



**VIRGINIA RAILWAY EXPRESS
L'ENFANT STATION AND FOURTH TRACK ALTERNATIVES ANALYSIS**

Date: August 3, 2021 Venue: Video Call

Agency Working Group Meeting

ATTENDEES

VRE

- Christine Hoeffner
- Dallas Richards

VHB Metro DC

- Mark Colgan
- Lee Farmer

Amtrak

- Amrita Hill
- Jeffrey Ensor
- David Haring
- Herbert Wescott
- Justin Waldron
- John Tull
- Lauren Anderson
- Maxwell Toth

District Department of Energy and Environment (DOEE)

- Michael Somersall

District Department of Transportation (DDOT)

- Anna Chamberlin
- Emma Blondin

District Office of Planning (DCOP)

- Kristin Calkins
- Rogelio Flores

General Services Administration (GSA)

- Marc Poling
- Lindsey Veas

NCPC

- Meghan Dowker
- Matthew Flis

National Park Service

- Tammy Stidham
- Catherin Dewey

Northern Virginia Transportation Commission (NVTC)

- Allan Fye

United States Commission of Fine Arts (CFA)

- Thomas Luebke
- Frederick Lindstrom
- Sarah Batcheler

Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT)

- Katherine Youngbluth

Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority

- Jim Ashe

DISCUSSION

Note: The following discussion was accompanied by the attached slideshow presentation.

1. Safety

- Christine Hoeffner (VRE) provided a safety moment. She reminded everyone to be aware of how to evacuate from their location quickly in event of an emergency.

2. Introductions

- Christine introduced herself and the VRE team. She is Project Manager for the project. Their consultants are VHB, represented by Mark Colgan and Lee Farmer.



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- The other attendees introduced themselves.
- Christine provided an overview of VRE's organization, operations, and 2040 system plan.

3. Alternatives Analysis Overview

- Christine provided an overview of the alternatives analysis process, which is intended to help VRE think through options to enhance rail operations and increase capacity at L'Enfant Station.
- She noted that L'Enfant is VRE's busiest station, yet it only has a 550-foot single-sided platform – this means it cannot serve a full-length train and operational flexibility is limited, particularly when delays result in congestion in the corridor.
- The purpose of this group is to provide an opportunity for agencies to learn about the project, and to have an open dialogue regarding the process and any issues or concerns VRE should be aware of.
- Christine explained the design objectives for the process and provided some key statistics for L'Enfant Station.

4. Existing Context

- Christine walked through several slides showing the existing context for the station, highlighting existing issues with capacity and operational flexibility and showing the existing platform and tracks.
- She also showed an aerial photograph of the immediate station vicinity highlighting adjacent uses such as the GSA building, the new WMATA headquarters, and Hancock Park.
- She noted that the 2017 rider survey showed the majority of VRE riders reach their final destination on foot or by bike – but this includes destinations north of the Mall and along the waterfront, which highlights the importance of the 7th Street spine in getting people across the Mall to the north and across I-395 to the south.
- VRE also has a lot of riders who transfer to Metrorail, which means it is important to have a convenient connection between VRE and Metrorail.

5. Planning Considerations

- Christine outlined planning considerations for the station and fourth track.
- A key consideration is the constrained right-of-way, and also the need to maintain railroad operations during construction.
- A really key consideration is Reservation 113/Hancock Park, which is administered by NPS and is part of the L'Enfant Plan.
- VRE also will be looking at how the station design can better integrate with the surrounding community by asking whether there are ways in which the new station can be a community asset particularly through the location and design of entrances.
- Christine noted that outside the railroad right-of-way, considerations include relationships to the new WMATA headquarters, the L'Enfant Plaza Metrorail Station second elevator on D Street and upgraded Metrorail elevators on 7th Street.
- Within the railroad ROW, this project is part of the Transforming Rail in Virginia program.
- The concepts developed during the alternatives analysis will be informed by and coordinated with the design of adjacent projects. The planning and design for this project will identify coordination required during implementation.



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6. Proposed Alternatives Analysis Process

- Lee Farmer (VHB) provided an overview of the alternatives analysis process.
- VRE is proposing a two-step process for the analysis of alternatives, based on the project objectives.
- The process starts with feasibility and then evaluates the remaining alternatives based on VRE's goals for the project.
- Details of this process are provided on the accompanying slides.

7. Timeline and Next Steps

- Lee presented a timeline showing the alternatives analysis process and including milestones for engaging with the working group.
- The process includes four working group meetings at specific milestones:
 - Meeting #1 includes an overview of the project and process and asks participants to provide feedback on that process.
 - Meeting #2 will be later in the Fall and will review the results of the fatal flaw analysis and ask for feedback on the alternatives.
 - Meeting #3 will be in early 2022 and will present the results of the alternatives analysis and ask for feedback on the recommended preferred alternative before it goes to the VRE Operations Board for adoption.
 - Meeting #4 will be in Spring 2022 and will present the draft concept design for the preferred alternative and discuss next steps.
- Once VRE finishes concept design, the project will be ready to move into PE and NEPA.
- VRE will also be providing information and reaching out to the public during this time period - no formal public meetings and planned, but VRE does plan on "going to the public" through rider outreach and also being available to attend community events and speaking at community meetings. VRE requested that participants let them know if there are any groups, events, or meetings they should be thinking about and who they should be reaching out to.

8. Discussion

- Mike Somersall (DOEE) noted that it looks like VRE has already engaged with FRA. He asked whether VRE has considered inviting them to this group.
 - Christine noted that VRE has not included them on this group but have completed all activities consistent with FRA and FTA requirements. Adding FRA is a good idea.
- Marc Poling (GSA) noted that they have construction projects going on in the area such as 301 7th Street. Renovations are expected to start perhaps next year in 2022; consolidation of offices wouldn't be completed for a couple of years. Marc said their considerations would be to ensure VRE coordinates security, sightlines, and construction sequencing. Mark said he can provide point of contact for the 301 7th Street Project.
ACTION: Christine asked that he send the contact to Lee and herself and they will set up a coordination meeting.
- Kristin Calkins (DCOP) noted that DC's updated comprehensive plan has changed the future land use map for this area allowing residential in the future. The zoning hasn't changed yet, but future vision is to have residential. She suggested VRE consider the



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potential for new track to be adjacent to residential uses in the future. Christine asked whether DCOP has Identified what buildings this might include. Kristin said she couldn't speak to specific as the land use map does not designate land use by building or specific parcel.

- Jim Ashe (WMATA) asked who VRE has been coordinating with at WMATA. Mark Colgan (VHB) noted it was previously Sara Benson in Planning, who has since changed departments. Jim noted VRE will want geotechnical engineering for the zone of influence on 7th Street related to the L'Enfant Plaza Metrorail Station. Lee noted VRE has a geotechnical engineer on the team now as they recognized this could be major coordination item. **ACTION:** VRE to set up a coordination meeting with WMATA.
- Catherine Dewey (NPS) noted no major concerns related to Hancock Park at the moment. She noted that it has been considered for a memorial site and also recalled some WMATA project in area. Lee noted it could be the expansion of the single street elevator to two elevators. Catherine recalled this was probably it. Lee indicated future coordination should take place. **ACTION:** VRE to set up a coordination meeting with NPS.
- Meghan Dowker (NCPC) noted that the SW Ecodistrict plan has several recommendations for L'Enfant Station improvements and suggested the team review the plan. One suggestion in the plan is to explore interoperability for MARC, VRE, and Amtrak passenger service at L'Enfant Station. Meghan noted her understanding was that there were different platform heights involved as well as different fuels for trains.
 - Christine explained that VRE operates with low level platforms and MARC trains also can accommodate low level platforms. VRE is not considering MARC specifically as part of this project, but run-through service is being studied separately. Amtrak currently utilizes VRE low level platforms at other stations. She noted that VRE and MARC run diesel. Amtrak has electric but is moving to diesel-electric.
 - Kate Youngbluth (DRPT) noted that at this time the Transforming Rail in Virginia program is not precluding future electrification and agree with Christine's other points
 - Dallas Richards (VRE) clarified that interoperability generally relates to a corridor handling freight and passenger rail across all tracks, which the project is doing.
 - Jeff Ensor (Amtrak) asked whether (VRE) would consider adding a criteria not to preclude electrification in future.
 - Christine asked what measures should be included for an alternatives analysis to address that criterion; Jeff indicated he did not have a specific measure in mind at this time.
 - Dallas noted handling freight double-stack cars and providing electrification can be complicated.
 - Jeff asked how Long Bridge would accommodate and Kate suggested a sidebar discussion on electrification.
 - Jeff noted that he also has questions on fluidity of track operations in area. Kate noted there are quite a few demands on the corridor space, and projects want to be cognizant of what's achievable. Kate agreed a separate conversation would be appropriate.
 - **ACTION:** DRPT/VPRA, VRE, and Amtrak to convene a future coordination meeting to address future electrification and interoperability.
- Rogelio Flores (DCOP) noted that there are current decarbonization goals for DC and this VRE project could add positively to them. He noted that resiliency and climate change are also really important for DC as well. He suggested that VRE should add a representative



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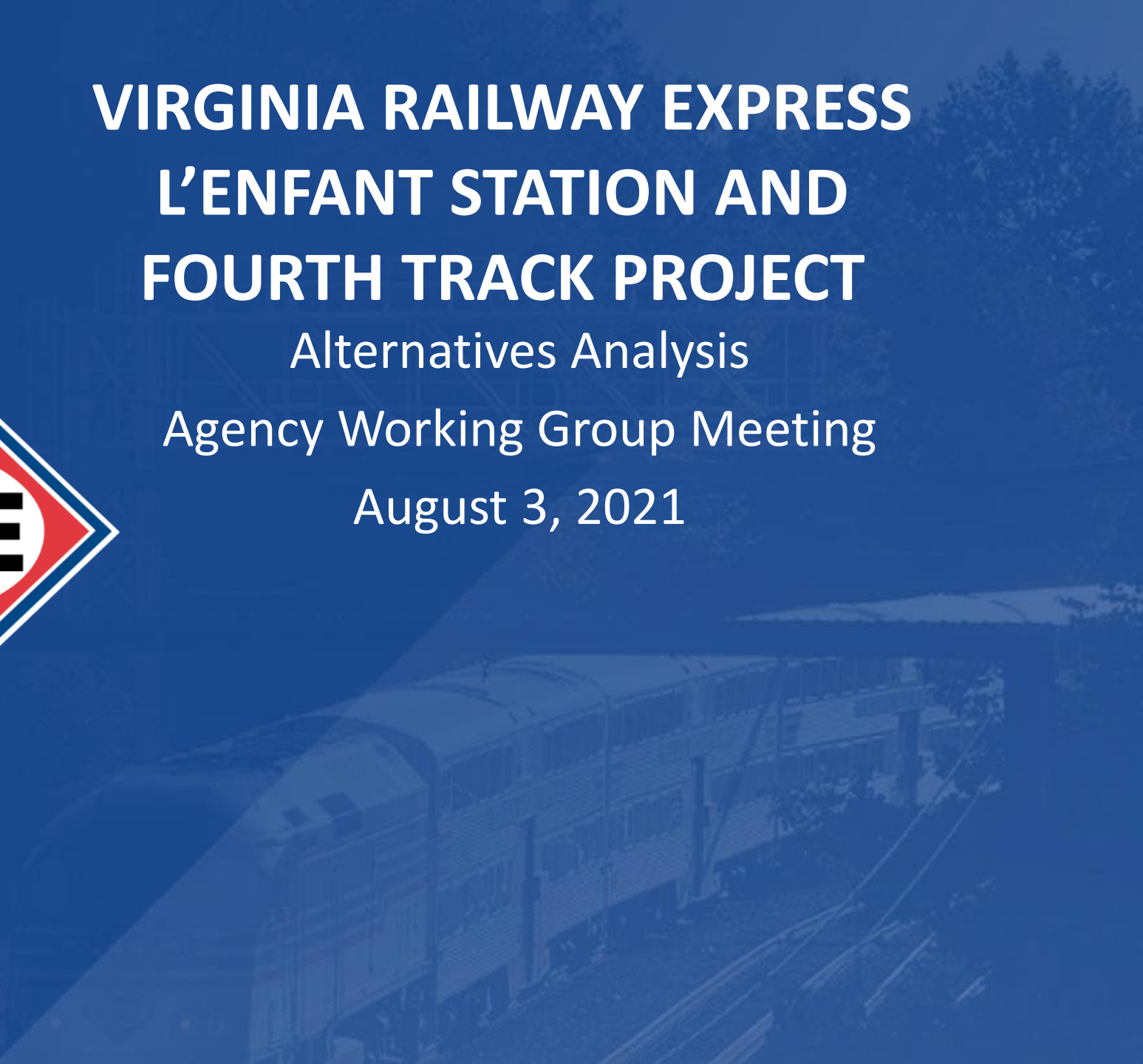
from that side of DOEE to the working group and offered to provide a DOEE contact to the VRE project team.

VIRGINIA RAILWAY EXPRESS L'ENFANT STATION AND FOURTH TRACK PROJECT

Alternatives Analysis

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AGENDA

- Safety Briefing & Introductions
- Alternatives Analysis Overview
- Existing Context
- Planning Considerations
- Proposed Alternatives Evaluation Process
- Timeline & Next Steps
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- High Customer Satisfaction
- Quality Service
- Reliable Service
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VRE Operations

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VRE System Plan

- Adopted in 2014
- Framework for VRE system investments and service through 2040 to meet regional travel needs.
- Adding rail capacity and growing VRE service is the key
- Potential to more than double VRE ridership when fully implemented
- Update of the System Plan anticipated in 2021.



ALTERNATIVES ANALYSIS

- **Purpose** : Identify a preferred alternative to enhance rail operations and increase capacity at the VRE L'Enfant Station.
- **Purpose of Agency Working Group:** Provide feedback about the project, particularly regarding any elements under each agency's jurisdiction.
- **Coordination Points:**
 1. Project overview; provide feedback on proposed alternatives analysis process
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PROJECT DESIGN OBJECTIVES

- Add a continuous 4th track between LE and VA interlockings
- Provide a center island platform that can accommodate two trains simultaneously
- Serve full-length trains
- Provide sufficient platform area for anticipated ridership
- Remain within existing railroad right-of-way to extent practicable
- Enhance regional and local connectivity



— Platform ● Interlocking — To First Street Tunnel

VRE L'ENFANT STATION STATISTICS

2019

Approx. 4,500
boardings per day

32 trains per day

VRE's busiest station

Serving 45 percent
of VRE riders

Transforming Rail in Virginia (New Service)

4 additional trains
est. **2024**

+

12 additional trains
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4 additional trains
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VRE System Plan 2040

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15-minute
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30-minute
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EXISTING CONTEXT



EXISTING CONTEXT – PLATFORM AND TRACKS



Looking north



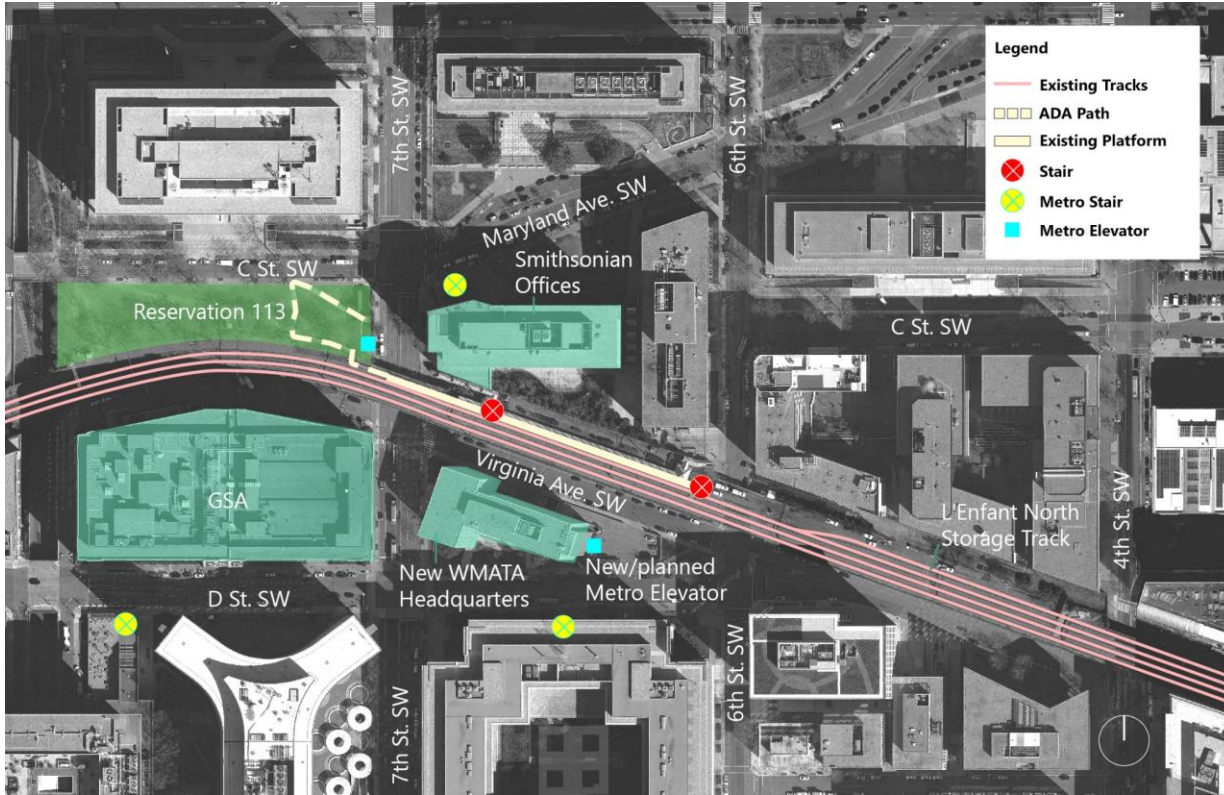
Platform



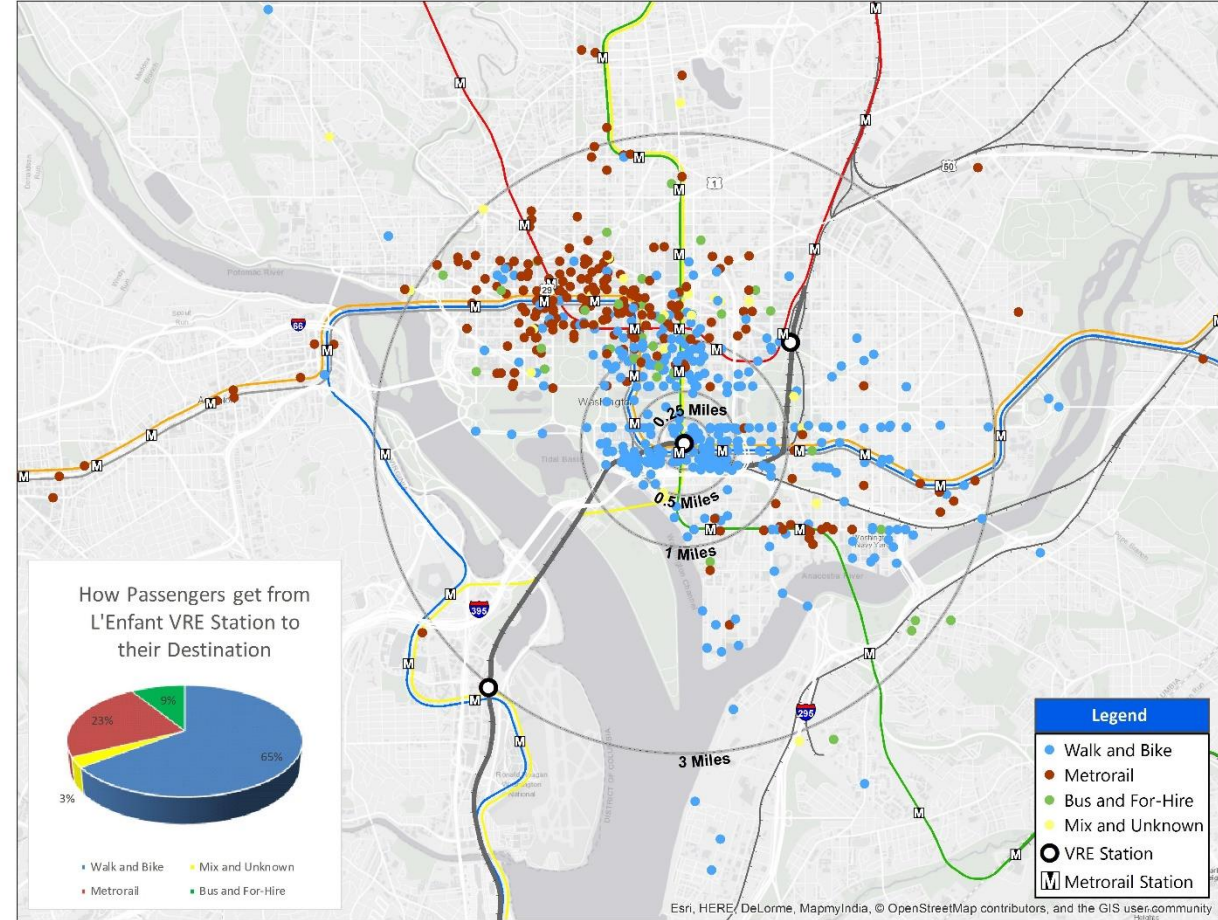
Looking south



EXISTING CONTEXT – CONNECTIONS



VRE L'Enfant Station Immediate Vicinity



Destinations from VRE L'Enfant Station by Mode, 2017

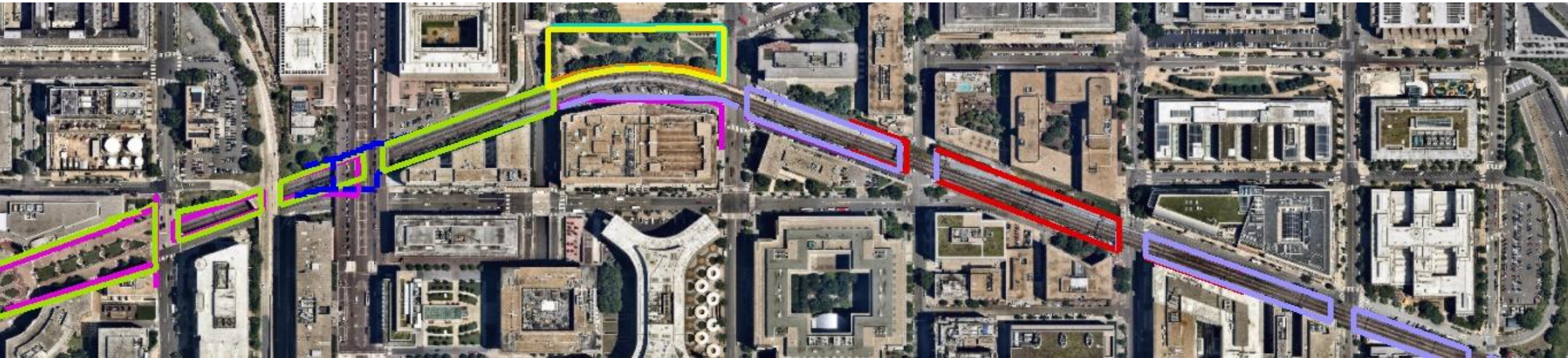
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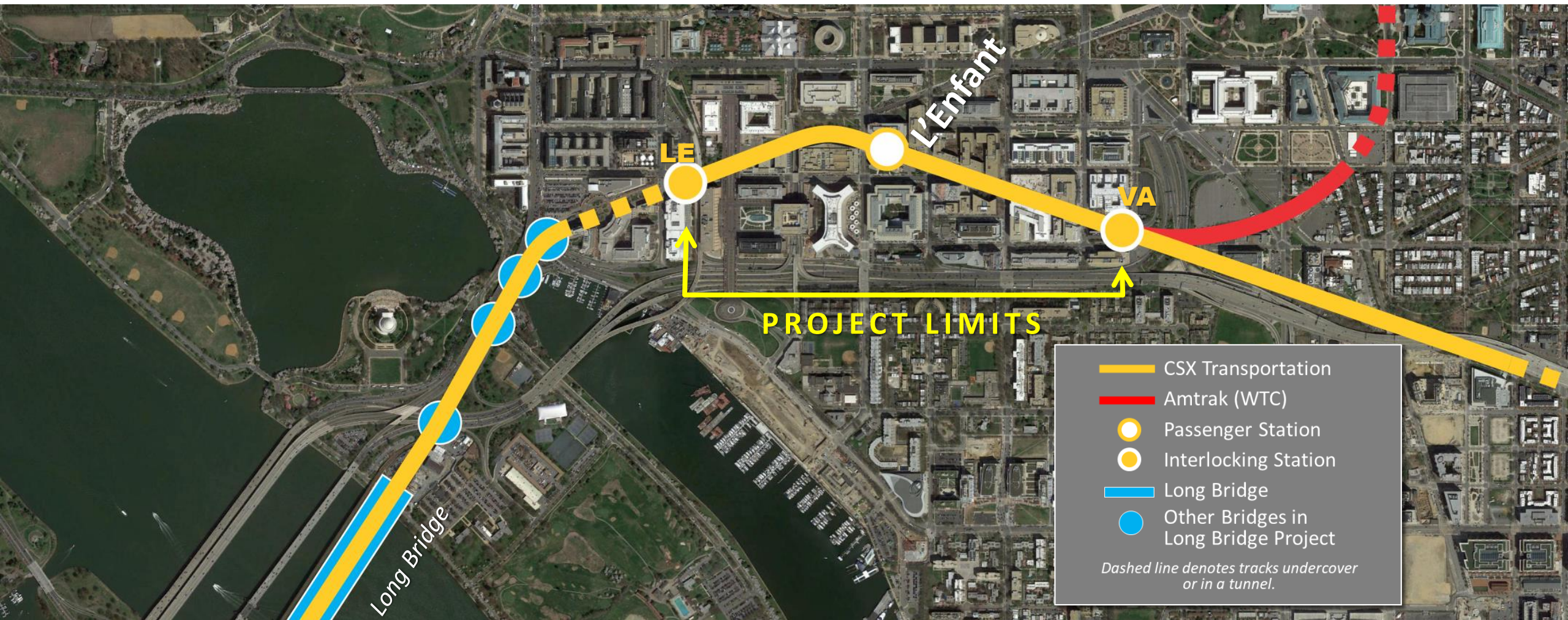
- Railroad right-of-way/operations
- Coordination with adjacent projects
- Reservation 113/Hancock Park
- Integrate station with surrounding community

Previous/Ongoing Work

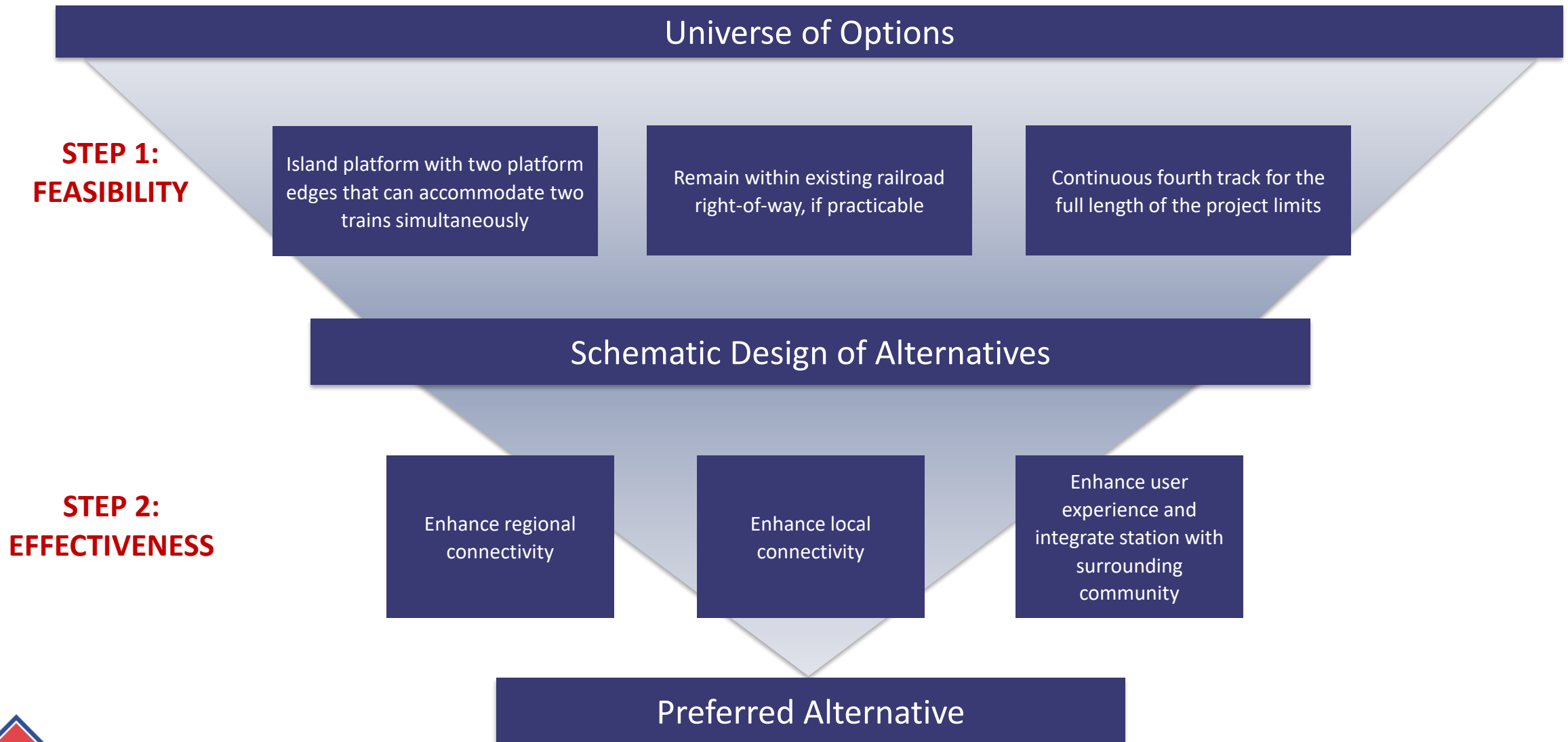
- L'Enfant Station capacity study (2002)
- L'Enfant Station initial track alignment & passenger platform study (2016)
- L'Enfant Station Assessment (2016)
- Property research & survey
- Stakeholder coordination



ADJACENT PROJECTS



PROPOSED EVALUATION PROCESS



STEP 1 FEASIBILITY: EVALUATION CRITERION #1

Design an island platform with two platform edges that can accommodate two trains simultaneously

Measures:

- Minimum length of 680 feet with maximum platform length of 750 feet
- Majority or greater than 50% of platform width at 24 feet (some tapering at ends acceptable)
- Located between Tracks 3 and 4
- Platform curvature less than $1^{\circ} 45'$

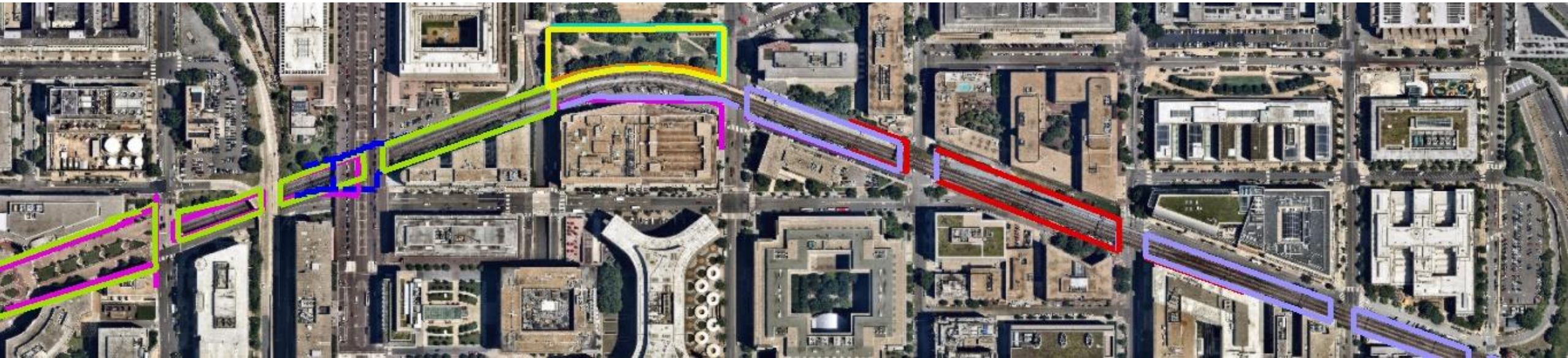


STEP 1 FEASIBILITY: EVALUATION CRITERION #2

Remain within the existing railroad right-of-way, if practicable

Measure:

- Concept must fit within existing railroad right-of-way, and not unduly change existing leases or easements if practicable



STEP 1 FEASIBILITY: EVALUATION CRITERION #3

Design a continuous fourth track for the full length of the project limits

Measures:

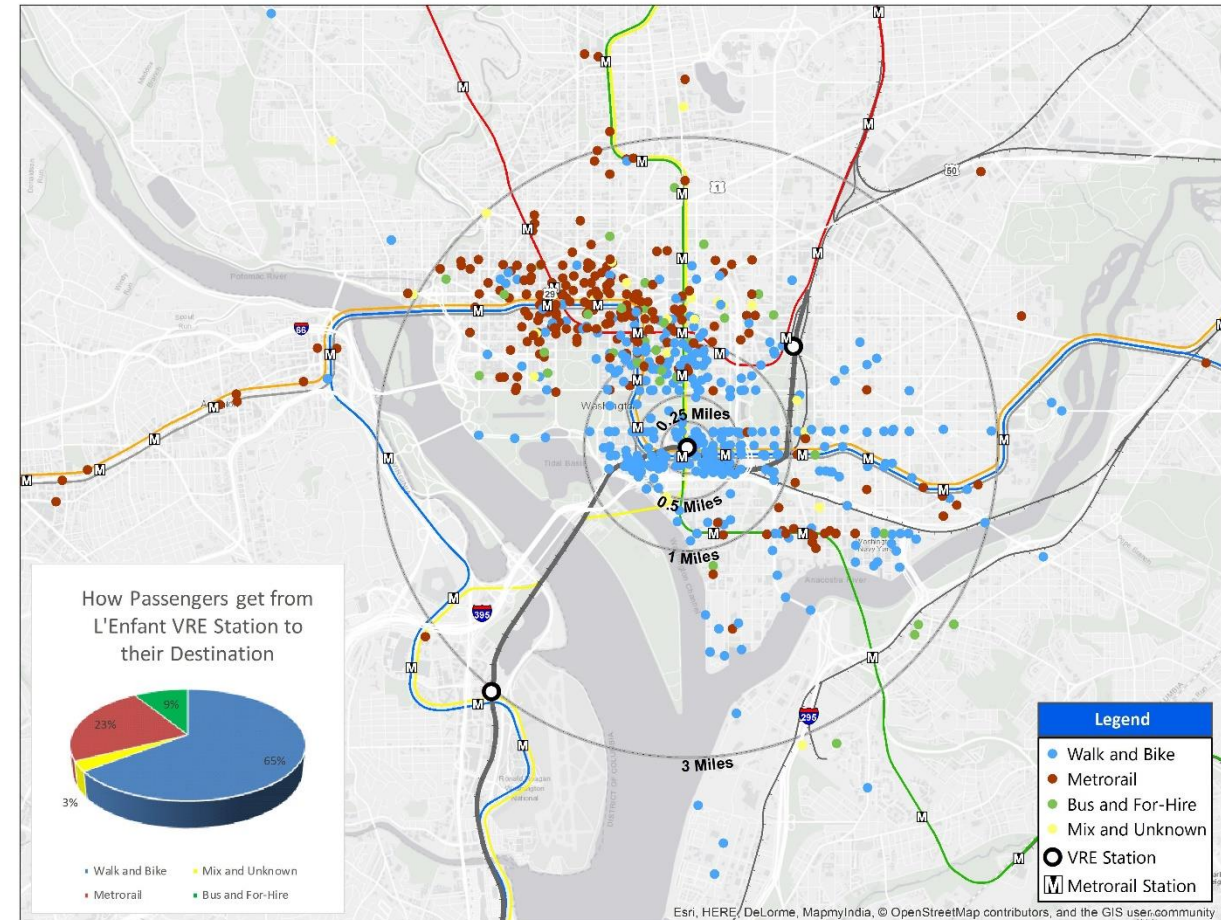
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- Proposed design speeds must maintain existing maximum authorized speeds
- Proposed interlockings must allow for universal flexibility between all four proposed tracks
- Horizontal and vertical clearances must conform to relevant VRE and CSXT standards

STEP 2 EFFECTIVENESS: EVALUATION CRITERION #4

Enhance regional connectivity

Measures:

- Distance to existing Metrorail station entry from closest point on VRE station platform, using local street network
- Number of street crossings to closest Metrorail station entrance



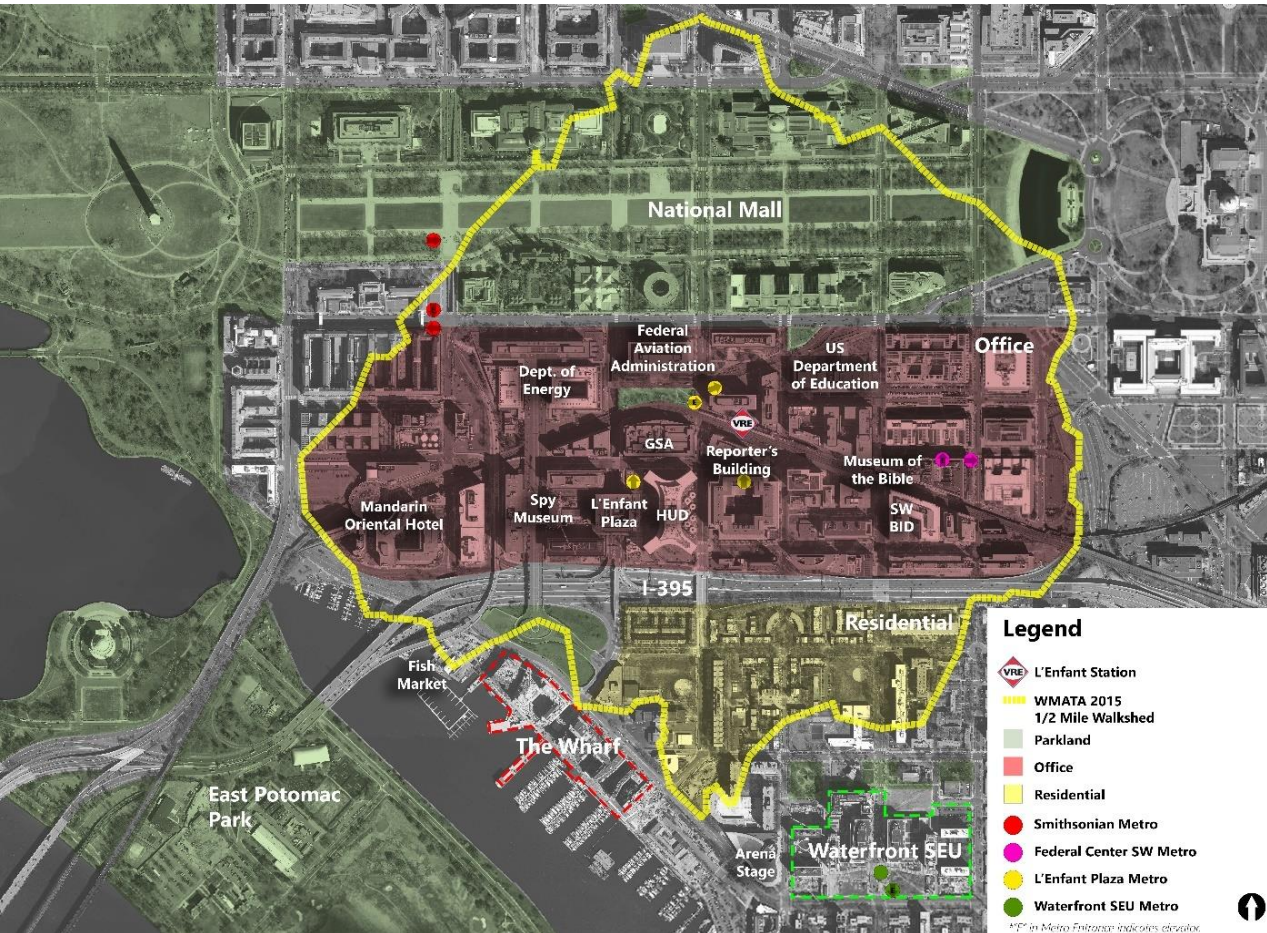
Destinations from VRE L'Enfant Station by Mode, 2017

STEP 2 EFFECTIVENESS: EVALUATION CRITERION #5

Enhance local connectivity

Measures:

- Number of jobs within ½ mile of station entrances using the existing pedestrian network
- Number of VRE rider destinations within ½ mile of station entrances using the existing pedestrian network
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- Number of Bikeshare docks available within ¼ mile of station entrances
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1/2 Mile Walkshed from Existing Station

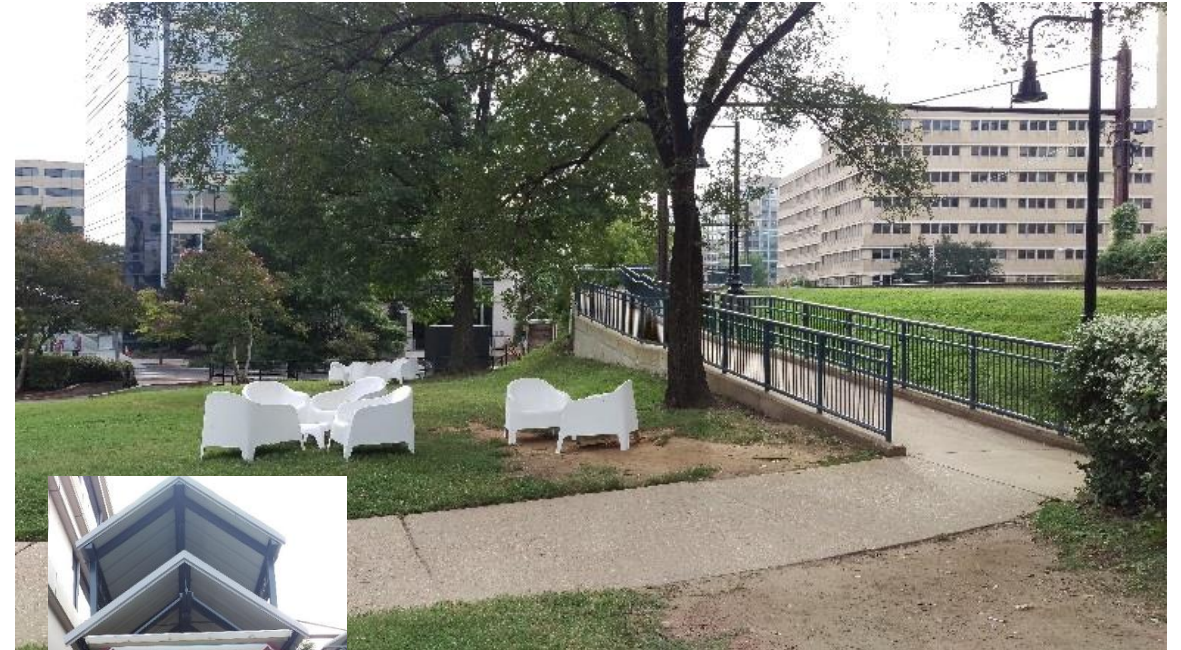
STEP 2 EFFECTIVENESS: EVALUATION CRITERION #6

Enhance user experience and integrate station with surrounding community

Measures:

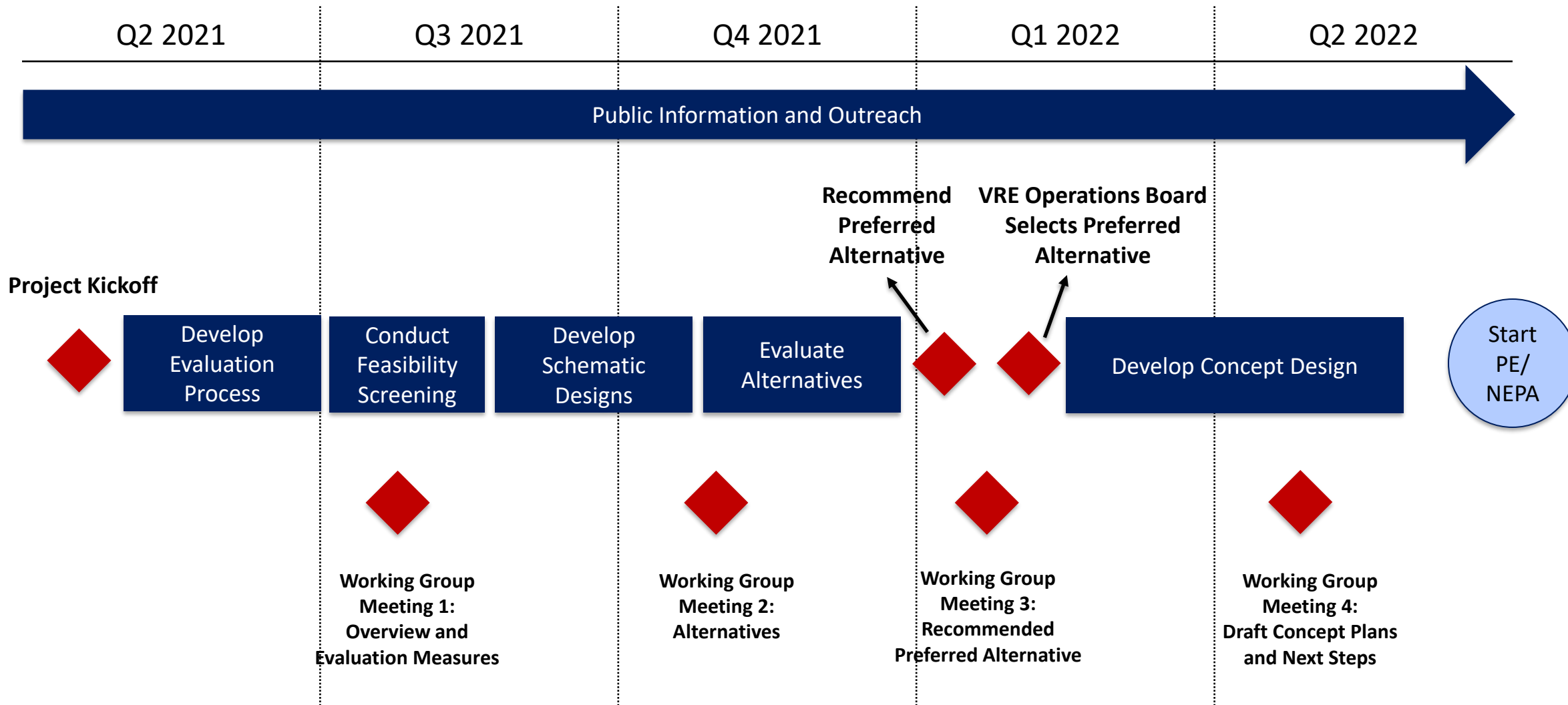
- Number of ADA access points to platform
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Existing ADA Access Through Hancock Park



Existing Stairs at 7th Street SW

TIMELINE & NEXT STEPS



QUESTIONS FOR WORKING GROUP

- Does your agency have plans that may affect the VRE project and should be considered?
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DISCUSSION

For more information, visit:
projects.vre.org
(website under development)

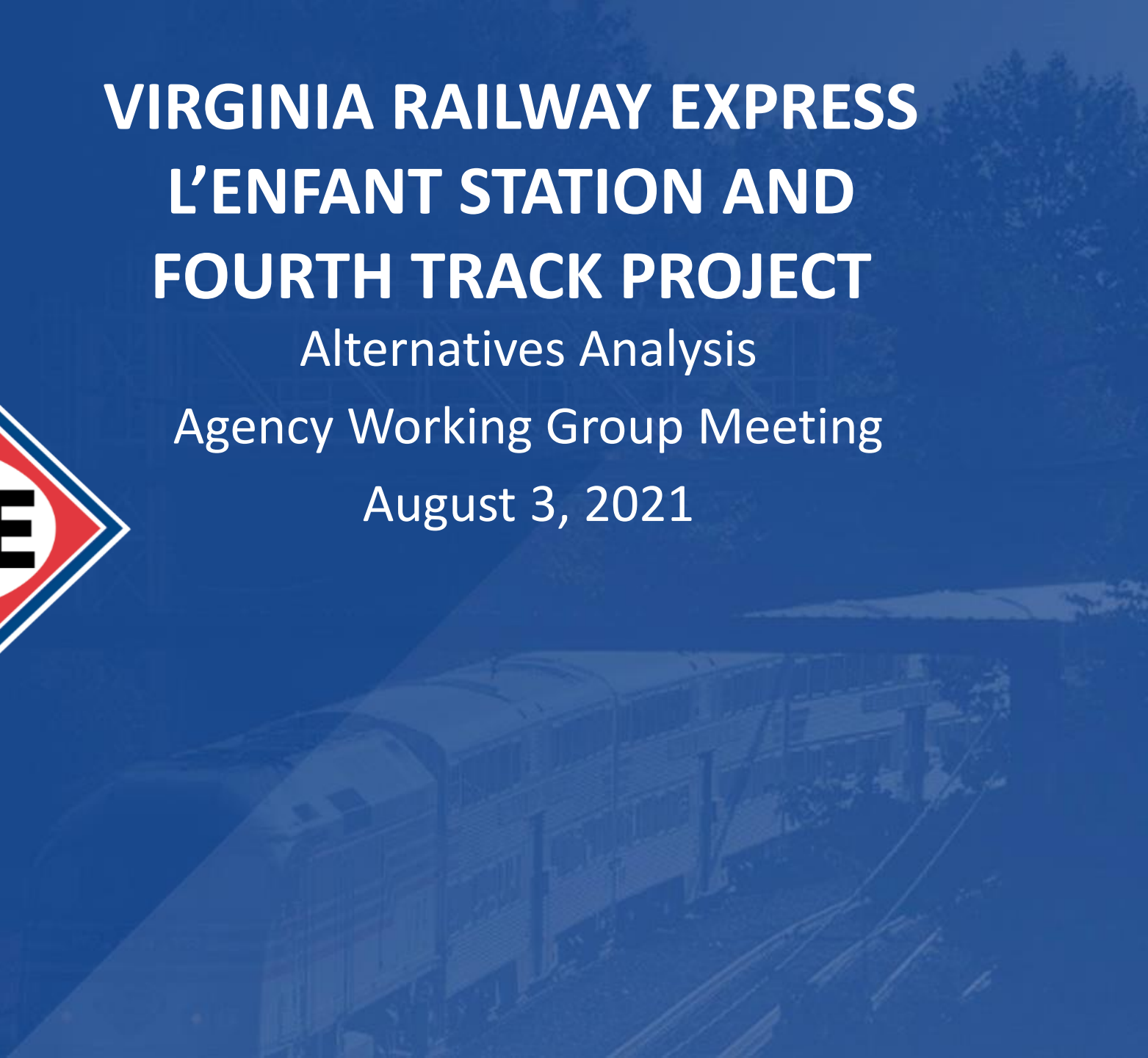
VRE Project Manager:
Christine Hoeffner
choeffner@vre.org

VIRGINIA RAILWAY EXPRESS L'ENFANT STATION AND FOURTH TRACK PROJECT

Alternatives Analysis

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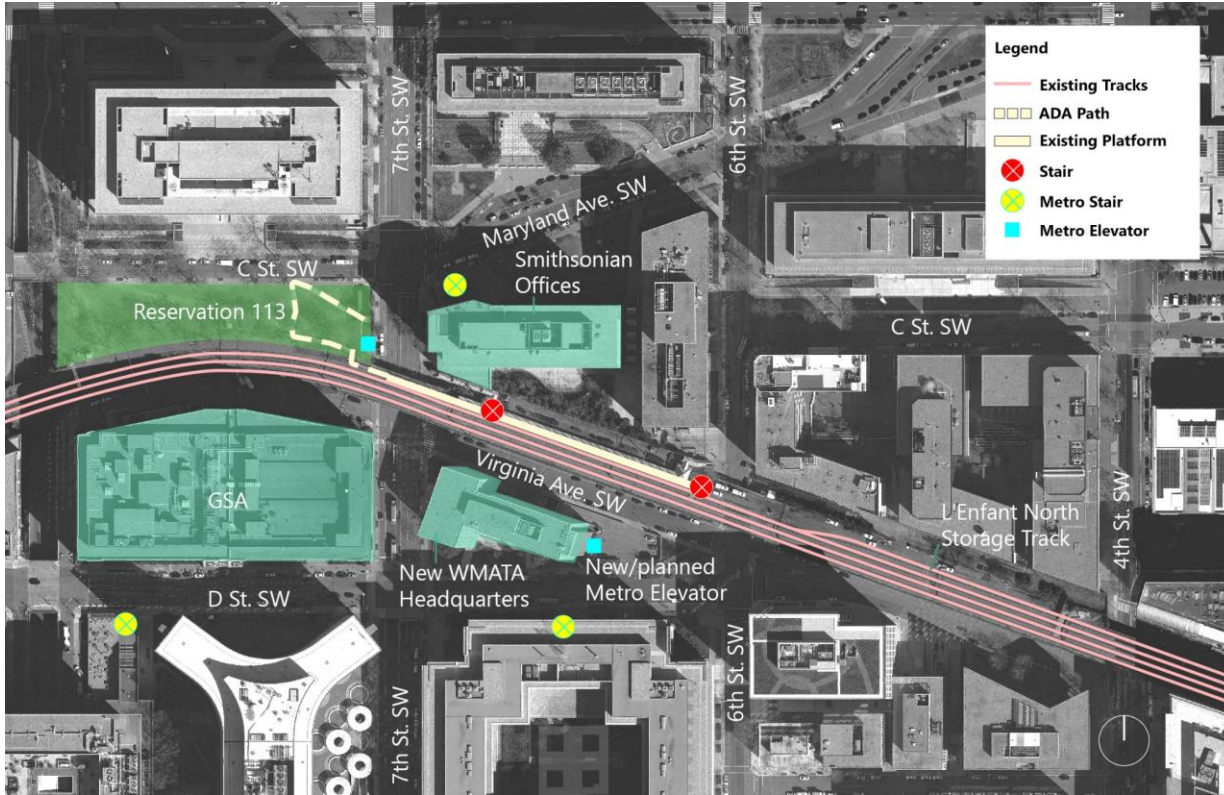
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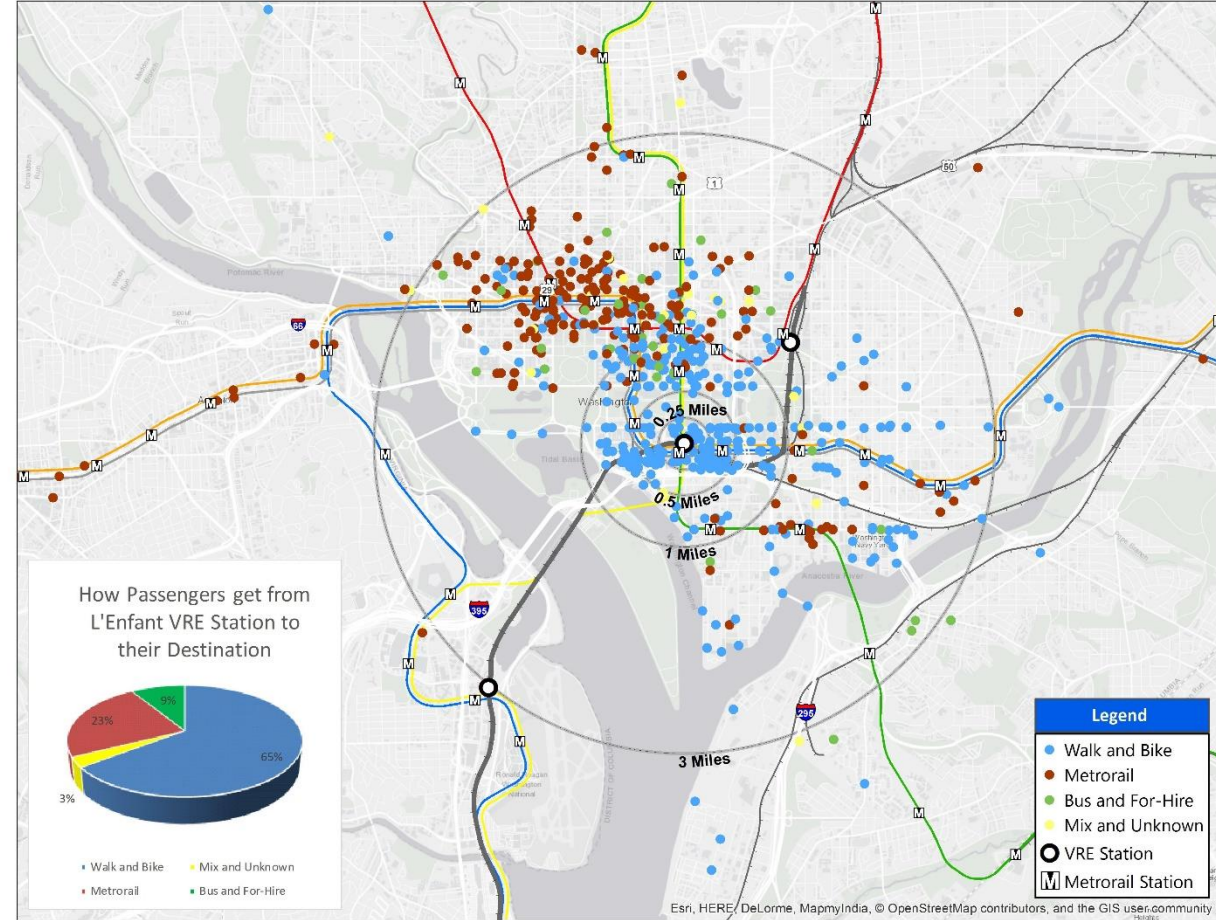
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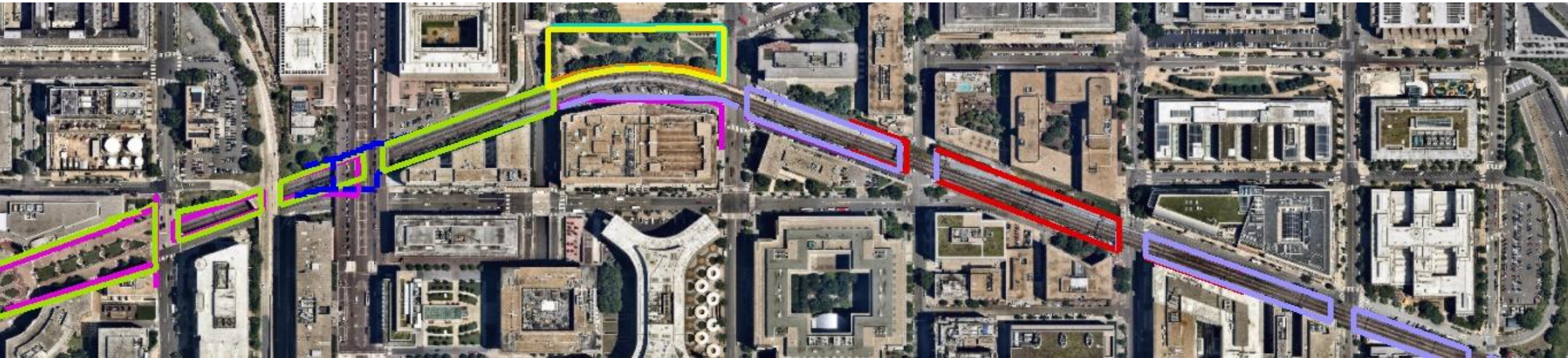
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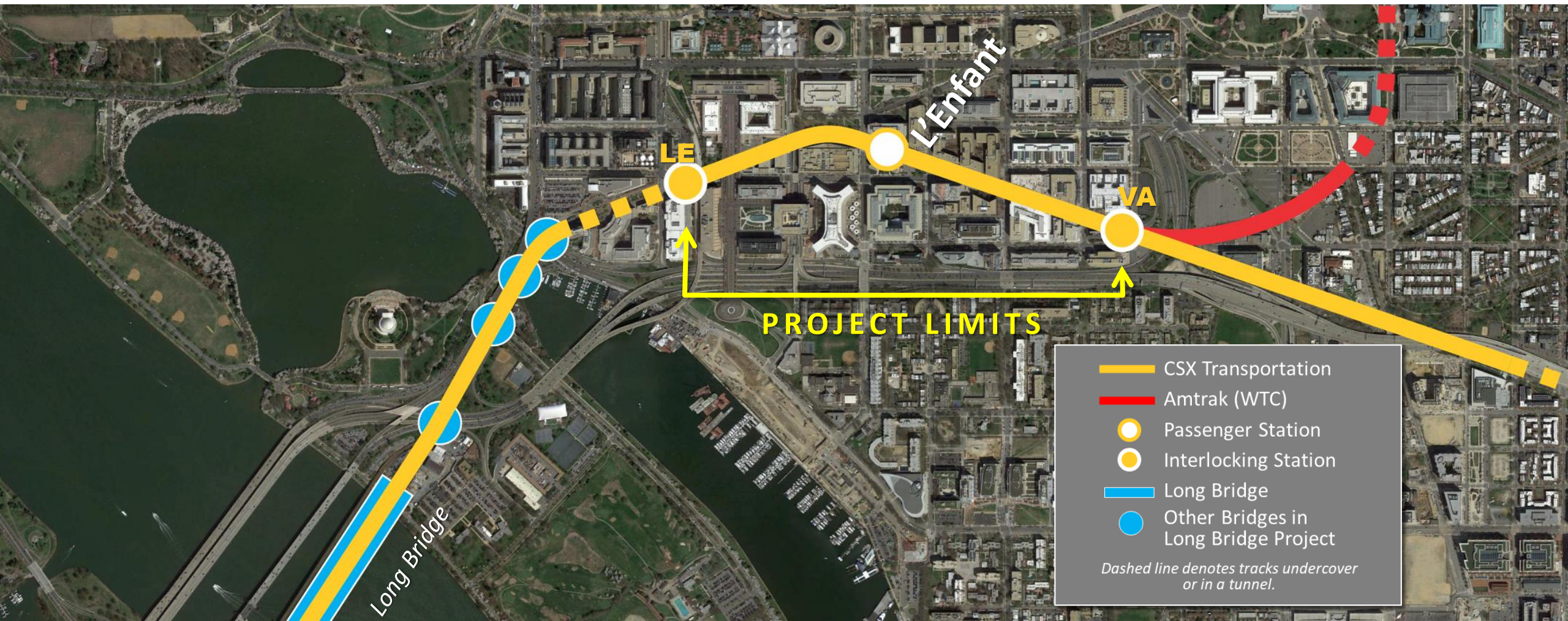
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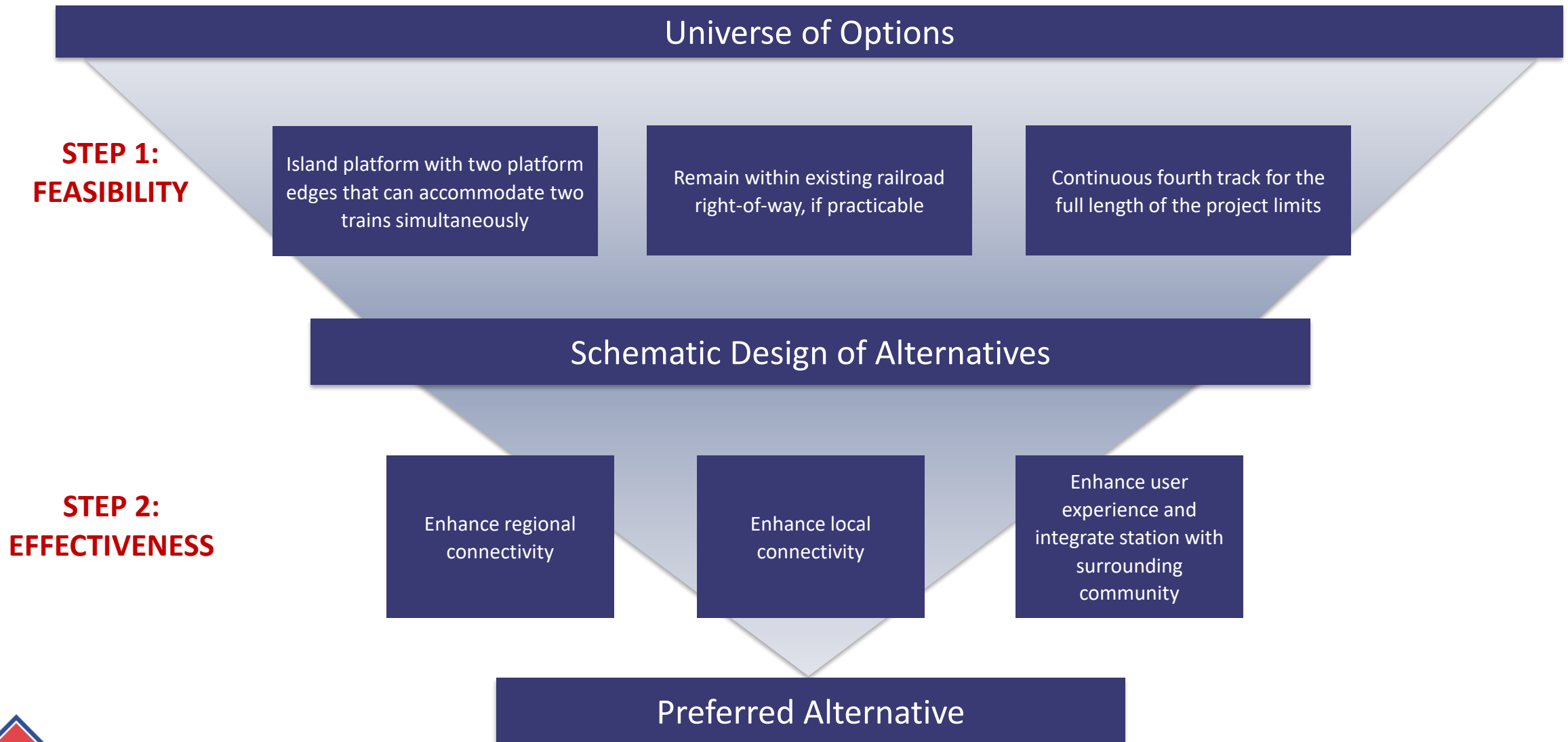
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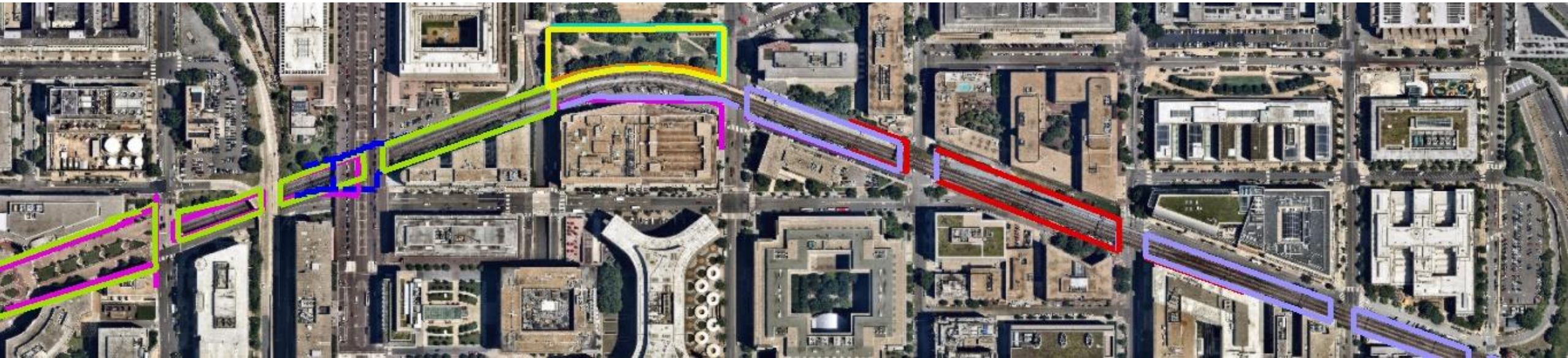


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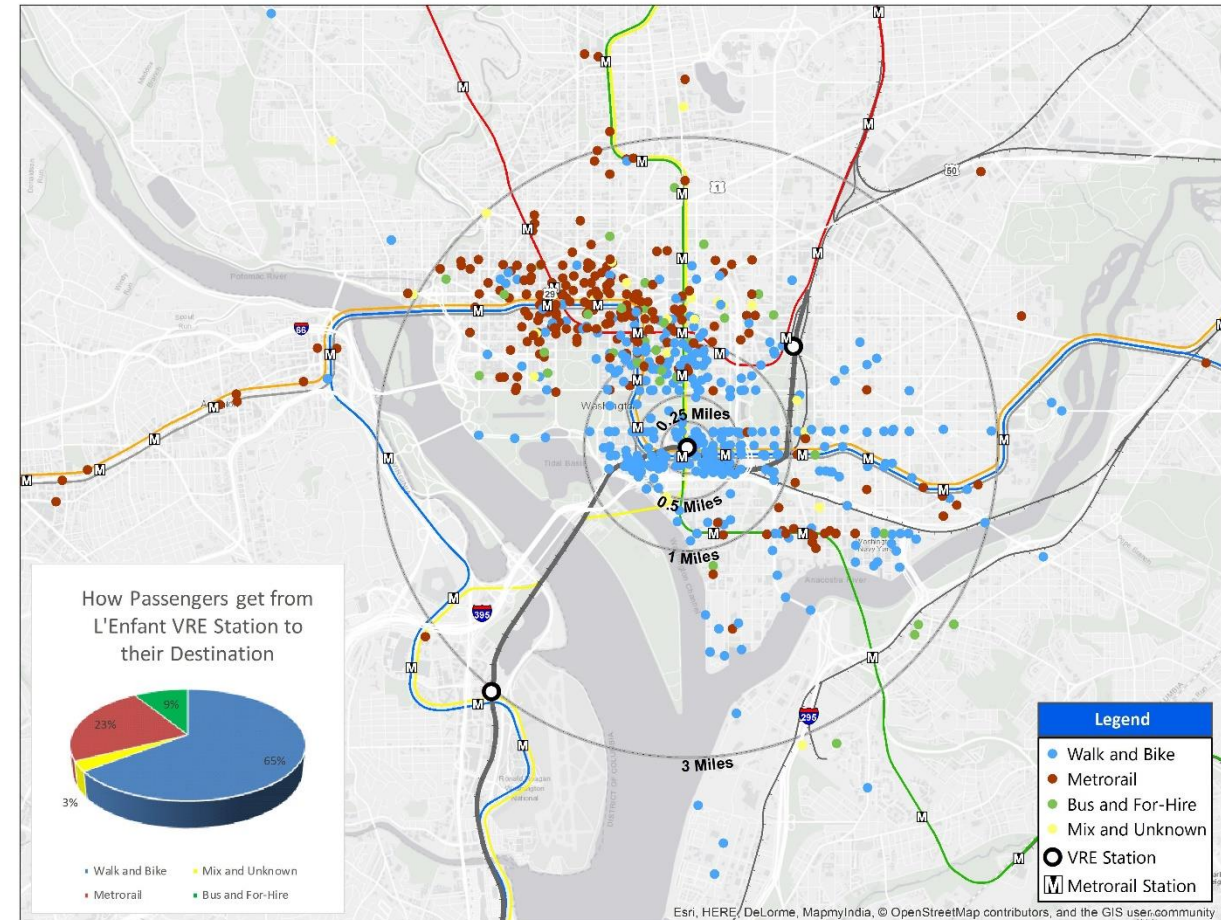
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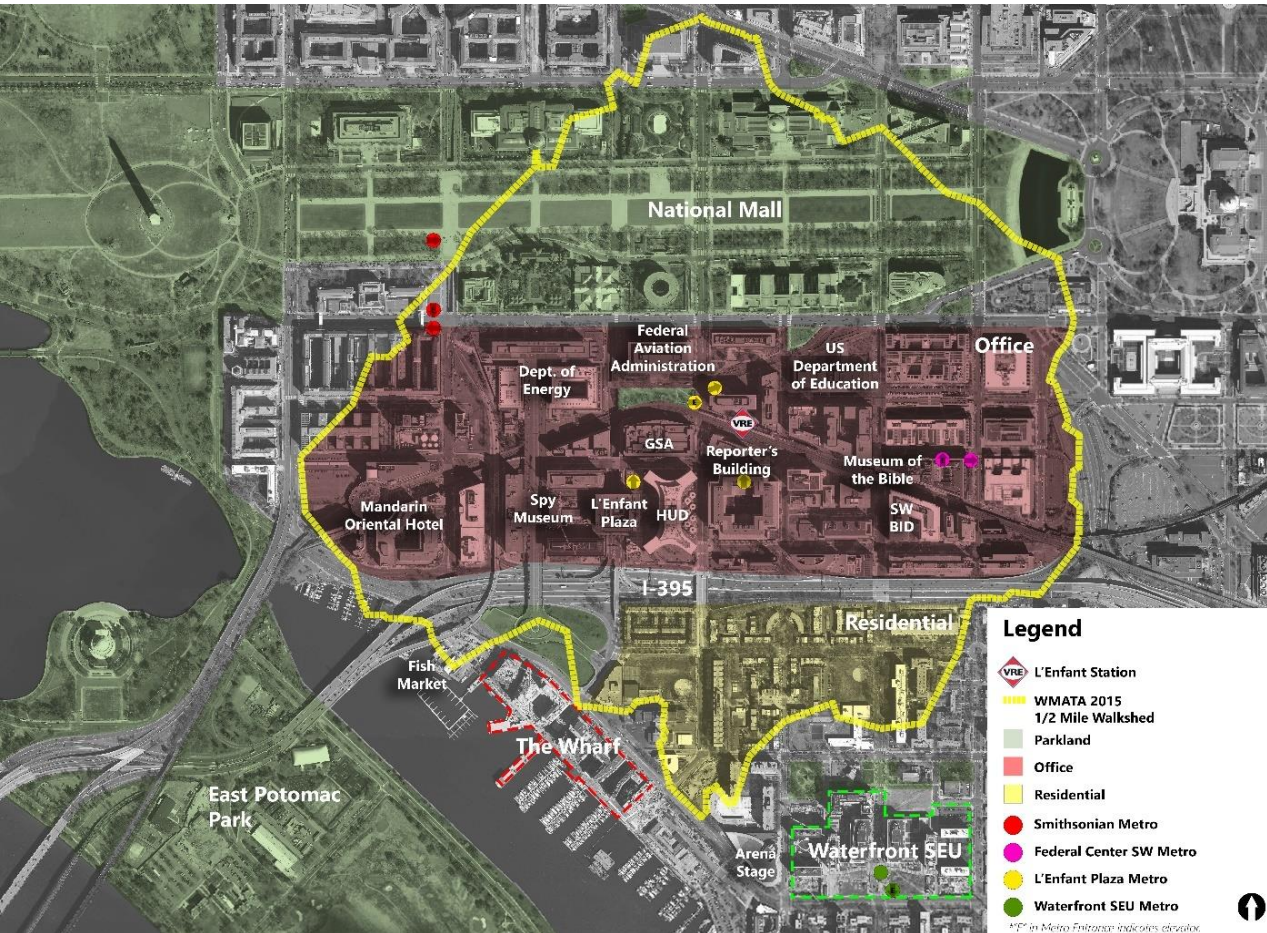
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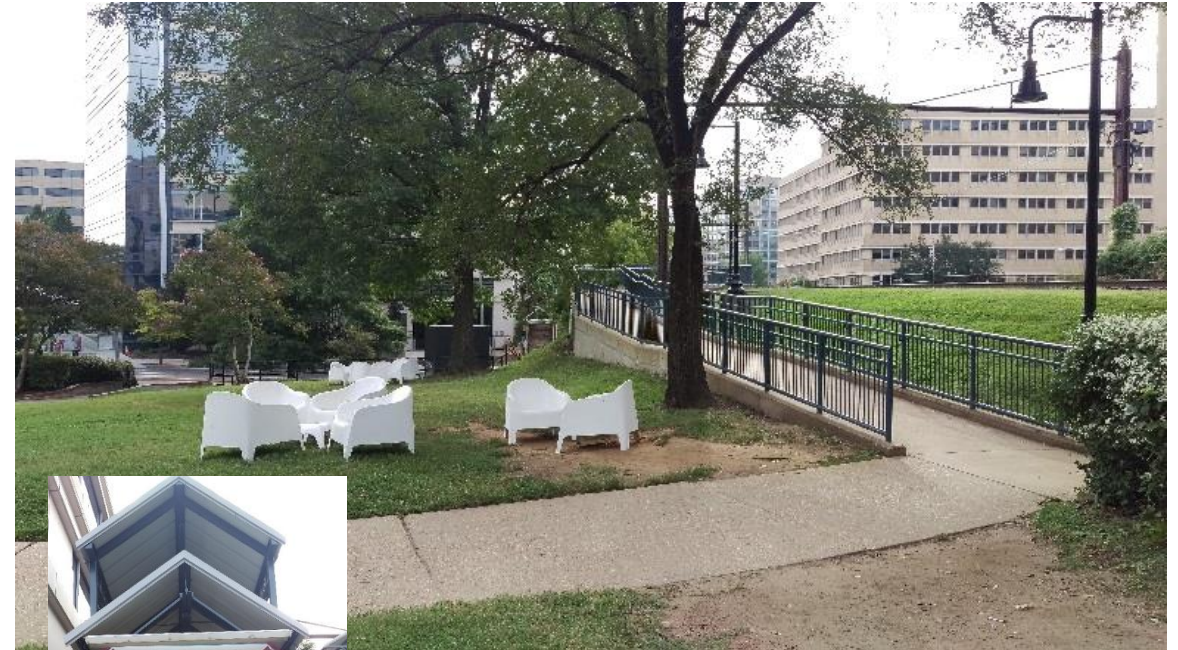
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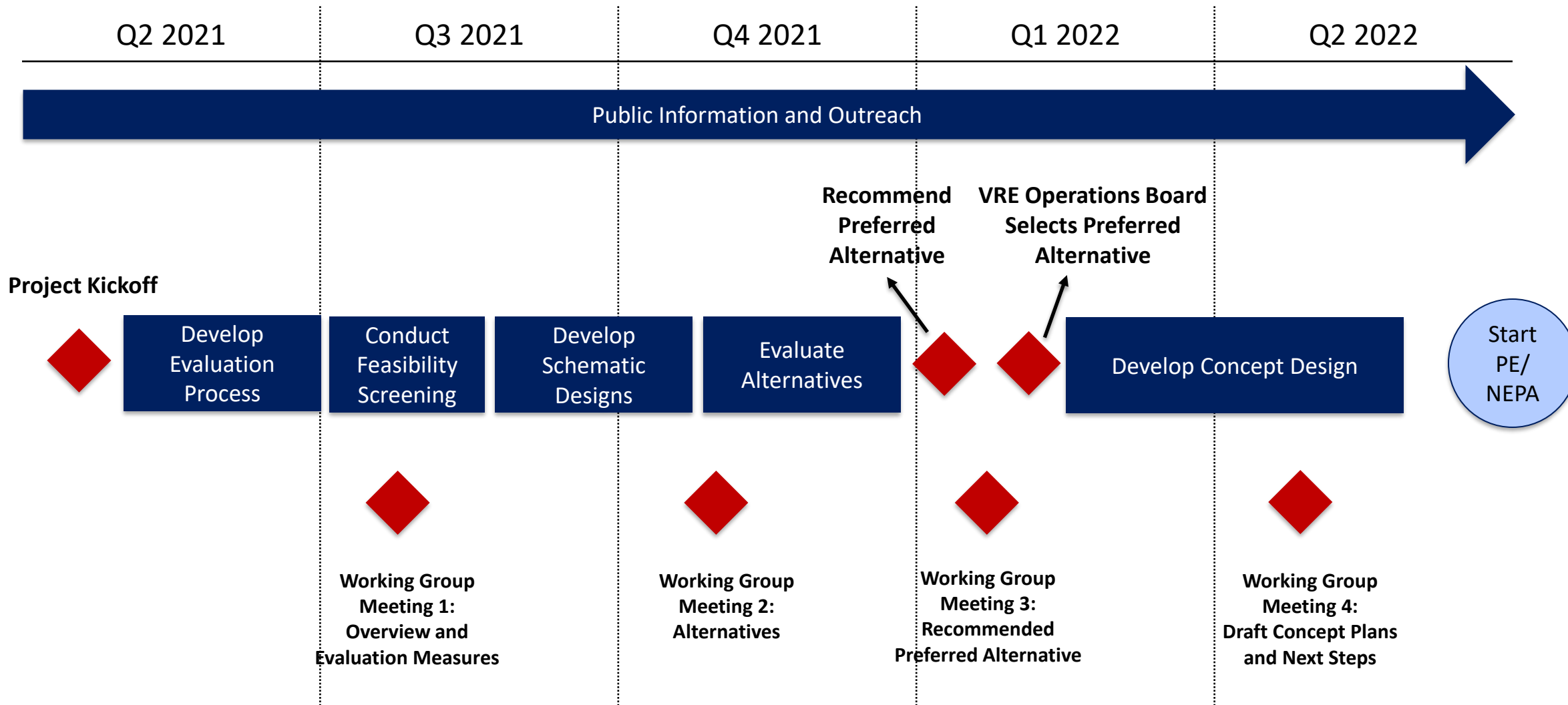
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- Quality Service
- Reliable Service
- Strong Partnerships



VRE Operations

Service

- Commuter rail service from suburban Virginia to Washington, D.C. metropolitan core
- 19,000 trips/day pre-COVID
- 32 daily trains – 16 on each line
- 19 stations
 - » Stations in 9 northern Virginia cities and counties
 - » 2 stations in DC

Staff

- 50+ VRE headquarters/warehouse employees
- 140+ contracted operations and maintenance employees



VRE System Plan

- Adopted in 2014
- Framework for VRE system investments and service through 2040 to meet regional travel needs.
- Adding rail capacity and growing VRE service is the key
- Potential to more than double VRE ridership when fully implemented
- Update of the System Plan anticipated in 2021.



ALTERNATIVES ANALYSIS

- **Purpose** : Identify a preferred alternative to enhance rail operations and increase capacity at the VRE L'Enfant Station.
- **Purpose of Stakeholder Working Group:** Provide the opportunity for groups with interests in the outcome of the project to be informed and provide meaningful input into the decision-making process.
- **Coordination Points:**
 1. Project overview; provide feedback on proposed alternatives analysis process
 2. Review fatal flaw analysis; provide feedback on alternatives
 3. Review evaluation of alternatives; provide feedback on recommended preferred alternative
 4. Review and provide feedback on draft concept design

PROJECT DESIGN OBJECTIVES

- Add a continuous 4th track between LE and VA interlockings
- Provide a center island platform that can accommodate two trains simultaneously
- Serve full-length trains
- Provide sufficient platform area for anticipated ridership
- Remain within existing railroad right-of-way to extent practicable
- Enhance regional and local connectivity



— Platform ● Interlocking — To First Street Tunnel

VRE L'ENFANT STATION STATISTICS

2019

Approx. 4,500
boardings per day
32 trains per day
VRE's busiest station
Serving 45 percent
of VRE riders

Transforming Rail in Virginia (New Service)

4 additional trains
est. **2024**

+

12 additional trains
est. **2026**

+

4 additional trains
est. **2030**

VRE System Plan 2040

Approx. 9,000
boardings per day

15-minute
peak service

30-minute
reverse-peak service

60-minute
midday service



EXISTING CONTEXT



EXISTING CONTEXT – PLATFORM AND TRACKS



Looking north



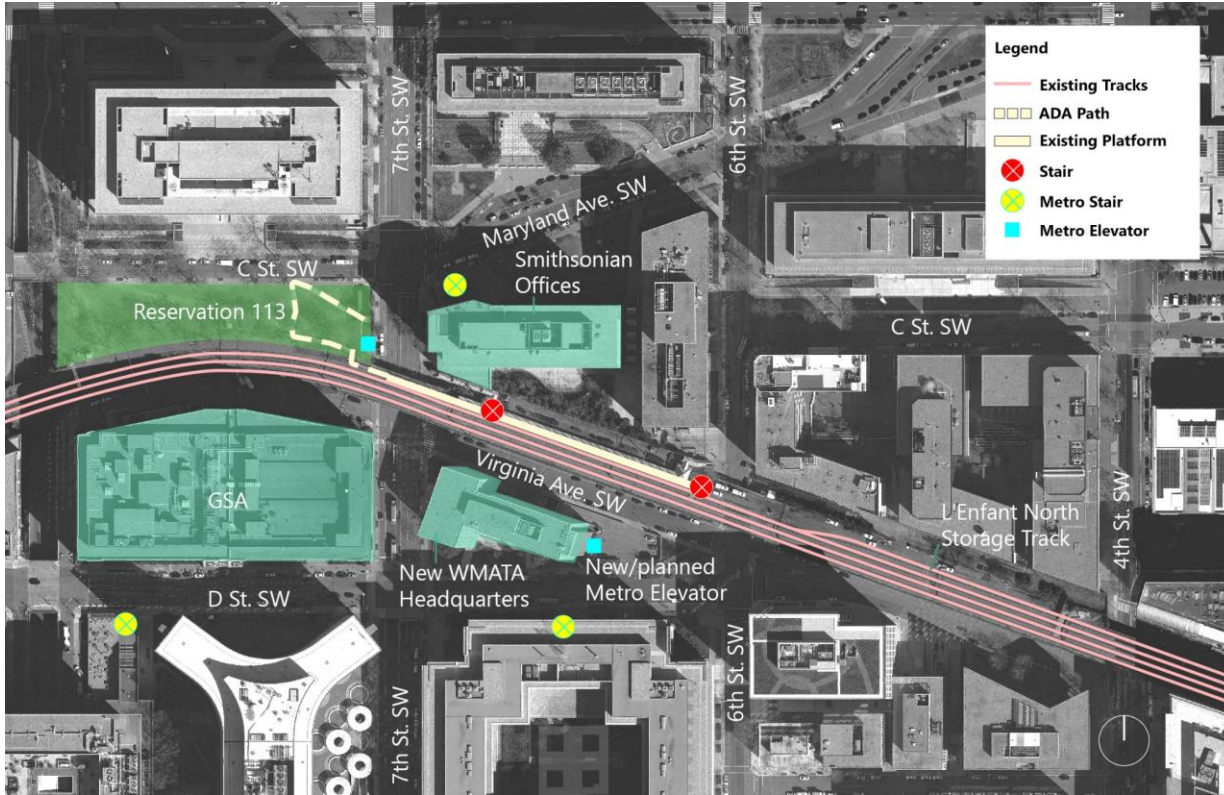
Platform



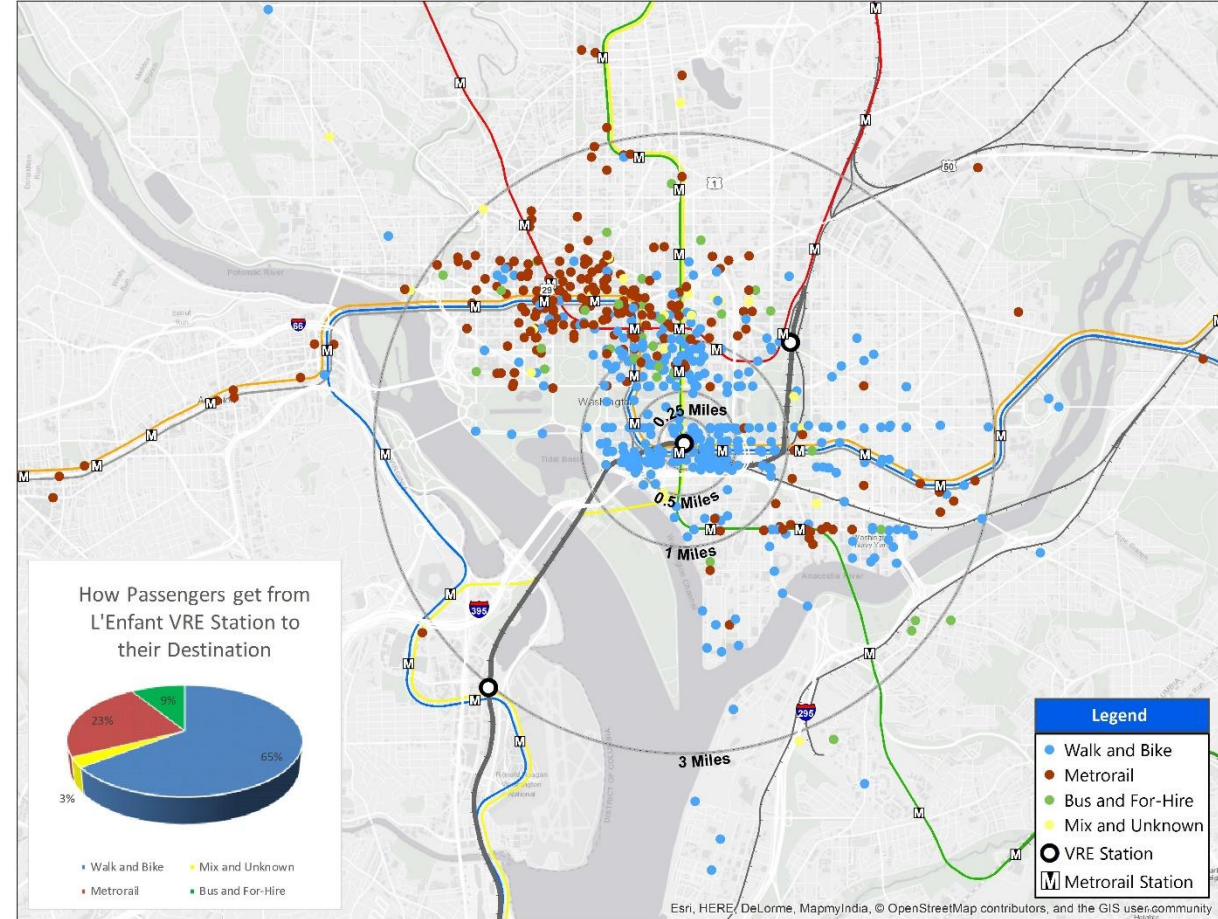
Looking south



EXISTING CONTEXT – CONNECTIONS



VRE L'Enfant Station Immediate Vicinity



Destinations from VRE L'Enfant Station by Mode, 2017

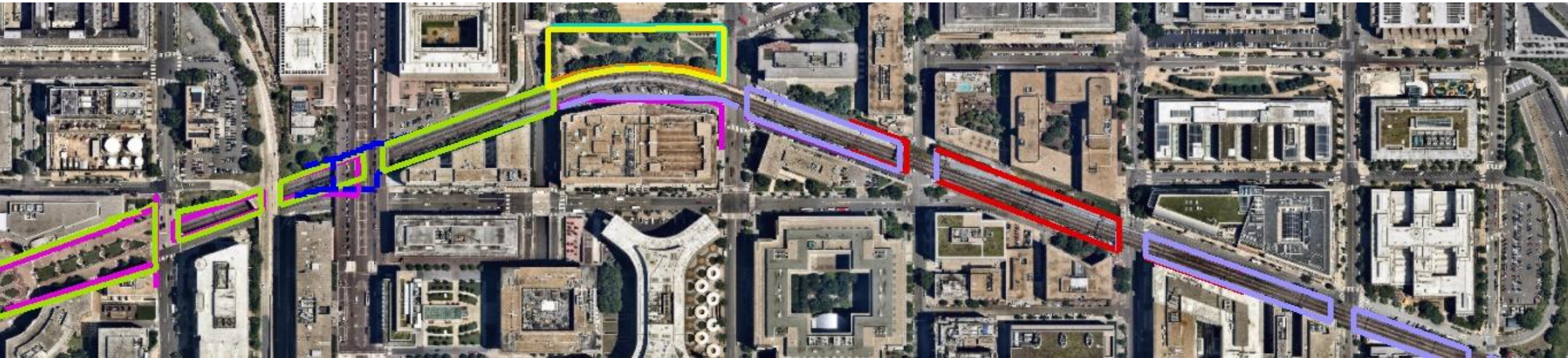
PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

Considerations

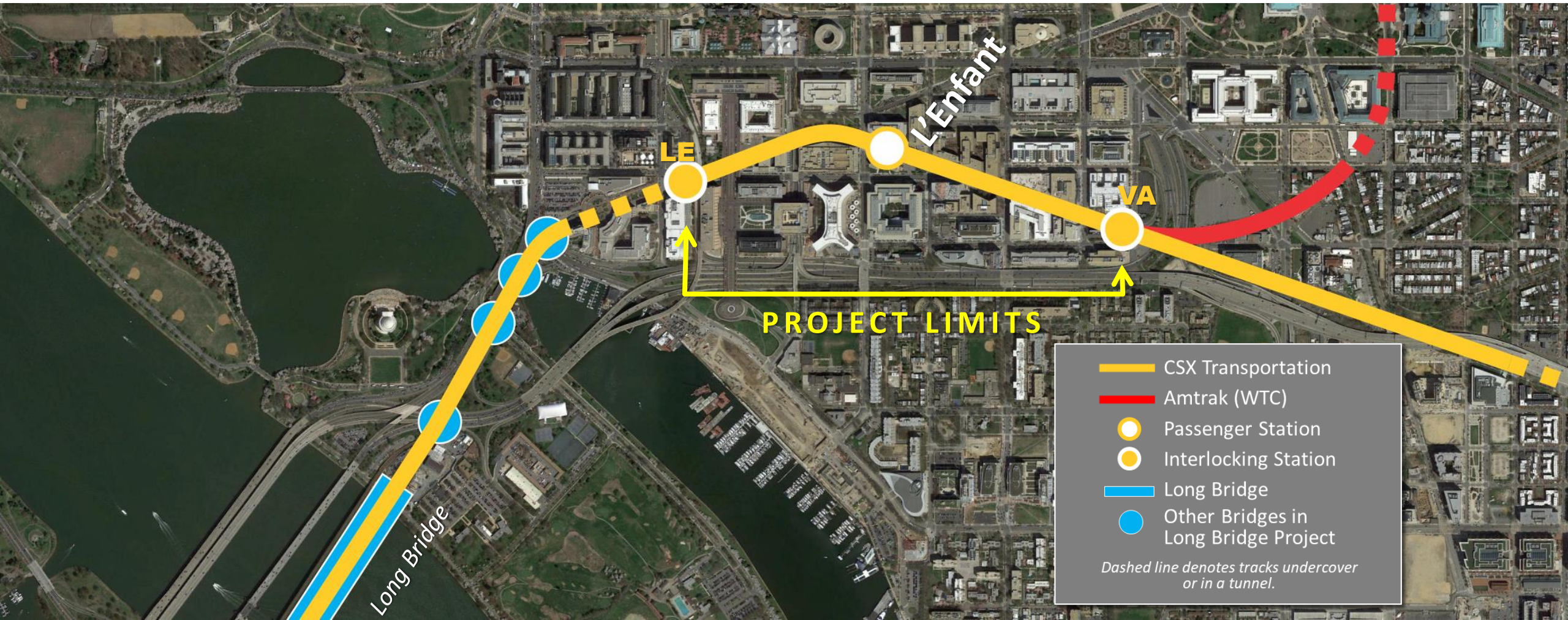
- Railroad right-of-way/operations
- Coordination with adjacent projects
- Reservation 113/Hancock Park
- Integrate station with surrounding community

Previous/Ongoing Work

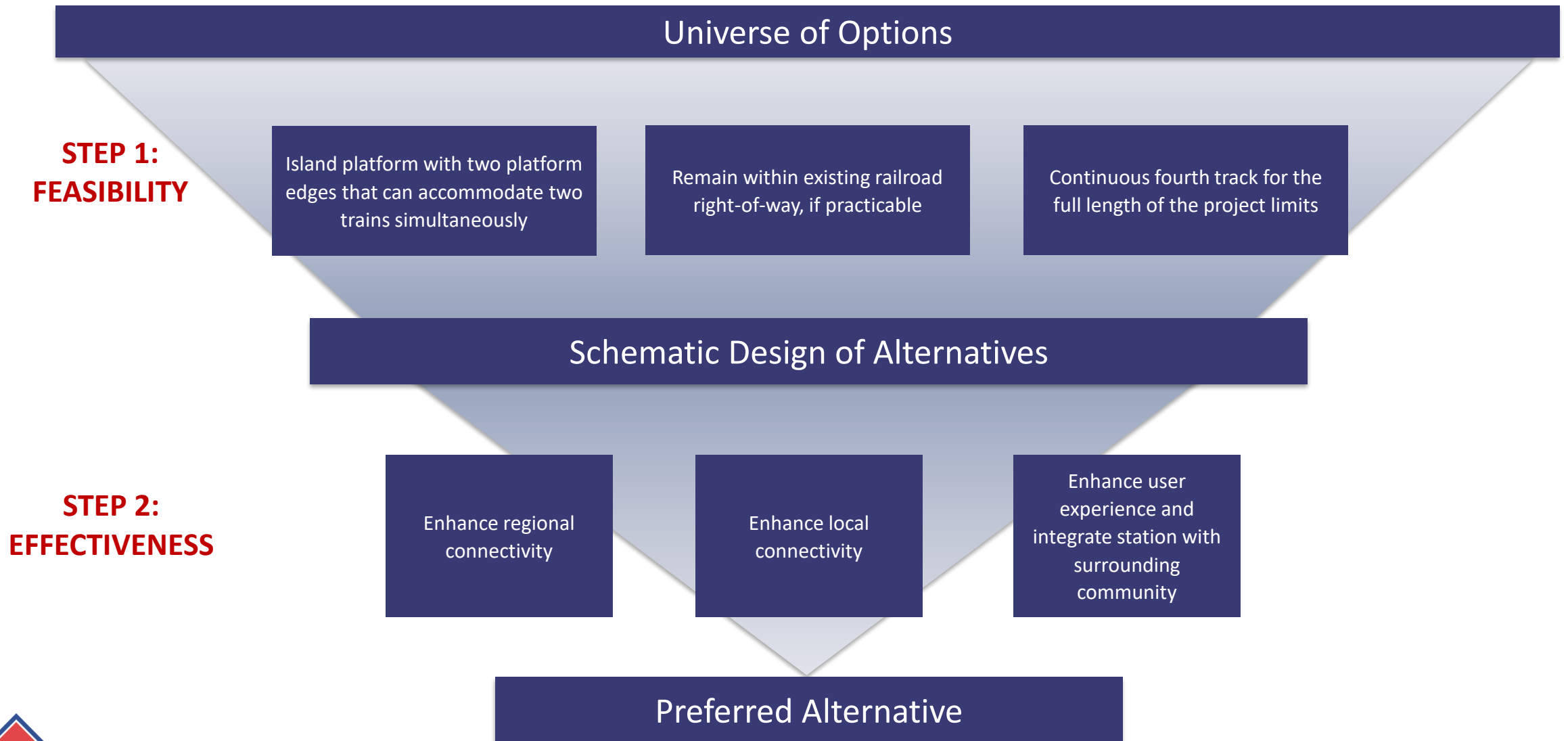
- L'Enfant Station capacity study (2002)
- L'Enfant Station initial track alignment & passenger platform study (2016)
- L'Enfant Station Assessment (2016)
- Property research & survey
- Stakeholder coordination



ADJACENT PROJECTS



PROPOSED EVALUATION PROCESS



STEP 1 FEASIBILITY: EVALUATION CRITERION #1

Design an island platform with two platform edges that can accommodate two trains simultaneously

Measures:

- Minimum length of 680 feet with maximum platform length of 750 feet
- Majority or greater than 50% of platform width at 24 feet (some tapering at ends acceptable)
- Located between Tracks 3 and 4
- Platform curvature less than 1° 45'

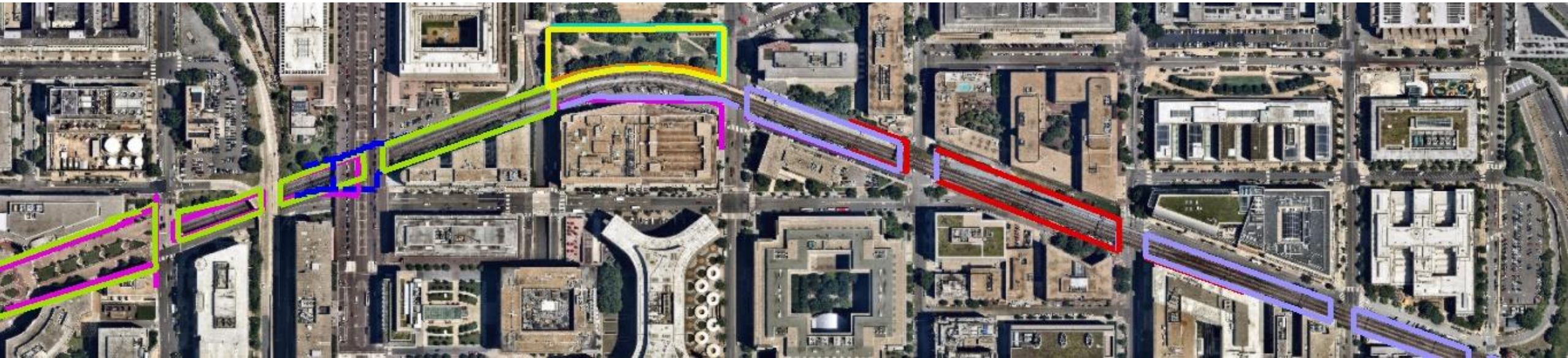


STEP 1 FEASIBILITY: EVALUATION CRITERION #2

Remain within the existing railroad right-of-way, if practicable

Measure:

- Concept must fit within existing railroad right-of-way, and not unduly change existing leases or easements if practicable



STEP 1 FEASIBILITY: EVALUATION CRITERION #3

Design a continuous fourth track for the full length of the project limits

Measures:

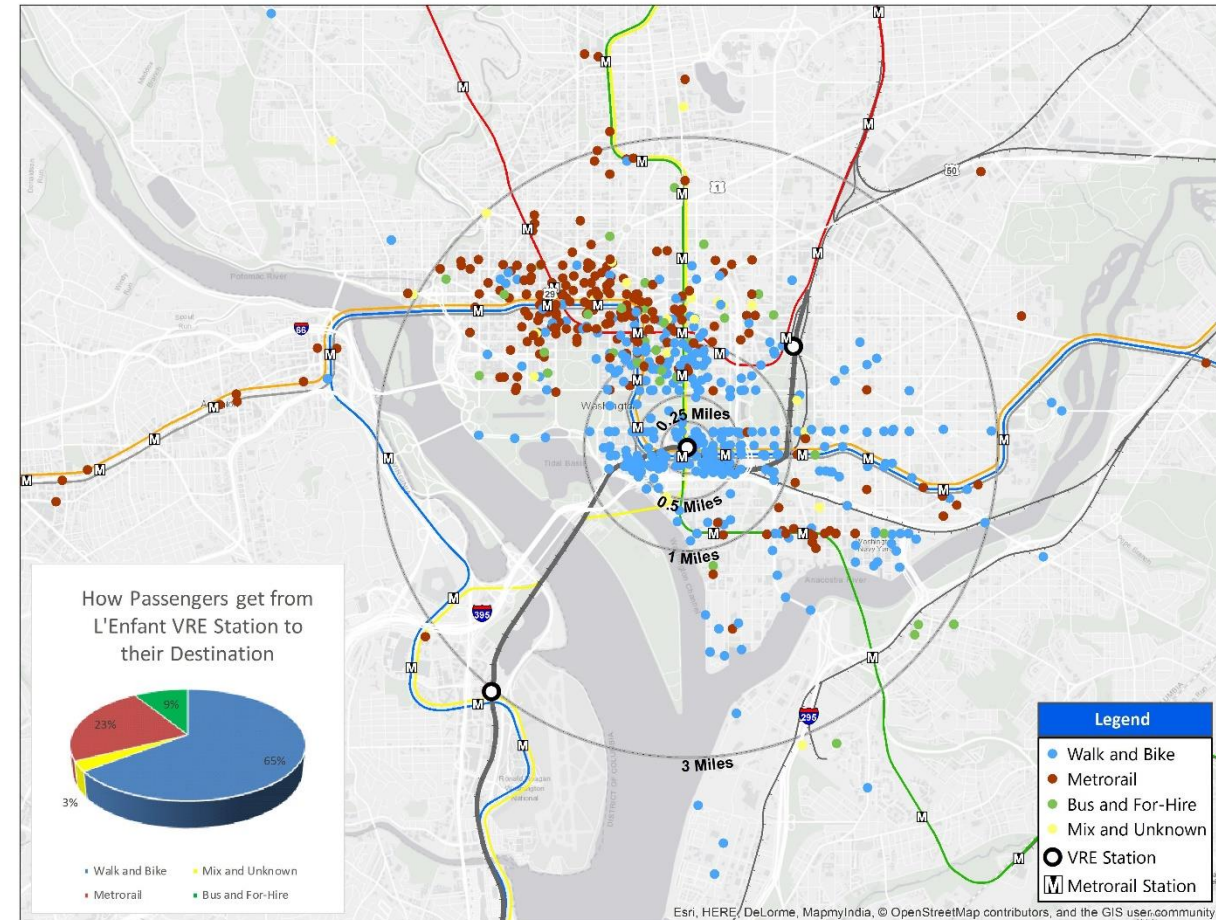
- Track centers and geometry must conform to relevant VRE and CSXT standards
- Proposed design speeds must maintain existing maximum authorized speeds
- Proposed interlockings must allow for universal flexibility between all four proposed tracks
- Horizontal and vertical clearances must conform to relevant VRE and CSXT standards

STEP 2 EFFECTIVENESS: EVALUATION CRITERION #4

Enhance regional connectivity

Measures:

- Distance to existing Metrorail station entry from closest point on VRE station platform, using local street network
- Number of street crossings to closest Metrorail station entrance



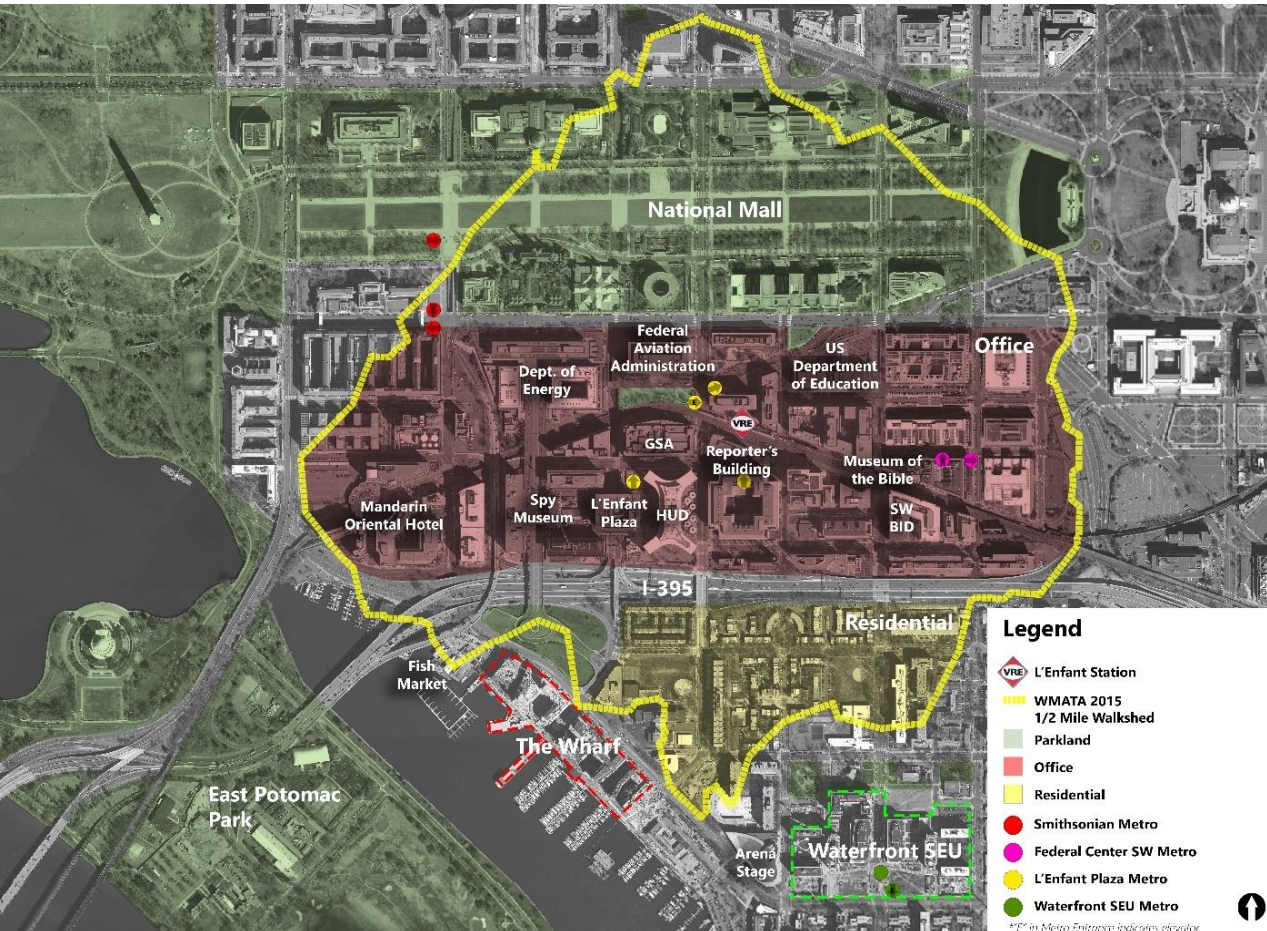
Destinations from VRE L'Enfant Station by Mode, 2017

STEP 2 EFFECTIVENESS: EVALUATION CRITERION #5

Enhance local connectivity

Measures:

- Number of jobs within ½ mile of station entrances using the existing pedestrian network
- Number of VRE rider destinations within ½ mile of station entrances using the existing pedestrian network
- Number of residents within ½ mile of station entrances using the existing pedestrian network
- Number of Bikeshare docks available within ¼ mile of station entrances
- Unique number of bus routes accessible within ¼ mile of station entrances
- Total sidewalk network accessible within ¼ mile
- Max Walkscore of station entrances
- Walking Distance to the Wharf/Smithsonian Castle from station entrances



1/2 Mile Walkshed from Existing Station

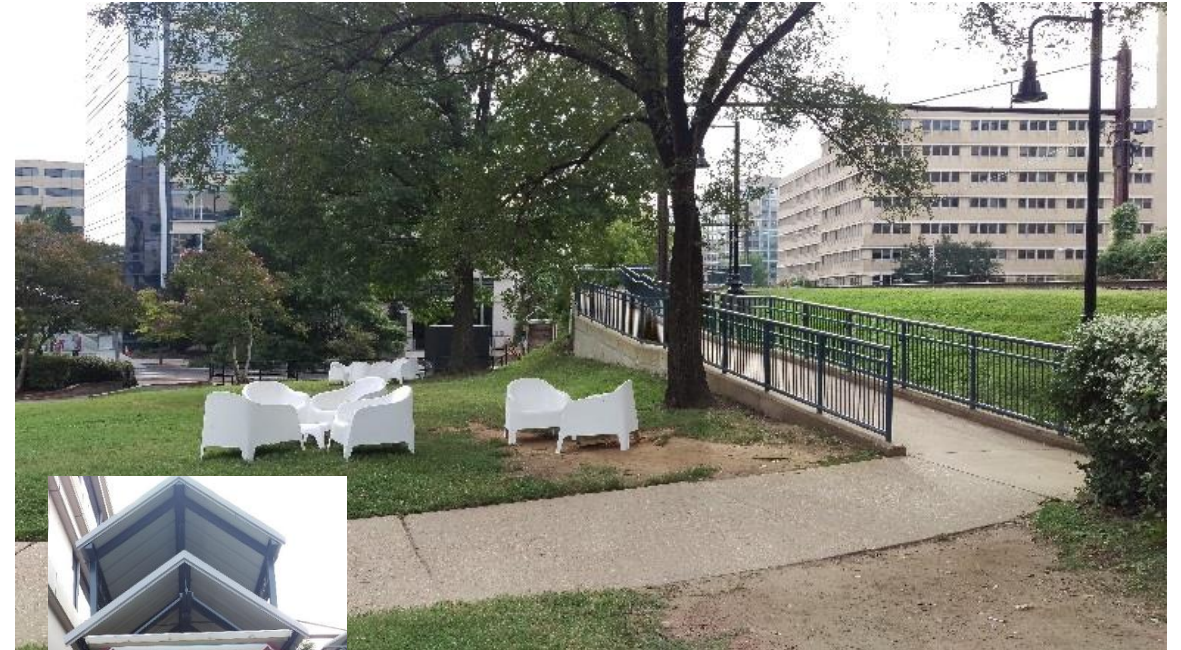
STEP 2 EFFECTIVENESS: EVALUATION CRITERION #6

Enhance user experience and integrate station with surrounding community

Measures:

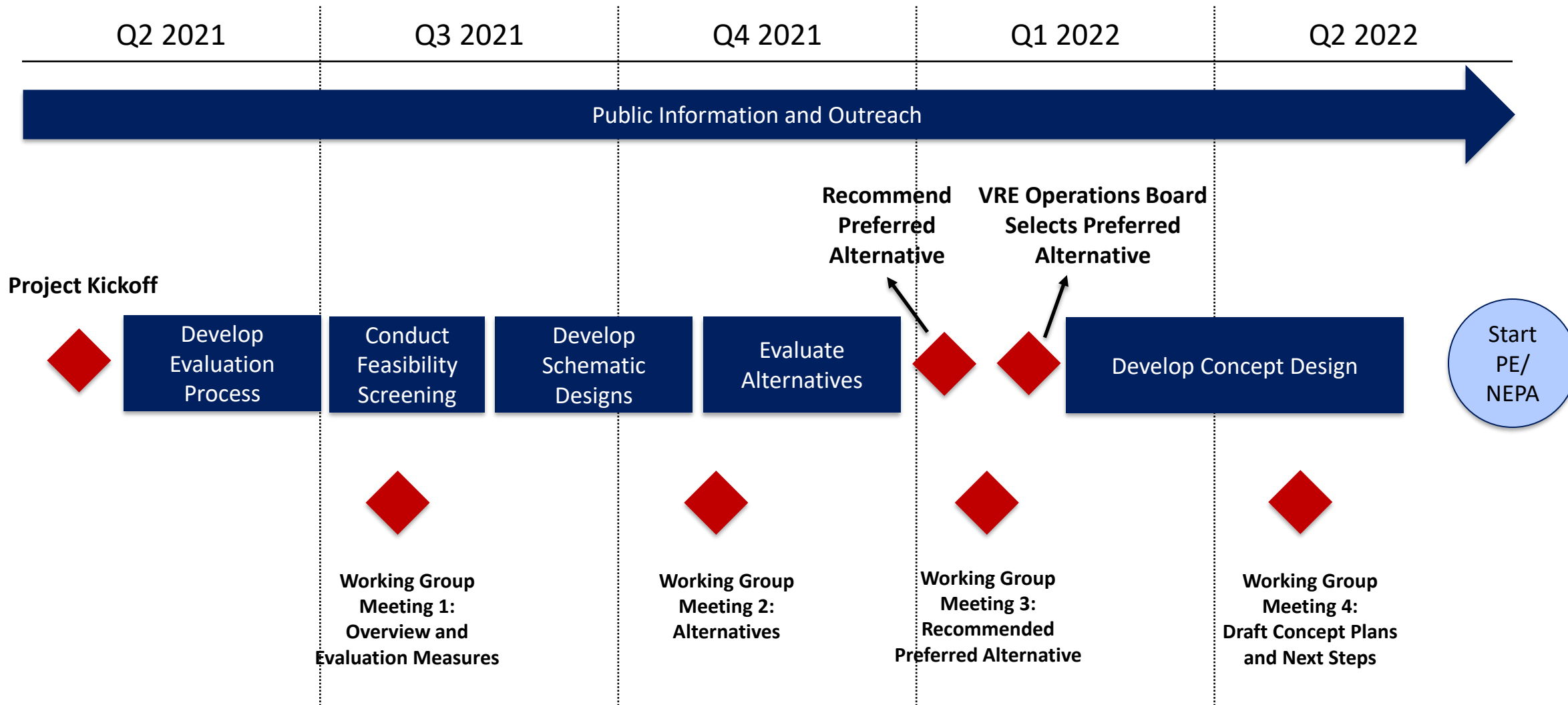
- Number of ADA access points to platform
- Closest ADA accessible entrance to Metrorail elevator along sidewalk network
- Average sidewalk widths within $\frac{1}{4}$ mile

Existing ADA Access Through Hancock Park



Existing Stairs at 7th Street SW

TIMELINE & NEXT STEPS



QUESTIONS FOR WORKING GROUP

- What are your priorities for expanding L'Enfant Station? (e.g., access, safety, traffic during construction or operations, other priorities or concerns about impacts)
- Are there other community groups we should invite to participate in the working group?
- Do you have ideas about alternatives we should consider?
- Please let us know of any opportunities or suggestions for outreach to the public



DISCUSSION

For more information, visit:
projects.vre.org
(website under development)

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