

# **Dulles Corridor Metrorail Project – Extension to Wiehle Avenue**

## **Northern Virginia**

(November 2009)

The Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority (MWAA), in cooperation with the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA), is proposing to construct an 11.7-mile extension of the region's Metrorail system from west of the existing East Falls Church Metrorail station through the large Tysons Corner employment and retail center to Wiehle Avenue in the Reston area of Fairfax County. The project will be operated as a separate Metrorail line under a new service configuration that terminates in Washington, DC at the existing Stadium-Armory Metrorail station. The proposed project scope includes construction of five new stations, a major park-and-ride lot at Wiehle Avenue, and expanded storage capacity at WMATA's West Falls Church rail yard. The project also includes the purchase of 64 heavy rail vehicles. The extension would be operated by WMATA, with trains operating at seven minute peak frequencies from the Wiehle Avenue station through East Falls Church, continuing along the existing Metrorail Orange Line track east through Arlington County, downtown Washington, DC, Capitol Hill, and terminating at Stadium-Armory. The 11.7-mile extension is the first phase of a proposed 23.1-mile extension of Metrorail west to Dulles International Airport and Loudoun County.

The Tysons Corner area contains over 25 million square feet of office space and 110,000 employees. Redevelopment and expansion of major retail and office development is underway. The Reston area contains significant mixed-use development, with a substantial employment base and large residential population, many of whom commute to employment sites in Washington, DC. The primary transportation arteries that serve this rapidly-growing area are the Dulles Toll Road and Route 7, both of which experience significant congestion during peak hours. The proposed Metrorail extension would expand transportation capacity to and from Reston and the Tysons Corner regional activity centers (including reverse commute trips), while providing a direct rail link for commuters from northwest Fairfax and Loudoun Counties to employment opportunities in Tysons Corner, the Rosslyn-Ballston corridor, downtown Washington, DC, and other locations adjacent to stations along the 106-mile Metrorail system. Ridership is projected to be approximately 85,700 daily riders by 2030, including an estimated 10,000 new transit riders.

The total project cost under the Full Funding Grant Agreement (FFGA) is \$3,142.47 million. The Section 5309 New Starts funding share is \$900.00 million.

## **Status**

Following years of study, a phased bus/rail system in the Dulles corridor was adopted into the region's long range plan in October 1999. In March 2000, FTA approved initiation of preliminary engineering (PE) for the Dulles Corridor Bus Rapid Transit Project. Upon completion of a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) in November 2002, a 23.1-mile Metrorail extension to Route 772 in Loudoun County replaced BRT as the locally preferred alternative (LPA). Due to funding concerns, the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT), the project's original sponsor, and WMATA identified a project terminating at Wiehle Avenue as the first phase of implementation of the LPA. FTA approved a Supplemental Draft EIS in October 2003 reflecting this terminus. FTA approved DRPT's request to initiate PE for the Extension to Wiehle Avenue project in June 2004. DRPT received a Record of Decision (ROD) on the Final EIS for both this project and the full LPA in March 2005. The environmental documents covered the entire LPA west through Dulles International Airport to Loudoun County. Thus, the Federal Aviation Administration issued its own Record of Decision in July 2005.

In March 2006, the Commonwealth of Virginia accepted the MWAA proposal to assume control of the Dulles Toll Road and responsibility for construction of the project. Such authority is intended to enable MWAA to accelerate implementation of not only the Metrorail Extension to Wiehle Avenue but the full LPA using Dulles Toll Road revenues. In February 2006, Fairfax County requested that the Metrorail alignment along Route 7 be shifted from the south side to the median, so that a boulevard-type roadway could be constructed. An Environmental Assessment addressing this proposed change was published in February 2006. After a public hearing in March 2006, FTA issued an amended ROD in November 2006. The Project was formally transferred from DRPT to MWAA in July 2007. FTA approved the Project into final design in May 2008. The Dulles Toll Road was transferred from the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) to MWAA in November 2008. MWAA and FTA executed an FFGA in March 2009, with revenue operations scheduled for December 2014. Construction has begun along the entire 11-mile alignment consisting of utility relocation, tunneling and elevated structure work.

SAFETEA-LU Section 3043(b)(23) authorized the Dulles Corridor Metrorail Project for final design and construction. Through FY 2010, Congress has appropriated \$404.48 million in Section 5309 New Starts funds including \$77.26 million in ARRA funds for the project.

<b>Reported in Year of Expenditure Dollars</b>		
<b><u>Source of Funds</u></b>	<b><u>Total Funding (\$million)</u></b>	<b><u>Appropriations to Date</u></b>
<b>Federal:</b> Section 5309 New Starts FFGA Commitment FHWA Flexible Funds (STP)	\$900.00 \$75.00	\$404.48 million in total appropriations through FY 2010. This includes \$77.26 million in ARRA funds.
<b>State:</b> Virginia Transportation Act 2000 Commonwealth Transportation Board Bonds	\$51.70 \$125.00	
<b>Local:</b> Dulles Toll Road Revenues and Bond Proceeds Fairfax County Transportation Improvement District	\$1,467.02 \$523.75	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$3,142.47</b>	

**NOTES:** The sum of the figures may differ from the total as listed due to rounding.

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