

Crystal City/Potomac Yard Corridor Interim Transit Improvement Project

Implementation Workshops
Summary Report of Activities and Comments Received

June 6 - 10, 2005
October 5, 2005

1.0 INTRODUCTION

From June 6 to 10, 2005, the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation, the City of Alexandria, and Arlington County held a series of public meetings to hear comments and questions related to the Crystal City/Potomac Yard Interim Transit Improvement Project. This report contains a summary from each meeting, presentation materials, and all comments received during the week of workshops and the additional meeting.

The project, which is an interim solution to immediate transportation challenges facing the Route 1 corridor, would provide a new, distinct transit service between the Pentagon and Braddock Road Metrorail stations. The implementation workshops consisted of five meetings and two open house sessions over the course of a week. The schedule of the meetings was as follows:

Monday, June 6	Agency Meeting
Tuesday, June 7	Developers Meeting
Wednesday, June 8	Business Owners and Managers Meeting
Wednesday, June 8	Civic Associations, Committees, and Commissions
Wednesday, June 8	Public Workshop
Friday, June 10	Open Houses
Wednesday, October 3	Developers Meeting

The purpose of the implementation workshops was to inform stakeholders and the general public about key issues related to the implementation of the Crystal City/Potomac Yard Corridor Interim Transit Improvement Project and to solicit their opinions, concerns, and advice, which will serve as input for subsequent project development and implementation.

Rather than reviewing concepts developed by the consultant team at one large public meeting that can easily be dominated by one individual or faction, or conducting a technical charrette that provides little opportunity for public input, the project team conducted a series of smaller meetings over the course of the week with groups of stakeholders who have similar interests. This approach allowed the opinions of all parties to be heard in a constructive, non-confrontational atmosphere.

2.0 WORKSHOP FORMAT

Participants

The project team invited area stakeholders to participate in the workshops. Stakeholders included city, county, and agency staff; developers within the corridor; business owners and managers within the corridor; and members of neighborhood associations and city/county committees and commissions. In addition, advertisements were placed in local newspapers in advance of the public workshop and open houses. Participants were registered upon arrival at the meeting locations. Each person received a packet of materials containing the meeting agenda, a comment sheet, copies of the presentation slides, and a copy of the phased transit implementation timetable.

Materials Used

The project team used several tools to communicate concepts to workshop participants and made a concerted effort to document the questions and comments of those in attendance. Materials used at the workshops included:

- Project Boards and Flip Charts
- Aerial Photos, Maps, and Graphics

- Slide Presentation
- Comment Sheets
- Alignment/Stop Worksheets
- Amenity Surveys
- Newsletter

Format and Schedule

Each workshop was scheduled for 90 minutes, which necessitated an orderly, focused approach to the presentation of material and the solicitation of input from participants. A format in which participants move from station to station was judged to be inefficient for this situation; instead, it was decided that information be presented and discussed in a series of brief modules:

1. Group introductions (5 minutes)
2. Project introduction (5 minutes)
3. Operational issues (20 minutes)
4. Alignment issues (15 minutes)
5. Stop locations (15 minutes)
6. Stop amenities (15 minutes)
7. Summary/Conclusion (5-10 minutes)

Project Introduction

This module introduced the project through a brief slide show by addressing the purpose and agenda of the workshop, the study area, current and planned development in the corridor, potential alignments, transit elements, and the need for the project. The module also discussed prior studies and the background of the project leading up to the workshops.

Operational Issues

This module provided an overview of planned and potential phasing of interim transit service in the Crystal City/Potomac Yard corridor. Specific operational issues that were addressed included frequency of service, interconnections with other transit services, and types of fare collection. The project team gave a 5-minute overview – including an explanation of the phased transit implementation plan – followed by 15 minutes of moderated group discussion. Copies of presentation boards outlining key operations issues were provided as handouts.

Alignment Issues

In this module, the project team discussed the proposed alignment segments in both Arlington and Alexandria, emphasizing the different levels of input that were requested for the Alexandria alignment and the three Arlington alignment segments. The project team gave a 5-minute overview, followed by 10 minutes of moderated group discussion. Select aerial photos and maps illustrating the segments and the design of the first segment were provided. Participants marked a large printout of the alignment overlaid on an aerial photograph of the area to indicate issues of concern and alternative alignment suggestions. Participants were also given worksheets with space to answer three questions: (1) Should the alignment go straight to the Pentagon or go through Pentagon City? (2) Which route should the alignment take through Crystal City? And (3) Should transit run on dedicated lanes along Route 1 in Alexandria?

Stop Locations

This module provided an overview of stop locations that have been identified for the entire alignment. The project team gave a 5-minute overview in which they discussed the major issues to be considered when choosing stop locations. During the Monday workshop for

agency staff, participants were given handouts for all locations with space to list concerns and observations for each location. Input was requested concerning such issues as the relationship of stops to cross-streets, proximity to adjacent destinations, etc. During the Tuesday and Wednesday workshops, participants indicated desired stop locations on a large printout of the alignment overlaid on an aerial photograph of the area.

Stop Amenities

The project team presented a 5-minute overview of the functions served by different stop amenities and constraints on stop design, including space and cost. Participants were then given a worksheet listing a variety of amenities and asked to indicate which were most important to them. Amenity categories included shelters, boarding types, waiting and loading types, safety issues, lighting, passenger information, and furnishings.

Summary/Conclusion

The project team concluded each meeting by inviting participants to attend the Public Workshop (Wednesday evening) and the Open Houses (Friday morning and evening). The team asked that worksheets for stop locations and amenities, along with comment sheets, be returned for tabulation.

Group Discussion Questions and Comments

During the moderated group discussion segments of each workshop, participants were given the opportunity to ask questions and make comments. Generally these questions and comments related to one of four subjects: development issues, transit operations, alignment and stop locations, and stop amenities. Questions and comments were recorded by project staff and are summarized below by subject for each workshop. Attachments to this summary contain transcriptions of oral and written comments offered by meeting participants.

3.0 MONDAY, JUNE 6 – AGENCY MEETING

Monday's activities took place in the conference room of Crescent Resources (a developer in the corridor) in Crystal City, Arlington. In the morning, members of the project team rehearsed the presentation with the Technical Advisory Committee, made up of members of City of Alexandria, Arlington County, and Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation staff. The practice exercise was followed by a group tour of the corridor in one of Alexandria's DASH buses. The first implementation workshop began at 3 pm with about 12 members of local transportation agencies in attendance.

Participants

Maurice Daly, Bob Garbacz, Al Himes, and Jim Maslanka – City of Alexandria
Bee Buerger, Charlie Denney, Richard Hartman, Jim Hamre, Matt Kellogg, and Dennis Leach – Arlington DOT
Dic Burke and Bud Siegel – VDOT
Tanya Husick – VDRPT
Frederick Simms – WMATA

Questions and Comments

Development Issues – Agency members at the meeting spoke mainly about operations, although there were a few references to development. It was felt that Crystal Drive should become more pedestrian oriented and mixed-use. Another remarked that the team's information about existing and planned development is incomplete. One person asked if the service would expand as development in the corridor grows.

Transit Operations – Many of the comments related to specifics about the vehicles: what type, what kind of fuel (CNG), will they be trolleybuses or articulated buses, where will they be stored and maintained, and will the service have a consistent look across jurisdictional lines. Other comments related to existing bus routes, such as how well the routes are currently served, and will some routes be eliminated. Others wanted to know how and when the service will be integrated, and if the service overlap is viable in the short term (2 to 3 years). One person asked that connections between Metrorail and Potomac Yard, from the north, be considered when developing the service plan.

Alignment and Stop Locations – Among the questions heard at this meeting: will the service go directly to the Pentagon or stop at Pentagon City, or should the alignment split at some point to cover more destinations? And in case of road closures or a shut-down at the Pentagon, what will the back-up service plan be? One person wanted to know if the North Tract in Arlington will be on the alignment, and another recommended that a stop be within walking distance of the VRE station in Crystal City.

Stop Amenities – Suggestions about stop amenities included design that reflects the sophistication of new development in the corridor, such as cantilevered overhangs for shelters. One participant raised the point that there needs to be a commitment to the cleaning and maintenance of stop shelters. Another inquired about design guidelines and recommendations and advised that the design process for shelters be coordinated with VDOT.

In addition to these issues, safety was on the mind of agency members. One recommended a dedicated lane in the median as a way to save space and protect pedestrians. Another agreed that pedestrian safety is a “huge issue,” particularly at 15th and Fern in Arlington.

4.0 TUESDAY, JUNE 7 – DEVELOPERS MEETING

Tuesday’s workshop took place at 1 pm at Crescent Resources in Arlington. Three members of the local development community participated in the session. Each representative’s company has a stake in the ongoing redevelopment of the Crystal City/Potomac Yard corridor.

Participants

Doug Abbott – Abbott Development
Magnolia Niederhauser – Archstone-Smith
Meng P. David – Gould Property Company

Questions and Comments

Development Issues – The developers identified their projects as being in the mid-term time frame. One is two years away; the other is 4 to 5. There is concern that Crystal City’s current transit service can’t handle the increase in development; the new EPA building to open in early 2006 alone will add 2,200 potential transit riders.

Transit Operations – One question related to ridership on existing bus routes; it was asked if the ART 90 route will be modified as ridership is less than 1,000 per day.

Alignment and Stop Locations – The issue of whether Pentagon or Pentagon City as the northern terminus was raised. Both were deemed important; and it was asked if a split service was possible. Another question related to dedicated lanes, and which jurisdiction supports which modes and exclusive lanes. One developer would like to see light rail built eventually, and said he would gladly trade having parking in front of his building for a nice transit system.

Stop Amenities – These are seen as good selling points for developers; they agreed that the system should have a distinct identity as it will be easier to market that way. They would prefer stop shelters to protect riders from the elements, as well as good lighting and design. They also expressed reservations about the high cost of shelters.

5.0 WEDNESDAY, JUNE 8 – BUSINESS MANAGERS MEETING

Wednesday's first workshop started at 9 am at Crescent Resources in Arlington. Four managers from Crystal City hotels participated in the session; the hotel managers offered their insight into transportation issues along Route 1 that affect their customers.

Participants

Seniet Tesbaru – Courtyard Crystal City
Tammy Bowser and Harold Bassler – Hilton Crystal City
Robert Klein – Holiday Inn Crystal City

Questions and Comments

Development Issues – New development was not expressed as a concern to existing hotels; however, the hotel managers on hand felt that Metro is very important to Crystal City hotels. They “live and die by it,” according to one manager. Thirty percent of Crystal City's hotel workforce uses transit to get to and from work in the Route 1 corridor, so a new transit service would help toward that end.

Transit Operations – Weekend service is of interest to hotels. The managers like the idea of six-minute peak headways, but asked what kind of service will be available off-peak and on weekends. Hotels mainly have tourists on weekends, which are a different breed of guest and transit user than weekday business travelers; tourists have a little more anxiety about waiting for transit. Exclusive lanes are important for reliability and keeping on schedule; hotels understand the difficulty of maintaining reliable service in mixed traffic because they run shuttle buses to Metro and the airport.

Alignment and Stop Locations – A service to Potomac Yard would be valuable to hotels, because sometimes guests walk down there and then realize they've made “too big a commitment.” The hotel managers agreed that the alignment should go to Pentagon City; it's just as important to their guests as the Pentagon. Direct access to both locations is a selling point for them. In terms of access, the hotel managers felt that pedestrian access in Crystal City is a problem. Hotel guests generally won't cross Jefferson Davis Highway. They will cross at 23rd Street, but that's not convenient for many hotels. It was recommended that a stop be moved slightly north to 23rd Street.

Stop Amenities – The hotel managers claimed that because people generally don't like to use buses; this service must be unique, fun-looking, and comfortable, with good signage. Old Town is a primary competitor for Crystal City hotels, so anything that can be done to “make Crystal City look less like Concrete City” is good.

One hotel manager discussed Atlantic City's “Jitney” bus, and asserted that it is very popular because it's not considered a regular bus. He suggested the Crystal City/Potomac Yard service be called “Flash” as it emphasizes speed. Branding is almost as important as where the stops are located, in his opinion. Another manager talked about the need for guests to feel safe at transit stops, and suggested the inclusion of panic buttons and/or 911 call boxes. Forty percent of the guests at one hotel are women business travelers, and they need to feel safe when using the new transit system.

6.0 WEDNESDAY, JUNE 8 – CIVIC ASSOCIATIONS, COMMITTEES, AND COMMISSIONS MEETING

This workshop, by invitation to local civic leaders, was from 6 to 7:30 pm at the Cora Kelly Recreation Center in Alexandria. About 15 participants representing different constituencies attended the meeting and offered their perspectives on the project.

Participants

David Fromm – Del Ray Citizens Association
Rob Krupicka – Alexandria City Council
Bill Cook – Warwick Village Citizens Association
Al Voorhees – UDAC Alexandria
Jim Butler – Federation of Civic Associations
Ellen Pickering – Taylor Run
Roger Waud – NOTICE
Lillian J. White – LWVA
Bill Hendrickson
Paul Hertel
Sylvia Sibrover
Mariella Posey

Questions and Comments

Development Issues – Participants in this workshop tended to focus on transit operations and possible alignments and stop locations rather than development issues.

Transit Operations – Integrated service was regarded as very important, especially in Crystal City. Participants would like to see both Arlington and Alexandria use the same technologies. Dedicated lanes were seen as being crucial to the project; Alexandria was encouraged to pursue exclusive guideways. As for service, one participant thought that 6-minute headways could be overkill, and that 10 minutes might be more appropriate. It was generally agreed that weekend service is essential, and that extended hours are necessary as currently it is easy to get stranded at Potomac Yard. There were questions about the size and type of buses, and whether existing bus services will be maintained. One participant urged that planners “keep an eye on long-term service” as short-term could cause disjointed transit in the corridor.

Alignment and Stop Locations – Several people wanted to know why Stop # 15 is behind the shopping center, and asked that moving the alignment back onto Route 1 be considered. Other suggestions included connecting the alignment to Columbia Pike, using Main Street south of Stop # 17, having a stop at Pentagon City, and having a split-pair on Clark/Eads Streets.

Stop Amenities – Due to lack of time, this topic was not treated with as much interest as alignments and stop locations.

7.0 WEDNESDAY, JUNE 8 – PUBLIC WORKSHOP

The public workshop, a meeting open to all members of the public, immediately followed the civic associations, committees, and commissions workshop from 7:30 to 9:30 pm. Approximately 15 local residents watched the presentation and joined the discussion.

Participants

Julie Crenshaw – Committee Chair, COG
Charles DeCola – National Airport
Gary Myers – MWAA
Katy Cannady – Rosemont Citizens
Kevin Beekman – Lenox Place at Sunnyside HOA
Del Pepper – Vice Mayor, City of Alexandria
Elizabeth Jones – City of Alexandria
Justin Wilson – DCRA/DASH
Ellen Armbuster – Arlington Co. Transportation Commission
Donna LaFountain
Linda D. Lee
Sally Hill Cooper
Larry Grossman
Lois Walker
Linda D. Banks

Questions and Comments

Development Issues – Participants in this workshop generally did not address development issues; though there was a question about whether park space is planned in the Town Center and another about whether the new service would block existing curb cuts.

Transit Operations – Rail service was a matter of interest for several people in this workshop; one wanted to know if light rail is the ultimate service for the corridor. Another stressed the need for more Metro stations in Alexandria to create a pedestrian-friendly environment. One participant implored the project team to create demand, rather than trying to meet demand. High-quality transit with six-minute headways, especially at night and on weekends, was desirable for several participants. Most felt the need for exclusive busways essential for travel time savings and integrated service, while others voiced the need for a uniform fare structure.

Alignment and Stop Locations – Participants had several questions about the alignment: Should it go to Pentagon City? Should the system offer split service (to the Pentagon and Pentagon City)? If the alignment is not on Potomac Street, then where will it be? Some suggested that the alignment should run on Main Street, not Route 1, and that if it does run on Route 1, it should stop at the curbside and not in the center; one participant felt that a median alignment could be “perilous”. Another requested that Stop # 22, currently shown at Fayette and Montgomery Streets, be moved to 1st Street.

Stop Amenities – This group had many comments about stop amenities. Among the suggestions heard: Stops should include lean bars or tilting seats, real-time passenger information, weather protection, level boarding, and nice aesthetics. Identity is highly important, and the system must be recognizable and attractive. Branding is important. Stops should have green roofs and/or be surrounded by rain gardens. Stops should have vandalism- and scratchitti-proof glass. One participant asked if stops be built into buildings and other proposed structures. The scale of stops should fit their surroundings. Larger stops could be built with

contributions from developers. Another participant thought that stops should feature public art and use alternate power sources such as LEDs and photovoltaics to conserve energy and save money.

8.0 FRIDAY, JUNE 10 – OPEN HOUSES

Friday's open houses were located at Grace Episcopal Church on Russell Road in Alexandria. One session was held from 11:30 am to 1 pm and another was held from 6 to 7:30 pm. The format of these events was different than the workshops held earlier in the week. The purpose of the open houses was to provide a synopsis of feedback heard at the workshops. No presentation was given; rather, the setting was informal, and participants were encouraged to review the materials on display in the room, ask questions of the project team, and offer their views individually. The event was advertised in local newspapers and open to the public, and all participants in the earlier workshops were invited to attend the open houses. About 20 people participated in the open houses.

A.M. Participants

Laura Durham and Ron Kagawa – City of Alexandria
Katherine Jackson – News Channel 8
Harriet McGuire
Agnes Artemel
Garrett Erdle

P.M. Participants

Bernadette and Jason Williams – Del Ray Citizens
Jim Butler – Alexandria Federation of Civic Associations
Katy Cannady – Rosemont Citizens
Kevin Beekman – Lenox Place at Sunnyside HOA
Jeff Price – Arlington DOT
Lillian J. White – LWVA
Linda D. Lee
Paul Hertel
Larry Grossman
Adam Hancock

Questions and Comments

Development Issues – One participant remarked that Alexandria needs a finished land use plan before the alignment is set. Some were concerned about how new development would access the new system, e.g., pedestrian overpasses or tunnels are needed on Route 1; a ramp to access Fayette Street from Monroe Avenue bridge is needed as well.

Transit Operations – Several participants had concerns about the impact of a new transit system on Metrorail stations in Arlington, such as the way it would affect capacity at Crystal City Metrorail station. It was suggested that the service run every five minutes from 5 am to 11 pm. One person was adamant that small vans or buses (electric, solar battery) were needed for the system because they allow for easier upgrade and modernization of vehicles and potential lower maintenance costs. Another participant preferred buses to driverless rail systems because bus drivers are “eyes in the community,” a security force. One participant recommended that the 9A and 9B Metrobus routes not be eliminated.

Alignment and Stop Locations – Several participants felt that the bus should stop within two city blocks (maximum 10 minute walk, especially with grocery bags) of houses, apartments, and

offices. One participant was concerned that an alignment along the front of Potomac Yard shopping center may be slower than one behind it, due to traffic conflicts.

Stop Amenities – It was suggested that money be spent on a fast and efficient service rather than elaborate amenities.

9.0 WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 5 – MEETING WITH CORRIDOR DEVELOPERS

The purpose of this meeting (held at Crescent Resources offices, 2805 South Crystal Drive) was to update corridor developers on the status of the Crystal City/Potomac Yard Interim Transit Improvements project, to obtain their feedback and suggestions on issues including alignment, station stop amenities, service phasing, and service branding, and to set the stage for further dialogue between the City of Alexandria, Arlington County, and developers.

<u>Participant</u>	<u>Company/Organization/Agency</u>
Gordon Fraley	Charles E. Smith
Mara Olguin	Charles E. Smith
Jeff Sherman	Charles E. Smith
Dan Strotman	Comstock
Elizabeth Adams	Crescent Resources
Dan Kohlhepp	Crescent Resources
Jack Reutemann	Crescent Resources
Robert Atkinson	Davis Carter Scott
Chris Tacinelli	Grove/Slade (representing Charles E. Smith)
Doug Abbott	Gould Property Co./Abbott Development
Jean-Marc Dizard	Hyatt Regency Crystal City
Ben Timashenka	Hyatt Regency Crystal City
Joy Hunt	Konterra Realty LLC
Rich McCoy	Konterra Realty LLC
Tom Malone	KSI Service Inc.
Robert Esselburn	Lewis Scully Gionet
Karen Orosch	McCaffery Interests
Gary Dick	Meridian Group
John Wilkinson	Meridian Group
Jon Lindgren	Pulte
Cathy Puskar	Walsh, Colucci
Dennis Leach	Arlington County DES
Bee Buergler	Arlington DOT
Richard Hartman	Arlington DOT
Peter L. Bass	Arlington Economic Development
Jim Maslanka	City of Alexandria
Tanya Husick	Department of Rail and Public Transportation

Alignment Issues - The developers had a number of questions and suggestions relating to the transit alignment. These included:

- Alignment south of the Monroe Avenue Bridge. Some developers suggested that an alignment accessing Braddock Road Metrorail Station via Main Street south of the Monroe Avenue Bridge would be more efficient than the suggested route using Route 1 and existing neighborhood streets. They suggested that this route would have less traffic, and that there might be a greater possibility for dedicated right-of-way. City staff responded that this alignment was considered during the Alternatives Analysis, but that the right-of-way is too narrow. Alexandria is considering providing DASH shuttle service on Main Street between Potomac Yard and the Braddock Road Metrorail Station.
- Alignment between East Glebe Road and the City/County Line. The suggested alignment turns east along South Glebe Road and then runs through Potomac Yard via Potomac Avenue, before turning west along East Glebe Road. However, the Alexandria Ad Hoc Transportation Task Force recently recommended turning west to Route 1 north of the existing Potomac Yard Shopping Center once McCaffery Interests (the owners of the shopping center site) redevelops. Developers wanted to know the justification for the route behind the shopping center. The route behind the shopping center has been carried forward to this point in the study because it is closer to stores, there would be less traffic here than along a mixed traffic alignment on Route 1, and it is probably easier to site stations.

This issue is of particular concern to Potomac Yard Development, LLC, the developers of the Alexandria portion of Potomac Yard. Should their plans for the Town Center site assume access to transit service? They are interested in working with the City to resolve this issue.

Whatever the eventual decision regarding running the alignment on Potomac Avenue or Route 1 in Alexandria, it is assumed that the alignment will still turn east on South Glebe Road in Arlington. Meridian Group, Inc. is basing the design of their site (Center Park) around the location of a transit stop on South Glebe Road.

- Use of Dedicated Right-of-Way. Participants generally agreed that the service should make use of as much dedicated right-of-way as possible, in order to decrease trip times and increase reliability. However, the City and the County should also consider impacts to on-street parking, especially in Crystal City where lack of on-street parking could hurt retail businesses.

Participants noted that use of the first phase of the Arlington transitway as soon as possible is key. By demonstrating the benefits of an exclusive transitway, developers could be encouraged to participate in the project.

- Arlington Transitway. Participants enquired whether the Arlington transitway will be built piecemeal or all at once. They expressed the opinion that construction on the busway should start as soon as possible. One and Two Potomac Yard are scheduled to open in March 2006, and there must be something there when it opens. The sooner this improved service is in place, the better.

Station Stop Amenities - The developers were in agreement that the station stops should have a high level of amenities. Specific elements mentioned included:

- Next vehicle arrival information/schedule. Station stops should include displays indicating when the next vehicle will arrive, as well as static schedules indicating hours of service and headways (if appropriate).
- Wayfinding information. Participants suggested the use of wayfinding information at station stops, including maps showing destinations at each stop. Participants also suggested the installation of bulletin boards or kiosks indicating destinations and events at nearby stops.
- Common architectural elements – a “family” of structures. There was a feeling the station stops should include common architectural elements which make them easily identifiable as belonging to the same service. However, they do not have to be identical. There was support for the idea that each station stop should include features unique to its location.
- High quality design. Station stops should reflect the high quality design and materials being used in the rest of the development. Developers are attempting to create a first class destination, and transit should contribute to that, rather than detracting from it.

Branding/Marketing - Developers were in agreement that the service should have a unique identity. A high quality transit service will help them market their properties (as an example, the Docklands light rail service was key to the success of Canary Wharf in London).

One way of initiating a unique brand would be to begin with the immediate or short term service and add branding elements incrementally as the service is developed. An opposing view was also voiced, with the suggestion that branded service not be introduced until sponsors are ready to initiate a high quality, integrated service in the corridor. Otherwise, it is possible that the branded service could acquire a poor reputation, which would be detrimental to plans for a truly transit-oriented corridor.

When the brand is introduced, stations and vehicles should have a visible, distinct character. Riders should be able to understand quickly and easily how to get from the Metrorail stations to Potomac Yard and Crystal City residences, offices, and activity centers via this service. Because of this, the piece between the Crystal City Metrorail Station and the Braddock Road Metrorail Station is the most important. Planning for service branding should begin as soon as possible.

Vehicles - Participants expressed concern over the possible use of diesel buses. Given that vehicles will be passing by their buildings every 3-6 minutes, it is imperative that they be as quiet as possible and use clean-burning fuel. Project staff noted that the newly acquired fleet of WMATA natural gas powered, low-floor buses would be used to provide much of the near-term transit service in Crystal City and Potomac Yard.

Phasing - There were a number of questions about implementation of improved transit in the immediate time frame. A number of developments will be coming online in the next year. An efficient transit connection between these developments and the Crystal City Metrorail Station is essential.

Participants expressed support for the phased implementation of improved transit service, to coincide with the opening of new buildings in the corridor. They also supported the idea that service frequency would increase as passenger demand increases (although there should be frequent, reliable service from the start).

Ongoing Coordination with Developers - The developers expressed a willingness to work with City and County officials as planning goes forward. However, they also indicated the need for certain decisions sooner rather than later, given that their plans are based on the City and County's plans. Communication is essential.

Rather than convene a formal task force, there was consensus among the developers that coordination should take place mostly on an informal basis. However, it could be useful to form working groups for specific tasks. One example of this is marketing – this process should begin as soon as possible, so that all the pieces that go into branding a service are ready to go when the service is introduced. Mara Olguin from Charles E. Smith expressed an interest in leading a dialogue involving the marketing representatives of developers within the corridor.