Major Work at Dulles Airport and All Stations Intensifying

The pace of construction of Phase 2 of the Silver Line, which will eventually connect Loudoun County, Dulles Airport, Reston and Herndon with downtown D.C. and the rest of the existing Metrorail System, is headed into a bustling construction period, according to Charles Stark, the Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority’s executive director of the Dulles Corridor Metrorail Project (a.k.a. the Silver Line).

“This is the biggest year so far for construction all along the Phase 2 alignment from Reston west to Ashburn,” said Stark. The coming construction season is critical, he said. “There is a lot of work to be done.”

A specific date has not been set for opening and it will be determined by the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority after the Airports Authority finishes the line and transfers it to the regional agency.

Capital Rail Constructors (CRC), a joint venture of Clark Construction and Kiewit Infrastructure South, is the design-build contractor for all civil work, station and support facilities construction, bridges and aerial guideway structures, and train track and systems portions of Phase 2.

In recent months, CRC crews have made progress on the construction of the aerial guideway that will carry the Silver Line above Dulles Airport. Rail project officials have collaborated with airport executives and operations staff, airport users, employees and tenants such as cargo carriers and rental car agencies, to ensure construction does not interrupt critical traffic movements day or night.

The installation of 72” and 84” girders for the superstructure portion of the aerial guideway has progressed through the heavily treed areas of the northeast end of Dulles Airport toward the Dulles Greenway. Deck work to prepare the guideway for future track installation is taking place.

Two large straddle bents – each requiring between 380 and 489 cubic yards of concrete – have been constructed over particularly wide areas where piers cannot be used to support the spans. These aerial guideway elements are comprised of two vertical columns connected by a cap, also known as a "bent," and will support the girders and deck over the road crossings as trains enter and leave the airport. A total of four large straddle bents will be needed at Dulles, and an additional four will be built over the eastbound Dulles Greenway at night.

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All six stations—Reston Town Center, Herndon, Innovation Center, Dulles Airport, Loudoun Gateway and Ashburn—are currently in some stage of construction. In fact, Metrorail's distinctive exterior façade is already being installed at the Innovation Center Station. “You can easily tell that it is a station,” project officials report.

This station, near the Center for Innovative Technology and Route 28, is a buzz of construction. Not only are station and access points coming along, Fairfax County is beginning work on the parking garage, and a private contractor is building a mixed-use complex nearby.

Here’s what’s happening at some of the other stations:

· Reston Town Center: Pile driving and other preliminary station work will continue through April. This spring, the first tower crane at the Reston site will go up in the median of the Dulles International Airport Access Highway (DIAAH), to be followed shortly by a second tower crane at that location, and will bring the total number of tower cranes concurrently in use on the project to five.

· Herndon: A tower crane has been in place for months to facilitate station construction. Preliminary road changes and bus re-routings at the Herndon-Monroe Park & Ride facility have taken place as utility and other prep work speeds up, especially along Sunrise Valley Drive. Work on a traction power substation near Herndon Station is starting. This is one of several sites where the hardness of below-ground rock is forcing crews to do hand-mining rather than use drills to break through.

Low profile caps will support the girders and deck of the Silver Line where it will cross Autopilot Drive at Dulles International Airport. Photo by Capital Rail Constructors.

Bus ramps, turn lanes work coming in Tysons

As a part of close-out of Phase 1, Dulles Rail project contractors will soon be making some repairs for the bus ramps and turn lanes at the McLean and Spring Hill Metrorail Stations. Dates and times will be released in advance of the work.

Working together near future Herndon Station

Rail project and Fairfax County officials are working together to coordinate duct bank and other work near the future Herndon Rail Station. The rail team (Capital Rail Constructors) is building the rail line and station and the county is building the parking garage. Coordinating schedules is maximizing efficiencies as both teams work almost side by side.

The Dulles Airport Station site is a hive of activity as DCMP crews backfill the elevator machine room perimeter walls, perform waterproofing and install steel rebar in preparation for the mezzanine mat pour. Photo: Capital Rail Constructors.

Want to know more or set up a briefing? Please visit www.dullesmetro.com, follow us on twitter @DullesMetrorail or call (703) 572-0506. To set up a briefing for your HOA, civic group or business email outreach@dullesmetro.com. To report construction concerns, please call our hotline: 1-844-385-7245