

# NEPA PROCESS

## Why NEPA?

The National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA) process is required for the Potomac Yard Metrorail Station in order for the project to be eligible for federal funding. NEPA is also required because some of the alternatives may affect the federally-owned George Washington Memorial Parkway, which is administered by the National Park Service (NPS).

## What is NEPA?

NEPA requires federal agencies to undertake an assessment of the environmental effects of their proposed actions and reasonable alternatives to those actions. The NEPA process is meant to help public officials make better informed decisions, and to enable community involvement in those decisions.

## Who's Involved?



The City of Alexandria is the project sponsor and joint lead agency.



The National Park Service (NPS) is a cooperating agency because of its role in administering the George Washington Memorial Parkway.



The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) is the lead federal agency, because the City will be seeking federal funding for a portion of the project.



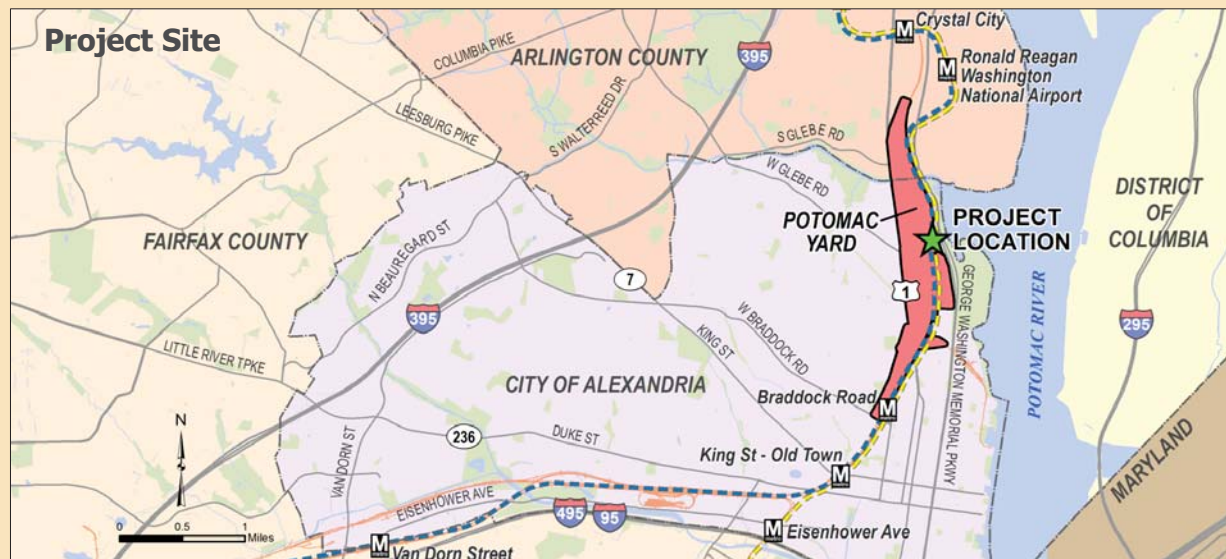
The Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) is a cooperating agency because they would build and operate the station.

# PURPOSE AND NEED

## Purpose and Need Statement

The purpose of the project is to improve local and regional transit accessibility to and from the Potomac Yard area adjacent to the U.S. Route 1 corridor for current and future residents, employees and businesses.

- Currently, the area is not served by direct access to regional transit services, such as Metrorail. Direct access to the Metrorail system will facilitate regional transit trips.
- Traffic congestion will increase on U.S. Route 1 even without the proposed development in Potomac Yard. Increasing the share of transit trips would help manage congestion, reduce auto trips, and make efficient use of existing infrastructure.
- Due to the constrained capacity of the existing roadway network, additional transportation options are needed to redevelopment plans by accommodating travel demand through transit and other non-auto modes.



Potomac Yard Park



Existing Metrorail Blue/Yellow Line between Potomac Greens and Potomac Yard



Existing Potomac Yard Shopping Center

Find Out More

Section 2.5.3 of the Draft EIS

# HISTORY AND PLANNING

## 1906

- Opening of Potomac Yard, which grew to become the largest yard for freight-switching operations on the east coast.

## 1968/1975

- Metrorail system plans identified Potomac Yard as a site for a future Metrorail station that could benefit new development.

## Mid-1980s

- Alexandria 2020 plan proposes a mixed-use, neighborhood development with a Metrorail station.

## Late-1980s

- Operations of the rail yard began to be phased out.

## 1992/1999

- *The Potomac Yard/Potomac Greens Small Area Plan* identified the potential for a Metrorail station. A 2009 revision includes approval for an urban, mixed-use Town Center along East Glebe Road.

## 2010

- The *Potomac Yard Concept Development Study* analyzes eight potential Metrorail station locations; recommends further examination of three locations.
- The *North Potomac Yard Small Area Plan* envisions replacing the existing shopping center with a high-density, transit oriented neighborhood anchored by a Metrorail Station

## 2011

- The current EIS study begins by gathering public and agency input on the scope of the environmental study and the alternatives to be evaluated.



Historic Potomac Yard



Metrorail System



Potomac Yard Small Area Plan



View showing planned development in North Potomac Yard

# NO BUILD ALTERNATIVE



The **No Build Alternative** includes all planned transportation projects expected to be finished by 2040, except the Metrorail station. The alternative includes:

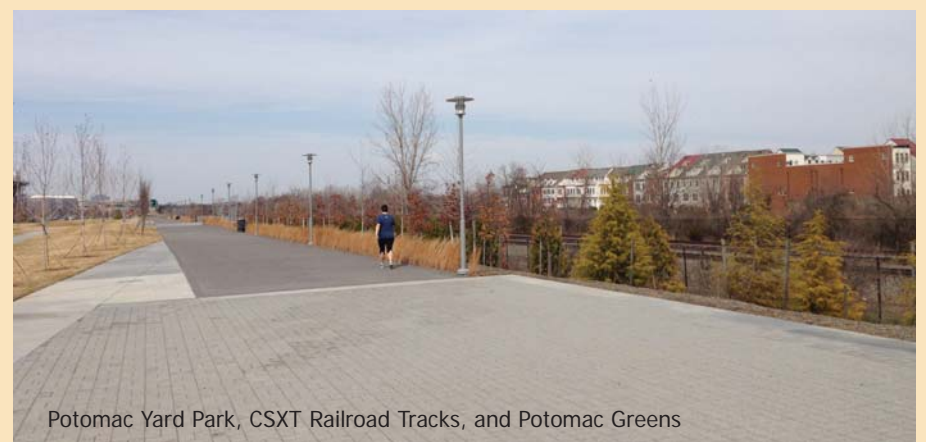
- Build-out of the Potomac Yard street network,
- Crystal City/Potomac Yard (CCPY) Transitway
- Expansion of local bus service
- Off-street multi-use trail from Four Mile Run to Braddock Road
- Pedestrian/bicycle bridge over the tracks between Potomac Yard and the Potomac Greens neighborhood



Potomac Avenue



Crystal City/Potomac Yard Transitway  
Photo credit: BeyondDC



Potomac Yard Park, CSXT Railroad Tracks, and Potomac Greens

# BUILD ALTERNATIVE A

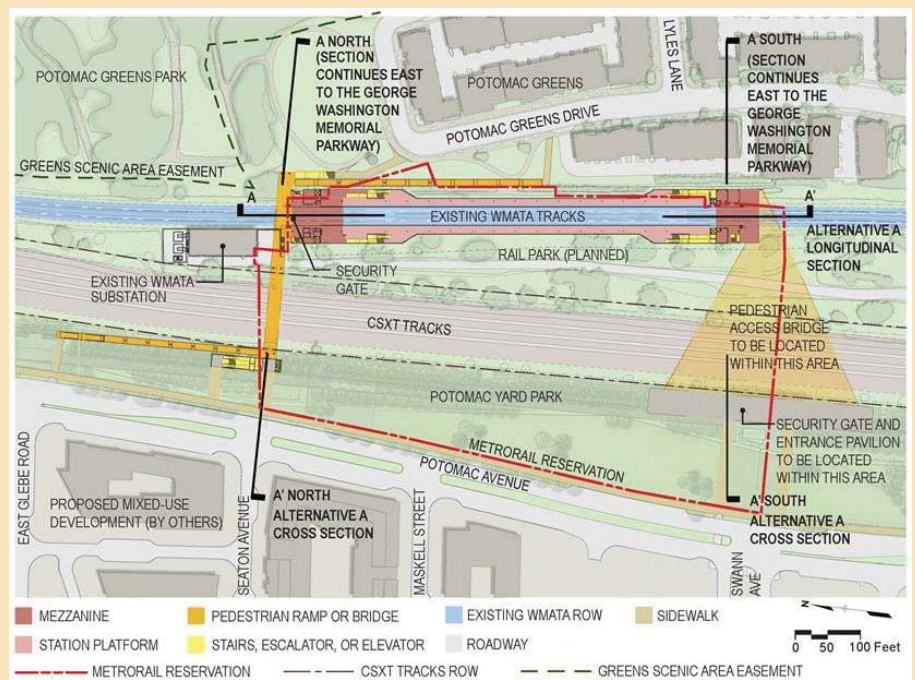


- Alternative A - Platform & Facilities
- Alternative A - Range of Potential Pedestrian Crossings
- Alternative A - Construction Staging Area
- Alternative A - Optional Construction Access and Impact Area
- Existing Metrorail Blue/Yellow Line
- Existing CSXT Tracks
- Existing CSXT Right-of-Way

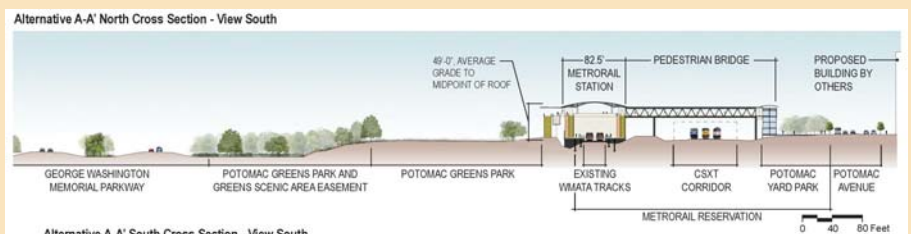
**Build Alternative A** would be located along the existing Metrorail tracks between the CSX Transportation (CSXT) railroad tracks and the northern end of the Potomac Greens neighborhood, generally within the "Metrorail Reservation" identified as part of the Potomac Yard/Potomac Greens Small Area Plan (1999).

Key features include:

- Same level as the existing Metrorail tracks
- Side platform layout
- Two pedestrian bridges from the station over the CSXT railroad tracks to Potomac Yard
- Northern bridge would provide 24-hour pedestrian/bicycle access between Potomac Yard and Potomac Greens.

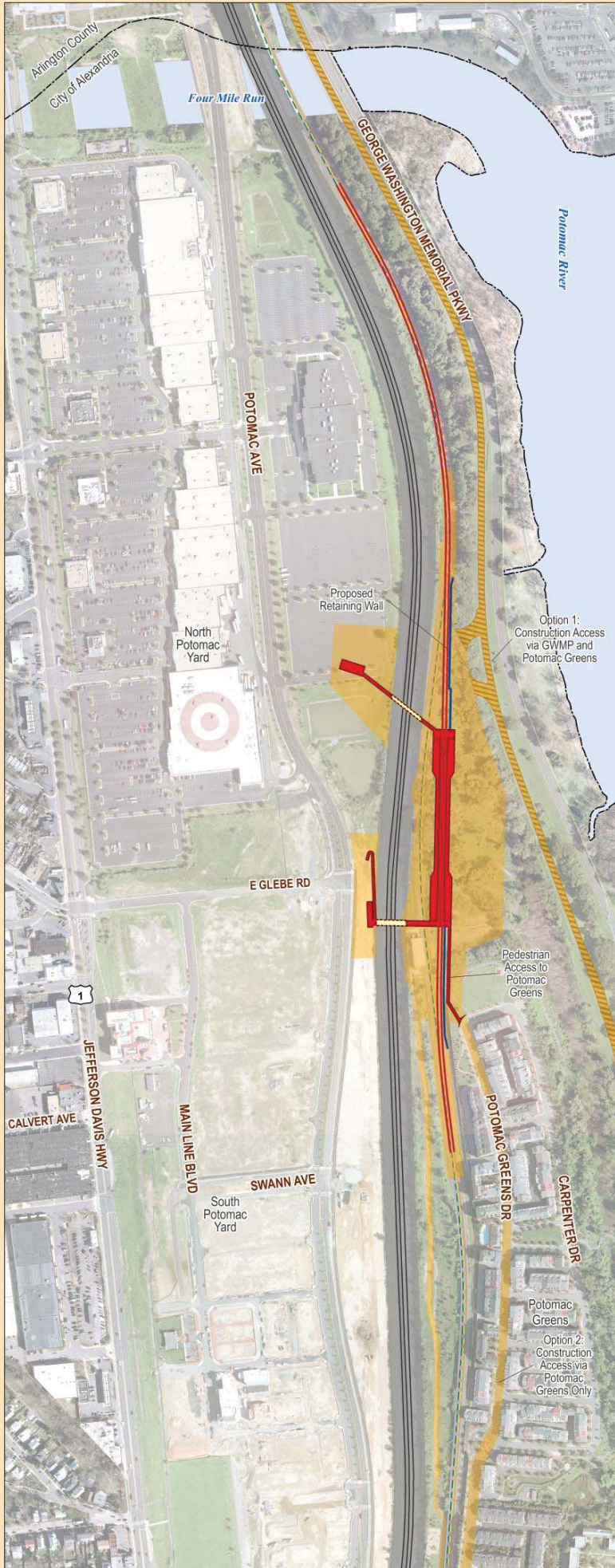


NOTE: THIS DRAWING IS FOR ILLUSTRATIVE PURPOSES ONLY. THE FINAL DESIGN OF THE STATION, AMENDMENTS TO OPEN SPACE, AND THE PEDESTRIAN BRIDGES WILL OCCUR AS PART OF THE DESIGN-BUILD PROCESS AND WILL REQUIRE ALL APPLICABLE WMATA AND CITY APPROVALS.



NOTE: SECTIONS DEPICT CONCEPTUAL DESIGNS. ALL DESIGNS OF THE STATION ARE SUBJECT TO ALL APPLICABLE WMATA AND CITY APPROVALS.

# BUILD ALTERNATIVE B

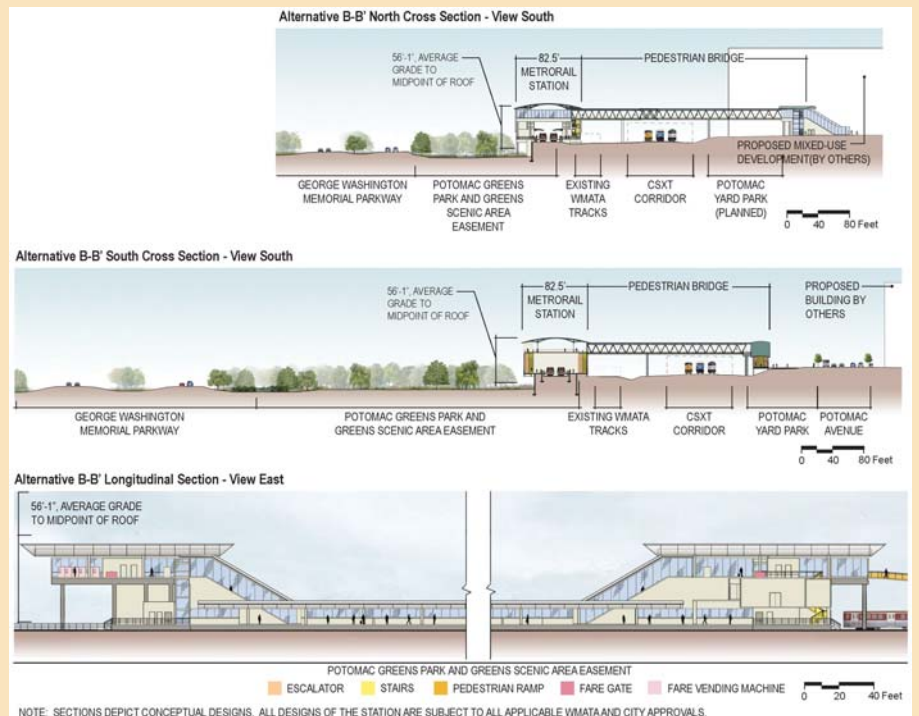
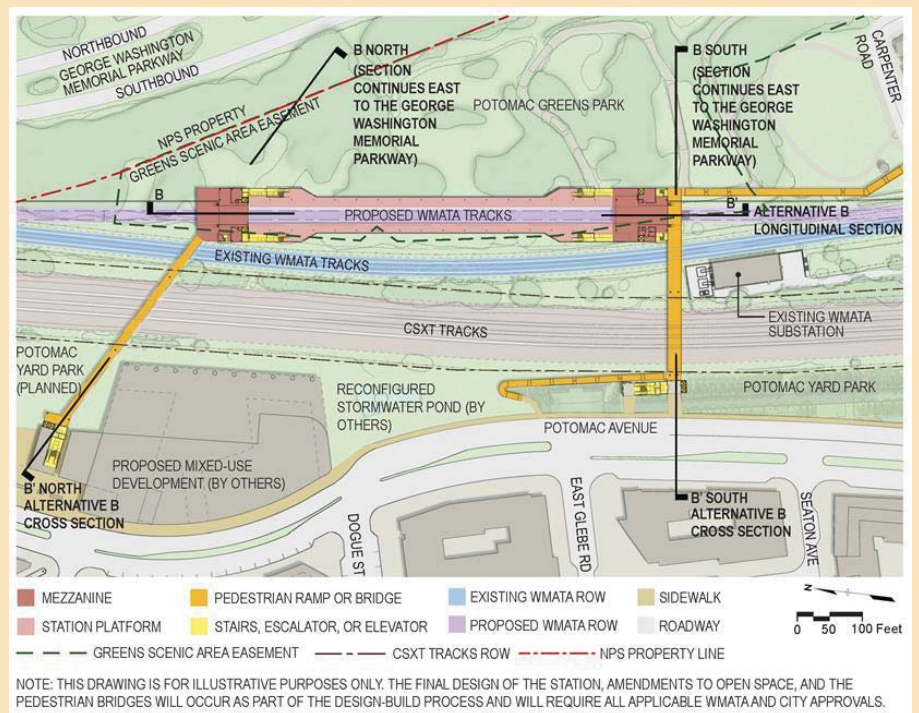


- Alternative B - Platform & Facilities
- Alternative B - New Metrorail Track
- Alternative B - Construction Staging Area
- Alternative B - Optional Construction Access and Impact Area
- Existing Metrorail Blue/Yellow Line
- Existing CSXT Tracks
- Existing CSXT Right-of-Way

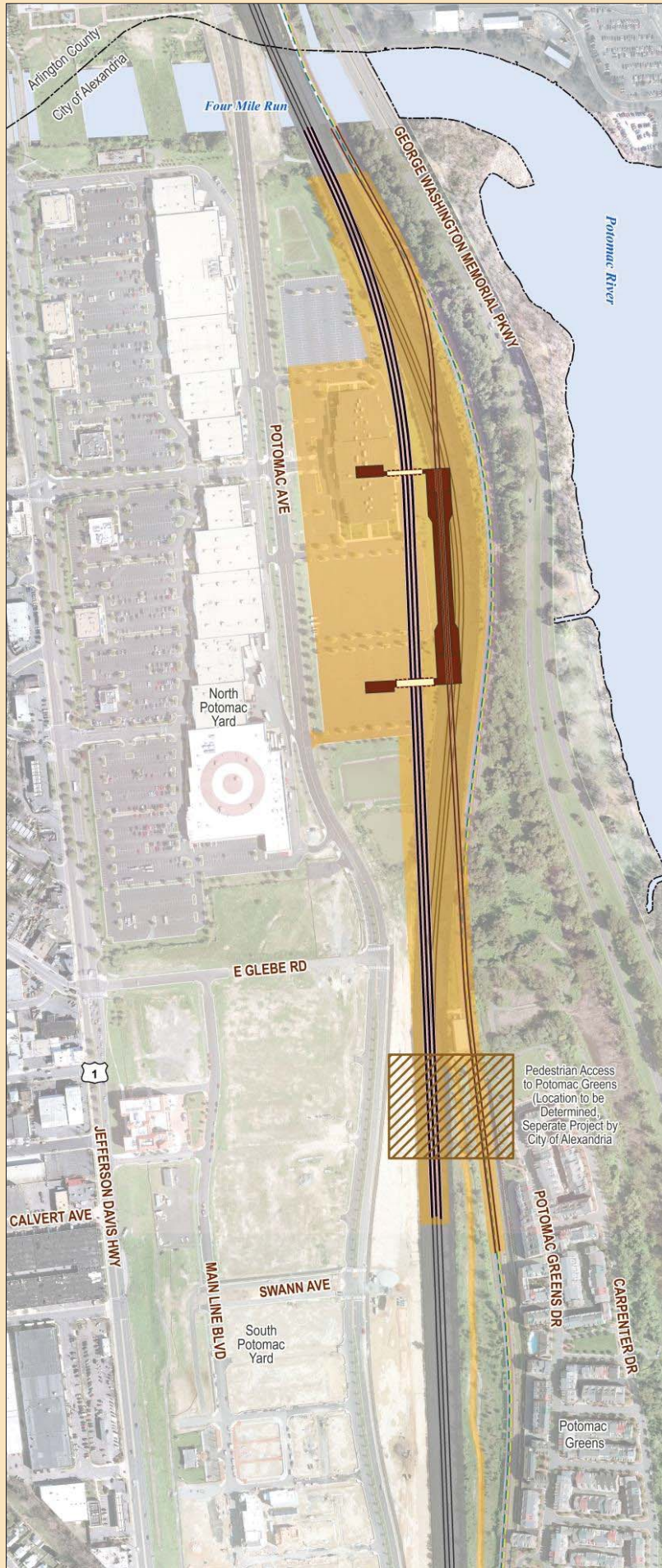
**Build Alternative B** would be located between the George Washington Memorial Parkway and the CSXT railroad tracks north of the Potomac Greens neighborhood, and east of the existing Potomac Yard Shopping Center.

Key features include:

- Same level as the existing Metrorail tracks
- Side platform layout
- Two pedestrian bridges from the station over the CSXT tracks to Potomac Yard
- Southern bridge would provide 24-hour pedestrian/bicycle access between Potomac Yard and Potomac Greens.



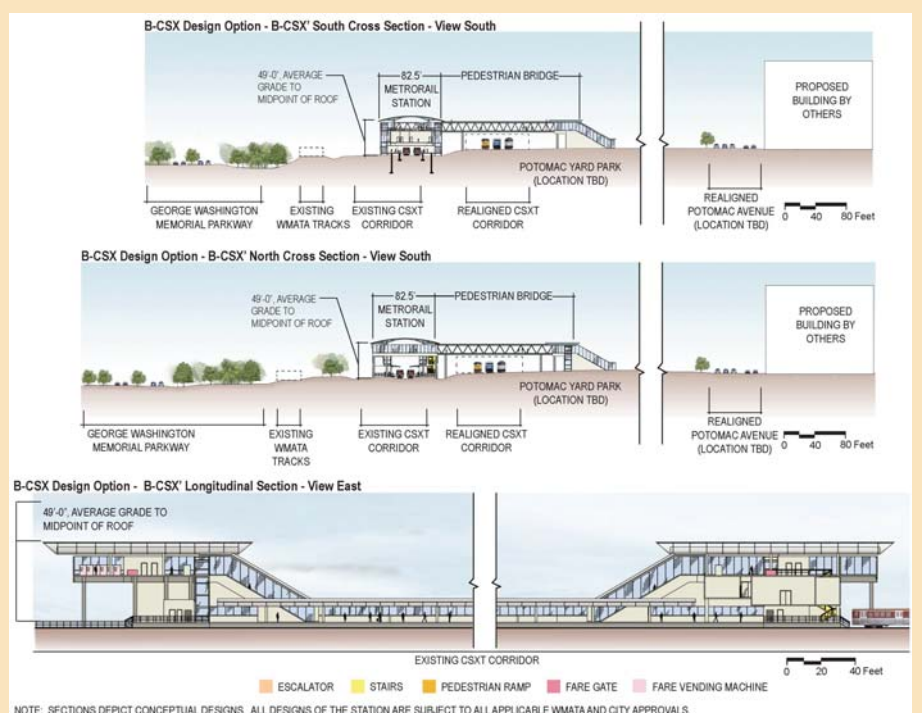
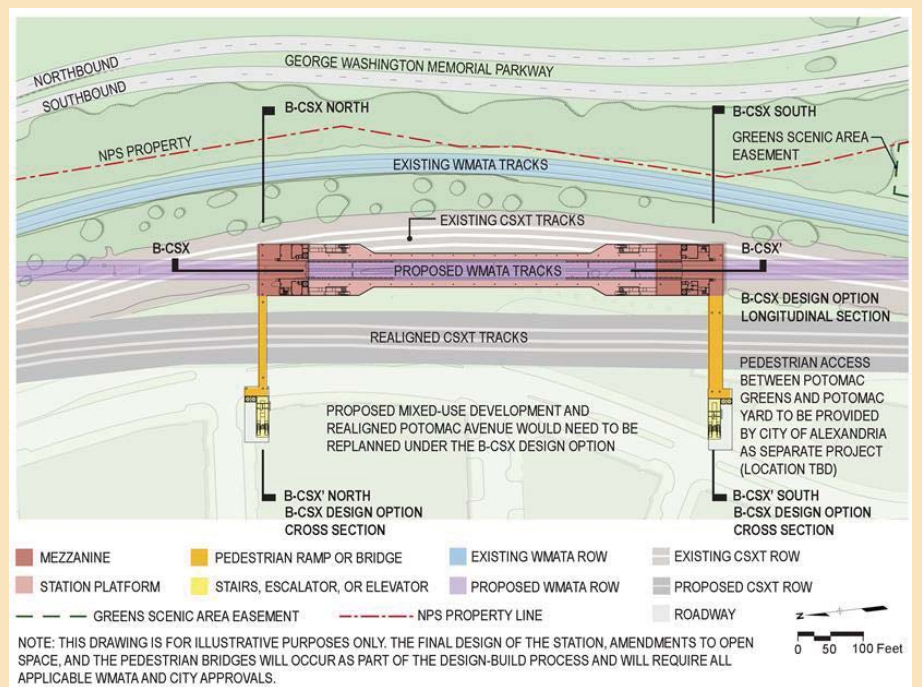
# B-CSX DESIGN OPTION



**B-CSX Design Option** would be located on land currently occupied by CSXT railroad tracks to the east of the existing movie theater. This design option would require construction of new CSXT tracks to the west of their current location.

Key features include:

- Same level as the existing Metrorail tracks
- Side platform layout
- Two pedestrian bridges from the station over the CSXT tracks to Potomac Yard
- One 24-hour pedestrian/bicycle bridge over the CSXT tracks to connect Potomac Yard and the Potomac Greens neighborhood would be constructed as a separate project.



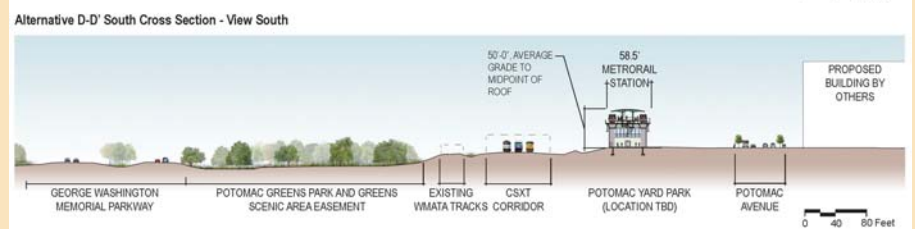
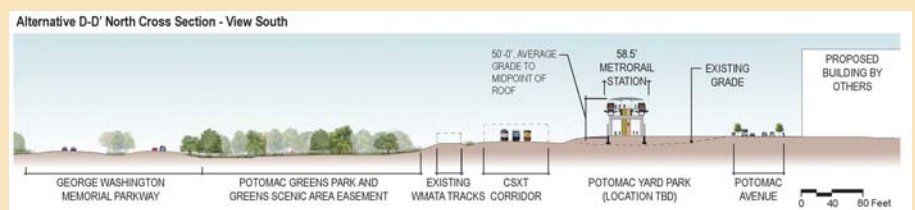
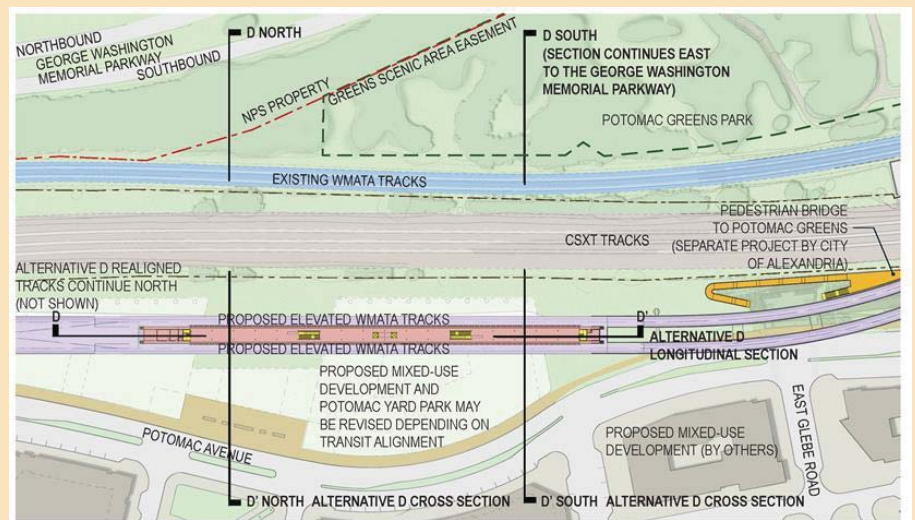
# BUILD ALTERNATIVE D



**Build Alternative D** would be located west of the CSXT railroad tracks near the existing Potomac Yard Shopping Center.

Key features include:

- Elevated tracks starting north of Four Mile Run, crossing the CSXT tracks into Potomac Yard, and then crossing the CSXT tracks again to reconnect to the existing Metrorail line behind Potomac Greens.
- Elevated station
- Center platform layout
- Ground floor entrance mezzanine
- One 24-hour pedestrian/bicycle bridge over the CSXT tracks to connect Potomac Yard and the Potomac Greens neighborhood would be constructed as a separate project.





# WHY DO WE NEED A METRO STATION?

## IT'S A SMART INVESTMENT

up to **26 K** new jobs in Potomac Yard

over **3 to 1** revenue gain to cost

up to **\$2.0 B** net new tax revenue to City



[projection over the next 30 years]

The redevelopment of Potomac Yard presents an opportunity to create a vibrant new community within Alexandria, one that is known throughout the region for its desirable neighborhoods, outstanding waterfront, public parks, and access to public transportation. The construction of a Metrorail station in the Potomac Yard area is central to this vision.

## METRO WILL ATTRACT TRANSIT-ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT

residential (units)

**7,100**

office (sf)

**4.2 M**



**80%+**

of all office building construction in the region is taking place within

retail (sf)

**768 K**

net new development (sf)

**13.1 M**

**1/4 mi.**

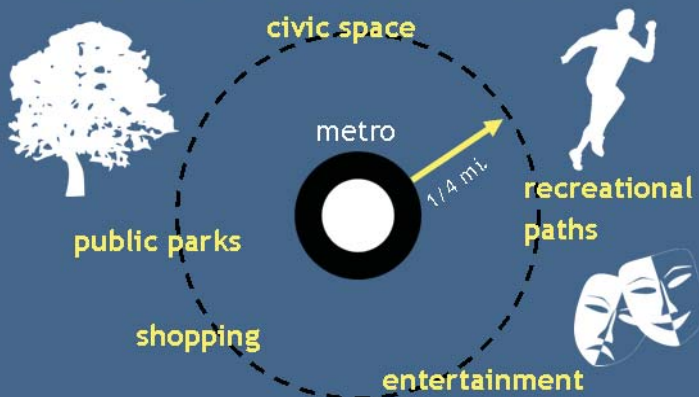
of a Metro station

[projection over the next 30 years]

## Community Benefits of a Potomac Yard Metro Station

- New tax revenues and developer contributions **pay for public amenities** such as parks, schools, and affordable housing in Potomac Yard and citywide.
- More housing options near transit **enable people at a range of income levels and times of life (including empty-nesters and young professionals) to live in Alexandria** and contribute to civic life.
- A mix of uses, including significant shopping and public open space, provides **a vibrant, fun destination for all Alexandrians.**
- A mix of uses in a high-density environment, supported by Metrorail, means thousands of trips not taken by car. **Many people will walk or bike to destinations in Potomac Yard to take care of their daily needs.**

## CREATE A GREAT COMMUNITY AND REGIONAL DESTINATION



## GIVE PEOPLE TRANSPORTATION CHOICES

**M**  
metro

maximizes the number of people taking transit to and from the Potomac Yard area

enables an environment where people can walk, bike, and take transit for their daily needs



**1**

removes thousands of cars from the congested Route 1 corridor every day

## Transportation Benefits of a Potomac Yard Metrorail Station

10,000 – 11,300	Daily boardings at a Potomac Yard Metrorail Station
34%	Daily trips taken by transit, walking, or bike
5,000	Daily auto trips removed from the road

# FINANCIAL FEASIBILITY

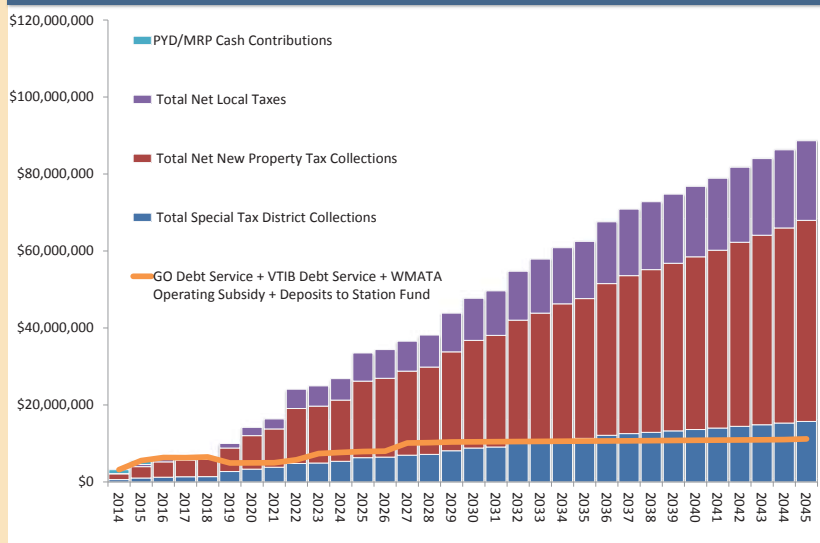
## Conceptual Capital Costs (2018 Dollars)

Alternative	Costs
Alternative A	\$209 M
Alternative B	\$268 M
B-CSX Design Option	\$351 M
Alternative D	\$493 M

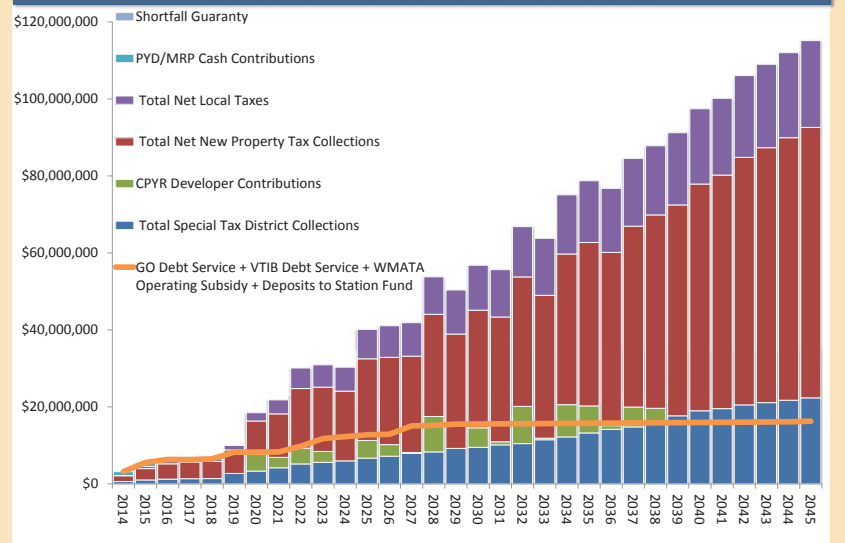
## Funding Sources



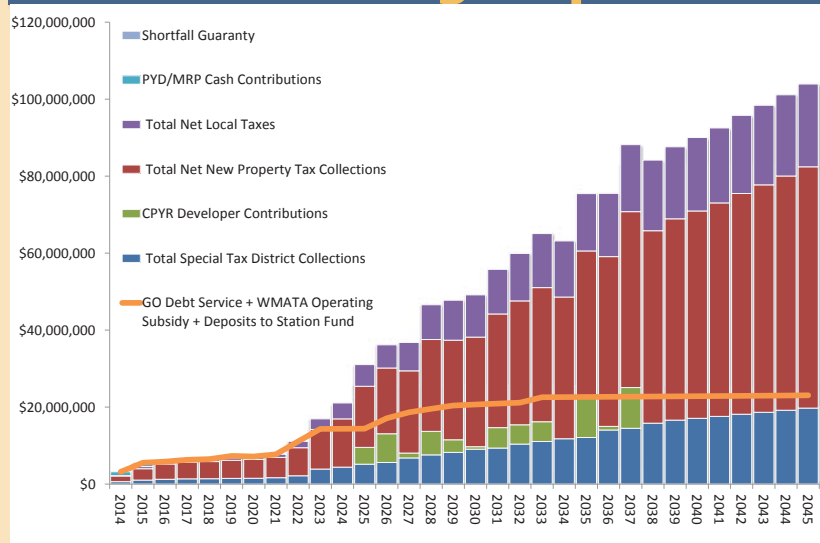
## Cash Flow – Alternative A



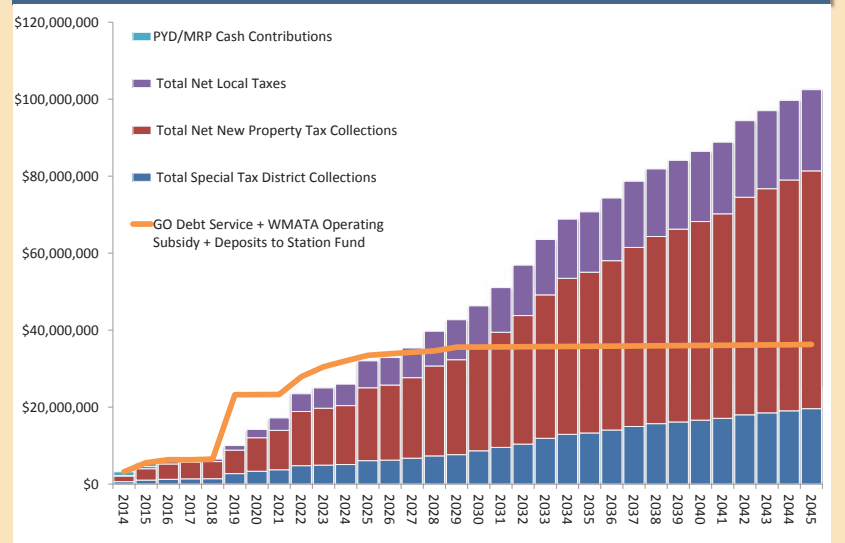
## Cash Flow – Alternative B



## Cash Flow – B-CSX Design Option



## Cash Flow – Alternative D



# LAND USE AND PLANNING IMPACTS

## How Does the Metrorail Station Fit in With Local Plans?

The North Potomac Yard Small Area Plan and the associated zoning link the level of development in North Potomac Yard to the presence of a Metrorail station at the approximate location of Alternative B. If a Metrorail station is constructed at a location other than Alternative B or a station is not built, the amount of permitted development in North Potomac Yard is reduced by approximately 3.825 million square feet.

## Maximum Building Heights in Potomac Yard



### Find Out More

- Draft EIS Section 2.5.3
- Land Use, Zoning, and Consistency with Local Plans Technical Memorandum
- North Potomac Yard Small Area Plan

## Land Use Impacts

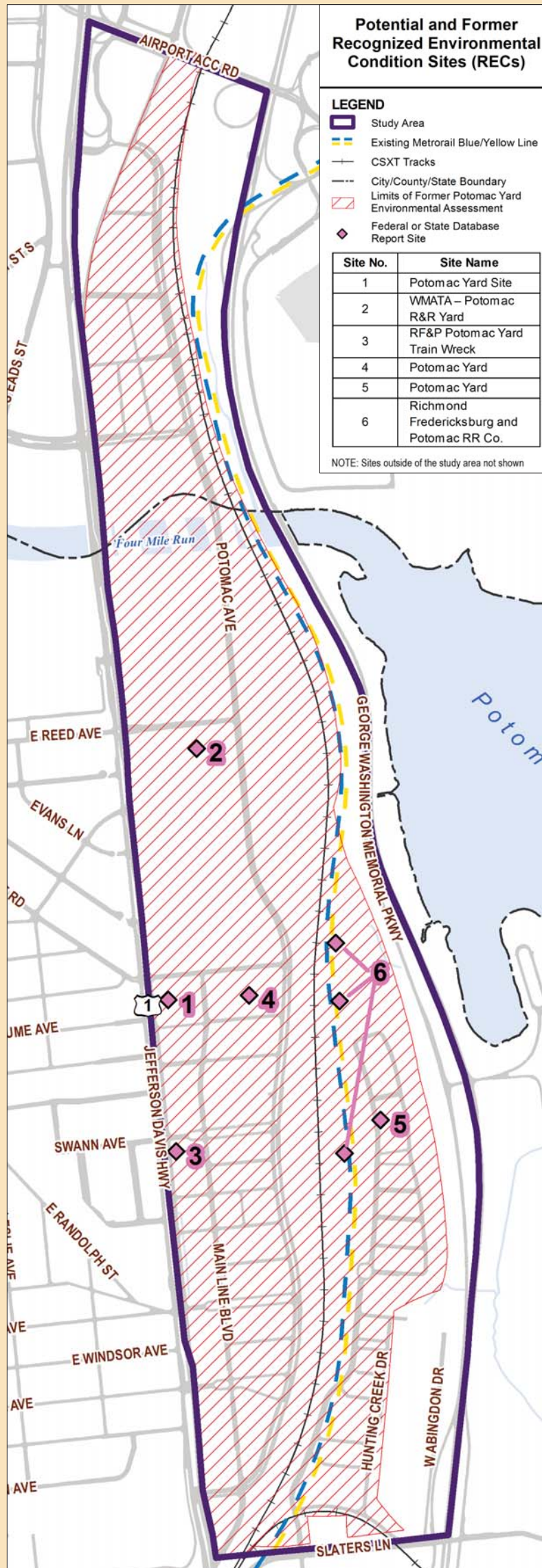
**Build Alternative A** would be located primarily on land designated in 1999 for a possible future Metrorail station (the Metrorail Reservation). The landings for the pedestrian bridges would be located in Potomac Yard Park and Potomac Greens Park.

**Build Alternative B** would be located on land that is currently public open space and is covered by the Greens Scenic Area Easement. A portion of the right-of-way for the realigned tracks would require the acquisition of some national parkland. The landing for the southern pedestrian bridge would be located in Potomac Yard Park. The site was identified as a potential site in the 2010 *North Potomac Yard Small Area Plan*.

**B-CSX Design Option** would be located on land currently occupied by the movie theater and parking lot, and which is planned for future mixed-use development and associated infrastructure.

**Build Alternative D** would be located on land currently occupied by the movie theater and parking lot, and which is planned for future mixed-use development and associated infrastructure. The aerial tracks would require the acquisition of some national parkland and City parks.

# HAZARDOUS MATERIALS IMPACTS



## Background

Potomac Yard was an active rail yard through most of the 20th Century. The presence of hazardous materials in Potomac Yard, primarily as a result of former rail yard activities, has been previously documented, including extensive remedial investigations and reports completed in accordance with Federal, state and local laws. Contaminants have been remediated or mitigated during previous remedial activities and during redevelopment.

## Evaluation of Alternatives

The No Build Alternative would not disturb potential residual contaminants in the soil.

The potential impacts from the Build Alternatives and B-CSX Design Option would occur during construction activities, which could disturb contaminated fill material, soils, and groundwater within the study area.

Best Management Practices (BMPs) and construction mitigation methods would be used to lessen impacts from contaminated materials.

### Find Out More

- Draft EIS Section 3.20
- Phase I Environmental Site Assessment and Hazardous and Contaminated Materials Technical Memorandum

# OPPORTUNITIES FOR COMMENTS

## How Can I Submit Comments?

### Comment on the Draft EIS to WMATA

Submit written comments by May 18, 2015:

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

**Potomac Yard Metrorail Station EIS**  
**P.O. Box 16531**  
**Alexandria, VA 22302**

The WMATA public hearing part of the NEPA process will be held on:

**Thursday, April 30, 2015 at 6:30 p.m.**  
**Cora Kelly Recreation Center**  
**25 W. Reed Avenue**  
**Alexandria, VA 22305**

### Comments to the City of Alexandria on the Preferred Alternative

The staff recommendation for the preferred alternative will be released on about April 24, 2015. A public hearing will be held before the Alexandria City Council on:

**Saturday, May 16, 2015 at 9:30 a.m.**  
**City Council Chambers**  
**Alexandria City Hall**  
**301 King Street**  
**Alexandria, VA 22314**

The staff recommendation will also be discussed at the following board, commission, and committee meetings in April:

- Planning Commission
- Transportation Commission
- Board of Architectural Review
- Parks and Recreation Commission
- Environmental Policy Commission
- Potomac Yard Metrorail Station Implementation Work Group

Public comment at board, commission, or committee meetings should be specific to the issues within that board, commission, or committee's purview. See [alexandriava.gov/Potomac Yard](http://alexandriava.gov/PotomacYard) for the schedule of board, commission, and committee meetings.

## What Happens with My Comments?

### Comments on the Draft EIS

Comments will be responded to in the Final EIS. Comments from the public that identify specific objectionable elements or effects of an alternative can influence the selection and refinement of the preferred alternative.

### Comments on the Staff Recommendation

A summary of comments on the staff recommendation will be provided as an addendum to City Council before the vote on the preferred alternative.