

Final Environmental Impact Statement

Appendix F5

Aesthetics and Visual Quality: Visual Assessment







U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Railroad Administration

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Visual Impacts Key



Private Air Rights 	Preferred Alternative 
Potential Federal Air Rights 	Outline of existing element to be removed 



Note: The simulations shown in the following tables convey building mass, height, and setback. For the No-Action Alternative, building volumes reflect the maximum allowable zoning volumes as no more refined plans are available. For the Preferred Alternative, analyses are based on more refined assumptions about mass, height, and setback for the private and potential Federal air rights development, defined in collaboration with the private air rights developer during the post-2020 DEIS refinements of the Preferred Alternative. The massing provided by the developer is illustrative and represents one potential option for the private air rights development.



Table 1: Visual Impacts of the No-Action Alternative


View	Description and Assessment	View of No-Action
<p>1. First Street NE, view looking north:</p>	<p>First Street NE, view looking north: In the distance, especially from Independence Avenue, only the headhouse roof is visible; however, as one approaches Columbus Plaza the entire south elevation of Washington Union Station (WUS) can be seen. As such, the aesthetic and visual impact of the No-Action Alternative changes as one approaches WUS. The No-Action Alternative would have a major adverse impact on this view as the private air-rights development would be highly noticeable. The buildable volume would have visibility and would change the silhouette of the station, especially from First Street NE and C Street NE where the barrel vault of the WUS headhouse would be interrupted by the massing of the development. What was once perceived as open space behind the station would be built up. There would be moderate to high sensitivity as the No-Action Alternative would noticeably change the character of the view behind the station.</p>	

View	Description and Assessment	View of No-Action
<p>2. Delaware Avenue NE, view looking northeast:</p>	<p>Delaware Avenue NE, view looking northeast: From Constitution Avenue NE, C Street NE, and D Street NE only the center three bays of the WUS headhouse are visible; however, as one approaches Columbus Plaza, the entire south elevation of WUS can be seen. The aesthetic and visual impact of the No-Action Alternative changes as one approaches WUS. The No-Action Alternative would have a major adverse impact on this view as the private air-rights development would be highly noticeable. The buildable volume would have high visibility and would change the silhouette of this view, one of the primary views of the L’Enfant and McMillan Plans connecting the U.S. Capitol Grounds with WUS. The barrel vault of the WUS headhouse would be interrupted by the massing of the development on both sides and what was once perceived as open space behind the station would be built up. In addition, the development is not symmetrical, and the east side would be noticeably taller than the west. There would be moderate to high sensitivity and the No-Action Alternative would noticeably change the character of the view.</p>	



View	Description and Assessment	View of No-Action
<p>3. Louisiana Avenue NE, view looking northeast:</p>	<p>Louisiana Avenue NE, view looking northeast: Along Louisiana Avenue NE only the center pavilion of the WUS headhouse is visible; however, as one approaches Columbus Plaza, the entire south elevation of WUS and the far west portion of the WUS parking facility can be seen. As such the visual impact of the No-Action Alternative changes as one approaches WUS. The No- Action would have a major adverse impact on this view as the private air-rights development would be moderately to highly visible. The private air-rights would provide a backdrop to the barrel vault where there is currently open space. The private air-rights would rise above the roofline of the barrel vault. There would be high sensitivity as the No-Action Alternative would noticeably change the character of the view.</p>	
<p>4. E Street NE, looking northeast:</p>	<p>E Street NE, looking northeast: From E Street NE and North Capitol Street, portions of the south and west elevations of WUS are visible; however, as one approaches Columbus Plaza the entire south elevation of WUS and the far west portion of the WUS parking garage can be seen. The No-Action Alternative would have a moderate adverse impact on this view. The visual assessment indicates that the private air-rights development would be moderately visible and will be partially obscured by the existing parking garage. There would be moderate sensitivity because the alternative would be visible between the west pavilion and the barrel vault and would change the character of the view.</p>	


View	Description and Assessment	View of No-Action
<p>5. F Street NW, view looking east:</p>	<p>F Street NW, view looking east: F Street NW is truncated at First Street NW; the Georgetown University Law School and Interstate 395 (I-395) lay to the west. Only the front portion of the WUS headhouse and Columbus Plaza are visible from F Street NW. The No-Action Alternative is not visible and would have no impact on this view. The character of the view, defined by multi-story commercial buildings, would not change.</p>	
<p>6. Massachusetts Ave NW, view looking east:</p>	<p>Massachusetts Ave NW, view looking east: Only Columbus Plaza is visible from Massachusetts Avenue NW. The No-Action Alternative is not visible and would have no impact on this view. The character of the view, defined by multi-story commercial buildings and the City Post Office, would not change.</p>	



View	Description and Assessment	View of No-Action
<p>7. G Street NW, view looking east:</p>	<p>G Street NW, view looking east: The WUS parking garage is visible along G Street NW. The street is characterized by institutional and commercial buildings, especially the US Government Publishing Office Building and the former Gales School on the corner of Massachusetts Avenue and G Street NW. The No-Action Alternative would have no impact on this view as the private air-rights development would be largely obscured by the existing WUS parking garage. There would be low sensitivity as the No-Action Alternative would only be slightly noticeable. The No-Action Alternative would not change the character of the view.</p>	
<p>8. H Street NW, view looking east:</p>	<p>H Street NW, view looking east: The H Street Bridge and WUS parking garage is visible from First Street NW looking east towards the Project Area. The view is characterized by the commercial and institutional buildings flanking the street west of the bridge. From the H Street Bridge, the WUS parking garage is visible. The WUS headhouse and Terminal Rail Yard are not visible to pedestrians due to the height of the bridge barrier walls. The No-Action Alternative would have a minor adverse impact. There would be moderate visibility and low sensitivity as the No-Action Alternative would minimally change the character of the view looking east along H Street, which is defined by the existing commercial and institutional buildings.</p>	

View	Description and Assessment	View of No-Action
<p>9. K Street NW, view looking east:</p>	<p>K Street NW, view looking east: K Tower and other elements of the Terminal Rail Yard, including the K Street underpass and sections of the Burnham Walls, are partially visible looking east from the intersection with First Street NE. However, the cultural environment to the west of the rail yard is defined by the large commercial and institutional buildings that frame the street. The No-Action Alternative would have a minor adverse impact on the view as it would be slightly noticeable. There would be moderate visibility and low sensitivity as the No-Action Alternative would minimally change the character of the view, which is defined by the existing multi-story commercial and institutional buildings.</p>	
<p>10. First Street NE, view looking south:</p>	<p>First Street NE, view looking south: The WUS Burnham Walls are visible looking south towards the Project Area from the intersection with K Street, while the WUS parking garage is visible from New York Avenue. The street is characterized by the Metropolitan Branch Trail that runs beside it as well as many multi-story commercial and multi-family residential buildings. The grade change of the existing street and presence of the Burnham Walls prevents a view of the rail yard, and the view towards WUS is blocked by the existing parking garage. The No-Action Alternative would have a moderate adverse impact on this view as it would be highly noticeable, filling in what is perceived as open space above the Burnham Walls with development. There would be moderate sensitivity as the No-Action Alternative would only moderately change the character of the cultural environment, which is already defined by the existing commercial and institutional buildings on the west side of the street as well as the existing WUS parking garage rising above the Burnham Wall.</p>	



View	Description and Assessment	View of No-Action
<p>11. New York Avenue Bridge NE, view looking south:</p>	<p>New York Avenue Bridge NE, view looking south: From the New York Avenue NE Bridge, the Terminal Rail Yard, WUS, and WUS parking garage are visible. The U.S. Capitol is also visible beyond. The No-Action Alternative would have a major adverse impact on this view as it would be highly noticeable. There would be high sensitivity as the No-Action Alternative would noticeably change the character of the built environment and the vista, obscuring the view of the U.S. Capitol as well as the view connecting the rail yard to the WUS headhouse.</p>	
<p>12. Second Street NE, view looking south:</p>	<p>Second Street NE, view looking south: The view of the Project Area changes as one moves south along Second Street NE. From M Street NE and L Street NE, elements of the Terminal Rail Yard are visible including the Burnham Walls, street underpasses, and several catenaries and signal bridges within the yard. At K Street NE, Substation 25A is also visible, and at I Street NE the REA Building comes into view. Second Street NE is bordered by the Terminal Rail Yard to the west and mostly single-family rowhouses and multi-family apartment buildings of various styles and ages. The No-Action Alternative would have a major adverse impact on this view as it would be highly noticeable. Substation 25A would be removed and dense commercial and residential development would occupy what is characterized as the open and industrial rail yard. There would be high sensitivity as the No-Action Alternative would noticeably change the scale and character of development within the rail yard and behind the REA building.</p>	



View	Description and Assessment	View of No-Action
<p>13. K Street NE, view looking west:</p>	<p>K Street NE, view looking west: Looking west along K Street NE, the K Street NE underpass and Burnham Walls of the Terminal Rail Yard are visible. K Street NE is characterized by two-story traditional row houses as well as new multi-story residential and mixed-use buildings of various styles and ages. The No-Action Alternative would have a moderate adverse impact on this view as it would be highly noticeable. There would be high visibility and moderate sensitivity as the No-Action Alternative would moderately change the scale and character of the mostly residential neighborhood, which historically was characterized by single family residences, but is currently experiencing increased multi-story residential and mixed-use development.</p>	
<p>14. I Street NE, view looking west:</p>	<p>I Street NE, view looking west: The REA building is directly visible looking west along I Street NE. The street is characterized by a mixture of multi-story, multi-family apartment buildings and two-story single-family row houses of varying styles and ages. The No-Action Alternative would have a moderate adverse impact on this view as it would be highly visible, changing the scale of development behind the REA building. There would be moderate sensitivity as the No-Action Alternative would moderately change the scale and character of the mostly residential neighborhood, which historically was characterized by single family residences, but is currently experiencing increased multi-story residential development.</p>	

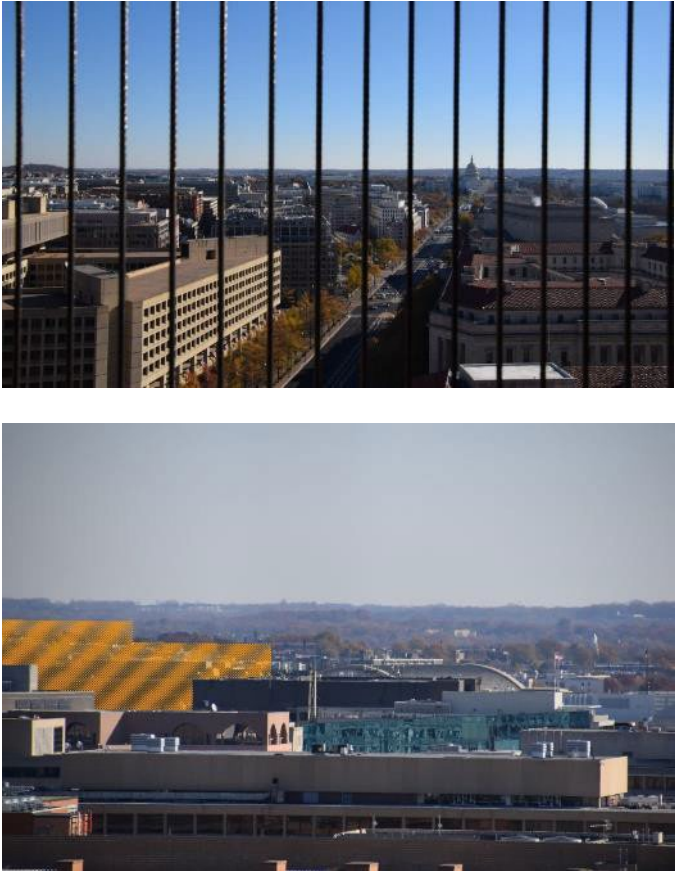

View	Description and Assessment	View of No-Action
<p>15. H Street NE, view looking west:</p>	<p>H Street NE, view looking west: Looking west along the H Street NE commercial corridor, the H Street Bridge and WUS parking garage are visible. From the H Street Bridge, portions of the Terminal Rail Yard are also visible, including the REA Building and K Tower. The roof of the WUS headhouse is also visible. H Street NE is a busy commercial corridor and features many multi-story commercial buildings, residences, and mixed-use buildings of various styles and ages. The No-Action Alternative would have a minor adverse impact on this view. There would be moderate visibility and low sensitivity as the No-Action Alternative would minimally change the character of the view, defined by the bridge and the multi-story commercial and residential buildings.</p>	
<p>16. G Street NE, view looking west</p>	<p>G Street NE, view looking west: The No-Action Alternative would have a minor adverse impact on this view as it would be slightly noticeable. There would be moderate visibility and low sensitivity as the No-Action Alternative would minimally change the character of the view, defined by the existing two- and three-story residential and civic buildings along G Street NE and multi-story commercial buildings along 2nd Street NE.</p>	

View	Description and Assessment	View of No-Action
<p>17. F Street NE, view looking west:</p>	<p>F Street NE, view looking west: Looking west, the WUS headhouse and a section of the original passenger concourse (currently retail) are visible. The No-Action Alternative is hardly visible and would have a negligible adverse impact on this view. There would be low visibility and low sensitivity as the No-Action Alternative would not change the character of the view, defined by the existing two- and three-story residential and commercial buildings along F Street NE and multi-story commercial buildings along 2nd Street NE.</p>	
<p>18. Massachusetts Avenue NE, view looking northwest:</p>	<p>Massachusetts Avenue NE, view looking northwest: Columbus Plaza and Columbus Fountain are visible along Massachusetts Avenue until one approaches Columbus Circle NE where the South elevation of WUS becomes visible. The No-Action Alternative is hardly visible and would have a negligible adverse impact on this view, as the private air-rights development would not be noticeable. The Thurgood Marshall Federal Judicial Center would largely obscure any new development. There would be low visibility and sensitivity as the character of the view, defined by the Thurgood Marshall Center and the headhouse of WUS, would not be changed.</p>	

View	Description and Assessment	View of No-Action
<p>19. View from Columbus Plaza:</p>	<p>View from Columbus Plaza: Columbus Plaza provides direct views of the entire south façade of WUS. The Project Area is not visible from the center of the plaza; however, as one moves east and west, some areas of the existing WUS infrastructure including the existing parking garage and ramps are visible. The No-Action Alternative would have a minor adverse impact on this view as the private air-rights development have low visibility due to the height and angle of the existing headhouse and the fact that the existing parking garage and ramps would obscure any new development. There would be moderate sensitivity as the character of the view, defined by the open space of the plaza and view of the south elevation of WUS, would not be changed but the private air-rights would interrupt the WUS roofline.</p>	
<p>20. View from Columbus Circle Drive – East Side:</p>	<p>View from Columbus Circle Drive – East Side: Columbus Circle Drive NE is the roadway surrounding Columbus Plaza with direct connections to E Street NE, Louisiana Avenue NE, Delaware Avenue NE, First Street NE, and Massachusetts Avenue NE. The No-Action Alternative would have a moderate adverse impact on this view as it would be moderately visible from the east side of the circle near First Street NE. There would be moderate sensitivity as the private air-rights volume that would be visible from the east side of the circle would not interrupt the barrel-vaulted silhouette of the station but the view, characterized by the perceived openness behind the station, would be altered. However, the open nature of the plaza and view of the south elevation of WUS would not be changed.</p>	

View	Description and Assessment	View of No-Action
<p>21. View from Columbus Circle Drive – West Side:</p>	<p>View from Columbus Circle Drive – West Side: Columbus Circle Drive NE is the roadway surrounding Columbus Plaza with direct connections to E Street NE, Louisiana Avenue NE, Delaware Avenue NE, First Street NE, and Massachusetts Avenue NE. The No-Action Alternative would have no impact on this view as it would be slightly noticeable from the west side of the circle near Louisiana Avenue NE. There would be low sensitivity as the private air-rights volume would be obscured from view by the headhouse and existing station parking garage. The open nature of the plaza and view of the south elevation of WUS would not be changed.</p>	
<p>22. View from Washington Monument:</p>	<p>View from Washington Monument: The private air-rights development would have low visibility and low sensitivity as the No-Action Alternative would be compatible with the existing urban context. Therefore, from this view the No-Action Alternative would have a negligible adverse impact. The view, characterized by the open nature of the National Mall flanked on either side by civic and institutional buildings, would not be changed.</p>	

View	Description and Assessment	View of No-Action
<p>23. View from Arlington House at Arlington National Cemetery:</p>	<p>View from Arlington House at Arlington National Cemetery: The Project Area and private air-rights development is not visible in plain view and can only be identified using binoculars or a zoom lens on a camera as seen in the lower image. In plain view there would be little to no visibility and little to no sensitivity. Therefore, from this view the No-Action Alternative would have no impact.</p>	
<p>24. View from U.S. Capitol Dome:</p>	<p>View from U.S. Capitol Dome: The No-Action Alternative would have a moderate adverse impact on this view. The private air-rights development is moderately visible. There would be moderate sensitivity as the No-Action Alternative would have an allowed buildable volume height that is greater than other buildings in the area but does not extend above the horizon line. The new development would moderately change the view by obstructing the view of the Terminal Rail Yard and bridging the commercial, institutional, and residential development to the east and the west of the station, creating a cultural environment that is more uniform from east to west. Views to WUS and the Senate Office Buildings as well as the view along North Capitol Street would remain unchanged.</p>	

View	Description and Assessment	View of No-Action
<p>25. View from the Old Post Office Building:</p>	<p>View from the Old Post Office Building: The Project Area and private air-rights development is difficult to identify in plain view through the safety bars within the Old Post Office observation tower and can only be seen clearly using binoculars or a zoom lens on a camera as seen in the lower image. The private air-rights development would be visible; however, due to the distance the No-Action Alternative is slightly noticeable. There would be low sensitivity as the No-Action Alternative would be compatible with the existing urban context. Therefore, from this view the No-Action Alternative would have a negligible impact. The view, characterized by multi-story commercial buildings, would not be changed.</p>	
<p>26. View from Washington National Cathedral:</p>	<p>View from Washington National Cathedral: From the bell tower of the National Cathedral looking southeast, the view is characterized by dense tree cover transitioning to relatively dense, mid-height urban development. The alternative would have little to no visibility and no sensitivity due to the distance from the Project Area. The alternative would be compatible with the existing urban context. The character of the view would not be changed; therefore, from this view, the No-Action Alternative would have no impact.</p>	







View	Description and Assessment	View of No-Action
<p>27. View from St. Elizabeths West Campus:</p>	<p>View from St. Elizabeths West Campus: Looking northwest to downtown Washington, DC the view is characterized by the Anacostia River and dense urban development beginning north of the river. The private air-rights development is not visible. There would be no visibility or sensitivity and the character of the view would not be changed; therefore, from this view, there is no impact.</p>	
<p>28. View from H Street Bridge</p>	<p>H Street Bridge, view looking south: Looking south, the view of the rail yard and much of the station building is obscured by the H Street Bridge barrier wall. The existing station parking garage dominates the view to the right (west) while elsewhere the view is characterized by the openness and views to the sky. The No-Action Alternative would have a major adverse impact on this view as it would be highly noticeable. Dense commercial and residential development would occupy what is characterized as the open space beyond the bridge. There would be high sensitivity as the No-Action Alternative would noticeably change the scale and character of development along the bridge.</p>	



Table 2: Visual Impacts of the Preferred Alternative (Alternative F)


View	Description and Assessment	View of the Preferred Alternative
<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">1. First Street NE, view looking north:</p>	<p>First Street NE, view looking north: In the distance, especially from Independence Avenue NE, only the WUS headhouse roof is visible; however, as one approaches Columbus Plaza the entire south elevation of WUS can be seen. As such, the aesthetic and visual impact changes as one approaches WUS.</p> <p><i>Compared to existing conditions, the Preferred Alternative would have a major adverse impact on this view. The visual assessment indicates that the Preferred Alternative is visible above the headhouse roof and at the far eastern corner and visually intersects WUS below the cornice line of the East Hall, making it highly noticeable. There would be moderate to high visibility and sensitivity and the Preferred Alternative would noticeably change the character of the view.</i></p> <p><i>Compared to the No-Action Alternative, the Preferred Alternative would have a minor adverse impact on this view. The visual assessment indicates that the Preferred Alternative is visible above the headhouse roof and at the far eastern corner. However, these volumes are visually balanced by the private air rights development. Therefore, there would be moderate visibility and low sensitivity and the Preferred Alternative would change the character of the view to a minor degree.</i></p>	 <p style="text-align: center;">The Preferred Alternative and Existing Conditions</p>  <p style="text-align: center;">The Preferred Alternative and No-Action</p>



View	Description and Assessment	View of The Preferred Alternative
<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">2. Delaware Avenue NE, view looking northeast:</p>	<p>Delaware Avenue NE, view looking northeast: From Constitution Avenue NE, C Street NE, and D Street NE only the center three bays of the WUS headhouse are visible; however, as one approaches Columbus Plaza, the entire south elevation of WUS can be seen. The aesthetic and visual impact changes as one approaches WUS.</p> <p><i>Compared to existing conditions, the Preferred Alternative would have a major adverse impact on this view as the Project would be highly noticeable. The buildable volume would change the silhouette of this view, one of the primary views of the L'Enfant and McMillan Plans connecting the U.S. Capitol Grounds with WUS. The barrel vault of the WUS headhouse would be interrupted by the massing of the development on the west and what was once perceived as open space behind the station would be built up. The symmetrical composition of the roof profile would also change. There would be moderate to high sensitivity and the Preferred Alternative would noticeably change the character of the view.</i></p> <p><i>Compared to the No-Action Alternative, the Preferred Alternative would have a moderate adverse impact on this view. While it is highly noticeable, it would create a visual symmetry with the private air rights development on the east by visually complementing its height. Therefore, there would be low to moderate sensitivity. The Preferred Alternative would moderately change the character of the view, established by the No-Action Alternative.</i></p>	<div>  </div> <p>The Preferred Alternative and Existing Conditions</p> <div>  </div> <p>The Preferred Alternative and No-Action</p>

View	Description and Assessment	View of The Preferred Alternative
<p>3. Louisiana Avenue NW view looking northeast:</p>	<p>Louisiana Avenue NW view looking northeast: At certain points along Louisiana Avenue NW only the center pavilion of the WUS headhouse is visible; however, as one approaches Columbus Plaza, the entire south elevation of WUS and the far west portion of the WUS parking facility can be seen. As such the visual impact changes as one approaches WUS.</p> <p><i>Compared to existing conditions</i>, the Preferred Alternative would have a moderate adverse impact on this view as the development would be moderately noticeable. While the development is highly visible, it is sufficiently set back from the historic headhouse to appear as part of the urban context north of the station. There would be moderate visibility and sensitivity, and the Preferred Alternative would moderately change the character of the view.</p> <p><i>Compared to the No-Action Alternative</i>, the Preferred Alternative would have a minor adverse impact on this view as the change would be moderately noticeable. The Preferred Alternative, from this angle, would have moderate visibility and low sensitivity, being balanced by the private air rights development to the east. The Preferred Alternative would not change the character of the view that exhibits development behind the headhouse.</p>	 <p>The Preferred Alternative and Existing Conditions</p>  <p>The Preferred Alternative and No-Action</p>



View	Description and Assessment	View of The Preferred Alternative
<p>4. E Street NE, looking northeast:</p>	<p>E Street NE, looking northeast: From E Street NE and North Capitol Street, portions of the south and west elevations of WUS are visible; however, as one approaches Columbus Plaza the entire south elevation of WUS and the far west portion of the WUS parking facility can be seen.</p> <p><i>Compared to existing conditions, the Preferred Alternative would have a negligible adverse impact on this view as the Preferred Alternative would match or be less visible than the existing parking garage. The Federal air-rights development would be set back and would not rise above the west pavilion of the headhouse causing low sensitivity. The Preferred Alternative would not change the character of the existing view.</i></p> <p><i>Compared to the No-Action Alternative, the Preferred Alternative would have a negligible adverse impact on this view. The potential Federal air rights development would not rise above the roofline of the west pavilion and would have low visibility and sensitivity. The Preferred Alternative would not change the character of the view.</i></p>	<div> </div> <p>The Preferred Alternative and Existing Conditions</p> <div> </div> <p>The Preferred Alternative and No-Action</p>

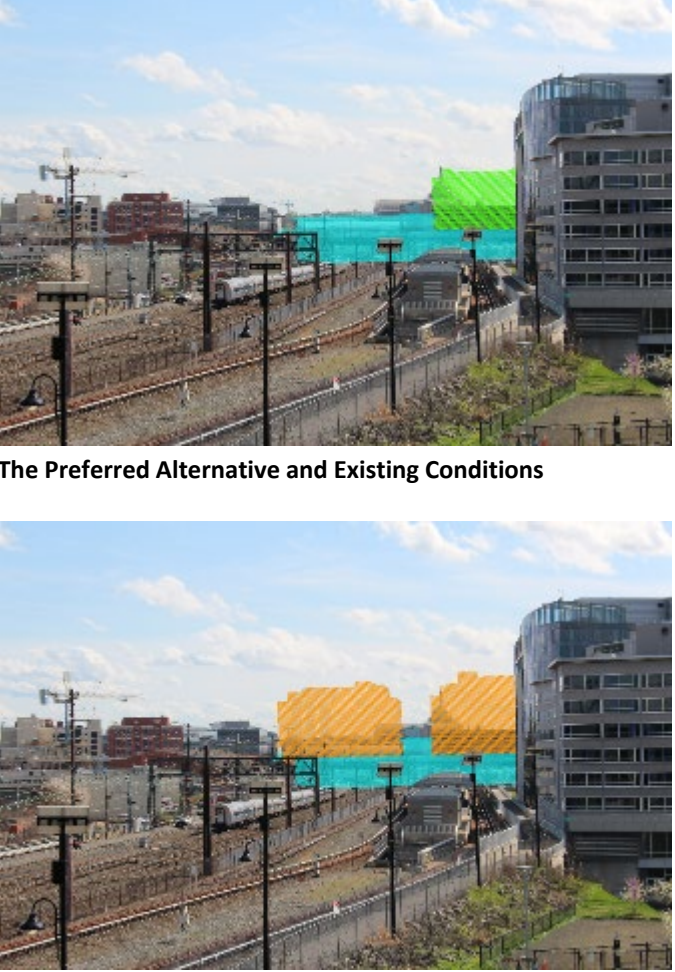
View	Description and Assessment	View of The Preferred Alternative
<p>5. F Street NW, view looking east:</p>	<p>F Street NW, view looking east: F Street NW is truncated at First Street NW; the Georgetown University Law School and I-395 lay to the west. Only the front portion of the WUS headhouse and Columbus Plaza are visible from F Street NW.</p> <p>The Preferred Alternative is barely visible from this view, but the potential Federal air rights development would appear in the corner on the left, as denoted by the blue arrow. When compared to both existing conditions and the No-Action Alternative, the Preferred Alternative would have extremely low visibility and no sensitivity and would not change the character of the view. Therefore, the Preferred Alternative would have a negligible adverse impact on this view.</p>	 <p>The Preferred Alternative and Existing Conditions/ No-Action</p>
<p>6. Massachusetts Ave NW, view looking east:</p>	<p>Massachusetts Ave NW, view looking east: Only Columbus Plaza is visible from Massachusetts Avenue NW. Neither the No-Action Alternative nor the Preferred Alternative is visible from this vantage point. Therefore, there is no impact on this view. The character of the view, defined by multi-story commercial buildings and the City Post Office, would not change.</p>	 <p>The Preferred Alternative and Existing Conditions/ No-Action</p>



View	Description and Assessment	View of The Preferred Alternative
<p>7. G Street NW, view looking east:</p>	<p>G Street NW, view looking east: The WUS parking facility is visible along G Street NW. The street is characterized by institutional and commercial buildings, especially the US Government Publishing Office Building and the former Gales School on the corner of Massachusetts Avenue NW and G Street NW.</p> <p><i>Compared to existing conditions and the No-Action Alternative, the Preferred Alternative would have a beneficial impact on this view.</i></p> <p>The visual assessment indicates that the Preferred Alternative would be less visible than the existing parking garage, which is the only portion of WUS visible from G Street NW. The Preferred Alternative would include the removal of the parking garage, opening the view to the east and making the entire cornice line of the City Post Office more prominent.</p> <p><i>Compared to the No-Action Alternative, the Preferred Alternative would also have a beneficial impact on this view.</i> The parking garage would be removed, opening the view to the east and making the entire cornice line of the City Post Office more prominent.</p>	 <p>The top photograph, titled "The Preferred Alternative and Existing Conditions", shows a street view with a large, multi-story building (the City Post Office) on the right. A white van and a red car are visible on the street. A colorful banner is strung across the street in the foreground.</p> <p>The bottom photograph, titled "The Preferred Alternative and No Action", shows the same street view but with a different perspective or lighting, highlighting the building's facade and the banner.</p>



View	Description and Assessment	View of The Preferred Alternative
<p>8. H Street NW, view looking east:</p>	<p>H Street NW, view looking east: The H Street Bridge and WUS parking facility is visible from First Street NW looking east towards the Project Area. The view is characterized by the commercial and institutional buildings flanking the street west of the bridge. From the H Street Bridge, the WUS parking facility is visible. The WUS headhouse and Terminal Rail Yard are not visible to pedestrians due to the height of the bridge barrier walls.</p> <p><i>Compared to existing conditions, the Preferred Alternative would have a negligible adverse impact on this view as it would be slightly noticeable. There would be low visibility and low sensitivity, and the Preferred Alternative would not change the character of the view, defined by the bridge and the multi-story commercial and residential buildings.</i></p> <p><i>Compared to the No-Action Alternative, the Preferred Alternative would have no impact on this view as it would not be visually distinct from the private air rights.</i></p>	 <p>The Preferred Alternative and Existing Conditions</p>  <p>The Preferred Alternative and No-Action</p>

View	Description and Assessment	View of The Preferred Alternative
<p>9. K Street NW, view looking east:</p>	<p>K Street NW, view looking east: K Tower and other elements of the Terminal Rail Yard, including the K Street underpass and sections of the Burnham Walls, are visible looking east from the intersection with First Street NE. However, the cultural environment to the west of the rail yard is defined by the large commercial and institutional buildings that frame the street. Therefore, the view changes as one approaches the intersection with First Street NE and the character of the view changes from one of a dense urban environment to one defined by the open and industrial nature of the rail yard.</p> <p><i>Compared to existing conditions and the No-Action Alternative, the Preferred Alternative would have a negligible adverse impact on the view. At K Street and First Street NW, the Preferred Alternative is hardly noticeable. There would be low visibility and low sensitivity. The Preferred Alternative would not change the character of the view, which is defined by the existing multi-story commercial and institutional buildings.</i></p>	<div> </div> <p>The Preferred Alternative and Existing Conditions</p> <div> </div> <p>The Preferred Alternative and No-Action</p>



View	Description and Assessment	View of The Preferred Alternative
<p>10. First Street NE, view looking south:</p>	<p>First Street NE, view looking south: The WUS Burnham Walls are visible looking south towards the Project Area from the intersection with K Street NE, while the WUS parking facility is visible from New York Avenue NE. The street is characterized by the Metropolitan Branch Trail that runs beside it as well as many multi-story commercial and multi-family residential buildings. The grade change of the existing street and presence of the Burnham Walls prevents a view of the rail yard, and the view towards WUS is blocked by the existing parking garage.</p> <p><i>Compared to existing conditions, the Preferred Alternative would have a moderate adverse impact</i> on this view as it would be highly noticeable, filling in what is perceived as open space above the Burnham Walls with development. The existing parking garage would be removed in the Preferred Alternative, further opening the view south along First Street NE.</p> <p>There would be moderate sensitivity as the Preferred Alternative would only moderately change the character of the cultural environment, which is already defined by the existing commercial and institutional buildings on the west side of the street.</p> <p><i>Compared to the No-Action Alternative, the Preferred Alternative would have no impact</i> on this view as it would not be visually distinct from the private air rights.</p>	 <p>The Preferred Alternative and Existing Conditions</p>  <p>The Preferred Alternative and No-Action</p>

View	Description and Assessment	View of The Preferred Alternative
<p>11. New York Avenue Bridge NE, view looking south:</p>	<p>New York Avenue Bridge NE, view looking south: From the New York Avenue NE Bridge, the Terminal Rail Yard is visible in the foreground and defines the character of the view. WUS and WUS parking facility are visible. The U.S. Capitol is also visible beyond. The views to these elements changes as one walks (or drives) across the bridge. As such, the aesthetic and visual impact changes.</p> <p><i>Compared to existing conditions, the Preferred Alternative would have a moderate adverse impact on this view as it would be highly noticeable. There would be moderate sensitivity as the Preferred Alternative would moderately change the environment and the vista, interrupting the view of the rail yard closest to WUS and— from the specific vantage point shown in the photo—a portion of the U.S. Capitol. However, the character-defining element of the view, namely of the Terminal Rail Yard in the foreground, would be maintained and the majority of the WUS headhouse would be visible.</i></p> <p><i>Compared to the No-Action Alternative, the Preferred Alternative would have no impact on this view as it would not be visually distinct from the private air rights.</i></p>	 <p>The Preferred Alternative and Existing Conditions</p> <p>The Preferred Alternative and No-Action</p>


View	Description and Assessment	View of The Preferred Alternative
<p>12. Second Street NE, view looking south:</p>	<p>Second Street NE, view looking south: The view of the Project Area changes as one moves south along Second Street NE. From M Street NE and L Street NE, elements of the Terminal Rail Yard are visible, including the Burnham Walls, street underpasses, and several catenaries and signal bridges within the yard. At K Street NE, Substation 25A is also visible, and at I Street NE the REA Building comes into view. Second Street NE is bordered by the Terminal Rail Yard to the west and mostly single-family rowhouses and multi-family apartment buildings of various styles and ages.</p> <p><i>Compared to existing conditions, the Preferred Alternative would have a moderate adverse impact on the view. The Preferred Alternative is moderately visible and changes the perception of openness beyond the existing Substation 25A. There would be moderate sensitivity as the view would moderately change.</i></p> <p><i>Compared to the No-Action Alternative, the Preferred Alternative would have no impact on this view as it would not be visually distinct from the private air rights.</i></p>	 <p>The Preferred Alternative and Existing Conditions</p>  <p>The Preferred Alternative and No-Action</p>



View	Description and Assessment	View of The Preferred Alternative
<p>13. K Street NE, view looking west:</p>	<p>K Street NE, view looking west: Looking west along K Street NE, the K Street underpass and Burnham Walls of the Terminal Rail Yard are visible. K Street NE is characterized by two-story traditional row houses as well as new multi-story residential and mixed-use buildings of various styles and ages.</p> <p><i>Compared to existing conditions, the Preferred Alternative would have a negligible adverse impact on the view. It would be slightly noticeable and there would be low visibility and low sensitivity. The Preferred Alternative is in keeping with the scale of the neighborhood and does not change the character of the view.</i></p> <p><i>Compared to the No-Action Alternative, the Preferred Alternative would have no impact on this view as it would not be visually distinct from the private air rights.</i></p>	 <p>The Preferred Alternative and Existing Conditions</p>  <p>The Preferred Alternative and No-Action</p>


View	Description and Assessment	View of The Preferred Alternative
<p>14. I Street NE, view looking west:</p>	<p>I Street NE, view looking west: The REA building is directly visible looking west along I Street NE. The street is characterized by a mixture of multi-story, multi-family apartment buildings and two-story single-family row houses of varying styles and ages.</p> <p><i>Compared to existing conditions and the No-Action Alternative, the Preferred Alternative would have no impact on this view as it would not be visible from I Street NE. It would not change the character of the view.</i></p>	<div> </div> <p>The Preferred Alternative and Existing Conditions</p> <div> </div> <p>The Preferred Alternative and No-Action</p>

View	Description and Assessment	View of The Preferred Alternative
15. H Street NE, view looking west:	<p>H Street NE, view looking west: Looking west along the H Street NE commercial corridor, the H Street Bridge and WUS parking facility are visible. From the H Street Bridge, portions of the Terminal Rail Yard are also visible, including the REA Building and K Tower. The roof of the WUS headhouse is also visible. H Street NE is a busy commercial corridor and features many multi-story commercial buildings, residences, and mixed-use buildings of various styles and ages.</p> <p><i>Compared to existing conditions, the Preferred Alternative would have a minor adverse impact on this view. The Preferred Alternative would have moderate visibility and low sensitivity as the alternative would minimally change the character of the view looking east along H Street NE, which is defined by the existing commercial, multi-story residential, and institutional buildings.</i></p> <p><i>Compared to the No-Action Alternative, the Preferred Alternative would have no impact on this view as it would not be visually distinct from the private air rights.</i></p>	 <p>The Preferred Alternative and Existing Conditions</p>  <p>The Preferred Alternative and No-Action</p>



View	Description and Assessment	View of The Preferred Alternative
<p>16. G Street NE, view looking west:</p>	<p>G Street NE, view looking west: This view is defined by the existing two- and three-story residential and civic buildings along G Street NE and multi-story commercial buildings along Second Street NE.</p> <p><i>Compared to existing conditions, the Preferred Alternative would have a negligible adverse impact on this view. There would be low sensitivity, as the Preferred Alternative would be only slightly visible from G Street NE. It would not change the character of the view.</i></p> <p><i>Compared to the No-Action Alternative, the Preferred Alternative would have no impact on this view as it would not be visually distinct from the private air rights.</i></p>	<div> </div> <p>The Preferred Alternative and Existing Conditions</p> <div> </div> <p>The Preferred Alternative and No-Action</p>



View	Description and Assessment	View of The Preferred Alternative
<p>17. F Street NE, view looking west:</p>	<p>F Street NE, view looking west: This view is defined by the existing two- and three-story residential and commercial buildings along F Street NE and multi-story commercial buildings along Second Street NE.</p> <p><i>Compared to existing conditions and the No-Action Alternative, the Preferred Alternative would have no impact on this view. There would be low sensitivity, as the Preferred Alternative would not be visible from F Street. It would not change the character of the view.</i></p>	 <p>The Preferred Alternative and Existing Conditions/ No-Action</p>


View	Description and Assessment	View of The Preferred Alternative
18. Massachusetts Avenue NE, view looking northwest:	<p>Massachusetts Avenue NE, view looking northwest: Columbus Plaza and Columbus Fountain are visible along Massachusetts Avenue NE until one approaches Columbus Circle NE where the South elevation of WUS becomes visible.</p> <p><i>Compared to both existing conditions and the No-Action Alternative, the Preferred Alternative would have no impact on this view. There would be low sensitivity, as the Preferred Alternative would not be visible, and it would not change the character of the view, defined by the Thurgood Marshall Center and the headhouse of WUS.</i></p>	 <p>The Preferred Alternative and Existing Conditions</p>  <p>The Preferred Alternative and No-Action</p>

View	Description and Assessment	View of The Preferred Alternative
<p>19. View from Columbus Plaza:</p>	<p>View from Columbus Plaza: Columbus Plaza provides direct views of the entire south façade of WUS. The Project Area is not visible from the center of the plaza; however, as one moves east and west, some areas of the existing WUS infrastructure including the existing parking garage and ramps are visible.</p> <p><i>Compared to both existing conditions and the No-Action Alternative, the Preferred Alternative would have no impact on this view. There would be low sensitivity, as the Preferred Alternative would not be visible, and it would not change the character of the view.</i></p>	 <p>The Preferred Alternative and Existing Conditions/ No-Action</p>




View	Description and Assessment	View of The Preferred Alternative
<p>20. View from Columbus Circle Drive – East Side:</p>	<p>View from Columbus Circle Drive – East Side: Columbus Circle Drive NE is the roadway surrounding Columbus Plaza with direct connections to E Street NE, Louisiana Avenue NW, Delaware Avenue NE, First Street NE, and Massachusetts Avenue NE.</p> <p><i>Compared to existing conditions, the Preferred Alternative would have a minor adverse impact on this view. There would be low to moderate visibility from the east side of the circle near First Street NE. There would also be low sensitivity as the Preferred Alternative would be deferential to the historic station and would appear below the cornice line of the station and steps down in height as it moves back. The character of the view, defined by the prominence of the station, would not change.</i></p> <p><i>Compared to the No-Action Alternative, the Preferred Alternative would have a negligible adverse impact on this view as it would have low visibility and for the most part would not be visually distinct from the private air rights.</i></p>	<div> </div> <p>The Preferred Alternative and Existing Conditions</p> <div> </div> <p>The Preferred Alternative and No-Action</p>


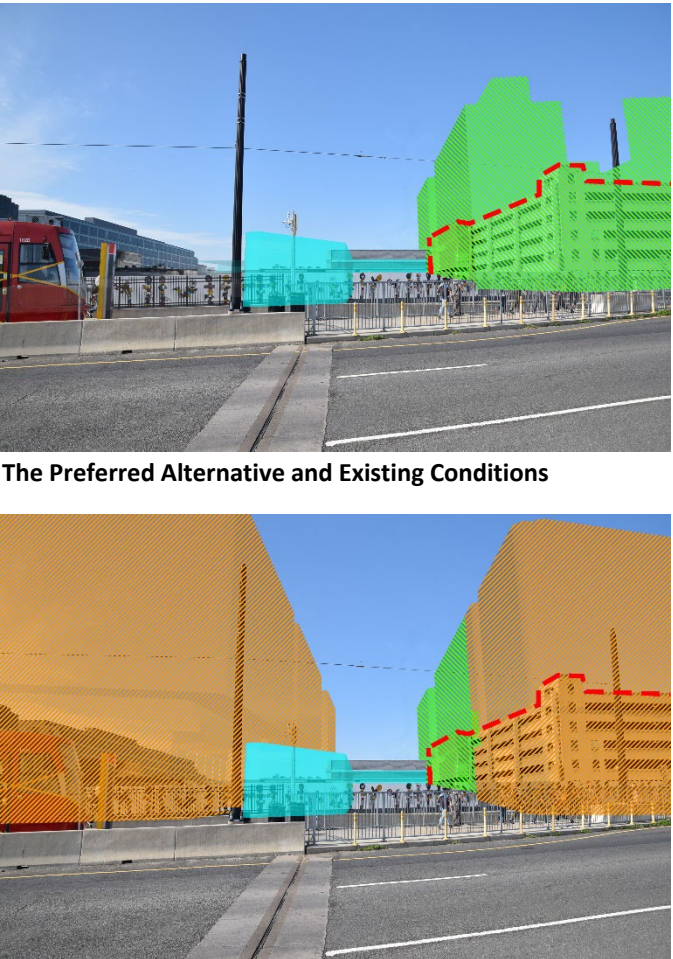
View	Description and Assessment	View of The Preferred Alternative
<p>21. View from Columbus Circle Drive – West Side:</p>	<p>View from Columbus Circle Drive – West Side: Columbus Circle Drive NE is the roadway surrounding Columbus Plaza with direct connections to E Street NE, Louisiana Avenue NW, Delaware Avenue NE, First Street NE, and Massachusetts Avenue NE.</p> <p><i>Compared to existing conditions and the No-Action Alternative, the Preferred Alternative would have a beneficial impact on this view.</i> The Preferred Alternative would have low visibility from the west side of the circle near Louisiana Avenue NW/NE. The existing parking garage that projects beyond the plane of the west elevation of WUS would be removed, opening the viewshed north along First Street NE. There would be low sensitivity as the open nature of the plaza and view of the south elevation of WUS would not be changed. While the view north along First Street NE would be noticeably changed, it is seen as a positive impact as it restores the street view, first established by the L’Enfant Plan. The private air rights are not easily visible from this view as they would sit behind the Preferred Alternative.</p>	<div style="text-align: center;">  <p>The Preferred Alternative and Existing Conditions</p>  <p>The Preferred Alternative and No-Action</p> </div>

View	Description and Assessment	View of The Preferred Alternative
<p>22. View from Washington Monument:</p>	<p>View from Washington Monument: This view is characterized by the open nature of the National Mall flanked on either side by civic and institutional buildings.</p> <p><i>Compared to existing conditions, the Preferred Alternative would have low visibility and low sensitivity due to the distance and nature of the urban fabric. The Preferred Alternative would be compatible with the existing urban context and the alternative would have a negligible adverse impact. The character of the view would not be changed.</i></p> <p><i>Compared to the No-Action Alternative, the Preferred Alternative would have no impact on this view as it would not be visually distinct from the private air rights.</i></p>	<p>The Preferred Alternative and Existing Conditions</p>  <p>The Preferred Alternative and No-Action</p> 

View	Description and Assessment	View of The Preferred Alternative
<p>23. View from Arlington House at Arlington National Cemetery:</p>	<p>View from Arlington House at Arlington National Cemetery: The view from Arlington House looking northeast to downtown Washington is characterized by the skyline punctuated by the Old Post Office Building clock tower and Washington Monument. High ground in the northeast quadrant of the city serves as a backdrop to the skyline.</p> <p><i>Compared to both existing conditions and the No-Action Alternative, the Preferred Alternative would only be visible using binoculars or a camera with a zoom lens. Due to the distance and nature of the urban fabric, there would be very low visibility and very low sensitivity. The Preferred Alternative would be compatible with the existing urban context and the alternative would have no impact. The character of the view would not be changed.</i></p>	

View	Description and Assessment	View of The Preferred Alternative
<p>24. View from U.S. Capitol Dome:</p>	<p>View from U.S. Capitol Dome: Looking northeast from the dome of the U.S. Capitol, the entire headhouse and portions of the railyard are visible.</p> <p><i>Compared to existing conditions,</i> the Preferred Alternative is moderately noticeable and would have a moderate adverse impact on this view. The Preferred Alternative would have moderate visibility and moderate sensitivity, as a large development behind the station where currently other developments appear smaller due to their distance. However, the view to WUS and the Senate Office Buildings as well as the view along North Capitol Street would remain unchanged.</p> <p><i>Compared to the No-Action Alternative,</i> the Preferred Alternative would have a negligible adverse impact on this view. It would have low visibility and low sensitivity as it would be visually balanced by the private air rights. The Preferred Alternative and No-Action Alternative would visually bridge the commercial, institutional, and residential development surrounding the station, creating a cultural environment that is more uniform from east to west.</p>	<div> </div> <p>The Preferred Alternative and Existing Conditions</p> <div> </div> <p>The Preferred Alternative and No-Action</p>

View	Description and Assessment	View of The Preferred Alternative
25. View from the Old Post Office Building:	<p>View from the Old Post Office Building: From the clock tower of the Old Post Office Building, only the very top of the headhouse barrel vaulted roof is visible.</p> <p><i>Compared to existing conditions and the No-Action Alternative, the Preferred Alternative would have no impact on this view. The Preferred Alternative would not be visible, and the view, characterized by multi-story commercial buildings, would not be changed.</i></p>	 <p>The Preferred Alternative and Existing Conditions/ No-Action (Magnified)</p>  <p>Existing View (unmagnified)</p>
26. View from Washington National Cathedral:	<p>View from Washington National Cathedral: From the bell tower of the National Cathedral looking southeast, the view is characterized by dense tree cover transitioning to relatively dense, mid-height urban development. The Preferred Alternative would have little to no visibility and no sensitivity due to the distance from the Project Area. The Preferred Alternative would be compatible with the existing urban context. The character of the view would not be changed; therefore, from this view, the Preferred Alternative would have no impact.</p>	 <p>The Preferred Alternative and Existing Conditions/ No-Action</p>

View	Description and Assessment	View of The Preferred Alternative
<p>27. View from St. Elizabeths West Campus:</p>	<p>View from St. Elizabeths West Campus: Looking northwest to downtown Washington, DC the view is characterized by the Anacostia River and dense urban development beginning north of the river.</p> <p><i>Compared to both existing conditions and the No-Action Alternative, the Preferred Alternative is not visible. There would be no visibility or sensitivity and character of the view would not be changed; therefore, from this view, there is no impact.</i></p>	 <p>The Preferred Alternative and Existing Conditions/ No-Action</p>
<p>28. View from H Street Bridge</p>	<p>H Street Bridge, view looking south: Looking south, the view of the rail yard and much of the station building is obscured by the H Street Bridge barrier wall. The existing station parking garage dominates the view to the right (west) while elsewhere the view is characterized by the openness above the rail yard and views to the sky.</p> <p>Compared to the existing conditions, the Preferred Alternative would have a major adverse impact on this view. The Preferred Alternative would have high visibility and high sensitivity, as it would change the scale and character of development along the bridge, which historically has conveyed architect Daniel Burnham’s design for the WUS rail yard.</p> <p><i>Compared to the No-Action Alternative, the Preferred Alternative would have a negligible adverse impact on this view. There would be low visibility and low sensitivity as it would mostly be indistinct from the private air rights. A view to the barrel-vault roof of the historic station would remain.</i></p>	 <p>The Preferred Alternative and Existing Conditions</p> <p>The Preferred Alternative and No-Action</p>