

# Consent Item (A) 04-22-2021

Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority

## Board Action/Information Summary

Action  Information

MEAD Number:  
202262

Resolution:  
 Yes  No

### TITLE:

Approval for Public Hearing Crystal City Station

### PRESENTATION SUMMARY:

This presentation provides information to support a request to hold a compact public hearing for the construction of a new station entrance at the Crystal City Metrorail Station.

### PURPOSE:

To obtain Board authorization to solicit comments and hold a Compact Public Hearing to amend the Mass Transit Plan by adding a new Metrorail East Entrance to the Crystal City Station at the corner of 18th Street South and Crystal Drive in Arlington, Virginia.

### DESCRIPTION:

Arlington County has proposed to fund, design and build a new entrance to Crystal City Metrorail Station and turn the completed project over to WMATA. Arlington county has entered into an agreement with a developer **JBG Smith** which has teamed with **VHB** (project management), **Clark Construction**, **KGB Design Studio** and **AECOM Engineering** to produce the proposed concept.

### Key Highlights:

- Over the past 20 years, studies and plans have identified a need for a second entrance to the Crystal City Metrorail Station.
- Arlington County has proposed to develop and turn-over to WMATA the new station entrance to the Crystal City Metrorail Station. Arlington County and a private developer will design and construct the new entrance under the Commonwealth's Public-Private Education Facilities and Infrastructure Act. (PPEA)
- WMATA and Arlington County have worked together to develop a conceptual plan and executed a Design Support Agreement (DSA) to further the design development and review process.

- The proposed second entrance to the Crystal City Metrorail station will include a surface entrance stair and two ADA-compliant elevators leading to a new mezzanine space connecting to the existing station train room area, a faregate array, fare vending machines, station manager kiosk, mechanical rooms, restrooms, and an employee breakroom. A new mezzanine structure would be constructed above the tracks for passenger circulation on the east side of the station.
- To advance the project further, allow Arlington County to execute a Comprehensive Agreement with the developer and permit construction, a Compact Public hearing must be conducted, as an amendment to the Mass Transit Plan is required to add the entrance to the Crystal City Station.

### **Background and History:**

WMATA operates the Crystal City Metrorail Station, on the Metrorail Blue and Yellow lines, in the Crystal City neighborhood of the National Landing section of Arlington County, Virginia. The existing station entrance is served by seven bus bays, with four bays located on South Bell Street and three bays located on 18th Street South. A Capital Bikeshare station is located on South Bell Street across 18th Street South from the station entrance. A corral for dock-less scooters and bicycles is located on 18th Street South at South Bell Street. The Crystal City station does not include any Park & Ride or Kiss & Ride facilities.

The Crystal City Metrorail Station Access Study, completed in 2002, focused on identifying and evaluating specific station and area improvements with a goal of increasing convenience and safety for customers accessing the station. The study proposed a new east entrance at the northwest corner of 18th Street and Crystal Drive that would connect via a new pedestrian tunnel to the station's existing mezzanine. The study noted that this new entrance would shorten walk distances for customers accessing the station from the east by over 500 feet and would also eliminate the need for pedestrians to climb over a hill on 18th Street South between Crystal Drive and the existing entrance on South Bell Street.

The Crystal City Sector Plan, approved in 2010, identified the need for continued development of a robust multi-modal transportation network to support the proposed redevelopment of Crystal City. The transportation element of the plan recommended enhancing connections between existing public transportation modes through several improvements, one of which was a second entrance to the Metrorail station in the proximity of 18th Street South and Crystal Drive.

The purpose of the Crystal City Station Access and Second Entrance Study, completed in 2014, was to develop feasible alternatives for enhanced access to the Crystal City Metrorail Station including a potential second entrance. The study evaluated five second entrance alternatives, one alternative focused on

lower cost access improvements, and four alternatives which would involve the addition of an elevator only. The study recommended construction of a new entrance at the northwest corner of 18th Street South and Crystal Drive.

In 2016, Arlington County included the Project in its Transit Development Plan (TDP) and Capital Improvement Plan (CIP).

In October 2018, the County Board approved the plan to redevelop a portion of Crystal Square in Crystal City. The new second entrance for the Crystal City Metrorail Station is planned to be integrated into the development. This new station entrance project was included in Virginia's Memorandum of Understanding with Amazon as part of the HQ2 development.

In 2020, Arlington County & JBG SMITH (developer) executed an Interim Agreement for development of 30% design; WMATA & Arlington County executed a Design Support Agreement (DSA) for support services.

An Environmental Evaluation Report was completed in January of this year. The development team submitted to FTA the final materials to support a Documented Categorical Exclusion in late February. Final approval is anticipated after coordination with the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ)

### **Discussion:**

The purpose of the Project is to improve access to the station from the east and provide additional internal station capacity to accommodate long-term passenger demand. The Project is needed because the station currently lacks a direct Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)-accessible route for the many users who access the station from the east, particularly those with mobility challenges and does not directly connect with the bicycle corridor and high-capacity transit modes east of the station (VRE and Metroway). The single entrance also restricts internal station capacity. To address these issues, Arlington County, in coordination with WMATA, proposes to include an entrance stair and two ADA-compliant elevators in a new entrance at the northwest corner of Crystal Drive and 18th Street South.

The proposed second entrance to the Crystal City Metrorail station would be located at the northwest corner of Crystal Drive and 18th Street South. It would include an entrance stair and ADA-compliant elevators. The entrance would provide mezzanine space connecting to the existing station train room area. The new space would include station and passenger facilities such as a faregate array, fare vending machines, station manager kiosk, mechanical rooms, restrooms, and an employee breakroom. A new mezzanine structure would be constructed above the tracks for passenger circulation on the east side of the station. The outbound side platform would include two mezzanine-to-platform ADA-compliant elevators. Due to space constraints, the inbound side platform would only include one platform-to-mezzanine ADA-compliant elevator.

The proposed second Metrorail station entrance would enhance connectivity

with Metroway and the VRE Crystal City Station by providing an entrance to the Metrorail system in close proximity to the Metroway stop and both the existing and future VRE entrance on Crystal Drive. It would shorten the trip for northbound Metroway riders, who currently must ride the bus around on 15th Street South and South Bell Street to access the Metrorail Station (or get off at 18th Street South and walk uphill for a block). It would also require a shorter walk for VRE riders both from the current VRE station and the proposed relocated station.

Under the interim agreement between the developer JBG Smith and Arlington County, preliminary engineering and conceptual design is underway including the following:

- Documented Categorical Exclusion and Environmental Evaluation
- Public engagement
- Geotechnical engineering
- Survey and subsurface utility locating
- Station architecture & engineering

The current project timeline proposed by Arlington County is:

- Now–Summer/Fall 2021-Station design and architecture (PE/30% plans)
- Now–Summer/Fall 2021-Public involvement/comment
- June/July 2021-Arlington County public meeting
- Fall 2021-Comprehensive Agreement with Developer
- Fall 2021-Summer 2022 Final Design
- Spring 2022-Fall 2023 Construction
- Fall 2023-Station opening

During the Summer and Fall of 2021, WMATA will negotiate a Project Construction Agreement (PCA) with Arlington County. This agreement will establish the details for design and construction and acceptance of the new facility as well as reimbursement for WMATA’s costs incurred in inspection and oversight of the project.

**FUNDING IMPACT:**

There is no impact to funding to conduct the proposed compact public hearing. Any costs incurred by WMATA are subject to reimbursement by Arlington County under the Design Support Agreement.

**TIMELINE:**

<b>Previous Actions</b>	None
<b>Anticipated actions after presentation</b>	Hold a public hearing in the Summer of 2021 and present a staff report and recommendation to the Board in the Fall of 2021.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

Board approval to hold a public hearing to amend the Mass Transit plan by adding an East Entrance to the Crystal City Station in the vicinity of 18th Street South and Crystal Drive in Arlington, Virginia.

SUBJECT: APPROVAL TO CONDUCT A COMPACT PUBLIC HEARING FOR A NEW ENTRANCE AT THE CRYSTAL CITY METRORAIL STATION WHICH WOULD ALTER THE MASS TRANSIT PLAN

RESOLUTION  
OF THE  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS  
OF THE  
WASHINGTON METROPOLITAN AREA TRANSIT AUTHORITY

WHEREAS, Compact § 15 requires the Board of Directors to transmit proposed changes to the Mass Transit Plan to certain enumerated agencies and to conduct a public hearing; and

WHEREAS, Arlington County has identified a new entrance to the Crystal City Metrorail Station (the "East Entrance") as part of its Transit Development Plan for redevelopment of Crystal Square in Crystal City; and

WHEREAS, The East Entrance was part of the Commonwealth of Virginia's Amazon HQ2 commitment for transportation infrastructure improvements; and

WHEREAS, Arlington County has proposed to fund, design and construct the East Entrance, and transfer all rights to the East Entrance to WMATA; and

WHEREAS, WMATA has conducted studies determining that there is a need for the East Entrance; and

WHEREAS, The addition of the East Entrance to the Crystal City Metrorail Station will result in a change to the Mass Transit Plan;

NOW, THEREFORE, be it

*RESOLVED*, That in accordance with Compact § 15, the Board of Directors authorizes staff to transmit the proposed change to the Mass Transit Plan to the enumerated agencies and to hold a public hearing on the proposed new entrance to the Crystal City Metrorail Station; and be it further

*RESOLVED*, That the Board of Directors authorizes the General Manager and Chief Executive Officer to release the Public Hearing Staff Report to the public for comment prior to Board approval; and be it finally

*RESOLVED*, That this Resolution shall be effective 30 days after adoption in accordance with § 8(b) of the WMATA Compact.

Reviewed as to form and legal sufficiency,

/s/ Patricia Y. Lee  
Patricia Y. Lee  
Executive Vice President and General Counsel

WMATA File Structure Nos.:  
12.7.2 Master Plans/Mass Transit Plan (including transit zone modifications)  
18.8 Public Hearings and Meetings

PROPOSED