorail service will exceed capacity during both the AM and PM peaks, causing even more crowding. The new concourses will improve horizontal circulation, but vertical circulation could become a major problem.

Mitigation measure No. 14, Table 7-1, proposes a new WMATA Station Access and Capacity Study to identify necessary improvements not developed by the Concourse Modernization Project. The Committee of 100 would encourage this study be done concurrently with the design for the Concourse Modernization Project to save time and money and to prevent problems in hampering vertical circulation created by the concourse modernization.

The next mitigation item, No. 15, refers to USRC engaging with WMATA about the proposed new core line, referred to as “Blue-Orange-Silver.” Nothing is explained about this, but according to news reports, this new tunnel would bring Metro’s Blue, Orange, and Silver lines to service Union Station. If this project proves viable, it will take many years and several billion dollars to build. The potential alignment for this new tunnel will need to account for and avoid the deep pile foundations (at least 150 feet) required for the new station concourses.

DC Streetcar: This section is confusing. Section 5.5.1.3 of the SDEIS states that the “Preferred Alternative would increase the passenger volumes *departing* from WUS by 361 in the westbound direction in the AM peak, and 44 in the PM peak.” But the Streetcar terminates at Union Station on the H Street Bridge just east of the existing parking garage. Is there a westbound *departure* demand to be met? The Streetcar can only move eastward from Union Station. [Italics added]

Intercity, Tour/Charter and Sightseeing Buses: A new bus facility will be built adjacent to the train hall and above the train level. An extensive study that examined six new bus stations has produced a design with 38-39 slips, their use optimized by using “dynamic management”, with 10 to 15 more slips available on the upper deck when needed, resulting in a facility significantly more functional and versatile than the existing bus facility. Entrance to the new bus facility will

be at the new east intersection on H Street NE. Exiting would be via the new west intersection, which is projected to experience LOS F during peak periods.

Bicycles: The overview of comments from the 2020 DEIS, Section 3.1, stated that improved pedestrian and bicycle connectivity would be an important part of a successful design. The four locations proposed for secured and covered bicycle parking (totaling 900 spaces), shown in Figure S-12, with two Capital Bikeshare stations (totaling 100 spaces) should satisfy those comments. Bicycle ramps, some shared with pedestrians, will provide additional connections from the front of the station to the deck levels and H Street. A large Bikeshare station on the east side of Columbus Circle, along the road to F Street, is not mentioned in the SDEIS. Will part of it remain after a pick up and drop off area for two vehicles is added?

Several of the specific recommendations for bicycles, such as providing protected bike lanes or paths, have been completed on many streets around the station since 2020, including the Greenway proposed for First Street NE. However, in some cases, the protective measures used have created obstacles for vehicles, causing delays.

Pedestrians: The need for additional pedestrian entrances on both the east and west sides of the station was apparent long before the proposed renovations. The new east and west entrances into the H Street Concourse, and entrances from H Street NE, should satisfy the comments in Section 3.1 of the 2020 DEIS. In addition, a pedestrian ramp (shared with bicycles) and a second bicycle ramp will connect the front of the station and First Street NE to the deck-level and H Street, helping to reduce congestion inside the historic station.

Internally, the additional concourses and widened walkways should provide sufficient carrying capacity, minimizing congestion except for the busiest peak period events. The vertical circulation must be improved as described before.

Outside, enlarging the plazas and consolidating the pedestrian crossings is a good idea that will help minimize conflicts with vehicles as volumes of both increase. Pedestrian queues at nearby crossings or pick up points will increase but should remain manageable. Overall, the proposed improvements should be able to safely satisfy the demand.

Vehicle Parking and Rental Cars: A new, single level, below-grade facility will be built for parking with a pick up and drop off zone under the train hall. This new pick up and drop off location is expected to handle approximately half of the demand, reducing the demand on Columbus Circle. The total number of parking spaces to be provided, up to 550, is below the parking demand calculated in the analysis, but is the maximum that can be located on one level. There are a number of buildings with parking lots on First Street NE that might be used, but no details are presented.

For rental cars, about 100 spaces will be reserved in the parking area. This is significantly below the demand estimate of 230, and lower than what is available presently. The rental companies will be left to develop off-site management schemes for the fewer spaces that will be available.

For Hire Vehicles: Five locations have been designated for passenger pick-up and drop-off. This should reduce considerably the congestion at the front of WUS and provide flexibility for passengers to access their trains or buses or to be picked up after arrival. The entrance for vehicles to the upper deck at the west intersection of the H Street Bridge will experience Level of Service (LOS) F during both AM and PM peak hours.

LOS is a qualitative measure of driving comfort and convenience, including speed, cost, traffic interruptions, and other factors. LOS A has practically no traffic. LOS C is considered the capacity of a street or intersection; any delays are minor. LOS F has very heavy traffic, significant delays, and may be gridlocked. Efforts to improve this condition and at the other intersections around Union Station are part of the traffic mitigation studies being coordinated between USRC and DDOT.

Automobile and Bus Traffic: Traffic conditions entering Union Station from Massachusetts Avenue NE, from H Street NE, as well as in the surrounding neighborhood are already poor, with traffic delays common during the day, not just during peak periods. Traffic approaching the station from the east on H Street NE suffers due to the mix of auto, bus, and the Streetcar when it changes lanes to go up the slope of the H Street Bridge to its terminus just east of the existing parking garage. Approaching traffic from the west queues up to turn right into the parking garage at both AM and PM peak hours which contributes to Level of Service (LOS) F at North Capitol Street and H Street NE. Ten intersections in the immediate area will suffer with LOS F during the AM peak (six are on North Capitol Street), and nine during the PM peak. The traffic analysis explains the significant increase in AM and PM volumes and the new distribution of traffic within the immediate area of the station. The intersection analysis describes the degradation of service to LOS F at six intersections, while service would improve at three intersections. The results are presented in Figure 5-2 and Table 5-17.

However, Table 5-17, the Summary of Traffic Impacts, is incomplete. Figure 5-2, the Levels of Service at Peak Hour, is a map of the area that shows the LOS for most of the intersections in the immediate neighborhood out to North Capitol Street and New York Avenue NE. Eleven intersections are omitted from the summary table without explanation, although they all have LOS of A, B or C. For example, Intersection Number 11 appears to be the ramp down to the underground parking but is not identified in the text. All of the intersections shown in Figure 5-2 should be listed in Table 5-17.

For city and commuter buses, some delays are expected to increase. The analysis shows that even though ridership is expected to increase, many city and commuter buses are estimated to continue operating under capacity. However, eight Metrobus routes would be over capacity, and overcrowding would get worse. With the additional traffic and increased delays, monitoring and adjusting intersection signal timing will become even more important.

As part of the intersection analysis that will be done as the project progresses, will the DDOT analyses consider Flexible Progressive Systems to manage the traffic signals at intersections along the major roads near Union Station?

The DDOT Bus Priority Program is examining various treatments to improve service, including bus only lanes, for North Capitol Street, H Street NE/NW, and Massachusetts Avenue NE/NW. Other strategies include modifying the bus routes to attract more ridership while reducing congestion on major streets.

Under the North Capitol Street Corridor Study (<https://north-capitol-st-dcgis.hub.arcgis.com/#project-overview>), existing conditions are being evaluated between Massachusetts Avenue and Missouri Avenue NW. Changes to pavement markings and improved signage for the North Capitol Street and Massachusetts Avenue NE/NW intersection have been proposed and are being evaluated. The final proposals should be implemented as soon as practical.

A signal and mobility study for the southern portion of the Study Area, at Louisiana Avenue and North Capitol Street is underway. The additional intersections along North Capitol Street to K Street should be added to this study since all of the intersections suffer with LOS F during peak periods.

Adjusting signal timing and other modifications at First and K Streets NE, North Capitol and G Street, and other intersections are presented in Chapter 7, Table 7-1, Mitigation Measures, item #28 and should be done as soon as practicable.

Comments Concerning Historic Preservation

Historic Preservation Plans are Insufficiently Developed: The draft supplemental DEIS appropriately acknowledges the adverse effects to cultural resources as a result of the preferred alternative. These adverse effects include physical effects to the historic Union Station itself and to surrounding related structures, as well as substantial visual effects. To comply with the requirements of Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, FRA is coordinating the review of these impacts upon historic properties as a part of the NEPA process – requiring the completion of a Programmatic Agreement to be included in the final Record of Decision. A proposed draft of that Programmatic Agreement was provided as a part of the Supplemental DEIS for comment.

Key to the Section 106 process is consultation with stakeholders. Although in this case consultation has been taking place for several years, because of the very conceptual nature of the expansion proposal, that consultation to determine the impact on historic properties and to mitigate adverse effects has only been able to be focused upon extremely general function and massing studies. A series of white box building and function envelopes on a diagram, therefore, are the only technical documents that consulting parties have been able to comment upon. Design, however, which is an integral part of evaluating the actual effects to a historic property, has not even been developed yet and is, instead, deferred to the Programmatic Agreement for “signatories” to consult upon at a future date.

Broaden Stakeholder Consultation: While we understand the need to defer consultation on design, we strongly object to this being limited only to the signatories of the Programmatic Agreement. Integral to the Section 106 process is stakeholder consultation. Reserving the right to comment upon the design only to signatories, therefore, does not in any way meet the spirit of meaningful consultation required under Section 106. This Programmatic Agreement should be altered to include stakeholder/consulting party participation throughout the design process

Mitigating adverse effects to historic properties is also a requirement of Section 106. The form that mitigation can take is essentially infinite – it can include a wide variety of strategies. Proposed in the Programmatic Agreement is, however, rather mundane mitigation including photo documentation, architectural salvage, and signage. In our view, given the potential adverse effects, mitigation should take a more direct form and include strategies to improve the historic station itself. The State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) has suggested, for example, restoring natural light to the skylights in the historic concourse, improving the east and west terminations of the current retail concourse, or restoring the historic fountains in Columbus Plaza. All of these measures are much more meaningful and more directly would account for and properly mitigate adverse effects to the historic station.

These more direct mitigation strategies, in our view, take on even more meaning given the current state of affairs at the historic station. The consultation process began in what amounts to essentially a different era. Pre-COVID, the historic station house was a vibrant, albeit exceedingly retail enterprise. Today, countless storefronts and restaurant spaces are empty and the “landlord” has filed bankruptcy. We are concerned that this expansion project, which would substantially expand foot traffic to the rear of the station into a new structure, will exacerbate a decrease in use and foot-traffic to the historic station that needs to be examined now as an additional new adverse effect.

Conclusion

The rail projects now in progress that affect Union Station are projected to be completed well within the 2040-time horizon of this project. Those projects, together with thru-running of commuter trains and separation of passenger/commuter rail from freight rail south of Union Station will greatly increase the number of trains that will need to access Union Station. Substantial revisions to the Preferred Alternative and the SDEIS are required to adequately address increases in future rail operations and the environmental impact of those operations.

The Committee of 100 respectfully requests that the Federal Rail Administration provide a period of 60 days after issue of the Final Environmental Impact Statement to allow comments on the FEIS and to then an additional period of time in order to evaluate and take those comments

into account in its Record of Decision so that the FRA may validly certify, as required by Council on Environmental Quality's National Environmental Policy Act regulations, in the ROD that it considered all of the alternatives, information, and analyses, and objections submitted by public commenters for consideration by the lead and cooperating agencies in developing the FEIS.⁴⁸

Respectfully submitted,



Shelly Repp, Chair
The Committee of 100 on the Federal City
Chair@Committeeof100.net

⁴⁸ 40 CFR 1500.3(b)(4).

SO2

1gram = 2.20E-03 lbs

Table 1 - Line-Haul Emission Factors (g/bhp-hr)

		PM-10	HC	Nox	CO
	UNCONTROLLED	0.32	0.48	13.00	1.28
1973 - 1992	TIER 0	0.32	0.48	8.60	1.28
	TIER 0+	0.20	0.30	7.20	1.28
1993 - 2004	TIER 1	0.32	0.47	6.70	1.28
	TIER 1+	0.20	0.29	6.70	1.28
2005 - 2011	TIER 2	0.18	0.26	4.95	1.28
2012 - 2014	TIER 2+ & TIER 3	0.08	0.13	4.95	1.28
2015 or later	TIER 4	0.015	0.04	1.00	1.28

(+) INDICATES THAT THESE ARE THE REVISED STANDARDS IN 40 CFR PART 1033

Table 1 - Line-Haul Emission Factors (g/gal)

		PM-10	HC	Nox	CO
	UNCONTROLLED	6.66	9.98	270.40	26.62
1973 - 1992	TIER 0	6.66	9.98	178.88	26.62
	TIER 0+	4.16	6.24	149.76	26.62
1993 - 2004	TIER 1	6.66	9.78	139.36	26.62
	TIER 1+	4.16	6.03	139.36	26.62
2005 - 2011	TIER 2	3.74	5.41	102.96	26.62
2012 - 2014	TIER 2+ & TIER 3	1.66	2.70	102.96	26.62
2015 or later	TIER 4	0.31	0.83	20.80	26.62

(+) INDICATES THAT THESE ARE THE REVISED STANDARDS IN 40 CFR PART 1033

Table 1 - Line-Haul Emission Factors (lb./gal)

		PM-10	HC	Nox	CO	PM-2.5	SO2
	UNCONTROLLED	0.0147	0.0220	0.5961	0.0587	0.0142	0.0345
1973 - 1992	TIER 0	0.0147	0.0220	0.3944	0.0587	0.0142	
	TIER 0+	0.0092	0.0138	0.3302	0.0587	0.0089	
1993 - 2004	TIER 1	0.0147	0.0216	0.3072	0.0587	0.0142	
	TIER 1+	0.0092	0.0133	0.3072	0.0587	0.0089	
2005 - 2011	TIER 2	0.0083	0.0119	0.2270	0.0587	0.0080	
2012 - 2014	TIER 2+ & TIER 3	0.0037	0.0060	0.2270	0.0587	0.0036	
2015 or later	TIER 4	0.0007	0.0018	0.0459	0.0587	0.0007	

(+) INDICATES THAT THESE ARE THE REVISED STANDARDS IN 40 CFR PART 1033

Table 1 - Line-Haul CE

PM-10	HC	Nox	CO	PM-2.5	VOC	SO2
56.43%	53.93%	57.84%	-4.48%	56.43%	56.78%	99.71%

CE = (UNCONTROLLED - CONTROLLED) / UNCONTROLLED

Table 2 - Switch Emission Factors (g/bhp-hr)

		PM-10	HC	Nox	CO
	UNCONTROLLED	0.44	1.01	17.40	1.83
1973 - 2001	TIER 0	0.44	1.01	12.60	1.83
	TIER 0+	0.23	0.57	10.60	1.83
2002 - 2004	TIER 1	0.43	1.01	9.90	1.83
	TIER 1+	0.23	0.57	9.90	1.83
2005 - 2010	TIER 2	0.19	0.51	7.30	1.83
	TIER 2+	0.11	0.26	7.30	1.83
2011 - 2014	TIER 3	0.08	0.26	4.50	1.83
2015 or later	TIER 4	0.015	0.08	1.00	1.83

(+) INDICATES THAT THESE ARE THE REVISED STANDARDS IN 40 CFR PART 1033

Table 2 - Switch Emission Factors (g/gal)

		PM-10	HC	Nox	CO
	UNCONTROLLED	6.69	15.35	264.48	27.82
1973 - 2001	TIER 0	6.69	15.35	191.52	27.82
	TIER 0+	3.50	8.66	161.12	27.82
2002 - 2004	TIER 1	6.54	15.35	150.48	27.82
	TIER 1+	3.50	8.66	150.48	27.82
2005 - 2010	TIER 2	2.89	7.75	110.96	27.82
	TIER 2+	1.67	3.95	110.96	27.82
2011 - 2014	TIER 3	1.22	3.95	68.40	27.82
2015 or later	TIER 4	0.23	1.22	15.20	27.82

(+) INDICATES THAT THESE ARE THE REVISED STANDARDS IN 40 CFR PART 1033

Table 2 - Switch Emission Factors (lb./gal)

		PM-10	HC	Nox	CO	PM-2.5	SO2
	UNCONTROLLED	0.0147	0.0338	0.5831	0.0613	0.0143	0.0345
1973 - 2001	TIER 0	0.0147	0.0338	0.4222	0.0613	0.0143	
	TIER 0+	0.0077	0.0191	0.3552	0.0613	0.0075	
2002 - 2004	TIER 1	0.0144	0.0338	0.3318	0.0613	0.0140	
	TIER 1+	0.0077	0.0191	0.3318	0.0613	0.0075	
2005 - 2010	TIER 2	0.0064	0.0171	0.2446	0.0613	0.0062	
	TIER 2+	0.0037	0.0087	0.2446	0.0613	0.0036	
2011 - 2014	TIER 3	0.0027	0.0087	0.1508	0.0613	0.0026	
2015 or later	TIER 4	0.0005	0.0027	0.0335	0.0613	0.0005	

(+) INDICATES THAT THESE ARE THE REVISED STANDARDS IN 40 CFR PART 1033

Table 2 - Switch CE

PM-10	HC	Nox	CO	PM-2.5	VOC	SO2
32.72%	23.14%	22.11%	0.00%	32.72%	24.36%	99.71%

Table 3 Conversion Factors (bhp-hr/gal)	
Locomotive Applicati	EFs
Line-Haul / Passenge	20.80
Small Line-Haul	18.20
Switching	15.20

July 6, 2023 -- C100 Comments on Union Station Expansion -- Appendix A

Tier	Unit #	Old Unit #	Mfg.	Model #	Original Manufacture Year	Year Re-Built ^a	Mfg Re-Build	Model #	Remarks
0	533		Electro Motive Division of GM	MP1500	1975				
NA	541		Electro Motive Division of GM	SW1500	1973				Rarely Used
NA	569		Electro Motive Division of GM	SW1000	1973				Rarely Used
4	597	797	Electro Motive Division of GM	SW1000M	1956	2015	National	2GS12B-R (GenSet)	
4	599	799	Electro Motive Division of GM		1952	2014	National	2GS12B-R (GenSet)	
0	737		Electro Motive Division of GM	SW-1	2006				Overhauled, but still uncontrolled engine
Unc	792		Electro Motive Division of GM	SW1000	1952				At NRE for Re-Build after 2017
Unc	793	Not Renumbered	Electro Motive Division of GM	SW1000M	1952	2018	National	2GS12B-R (GenSet)	
Unc	794		Electro Motive Division of GM	SW1000M	1950				
Unc	796		Electro Motive Division of GM	SW1000M	1952				
Unc	798		Electro Motive Division of GM	SW1000M	1952				At NRE for Re-Build after 2017

As of 2017

Original/Rebuild Year of Manufacture	Tier Levels	# of Engines
1972 or earlier	Uncontrolled	5
1973-2001	Tier 0	2
2002-2004	Tier 1	0
2005-2010	Tier 2	0
2011-2014	Tier 3	0
2015 or later	Tier 4	2
		9

Emissions Factors (g/gal)				Emissions Factors (tons/gal)			Total Emissions (tpd)		
HC	VOC	NOx	CO	VOC	NOx	CO	VOC	NOx	CO
15.35	16.17	264.48	27.82	0.000018	0.00029	0.00003	0.006	0.100	0.011
15.35	16.17	191.52	27.82	0.000018	0.00021	0.00003	0.002	0.029	0.004
15.35	16.17	150.48	27.82	0.000018	0.00017	0.00003	0.000	0.000	0.000
7.75	8.16	110.96	27.82	0.000009	0.00012	0.00003	0.000	0.000	0.000
3.95	4.16	68.40	27.82	0.000005	0.00008	0.00003	0.000	0.000	0.000
1.22	1.28	15.20	27.82	0.000001	0.00002	0.00003	0.000	0.001	0.003
							0.01	0.13	0.02

* HC to VOC Conversion factor = HC*1.053 (Page 4, EPA-420-F-09-025, April 2009)

* Engines currently at NRE for rebuild are expected to be Tier 4 compliant and are included in calculations accordingly

^a Re-Built refers to Engine replacement. Engines already replaced and currently in process of being replaced at NRE are all Tier 4 compliant.

Conversion factor: grams/ton 907184.74

Fuel consumed (gal)	Per year	Per day
Engines 2013 or older	25000	68.5
Engines 2014 or later	15000	41.1

July 6, 2023 -- C100 Comments on Union Station Expansior

Amtrak		Commuter (MARC + VRE)		Class I Line Haul		CSX Yard		Ivy City Yard (A)	
FIPS	11001	STCNTYFIPS	11001	STCNTYFIPS	11001	fips code	11001		
Pollutant	Sum of Emissions(tons)	Pollutant	Sum of Emissions(tons)	Pollutant	Sum of Emissions(tons)	Pollutant	Sum of Emissions(tons)	Pollutant	Sum of Emissions(tons)
CH4	0.11	CH4	0.27	CH4	0.52	CH4	0.04	CH4	0.04
CO	3.70	CO	8.87	CO	17.39	CO	1.30	CO	1.30
CO2	1,411.31	CO2	3,380.43	CO2	6,630.93	CO2	475.62	CO2	475.62
N2O	0.04	N2O	0.09	N2O	0.17	N2O	0.01	N2O	0.01
NOX	21.58	NOX	40.13	NOX	78.71	NOX	9.36	NOX	9.36
PM10	0.73	PM10	1.01	PM10	1.99	PM10	0.25	PM10	0.25
PM25	0.71	PM25	0.98	PM25	1.93	PM25	0.24	PM25	0.24
SO2	0.01	SO2	0.03	SO2	0.06	SO2	0.00	SO2	0.00
VOC	1.16	VOC	1.62	VOC	3.17	VOC	0.61	VOC	0.61
EPA Calculated Draft 2020 NEI, District Reviewed		EPA Calculated Draft 2020 NEI, District Reviewed		EPA Calculated Draft 2020 NEI, District Reviewed		EPA Calculated Draft 2020 NEI, District Reviewed		District Calcula	

Totals

Pollutant	Sum of Emissions(tons)
CH4	1.72
CO	58.05
CO2	21,776.28
N2O	0.56
NOX	263.30
PM10	6.96
PM25	6.74
SO2	4.28
VOC	14.53

1 -- Appendix B

.mtrak)		Ivy City Yard (MARC)		Ivy City Yard (VRE)	
Sum of Emissions(tons)	Pollutant	Sum of Emissions(tons)	Pollutant	Sum of Emissions(tons)	
0.41	CH4		0.29	CH4	0.09
14.09	CO		9.71	CO	2.98
5,142.84	CO2		3,622.37	CO2	1,112.78
0.13	N2O		0.09	N2O	0.03
62.73	NOX		38.85	NOX	11.93
1.63	PM10		1.04	PM10	0.32
1.58	PM25		1.00	PM25	0.31
3.28	SO2		0.68	SO2	0.21
4.16	VOC		2.91	VOC	0.90
ted Draft 2020 NEI		District Calculated Draft 2020 NEI		District Calculated Draft 2020 NEI	

Station was established, it was intended to be an intermodal facility, providing equal access and opportunities for both buses and trains. We sincerely hope that this will continue to be the case, as millions of individuals who rely on our service will not settle for anything less. I appreciate the opportunity to address you today on this significant matter, which is an important issue, not only to Coach USA and Megabus, but the other bus operators who depend on a safe and secure facility for our valued customers. Thank you.

MR. EDWARDS: Thank you. And I apologize for misstating your name.

L. Miller Brooks.

MS. BROOKS: Thank you. Can you hear me? Am I -- I'm going to hold this because of height constraints. All right. Thank you. I'm Laura Miller Brooks, the Director of Transportation and Infrastructure for the Federal City Council, and I'll be providing remarks on behalf of the Federal City Council.

The expansion of Union Station represents the single greatest economic development and transportation opportunity for the District of Columbia and the region

as a whole. An opportunity of this magnitude requires a bold vision, modern and innovative thinking, and dedication to the highest and best standards of planning and design.

The proposed project outlined in the FRA's draft EIS Preferred Alternative AC in 2020 failed to achieve key stakeholder support. Today, the new project vision defined in the FRA's Supplemental Draft EIS Preferred Alternative F presents a bold vision for the next century of Union Station's existence and success. We believe that the SDEIS Preferred Alternative F will gain broad public and political support for the SEP as the new vision effectively addressed feedback from local and regional stakeholders who expressed opposition in 2020 with the DEIS design.

The Federal City Council applauds the work of the FRA, USRC, and Amtrak in revising the project design to address the concerns raised in 2020, as well as their commitment to public input. We are confident that the end result will be a project that benefits our communities and the nation as a whole, and now is the time to finish the environmental review process swiftly

and with this Supplemental Draft EIS vision, finish the environmental review process by January 2024.

We applaud the FRA on key elements, including a right-sized below-grade parking facility, world-class inner-city pedestrian --

MR. EDWARDS: One minute.

MS. BROOKS: -- and bicycle facilities, and the best bus facility in America at 39 slips, with the 15 additional slips for high-capacity events. Thank you for the opportunity to provide comment here today and, again, we look forward to supporting the FRA, USRC, and Amtrak in realizing this incredible vision. Thank you.

MR. EDWARDS: Thank you. I'm going to just say a few words about signing up again. We've got two more folks who've signed up. Please hold your hand up if you decide that you want to make a comment. Someone will come by, and we have some -- hold that hand up again for me. Okay. I'll say it now. If you'd like to comment, and you have not signed up, please hold up your hand, and we will capture your name and then we'll call you in order. So if anyone wants to comment, has not signed up, please hold up your hand and we'll get your name and put



202.223.4560
1310 L Street, NW Suite 325
Washington, DC 20005
www.federalcitycouncil.org

Amanda Murphy
Deputy Federal Preservation Officer
Office of Federal Railroad Policy and Development
USDOT Federal Railroad Administration (MS-20)
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590

Re: Public Comment to the Washington Union Station Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement

The expansion of Union Station represents the single greatest economic development and transportation opportunity for the District of Columbia and the region as a whole. An opportunity of this magnitude requires a bold vision, modern and innovative thinking, and dedication to the highest and best standards of planning and design.

The proposed project outlined in the FRA's Draft EIS (DEIS) Preferred Alternatives A-C in 2020 failed to achieve key stakeholder support. Today, the new project vision defined in the FRA's Supplemental Draft EIS (SDEIS) Preferred Alternative F presents a thoughtful vision for the next century of Union Station's existence and success. We believe that the SDEIS Preferred Alternative F will gain broad public and political support for the SEP as the new vision effectively addresses feedback from local and regional who had expressed opposition critical design elements of the non-rail project components in the 2020 DEIS design.

The Federal City Council (FC2) applauds the work of the FRA, USRC, and Amtrak in revising the project design to address the concerns raised in 2020 and their commitment to public input. We are confident that the end result will be a project that benefits our communities and the nation as a whole. Now is the time to finish this environmental review process swiftly, and issue a Record of Decision (ROD) by January, 2024.

The revised SDEIS Preferred Alternative includes major improvements the FC2 supports the FRA including in the Final EIS (FEIS):

- **Right-sized parking located below-grade:**
We applaud the FRA for reducing the station's reliance on automobiles in the SDEIS by lowering the maximum parking spaces from 1,600 to 550-400 parking spaces. The creation of a centralized below-grade vehicle facility will more effectively support parking, pick-up and drop-off, and rental car demand.
- **First-class intercity and charter bus facilities:**
The bus plan presented in the SDEIS is a high quality, centrally located facility that provides more than sufficient capacity and effectively affirms the strong multi-modal objectives of the SEP. We believe that the new design will significantly improve the passenger experience for the

projected 3 million intercity bus riders traveling through Union Station annually by 2040. The FC2 appreciates the FRA's designation of 38-39 bus slips, along with 15 additional bus slips for high-capacity events, and the central location of the bus facility in the SDEIS Preferred Alternative F. We fully support the FRA maintaining this facility's size and location in the Final EIS.

- **Modernized and efficient Pick-Up and Drop-Off (PUDO):**

The centralized PUDO area prioritizes pedestrians and cyclists and maximizes the efficiency of Transportation Network Companies (TNCs) by reducing idling and vehicle miles traveled (VMT) to and from the station. The SDEIS Preferred Alternative F creates new access points to the station with the creation of below-grade PUDO facilities, reduces congestion in and around Columbus Circle, and increases access to station platforms from PUDO areas for customers.

- **Improved bicycle facilities:**

We applaud the FRA for incorporating bicycle access, bicycle and bike share parking, and programming as readily recognizable components of the SDEIS Preferred Alternative. We also believe that the SDEIS's proposed plans for parking, PUDO, and the bus facility mitigate unsafe interactions between vehicles and vulnerable road users. We commend the FRA for addressing safety concerns regarding bike lanes and pedestrian zones throughout the duration of the SEP construction.

- **Beautiful, fully- integrated urban design:**

The station elements of the SDEIS Preferred Alternative F are all in balance, working together to create a truly world-class multimodal transportation facility. The SDEIS incorporates design elements that support the iconic entry to the station from the north, and open spaces that will serve the public and benefit the neighborhoods that surround the station. By eliminating the above-grade parking facility, the SDEIS enhances the development of a vibrant urban air rights environment that brings substantial advantages to both the residents and visitors of the area.

The FC2 strongly supports these changes to the SDEIS Preferred Alternative F, and we encourage the FRA to include these important improvements and project elements in the Final Environmental Impact Statement (Final EIS). **However, some elements of the project remain insufficiently analyzed or not addressed in the SDEIS. The FC2 calls on the FRA to address the following in the Final EIS to ensure the project's success:**

- **Unify the federal and public air rights to ensure full delivery of public benefits:**

The SDEIS Preferred Alternative F presents numerous benefits that depend on a cohesive, unified air rights development. In particular, the central plaza connecting H Street to the new Train Hall is an essential urban place-making feature of the Preferred Alternative. FRA falls short in committing to unified control and ownership of all air rights (public and private) – this lack of commitment puts the presence of the entire air rights development at-risk. One primary owner/developer must plan and propose a cohesive, organized and viable air rights development plan that captures the economic development potential of one of the most important transit-oriented development sites in the mid-Atlantic. An SEP without the economic development and civic space contributions of a viable, unified air rights development is unacceptable. We ask that the FRA make a clear and affirmative commitment to the unified

ownership and control of the air rights development parcels to ensure that the benefits and potential for the SEP are fully realized.

We also believe that the Final EIS should revise the No-Action Alternative. The current No-Action Alternative involves the development of private air rights but fails to consider the irreversible negative consequences of pursuing this development independently from the SEP. If the air rights development proceeds without the SEP, it will eliminate any opportunity to address the existing accessibility and safety concerns of the station or adequately meet the future rail capacity requirements. This missed opportunity is likely to have long-lasting effects, possibly rendering these issues unsolvable indefinitely.

- **Clarify and solidify USRC's role as Project Sponsor for effective delivery of the SEP:**

We applaud the FRA for designating USRC as the Project Sponsor of the SEP in the SDEIS. An empowered and well-resourced USRC will ensure there is a single point of authority for taking the SEP through the design and construction of this mega-project. However, to ensure USRC's success in this role, we encourage the FRA to define the Project Area authority that USRC will oversee for the design and construction and to identify the authorities and resources that the FRA and Amtrak will provide to support the effective delivery of the SEP. We believe that the FRA must take these steps to ensure that USRC has the necessary staffing and financial resources to implement the project expeditiously.

Additionally, the SDEIS highlights the need for regional investment in the SEP as a result of the reduced parking revenue to sustain USRC's operations. However, FC2 believes that regardless of the implementation of the SEP, USRC is already unable to rely on parking revenues to sustain operations of the historic station. The FC2 encourages the FRA to broaden the rationale for USRC to identify new revenue sources, and the need for regional investment in the SEP, to be for reasons beyond the loss of parking revenue, including the project benefits delivered by expanded rail and bus service facilitated by the SEP.

The Washington Union Station Expansion Project is of critical and significant importance to the region, and the Federal City Council is dedicated to ensuring the success of this project. It is thus imperative that the FRA address these comments in the Final EIS.

Once again, the FC2 thanks the FRA for the work to make the changes in the SDEIS. To that end, the FC2 is encouraged with this progress and hopes that the FRA continue to expedite completion of the environmental review process by issuing a ROD for the SEP by January, 2024. Once this is done, we will move forward, as one region in concert with the federal government, to realize the opportunity of delivering the next century for our Nation's Station, and greatly improving how people move to, from, in, around, and through Washington Union Station.

Sincerely,

Anthony A. Williams
CEO and Executive Director
Federal City Council

Cc: The Honorable Eleanor Holmes Norton
Mayor Muriel Bowser
Chairman Phil Mendelson
Councilmember Charles Allen
Stephen Gardner, Amtrak
Doug Carr, USRC
Marcel Acosta, NCPC



Amanda Murphy
Deputy Federal Preservation Officer
Office of Federal Railroad Policy and Development
USDOT Federal Railroad Administration (MS-20)
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590

CC: The Honorable Amit Bose
Administrator, Federal Railroad Administration

Jennifer Mitchell
Deputy Administrator, Federal Railroad Administration

Dear Ms. Murphy,

On behalf of the Greater Washington Partnership (the Partnership), I am writing to express my support for the **Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement, Draft Programmatic Agreement, and Draft Section 4(f) Evaluation (the SDEIS)** for the **Union Station Expansion Project**. The Partnership commends the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) for its commitment to addressing stakeholder concerns about the 2020 Draft EIS and for the agency's transparency throughout the process.

The Partnership is a first-of-its-kind nonprofit alliance of the region's leading employers in Maryland, Virginia, and Washington, DC. In 2018, the Partnership released the [Blueprint for Regional Mobility](#), an action-oriented strategy to transform our region's transportation system into an asset that ensures our global competitiveness, expands access to opportunity, and removes barriers to mobility from Baltimore to Richmond, including a recommendation to modernize Union Station.

As the nation's second busiest passenger rail station, Union Station is a vital regional transportation hub that connects the Northeast and Southeast rail corridors. Its expansion and modernization to better accommodate commuter and intercity rail is critical to the long-term economic health and vibrancy of the region. The modernization project is also central to achieving hourly service between Baltimore and Richmond and establishing MARC run-through service to Alexandria, two core goals of the Partnership's [Capital Region Rail Vision](#).

In comments to FRA on the 2020 Draft EIS, the Partnership stressed the need for a bold vision and full support from key stakeholders for the project, both of which are better addressed by the SDEIS. The Partnership applauds FRA's inclusion of right-sized parking facilities, improved bike and pedestrian access, a modernized and more efficient pick-up and drop-off area, world-class intercity bus facilities, and fully integrated urban design in the SDEIS to create a modern, urban transportation hub that will better connect our region, from Baltimore to Richmond, and drive economic competitiveness. The Partnership also encourages continued consideration on how to



GREATER WASHINGTON PARTNERSHIP
1200 17th St NW, Suite 550
Washington, DC 20036

greaterwashingtonpartnership.org
202.765.2024
info@greaterwashingtonpartnership.org



best incorporate through running for all MARC and VRE services to create a seamless regional rail system from Maryland through to Virginia.

Thank you for your leadership and commitment to meaningful stakeholder engagement throughout this process, and I look forward to FRA's record of decision on the final expansion and modernization design in the coming months.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kathy Hollinger", with a long, sweeping flourish extending to the right.

Kathy Hollinger
CEO

CC: Thomas Maloney, Vice President, Policy & External Affairs, Greater Washington Partnership
John Hillegass, Director, Regional Mobility & Infrastructure, Greater Washington Partnership



it on the list.

All right. Next, Gregory Cohen.

MR. COHEN: Thank you for the opportunity to be here today. My name is Greg Cohen. I'm Greyhound's Government Affairs representative here in D.C. Greyhound and the other inner-city bus companies that serve Union Station have been actively engaged with the project planning team over the past several years. I want to thank the leadership of USDOT and USRC, as well as staff and consultants, for regularly meeting with us and making a good-faith effort to resolve concerns that inner-city bus operators have raised throughout the planning effort.

Also want to thank Congresswoman Eleanor Holmes Norton for consistently supporting the integration of buses into Union Station. Thanks, also, to DDOT and CPC and the many other stakeholders in the process. As my colleague, Dan, mentioned, inner-city bus is critical mode of transportation. It's the most affordable, most sustainable, most diverse, and least subsidized mode of mass transportation. It also connects thousands of small, medium, and large-sized communities from coast to coast, many more than both trains and commercial

airlines. Our passengers come from all walks of life, yet sometimes buses are the forgotten mode. I'm very pleased that because of those I just thanked, we and our passengers have not been forgotten when it comes to redevelopment of Union Station.

Today, I'm here to speak solely on behalf of Greyhound. We're still working out whether our written testimony will include our ad-hoc coalition of bus companies or Greyhound alone. But Greyhound is very excited that the SDEIS envisions that the redeveloped Union Station will be a world-class intermodal hub that can accommodate growth for all of those who come to our region by train, bus, subway, and other modes.

Although the design year is 2040, we expect that the new facility could serve the city for as many as 100 years. Given the permanence of the planned transportation center, and the expected densely developed economic growth in the area around the station, we had initially expressed serious concerns over early concepts that drastically reduced capacity for motor coaches, and didn't consider the potential --

MR. EDWARDS: One minute.

MR. COHEN: -- for growth beyond 2040. However, we are pleased that the project team has now developed a preferred alternative that will accommodate 39 motor coaches on a typical day and 54 during peak holidays and events. We expect that the extra 15 overflow spaces will likely be needed as permanent spaces beyond 2024. While the new facility is smaller than the existing one, it is designed to fit better in the community and be more attractive and functional.

The day before the SDEIS was released, Greyhound learned of a number of commitments the project team has made for bus carriers. Some of the commitments made a detail between us and the study team were not presented in quite as much detail in the SDEIS. In our written testimony, we'll request some specific changes to the FEIS that match commitments as we understand them, emphasize some key points, and possibly being minor other adjustments. Assuming that those issues can be resolved, and that 54 bus slips will truly be available when needed, we will be offering our support for the project and be pleased to be counted among the proponents. Thanks again for your time.



National Trust *for*
Historic Preservation®

July 6, 2022

Amanda Murphy,
Federal Preservation Officer
Office of Federal Railroad Policy & Development
USDOT Federal Railroad Administration (MS-20)
1200 New Jersey Ave. SE
Washington, DC 20590

Via email to: info@wusstationexpansion.com
amanda.murphy2@dot.gov

Re: Comments on Supplemental Draft EIS and Draft Programmatic Agreement for
Washington Union Station Expansion Project

Dear Ms. Murphy,

The National Trust for Historic Preservation appreciates the opportunity to submit these comments on the current draft of the Programmatic Agreement (PA) for the Washington Union Station Expansion Project, as well as the Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement (SDEIS) for the project. As you know, the National Trust has been participating from the beginning as a consulting party under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) in the ongoing multi-year federal review process for this project led by the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA).

First of all, we would like to commend the FRA for the revisions that have been made to the plans for the proposed project since 2020, especially the modifications to the plans for parking and traffic circulation. The FRA has made significant changes to the plans that are directly responsive to the comments from the public and the other agencies involved in the review process.

However, there are some unresolved issues that still need to be addressed, and we hope that the FRA will continue to be responsive to the ongoing public comments.

Comments on the Supplemental Draft EIS

- ***Traffic Impacts on the Capitol Hill Historic District***

The SDEIS acknowledges that “Increased traffic volumes in the Preferred Alternative would result in a minor adverse direct operational impact on the Capitol Hill Historic District” (SDEIS at p. 5-96). But the SDEIS goes on to state that the traffic impact on the historic district will be negligible, for two primary reasons. One is the argument that the historic district is primarily significant for its architecture, and traffic doesn’t adversely impact the architecture. Second is the argument that traffic is already terrible within the Capitol Hill

Historic District. *Id.* at p. 5-97. We disagree with this rationale and these conclusions by the FRA.

Future traffic impacts are by their nature difficult to predict. In our view, the appropriate response would be to develop a detailed monitoring protocol, and if construction traffic (or other traffic) reaches certain levels, then restrictions would be imposed that would help to reduce traffic through the historic district. In our view, the Section 106 PA would provide the ideal mechanism to develop and implement a binding monitoring commitment of this type. We urge the FRA to follow up and work with the consulting parties, including the Capitol Hill Restoration Society, to develop this as a binding mitigation measure (rather than merely a Whereas Clause), as discussed below.

- ***Importance of a Unified Plan for Air Rights Development***

We share the concerns raised by David Tuchmann on behalf of Akridge during the consultation meeting on June 29, regarding the potential segmentation of the air rights development. The air rights development has a number of important benefits that are crucial to the economic and architectural success of the redevelopment project, but it also has the potential for adverse effects if not carefully planned and designed in a cohesive and unified manner that is compatible with the historic character of the surrounding area. Segmentation of the air rights development would increase the likelihood of adverse effects on historic properties, and would exponentially increase the risk that the benefits would not be achieved in the first place.

- ***Avoid Simultaneous Record of Decision and Final EIS***

The SDEIS states that the FRA intends to issue the Final EIS and the Record of Decision (ROD) simultaneously, rather than offering the public the opportunity to comment on the Final EIS, citing the FAST Act¹ as the basis for this proposed exclusion of public comment. (SDEIS, at xxi n.5.)² Given the magnitude and complexity of the redevelopment project, and the high level of interest by the public, we strongly recommend that the FRA defer the ROD by 45 days in order to receive and respond to public comments on the Final EIS. It has now been more than seven and a half years since the FRA first issued its Notice of Intent (NOI) to prepare an EIS for this project. 80 Fed. Reg. 68,380 (Nov. 4, 2015). The FAST Act had not even been enacted into law at the time of the NOI for this project. During the years that followed, public comments have helped to substantially shape and modify the plans for this project, in ways that have advanced its transportation goals while reducing its adverse effects. In the context of this timeline, an additional 30-45 days is minimal, and the FRA's attempt to foreclose any further public comment after July 6, 2023 is unreasonable.

¹ Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act, Pub. L. No. 114-94 (Dec. 4, 2015); see 49 U.S.C. § 304a.

² According to the federal permitting dashboard, the currently projected date for issuance of the ROD is January 22, 2024: <https://www.permits.performance.gov/permitting-project/dot-projects/washington-union-station-expansion-project>.

Not only was the FAST Act not an existing law at the time of the NOI in this case, but in our view, the circumstances under which the FAST Act calls for a “single document” combining the Final EIS and the ROD are not applicable here. The FAST Act states:

To the maximum extent practicable, the lead agency shall expeditiously develop a single document that consists of a final environmental impact statement and a record of decision, unless—(1) the final environmental impact statement makes substantial changes to the proposed action that are relevant to environmental or safety concerns; or (2) there is a significant new circumstance or information relevant to environmental concerns that bears on the proposed action or the impacts of the proposed action.

49 U.S.C. § 304a(b). The ultimate resolution of *many* issues relevant to the impacts of the project is being postponed until after the Final EIS has been issued. These postponed issues regarding environmental concerns include, for example, the design of the project, the design and development plans for the air rights, the impacts of construction noise and vibration, and the monitoring and potential mitigation of traffic impacts, to name just a few. The comments submitted by the Committee of 100 on the Federal City also identify a number of additional unresolved issues ranging from outdated and unreliable projections of ridership to emissions and air quality impacts. In our view, all of these postponed and unresolved issues constitute “significant new . . . information relevant to environmental concerns that bears on the proposed action or the impacts of the proposed action.” *Id.* Accordingly, even the FAST Act does not mandate a combined FEIS and ROD under these circumstances.

Comments on the Draft Programmatic Agreement

As discussed by the consulting parties during the Section 106 consultation meeting on June 29, the Draft PA still needs work. The FRA acknowledged that it had not yet completed the process of incorporating earlier comments that had been submitted by the SHPO and other agencies prior to sharing a draft of the PA with the full list of consulting parties. The Draft PA necessarily defers the resolution of many of the adverse effects from the project, but needs to incorporate much more specific procedures for assessing, minimizing, and mitigating the adverse effects – and needs to include the consulting parties in that process. We also agree with the Committee of 100 that the currently proposed mitigation package is too “mundane.”

- ***Inadequate Resolution of Traffic Impacts*** (Whereas Clause, p.3, Lines 90-99)

The National Trust and the Capitol Hill Restoration Society both raised formal disagreements with the FRA’s finding of “no adverse effect” on the Capitol Hill Historic District as a result of traffic impacts. In response, the FRA included a Whereas Clause in the Draft PA offering that the Project Sponsor (USRC) would implement a number of measures that would contribute to avoiding and minimizing these potential adverse effects. These include regular monitoring activities, implementation of restrictions, and development of a Construction Transportation Management Plan. This approach of monitoring the actual traffic impacts and then using those results to trigger certain restrictions if specific thresholds are met, was supported by

the ACHP. However, it needs to be incorporated into the body of the PA as a binding commitment, rather than merely a Whereas Clause. And all consulting parties need to be involved in the process of developing the traffic monitoring plan, not just the Signatories.

- ***Inadequate Review Procedures*** (Stipulation II, pp. 3-4)

Stipulation II describes the general procedure for reviewing and commenting on all documents and plans as the PA is implemented, including all of those in Stipulation VI (Treatment Measures). However, Stipulation II is limited exclusively to input by the Signatories, and makes no provision whatsoever for comments by any other consulting parties. (*See, e.g.*, Lines 128, 131-134, 136, 138-139, 142, 145, 149-151.) This is absolutely unacceptable, and we urge the ACHP and SHPO to insist that this be revised. The consulting parties in this case bring substantial expertise to the table, and they represent parties and historic places directly affected by the project. Their comments have already been highly influential in persuading the FRA to make modifications to the project, and they should not be excluded from all subsequent review and comment opportunities, as the Draft PA proposes. More detailed revisions are also needed to Stipulation VI, in order to ensure this input from the consulting parties, as described below.

- ***Inadequate Stipulation for Historic Preservation Covenant***
(Stipulation VI.A.1., p.6)

The Draft PA merely provides that the FRA will “*seek to* include a historic preservation covenant” in the transfer of any real estate out of federal ownership (Line 222, emphasis added), but does not constitute a firm commitment to doing so. Nor does this draft stipulation include any standards about what would be included in the covenant. Would the covenant meet the standard of “adequate and legally enforceable restrictions or conditions to ensure long-term preservation of the property's historic significance,” within the meaning of 36 C.F.R. § 800.5(a)(2)(vii)? Who would hold the authority to enforce compliance with the covenant? Only the Signatories would have any input on these issues (Lines 225 & 227); all other consulting parties would be excluded from the process. In addition, the fourth Whereas Clause (Lines 22-23) states that the privately-owned air rights being acquired for the project are already subject to a historic preservation deed covenant. How would the terms of that existing covenant compare with and relate to the language of the newly negotiated covenant? D.C. has a notoriously poor track record regarding failed preservation covenants, as the National Trust has emphasized in a prior letter to the ACHP regarding the development of specific guidance for the use of preservation covenants in the Section 106 process. (See attached.) Accordingly, it will be especially important to strengthen the language of this stipulation, and to include all consulting parties in the process of drafting the preservation covenant.

- ***Inadequate Consultation for Design Review*** (Stipulation VI.A.2., pp.6-7)

The Draft PA would limit the development and implementation of the Design Review process to the Signatories (Lines 231 & 233), and would exclude all other consulting parties from the Design Review. This is unacceptable. In addition, the Draft PA should be more specific about the appropriate timing and sequence of submissions to the NCPC and CFA

(Lines 241-243), and how they would be coordinated with the design review process developed under the PA. The DC Historic Preservation Review Board (HPRB) needs to be added as well.

- ***Inadequate Stipulation for Design Guidelines & Air Rights Development*** (Stipulation VI.A.3., p.7)

As discussed above, and at the June 29 consultation meeting, this draft stipulation is far too narrow. First, the design guidelines need to be developed for all of the areas subject to development under the project, not just the federal air rights. While the guidelines themselves may vary somewhat for the different components of the development, they need to be coordinated to ensure that adverse effects will be minimized and that the design of the new development will be harmonious and compatible. Second, the development of these design guidelines should not be limited to the Signatories (Lines 258 & 260), but should include all consulting parties. The substantial expertise of the consulting parties will be essential to the development of meaningful design guidelines.

We also agree with the concerns raised by the SHPO that the Draft PA fails to include any stipulations regarding the proposed central plaza, even though the plaza is one of the most critical components of the Preferred Alternative. An additional stipulation needs to be added to the Draft PA in order to ensure that the plaza will be developed and that the remaining development will be consistent with the Preferred Alternative.

- ***Inadequate Consultation for Interpretation Plan*** (Stipulation VI.A.6., p.9)

The Draft PA would limit the development and implementation of the Interpretation Plan to the Signatories (Lines 340 & 347), and would exclude all other consulting parties from the process. This is especially problematic since many of the consulting parties have direct experience with historical interpretation, and their expertise would substantially improve the resulting Interpretation Plan.

- ***Inadequate Consultation for Historic Properties Construction Protection and Signage Plan*** (Stipulation VI.A.8., pp.9-10)

The Draft PA would limit the development and implementation of the Historic Properties Construction Protection and Signage Plan to the Signatories (Lines 376 & 387), and would exclude all other consulting parties from the process. This should be revised to include all consulting parties.

- ***Inadequate Consultation for Construction Noise and Vibration Control Plan*** (Stipulation VI.A.9., p.10)

The Draft PA would limit the development and implementation of the Construction Noise and Vibration Control Plan (CNVCP) to the Signatories (Lines 395 & 422), and would exclude all other consulting parties from the process. The consulting parties in this case bring substantial expertise to the table, and they represent parties and historic places

directly affected by the project. The preparation and implementation of this plan would not only be delegated to the USRC, but would be *re*-delegated to the construction contractor, including the determination of the “appropriate vibration thresholds” and “measures to be taken to minimize the risk of damage.” (Lines 398-399). In our experience, it is much better to include the specific vibration thresholds in the PA itself, and to include the minimization measures in the plan, rather than leaving these determinations in the hands of the construction contractor. For example, enclosed is an excerpt from the MOA governing the construction of the new Coast Guard headquarters building at the St. Elizabeths campus, which serves as a useful model regarding vibration control, and we would encourage the Signatories to copy much of this language, including the provision that states “Vibrations shall be monitored to ensure that vibration levels . . . do not exceed 0.2 inches/second.”

- ***Monitoring and Reporting*** (Stipulation X., p.14)

In addition to the draft language in Stipulation X requiring the USRC to prepare and distribute an annual report, we strongly recommend that the USRC also be required to convene an annual meeting, inviting all consulting parties. In our experience, these kinds of annual meetings are much more valuable than merely distributing a document, and they help to reduce the risk of misunderstandings and conflicts in the future. Annual meetings are especially important for projects with an unusually long duration such as this one.

Conclusion

Thank you in advance for considering the comments of the National Trust for Historic Preservation. We appreciate the opportunity to continue to participate in the consultation process to refine and improve the Section 106 Programmatic Agreement for the Washington Union Station Expansion Project.

Sincerely,



Elizabeth S. Merritt
Deputy General Counsel

Enclosures:

- Excerpt from MOA for new Coast Guard HQ at St. E's (Dec. 16, 2009)
- National Trust comments to ACHP re Guidance on the Use of Real Property Restrictions or Conditions in the Section 106 Process to Avoid Adverse Effects (June 29, 2015)

cc: Rachel Mangum and Jaime Loichinger, Advisory Council on Historic Preservation
Andrew Lewis and David Maloney, DC State Historic Preservation Office
Lee Webb, Federal Preservation Officer, National Capital Planning Comm'n
Tom Luebke, Federal Preservation Officer, Commission of Fine Arts

Rebecca Miller, DC Preservation League
Erik Hein, Committee of 100 on the Federal City
Drury Tallant, Capitol Hill Restoration Society
David Tuchmann, Akridge Development
Katie Hummelt and Jennie Gwin, Beyer Blinder Belle
Rob Nieweg, National Trust for Historic Preservation

912 the placement of the two-layer security fencing along the access road and will need to
913 avoid interferences from retaining walls and vehicles (vibrations) to the surveillance
914 and detection systems..

915
916 In order to ensure the security and operational needs of the West Campus, clearance
917 of selected understory vegetation and debris in portions of this area shall be required
918 to maintain proper security of the severe slope area between the fence and the
919 plateau and GSA shall coordinate these efforts in accordance with the campus
920 Landscape Preservation and Management Plan. All vegetation shall be cut and not
921 pulled.

922
923 3. Shoring of Center Building:

924 GSA shall develop, prior to excavation, an appropriate system to protect, support and
925 otherwise not adversely affect the Center Building adjacent to the USCG
926 Headquarters. Because the foundation of the Center Building is shallow, in
927 relationship to the USCG Headquarters, it is important to provide the appropriate
928 supportive excavation system that minimizes the potential effect on the Center
929 Building which may result from the excavation and the construction of the USCG
930 Headquarters. GSA shall adopt a Construction Protection Plan (CPP) for the
931 Undertaking which includes but is not limited to the installation of electronic sensing
932 devices on the building to detect any potential vibration or shifting of to the building
933 and grounds during construction. This proactive effort is being taken as an added
934 protective measure to ensure the safety, security, and stability of the Center Building
935 and its immediate environs and to ensure disturbances are limited. The CPP shall
936 provide for an engineer and/or historical architect meeting the proposed *Secretary of*
937 *the Interiors Historic Preservation Professional Qualifications Standards 62*
938 *Fed.Reg.33,707 (June 20, 1997)* to supervise implementation of the CPP. Vibrations
939 shall be monitored to ensure that vibration levels at the Center Building do not exceed
940 0.2 inches/second. In the event that this vibration threshold is exceeded, the CPP
941 shall provide a process to ensure that construction work is stopped until such time as
942 the qualified professionals have determined that modifications have been made in the
943 construction activities to assure that no damage shall occur to historic properties.
944

945 **III. PUBLIC ACCESS**

946
947 Access Program: GSA shall work with DHS to develop a Public Access Program
948 ("Access Program") for St. Elizabeths that respects the operational and functional needs
949 of DHS and shares the experience, exceptional history and significance of the West
950 Campus with the general public. The Access Program shall be developed in further
951 consultation with GSA, DHS, the Signatories and the Consulting Parties, and shall
952 consider models successfully implemented at other secure historic federal facilities. So
953 as to not interfere with DHS operations, the Access Program shall be structured in
954 phases, as outlined in the PA, in accordance with scheduling and screening procedures
955 and construction and occupancy phases, and as outlined below. The Access Program
956 shall reflect the security parameters outlined for a Level 5 ISC facility and include limited
957 controlled, regular daily access to the West Campus including, at a minimum, the Point,
958 the Cemetery, and Hitchcock Hall, subject to demonstrated public demand for such
959 access. All access shall be pre-arranged, require visitors to provide certain personally
960 identifiable information (PII) to allow for the completion of the screening check by DHS
961 security and guided. Consultation around the Access Program shall take place regularly



**National Trust for
Historic Preservation**
Save the past. Enrich the future.

June 29, 2015

Reid Nelson
Kirsten Kulis
Advisory Council on Historic Preservation
401 F Street NW, Suite 308
Washington, DC 20001

Re: Guidance on the Use of Real Property Restrictions or Conditions in the Section 106
Process to Avoid Adverse Effects

Dear Reid and Kirsten:

Thank you for reaching out to preservation partners and other interested parties to seek comments on the draft guidance developed by the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP) regarding the use of preservation covenants in an effort to ensure the long-term protection of historic properties when those properties are conveyed by the federal government to non-federal owners. The National Trust has been pleased to serve on the Task Force that worked with the ACHP to help develop the draft guidance, so we were able to see first-hand the expertise and collaboration that informed this draft.

In general, we think the draft guidance is excellent, and we believe it will substantially improve the quality and effectiveness of these preservation covenants going forward.

However, we want to reiterate our concerns that this guidance should be viewed as just a first step. It will be important for the ACHP to tackle the larger and more complex problem of the hundreds or thousands of existing preservation covenants that have been attached at some time in the past as a condition of federal property conveyance, and have been relied on to support a “no adverse effect” determination in the Section 106 review process, but have failed to “ensure long-term preservation of the property’s historic significance,” and thus fail to comply with the requirements of 36 C.F.R. § 800.5(a)(2)(vii). These include situations where the covenant is not being enforced as intended; where the covenant is amended in a way that substantively weakens the protection of the historic property; or where one of the parties is seeking to extinguish the covenant as a matter of convenience. We also discussed the problem that many of these failed covenants call for the ACHP itself to be involved in some capacity in resolving future disputes about the covenants, often many years after the federal agency has completed the disposition of the property.

As you know, a number of these controversies have arisen in the context of conveyances of historic post office buildings by the U.S. Postal Service. For example:

- ***Ukiah Post Office, Ukiah, California:*** In 2012, the downtown Ukiah Post Office was sold to a private owner, with a preservation covenant that designated the State Historic Preservation Office as the entity responsible for enforcing the covenant, even

though the SHPO objected that it was unwilling and unable to serve in that capacity. As you know, the ACHP objected to the proposed covenant terms and to the determination of “no adverse effect” by the Postal Service, but those objections were disregarded by the agency. The historic lobby mural has since been removed and the building remains vacant. A six-foot-tall tarp-like fence surrounds the structure.

- ***Venice Post Office, Venice, California.*** The sale of the historic Venice Post Office in 2012 to Hollywood producer Joel Silver was enabled by the granting of a covenant to the City of Los Angeles rather than to the SHPO. However, two and a half years after the sale, all work on the renovation project has stalled, and the building is now an eyesore scarred by graffiti in a prominent part of downtown. While the covenant granted the City the right to review the appropriateness of proposed rehabilitation work, it did not give the City the right to take enforcement action where little or no work to the building is occurring.

Although the ACHP was able to raise objections in both of these cases, most of these issues do not even come to the ACHP’s attention, since agencies are not required to notify the Council when they make determinations of “no adverse effect” unless the SHPO has raised an affirmative objection.

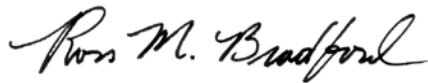
In addition to the Post Office examples, two current controversies in Washington, DC provide classic examples of failed covenants:

- ***McMillan Sand Filtration Site.*** In 1987, GSA sold this 25-acre parcel to the City of Washington for \$9 million, with the understanding that the City wanted to introduce some development on the site. (Contemporaneous documents suggested that the height and density contemplated at the time was up to four-story buildings.) The covenant that was used to justify a “no adverse effect” determination requires two things: (1) The D.C. Historic Preservation Officer (HPO) must review all preliminary and final plans and specifications for renovation, rehabilitation, demolition, or new construction within the site, and if the HPO does not “agree with” the preliminary or final plans, and the disagreement cannot be resolved, the City must immediately request the comments of the ACHP in accordance with 36 C.F.R. Part 800. (2) The covenants specifically require that any and all “rehabilitation and renovation work” at the site must comply with the *Secretary of the Interior’s Standards*. However, the City has taken the position that this requirement only applies if the developers voluntarily choose to rehabilitate or renovate an element of the site; the City contends that any demolition or destruction of historic elements is permitted by the covenant, as long as the HPO “agree[s].” The current development proposal—calling for complete destruction of the character-defining underground vaults in the site, and high-density development, including 115-foot-high office buildings—could not reasonably be considered to have “no adverse effect” on the historic site.
- ***Georgetown West Heating Plant.*** This historic structure was sold by GSA in 2013, subject to a relatively traditional historic preservation covenant, which required any alterations to comply with the *Secretary of the Interior’s Standards*. However, the covenant also included a cancellation clause, which provided that “the SHPO may, for

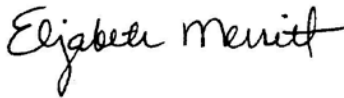
good cause, modify or cancel any or all of the Historic Preservation Covenants upon the written request of Grantees [i.e., the purchasers].” When the purchasers proposed a redevelopment plan that called for the demolition of 70% of the historic structure, preservation advocates raised questions about how those plans could be reconciled with the *Secretary’s Standards*. The purchasers responded that they never intended to try to comply with the *Secretary’s Standards*, but intended from the outset to have the covenant cancelled. Although the DC-SHPO has not taken any steps to cancel the covenant at this point, the political pressure to do so remains strong.

We look forward to continuing the work of the Task Force in an effort to address the important policy issues represented by these examples of failed historic preservation covenants.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ross M. Bradford". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Ross M. Bradford
Senior Associate General Counsel

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Elizabeth Merritt". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Elizabeth S. Merritt
Deputy General Counsel

Amanda Murphy
Deputy Federal Preservation Officer
Office of Federal Railroad Policy and Development
USDOT Federal Railroad Administration (MS-20)
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590

Re: Public Comment to the Washington Union Station Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement

Dear Ms. Murphy,

The expansion of Union Station represents one of the greatest economic development and transportation opportunities for the Capital Region. An opportunity of this magnitude requires a bold vision, modern and innovative thinking, and dedication to the highest and best standards of planning and design.

The proposed project outlined in the FRA's Draft EIS (DEIS) Preferred Alternatives A-C in 2020 failed to achieve key stakeholder support. Today, the new project vision defined in the FRA's Supplemental Draft EIS (SDEIS) Preferred Alternative F presents a bold vision for the next century of Union Station's existence and success. We believe that the SDEIS Preferred Alternative F will gain broad public and political support for the SEP as the new vision effectively addresses feedback from local and regional who had expressed opposition critical design elements of the non-rail project components in the 2020 DEIS design.

We applaud the work of the FRA, USRC, and Amtrak in revising the project design to address the concerns raised in 2020, as well as their commitment to public input. We are confident that the end result will be a project that benefits our communities and the nation as a whole. **The revised SDEIS Preferred Alternative includes major improvements we support the FRA including in the Final EIS:**

- **Right-sized parking located below-grade:**
We applaud the FRA for reducing the station's reliance on automobiles in the SDEIS by lowering the maximum parking spaces from 1,600 to 550-400 parking spaces. The creation of a centralized below-grade vehicle facility will more effectively support parking, pick-up and drop-off, and rental car demand.
- **Modernized and efficient PUDO (Pick-Up and Drop-Off):**
The centralized PUDO area prioritizes pedestrians and cyclists and maximizes the efficiency of Transportation Network Companies (TNCs) by reducing idling and vehicle miles traveled (VMT) to and from the station. The SDEIS Preferred Alternative F creates new access points to the station with the creation of below-grade PUDO facilities, reduces congestion in and around Columbus Circle, and increases access to station platforms from PUDO areas for customers.
- **Bus facility better integrated with minimized impacts to the street network:**

The bus facility presented in the SDEIS is a victory that will enhance multimodal, civic, and economic opportunities for Union Station and the District. We believe that the new design will significantly improve the passenger experience for the projected 3 million intercity bus riders traveling through Union Station annually by 2040. We appreciate the FRA's designation of 38-39 bus slips, along with 15 additional bus slips for high-capacity events, and the central location of the bus facility in the SDEIS Preferred Alternative F. We fully support the FRA maintaining this facility's size and location in the Final EIS.

- **Improved bicycle facilities:**

We applaud the FRA for incorporating bicycle access, bicycle and bike share parking, and programming as readily recognizable components of the SDEIS Preferred Alternative. We also believe that the SDEIS's proposed plans for parking, PUDO, and the bus facility mitigate unsafe interactions between vehicles and vulnerable road users. We commend the FRA for addressing safety concerns regarding bike lanes and pedestrian zones throughout the duration of the SEP construction.

- **Beautiful, fully- integrated urban design:**

The station elements of the SDEIS Preferred Alternative F are all in balance, working together to create a truly world-class multimodal transportation facility. The SDEIS incorporates design elements that support the iconic entry to the station from the north, and open spaces that will serve the public and benefit the neighborhoods that surround the station. By eliminating the above-grade parking facility, the SDEIS enables the development of a vibrant urban environment that brings substantial advantages to both the residents and visitors of the area.

We strongly support these changes to the SDEIS Preferred Alternative F, and we encourage the FRA to include these important improvements and project elements in the Final EIS. **However, some elements of the project remain insufficiently analyzed or not addressed in the SDEIS. We call on the FRA to address the following in the Final EIS to ensure the project's success:**

- **Unify the federal and public air rights to ensure full delivery of public benefits:**

The SDEIS Preferred Alternative F presents numerous benefits that depend on a cohesive, unified air rights development. In particular, the central plaza connecting H Street to the new Train Hall is an essential urban place-making feature of the Preferred Alternative. FRA falls short in committing to unified control and ownership of all air rights (public and private) – this lack of commitment puts the presence of the entire air rights development at-risk. One primary owner/developer must plan and propose a cohesive, organized and viable air rights development plan that captures the economic development potential of one of the most important transit-oriented development sites in the mid-Atlantic. An SEP without the economic development and civic space contributions of a viable, unified air rights development is unacceptable. We ask that the FRA make a clear and affirmative commitment to the unified ownership and control of the air rights development parcels to ensure that the benefits and potential for the SEP are fully realized.

We also believe that the Final EIS should revise the No-Action Alternative. The current No-Action Alternative involves the development of private air rights but fails to consider the irreversible negative consequences of pursuing this development independently from the SEP. If the air rights development proceeds without the SEP, it will eliminate any opportunity to address the existing accessibility and safety concerns of the station or adequately meet the future rail capacity requirements. This missed opportunity is likely to have long-lasting effects, possibly rendering these issues unsolvable indefinitely.

- **Clarify and solidify USRC's role as Project Sponsor for effective delivery of the SEP:**

We applaud the FRA for designating USRC as the Project Sponsor of the SEP in the SDEIS. An empowered and well-resourced USRC will ensure there is a single point of authority for taking the SEP through the design and construction of this mega-project. However, to ensure USRC's success in this role, we encourage the FRA to define the Project Area authority that USRC will oversee for the design and construction and to identify the authorities and resources that the FRA and Amtrak will provide to support the effective delivery of the SEP. We believe that the FRA must take these steps to ensure that USRC has the necessary staffing and financial resources to implement the project expeditiously.

Additionally, the SDEIS highlights the need for regional investment in the SEP as a result of the reduced parking revenue to sustain USRC's operations. However, FC2 believes that regardless of the implementation of the SEP, USRC is already unable to rely on parking revenues to sustain operations of the historic station. The FC2 encourages the FRA to broaden the rationale for USRC to identify new revenue sources, and the need for regional investment in the SEP, to be for reasons beyond the loss of parking revenue, including the project benefits delivered by expanded rail and bus service facilitated by the SEP.

Once again, we thank the FRA for the work to make the changes in the SDEIS. We are encouraged with this progress and hope that the FRA continue to expedite completion of the environmental review process by issuing a ROD for the SEP by January, 2024. Once this is done, we will move forward, as one region in concert with the federal government, to realize the opportunity of delivering the next century for our Nation's Station, and greatly improving how people move to, from, in, around, and through Washington Union Station.

Sincerely,



Brian Smith

Senior Director, Planning and Economic Development

NoMa Business Improvement District



June 22, 2023

Ms. Amanda Murphy
Deputy Federal Preservation Officer
Office of Federal Railroad Policy and Development
USDOT Federal Railroad Administration (MS-20)
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590
info@WUSstationexpansion.com

Re: Public Comment to the Washington Union Station Supplemental Draft EIS

Dear Ms. Murphy:

On behalf of Virginians for High Speed Rail (VHSR) and the Virginia Transit Association (VTA), I am writing to offer public comments pertaining to the supplemental draft environmental impact statement (SDEIS) for the Washington Union Station (WUS) Expansion project.

The expansion of Washington Union Station (WUS) represents a project of national significance, and a project of great importance for the Commonwealth of Virginia. For this reason, VHSR and VTA strongly support the modernization and redevelopment of Washington Union Station—Amtrak's second busiest train station in the U.S., WMATA's busiest Metrorail station, and the busiest transportation hub in the region, serving more residents and tourists than the Greater Washington's three airports combined. The existing train station achieves this even though it does not provide a consistent positive train or retail experience for its nearly 40 million annual visitors, and its track configuration and platform capacity are unable to meet expected growth of our Amtrak and Virginia Railway Express (VRE) services.

Building off our previous comments in conjunction with the Greater Washington Partnership sent to the FRA in September of 2020, VTA and VHSR want to acknowledge our appreciation for the continued efforts to further refine the initial DEIS.

We recognize the work to further weave the modernized WUS into its local community fabric by further improving and expanding pedestrian and bicycle access; reducing the station's reliance on automobiles by lowering the maximum parking spaces from 1,600 to 550/400 parking spaces; expanding peak bus accommodations to 54 buses (with space for 38-39 buses during normal travel periods) and giving them full inbound and outbound movement capability. We fully support these preferred alternative improvements.

The projected growth in both Amtrak and VRE service levels and accompanying ridership are important factors in the preferred alternative, and these increases in service are vital to ensuring that the Commonwealth's Transforming Rail in Virginia program is a success.

While we fully appreciate the complexities of finalizing the multi-state and multi-agency agreements that will be necessary to accommodate future run-through commuter rail service as articulated in the SDEIS, we continue to request that the final EIS plan for, or more clearly articulate, the future capability of run-through VRE service. While future service "from" MARC's Penn Line "to" VRE's Fredericksburg and Manassas' lines is fantastic, the reverse is also true. Connecting Virginia, Maryland, and the entire Capital Region with a one-seat ride from Virginia into Maryland via VRE will also greatly enhance the quality of life of Virginia's commuters along the I-95 and I-66 corridors.

Lastly, we hope that the project's anticipated timeline of 13 years might be streamlined and expedited to better align with the Commonwealth's historic passenger rail investments included in our Transforming Rail in Virginia program.

The Washington Union Station project continues to be a national and regional priority. As mentioned previously, it will allow for a more integrated and unified rail connection for the Northeast and the Southeast rail corridors, enable a more unified commuter rail landscape in the Capital Region, and unlock immense economic and housing development, and job creation for the region. We request that the FRA continue to advance the project while taking into consideration our comments pertaining to future VRE run-through service.

Sincerely,



Danny Plaugher
Virginia Transit Association
Virginians for High Speed Rail
Danny@Plaugher.org



Thursday, July 6, 2023

Amanda Murphy
Deputy Federal Preservation Officer
Office of Federal Railroad Policy and Development
USDOT Federal Railroad Administration (MS-20)
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE Washington, DC 20590

Re: Comments on Washington Union Station Expansion Project SDEIS

On behalf of the Washington Area Bicyclist Association (WABA) and our 6,000 members in the Washington Region, I am pleased to write with enthusiastic support for Preferred Alternative F for the Washington Union Station Expansion Project as outlined in the Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement.

This new design will transform DC's intercity, regional, and local rail and bus facilities into a first-class multimodal hub worthy of our Nation's Capital. Preferred alternative F addresses many of the concerns WABA raised at previous stages of planning. Revisions to right-size on-site car parking, prioritizing convenient, safe access by walking and biking with new connections to the trail, bike lane, and sidewalk networks, and new bicycle parking and Capital Bikeshare stations are major improvements which will make walking, biking, and transit the preferred choice for arriving at the station.

While we support the preferred alternative F as the best design option to move forward, we would like to raise some negative impacts to bicycle and pedestrian safety and possible mitigations for inclusion in the final EIS and final design.

Must Provide Safe Accommodations for First St Cycletrack and Met Branch Trail

Chapter 5.13.3 (p. 5-104) details construction impacts to the First Street NE cycletrack and the Met Branch Trail on Second Street, proposing to close facilities for a combined 5+ years during Phases 1 and 4. The DEIS notes that only a small portion of the eight-mile Metropolitan Branch Trail will be impacted. Yet, like removing a 1-foot section of a mile-long pipe, dismantling one block in a regional multi-use trail is extremely disruptive to the thousands of daily users who rely on the trail for a safe, direct route. Any proposed closure or detour of the Met Branch Trail or First Street Cycletrack must provide a safe accommodation for trail users that offers a comparable level of safety, as required by DC law and DDOT regulations.

While we understand that construction necessarily must occur to modify these facilities, closure and detour to an alternate street are a course of absolute last resort. We welcome a collaborative discussion on options for safe accommodations on First St NE. Safety of vulnerable road users around this construction site must be the first priority throughout this construction project.

Mitigate Bicycle Conflicts at the First St. Loading Dock

Under the existing design, the First Street two-way protected bike lane, a high-volume branch of the regional Metropolitan Branch Trail, runs directly in front of the First Street loading dock. Delivery trucks persistently park in or blocking the protected bike lane and sidewalk rather than use the loading dock, interrupting the otherwise safe, low-stress bicycle route for thousands of daily trail users. This forces bicyclists to dismount, climb the curb, and enter the travel lane to continue on. This constant conflict puts the most vulnerable road users at risk, and persists as a daily structural reality of commercial operations under the current design. It should be mitigated as part of the station redesign.

As a mitigation, the protected bike lane and loading dock should be redesigned to eliminate this conflict, including widening the bike lane and adding permanent, substantial mid-lane barriers to prevent entry by vehicles. As other loading docks are brought online, other loading docks should be prioritized for daily activities.

Provide Secure, Longer term Bicycle Parking

We appreciate the inclusion of multiple locations for short term bicycle parking within the station design. With planned connections to the bicycle network, bicycling to an intercity train or bus will be convenient, but passengers need a dependable, secure facility to leave their bicycle behind without concerns about theft. A secure bicycle parking facility should have controlled access, continuous monitoring by staff and video, and be accessible with a step-free, roll-in, access point from either First or Second Street. Additionally, an area should be designated for bicycle assembly/disassembly, including tools (e.g. a fix-it stand) to support tourism by bicycle and train.

Upgrade the First St. Protected Bike Lane

The two-way protected bike lane on First Street NE was first installed in 2013 as an extension to the Metropolitan Branch Trail. While appropriate for the time, it was largely retrofitted into an existing street design and does not meet modern standards for bike lane width or buffer width. The current design will not accommodate expected future user volumes and should be upgraded. The 2-way protected bike lane should be widened to 12' (6' each way), at least a 3' buffer, and a permanent, durable barrier from traffic. Eliminating the existing west side on-street parking provides the needed width.

The proposed First St. NE garage entry/exit will cross the protected bike lane, creating four new conflict points from turns in and out of the garage – a significant negative impact to safety. To mitigate this conflict, minimize the garage entry width to 22' and use no greater than 15' curb radius to encourage slow turns in/out of the garage and to maximize visibility. At garage entrances, repurpose some of the proposed west side pickup-dropoff zone to bend the sidewalk and bike lane out away from the wall and garage entrance to increase visibility of approaching bicyclists and pedestrians.

Create Seamless Bicycle Circulation and Connections at Columbus Circle

The SDEIS notes that the front of Union Station will remain the main access point for pedestrians and bicyclists, yet, the proposed roadway reconfiguration is entirely oriented towards automobile and pedestrian circulation, not bicycles. Moving ahead with this design would be a missed opportunity for bicycle access to the station and leave a permanent hole in DC's bicycle network. To access or traverse this space, people who bike need safe, protected lanes, dedicated for bicycles. To mitigate this negative impact:

- Collaborate with DDOT to add a curb-separated protected bike lane on Massachusetts Ave between North Capitol St to 2nd St NE,
- Collaborate with DDOT to add a direct, intuitive, safe bike connection from the 1st St. NE protected bike lane to planned protected bike lanes on E St. NE and Louisiana Ave, with elements of a protected intersections, and
- Designate a 2-way east-west bicycle connection north of the Union Station fountain to directly connect First Street and the F Street Met Branch Trail that avoids conflicts with vehicle traffic.

Upgrade the Metropolitan Branch Trail on the East Side

The regional Metropolitan Branch Trail runs along both First Street, as an in-street protected bike lane, and on Second Street as a sidewalk-level multi-use trail. The trail is not yet fully built out and does not offer seamless connections to the rest of the network.

Between G Street NE and K Street NE, the Second street trail is merely a signed route on the sidewalk. Under alternative F, this area is designated as a pickup, dropoff area on narrow sidewalks, but does not appear to note the multi-use trail. The trail should be redesigned, widened, and rebuilt to modern multi-use trail standards from G to K Streets NE with appropriate design to reduce conflicts in front of the Second Street concourse entrance.

At Columbus Circle, the Met Branch trail stops just short of making useful connections at the bottom of the ramp at F Street near the existing Capital Bikeshare station. This sidewalk space should be redesigned to extend the multi-use trail up the hill to connect to Massachusetts Ave.

WABA empowers people to ride bikes, build connections, and transform places. We envision a just and sustainable transportation system where walking, biking, and transit are the best ways to get around. We believe that moving ahead with preferred alternative F with the above mitigations will help achieve that vision for Washington Union Station.

Please contact Garrett Hennigan at garrett.hennigan@waba.org or 202-656-3078 for follow-up.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Garrett Hennigan
WABA Organizing Manager



July 6, 2023

- VIA EMAIL -

**Re: Comments on the Washington Union Station Expansion Project
Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement**

To Whom It May Concern:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on the Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the Washington Union Station (WUS) Expansion Project. In August of 2020, we raised serious concerns with the original DEIS, particularly regarding how the preferred alternative at-the-time reduced the number of bus slips for motorcoaches and how such a reduction in capacity could impact the availability of affordable bus options for travelers, and questioning whether such space reductions are in compliance with federal law.

Since that time, our companies have engaged in regular meetings with the project planning team and we have closely coordinated efforts to come to an agreement, which would help alleviate our concerns. Based on the commitments made to us by study team members and consultants at a meeting on June 13, 2023, we are optimistic that the Final Environmental Impact State (FEIS) will be a document that we can support. However, it is important that the FEIS clarify commitments not fully documented in the SDEIS. Therefore, these comments will focus on some key commitments, which must be included in the final document.

While we would have preferred to see FRA endorse an alternative that maintains or increases the current number of bus slips (61) as we had originally requested, we support a compromise outlined in the preferred alternative, Alternative F, which commits to the inclusion of 54 bus slips on-site. The study team has committed to us that they “will make all 54 slips available when demand requires it” and prioritize keeping intercity buses within the main facility when excess demand exceeds capacity on the lower mezzanine level. Our support for this project is contingent on project sponsors keeping the commitment that the total number of bus slips will not be reduced below 54 as the project moves forward. While there are only 39 slips in the main facility and 15 on the deck level, we encourage FRA and USRC to avoid confusion in the FEIS

by clearly stating throughout the final document that the selected alternative includes a total capacity of 54 slips, not 38-39.

Several other key commitments were made to us at the June 13th meeting, including:

- 1) **An operations plan** that is developed in coordination with bus carriers, DDOT, and the Mayor's Office of Special Events. This plan would develop the approach to gate management, safety and security systems planning, technology, special event management, electric charging or alternate fuels, peak intercity event management, and revenue/cost/fee allocation -- balancing facility needs and carrier economics.
- 2) **Design coordination** between the design team and the bus carriers, including amenities for passengers.
- 3) **Trend monitoring**, conducted by USRC, to regularly evaluate demand at WUS and in the District overall.
- 4) **Building safety and accessibility** into bus slip design, so that operators in all 54 slips can back up and turn safely and serve passengers with mobility challenges.
- 5) **Working closely on the cost allocation approach** with bus carriers, including developing a fair cost structure.
- 6) **Addressing safety and security concerns** by not permitting non-reserved bus services inside the future facility.

We ask that the above commitments be clearly stated in the FEIS. Of critical importance is the need to keep rent and other maintenance/operational costs that are passed on to bus companies down. The intercity bus mode is the most affordable mode of transportation, serving a large number of low-income passengers. Operating margins are typically very tight. Cost increases passed on to carriers should be limited to the greatest extent possible – certainly at no more than general inflation (CPI).

We also ask that item #6 above be much clearer and state unequivocally that unpaid, unreserved buses will not be allowed in the future facility. This is important for safety, security, and capacity reasons but also as a basic matter of fairness to operators that pay rent and fees for access and maintenance.

Additional Concerns

In Appendix S2, section S.6, page 11, lines 135-143, there is a discussion of peak intercity and charter/tour demands. Lines 135-137 discount the possibility that the intercity bus demand will

ever exceed the capacity of the main facility, while lines 137-139 discuss the possibility that charter/tour demands may exceed capacity. The conclusion is that the 15 slips on the PUDO deck level will only be needed as the result of charter/tour demand, and never as a result of intercity bus demand. Given the likelihood that the facility will outlast the design year and the lack of reliability of travel forecasts in general, it is unnecessary and potentially unhelpful to frame bus capacity shortages by type of service. We request clarification that the 15 slips on the PUDO deck level will be available as needed, regardless of whether the bus volume comes as a result of intercity buses or charter/tour bus peaks (or both).

Also, to make it clear that these slips will be available when needed, we request that the word "could" in line 140 be changed to "would". Similarly on page 16 of Appendix S-2, the word "could" should be changed to "would". Also, the word "infrequently" on page 16 should be removed because it is an unnecessary and subjective adjective that doesn't provide any real clarity to the reader of how often the PUDO deck would actually be needed for buses. For the same reason the clause ",which are anticipated to be infrequent," should be removed from S.6 page 11, line 139. Once the facility is in operation, it should not be an operational challenge for management or operators when the PUDO deck is needed for buses; rather it should be a well-tested arrangement with a smooth conversion of the space, as needed. By discounting the likelihood that this area will be needed more than "infrequently" for buses, planners could inadvertently lead facility managers to be unprepared or uncooperative when bus operators need them.

In the main document, Chapter 3, Section 3.4 provides a detailed discussion on active / dynamic gate management for buses, noting briefly that such applications have not been successfully used in the US for intercity or charter/tour operations. While examples are provided for its use in other countries, our experience is that the results have been mixed.

Bus operators currently using WUS have raised serious concerns regarding the use of active/dynamic management based on significant challenges with its implementation in Toronto, Canada, the higher cost of operation that would be passed on to operators, and concerns about gate confusion for customers and drivers.

Our objections appear to have been recognized by the addition of Section 3.5.3 of the document, which discusses a "zonal" approach to slip assignment (page 37, line 810), noting that further study is needed. We support the zonal approach and encourage completion of any needed study so that this approach is clearly recommended in the FEIS. Yet language remains in Section 3.4.1 (page 28 lines 609-610), which states that "To manage peak demands, the facility *would* make use of the active, or dynamic, management." Given that the "zonal" approach has strong support from the operators and the dynamic approach is opposed by operators, we request that the FEIS not insist on stating active/dynamic management would be used, but

rather simply leave it open as an operational possibility that could be considered if needed over the long-term.

Finally, we ask that the FEIS more clearly state that during peak periods, when demand in the main facility exceeds supply, charter/tour buses would be the first to be “bumped” up to the upper level, while intercity buses would be the last to be “bumped” up. We understand this to already be the planners’ intention, but would like clarity on this point since the waiting and information area for intercity customers, including those making connections, will be in the primary bus area.

Closing

Finally, we would like to sincerely thank the leadership of USDOT and USRC, as well as staff and consultants, for regularly meeting with us over the past several years and making a good-faith effort to resolve bus-operators’ concerns. We also thank Congresswoman Eleanor Holmes Norton for consistently supporting the integration of bus service in Washington Union Station. Finally, we thank the District of Columbia Department of Transportation leadership and staff, National Capital Planning Commission members and staff, and other stakeholders in the process that have advocated for full inclusion of intercity bus and our passengers in the expanded facility.

Once the last few issues discussed above are fully addressed, we look forward to endorsing a Final Environmental Impact Statement and construction of a world-class, expanded Washington Union Station that will serve as an intermodal “success story” for decades to come.

Sincerely yours,

The Washington Union Station Intercity Bus Coalition

cc:: The Honorable Muriel E. Bowser, Mayor, The District of Columbia
The Honorable Eleanor Holmes Norton, Member of Congress
The Honorable Teri Hawks Goodmann, Chair, National Capital Planning Commission
The Honorable Everett Lott, Director, District of Columbia Department of Transportation
The Honorable Polly Trottenberg, Chair, Union Station Redevelopment Corporation and
Deputy Secretary, U.S. Department of Transportation
Mr. Doug Carr, President and CEO, Union Station Redevelopment Corporation

Washington Union Station Expansion Project

Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement (SDEIS)

JUNE 27, 2023 | WWW.WUSSTATIONEXPANSION.COM

Comment Form

I support the Union Station Expansion Project on one condition and that is that project leaders hire a diverse workforce. Thanks.

Continue on back if needed ▶

Commenter Information

NAME: *Anonymous ~~to~~ Commenter*

ORGANIZATION (If applicable):

EMAIL ADDRESS:

ZIP CODE:

to listen until 8:00.

By around 7:55, if there have not been any more comments, I will, you know, kind of take us down the hill, tell you how you can make your comments after tonight. The record will be open until July the 6th, and we are asking that you continue to make comments. You can also participate in a virtual meeting that will be held tomorrow night, and there's information that we'll put on the screen about how to do that. That meeting, that virtual meeting, will be from 5:00 until 7:00 p.m. Eastern Daylight Time.

So with that, we're just going to put things on pause. Sign up with Katie, and we'll reconvene when we have some other folks who want to make a comment.

(Pause in the proceedings)

(The following one-on-one comment was made during the pause.)

MR. AMIN: Yes, my name is Ra Amin. I'm a resident of the District of Columbia. The first name is spelled R-a. Last name is spelled A-m-i-n. And I'm speaking at this time as a individual. I was just thinking about the first question that was asked by a

audience member this evening. The question was -- one part of her question was about work hours, and what work hours will be requested for the project? And one of the things that I mentioned to her that I think should be addressed to the community is that not only the work hours, you know, Monday through Friday, but will there -- will the project request weekend hours, like Saturday hours?

And also holiday permitting hours, you know, especially those off holidays and, like, Presidents' Day, MLK Day, some of those other days that a majority of communities will have off. But a lot of times we find out that projects, especially large projects, request to work on those days, but that also impacts community greatly, especially when you want to use that day as a day of rest or a day of family. Those are -- that's my comment.

(Proceedings continue)

MR. EDWARDS: Have your attention. We're going to reconvene. Sh, sh, sh, sh, sh. Jessie, bring the mic up. Okay. Let's go ahead and reconvene and bring the room back to order. Sonali (phonetic), Laura,

From: [Karthik Balasubramanian](#)
To: [Ashton Rohmer](#); [Union Station Expansion](#)
Subject: Re: union station meetings
Date: Wednesday, June 14, 2023 10:54:28 AM

Union Station should be a WMATA + circulator bus hub as well. Silver Spring station has 2 levels of WMATA + RideOn connection. This is what we should be seeing in the new Union Station as well, because it will allow MANY more people to come to Union Station without a car.

On Wed, Jun 14, 2023 at 10:50 AM Ashton Rohmer <ashton.mcrp@gmail.com> wrote:

- REMINDER -

We want to hear your comments on the
Washington Union Station Expansion Project
Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement (SDEIS)

All comments must be sent on or before July 6, 2023

The SDEIS is available for review at:

<http://www.wusstationexpansion.com>

The Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) will be hosting two public hearings to receive comments on the SDEIS:

In-Person Public Hearing:

June 27, 2023

Washington Union Station East Hall

5:00 pm to 8:00 pm (open house from 5:00 pm to 6:00 pm)

Virtual Public Hearing:

June 28, 2023

[Click here to join](#)

or call: (301) 715-8592, Meeting ID: 817 4039 4141, Passcode: 368015

5:00 pm to 7:00 pm

Each commenter at the public hearings will have **3 minutes** to make a verbal comment.

Please be mindful of the time limit: we want everyone to have a chance to speak.

FRA will not respond to comments at the public hearings.

FRA will respond to comments in the Final Environmental Impact Statement

Additional ways to comment:

- By email to: info@wusstationexpansion.com
- By telephone (voicemail) at: (800) 892-3297
- By mail to:

Amanda Murphy
Deputy Federal Preservation Officer
Office of Federal Railroad Policy and Development
USDOT Federal Railroad Administration (MS-20)
1200 New Jersey Avenue SE
Washington, DC 20590

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Ashton Rohmer, AICP
she/her/hers

From: [Louise Brodnitz](#)
To: [Union Station Expansion](#)
Subject: Comments about Union Station Expansion
Date: Wednesday, June 14, 2023 9:31:11 AM

Hello!

My comment has to do with WMATA bus accommodation. Surface transportation is going to be essential in reducing vehicle traffic congestion – but my experience of buses at Union Station has been abysmal.

I urge you to give greater weight to accommodating buses on ALL sides of this redevelopment. Many people, especially as we age, will prefer bus to metro. Expanding the pool of bus users, and making it as easy as possible for them, will ensure that all are equally well-served.

1. Please require that all new development along H street be required to directly address, welcome and accommodate pedestrian access from buses and streetcars.
2. Provide a pedestrian connection (elevator and stairs) from North Capitol Street to the H Street overpass. As it currently stands, there is no connection whatsoever for pedestrians to access the H Street buses.
3. Make all bus connections minimal and effortless, so that adjacencies that appear on a map (such as item 2) are accessible in reality.
4. Make bus travel to and around Union Station as pleasant and seamless as the trains, and should work for DC residents coming from all directions by bus.

Best,

Louise D. Brodnitz

From: [Xavier Domenico](#)
To: [Union Station Expansion](#)
Subject: WUS Expansion Project
Date: Sunday, June 18, 2023 11:54:16 PM

Dear WUS Expansion team,

I am writing in support of the project, more specifically in support for decrease in parking for private vehicles. I hope to see guidance in that the new terminal is designed in a manner compatible with the historic WUS building- much like Moynihan Train Hall in New York City.

Sincerely,
Xavier Czerewko

From: [Gregory Dunn Osborn](#)
To: [Union Station Expansion](#)
Subject: Public Comment - Washington Union Station
Date: Sunday, May 14, 2023 5:19:05 PM

Hello,

I am a resident of Washington DC that uses Washington Union Station for both business and personal purposes. Over the years, I've used WUS's car rental, bikeshare, dining, train, and bus services.

I am concerned that the preferred alternative lacks a viable means to generate revenue to offset the loss of revenue from parking at WUS. I worry that the preferred alternative's considerable scope introduces new risks that would further accelerate WUS's already-perilous retail situation, such as noise, vibration and the closure of public areas. I worry that WUS will be forced to levy higher costs on its users to offset losses from parking, construction, and debt finance, making WUS less appealing for me to use.

I hope to use WUS for many years to come, and I commend the team's thorough work on the station's future. However, I think the history of installing new rail infrastructure in Manhattan demonstrates that building around active railways is simply hard, expensive, and not cost competitive to simply doing nothing. If -- despite record commercial vacancy rates in the city - - we'd like to install new retail/bikeshare/bus loading facilities, surely there are cheaper places to build them than on top of the northeast corridor?

(Personally, I would advocate working with Ashkenazy Acquisition Corporation to improve the condition, maintenance, accessibility, and safety of existing facilities, but I recognize this is outside the scope of the current process.)

Kind regards,
Gregory

From: [Hannah Follweiler](#)
To: [Union Station Expansion](#)
Subject: Fwd: New Plan for Union Station
Date: Wednesday, May 17, 2023 1:38:19 PM

Hello,

I'm here to write that I support the new plan released within the last week. I love taking the train and I think Union Station is beautiful but also in need of an update. My concerns about there being too much parking and not enough space for buses has been addressed. And I love the current plan. I think it's a feasible option and much better than what we were working with in the past. The look and feel of the new concourse reminds me of how nice it is to be in the new train hall in NYC. I believe this will bring a lot of people into our city and be a reminder of how great DC is.

One concern I still have is about the length of time it will take for this project to complete. I understand that is it a long process and there are many different elements to the project as well as multiple stakeholders. But as someone who knows our climate is changing rapidly I feel it is irresponsible for this project to take this long. An updated station would make it more attractive for people to take the bus or train to other parts of the country. We can't wait until 2040's or 2050's.

Thank you for your time,
Hannah Follweiler

From: [Izzy Gholi](#)
To: [Union Station Expansion](#)
Subject: Union Station Thoughts
Date: Monday, May 15, 2023 10:14:54 PM

Hello,

My name is Izzy Gholi and I am a DC resident. I graduated from Catholic University in 2020 and Union Station was one of my favorite spots in DC. I now live in Capitol Hill and still use it frequently and I am always in awe of the pillars outside and the grand main hall entrance

I feel very strongly about preserving the outside pillars and main hall historic structure. The facade of Union Station is what greets people as they come and go from DC and is one of my most beloved views.

I look forward to the renovation, but I hope we can keep the historic and grand nature of the building intact.

Best,
Izzy Gholi

From: [Sean Gilliam](#)
To: [Union Station Expansion](#)
Subject: Parking Volume
Date: Wednesday, May 17, 2023 7:52:53 AM

Good Morning,

After reviewing the documents related to parking at the renovated Union Station I have a grave concern I believe is being overlooked. There are numerous Amtrak employees who utilize the current parking garage as monthly parkers, or intermittent users that I feel are not being accounted for. Conductors, Engineers, Station Employees, On Board Services, Mechanical, Clerks, and many others are among the users of the garage. Amtrak provides no parking in the station area to Craft employees, only to Management employees at a garage on 2nd St NE. It appears the writers of this document are failing to account for these employees and their needs so that trains are able to move. Amtrak presently only makes parking available to Craft employees two miles away from the station at the Ivy City facility. Although a Shuttle is provided, this "service" can take 30-45 minutes each way to make the trek to and from the station. Suggesting that employees should use transit is also not an option. Many times when employees come and go Transit is shut down, or impractical to use. Employees have limited rest periods as it is, ensuring that there is appropriate parking facilities available for them is paramount in my opinion.

Regards,
Sean Gilliam
Locomotive Engineer

Sent from my iPhone...so spelling doesn't count

From: [bruce hain](#)
To: [Union Station Expansion](#)
Subject: SDEIS Comment - Washington Union Station Expansion Project
Date: Friday, July 7, 2023 12:00:07 AM

July,
6,
2023

Amanda Murphy
Deputy Federal Preservation Officer
Office of Federal Railroad Policy and Development
Washington, DC

Dear Ms. Murphy,

Here follows my comment on the Expansion Project, which actually entails significant contraction and curtailment. If you're going from 33 tracks down to 19, while shortening the platform length significantly owing to some unexplained exigency of building a SECOND main concourse completely at odds with the existing architecture, then you've climbing the rails. I'm not opposed to contrasting contemporary style with tradition: it has been the most successful means to expand and modify properties that need it, when undertaken in a sober way, but the "Train Hall" is dimensionally gargantuan viewed against the original concourse, and screams it's belittlement through its indulgence in thematic material otherwise graceful, but in this case insulting to the original. Everything is Bigger, Better, Airier, with so much more light, glass and breathing room! A better option, if you want a few wider platforms, is to take away some of the single tracks, and go from 33 down to 30, **not** 19. The longest platforms were intended to allow two 1750' trains and two 1500' ones, on the tunnel tracks. that should be preserved, and the two sharp curves on the tunnel track platforms removed. They are some kind of appeal for more money to waste, f but not included in the original design.

True, the existing concourse has not aged well, but it's operating with a handicap, as some of the geniuses who worked on the last revamp seem to have found it undesirable. **Why else would would they chop off the ends?**

Clearly, if preservation law means anything at all the first priority in this re-do is to at least start down a clear path of getting the original concourse right. That means the FRA begins negotiating with with the SEC, because their very grand entrance has been standing in the way since 2002 (The concourse needs to be extended about 62.5' on each side - up to the walls with the globular lamps on top.) and the FRA had an empty space there for at least a decade after the Reagan Administration improvements were completed. It was only a level parking lot, yet they never reconsidered, never thought to to secure the necessary asset needed to ensure the viability of their own property. And it is a 'pattern' with this cabal since about 1945: selling off the Main Line and pleading poverty all the way, while paying exorbitant "dividends" as the system of transportation goes to hell. It's an issue of the environment, of living standards and of national defense, and there are laws in place that enjoin it. It was the railroads in their deprecated state leading to collapse that decided passengers were no longer wanted or needed, or the lucrative government contracts - which **they refused** - to carry the mail, leaving air transport as the only quick option for mail and package express. It's now certain the Harley Post Office opposite Penn Station in Manhattan, with it's giant pneumatic tubes running all over Manhattan, will never be used to move the mail again, and the same applies to the "National Postal Museum" - **because the railroads and their spiritual heirs Amtrak and the FRA wanted it that way.** The Pennsylvania Railroad was the head of this cabal, once the richest railroad in the world; the NY Central was as an innocent victim, but they soon learned. It was the PRR that introduced propaganda kinks on the Northeast Corridor, just in time for the Metroliner's benighted debut. The tactic (rather inexplicable on its face) lives on in the New York City Subway and Long Island Railroad, which carry the highest passenger volume in the country. What I call the Railroad Engineering FRA Revolving Door Cabal tends to leverage it when they want state transit boards to start forking out for make-work "improvements" that often castrate rather than alleviate bottlenecks and capacity constraints, serving often the get them etched in stone and steel of practical permanence. These people have no business selling property rights to anyone,

never mind self-interested developers who will grab every chance they can get to work an advantage. Frankly, I think they owe their prospective partners (if any) an apology, and maybe some compensation.

Any re-do of Washington Union station must be constrained within reasonable dimensions; it cannot be used as a springboard to catapult an exorbitant rent roll, especially if every time there's a turn-around, or a virus, the transit-critical house catches on fire. Where once this station had the finest indoor mall property in the world, by revenue and every other measure - and by far - it all cascaded in the space of a few months. **How much worse will it be, if the mall property is expanded two fold?** Is that not what Amtrak and the FRA have in mind?

As a practical matter, this expansion - which actually entails diminution of the rail infrastructure's usefulness and versatility, and thereby its fitness for the future - must be curtailed. Because, the only reason the Amtrak and the FRA want so much development on top, is to lock in their denigrating modifications at track level, so that (again) they are etched in stone and steel of practical permanence. The three commodious entrance portals at either side, on the front of the concourse, were designed to allow quick access to the platforms for dashing commuters wanting to bypass an extended trek through the crowded station. They were designed as a boon to passengers arriving on foot, and for both environmental and aesthetic reasons the Concourse must be restored. I'm not sure about Chicago windows all the way around at either end, but they might look nice with a long banquette continuing past the corners. I'm sure a very beautiful and up-to-date treatment for the ends can be had, perhaps with more glass to set off the clocks if it should be decided to retain them.

But what happened at the waiting room-concourse roof interface? Someone decided they were so in need of more glorious airborne light that they decided to truncate the giant arch lunettes of the waiting room to achieve it: so the lunettes on the front of the building extend lower than the ones up against the ineptly modified roof of the concourse - as a sort of snoot cock to Burnham I suppose. Obviously, the symmetry of the Waiting Rooms upper windows must be restored, Now.

I find it very improbable that the side entrances at H Street will attract many passengers or visitors, as the SDEIS so insistently advocates. Who wouldn't just approach from the front and walk down the platform if they had the choice? Also, something to avoid is more subterranean halls of lengthy proportions, as the board of the NY MTA has so bitterly insisted about while denigrating the very pleasant modifications made at Penn Station in the '90s incessantly... with crummy results, and no tenants, at about two billion dollars so far, with no appreciable benefit.

Certainly H-Street is an eyesore, **and it should run UNDER the tracks.** But Pergamente as already made Herculean efforts to beautify the inconvenient interface of the new building. So get your "basics" - exigencies - worked out first, and don't lie in the papers that you can produce an even moderately pleasant set of side entrances there without rebuilding the bridge. The grade is too steep. The bridge is a relic. Get rid of it. Bury it. **THEN** set about making your plans for investing in development and developers.

And I'm telling you: the only reason they want Madison Square Garden moved off of Penn Stations is so they can create a tabula rasa rearranging of the columns at track level, **so they can lay it lame**, then develop the property over it so it's permanent. The same thing applies at Washington Union Station. Amtrak doesn't have a good record with historic train stations. They, or their direct predecessors - the Freight Carrier Railroad Engineering FRA Revolving Door Cabal - have trashed a huge number of strategically located train stations, designed by the brightest engineers and architects of their age to serve the public, in sometimes stunning and luxurious settings, of great architectural diversity and often great beauty, intended to last for a couple hundred of years or more.

Amtrak has shown through many of their actions that *They* prefer "AmShack" - regardless of any inconvenience to the public, or the practical inefficiencies of track configurations that their preferred locations often entail. See: Penn Station, Grand Central, Albany, Schenectady, Utica, Rochester, Buffalo, St. Louis (probably our second-greatest station still surviving, but it's blocked!) Cincinnati, Columbus, Springfield, Dayton, Detroit, Kansas City, Joplin, Birmingham, two in Milwaukee, Frank Lloyd Wright's Madison, South Bend, and 3rd & Townsend in San Francisco to name a few.

Please! DON'T LET THEM DO THAT AGAIN.

Very Truly Yours,

Bruce W. Hain

From: [Gene Hunt](#)
To: [Union Station Expansion](#)
Cc: Charles@charlesallenward6.com
Subject: Feedback from Area Residents
Date: Friday, June 16, 2023 12:58:49 PM

Council Member Charles Allen (Ward 6) support's significantly fewer parking spaces at the proposed Union Station development. I completely **disagree**. We do not need people parking cars in our neighborhood as they visit retail shops or they wait for late trains to arrive to pick up guests. People don't take bikes to go on a train. Please make parking easy and accessible with charging stations to support EV green initiatives.

Eugene Hunt

During this period, we're going to simply wait to see if someone raises their hand. We won't put any music on in the background. There won't be any other commentary. So I will I will just say that we're here and we encourage you to to participate in the hearing. And we're just going to be here with with our readiness to hear from you

40:55

For anyone who has just joined, I am Don Edwards I'm going to serve tonight as your host and facilitator, you are participating in a public hearing to receive comments on the supplemental draft environmental impact statement, or SDEIS for the Washington Union Station Expansion Project, which the Federal Railroad Administration made available to the public on May the 12th. This public hearing tonight is designed to capture comments that you make during this hearing. I would instruct you for your information. We have allotted three minutes and we are utilizing a timer that is on the screen. And we ask that you make your comments after raising your hand using the raise hand function. I will then recognize you and your microphone will be opened. When your microphone is open, you'll have three minutes I will give you a verbal cue at one minute. And then at the end, when the timer has ticked down, we ask that you allow a next commenter to have the mic we will be open and conducting the hearing up until around 7pm. And we are going to remain here in order for anyone who desires to get on the record during the period that we are having the hearing. So we are just going to be here happy to see that some of you have stayed and we will be waiting for whatever comments we received tonight. So I will check in periodically open my mic to welcome any new arrivals and thank you for being here.

44:38

I see that. We have a recent phone caller I'm gonna give you instructions. Since you looks like you just joined I want to welcome you. My name is Don Edwards. I'm serving as your facilitator tonight. This is a public hearing being conducted by the Federal Railroad Administration. To receive public comments on the supplemental draft environmental impact statement for the Washington Union Station expansion project. The SDEIS has been made public since May the 12th. And we are receiving comments on a presentation that took place earlier tonight. If you would like to make a comment, please use the raise hand function or use when you use the raise hand function if you're on the phone, we will see that your hand has been raised. Or if you wish to just say that you want to speak, I will recognize you and your microphone will be opened. We have staff listening in and so you will have three minutes to comment. And then we will ask you to let someone else have an opportunity. But each speaker is allotted three minutes your comments will go on the record. Please be aware of that. And also be aware that we will not waver from our commitment to making sure that comments are respectful do not get into the area of obscenity or intimidation. So with that, if you're interested in making a comment, please let us give us a signal and we will open the mic so that you can be heard. Thank you

46:59

just been reminded for phone users to use star nine to raise your hand and let us know that you want to speak

50:59

I see a hand has been raised. I'm going to just make sure that we have the instructions again, before your mic is opened. I want you to know that you are here attending the public hearing to get comments on the supplemental draft environmental impact statement for the Washington Union Station expansion project. Our host in our colleagues tonight from the Federal Railroad Administration, are here to listen to your comments. I see that we have a hand raised. Ken jarboe. Welcome.

51:37

Thank you, Don. It's been a while. I was just going back and looking at the supplemental, which is why it took me so long to get my comment in. I am very concerned about the design of the drop off and pickup locations.

The supplemental says that it is being centralized at the parking garage, yet, they're going to allow pickup and drop off in front of the station. And apparently somewhere around H Street. I am concerned that this proliferation of pickup and drop off sites will just add to greater confusion. And frankly, you know, some of us remember the redesign of Columbus Circle that was supposed to take care of the traffic problems, but it essentially created gridlock in front of the station. And I'm hoping that the new plans will relieve that. there's nothing more unsightly than a large parking lot in front of this historic building.

52:45

Thank you. Thank you Ken if someone else who would like to make a comment, please use the raise hand function or press star nine if you would like to make a comment. We will, we will acknowledge you as soon as we see that raised hand or we get the star nine signal. And we'll open your mic and you'll be able to speak and we'll give you three minutes to do that in and we will be very pleased to have any comments of anyone who's ready to make one. We will be open and available to receive comments until close to our closing time of 7pm

1:02:01

I see that we may have someone who has joined via the phone. Welcome. My name is Don Edwards, I'm serving as your host and facilitator tonight. You have, you are attending a public hearing to record comments from the public in regarding the supplemental draft environmental impact statement for the Washington Union Station expansion project. The draft statement has been released in the public realm since May the 12. And tonight, this hearing is designed to provide a virtual opportunity for your comments to be captured. If you would like to have an opportunity to make a comment, please use the raise hand function and your your name will appear with a hand and I will then call upon you, your mic will be opened and you will have three minutes to make your comment. If you're using the phone, use star nine. In that same process will be used to make sure that you have an opportunity to speak through the phone and have your comments recorded. We will want you to recognize that there are a number of other ways that you can be your comments can be recorded and become part of the public record. There is an email address info at W U S station expansion or one word dot com there is a number that you can leave a voicemail at 800-892-3297. Again 800-892-3297 If you would like to leave a voice message. And we would ask that all comments be submitted on or before July the sixth so that it can become part of the public record. So I don't see a hand raised or I haven't gotten a signal of a star nine. But we will be here and we will be ready. When you're ready. We'll recognize you as soon as we get the signal. I'll make sure I make this announcement periodically just in case you drop in and you're wondering what's going on. Thank you

1:29:50

Hello

1:29:51

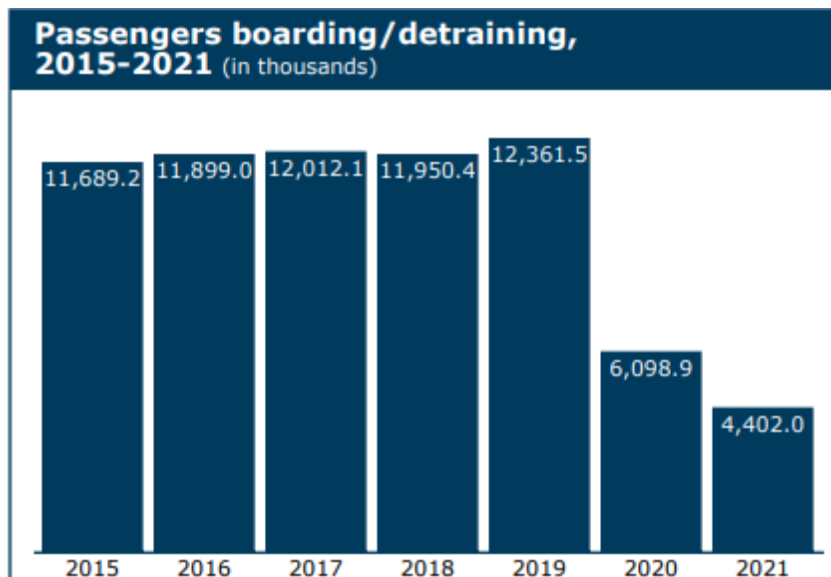
it seems that Don is having some technical difficulties, so I will be stepping in. As a reminder, we are here to take common As for the Washington Union Station expansion project, please raise your hand if you are ready to give your comment you will have three minutes to give your comments. And there are other means of giving your comments such as leaving a voicemail at the phone number that you see on your screen or submitting comment by email to info at Wu s station expansion.com. And with that, I will see if we have any new participants and none as of now, so we will keep this comment period open until a few minutes before seven. If you have anything to contribute, please raise your hand. Thank you

1:43:10

This is a reminder that this is a public hearing and you are invited to give your comments your comments can be submitted by email to info at washing W U S station expansion.com or by voicemail at 800-892-3297. You

From: [Lighter, Jake](#)
To: [Union Station Expansion](#)
Subject: Jake Lighter - Comment
Date: Monday, May 15, 2023 8:52:34 AM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)
[image003.png](#)

I do not believe that the project as currently conceived is justified for the current DC Metro needs. The project runs off of increased passenger rail projections which were conducted pre-Covid and pre-rise of remote work/teleworking (I cannot find data for 2022, but see below for data for 2021 for the NE Corridor). It is specious and deceptive to use numbers from prior projections that do not currently support justification. The DC Metro has many more pressing needs (such as decreasing bus and metro wait times) to prioritize a project with billions in funding that does not change, substantially, the transit realities of daily DC commuters.



Cordially,

Jake



Jake Lighter
Sr. HRIS Analytics Specialist

SPX Technologies, Inc.
6325 Ardrey Kell Road
Suite 400
Charlotte, NC 28277
www.spx.com



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individual or representing an organization whatever the case may be. You will have three minutes there is a timer in the upper window of the screen, which will count down. When it gets to one minute. I will give you a verbal cue of one minute and you will know that your time has begun to run down. At the end of three minutes. We would like to You allow us to recognize the next commenter. So with that, please begin to raise your hands and I will call your name out loud and your microphone will be opened. So I see one person with a hand and that is Jake

25:23

Hello, my name is Jake lighter and I'm only representing myself. I would like to address the ridership projections being used in part as a justification for the seeming necessity of the proposed \$8.8 billion dollar renovation project for Union Station. The projections used 2019 as a ridership baseline, and have as far as I can tell, not been altered to reflect ridership and projected travel conditions for the projected year of 2040. The pre pandemic projections were stated on page 39 of the SDEIS as follows for increased projections and 2019 to 2040. A 95% increase in ridership for Amtrak 150% increase in ridership from Marc and a 250% increase in ridership for VRE. I'd like now to state the current numbers on ridership for these lines. In 2019, the Amtrak Northeast Corridor had a ridership of 12,525,602 and in 2022, had a ridership of 9,235,694, putting ridership at about 74% of 2019. In 2019, Marc had total ridership of 8,976,927, and in 2022 had a ridership of 2,816,561, putting ridership at about 31% of 2019. Finally, in 2019, VRE had a total ridership of 4,475,529 and in 2022 had a ridership of 1,166,830 putting ridership at about 25% in 2019. This means that not only are the pre pandemic projections, but it's a severe doubt, and it's an open question of whether ridership will be able to return to levels they were in 2019 by 2040. Much less consider whether they will have the triple digit increases projected for the proposed renovation project. With conditions such as increased work from home and corporate cutbacks in business travel, I believe it is necessary for the project to receive new projections for 2040. And is it offensive to the US voter in the meeting of knowledge and democracy directed by civilian discourse to use these projections as justification for multibillion dollar mega project after a multi year pandemic that completely upended the realities of travel, it should be obvious that projections based on pre pandemic numbers are no longer accurate. I hope the more honest and accurate projections can be prepared for this project so that DC residents can have genuine conversation on what the justifications for this project are and why we should be throwing sums for a station, which is not in dire ill repair when there are far more pressing transit needs in the metro area. Thank you.

27:43

Jake, thank you very much. I do not see another hand raised coming. I hope that there is someone in the audience who wishes to make a comment. Good. I Turner.

28:08

L Turner, you should. Okay, now,

28:10

can you hear me?

28:11

Yes, we hear you now. Thank you.

28:13

Okay. Um, yes, my name is Lisa. I'm sorry, I didn't put my real name in there. Mine are questions? Forgive me. But I literally just got this flyer, and was trying to get on the meeting. So I missed about the first 12 to 15

MR. EDWARDS: Thank you. All right. I'm going to apologize ahead of time. Char, Chair Matthew?

MR. MATTHEW: Hello. My name is Chase Matthew. Thank -- I'd like to thank the FRA for holding this hearing. I am commenting purely as a private citizen and resident of the district. One of the key statements of need in the Environmental Impact Statement relates to the boarding, fluidity, and capacity of Amtrak trains. And I agree that that is certainly something that needs to be addressed here at Union Station.

My concern is that if Amtrak does not change their boarding procedures, it won't matter how large, beautiful, airy, et cetera, the train concourse is because Amtrak will continue to follow their existing procedure of having people line up in enormous lines 10 to 15 minutes before a train boards, everyone rushing across the concourse when they figure out what track the Northeast Regional will be on, the SCELA (phonetic), et cetera.

I am especially concerned about this because after investing over 8 mil -- 8 billion, excuse me, dollars in Moynihan Train Hall in New York, the same

procedure is being used as at the old Penn Station. So the beautiful train hall is filled with people lining up and enormous lines, which is not an efficient use of space, and it's not the way trains are boarded in almost any first-world country outside of the United States.

So I want to comment and ensure that the FRA and Amtrak are able to collaborate and design a space where either the Amtrak boarding procedures can be modified to make a more efficient use of the space, or the procedures can be changed to hopefully maximize the fluidity of the new train concourse and train movements. Thank you.

MR. EDWARDS: Thank you. All right. That's my list so far. We're going to be here until 8:00. You are certainly free to be here until 8:00 with us. We do have a few refreshments, but might not go very far. You're welcome to get up and look at the boards. We're going to have a -- hold your hand up so we can have you sign up if you want to make a comment. Please come and sign up with Katie here, and I will reconvene you, or at least ask you to be -- respectfully lower your volume. Our colleagues from FRA are going to stay. They're here

From: [KEVIN MOORE](#)
To: [Union Station Expansion](#)
Subject: Suggestion for WUS Expansion
Date: Sunday, July 2, 2023 10:58:01 PM

To Whom It May Concern,

I propose that the Washington Union Station expansion includes a provision for a dedicated Track for Private Car use (non Amtrak, non MARC, or Class One Railroad fleet).

Sincerely,

Kevin Moore, owner

Deep River Rail Ventures, LLC

From: [Ennis Parker](#)
To: [Union Station Expansion](#)
Cc: info@ncpc.gov
Subject: Feedback on Washington union station project
Date: Saturday, May 13, 2023 1:09:42 PM

Dear FRA and NCPC,

I am writing to share my feedback on the Washington union station project. I am a frequent visitor and user of the station and I care about its future.

I appreciate the efforts that you are making to expand and modernize the station to meet the anticipated demand and improve the multimodal access. I think the project has a lot of potential to revitalize the space and make it more attractive and enjoyable for customers.

However, I also have some concerns and suggestions that I hope you will consider as you review and refine the project elements. My main concern is the lack of variety, popularity and quality of the shops and restaurants in the station. I think the station needs more diverse and high-quality options for shopping and dining that can appeal to different tastes and preferences.

Some examples of shops and restaurants that I would like to see in the station are:

- A nice and modern bar and grill that serves burgers, sandwiches, salads, and drinks
- Better coffee shops that offer specialty coffee, tea, pastries, and snacks
- A nice sit down restaurant that serves American or international cuisine

I think these types of shops and restaurants could make the station more lively and enjoyable. They could also attract more customers and generate more revenue for the station.

I also think that the station could learn from some successful examples of other stations or markets in New York, such as Grand Central Terminal or Chelsea market. These places have a variety of food vendors, shops, and events that create a vibrant and cultural atmosphere. They also have a lot of historical and architectural significance that adds to their charm, much as the Union station building does.

I hope you will take my feedback into account as you work on improving Washington union station. I think the station has a lot of potential to become a great destination for travelers and locals alike.

Thank you for your attention and your hard work.

Sincerely,

Ennis Parker

From: [Jazmin Pilar](#)
To: [Union Station Expansion](#)
Subject: Comments- DC Union Station
Date: Sunday, May 21, 2023 6:57:38 PM

Hello,

As a new-er DC resident (two years in September), Union Station has become one of my favorite places in the city. Thank you for providing an FAQ of the process to move towards the renovation and the steps that have been taken to include the local and surrounding communities in the design process.

Today when I was walking through the station, I was curious about the open storefronts/restaurants and some of the walls linking these spaces and wondering what collaborations or initiatives are in place to optimize these spaces?

One thing I've recently noticed and appreciated more at airports is a focus on local history and art/art installation (e.g., Austin, Memphis, San Francisco, etc.) and I wonder if there's any planning or interest in curating temporary exhibitions or a way to honor public history?

If you have any upcoming committees or efforts to explore these types of efforts, please let me know. This is a very exciting project and I look forward to the future of this space.

Much appreciation,
Jazmin

From: [Ashton Rohmer](#)
To: [Union Station Expansion](#)
Cc: [Karthik Balasubramanian](#)
Subject: Union Station comment
Date: Friday, June 16, 2023 12:29:38 PM

First, there should be *no* parking spaces at Union Station. While I appreciate the 77% reduction compared to current parking availability, there are other pioneering train hubs (like NY Penn Station and Chicago Union Station) that have no parking but instead direct people to nearby privately-owned parking facilities (which are also available around Washington Union Station). Union Station is arguably one of the most transit-connected places in the *country*, plus it features access to bicycling, pedestrian, and scooter infrastructure. The space that's dedicated to parking will not only detract from those networks and induce demand, but it will add unnecessary construction costs and use square footage that could be dedicated to other uses that center the needs of people, not cars (such as housing, retail, and community gathering spots). Moreover, there should be no rental car operator at Union Station - we do not need to inject more cars (which will increase congestion, air pollution, and other negative externalities) into the heart of our city.

Furthermore, we need to have more and better facilities and services in and around Union Station for active and public transit modes. Plentiful bikeshare docks should be front and center (rather than relegated to the side of the building where people have to hunt for them). Safe, secure, affordable, and plentiful (personal) bike parking should be easily accessible (see bike garages in the Netherlands for inspiration - also see Oonee for a great solution). Wayfinding should be improved for cyclers, pedestrians, and public transit users alike. Infrastructure in and around Columbus Circle should be redesigned to prioritize the safety and comfort of non-car road users. **Taxis should be directed to the back of the building.** Union Station should be a WMATA + circulator bus hub such that transit connections are the easiest modes to access and are visible and featured prominently. (As a point of comparison, even Silver Spring is showing us up - their Metro station has 2 levels of WMATA + RideOn connections...this is what we should be seeing in the new Union Station as well, because it will allow MANY more people to come to Union Station without a car.)

To sum it up - design creates culture, and right now the current design perpetuates car culture. We need a design that cultivates active and public transportation culture by making those the most convenient modes available. When public health-minded property managers want to encourage people to take the stairs instead of an elevator, they make the stairs the first thing people see, design them to be beautiful and accessible, and tuck elevators in an inconvenient location. We should use the same principle in reimagining Union Station...especially since the new Union Station isn't really that reimagined if it is primarily designed for cars.

I'm waiting for DC to have visionary leaders about at least ONE

transit-related feature of our built environment, and unfortunately the current plan doesn't make the cut. What would being a visionary look like? Fundamentally shifting how we think about mobility to deprioritize dangerous, emissions-spouting cars and to make active and public transit modes the most accessible, visible, and supported ways to get around. This is a once-in-a-generation opportunity to be a national leader in transit and if we want to meet our Vision Zero, climate change, and public health goals, we need to have a lot more courage to prioritize our most vulnerable - yet most sustainable - road users.

--

Ashton Rohmer, AICP

she/her/hers

July 6, 2023

Amanda Murphy
Deputy Federal Preservation Officer
Office of Federal Railroad Policy and
Development USDOT Federal Railroad
Administration (MS-20) 1200 New Jersey Avenue,
SE
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Amanda: It was good to see you at the in-person public meeting at Union Station. Traffic was pretty bad in the neighborhood, so I parked several blocks away and walked. As I approached the station from the east along Massachusetts Avenue NE, I noticed that there is a large Bikeshare station on the right side of the station on the road that one takes to get to F Street NE. That Bikeshare station is not mentioned in the SDEIS, and I'll explain further in my comments below.

My comments in the submission from the Committee of 100 for the Federal City (C100) concerned, for the most part, vehicular and pedestrian transportation around the station. I have developed several supplemental comments that I am submitting on my own since there was not time to add them to the C100 comments.

Sincerely,

James A. Smailes, P.E.

Specific Comments on Figures in Appendix S2

Figure S-10 (page 12) shows the ramps to and from the Below-Ground Facility on G Street NE. But the figure does not show the existing off-street parking on the south side of G Street NE. These metered spaces are on the sidewalk and take up much of the block. There are a lot of spaces and, although it's understandable they would not be available during construction, will those spaces return after construction of the ramps?

Figure S-11 (page 13) – The revised intersection for traffic leaving the front of WUS shows four lanes on the west with two lanes turning right: one to enter First Street (to be made One Way) and the second turning westward onto Massachusetts Ave NE, all bound by new, expanded pedestrian plazas. I like this and it should make both pedestrian and vehicle traffic flow more smoothly and safely.

However, this past year I have become much more observant of the construction of bicycle and roadway “improvements”, or efforts to “calm” traffic. Too often I have seen roadway lanes narrowed to 10 feet with redesigned intersections that actually make it more difficult for traffic to make turns, or curves made too sharp in an attempt to slow traffic. But then, several months later, I’ve seen DDOT crews out fixing the mistakes, making the corners less sharp, or removing traffic islands entirely. I would just like to stress the need for care when designing these expanded pedestrian plazas. The traffic lanes must be wide enough to enable merging before the intersection, allow for ease of turning movements, and avoid creating obstacles that could hinder turning movements.

Figure S-13 (page 16) – The figure shows a large pedestrian island on the eastern approach to separate the left and right turn traffic flows from Massachusetts Avenue NE. There is cross hatching on both sides of the island that defines the size of the lanes. But the crosshatching is not explained in the figure legend. What are these crosshatched areas? Are they paint, or rumble strips? Hopefully, no one will suggest the white channelization posts that have been used far too often. The lanes should not be too restricted since a large volume of traffic will be entering the circle and drivers will need space to merge with the traffic coming from the east.

On the east side of the station, the text explains that the approach to turn onto F Street will be unchanged except for the installation of two pick-up and drop-off spaces for use by WUS tenants. But it doesn’t say what is there now. It is a large Bikeshare facility on the west side of the street. Will all of that space be given over for the two pick-up and drop-off spaces? Or will some Bikeshare stalls remain? If so, this Bikeshare facility is not mentioned in the write up on Bicycles in other parts of the SDEIS. This location should be marked on the figure.

Also, as one bears right to enter that road and before the new crosswalk, there are two pick-up and drop-off spaces on the right for the Thurgood Marshall Building to the east. Although not part of this project, these spaces exist and should be marked as well since they are used now by people going to, and coming from, the station and will continue to be used in the future.

Finally, making the approach on Columbus Circle three lanes has been needed for a long time and should be done as soon as practicable.

Figure S-14 (page 17)– The Street on the upper left of the figure should be labeled K Street NE, not I Street NE.

On the west side of First Street NE from K Street NE southward, the travel lane is defined by a solid white edge line, creating a long length of empty curb which is currently marked No Parking. Perhaps it was used by bicycles before? Regardless, with the completion of the Bicycle Greenway on the east side of the street, DDOT should consider allowing this length of curb to be used for parking.

Washington Union Station Expansion Project

Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement (SDEIS)

JUNE 27, 2023 | WWW.WUSSTATIONEXPANSION.COM

Comment Form

- ① Where is SEATING inside UNION station
- ② pickup & drop off how MANY LANES? (1 or 2 will not work)
- ③ environment
dust = NOISE
what time CAN construction start / and end
- ④ IS ANYONE signing off on this project ACTUALLY LIVE in the area.
- ⑤ what will happen to the hopscotch and work on the H St. Bridge? continue on back if needed ▶

Commenter Information

NAME: G. SULLIVAN

ORGANIZATION (If applicable): live in neighborhood

EMAIL ADDRESS: glsullivan123@gmail.com

ZIP CODE: 20002

Washington Union Station Expansion Project
Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement (SDEIS)

Comment Form (Continued)

Parking: Will it be affordable?

Buses: Will still share Union Station
Will there be a separate entrance
Now area for bus riders is too small

Taxi: Should not have their own space,
causes too much of a back up and gas
emissions from idling waiting

Noise: Will it be dulled with new Union Station
or will it be louder?

Site line: New

Washington Union Station Expansion Project

Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement (SDEIS)

JUNE 27, 2023 | WWW.WUSSTATIONEXPANSION.COM

Comment Form

Environment: you will be digging down for parking along this area when homes are being renovated they are being told they can not dig down due to environmental concerns how are you solving this issue?

Where will the construction debris/truck/etc be dumped.

Traffic: will buses be rerouted?
Will streets around Union Sta. be closed

Continue on back if needed ▶

Commenter Information

NAME:

g. Sullivan

ORGANIZATION (If applicable):

live in neighborhood

EMAIL ADDRESS:

gsullivan123@gmail.com

ZIP CODE:

20007

public realm. I think we all know what that is, but I'll help us if I need to. Be mindful that what you're saying is going to be recorded by this court reporter, and you also have an opportunity after everyone has been heard if you want to speak personally in front of the court reporter, you can sit there at that table.

So I don't know if there are any questions. I hope I've been pretty clear. So the first person that I'm going to call up now is G. Sullivan.

MS. SULLIVAN: My name is Gail Sullivan. I live down the street, so I'm just representing me. Okay? One of my concerns is the building of the garage underneath, and the reason I'm saying this is because living in the neighborhood, we've been told we can build up but we can't build down because of environmental issues. So -- and we're talking in this area, so I find it strange that you've been given permission to dig a hole but as a homebuilder, we can't dig a hole. We can only add a story. That's one.

Second, when construction does start, will it start at 8:00 and end at 5:00? Will it be on the weekends? I've heard nothing in any presentation as to

your time frame for when it will be starting. Because then you're affecting the neighborhood. Will you be closing the streets, you know, at certain times during your different phases?

Also, it's a lot of artwork on the H Street Bridge. What will happen to that? You know, will that be preserved the way you're going to preserve most of Union Station? Will the H Street Bridge artwork -- because a lot of people, you know, gave money for that. And will streets be closed? You know, during the different phases, will -- and when they're -- if they're closed while you're building that, the streets getting -- for construction to get there, what effect will the heavy equipment, which I'm assuming you're going to need, will have on our streets?

You know, I see now where heavy construction takes place and then the streets afterwards are horrible. There are big ditches, you know. They're -- I mean, there are things -- I'm just -- so when you're talking about the environment, are you talking about the infrastructure surrounding the area where you'll be doing? Because you have to go through that

infrastructure to get to where you're going to do your building.

So that part and when I think of the noise now, will it be noise reduction built into what you're doing? Because we've got noise now. I mean, I can hear the trains when I'm sitting in my living room. So when you're adding more things and putting all the cupboards in, and will our sightlines with this new piece of the construction, will it block our sightlines, you know, when we want to see the Capitol or anything? Will any of our sightlines be blocked?

MR. EDWARDS: One minute.

MS. SULLIVAN: Okay. I heard her talk a little bit about parking. So I just -- when we say parking, is it 24-hour parking? Is it weekly parking? You know, how long can you park once you put your car in there and you get on the train?

And, of course, seating. I looked at all your pictures over there. I didn't see a chair in Union Station, so where would people sit? I know when I went to New York and I went in the train -- there was not a chair there. It was no place to sit. So in the new

Union Station, are you taking the seating out? Where will people sit when you do your revising here and making it look better? Will I have benches that I can sit in, because if my train is not leaving right now, people are standing up? So when you build the new ones, will they be standing? That's it.

MR. EDWARDS: Thank you very much. Before I call the next person, Mr. Court Reporter, we have a list that we will give you with the spelling of everyone's name in the order they appeared. Is that right? Okay. Thank you.

Next, Brandon Buchanan.

MR. BUCHANAN: All right. Thank you very much, and thank you for holding this event here this evening in this historic facility. My name is Brandon Buchanan. I am with the American Bus Association, located here in Washington, D.C. And we represent the over-the-road bus industry, about 800, both charter and tour, as well as inner city, site seeing, transit, all of the forms of bus travel, as well as the destinations they go, including this one, Union Station. So we've helped to promote bus parking here at Union Station for over a

individual or representing an organization whatever the case may be. You will have three minutes there is a timer in the upper window of the screen, which will count down. When it gets to one minute. I will give you a verbal cue of one minute and you will know that your time has begun to run down. At the end of three minutes. We would like to You allow us to recognize the next commenter. So with that, please begin to raise your hands and I will call your name out loud and your microphone will be opened. So I see one person with a hand and that is Jake

25:23

Hello, my name is Jake lighter and I'm only representing myself. I would like to address the ridership projections being used in part as a justification for the seeming necessity of the proposed \$8.8 billion dollar renovation project for Union Station. The projections used 2019 as a ridership baseline, and have as far as I can tell, not been altered to reflect ridership and projected travel conditions for the projected year of 2040. The pre pandemic projections were stated on page 39 of the SDEIS as follows for increased projections and 2019 to 2040. A 95% increase in ridership for Amtrak 150% increase in ridership from Marc and a 250% increase in ridership for VRE. I'd like now to state the current numbers on ridership for these lines. In 2019, the Amtrak Northeast Corridor had a ridership of 12,525,602 and in 2022, had a ridership of 9,235,694, putting ridership at about 74% of 2019. In 2019, Marc had total ridership of 8,976,927, and in 2022 had a ridership of 2,816,561, putting ridership at about 31% of 2019. Finally, in 2019, VRE had a total ridership of 4,475,529 and in 2022 had a ridership of 1,166,830 putting ridership at about 25% in 2019. This means that not only are the pre pandemic projections, but it's a severe doubt, and it's an open question of whether ridership will be able to return to levels they were in 2019 by 2040. Much less consider whether they will have the triple digit increases projected for the proposed renovation project. With conditions such as increased work from home and corporate cutbacks in business travel, I believe it is necessary for the project to receive new projections for 2040. And is it offensive to the US voter in the meeting of knowledge and democracy directed by civilian discourse to use these projections as justification for multibillion dollar mega project after a multi year pandemic that completely upended the realities of travel, it should be obvious that projections based on pre pandemic numbers are no longer accurate. I hope the more honest and accurate projections can be prepared for this project so that DC residents can have genuine conversation on what the justifications for this project are and why we should be throwing sums for a station, which is not in dire ill repair when there are far more pressing transit needs in the metro area. Thank you.

27:43

Jake, thank you very much. I do not see another hand raised coming. I hope that there is someone in the audience who wishes to make a comment. Good. I Turner.

28:08

L Turner, you should. Okay, now,

28:10

can you hear me?

28:11

Yes, we hear you now. Thank you.

28:13

Okay. Um, yes, my name is Lisa. I'm sorry, I didn't put my real name in there. Mine are questions? Forgive me. But I literally just got this flyer, and was trying to get on the meeting. So I missed about the first 12 to 15

minutes. So forgive me if my question is asking some of what's already presented. I just right now have only one or two questions, the presentation that's been given, is this available somewhere online? Or where can we find the document with this proposal?

28:55

Once you've already said that, she just joined and you probably did not hear the instructions this hearing is to document questions and comments, but the questions will not be answered in this hearing.

29:09

Okay, then all right. Can you at least tell me where we can find the proposal? Is that not something that we can ask?

29:18

So I will ask you to look at the screen and there is a website, W.usstationexpansion.com The draft supplemental DEIS can be found there. Okay,

29:34

thank you. I will just make one comment in the time that I have left. Because I've obviously missed the record the proposal and everything. I would only hope that you that I didn't hear whether the historic Hall is being preserved. I hope that it is because it's absolutely beautiful. I'd look at it every time that I'm there. Even if I'm just walking through to catch train or a bus. The second comment that I wanted to make is, when I first moved to this area nearly 30 years ago, Union Station was for some of us a destination, there was a movie theater in there, there was a lot of robust shopping. And over time, it did not take very long for it to kind of go downhill. There were, I think, some issues in the movie theater, there were some acts of violence and things like that. And people stopped going there really to shop, and to do things like that. So I do hope that there will be some degree of shops and places where people may want to make Union Station a destination again, not just a place to walk through just to catch a train or a bus, which is what it's become for us lately. Thank

30:49

you. Thank you very much. Let me just mentioned again, the instructions we'd like for you to follow to make your comments tonight and to go on the public record. If you will locate the raise hand function and use it just click on it, we will see a raised hand by your name and I will call your name. At that time, your microphone will be opened. And you will have three minutes to make your comment. And you can see a three minute timer that is set at the beginning of each commenter. We'll use that as a way to manage time and we want to hear from every one. So those are the very simple directions for how you can go on the record. In this hearing. I am looking to see if there is another hand that someone wants to raise and be recognized. And we can make your mic open and hear your comment.

31:58

While you're considering, I will remind you that we will be here until just a few minutes before 7pm. We are required and happy to keep the microphone and keep the hearing available up until the very last minutes. So that we can document as much comment and opinion as we can receive tonight, there will be other ways in which you can send in your comments. I will just mention them. There is as you see a website, there is an email address. There is also a way for you to leave a voicemail at the number that's on the screen. All of these are intended to provide avenues for your input. And we hope you will use them I will caution you that you have until July the sixth only until July the sixth for your comment to be documented.

33:10