

# POTOMAC YARD METRO CONNECTION

## Potomac Yard Metrorail Station Environmental Impact Statement

This newsletter is the first in a series that will provide project updates on the Potomac Yard Metrorail Station Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) process, which is being undertaken by the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) and the City of Alexandria, in cooperation with the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) and the National Park Service (NPS). The project considers construction of a new Metrorail station located in the Potomac Yard area along the existing Metrorail Blue and Yellow lines between the Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport station and the Braddock Road station. This edition is intended to provide information about the initial screening and refinement of alternatives process, the three station location (build) alternatives, and the next steps of the EIS process. We hope you will join us for the next public meeting scheduled for **Thursday, April 19 from 7:00-9:00 pm at the Cora Kelly Recreation Center** to review the station location alternatives.

## Why Build a Metrorail Station at Potomac Yard?

A Metrorail station would improve accessibility of the Potomac Yard area and provide more transportation choices for current and future residents, employees, and businesses by establishing a new access point to the Metrorail system. The new station is needed to address existing and future travel demand in the area resulting from the City of Alexandria's planned development of Potomac Yard. Improved access to the regional system is needed to accommodate a greater share of travel to and from the site on transit, potentially reduce single-occupant vehicle use, decrease automobile emissions, and improve regional air quality.

### Potomac Yard Metrorail Station Project Goals

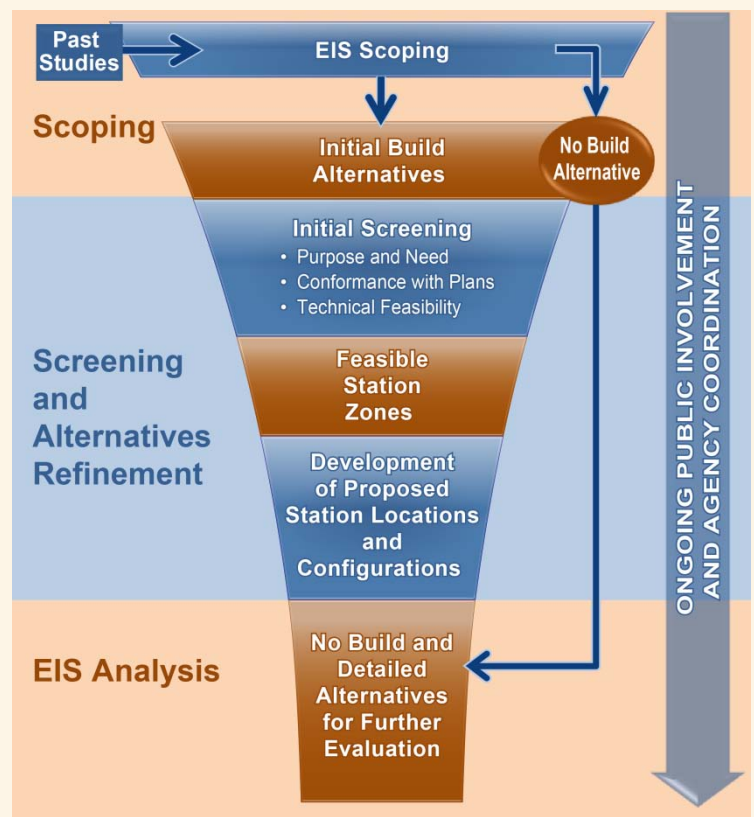
- Improve access to the regional Metrorail system
- Serve population and employment growth in the Potomac Yard area
- Accommodate projected travel demand and improve regional air quality
- Provide a cost-effective and financially feasible transportation investment
- Enhance transportation and pedestrian safety

## Scoping and Initial Alternatives Considered

The planning process for the Potomac Yard Metrorail Station began with the *Potomac Yard Metrorail Station Concept Development Study*, which was completed in 2010. The study identified eight possible Metrorail station locations. Subsequently, the scoping phase of the EIS was initiated in winter 2011, and a set of initial alternatives was presented to government agencies and the general public for review and comment. A No Build Alternative was also presented, and the scoping participants suggested several new alternatives, including three additional station locations and three non-Metrorail alternatives. A total of 36 alternatives were advanced for consideration in the initial screening.

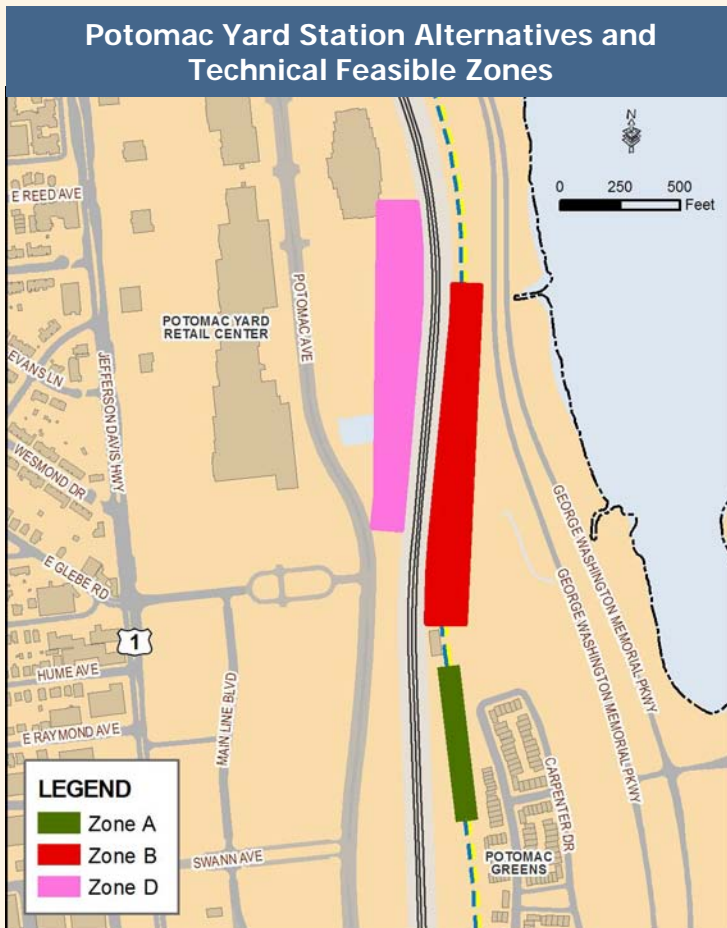
## Screening and Refinement of Alternatives

To develop a reasonable range of alternatives to be evaluated in the Draft EIS, the 36 alternatives developed during scoping were refined as part of a two-step screening process. The first initial screening reviewed alternatives for consistency with the project purpose and need, land use and development plans, and technical feasibility. The figure below shows the evaluation framework used to refine the alternatives.



## Development of Technically Feasible Zones

The alternatives that passed the initial screening included slight variations in location, and therefore “technically feasible zones,” where a station could be located. Key considerations in developing the zones included the available length of straight track for a platform; track geometry requirements to maintain a 45-mph minimum speed; the ability to tie new track back into existing Metrorail tracks within an acceptable out-of-service period (a 3-day weekend); and the ability to achieve required vertical clearances. Based on these considerations, Zones A, B, and D passed the initial screening of alternatives. The map below shows the three technically feasible zones.

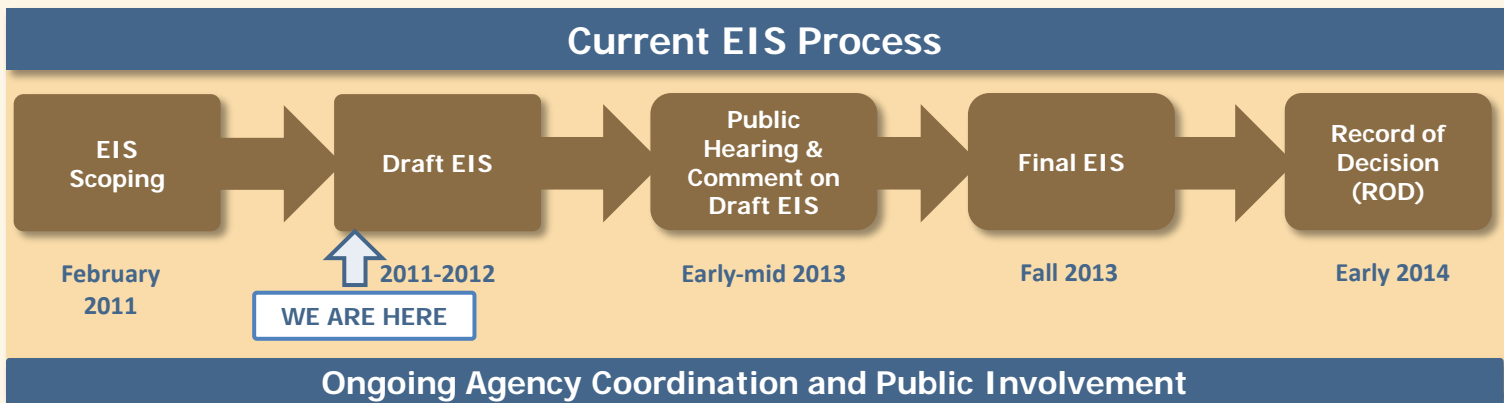


Following the identification of zones, the specific station design concept and facility configurations within each zone were identified with the goal of maximizing project benefits while minimizing the potential for adverse environmental impacts based on regulatory, social, environmental and economic considerations. Primary criteria for refinement included numerous items such as: minimizing the impacts to wetlands, access to planned development, and track geometry. The maps on the following page provide more detailed information on the alternatives developed.

## Next Steps

The detailed station alternatives resulting from the screening and refinement of alternatives will be carried forward for evaluation in the Draft EIS. The Draft EIS will document the affected environment, identifying existing conditions and potential opportunities and constraints relative to the proposed project. Based on this information, the potential impacts of each of the project alternatives will be assessed and documented. The project alternatives will also undergo a detailed evaluation based on potential impacts and their performance relative to the project purpose and need, and the project goals and objectives (see figure on page 1 for specific elements).

Key Environmental Considerations to be Addressed in the EIS	
Parks and parklands	Transportation
Visual resources	Safety and security
Water resources, wetlands, & habitats	Hazardous materials/contamination
Air quality & climate change	Historic & cultural resources
Safety & security	Construction
Economic development	Noise and vibration
Indirect & cumulative effects	Land acquisitions & displacements

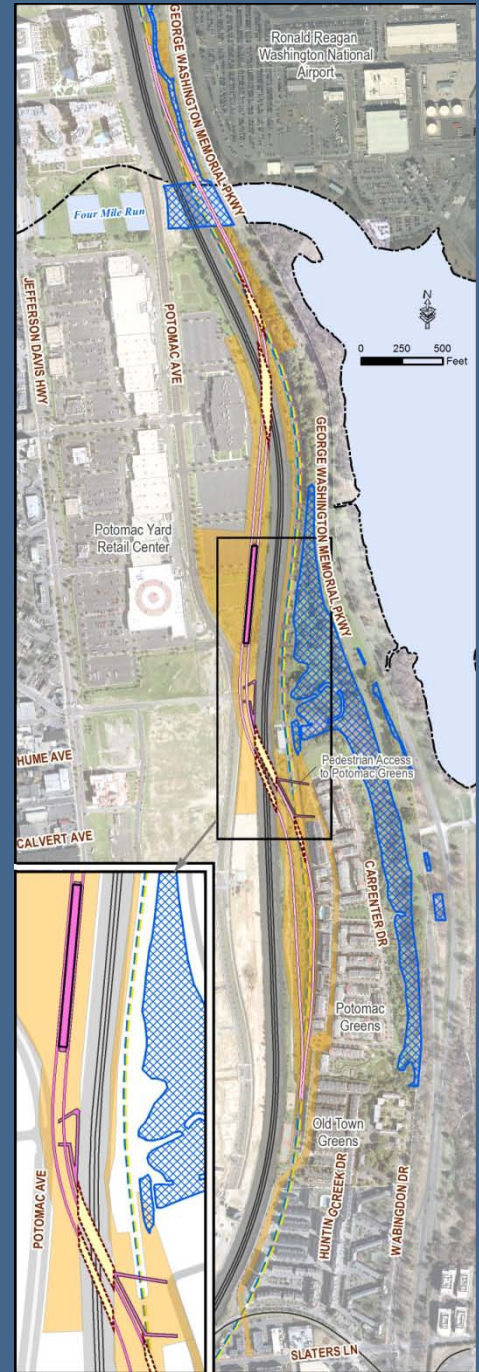


# METRORAIL STATION ALTERNATIVES DEVELOPED FOR THE DRAFT EIS

**Alternative A** is an at-grade station located on the existing alignment between the George Washington Memorial Parkway and the CSXT right-of-way and west of Potomac Greens. Earlier plans reserve this location for the placement of a station.

**Alternative B** is an at-grade station located on a new track alignment between the George Washington Memorial Parkway and the CSXT right-of-way, north of Potomac Greens.

**Alternative D** is an aerial station located on a new track alignment between the CSXT railroad right-of-way and Potomac Avenue.



## LEGEND

- Alternative A Platform & Facilities
- New Track for Alternative B
- Preliminary Wetland Areas
- Existing Metrorail Blue/Yellow Line
- Alternative B Platform & Facilities
- New Track for Alternative D
- Construction Access and Impact Area
- CSXT Tracks
- Alternative D Platform & Facilities
- Aerial Structure over Railroad
- CSXT Right-of-Way



Potomac Yard Metrorail Station EIS  
 P.O. Box 25132  
 Alexandria, VA 22313

## UPCOMING PUBLIC MEETING!

**THURSDAY, APRIL 19, 2012**  
 7:00-9:00 pm

### **CORA KELLY RECREATION CENTER**

25 West Reed Avenue  
 Alexandria, VA 22305

## GET INVOLVED!

Want to know more about the Potomac Yard Metrorail Station EIS? Visit the project website at

[www.potomacyardmetro.com](http://www.potomacyardmetro.com).

Let us know your comments by writing:

**Potomac Yard Metrorail Station EIS**  
 P.O. Box 25132  
 Alexandria, VA 22313

or email them to:

[comments@potomacyardmetro.com](mailto:comments@potomacyardmetro.com)