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Crystal City to Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport Multimodal Connection (CC2DCA) Project

Summer 2024 Update

Last fall, the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) and Arlington County issued the Environmental Assessment (EA) for the Crystal City to Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport Multimodal Connection (CC2DCA) project for public review. Since then, Arlington County has continued to advance the project. In this newsletter, you'll get an update on the status of the CC2DCA project and a glimpse at what you can look forward to later this year.

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- Environmental review process update
- Preliminary engineering and design phase update
- Next steps

Environmental Review Update

VDOT and Arlington County made the EA, including associated technical reports, draft Section 4(f) evaluation, and draft Section 106 Programmatic Agreement (PA) available for review on August 18, 2023. Agencies and the public had until October 3 to comment. On September 19, 2023, Arlington County held an open house at Aurora Hills Recreation Center to present the findings of the EA to the public and receive comments. Comments could also be submitted through an online form or via email. Eighty-four individuals or non-governmental organizations and six agencies submitted comments. The comments received expressed a variety of concerns or interests. These included: accessibility; connectivity to the Mount Vernon Trail; accommodation of all types of bicycle traffic; safety risks; and bridge design. Several comments were supportive of the project and encouraged moving forward quickly; others questioned the need for, or utility of, the project or objected to its cost. Some recommended using design elements to encourage pedestrian and bike use (such as shade, a direct route, and moving walkways); protecting existing large trees; removing invasive vegetation; and using warm-hued lights to protect animals. Most comments pertained to the future design and operation of the CC2DCA connection. None required any substantive changes to the EA.

Following the public review of the EA and associated documents, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), Arlington County, VDOT, the National Park Service (NPS), and the Virginia Department of Historic Resources executed the Section 106 Programmatic Agreement (PA). Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 requires government agencies to consider the effects on historic properties. If a federal or federally assisted project has the potential to affect historic properties, a Section 106 review needs to take place.

The PA defines measures to be taken during the later phases of the project to minimize and mitigate adverse effects on the George Washington Memorial Parkway (Parkway) as a historic resource. These measures include implementing design reviews, a vegetation



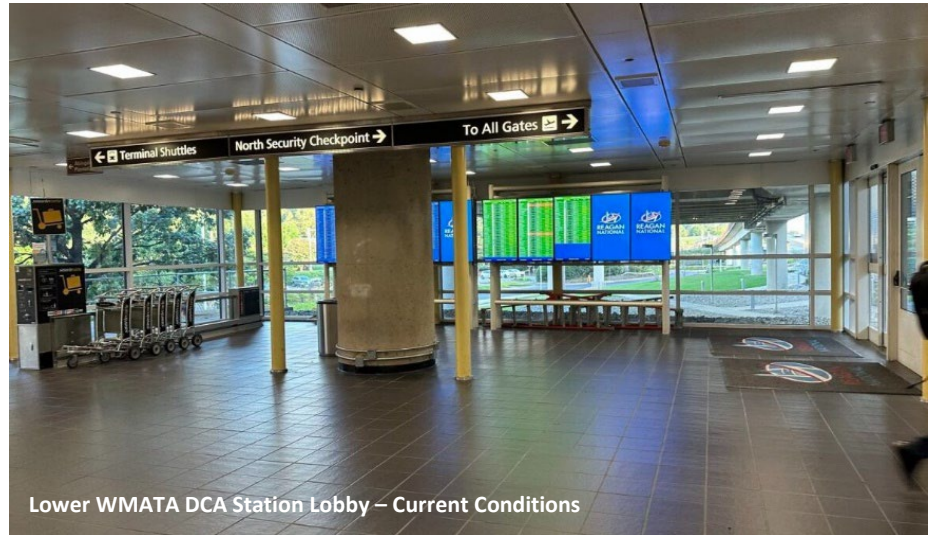
protection plan, a vegetation restoration plan, and a construction management control plan as well as providing funding for the development by NPS of a Long Range Comprehensive Interpretive Plan for the Parkway highlighting underrepresented stories related to the legacies of enslavement in the vicinity of CC2DCA.

To address impacts of CC2DCA on the Parkway as a park, Arlington County entered into a separate Mitigation Agreement (MA) with NPS. In the MA, Arlington County commits to providing funding for five years of Mount Vernon Trail maintenance activities and to contributing financially to rehabilitation work planned for Gravelly Point Park.

The Arlington County Board approved both agreements on December 16, 2023. Based on the EA and associated agreements, and after further internal reviews, **FHWA issued a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) on July 24, 2024.** Separately, Arlington County advanced the next phase of the project.

Preliminary Engineering and Design Update

In fall 2023, Arlington County initiated the Preliminary Engineering and Design Phase of the Project. The first step in this phase is to determine the alignment of the connection between the Parkway and DCA, which was not specifically defined in the EA. To that end, Arlington County has been meeting with the Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority (MWAA) and the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) as well as with the designers of MWAA's ongoing Roadway Network Improvements project. In coordination with these stakeholders, Arlington County has been considering several potential alignments. While these alignments all follow a slightly different route across DCA property, they all connect to the lower lobby of the WMATA DCA station (see photograph above), consistent with MWAA's requirement that CC2DCA not affect the Terminal 2 parking garage.



Lower WMATA DCA Station Lobby – Current Conditions

The CC2DCA design team is evaluating these potential alignments based on several factors. Key considerations include the total length of the bridge; the minimum slope allowed by geometry; the exact location of the connection to the WMATA DCA lobby; impacts to MWAA's Roadway Network Improvements project; impacts to utility lines; locations available for bridge piers; and the location of the link to the Mount Vernon Trail. The design team's goal is to find an alignment that combines feasibility with a comfortable slope, directness, and optimal user-friendliness.

In parallel, the design team performed field surveys to establish accurate elevations and determine the location of existing utility lines.

What's next?

Arlington County will present the alignment options to the public in the **fall of 2024, with completion of the 15% design anticipated by the end of the year.** Public and stakeholder feedback will inform the County's final decision on the alignment of CC2DCA across DCA property and the location of the link to the Mount Vernon Trail. Following the completion of the 15% design, the design team will immediately initiate the 30% design development stage.

To receive updates, sign up for the Crystal City-Pentagon City Transportation Update email list at www.cc2dca.us
or send an email to info@cc2dca.us