

# POTOMAC YARD METRORAIL STATION ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

## Key Dates

Publication of Notice of Intent to prepare an EIS	January 2011
Public and Agency Scoping Meetings	February 2011
Draft EIS/WMATA Public Hearing	Spring 2013
City of Alexandria Council Decision	Summer 2013
EIS Record of Decision	Fall 2013

## Project Information

Visit the project website at [www.potomacyardmetro.com](http://www.potomacyardmetro.com).

Mail your comments to the following address:

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

or email them to:

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

## Lead Agency



Federal Transit Administration

## Project Sponsor



City of Alexandria

## Cooperating Agencies



Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority



National Park Service

## Proposed Action

The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) as the Federal lead agency, in cooperation with the City of Alexandria, the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA), and the National Park Service (NPS), is initiating the preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). The proposed project includes the construction of a new Metrorail Station located at Potomac Yard within the City of Alexandria along the existing Blue and Yellow Lines between the Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport Station and the Braddock Road Station.

## Purpose and Need for the Potomac Yard Metrorail Station

The purpose of the project is to 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 regional Metrorail system. This additional access point is needed to address existing and future travel demand in the area resulting from the City of Alexandria's planned development of a major transit-oriented mixed-use activity center in the vicinity of the proposed station.

The project area in Alexandria is located in the Northern Virginia portion of the Washington metropolitan region, which is expected to see approximately 30% population growth in the next 30 years. The project area is located adjacent to existing residential neighborhoods to the west and southeast and an approximately 600,000 square-foot retail center. The existing retail center is approved for redevelopment, with 2.25 million square feet of total mixed-use development including office, retail, residential and hotel uses. Other properties in the Potomac Yard redevelopment area are approved for a total of approximately 4 million square feet of development. This additional development will impact the existing roadway network with increased travel demand contributing additional vehicle and transit trips. The transportation network in the project area is limited by the heavy rail tracks to the east and limited east-west connectivity west of Route 1.

Currently the project area is not served by Metrorail or other rapid transit services which provide regional connectivity. *(continued on page 2)*



## Public Scoping Meeting Agenda

### Open House

View the display boards with information about the Potomac Yard Metrorail Station EIS. Project staff will be available to answer questions about the existing conditions and the proposed project.

### Presentation

A brief presentation will summarize the purpose of the project, an initial set of alternative station locations for the project, and key environmental considerations.

### Opportunity to Provide Comments

Provide your comments and observations about the project and the EIS process.



The project area is located between two Metrorail stations, located 3.1 miles apart. This gap between the Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport Station and the Braddock Road Station is the longest for the portions of the Metrorail system that serve urban residential and commercial corridors. This area is currently served by local bus services that operate in mixed traffic along the congested U.S. Route 1 corridor, yet they have numerous local stops resulting in slow transit travel speeds. This results in relatively long transit travel times to access the site. The Crystal City/Potomac Yard Transitway, which will provide bus priority lanes on nearby Route 1, will improve reliability of local transit services along the Route 1 corridor; however, direct access to the Metrorail system is still needed to accommodate longer regional transit trips.

The anticipated Potomac Yard Metrorail Station was included in WMATA's 1999 *Transit Service Expansion Plan*, the 2010 *Financially Constrained Long-Range Transportation Plan for the National Capital Region*, and earlier WMATA and regional transportation plans, in addition to the City of Alexandria's 1992 and 2008 Transportation Master Plans and *North Potomac Yard Small Area Plan*. Establishing a new access point to the regional Metrorail system would provide more transit-friendly development patterns supported by improved access to transit as well as a safe and reliable alternative to automobile travel to and from the Potomac Yard area. Improved access to the regional system is also needed to accommodate a greater share of travel to and from the site on transit, potentially reducing reliance on single-occupant vehicle use, decreasing automobile emissions, and improving regional air quality. The Washington Metropolitan area has been identified as a non-attainment area for ozone and particulate matter because the concentrations of these pollutants exceed acceptable levels as designated by the EPA.

### Proposed Metrorail Station Locations

City of Alexandria plans for the Potomac Yard site include a high-density mixture of uses such as office, residential, retail, hotel, and other appropriate uses.

The *Potomac Yard Metrorail Station Concept Development Study* (2010) completed by the City of Alexandria and WMATA examined a number of potential station locations along the existing Metrorail tracks and along alternative

### METRO RAIL STATION ALTERNATIVES

**Metrorail Station Alternative A** would be located between the George Washington Memorial Parkway and the CSX Railroad tracks and west of the Potomac Greens Neighborhood.

**Metrorail Station Alternative B1** would be located between the George Washington Memorial Parkway and the CSX Railroad, just to the north of Alternative A.

**Metrorail Station Alternative B2** would be located between the George Washington Memorial Parkway and the CSX Railroad, to the north of Alternative A and to the south of Alternative B1.

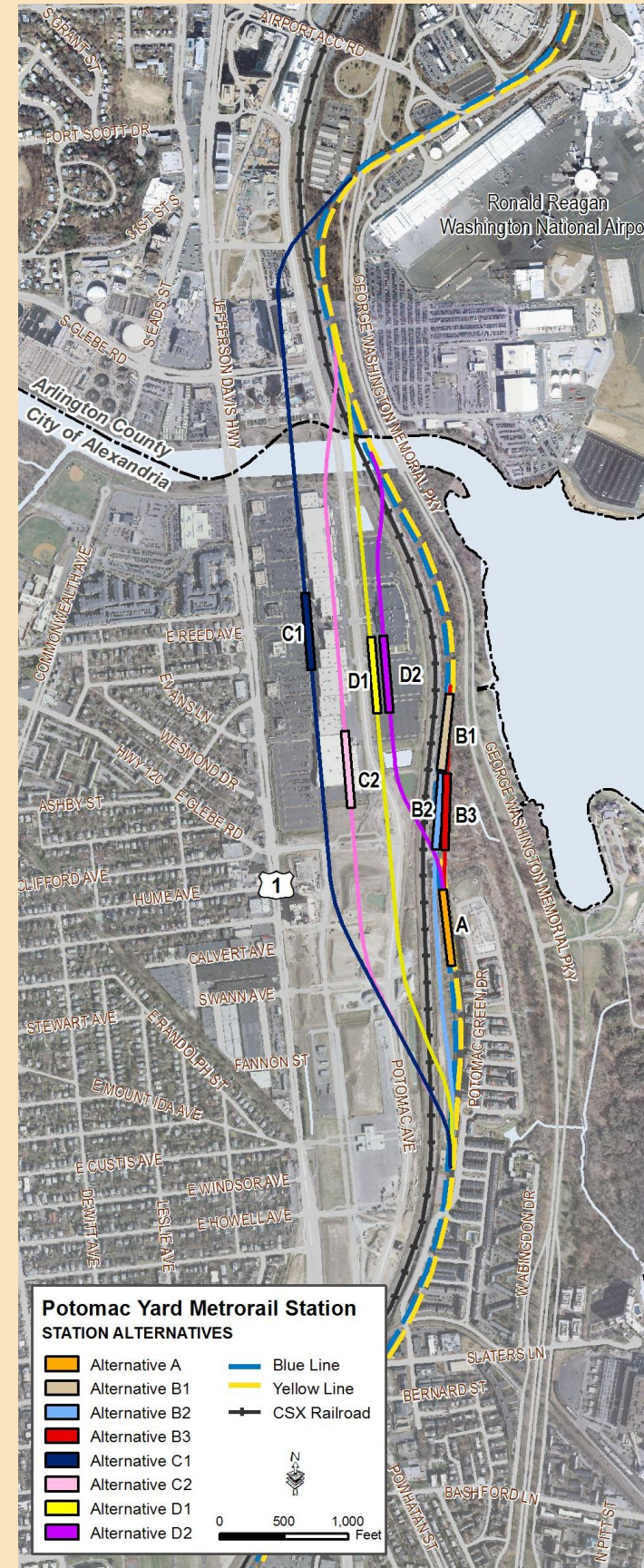
**Metrorail Station Alternative B3** would be located between the George Washington Memorial Parkway and the CSX Railroad, just to the east of Alternative B2.

**Metrorail Station Alternative C1** would be located between the CSX Railroad and Route 1.

**Metrorail Station Alternative C2** would be located between the CSX Railroad and Route 1, just east of Alternative C1.

**Metrorail Station Alternative D1** would be located between the CSX Railroad and Route 1, just east of Alternative C2.

**Metrorail Station Alternative D2** would be located between the CSX Railroad and Route 1, just east of Alternative D1.



alignments west of the existing parallel CSX freight rail tracks. All of the station alternatives included in the previous study have been identified for consideration in the EIS scoping process. Additional alternatives may emerge as a result of the scoping process.

### Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)

The EIS will document potential environmental impacts of the alternatives. Among key areas to be reviewed for potential impacts are community facilities, parklands, historic and cultural resources, traffic, hazardous and contaminated materials, air quality and climate change, noise and vibration, wetlands, protected species and habitats, and construction impacts.

### Agency Coordination

An Agency Coordination Plan will be developed to facilitate and document FTA's interaction with other agencies and to inform them how the coordination will be accomplished. The goal of the plan is to expedite and improve the environmental review process by clearly establishing agency interactions and expectations. This plan proposes time frames for input by those organizations and agencies. In addition, the plan proposes a schedule of meetings at key coordination points and identifies which persons, organizations, or agencies should be included. The meetings will include cooperating agencies, which are agencies specifically requested by FTA to participate in the NEPA process for the project; as well as participating agencies, which are governmental agencies that have an interest in the project because of jurisdictional authority, special expertise, or statewide interest.

### Public Involvement

Opportunities for the public to participate in the EIS process and offer input will be provided at several points during the course of the environmental study. These include public scoping meetings to solicit input on alternatives being reviewed and resource areas to be studied in the EIS and a public hearing to give the public and agencies an opportunity to provide comments on the Draft EIS. The scoping process and the public hearing will be conducted in compliance with federal regulations as set out in the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA), as amended.