



October 2nd, 2023

Kyle Kling
Capital Projects Management Coordinator
Arlington County – Department of Environmental Services
2100 Clarendon Blvd., Suite 900
Arlington VA 22201

Re: Environmental Assessment for CC2DCA

Dear Mr. Kling,

The Crystal City Civic Association (CCCA) is writing to express our strong support for Arlington County's CC2DCA Environmental Assessment (EA), with the exception of the Design Constraints. We would also like to highlight a concern with the process moving forward. The CCCA has this project in its boundary and we are intimately familiar with the project.

The project will promote sustainable transportation by providing a one-of-a-kind bicycle/pedestrian link between a fast-growing business district and an international airport. Importantly, the project will enhance National Landing's broader multi-modal transportation network by connecting directly with Virginia Railway Express (VRE) and Amtrak's planned Crystal City Station, the Crystal City-Potomac Yard Transitway and the Mt. Vernon Trail.

We agree with Arlington's approach to planning CC2DCA, as described in the EA. Specifically, we agree with Arlington's prioritization of routes that connect with the planned Crystal City rail station, which will host VRE, Amtrak and MARC rail service, as well as its focus on routes that minimize grade changes for users. This led to the selection of Alternative 7D, which provides the most direct, most convenient connection among all the routes considered. While the EA highlights Arlington's thoughtful approach to planning for CC2DCA, it also has a concern:

Design Constraints

The draft Programmatic Agreement commits Arlington to designing the project in a way that "minimizes potential adverse impacts resulting from introducing new features into the identified historic properties affected by the Project." It also requires Arlington to "consider and incorporate, to the fullest, reasonable extent..." all design feedback by the National Park Service (NPS). These requirements, while well-intentioned, are misguided and should be removed. National Landing is one of the most dynamic neighborhoods in the county. CC2DCA can and should reflect that context by serving as a world-class gateway to the neighborhood and the region for the millions who travel through DCA each year. Rather than view the project as a threat, NPS should embrace this opportunity by pushing for a design that complements, rather than copies, the existing condition. Accordingly, we object to the inclusion of these design constraints within the programmatic agreement and encourage the agreement be revised to provide more design flexibility.

We also have a concern with the process moving forward:

Connection at DCA

Per Section 2.5 of the EA, we understand that Arlington is continuing to work with the Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority (MWAA) to design the eastern end of the Preferred Alternative where the bridge arrives at DCA. The goal of this continued coordination is to accommodate MWAA's requests to avoid impacts to the existing parking garage while also avoiding potential conflicts with a planned roadway ramp. While we support the continued coordination and goal of minimizing impacts to the airport, we are concerned that the resulting design could significantly diminish the value of the project by requiring users to climb stairs or take an elevator at the eastern end of the bridge to get to the airport. Minimizing such "grade changes" was a key factor in the alternatives analysis process that resulted in the selection of Alternative 7D. Rather than compromising the project by inconveniencing all bridge users, it is imperative that MWAA design their roadway to enable an "at-grade" connection between the eastern end of CC2DCA and the existing walkway to the B/C terminal at DCA.

CC2DCA is a once-in-a-generation project with the potential to promote sustainable transportation while providing a world-class gateway to National Landing and the entire region. The EA reflects Arlington's thoughtful approach to project planning thus far, and we strongly support it. To ensure CC2DCA fulfills its full potential, we encourage Arlington to work with MWAA and NPS during the next phase to ensure the design and functionality of the project are not compromised.

Thank you for your consideration of our input.

Eric Cassel

A rectangular box containing a handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Eric Cassel".

President of the Crystal City Civic Association