

FEDERAL RAILROAD ADMINISTRATION 2023 PROGRESS REPORT

Executive Order 13287 “Preserve America” Section 3:
Improving Federal Agency Planning and Accountability

U.S.
Department of
Transportation

Introduction

The U.S. Department of Transportation's Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) prepared this report in fulfillment of the requirement of Section 3 of Executive Order 13287 "Preserve America". Section 3 requires Federal agencies with real property management responsibilities report to the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP) every three years. Section 3 also directs Federal agencies to prepare an assessment of the current status of its inventory of historic properties, the general condition and management needs of those properties, and steps to meet those needs, and report its progress in identifying, protecting and using historic properties in their ownership pursuant to the mandate in Section 110 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA).

The only historic property owned by FRA is *Union Station in Washington, DC*. The station was listed in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) in 1969 as a property of national significance meeting criteria A and C.



Washington Union Station

Washington Union Station Historic Context

Washington Union Station is an impressive example of Beaux Arts architecture designed by D.H. Burnham & Company. It is divided into three primary spaces: the historic headhouse (1908); the original passenger concourse (1908), currently used for retail and Amtrak ticketing; and the current passenger concourse, referred to as the Claytor Concourse, completed in 1988.

The station is significant for its association with railroad transportation improvements facilitated by the Washington Terminal Company, a consolidation of the Baltimore & Ohio and Pennsylvania Railroad companies in Washington, DC. The station not only allowed for increased safety and future rail growth, but it had a profound influence on early twentieth-century urban and landscape design in the District. Contributing and character-defining features of the station building include its monumental exterior façade, which is defined by the spatial arrangement, alignment with Delaware Ave NE, landscape, and architectural design; the historic headhouse, including the General Waiting Room/Main Hall, west and east wings serving the original ticket lobby and baggage room, the original dining room, serving room, lunch room, ladies waiting room, and smoking room; the State Reception Room/Presidential Suite; and the original passenger concourse, including its arched roof featuring plaster coffer panels and skylights, plaster cornice, and sections of original glazed brick and terracotta wall.

Washington Union Station Management

As passenger rail service declined in the mid-20th century, the station was converted into a visitor center managed by the National Park Service. However, as the station further deteriorated and passenger rail ridership began to rebound, Congress passed the Union Station Redevelopment Act of 1981 (USRA) (*Public Law No. 97-125*). The USRA authorized the Secretary of Transportation to rehabilitate and redevelop the station as a multi-use transportation facility and commercial complex.

The USRA included the following four goals:

- Preserve the historic station building;
- Restore and run the historic station building as a passenger rail station with facilities for charter, transit, and intercity buses;
- Financially support the continued maintenance and operations of WUS through commercial development; and
- Allow the Federal government to withdraw from active operation and management as soon as practical and with the least possible expense to the Federal government.

The Secretary of Transportation delegated responsibility for the station to FRA. To implement the USRA, a District of Columbia non-profit corporation, Union Station Redevelopment Corporation (USRC), was created in 1983. USRC's board members are the Secretary of Transportation, FRA Administrator, D.C. Mayor, Amtrak President, and Federal City Council President, or their respective designees. In 1985, FRA leased the station to USRC for 99 years. Under this agreement, USRC is responsible for the rehabilitation, redevelopment, and ongoing management and operations of WUS. USRC subleases to Union Station Investco (USI), a private property management company, for day-to-day facility management and operations. However, FRA has not received appropriations for operations and maintenance of the station since the early 1980s. More recently, FRA has requested, and received, funding for its role as the Authority Having Jurisdiction (AHJ) for building code and fire / life safety matters. FRA uses the funding to hire a building engineer firm to assist FRA as AHJ.

USRC acts as a landlord for Union, and works closely with FRA, and other partners such as USI, Amtrak and the DC Historic Preservation Office, to ensure the preservation of this historic transportation facility. USRC is responsible for capital projects through its Capital Maintenance Reserve Fund (CMRF), which is funded by USRC and USI. USI's sublease with USRC caps USI's contributions to the CMRF, and USRC is responsible for any additional capital needs exceeding the CMRF. USRC has been severely affected by COVID-19, which has caused a sharp decline in revenues at the station. As a result, USRC continues to postpone critical infrastructure projects such as replacing the aging roof and HVAC system, restoring the parking garage, and addressing building code, fire alarm, and utilities' needs. USRC faces a funding shortfall to complete many state-of-good-repair projects, which are beyond the typical operations and maintenance costs that have historically fallen to USRC to fund. Beyond lease payments and the CMRF contribution it receives, which are insufficient, USRC has no other available sources of funding to make up any shortfalls. For more information, visit www.usrcdc.com.

In addition, FRA administers congressionally-directed annual grants to Amtrak. These funds are broadly eligible for use by Amtrak for capital improvement projects and annual maintenance activities, operating expenses, and debt service payments. Amtrak has and will continue to use annual grant funding for improvements at Union Station where it operates intercity passenger rail service. However, these projects primarily address Amtrak's operational needs. Currently, Amtrak does not have the responsibility to contribute to the preservation of the station. More information is available on [FRA's website](#).

Washington Union Station Projects Since 2020

Since 2020, USRC or Amtrak **completed** the following projects:

<i>Project</i>	<i>Sponsor</i>	<i>Description</i>
Platform for Tracks 25/26	Amtrak	Application of a surface coating and new tactile to Platform 25/26
West Hall Granite Masonry Restoration Project	USRC	Cleaning, repair, and restoration of the granite walls, iron electric closet doors (located on the southwest and northwest corners), the laylight framing on the ceiling, and other surfaces in the West Hall.
Main Hall Granite Masonry Restoration Project	USRC	Cleaning, repair, and restoration of the granite walls, fountains, iron electric closet doors (located in each corner), and other surfaces at the ground and mezzanine levels in the Main Hall.
Marble Floor Tile Replacement	USRC	Stained and cracked tiles throughout the Main Hall and West Hall, as well as in the vestibules, were replaced and all the marble flooring was polished.
Main Hall Restoration Project	USRC	Restoration of the six historic vestibules on the north and south sides of the Main Hall and the exterior Roman Legionnaire statuary above the front entrance

The following Union Station projects are **ongoing**:

<i>Project</i>	<i>Sponsor</i>	<i>Description</i>
Track 22 Rehabilitation	Amtrak	Project provides for construction of an additional revenue track and platform to serve the run-through tracks at the station. The new platform and track will increase rail capacity. Aside from providing operational flexibility, the project is essential to maintaining rail operations during the Subbasement Reconstruction project.
Substation 25A Relocation	Amtrak	Substation 25A is original to station electrification (1940s). The existing location is not ideal, hard to reach, and is old. This SOGR project will replace/improve the substation and place it more strategically in Railway Express Agency (REA) building parking lot.
Crew Base Construction	Amtrak	Expand Crew Base (north of concourse, west side of yard)
Satellite Commissary Relocation	Amtrak	Satellite Commissary relocation to the former Amtrak Police Department (APD) site.
Amtrak Police Department Relocation	Amtrak	APD facilities need to be relocated. Amtrak will build a new 800 square foot patrol building that will be located on site with additional square footage to be in the REA building. The desire to vacate current space is necessitated by concourse modernization project.

Platform 16/17 Refresh	Amtrak	Detailed design for a new Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliant 15'ATR platform. Platform length to match existing platform length (approx. 1400 LF). Existing historic canopy structure to remain, but will require new roofing material, minor structural and/or drainage improvements, and will be refurbished to preserve the historic asset. Due to the new platform foundation system and removal of the old system, some improvements may be required to the walls of the S&I pit on Track 16.
Platform 17/18 Structural Improvements	Amtrak	This project will provide design for the structural improvements, including replacement or repair of the platform structure, foundation improvements as needed, selection of new coating systems and joint treatments, and requirements for temporary access and support of existing infrastructure.
Acela Platform Canopies 17/18, 19/20	Amtrak	Acela Platform Canopies (17/18 & 19/20) are beyond useful life. During inclement weather the platforms exhibit standing water and leaking from the roof. Drainage and canopy roof details need to be designed and implemented to prevent further safety concerns. Design and install permanent fall protection along the topside of the canopy to allow for future maintenance needs.
Concourse Modernization Project and North Hangar Safety Improvements	Amtrak	<p>The project will reconstruct and modernize the station's concourse to expand passenger flow, provide additional areas for boarding and queuing, improve amenities and address safety egress issues. Interior spaces of the existing Claytor Concourse will be completely renovated with new architectural finishes.</p> <p>The North Hangar project scope provides for the construction of a proposed emergency egress stairway and a new fire sprinkler system within the existing North Hangar area of the Clayton Concourse at the station. The new emergency stairway will provide egress for both the North Hangar passenger area and the overall Concourse. The inclusions of both the egress stair and fire sprinkler system into the rehabilitation of the North Hangar will ensure that the passenger facility meets current fire life safety code requirements.</p>
Handrail and Burnham Retaining Wall Improvements	Amtrak	Amtrak has responsibility for the state of good repair for the Burnham Wall at the station. The railing on top of the wall is deteriorating and is a safety hazard. To replace the railing, work on both the railing and the wall beneath must proceed. This work represents a significant effort as the wall and railing are both considered to be historic elements in the station, and so careful due diligence must be employed in considering changes that may affect this historic resource.
Main Hall Door Replacement	USRC	Installation of 38 custom fabricated Mahogany Wood Doors.
East Hall Scagliola	USRC	USRC is undertaking the restoration of the East Hall scagliola, in partnership with a grant from DDOT's Transportation Alternatives Program. This project is almost purely historic preservation but does have structural implications since in addition to restoration and in-painting, the scagliola will be properly secured in place.
Taxiway Restoration & Garage/Bus Deck Restoration	USRC	Repairs/restoration to the taxi way and USRC garage and bus deck.

Washington Union Station Expansion Project

USRC, in coordination with Amtrak, is proposing the Washington Union Station Expansion Project (SEP) to expand and modernize the station. The SEP includes reconstructing and realigning tracks and platforms; developing new passenger concourses; improving multimodal transportation facilities; and improving and expanding other supporting facilities.

The purpose of the SEP is to support current and future growth in rail service and operational needs; achieve compliance with ADA and emergency egress requirements; facilitate intermodal travel; provide a positive customer experience; enhance integration with the adjacent neighborhoods, businesses, and planned land uses; sustain the Station's economic viability; and support continued preservation and use of the historic station building.

The SEP is needed to improve rail capacity, reliability, safety, efficiency, accessibility, and security, for both current and future long-term railroad operations at this historic station. Many station facilities are currently at or exceed their practical capacity. Additional growth in rail service and ridership will quickly push the Station beyond its capacity unless substantial efforts are made to accommodate the growth. Union Station's passenger facilities, including platforms, waiting areas, and customer support services are not adequate to serve existing or projected future passenger demand for Amtrak and commuter rail. Multimodal operations and access are frequently constrained today and will be more so in the future. The layout and siting of the station restrict connectivity with neighbors and need to be enhanced. Finally, to provide for a sustainable future for the station's preservation and maintenance, the station needs to remain financially viable.

USRC is the Project Sponsor for the SEP. USRC will be responsible for implementing the SEP through final design and construction, in coordination with Amtrak. As Project Sponsor, USRC will also be responsible for implementing the measures proposed to avoid, minimize, or mitigate the adverse impacts of the SEP.

FRA's actions relating to the SEP may include issuing approvals or providing funding in the future for design or construction. All of the SEP action alternatives include the potential for redevelopment of Federally-owned air rights. If such development does occur in the future, FRA may be involved with the transfer, lease, or disposal of this property as a separate Federal action. Therefore, the SEP is undergoing National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (Section 106) review. FRA issued a Notice of Intent to prepare an EIS in late 2015, a Draft EIS in 2020, and a Supplemental Draft EIS with a draft Programmatic Agreement (PA) to resolve adverse effects to historic properties in 2023. FRA intends to execute the SEP PA and issue a Final EIS/Record of Decision in early 2024. For more information on the SEP visit: www.wusstationexpansion.com.

Conclusion

FRA is proud to be the steward of Washington Union Station which has served the rail traveling public to the nation's capital for 115 years. FRA looks forward to what is on the horizon for the station's second century.