

DULLES CORRIDOR METRORAIL PROJECT, PHASE 2
EXTENSION TO DULLES AIRPORT / ROUTE 772

Public Hearing Report
Preliminary Engineering Design Refinements
Environmental Assessment

Federal Transit Administration
Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority
Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority
(WMATA Hearing No. 575, Docket R12-01)



July 2012



Phase 2: Extension to Dulles Airport/Route 772



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1 INTRODUCTION

The Dulles Corridor Metrorail Project (Project) is proposed to improve mobility and transit accessibility in the rapidly developing and congested Dulles Corridor. The limits of the Project extend approximately 23 miles from the vicinity of the West Falls Church Metrorail station in Fairfax County to the vicinity of Route 772 in Loudoun County (See Figure 1-1). The Project would be constructed in two phases. The first phase, the Wiehle Avenue Extension, is currently under construction and will have an alignment length of approximately 11.7 miles and operate from the existing Metrorail Orange Line to Wiehle Avenue (Phase 1) in Fairfax County. The second phase, the Dulles Airport/Route 772 Extension, would continue the line 11.4 miles to Dulles International Airport and Route 772 (Phase 2) in eastern Loudoun County.

An Environmental Assessment (EA) on the Phase 2 Preliminary Engineering Design Refinements was prepared by the Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority (Airports Authority) for the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969 (42 USC 4321-4347), as amended, to address potential environmental impacts associated with design refinements to the Dulles Corridor Metrorail Project. The design refinements, which affect the Project's Phase 2, came about as the Project proceeded through the preliminary engineering phase of project development. The EA describes modifications that have been made to Phase 2 of the Project since the publication of the *Dulles Corridor Rapid Transit Project Final Environmental Impact Statement and Section 4(f) Evaluation* (Final EIS) in December 2004 and since the issuance of an amended Record of Decision for the Project by FTA in November 2006. The EA presents the anticipated changes in effects from those documented in the Final EIS.

A public hearing on the EA was held at 7:00 p.m. on June 13, 2012, at Herndon High School, located at 700 Bennett Street, Herndon, VA 20170. The purpose of the hearing was to provide citizens and agencies with an opportunity to comment on the proposed design refinements and changes in effects and mitigation measures from what was documented in the Final EIS.

This Public Hearing Report formally documents and provides responses to comments received at the hearing and during the public comment period, and will be utilized to comply with Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) Compact requirements upon approval of the WMATA Board of Directors. With the submittal of this report, FTA will review the findings of the EA and the responses to comments and will make its formal NEPA determination on the preliminary engineering design refinements.

INTRODUCTION

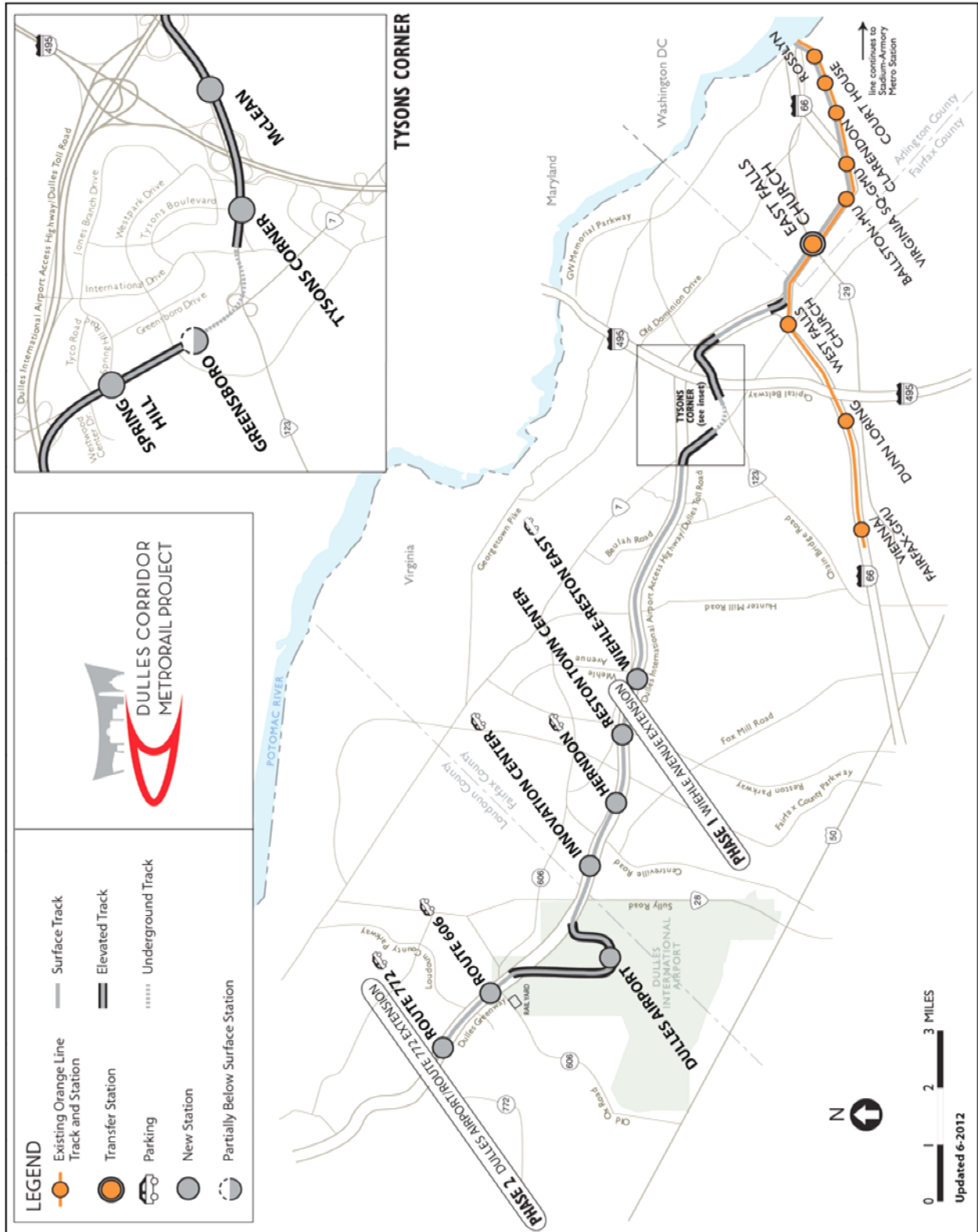


Figure I-1 Project Map

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SUMMARY OF PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

2.1 EA DISTRIBUTION AND NOTICE OF AVAILABILITY

On May 10, 2012, copies of the EA were mailed to the elected officials, agencies, and organizations identified in Appendix A of the EA. In addition, an electronic copy of the EA was posted and available for downloading on the Project's website at www.dullesmetro.com and the WMATA website at www.wmata.com/hearings. Also, the EA was made available for public inspection at the public libraries and community centers listed below.

Ashburn Library

43316 Hay Road
Ashburn, VA 20147
703.737.8100

Herndon Fortnightly Library

768 Center Street
Herndon, VA 20170
703.437.8855

Dolley Madison Community Library

1244 Oak Ridge Avenue
McLean, VA 22101
703.356.0770

Patrick Henry Community Library

101 Maple Avenue, East
Vienna, VA 22180
703.938.0405

Cascades Library

21030 Whitfield Place
Sterling, VA 20165
703.444.3228

Reston Regional Library

11925 Bowman Towne Drive
Reston, VA 20190
703.689.2700

Mary Riley Styles Public Library

120 N. Virginia Avenue
Falls Church, VA 22046
703.248.5030

Sterling Library

120 Enterprise Street
Sterling, VA 20164
703.430.9500

Great Falls Community Library

9830 Georgetown Pike
Great Falls, VA 22066
703.757.8560

Tysons-Pimmit Regional Library

7584 Leesburg Pike
Falls Church, VA 22043
703.790.8088

In conjunction with the publication of the EA, WMATA also published the *Proposed Refinements to the General Plans for the Wiehle Avenue Extension*. An electronic copy of the General Plans was posted and available for downloading on the Project's website at www.dullesmetro.com and the WMATA website at

www.wmata.com/hearings. In addition, copies of these plans were made available for review along with the EA beginning on May 10, 2012, during normal business hours, at the following locations.

WMATA

Office of the Secretary
600 Fifth Street, NW, Room 2D-209
Washington, DC 20001
202-962-2511

Dulles Corridor Metrorail Project Office

1593 Spring Hill Road
Suite 300
Vienna, VA 22182
703-572-0500

2.2 NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

As required by federal regulations and the WMATA Compact, an official notice of the hearing was published in the Washington Post on May 12, 2012 and May 19, 2012, and on the Project's and WMATA's websites (www.dullesmetro.com and www.wmata.com/hearings). This hearing provides citizens and agencies the opportunity to comment on potential impacts and determination of effects on Section 106 cultural resources by the Federal Transit Administration, the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), and the State Historic Preservation Officer. A WMATA Notice of Public Hearing was also posted at properties along the Project alignment where the proposed revisions would potentially change direct impacts to the property and necessitated a WMATA Compact Public Hearing. The postings occurred at three property locations: Route 28 Station North, Dulles Airport Station, and Route 772 Station South. In addition, notice of availability was sent via e-mail to the stakeholders on the Project's current mailing list. The Project also published advertisements for the public hearing in various local newspapers; copies of these notification materials are included in Appendix A of this report.

2.3 PUBLIC HEARING

The public hearing for the preliminary engineering design refinements to the Phase 2 – Extension to Dulles Airport/Route 772 portion of the Dulles Corridor Metrorail Project was held on June 13, 2012 at Herndon High School, 700 Bennett Street, Herndon, VA 20170. The public hearing session began with an open house at 6:30 p.m., followed by the formal public hearing proceedings at approximately 7:00 p.m. Pat Nowakowski, Executive Director of the Dulles Corridor Metrorail Project for the Airports Authority, provided an overview of the evening and provided a call to convene the formal public hearing proceedings at approximately 7:00 p.m. He then introduced WMATA Board members Honorable Catherine Hudgins (Fairfax County Representative), Mortimer Downey (Federal Representative), James Dyke (Virginia Representative), Karl Rohrer, Deputy Project Director for Phase 2 of the Dulles Corridor Metrorail Project, James Ashe, Manager, Environmental Planning and Compliance, WMATA, and Dan Koenig, Environmental Protection Specialist, Federal Transit Administration.

Public attendance for the hearing was approximately 50 persons. A total of 4 witnesses provided public testimony, and one written statements was submitted for the public hearing record. Those witnesses who registered in advance of the public hearing spoke first, followed by those who registered at the public hearing. Attendees were informed that if they did not want to speak at the hearing, they could submit a letter or send an e-mail until the close of the public comment period on June 25, 2012. Copies of the sign-in sheet and speakers list also are included in Appendix B.

Following introductions by Mr. Nowakowski, Mrs. Hudgins announced that the Airports Authority and WMATA were convening the hearing. The hearing was conducted in compliance with the applicable

requirements of NEPA and the WMATA Compact. The public hearing was held to receive and consider comments from the public on the EA for the preliminary engineering design refinements to Phase 2 of the Dulles Corridor Metrorail Project, a proposed Metrorail extension to Dulles Airport and Route 772 Loudoun County, Virginia. The FTA was identified as the lead federal agency for the Project with the Federal Aviation Administration a cooperating federal agency.

Public hearing procedures were explained including protocol for speakers, the use of a court reporter and preparation of a verbatim transcript, and submittal of written and electronic comments. Mrs. Hudgins indicated that following the public hearing, the Airports Authority and WMATA would review the testimony received for the record and prepare a report on the public hearing. After a review of the public hearing comments and responses, the FTA is expected to amend its NEPA Record of Decision for the Project. She noted that the Public Hearing Staff Report would be circulated for ten days to allow public review and comment. At the completion of the public review and comment period, the Airports Authority and WMATA Boards of Directors would act on the proposed refinements after considering the public hearing record and staff reports.

Karl Rohrer, Deputy Project Director for Phase 2, made the Project presentation providing a description of the following:

- Project History and Background
- Purpose of the Hearing
- Explanation of Why an EA was Prepared
- Overview of the Major Design Refinements
- Changes in Environmental Effects Resulting from the Design Changes
- Changes in Mitigation Measures

A copy of the presentation and script used by Mr. Rohrer is included in Appendix C. Upon completion of the presentation, witnesses testified. Witnesses included representatives from organizations and associations, as well as private citizens from communities that are located within close proximity to the Project. Several people who signed up to speak later opted not to testify.

The verbatim transcript of the testimony is included in Appendix D to this report.

2.4 SUMMARY OF COMMENTS RECEIVED

The following section provides a summary of the comments received during the full public comment period. The summary reflects both written comments and hearing testimony. Written comments include e-mails, letters, and statements submitted in person at the public hearing. State and local agencies, as well as the general public, provided comments on the EA.

2.4.1 Agency Comments

The following state and local agencies submitted comments on the EA:

- Fairfax County
 - Department of Planning and Zoning
 - Park Authority
 - Department of Transportation
 - Department of Public Works and Environmental Services
- Virginia
 - Department of Environmental Quality
 - Department of Conservation and Recreation
 - Department of Historic Resources
 - Department of Transportation

Responses to the agency comments received are provided in Chapter 3 of this report.

2.4.2 Public Comments

The comments received from the public ranged from support for the Metrorail project, in general, to concerns about the priorities reflected in the proposed design refinements. Responses to the public comments received are provided in Chapter 3 of this report.

3 RESPONSES TO COMMENTS RECEIVED FOR THE RECORD

Public agencies, civic association representatives, interest groups, and the general public submitted comments regarding the Dulles Corridor Metrorail Project during the formal public comment period that followed publication of the EA.

During the official comment period, a total of 14 commenters submitted comments through recorded testimony, letters, or e-mail. Each of these statements was reviewed to identify the specific comments made. These comments were then grouped by topic and further summarized to capture the issues or concerns being raised. Responses to comments have been prepared by subject area. Similar comments were grouped together and answered by a single response. Commenters names are listed in parentheses after each comment to help commenters find responses to their comments. In addition, a Commenter Index is provided in Table 3-1 to assist individuals and agencies in locating responses to their comments. A Subject Index is provided in Table 3-2 to assist commenters and other parties in finding comments and responses in areas of interest. A copy of each record of testimony, letter, and e-mail message received is presented in Appendix D.

TABLE 3-1: COMMENTER INDEX (PAGE NUMBER)

State Agencies	
Virginia Dept. of Environmental Quality 3-7, 3-12	Virginia Dept. of Transportation3-13, 3-14
Virginia Dept. of Historic Resources3-10	
Local Agencies and Commissions	
Fairfax County Park Authority 3-11, 3-12	Fairfax County Dept. of Public Works and Environmental Services.....3-7, 3-8, 3-9, 3-10, 3-12
Fairfax County Dept. of Planning and Zoning..... 3-12, 3-15	Fairfax County Dept. of Transportation ...3-4, 3-12, 3-13, 3-15
General Public	
Burrill..... 3-6, 3-13	Parnes 3-6
Cohn.....3-16	Rosenbloom 3-3, 3-6
Dayton.....3-4, 3-5	Sawislak 3-3, 3-4, 3-11, 3-13
Fairfield,.....3-3, 3-4	Tennyson.....3-3, 3-6, 3-8
Meurlin, 3-3, 3-4, 3-11, 3-16	Whitfield3-3, 3-17

TABLE 3-2: SUBJECT INDEX (PAGE NUMBER)

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3.1.1 General Support for Project.....3-3	3.3.2 Water Resources & Stormwater Management . 3-7
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3.1 PURPOSE AND NEED FOR THE PROPOSED ACTION

3.1.1 General Support for the Project

Comment: My overall comment is that I support the Refined LPA (Locally Preferred Alternative) because it provides the best balance of transportation, environmental, and fiscal issues. I encourage MWAA and FTA to move with all haste to complete the NEPA process and build the Refined LPA. (Sawislak)

Comment: I support this project and think the Phase 2 extension of heavy rail (Metro) is very important. (Rosenbloom)

Comment: The refinements will not seriously change or disrupt the basic project environmental benefits. (Tennyson)

Comment: The Washington Airports Task Force and its Board of Directors support the revision as presented. (Meurlin)

Comment: So I would urge FTA and FAA to approve this environmental assessment refinement, to make the appropriate amendments to the respected Records of Decisions, and move us one step closer to the day when we can all ride Metrorail to our international airport. (Fairfield)

Response: Comments noted.

3.1.2 Public Involvement

Comment: Since June 2011, at the direct request of US Department of Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood, eight or more closed door meetings have been held regarding the planning and funding of DR Phase 2 attended by representatives of USDOT, MWAA, WMATA, the Federal Transit Administration, Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation (VDRPT) plus Fairfax and Loudoun County officials. These meetings were held in direct contravention and willful violation of the US Department of Transportation's "Open Government Initiative." Several attempts to attend these meetings by media representatives and the public, myself included, were ignored. <http://www.dot.gov/open/> Since 2007 or earlier, MWAA has held many Board and Board Committee executive session meetings regarding Dulles Rail costs and Dulles Toll Road toll plans. The press and Dulles Corridor stakeholders, notably representatives of Dulles Toll Road users, were excluded from decisions made in various USDOT and MWAA meetings, many which have had, and will continue to have, a material impact on the public. No public hearing was ever held by MWAA, DRPT or WMATA to evaluate potential funding options and obtain public input on financial alternatives for Dulles rail phase 2. (Whitfield)

Response: A series of public hearings was held in 2009 by the Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority to solicit public input on the plan of finance for the use of the Dulles Toll Road revenues, including funding for the Dulles Corridor Metrorail Project. Additional updates were provided at public meetings held in 2010 and 2011, additional public hearings and meetings will be held with any future toll rate adjustments. A link to the materials presented at these meetings is found on the Airport Authority's website at www.mwaa.com.

3.1.3 Cost Savings Priorities and Preferences

Comment: Specifically I want to stress that in this economic climate, cost savings such as the aerial station concept at Dulles Airport are critical to the success of the project and the ability for the region to recover from this latest economic downturn and to prosper. I cannot stress strongly enough, that to spend hundreds of millions of dollars and possibly as much as half a billion, on a tunnel underground station at the airport is not prudent, necessary nor a good use of public funds. (Sawislak)

Response: Comment noted.

3.2 ALTERNATIVES EVALUATED

3.2.1 PE Design Refinements - Extension to Dulles Airport/Route 772

Comment: Fairfax County supports the Phase 2 aerial alignment and above ground Metrorail station at Washington Dulles International Airport (Dulles Airport). (Fairfax County Department of Transportation)

Comment: I support the construction of an aerial station at Dulles Airport because I do not believe that the very limited benefits and potential impacts of an underground station compensate for the colossal increase in cost and risk to build underground. (Sawislak)

Comment: The Washington Airports Task Force and its Board of Directors support the revision as presented. (Meurlin)

Comment: I think in particular the selection of the aerial alternative for the Dulles Terminal Station, the refined architecture of the station, which I observed outside, will strike an appropriate and equitable balance between preserving the architectural and historical integrity of the airport, and particularly the terminal and also shepherding the limited resources we have available to make the Phase 2 project a reality in a method that's most consistent with the public interest. (Fairfield)

Response: Comments noted.

Comment: One of the major revisions enumerated in the EA for Phase 2 is the movement of the Dulles Airport Station on the Airport Property and the construction of an above grade facility supported on piers. The apparent cost savings measure contemplates a connection to current underground walkways. The EA does not include a comprehensive Geotechnical Study of the effects on the new construction on the ground water levels and movements near and around the walkways and other facilities. The new alignment will involve new supporting structures that will create a network of water routes that could adversely affect the current walk way structures and their interiors. The current walk ways appear to have water leakage issues that will be further exacerbated by the newly created underground water network. The EA fails to address the long term effects on ambient air in the walk ways and the current condition of existing finishes and equipment such as moving sidewalks and escalators and elevators. The capital cost savings are not identified in specifics. Furthermore, there is no life cycle study that addresses water leakage, grouting, and mold control measures that may be necessitated by the new configuration. A full life cycle cost analysis should be made for all of the facilities-rail station, escalators, elevators, moving sidewalks, interior finishes, water removal, mold control on all underground surfaces. The evaluation of

cost savings capital and O & M should be published before a decision is made. In addition, a study should be performed on the existing condition of walkways that will serve the new station to assess potential for mold and other conditions that might affect users. (Dayton)

***Response:** The Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) design also connected to the existing walkway. The findings detailed in the EA for the Refined Locally Preferred Alternative design do not identify changes in these environmental effects from what was previously anticipated in the FEIS. Geotechnical studies for the Project were completed, but are outside the scope of this EA for Phase 2. In regards to mold, all efforts to mitigate and minimize for mold spores will be undertaken. The project will comply with all applicable regulatory and permitting requirements as required.*

Comment: The following comment is made with respect to the EA as posted on the internet and EIS for the Dulles Corridor Metrorail Project as enumerated in FAA and FTA record of decision as amended in March 2006. These documents do not address the significant issues that now exist at Dulles Airport concerning the Y-15 Yard Site. Use of the Yard Site was not addressed in the EIS. The use of the site for a stockpile was introduced in the EA of February 2006-Figure 2-17-Paragraph 2.4 Summary-Use Y-15 YARD SITE ON DULLES PROPERTY FOR CONSTRUCTION STAGING AND SOIL STORAGE. This figure shows the location and the division of the site into four components -a rectangular area for soil stockpile and three areas for precast fabrication and storage. The following descriptive dialogue is included in the 2006 EA:

“The Final EIS Wiehle Avenue Extension would not include any improvements or construction activities at the future Service & Inspection Yard Site 15, which would be constructed as part of the project's second phase, the Extension to Dulles Airport/Route 772.”

“A portion of the future Y-15 site on Dulles Airport property (approximately 36 acres) would be used for construction staging, precast concrete fabrication, and precast storage for the PE Wiehle Avenue Extension. The site would be use to stockpile soil from the excavation and tunneling activities in Tysons Corner. The excavated soil would be stored for possible later reuse as fill, or possible to construct a berm along Old Ox Road (Route 606) to screen future yard operations. All soil placed on this site would be placed to avoid any known wetlands and with proper sediment and erosion control. Figure 2-17 (in the 2006 EA) depicts the proposed layout of the Y-15 site for these uses. In addition, soil will be placed on this site in coordination with MWAA to ensure soil compatibility with local conditions.”

Notwithstanding the foregoing explicit guidance, Dulles Airport property and travelers on Route 606 have not been protected. The Dulles Airport property has been used in a manner that has resulted in significant degradation to its intended use. The Dulles Airport property has been a soil disposal depot for Phase 1 for soil from innumerable sources. A visit to the site would reveal huge unseeded piles of soil without designation. It is not located in accordance with Figure 2-17. In addition, traffic control lanes have not been constructed. In addition, the volume of truck traffic has hindered traffic flow on Route 606. The EA does not address when and how the soil will be used. From the size of the piles and the location of the local area and nearby water courses are potential sites for runoff or other deleterious effects. Remarkably, it would appear that the cost of off haul have been eliminated from the cost to the Phase 1 contractor notwithstanding its obligation to dispose of the soil. The EA should have included mitigation measures including testing of the soil, off haul plans, new traffic arrangements for 606 including signaling. The

current situation is a change of circumstance from the EIS and 2006 EA that requires a full impact statement to protect the wetlands and watercourses that traverse Dulles Airport. (Dayton)

Response: The impacts associated with the use of the Y-15 yard site for construction staging and storage activities were evaluated in the 2006 Environmental Assessment and the required mitigation was included in the Amended FTA Record of Decision executed in November 2006.

3.2.2 Alternatives to Current Design

Comment: Looking over the environmental impact and assessment paperwork the Route 28 Station, or the "Innovation Station" as we now call it, does not show a bridge connecting over the Dulles Toll Road. Now, I know it's not part of the station, but it would serve the station if it was built and I'm afraid that if, in fact, we have to go through a completely separate EA cycle to include that bridge, at a later date, we will be spending millions of dollars and wasting that, when it could have been incorporated as part of this. It may not be built at this time, but it should be considered as part of the EA impact at this time. (Parnes)

Response: During preliminary engineering for Phase 2, the project considered preliminary alignments to accommodate a proposed roadway bridge that would cross the Dulles Toll Road/Dulles International Airport Access Highway and rail guideway in the vicinity of the Route 28 Station. Fairfax and Loudoun Counties are currently in discussions on the alignment and upon agreement would then need to inform the Airports Authority whether they would request that such a bridge could be added to the project scope or funded and implemented separately.

Comment: Good luck in getting Loudoun County to support funding for the Phase 2 Silver Line! Much needed! I think it would be an easier sell if it went all the way to the Leesburg bypass road. Then the County Supervisors would be more likely to use the line and see the benefits, and Leesburg Pike and the Dulles Greenway would have far less traffic! Are they afraid they would lose money on the toll road? (Burrill)

Response: The current design extends the rail alignment to Route 772 in Loudoun County. An additional rail extension to Leesburg was not evaluated in this EA.

Comment: I would not use transit if it required transfer to bus alternative. Would use taxi cabs, carpool or drive alone. One seat ride from Rosslyn was very important as OmniRide service from Eastern Prince William County focuses on Pentagon and ends at Ballston. Feel that this project is worth public investment including federal funds and Commonwealth of Virginia. I really like the new station names, good job Fairfax County staff. (Rosenbloom)

Response: Comment noted.

3.2.3 Capital and Operating Costs

Comment: Metrorail, in 2010 according to the Federal Transit Administration, moved people with a modest operating subsidy of only 18 cents per passenger mile, compared to a \$1.13 subsidy for MetroBus and 70 cents for Fairfax Connector bus. The Connector has fewer retirees to pension so saves some money there but it may not qualify for federal aid under Section 13(c) of the transit labor law. With Dulles Rail expected to move 225 million annual passenger miles per year, saving 94 cents net on one-

third of them is worth \$ 70 million per year. Saving 52 cents net on another third riding Fairfax Connector will be worth \$ 39 million per year. Saving 17 cents per passenger-mile on the last third driving in autos is worth \$ 12.75 million per year, a total saving of \$ 121.75 million per year on operating expenses. (Tennyson)

Response: Comment noted.

3.3 ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS

3.3.1 Air Quality

Comment: DEQ's Northern Regional Office (DEQ-NRO) reminds the project managers that construction phases of the project are subject to permitting requirements associated with fuel-burning (or other air pollution-emitting) equipment and to rules governing fugitive dust and fugitive emissions. DEQ-NRO has permitting authority for the region including the project area. (Virginia Department of Environmental Quality)

Response: Comment noted. The project will comply with the applicable regulatory and permitting requirements and intends to implement the best practice recommendations included in the VDEQ comment letter dated June 14, 2012 (not itemized here but are included in Appendix D of this Public Hearing Report).

3.3.2 Water Resources & Stormwater Management

Comment: According to (Virginia Department of Environmental Quality) DEQ's Northern Regional Office (DEQ-NRO), the Phase 2 project will affect additional surface waters beyond those contemplated in earlier environmental documents. However, the impacts are consistent with those permitted under Virginia Water Protection Program (VWPP) Individual Permit No. 11-0193, issued on June 10, 2011. (Virginia Department of Environmental Quality)

Response: Comment noted. The project will comply with the terms of the VWPP permit obtained by the Airports Authority and cited above. In addition, the project will comply with the applicable regulatory and permitting requirements and intends to implement the best practice recommendations included in the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (VDEQ) comment letter dated June 14, 2012 (not itemized here but are included in Appendix D of this Public Hearing Report).

Comment: Resource Protection Area - EA notes that there would be a 0.44-acre encroachment into a Resource Protection Area (RPA) at the Route 28 station (Innovation Center Station) site, north side facility. The EA indicates that the Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority (MWAA) would request an exception under the Chesapeake Bay Preservation Ordinance for the proposed encroachment. MWAA should not assume that the exception request will necessarily be approved; rather, early coordination with the Fairfax County DPWES -Land Development Services staff should be pursued in order for MWAA to identify issues/concerns that may be associated with the exception request. (Fairfax County Department of Public Works and Environmental Services)

RESPONSES TO COMMENTS

Response: *The Airports Authority has previously coordinated with the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation (VDCR) on the potential impacts to the RPA and the procedures and requirements for submitting an exception request. Upon submittal of an exception request, VDCR will coordinate its review with the Chesapeake Bay Preservation Act Local Assistance Office for Fairfax County.*

Comment: The Environmental Assessment indicates that there would be a net increase in wetland impacts from Phase 2 of the project from 5.2 acres to approximately 5.8 acres as a result of the proposed design refinements. Fairfax County recognizes that at least one of the additional areas of wetland impacts (wetland W-60) would ultimately be lost to private development if it was not affected by the Metrorail extension project. However, another wetland area, W-80 near Herndon-Monroe (Herndon station), would experience increased impacts as a result of the design modifications as outlined in the EA, with the expansion of the proposed parking garage to the west of the existing parking garage, and it is not clear that such impacts would be inevitable absent Phase 2 of the project. (Fairfax County Department of Public Works and Environmental Services)

Response: *The reconfigurations of the Herndon-Monroe South and Route 28 South station facilities and garages were incorporated in the current design following coordination with Fairfax County. This has resulted in the additional impact to wetlands, documented on pages 3-33 and 3-34 of the EA. These impacts have been incorporated in approved permits from the US Army Corps of Engineers and the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality.*

Comment: The EA indicates that mitigation for wetland impacts will be sought through the purchase of credits at an approved mitigation bank. It is noted that this is consistent with the mitigation measures noted in the Final Environmental Impact Statement and Record of Decision; the document notes that "...all project impacts would occur within Hydrologic Unit Code (HUC) 2070008." HUCs are relatively large areas; it is not clear how close to the areas of impact the mitigation measures will be pursued. Consideration should be given to pursuing wetland mitigation efforts within the same watersheds as the areas of impact, as described below. (Fairfax County Department of Public Works and Environmental Services)

Response: *As stated in the EA, the requirements of the Section 404 permit allow for the purchase of credits at an approved mitigation bank. While it is true the credits will be sought within the HUC indicated, the Airports Authority is also planning to purchase credits within the same watershed where the impacts occur.*

Comment: Because of these huge motor fuel savings, the construction of transit power substations and parking facilities will have a great net beneficial impact on the environment. Stormwater run-off from the parking lots will not help, but retention ponds will help mitigate the problem leaving us very far ahead environmentally. The railway right-of-way will be ballasted for the most part, which allows water to sink in rather than run off, as it does on highways. A very few people may have to see benign parking facilities and sub-stations so that all people can have less pollution and run-off which is fouling our waterways. (Tennyson)

Response: *Comment noted.*

Comment: Stormwater Management - The EA states that the revised LPA represents a slight increase in imperviousness compared to the original LPA. Fairfax County is requesting an estimate of the increase and an indication of the total amount of impervious area for Phase 2 of the project. (Fairfax County Department of Public Works and Environmental Services)

Response: This information is included in the Phase 2 Stormwater Management Report and will be provided directly to Fairfax County.

Comment: The EA states that storm water management (SWM) ponds in flight path areas (including the maintenance yard) must be dry ponds due to Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) requirements. Not counting the five maintenance yard ponds, the County is requesting an indication of which of the ponds listed in section 2.1.4 of the EA are located in flight path areas and which are not. In addition, with the exception of SWM #1A, described as "extended detention," the County requests further information indicating if all ponds located outside flight path areas will be wet ponds. (Fairfax County Department of Public Works and Environmental Services)

Response: In addition to the ponds located at the maintenance yard, there are five additional ponds located in the general airport "flight path". None of these ponds is considered a wet or retention pond. Based on the preliminary engineering design, none of the ponds included in Phase 2 is currently anticipated to be a retention or wet pond, all Phase 2 ponds will likely be extended detention or dry ponds.

Comment: Comments on specific SWM facilities as described in section 2.1.4 of the EA: Several of the facilities listed mention sand filters. Sand filters are typically used as a component of a treatment train to remove pollution from stormwater. Additional performance enhancement options (see below) should be considered to increase treatment before discharge to receiving waters, to groundwater or for collection and reuse. (Fairfax County Department of Public Works and Environmental Services)

Response: Comment noted.

Comment: As noted above, SWM # 1 A is described as an "extended detention" pond. What will be the detention time of this pond compared to the other ponds listed under 2.1.4? (Fairfax County Department of Public Works and Environmental Services)

Response: Extended detention is generally no less than 48 hours. Additional details are provided in the Phase 2 Stormwater Management Report.

Comment: SWM #3A mentions inclusion of a "storm filter." It is not clear if this is a reference to a cartridge media treatment system (such as StormFilter, or similar) or to some other kind of BMP (Best Management Practice). (Fairfax County Department of Public Works and Environmental Services)

Response: Reference is made to a generic "storm filter" that will likely have the same performance requirements of a proprietary StormFilter.

Comment: SWM #14 is to be "retrofitted for quality control." Assuming that this refers to retrofits to provide or improve water quality benefits, additional information is needed on the nature of the proposed retrofits and the expected benefits. (Fairfax County Department of Public Works and Environmental Services)

Response: *SWM #14 is no longer being retrofitted for the Phase 2 project due to a change in project limits.*

Comment: SWM #6A is described as "an underground facility." It is unclear whether "underground" refers to containment/storage, detention or retention of stormwater runoff. More information is needed. If tank storage is being considered, this may present an opportunity for rainwater capture/reuse at the Herndon-Monroe station (Herndon station). (Fairfax County Department of Public Works and Environmental Services)

Response: *This underground facility is intended to be a detention facility such as an underground vault that will control the release of runoff following it being stored in order to minimize the effects on downstream facilities. Details on the current preliminary engineering design are included in the SWM Report.*

Comment: Information on the storage capacities, detention times and water quality benefits of existing and proposed SWM ponds is needed to more fully evaluate the efficacy of the proposed stormwater mitigations. Ideally, stormwater best management practices (BMPs) should be used to manage and detain runoff as close to the source as possible. Over-detaining in areas where controls exist to offset the lack of controls in other areas should be avoided to the maximum extent practicable. Low Impact Development (LID) techniques and practices should be pursued as much as possible in order to reduce stormwater runoff pollution and facilitate infiltration at the source. Examples of these types of techniques include vegetated swales, infiltration trenches, sand filters and porous pavement. In areas where conventional stormwater management ponds are to be used, it is recommended that these be designed with enhanced pollutant removal features such as micro-pools and wetland vegetation to optimize water quality benefits. (Fairfax County Department of Public Works and Environmental Services)

Response: *Comments noted. Because of existing drainage patterns and the limited availability of land in this corridor, in some cases there were limited options available to meet the VDCR criteria related to SWM water quality and quantity controls. Low Impact Development (LID) techniques and other Best Management Practices (BMPs) will be utilized wherever practicable.*

Comment: The EA states that increased wetland losses and minor impacts to aquatic habitat are expected. It is highly recommended that impacts to streams and wetlands be mitigated as close to the project (and within the watershed) as possible, when and where impacts are unavoidable. (Fairfax County Department of Public Works and Environmental Services)

Response: *Comment noted. Efforts are being made to mitigate wetland and stream impacts within the watershed.*

3.3.3 Historic, Cultural & Archaeological Resources

Comment: Through the process outlined in Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, and its implementing regulation 36 CFR Part 800, the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) and Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority (MWAA) determined, with concurrence from DHR, that the Refined LPA will have an Adverse Effect on the Dulles Airport Historic District and archaeological site 44LD1956, both of which are resources eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). In the case of the Dulles Airport Historic District, the introduction of the new, incompatible visual elements, i.e. the aerial guideway and station, into the historic district, the destruction of one of the remaining Saarinen "peek-a-boo" approach views of the historic terminal, and physical

encroachment into the Dan Kiley-designed landscape by support piers from the aerial station. Concerning the prehistoric archaeological site 44LD1956, construction of RLPA will result in its partial destruction.

The FTA and MWAA have been consulting with DHR and other parties to develop a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) that will include specific strategies to mitigate the adverse effects caused by the undertaking. The DHR anticipate that this consultation will continue until an acceptable MOA can be signed. We request that FTA and MWAA continue to work with this agency and the other consulting parties in order to realize this goal. (Virginia Department of Historic Resources)

Response: *Comment noted. FTA, WMATA and the Airports Authority will continue coordination and consulting party requirements on a revised MOA.*

Comment: The design concept proposed for the aerial station in the Refined LPA is functional, respectful, and complimentary to the historic Saarinen terminal. Rather than creating additional adverse effects, the station design actually reduces the visual impact of Parking Garage 1 (north garage) on the historic terminal by adding an element of complimentary design to the visual landscape. While both the LPA and the Refined LPA have adverse effects, the Refined LPA is the lesser of the two because of its improvement of the main view shed of the terminal. The impact on the peek-a-boo sequence is minor and does not constitute a major change from the visual impact of the service roadway bridge. (Sawislak)

Comment: Regarding impacts on the Dulles historic district: as the aboveground station at Dulles Airport is essentially grafted onto the front of the north side structured parking, we do not believe it will have any negative impact on the architectural splendor of the Saarinen Terminal. Rather, the aboveground location will give rail riders a singularly impressive view of the airport terminal. (Meurlin)

Response: *Comment noted.*

Comment: Historic preservation comments are confined to the aerial guideway and above-ground station at Dulles Airport; Dulles Airport National Register-eligible Historic District. Chapter 3, page 3-22. It appears from the EA that design for the Refined LPA above ground guideway takes into consideration the intrusive visual effects on the approach view that an above ground guideway will have and that the project design will seek to minimize the effect of the guideway on this view which contributes to the National Register-eligible Historic District. Fairfax County encourages a design that causes the least amount of impact on the views, including consideration of consolidation of the tracks into one aerial guideway structure. The Draft Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) (see Appendix D) stipulation 2, page 6, requires a design of aerial structures that minimize the interruptions to the views of the Main Terminal building. Further, at Section 3.4, Visual and Aesthetic Resources outlined the approach view of Dulles International Airport regarding the introduction of an aerial guideway. The document states that the "current design requires only a single bent to cross the inbound DIAAH lanes" (page 3-22) and references Figure 3-11 for visualization. The visualization shown in Figure 3-11 has two bents; therefore, an updated image with the current design of only a single bent should be provided to enable proper evaluation of visual impacts. (Fairfax County)

Response: *The visualization referenced in Figure 3-11 only shows a single bent structure supporting both guideways. Additional coordination on the design will be done in accordance with the terms of the amended Section 106 MOA.*

Comment: Chapter 3, page 3-27, Mitigation, Historic Architecture. Several alternatives for potential interpretation of the historic properties within the National Register-eligible Historic District are cited. However, no commitment is made that any of these alternatives will be implemented, only that they will be considered. A commitment is needed for implementation and needs to be specifically stipulated in the Draft Section 106 MOA (see Appendix D) that is currently being updated. There are several viable alternatives identified in this section of the EA that would enhance the visitor experience while educating one on this important architectural resource. (Fairfax County)

***Response:** A draft historic interpretive treatment plan is being developed in accordance with the terms of the updated MOA that will outline a program of what will be implemented as mitigation commitments required by the State Historic Preservation Office, which is the Virginia Department of Historic Resources.*

Comment: Chapter 4, Page 4-5, Historic District and Contributing Resources. Discussion of the Dulles Airport National Register-eligible Historic District tentatively defined in 1989. A National Register nomination should be prepared for the Dulles Airport Historic District as part of the mitigation. This could be specifically stipulated in the Draft Section 106 MOA (see Appendix D) that is currently being updated. (Fairfax County Departments of Transportation, Planning and Zoning, and Public Works and Environmental Services, and the Fairfax County Park Authority)

***Response:** As stated, Dulles Airport Historic District was tentatively defined as National Register eligible in 1989. To date, the Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority has not elected to submit a National Register nomination for the Dulles Airport Historic District.*

Comment: Construction of the Route 28 station (Innovation Center Station) included associated parking and storm water management area may have potential impacts on Site #44FX2233. This 19th century domestic site has not been formally evaluated for National Register of Historic Places; therefore, a Phase I archaeological survey is recommended. If significant sites are found, a Phase II archaeological testing is recommended in order to determine if sites are eligible for inclusion into the National Register of Historic Places. If sites are found eligible, avoidance or Phase III archaeological data recovery is recommended. (Fairfax County Park Authority)

***Response:** As noted in the Project's DEIS (2002) and associated technical reports, Site #44FX2233 was identified and evaluated in a 1997 Phase I archaeological study of the Dulles Green area conducted by Thunderbird Archeological Associates. That study identified #44FX2233 as the remnants of a domestic complex (c. 1875-1900) depicted at this location on historic maps. Its findings indicated surface deposits were present, but that subsurface integrity had been compromised by grading and filling. As a result, the site is probably ineligible for the NRHP and no further work was recommended.*

3.3.4 Waste Management

Comment: DEQ recommends that if any solid waste or hazardous waste is generated or encountered during construction of the project or its operation, the project manager and facility manager follow applicable federal, state, and local regulations for management and disposal of the waste. See "Regulatory

and Coordination Needs," item 4, for citations of applicable law and regulation and sources of additional information. (Virginia Department of Environmental Quality)

***Response:** Comment noted. The project will comply with the applicable regulatory and permitting requirements and intends to implement the best practice recommendations included in the VDEQ comment letter dated June 14, 2012 (not itemized here but are included in Appendix D of this Public Hearing Report).*

3.3.5 Section 4(f) Use

Comment: I concur with the EA's finding that both the LPA and the Refined LPA include a use of a historic resource protected under Section 4(f). However, as discussed in the section above, I find that the impact of that use is lessened by the design concept proposed in the Refined LPA and the fact that the aerial station allows all ground arriving passengers and employees an opportunity to view the station upon arrival. For these reasons, I find that the Refined LPA provides a partial mitigation of the use proposed in the 2004 LPA. (Sawislak)

***Response:** Comment noted.*

3.3.6 Traffic and Ridership

Comment: I think it would help convince Loudoun County Supervisors to support Phase II funding if you posted realistic projected ridership figures in a prominent location on your website. It would also help for everyone to learn how much traffic congestion on Leesburg Pike and the Dulles Greenway would likely be reduced after the line opens. (Burrill)

***Response:** The current EA focuses only on design changes to Phase 2 since the FEIS. No new ridership projections were prepared. Additional information on the project's effects to the local roadway network is included in Chapter 6 of the 2004 Final EIS. The results for the "Full LPA" refer to the entire Project (Phase 1 and Phase 2 combined).*

Comment: The previous inconsistency in the description of how traffic forecasts were developed has been corrected. This has resulted in changes in previous forecasts for some stations, with resulting changes in traffic analysis. Several references exist to Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) design standards. VDOT has recently adopted revised (urban) standards for streets in the Tysons Corner area. Although these standards apply at this time only within Tysons, it may be possible for them to be adapted to other urban areas if the county wishes to pursue this with VDOT. (Fairfax County Department of Transportation)

***Response:** Comment noted. In addition to this comment, Fairfax County Department of Transportation provided a series of detailed comments on the Phase 2 Preliminary Engineering Final Traffic Analysis Compendium dated September 2011 that were not the subject of this EA. The Airports Authority will provide a response to these comments directly to Fairfax County.*

Comment: First, it is noted that this document for review is a "refinement" to the original Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA) approved earlier and now comes before us as the Refined Locally Preferred Alternative because of several changes to the original plan. Foremost among them was building the Dulles Airport Station above ground rather than below ground as well as a small realignment of the Rte

28 Station. Because of these limited changes, the document states "that the potential impacts to the following types of categories of environmental resources as disclosed in the Final EIS will not change as a result of the implementation of the Refined LPA." The report goes on to state that "the traffic impact analysis disclosed in the Final EIS is still valid because updates to regional travel demand projections by the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (MWCOC) for 2030 are consistent with the travel demand projections used by the Final EIS, and because the Refined LPA would not result in an increase in traffic generation at any of the stations." Based upon this finding, one must rely on the earlier LPA and the data and findings that were made when that document was approved. Because no new Traffic Analysis was provided with this refined LPA, it is impossible to detail any new impacts on the existing and proposed transportation facilities surrounding Phase 2 of the Dulles Rail project. The Refined LPA does indicate that of the 27 Intersections involved with the project, the 9 intersections that were (Level of Service) LOS F continued to operate at that level but no additional intersections were added to that category.

TP (VDOT Transportation Planning) staff reviewed the station layouts and facilities and the previous comments by Loudoun OTS regarding keeping the Dulles North Transit Center (DNTC) lot independent and not having an access road between DNTC and metro garage at Route 606 station and these comments have been addressed in the Refined LPA. (Virginia Department of Transportation, Northern Virginia District, Transportation Planning)

Response: *Comment noted. As stated in the comment, the updated traffic analysis performed for the EA indicates that the same number of intersections indicated to operate at LOS F in the FEIS continue to operate at that level for the Refined LPA, with no new intersections added to that category. In accordance with FTA requirements, traffic analyses in the EA was based on approved MWCOC regional forecasts, which reflect zoning and land development densities formally adopted by the local jurisdictions.*

Additional supplemental traffic analysis was conducted due to design modifications of the stations and is being coordinated with VDOT Northern Virginia District Traffic Engineering staff; the results of the analyses are presented in Section 3.10 of the EA. In addition, the Refined LPA may affect ground transportation and parking at Dulles Airport during both construction and operation of the system because it would introduce an aerial structure along roadways and land used by airport tenants and their customers. Section 3.10 of the EA also presents an assessment of potential impacts to operations of airport tenants due to the introduction of an aerial structure at Dulles Airport.

Comment: After reviewing the Refined LPA, the Land Development Section highlighted a number of concerns it had because of the time that has elapsed between when the LPA was first performed and when the Refined LPA was prepared. These questions are outlined below.

1. Did the original traffic analysis include the massive increase in zoning for Tysons Corner?
2. Did the original traffic analysis include the massive development at the CIT site in Fairfax County?
3. Did the original traffic analysis include the massive development at World Center in Loudoun County?
4. Has Fairfax County indicated that they would approve massive zoning increases in the Reston Area when Metro is constructed? What did the traffic analysis show?
5. Did the traffic analysis show that Route 28 would fail if all these re-zonings were approved even if it were widened to 10 lanes? (Virginia Department of Transportation, Northern Virginia District, Land Development)

Response: *In accordance with FTA requirements, traffic analyses in the EA were based on approved MWCOG regional forecasts, which reflect zoning and land development densities formally adopted by the local jurisdictions.*

3.3.7 Planning and Compatibility with Local Jurisdictional Plans

Comment: The County requests it be noted in the EA that permanent names were selected for the Silver Line Metrorail station in Fairfax County, including Reston Town Center station (Reston Parkway), Herndon station (Herndon Monroe), and Innovation Center station (Route 28). The County is not requesting modification to existing plans, reports, diagrams, etc., but feels the permanent names should be reflected going forward. At the Reston Parkway station (Reston Town Center station), south side, further coordination between DCMP, Fairfax County, and WMATA staff to pursue redevelopment and stormwater management opportunities within one-quarter mile of the south side station pavilion. Such coordination should encourage mix-use development appropriate for a Metrorail station area. Additional comments on this topic are provided below.

At Figure 2-1, Phase 2 Alignment and Station Locations, the County recommends roadway and sub division elements, such as Broad Run, Saarinen Circle, Rudder Road, and Autopilot Drive, which are all mentioned in the narrative, be labeled for clarity purposes.

At Section 2.1.2, Stations, it is noted that the refined Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA) Route 28 station (Innovation Center station), north side, includes a "longer" modified pedestrian bridge. Fairfax County recommends adding length information for easier comparison and to quantify the change from the existing plan at Route 28. (Fairfax County Department of Planning and Zoning)

Response: *Comments noted.*

Comment: Town Center Parkway Extension - Fairfax County's Transportation Plan identifies a proposed extension of Town Center Parkway such that it would cross the Dulles International Airport Access Highway (DIAAH) and Toll Road and ultimately connect with Sunrise Valley Drive. It is not clear that the refined plans for the Reston Parkway station (Reston Town Center station) would afford an opportunity for such a crossing. Of particular note are the proposed stormwater management facilities and traction power substation; Fairfax County requests additional discussion on these project elements and the future Reston Parkway station itself to ensure a future roadway extension is not precluded based on DCMP Phase 2 project design, construction, or future Silver Line operation and maintenance. Currently Fairfax County is evaluating several tunnel alignments for this connection that would cross under both the DIAAH and the future DCMP (Silver Line). (Fairfax County Departments of Transportation and Planning and Zoning)

Response: *Comments noted. The Airports Authority will continue to coordinate with Fairfax County on potential options to not preclude the preferred alignment and construction methodology for the Town Center Parkway Extension.*

3.3.8 Station Access

Comment: I generally approve everything they're doing and it program, but I like to just emphasize that pedestrian and bicycle access to these facilities are going to be very important, I think in the future more so, and I just want to make sure that those are accounted for and taken care of in the final plan. (Cohn)

Response: The project design includes pedestrian and bike facilities at each rail station including sidewalks, bike racks and bike lockers.

Comment: Route 28 or CIT Station -Provision should be made for pilings to carry the Horsepen Bridge across the corridor immediately to the west of the station.

A major opportunity exists on the north side of the station to improve road access to the CIT and Dulles World Center area from the Dulles Toll lanes through an east-only connection, which would involve a further bridge. This bridge should be allowed for immediately to the east of the station. This opportunity evolved from the WATF's work to resolve the Horsepen Bridge problem and can be explained elsewhere in greater detail.

Further, the north side of the station currently is bordered by what is essentially a manmade swamp, now defined as a "wetlands". As the region is expected to add 1.6 million jobs, which will require an additional two million households over the next 20 years, the appropriate authorities should give serious consideration to mitigating this "wetlands" elsewhere, to redirecting the stream and to developing two million-plus sq. ft. immediately adjacent to the north side of the station as the region evolves. (Meurlin)

Response: The project design currently minimizes the impact to the Resource Protection Area (RPA) near the Route 28 Station North facilities as required by the Chesapeake Bay Preservation Ordinance. The mitigation for any wetland impacts will be through the purchase of credits at an approved wetland mitigation bank, not at this location.

Comment: Route 606 Station - The WATF believes that the project includes provision for the county or a third party to build southern parking and a southern access to the ticketing area of the station. The WATF strongly supports this provision.

South Riding and other substantial residential areas lie to the south of Route 50, accessible to the station via Route 606. Further, Route 606 is the core of Loudoun County's only industrial corridor and is expected to house approximately 30,000 employees or more by 2030. Consequently, there will be a substantial need to connect the station to these employment and residential centers, and to provide adequate south parking.

The project's responsibility to this future Route 606 station need should be limited to:

The provision for the aforementioned future south access to the station's ticketing area.

The placement of storm water management or any other related facilities where they will not seriously impede these future developments.

Loudoun County's policy of limiting landside development associated with the station to Transit Related Economic Development (TRED) should be sustained for aircraft noise reasons. (Meurlin)

Response: The project design as shown in the FEIS and now in the Refined LPA does not include south side facilities at the Route 606 Station but does accommodate the addition of these facilities at a future date.

3.4 OTHER ISSUES

3.4.1 Funding

Comment: By limiting the scope of issues addressed in the EA to those pertaining to *Preliminary Engineering Design Refinements*, those issues of most importance to the general public have not been addressed. Most notably, the EA ignores severely degraded air quality and adverse traffic congestion impacts that will result from increased commuter travel on local roads along the Dulles Corridor and in Tysons Corner after DR Phase 1 opens. MWAA's Dulles Toll Road (DTR) Traffic and Revenue Consultant - CDM Smith - in early 2012 projected that some 18 million vehicles annually will divert from the DTR to local roads. This traffic diversion will be worsened by MWAA's DR Phase 2 finance plan, which relies on DTR tolls to pay for 75% of its projected capital funding costs. MWAA admits that under its finance plan, absent other financing schemes, DTR tolls will double in 2013, triple by 2018 and are projected by MWAA to reach \$17 or more each way in the 2040s. (Whitfield)

Response: The future toll structure on the Dulles Toll Road will be dependent upon a number of factors including potential availability of additional funding and financing from a variety of sources.

Comment: The projected capital costs of DR have more than doubled since the final EIS was prepared in 2004. The federal government has repeatedly declined since 2002 to provide any additional capital funding or financial assistance for DR Phase 2 since the FTA cap of \$900 million in "New Starts" funding for Phase 1 was set. Nowhere else in the United States has a public transit project been funded so heavily dependent on local taxpayers who have had no voice in the decision making process and are not the direct beneficiaries of the rail project. It is patently bogus for MWAA, USDOT, WMATA, VRDPT and local government officials to assume that the locally preferred "heavy rail" alternative adopted circa 2002, when the total 23 mile project cost was about \$3 billion, incorporated in the March 2005 Record of Decision, remains the locally preferred option for traffic congestion relief and for providing improved mobility. The EIS was premised on 50% US government project funding. The first 103 miles of the Metrorail system was funded by 75+% in federal grants. Despite holding many meetings, US, Virginia, MWAA, WMATA and local officials have made NO public effort to explore far more cost effective bus transit options and financing alternatives which are likely to result in less traffic congestion and ameliorate adverse air quality impacts of planned rail operations in the Dulles Corridor and Tysons Corner. The doubling and tripling of DTR tolls will cause potentially severe short term and long term economic impact to and harm residents and businesses in the Dulles Corridor who are reliant on using the Dulles Toll Road. Many of these DTR users do not live or work near Metrorail stations and will not have the option of using the Silver Line. This impact has not been addressed as part of the socio-economic impact analysis in the EA. While some commuters will ride the Silver Line, particularly those who live near existing Metrorail stations, most commuters will continue to drive single occupant automobiles for the foreseeable future. (Whitfield)

Response: Comment noted. The issues identified were not the subject of this EA.

Comment: A recent study for the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments Transportation Planning Board showed that only 7% of Reston residents presently use public transit. Local traffic experts predict that only 15% of all Tysons Corner and Dulles Corridor commuters, particularly those from Arlington County and Washington DC and those who live near existing Metrorail stations will use the Silver Line. Most of the remaining commuters will continue to use automobiles. Due to provisions of the

WMATA compact, the Inside the Beltway jurisdictions are not obligated to help fund the Dulles Rail project but no similar restriction appears to exist to preclude those same jurisdictions from seeking funding from Loudoun County for projects Inside the Beltway.

Much increased traffic congestion will result from the induced development impacts of the DR project as a result of massive planned increases in property development densities in Tysons Corner, Reston and Herndon in Fairfax County as well as in eastern Loudoun County. These impacts have not been addressed in the original DR EIS or the EA. It appears that WMATA, the agency which helped prepare the Draft Environmental Impact Statement in 2002 and the Final EIS in 2004 has attempted to prevent public awareness of the potential adverse changes in rail ridership. The data in the EA relies on outdated and inaccurate information in the 2004 EIS. Federal regulations require data to be based on current and projected conditions. The radical change in the proposed financial structure for DR that has occurred since 2004 and the transfer of responsibility for building the project from the VDRPT to the Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority (MWAA) are not addressed. Finally, WMATA appears to be attempting to piggy-back its responsibilities in regards to its WMATA compact obligations by conducting a joint public hearing. (Whitfield)

***Response:** Comment noted. In accordance with FTA requirements, traffic analyses in the EA was based on approved MWCOG regional forecasts, which reflect zoning and land development densities formally adopted by the local jurisdictions.*

4 FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The findings and recommendations below are based on the analysis contained in the *Dulles Corridor Metrorail Project, Phase 2 – Extension to Dulles Airport/Route 772 Preliminary Engineering Design Refinements Environmental Assessment* (April 2012) and the comments received during the public hearing process that followed its publication.

4.1 CHANGES IN ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS FROM PRELIMINARY ENGINEERING DESIGN REFINEMENTS

The purpose of the Environmental Assessment (EA) was to evaluate the difference in environmental effects between the Final EIS Dulles Airport/Route 772 Extension and the project’s current design, the Refined LPA.

As shown below in Table 4-1, the anticipated changes in environmental effects from the preliminary engineering design refinements are modest.

Table 4-1: Summary of Environmental Impacts of the LPA and Refined LPA

Environmental Topic/Measure	Final EIS LPA (2004)	Refined LPA (2012)
SOCIAL EFFECTS		
<i>Land Use and Socio-Economics</i>		
Compatibility with existing land uses and planned development	Yes	Yes
Consistent with comprehensive plans	Yes	Yes (may require an update of the Airport Layout Plan)
Compatibility with local zoning	Yes, but special exceptions would be required at certain stations	Yes, but special exceptions would be required at certain stations
<i>Neighborhood, Community Services and Community Cohesion</i>		
Number of community facilities directly or indirectly affected	0	0
Changes to neighborhood cohesion or the creation of isolated neighborhoods or the erection of community barriers	None	None
Number of neighborhoods affected by noise and vibration	1	0
<i>Property Acquisition and Displacement</i>		
Number of privately-owned properties to be acquired	27	20
Number of residential and business displacements	0	0
<i>Visual and Aesthetic Conditions</i>		
Long-term visual effects	Minimal or negligible impacts	The introduction of an aerial alignment and above-ground station at Dulles Airport.

FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Table 4-1: Summary of Environmental Impacts of the LPA and Refined LPA

Environmental Topic/Measure	Final EIS LPA (2004)	Refined LPA (2012)
Cultural Resources		
Number of adverse affect determinations in accordance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) (Historic Architecture)	1 (Dulles Airport Historic District)	1 (Dulles Airport Historic District)
Number of adverse affect determinations in accordance with NHPA Section 106 (Archaeological Resources)	0	1
Parklands and Recreational Areas		
Number of parks and recreational areas affected	1 (due to the conversion of an interim use soccer field)	0
Environmental Justice		
Number of low-income and minority populations anticipated to experience disproportionately high and adverse impacts	0	0
ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS		
Geologic Resources		
Impacts to geologic, topographic, groundwater, prime farmland resources	Minor or none	Same as or less than the LPA because this alternative does not include an underground alignment and station at Dulles Airport.
Water Resources		
Total acres of permanent wetland impacts	5.2	5.8
Number of stream crossings	9	8
Number of 100-year floodplains affected	4	4
Stormwater runoff and water quality impacts	More impervious surfaces would result in higher amounts of stormwater runoff. Water quality would not be affected because the Project includes a system of storm water management (SWM) facilities.	The Refined LPA would slightly increase the amount of impervious surfaces. The SWM system design was revised accordingly. Water quality would not be affected.
Aquatic and Terrestrial Biota and Habitat		
Impacts to aquatic habitat	Minor	Minor
Displaced habitat used by terrestrial biota	Small amounts of urban landscaped habitat	An isolated forest would be displaced by the relocation of the Route 28 Station's north side facility.
Rare, Threatened and Endangered Species		
Number of adverse effect determinations in accordance with Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act	0	0
Air Quality		
Conformity with State Implementation Plan	Yes	Yes
Contribution to Regional Goals	Yes	Yes
Reduced Vehicle Emissions	Yes	Yes
Number of intersections predicted to exceed the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) for carbon monoxide (CO)	0	0
Noise and Vibration		
Number of noise sensitive receptors predicted to exceed FTA noise impact criteria	0	11

FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Table 4-1: Summary of Environmental Impacts of the LPA and Refined LPA

Environmental Topic/Measure	Final EIS LPA (2004)	Refined LPA (2012)
Number of vibration sensitive receptors predicated to exceed FTA vibration impact criteria	0	0
Hazardous and Contaminated Materials		
Number of hazardous materials sites of potential concern near the construction area	7	7
ECONOMIC EFFECTS		
Change in number of transit jobs over the Phase I condition	65	Same as LPA
Expected increase in corridor population (percent)	6.5 percent	Same as LPA
Expected increase in corridor employment (percent)	9.7 percent	Same as LPA
Expected increase in corridor development over the No Build condition (percent)	7 percent	Same as LPA
TRANSPORTATION EFFECTS		
Number of intersections predicted to operate at level-of-service (LOS) F during the AM peak hour in 2025	9	9 (includes analysis of additional intersections at stations)
Number of intersections predicted to operate at LOS F during the PM peak hour in 2025	9	9 (includes analysis of additional intersections at stations)
Consistent with applicable transportation plans	Yes	Yes
SECONDARY AND CUMULATIVE EFFECTS		
Additional demand for public services	Yes	Yes
Change in development character	Yes	Yes
Effect on undeveloped land in Loudoun County	Yes	Yes
Linkage between transportation and secondary development	Strong	Strong
Effect on transportation demand management strategies	Strong	Strong
SECTION 4(F)² AND SECTION 6(F)³		
Number of Section 4(f) uses	1 (Dulles Airport Historic District)	1 (Dulles Airport Historic District)
Number of Section 6(f) conversions	0	0

¹ Noise impact on the third and fourth floors at one receptor, the Dulles West Office Building

² Section 4(f) is from the U.S. Department of Transportation Act of 1966

³ Section 6(f) is from the Land and Water Conservation Fund Act of 1964

4.2 RECOMMENDED CHANGES IN MITIGATION MEASURES

Based on the analysis conducted as part of the EA and the public comments received, the project team has the following recommendations regarding the design refinements, required mitigation measures, and amendments to the Record of Decision (ROD).

4.2.1 PE Design Refinements

The project team recommends that all of the design refinements evaluated in the EA be incorporated into the project design.

4.2.2 Mitigation Measures

The mitigation measures included in the 2006 FTA Amended Record of Decision (ROD) would still apply to the Phase 2 portion of the project.

Based on the findings documented in the EA, the following changes in the mitigation measures, included FTA's 2006 ROD, are recommended:

Section 106 Cultural and Historic Resources: An updated Section 106 Memorandum of Agreement is required to address changes in effects to historic and archaeological resources. This agreement, which is currently under review by the Virginia State Historic Preservation Office and other consulting parties, outlines the scope and process for implementing the required mitigation measures for these resources.

Water Resources: The mitigation for wetland impacts would be satisfied through the purchase of credits at an approved mitigation bank within the same watershed. Compensation for stream impacts would also be sought at an approved mitigation bank.

Noise Effects. To address the new noise impacts at Dulles Airport, the Airports Authority will install appropriate noise mitigation either trackside (i.e. noise barrier) or acoustic windows at the existing Dulles West office building. If the future land use at this location changes prior to the start of rail operations, the need for mitigation measures would be re-evaluated.

Land Use Effects. The updated FAA Record of Decision (ROD) will address FAA regulatory requirements at Dulles Airport, including mitigation for the alignment encroachment into the existing runway protection zone. The FAA and the Airports Authority will conduct a separate environmental review for the associated mitigation measures prior to the start of Phase 2 operations.

The project team recommends that these mitigation measures be added to an amended ROD by the Federal Transit Administration to signify its acceptance of the preliminary engineering design refinements.