

Washington Union Station Expansion Project Guide

What is the Washington Union Station Expansion Project?

The Washington Union Station Expansion Project would expand and modernize Washington Union Station. The Project includes reconstructing and relocating tracks, developing new concourse facilities, maintaining and modernizing multimodal transportation facilities, and improving and expanding infrastructure and other supporting facilities. The Project will maintain financial viability to preserve and maintain the historic Washington Union Station building and its features. The Project is being proposed by the Union Station Redevelopment Corporation, in coordination with Amtrak.

Why is the Project Needed?

Union Station is a critical transportation hub in the Mid-Atlantic region. Approximately 37 million people pass through the station annually. It is one of the most visited tourist attractions in the Nation's Capital and one of the busiest tourist facilities in the world. The Station serves as a hub for Amtrak, Maryland Area Regional Commuter (MARC) Train Service, Virginia Railway Express (VRE) and the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) – both Metrorail and Metrobus. Historically, many tour bus operators have used Columbus Circle and the first floor of the garage or Bus Terminal, bringing thousands of tourists to the Station annually. Beginning in 2011, intercity bus services began operations from the Bus Terminal, sharing space with the tour bus companies. However, Union Station has deficiencies with respect to its current and planned future operation as a rail station, an intermodal transportation hub, an element of the urban fabric, and planned future development.

Rail Needs

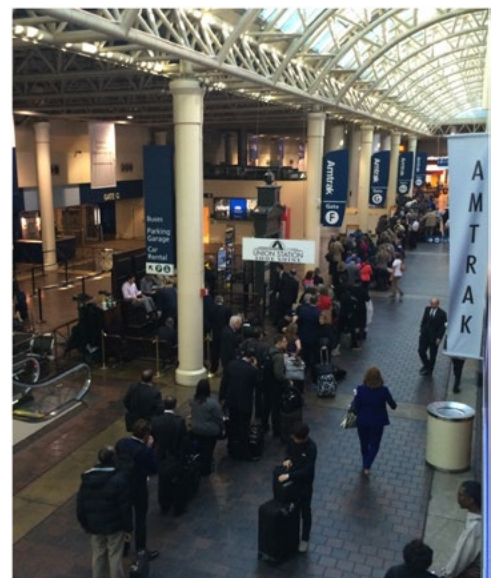
- Concourse and gate areas congested under current conditions and do not have the capacity to meet projected future demand
- Station does not provide sufficient space to meet future needs for railroad support services and operations
- Some platforms and concourses do not meet the emergency egress standards
- Some platforms do not meet the requirements of the American Disabilities Act (ADA)
- Platforms and track are inadequate to meet future demand
- Station layout does not provide integrated movement between transit modes
- Station layout does not provide intuitive movement between transit modes

Other Transportation Modes

- Taxi facilities are inefficient and lack adequate queuing areas
- Metrorail station is congested under current conditions and does not have the capacity to meet projected future demand
- Intercity and local bus facilities lack adequate capacity to meet current and future demand
- Bicycle facilities are limited and lack capability to meet future demand

Community

- Union Station provides limited access to and between surrounding neighborhoods and destinations



What is the NEPA Process?

FRA as the lead federal agency will prepare the EIS in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) (42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.), the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations implementing NEPA (40 CFR parts 1500–1508), and the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) Procedures for Considering Environmental Impacts (64 FR 28545, May 26, 1999, and 78 FR 2713, Jan. 14, 2013). In addition to NEPA, the EIS will address other applicable statutes, regulations and executive orders, including the 1980 Clean Air Act Amendments, Section 404 of the Clean Water Act, the National Historic Preservation Act, Section 4(f) of the Department of Transportation Act, the Endangered Species Act and Executive Order 12898 on Environmental Justice. The EIS will provide the FRA, reviewing and cooperating agencies, and the public with information to assess alternatives for expanding and modernizing Washington Union Station that will meet the Project's purpose and need; to evaluate the potential environmental impacts; and to identify potential avoidance/mitigation measures.

The EIS process involves several steps.

- Publishing a Notice of Intent to Prepare an Environmental Impact Statement
- Public and Agency Scoping to solicit input on the scope of the EIS
- Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) – a comprehensive document that describes the proposed Project, the purpose of and need for the Project, reasonable alternatives that were evaluated, the affected environment, environmental consequences, and mitigation measures.
- Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) – the FEIS will summarize the comments on the DEIS and provide responses to the substantive comments and will correct or modify the DEIS to respond to these comments.
- Record of Decision (ROD) –The ROD will document the factors that FRA considered in making a decision on the Project.



What is Scoping?

During the Scoping Period, FRA solicits public and agency input on the scope of the EIS, following issuance of a Notice of Intent to Prepare an Environmental Impact Statement. During the scoping period, FRA is holding a public information meeting on December 7, 2015, and is soliciting written comment on the scope of the EIS. In particular, FRA is asking the public to comment on:

- the study area
- the need for the Project
- the issues and resources to be evaluated in the EIS
- any particular concerns with respect to project impacts

FRA will consider the comments received during the scoping period in determining the scope and the significant issues to be analyzed in depth in the EIS.

What will the EIS Evaluate?

The EIS will evaluate a reasonable range of alternatives that are reasonable, practicable and feasible for the Project. FRA will also evaluate a No Action (No Build) Alternative.

For each of the resources listed below, the EIS will identify appropriate study areas; document existing conditions (the Affected Environment), evaluate the direct and indirect effects of each alternative (the Environmental Consequences), assess compliance with applicable regulations, and identify measures to mitigate unavoidable adverse impacts. The analysis will look at not only the impacts of the completed Project but those impacts that would occur during the construction period.

The EIS will evaluate these resource categories:

- Air Quality
- Water Quality
- Noise
- Vibration
- Solid Waste Disposal
- Aesthetics
- Transportation and Traffic
- Land Use
- Social and Economic Effects
- Environmental Justice Communities
- Public Health
- Public Safety
- Parks and Recreation Resources
- Section 4 (f) Properties
- Historic Properties
- Cumulative Impacts
- Secondary Impacts
- Construction Impacts

Other resources, particularly natural resources such as wetlands, floodplains, natural plant and animal communities, and threatened and endangered species, are not anticipated to be present within the study area and therefore are not anticipated to be evaluated in the EIS.

Public Engagement

- **Website:** www.WUSstationexpansion.com

FRA will post all NEPA documents (Notice of Intent, DEIS, FEIS, ROD) on its website (URL). The website will provide information to the public during FRA's preparation of the DEIS, and provide updates on the EIS status as well as opportunities for participation. The website will also provide a mechanism for submitting comments during the scoping and DEIS comment periods.

- **Public Meetings**

In addition to the Scoping Meeting on December 7, 2015, FRA intends to hold several additional public meetings during the process to gain input from the public. More details for the future meetings will be posted on the website and sent via email.

Agency Coordination

As the lead federal agency, the FRA will prepare the DEIS and the FEIS, and may invite agencies with jurisdiction by law or with special expertise on resources the Project may affect to be cooperating agencies. The FRA will coordinate closely with agencies with regard to technical issues throughout the development of the DEIS and FEIS to gain input related to topics such as:

- Screening alternatives
- Identifying the study area boundaries for specific resources
- Establishing data requirements and methodology for data collection and impact analysis
- Developing conceptual measures to address unavoidable environmental impacts.

Section 106 Process

The Project is also subject to Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (NHPA) (54 USC 300101 et seq.) (Section 106) which defines historic properties as "any prehistoric or historic district, site, building, structure, or object included on or eligible for listing on the National Register [of Historic Places (NRHP)]. Historic properties are found both above and below ground.

Archaeological sites and artifacts are the material remains of prehistoric and historic activities, while above-ground historic properties are at least 50 years old and include architectural resources (such as buildings and structures) as well as historic districts, which consist of historic properties that retain identity and integrity as a group, including linear districts such as railroads.

Union Station was listed on the DC Inventory of Historic Sites on November 8, 1964 and listed in the NHRP on March 24, 1968, The Project Area is adjacent to the NHRP-listed Capitol Hill District and Historic District and in proximity to several individual buildings and structures on the DC Inventory and the NHRP. Therefore the Section 106 review will evaluate impacts both the historic station building and the surrounding above-ground historic properties (including those associated with the rail terminal) as well as historic archaeological resources that may pre-date construction of the station and tracks.

The Section 106 regulations define a 4-step decision-making process in which the lead federal agency (FRA) consults with the State Historic Preservation Officer and other Consulting parties, and involves the public, in order to:

- Determine and document the Area of Potential Effect (APE)
- Identify and evaluate all historic properties within that APE
- Assess the effects of the Project on historic properties
- Resolve adverse effects on historic properties, which may include developing measures to mitigate for any unavoidable effects

For the WUS Expansion Project, FRA intends to coordinate the Section 106 process with the NEPA process, and will report its findings and SHPO concurrence in the DEIS and FEIS.

How to Comment

FRA encourages broad participation in the EIS process during scoping and review of the resulting environmental documents. Comments are invited from all interested agencies and the public to ensure the full range of issues related to the Project are addressed, reasonable alternatives are considered, and significant issues are identified. In particular, FRA is interested in identifying areas of environmental concern where there might be a potential for significant impacts.

To comment on the Scope of the EIS, please email comments to FRA at:
info@WUSstationexpansion.com
or submit comments in writing to the address below.
Please submit comments by **January 4, 2016**.

For additional information, contact:
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