

Abstract

Arlington County and Fairfax County, Virginia, in cooperation with the Federal Transit Administration (FTA), are proposing to implement high-quality, high-capacity transit service along a 5-mile corridor, running mainly along Columbia Pike, between the Pentagon/Pentagon City area in Arlington County and the Skyline complex located in the Baileys Crossroads Community Business Center (CBC) in Fairfax County. The proposed project, known as the Columbia Pike Transit Initiative, supports the transportation goals of the counties and fosters their vision for a multimodal corridor, linking its walkable, mixed-use, mixed-income neighborhoods and connecting these to the Washington, DC area transit network, and thus, the region's major activity centers.

The project is seeking federal funding for a portion of the proposed improvements through the FTA Capital Investment Grant Program (49 U.S.C. 5309) New Starts/Small Starts program. In order to meet the requirements of the program and maintain eligibility for federal funding, FTA, as the lead federal agency, in coordination with Arlington County and Fairfax County, is preparing this combined Alternatives Analysis/Environmental Assessment (AA/EA). The Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) is providing technical oversight of the AA/EA.

This AA/EA compares the ability of four alternatives to satisfy the project purpose and need and analyzes the potential effects of the alternatives on the built and natural environment. The AA/EA will be available for review and comment for 30 days, beginning on May 22, 2012. The 30-day public review period will close on June 21, 2012.

Public Meetings

Arlington County and Fairfax County will hold two public meetings on the AA/EA. Comment forms will be available for attendees to submit comments for the public record. The first meeting will be held on Wednesday, June 6, 2012, at Patrick Henry Elementary School, Cafeteria/Gymnasium, 701 South Highland Street, Arlington, VA 22204. The second meeting will be held on Thursday, June 7, 2012, at Goodwin House Bailey's Crossroads, Auditorium, 3440 South Jefferson Street, Falls Church, VA 22041. Both meetings will be held from 7:00 PM to 9:00 PM.

Comment Submission

Your comments are important. If you cannot attend one of the public meetings, you can submit your comments on the AA/EA between May 22, 2012, and June 21, 2012, to the following address: Columbia Pike Transit Initiative, P.O. Box 3915, Oakton, VA 22124, or by email to info@piketransit.com. The project website, www.piketransit.com, also provides an on-line comment form to submit comments. To ensure that comments will be considered, the Columbia Pike Transit Initiative must receive written comments by June 21, 2012.

Next Steps

After the public meetings and the close of the comment period, the Arlington County Board and Fairfax County Board of Supervisors will select a Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA). Thereafter, FTA will review the findings of the AA/EA and responses to comments. FTA will make its formal NEPA determination and the comments will be formally addressed in the NEPA finding.

If the Streetcar Build Alternative is selected as the LPA, Arlington County and Fairfax County would apply to enter the next phase, "preliminary engineering" or "project development," of FTA's New Starts/Small Starts program.

Additional Information is available by contacting:

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