



D.C. Bicycle Advisory Council

January 11, 2018

Ms. Anna Chamberlin
Manager, Project Review
District Department of Transportation
55 M Street SE, Suite 400
Washington, DC 20003-3515

Re: Comments on Environmental Impact Statement for the Long Bridge Project

Ms. Chamberlin:

We are writing you in regard to the Long Bridge Project.

The D.C. Bicycle Advisory Council is the advisory body to the Mayor, Council of the District of Columbia, and District agencies on matters pertaining to bicycling in the District. As such, we believe that the Long Bridge is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to create better biking between D.C. and Arlington, Va., and that the current design would squander that opportunity.

The ideal design would be one that, in compliance with existing plans, has bicycle/pedestrian connections to Long Bridge Park and the Mt. Vernon Trail on the Virginia side of the river, and to East Potomac Park, Maine Avenue and Hancock Park in Washington. DDOT would be wise to consider and include the existing plans of Arlington County and the National Park Service, and to be bold in its D.C. plans.

The current alternatives, as recently presented, only show a connection to the Mt. Vernon Trail on the east side of the George Washington Parkway and to Ohio Drive on the south side of East Potomac Park. This represents the bare minimum of what this facility could be. It would require Virginia to build a separate facility a few hundred feet across the George Washington Parkway in order to connect to the Mt. Vernon Trail and the new Long Bridge as is identified in existing Arlington plans and the National Park Service's Paved Trails Plan for the National Capital Region. This is an inefficient plan and it won't produce the kind of cohesive network that will best serve pedestrians and bicyclists.

On the District side, the Long Bridge should at least create the connections in DDOT's existing plans. MoveDC calls for a Long Bridge Crossing that connects Maine Avenue to Virginia. Such a connection, with an access point at Ohio Drive, would directly connect the Anacostia Riverwalk Trail (and by

extension the Wharf development) to the Mt. Vernon Trail, which again moves the District towards the goal of a cohesive network.

Furthermore, we urge the District to take this opportunity to consider extending the bicycle/pedestrian facility even farther north into Southwest D.C. The recently adopted State Rail Plan recognizes that the “unused/lightly used right-of-way” on the north side of the rail line (the RF&P Subdivision) from Maine Avenue to the west side of the L’Enfant Station could be utilized as a bicycle/pedestrian corridor. As most of that corridor is within this project’s study area, this seems like the right time to analyze such a facility, and, if possible, to build it in conjunction with the bridge.

We support a project that connects the entire corridor within the study area and we believe it should be built concurrently with the main rail project, not treated as a separate project. Packaging related projects in the same area will save time and money, and limit negative environmental impacts from construction.

Therefore, the Bicycle Advisory Council advises that the bicycle and pedestrian crossing be built simultaneously with the rail span, not as a separate project, and we urge the project team to plan, in accordance with existing regional and District plans, so that the terminus of the span will cross the George Washington Memorial Parkway and connect with Long Bridge Park on the Virginia side, with direct access to the Mt. Vernon Trail and extend to Hancock Park on the D.C. side with access to Maine Avenue and Ohio Drive.

Sincerely,

David Cranor

David Cranor
Bicycle Advisory Council Chair

David Alexander
Susan Balding
Tom Bridge
Michael Forster
Jeff Johnson
Rachel Maisler
Randall Myers
Jay Stewart
Casey Studhalter
Bicycle Advisory Council members