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Wednesday, July 25, 2012

Amtrak forges \$7 billion revitalization plan for D.C.'s Union Station

Today, Amtrak officials unveiled a master plan for Washington, D.C.'s Union Station. The plan calls for revitalizing the terminal to increase capacity, accommodate future service expansion and provide a better passenger experience – at a price tag of between \$6.5 billion and \$7 billion.

The plan includes a new train shed that would better organize connections to Amtrak, commuter-rail, transit and other transportation services. New passenger concourses, along with a series of new street entrances, would be integrated with the existing station so passengers and visitors could access the entire complex.

The station would be able to accommodate twice as many trains and three times as many passengers as the current facility, providing ample capacity for future high-speed, intercity and commuter-rail growth, according to a press release. Amtrak officials incorporated the proposed next-generation high-speed rail service into the facility plan, as well, with tracks, platforms and concourses for the service, to be located below the existing platforms.

“Washington Union Station is an integral part of the Northeast transportation network, facing urgent capacity issues and a need to expand to support increasing ridership growth across all services,” said Amtrak President and Chief Executive Officer Joe Boardman. “This plan will transform the station into a world-class transportation hub to serve the region and the mobility needs of generations of passengers yet to come.”

The master plan also creates a framework for progressive capital investment with a phased construction approach that could be completed in 15 to 20 years. It also includes a public-private partnership to build 3 million square feet of mixed-use development for Burnham Place, a proposed commercial, retail and residential center.

The master plan was developed in coordination with the U.S. Department of Transportation, Union Station Redevelopment Corp., Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation, Virginia Railway Express, Maryland Transit Administration, Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority and real estate developer Akridge.

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