

# STAFF RECOMMENDATION

C. Kelly

NCPC File Nos. MP186/6928



## ARMY NATIONAL GUARD READINESS CENTER MASTER PLAN AND PARKING GARAGE

111 South George Mason Drive  
Arlington County, Virginia

Submitted by the Army National Guard

March 26, 2009

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### Abstract

As a result of Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) 2005 actions, the Army National Guard Readiness Center in Arlington, Virginia, is required to accommodate an additional 1,200 personnel by 2011. In response, the Army National Guard (ARNG) has submitted a master plan for the Center that proposes a new headquarters addition and the construction of a multi-level parking structure. The headquarters addition was approved by the Commission at its February 5, 2009 meeting. Along with the proposed master plan, the ARNG has also submitted the proposed parking structure for preliminary and final review. The multi-level parking garage will be located east of the existing east parking garage; it is identified in the master plan as the northeast garage. The access to the northeast garage will be through the existing east garage entrance along the Arlington Boulevard access road. The parking garage will add 435 parking spaces to the existing 656 spaces.

### Commission Action Requested by Applicant

Approval of final master plan and approval of preliminary and final site and building plans, pursuant to 40 U.S.C. § 8722(b)(1).

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### Executive Director's Recommendation

The Commission:

**Approves** the master plan for the Army National Guard Readiness Center in Arlington, Virginia, as shown on NCPC Map File No. 2101.10(05.00)42645, with the mitigation to meet the modal

split objectives of the Transportation Management Plan (TMP) as outlined in the Army National Guard's Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) dated August 22, 2008

**Approves** the preliminary and final site and building plans for the northeast parking garage at the Army National Guard Readiness Center, as shown on NCPC Map File No. 2101.10(38.00)42646.

**Requires** the Army National Guard to submit the radio antenna to NCPC for review, consistent with the Commission's applicable Guidelines and Submission Requirements for Antennas.

**Recommends** that the Army National Guard continue to coordinate with Arlington County regarding transit improvements and impacts to the surrounding road network and with the U.S. Department of State regarding joint transit opportunities.

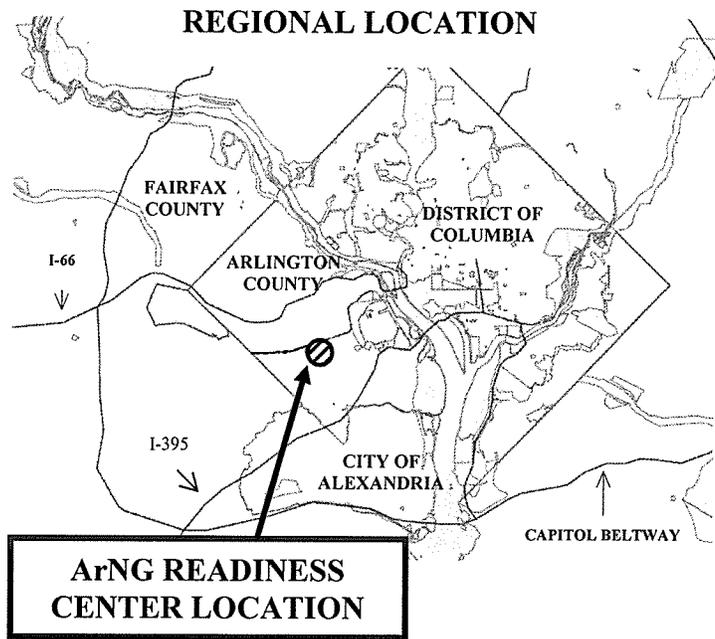
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**PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

Site

The Army National Guard (ARNG) Readiness Center is located at 111 South George Mason Drive in Arlington County, Virginia. The property is on the southeast corner of the intersection of Route 50 (Arlington Boulevard) and South George Mason Drive. The site is bordered on the east by the U.S. Department of State, National Foreign Affairs Training Center, on the north by Arlington Boulevard, on the west by South George Mason Drive and on the south by a residential community.

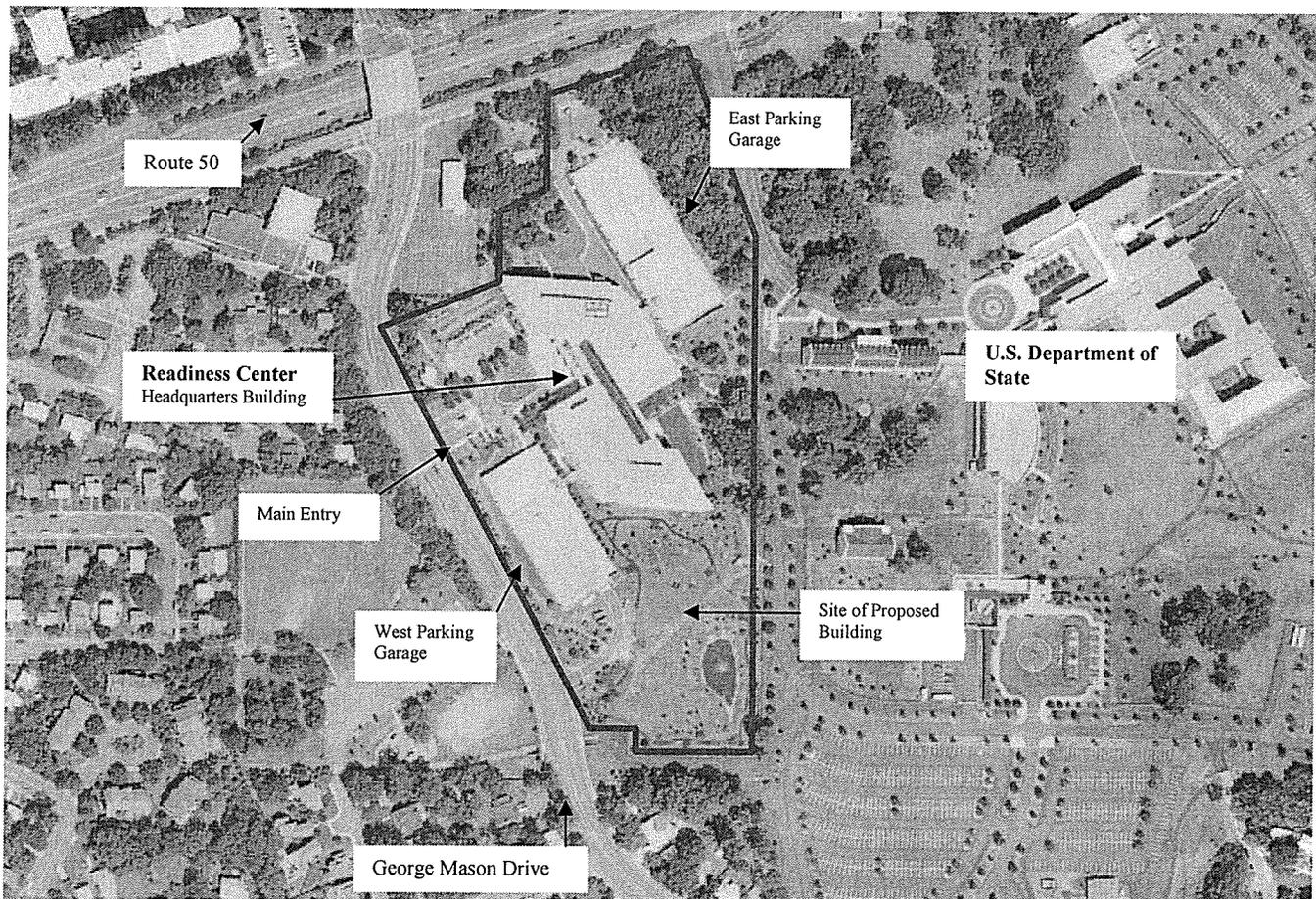
The ARNG Readiness Center site is a 15-acre site comprised of a headquarters facility, approximately 248,000 square feet, two three-story parking structures, and several small outbuildings. The outbuildings include two 200-square foot Military Police buildings, a portable building serving as a mail room, and two smoking shelters. There are also two radio VHF antenna towers on site.



## Background

The Army National Guard Readiness Center site occupies 15 acres of the former Arlington Hall Station. Arlington Hall was farmland prior to 1927. From 1927 to 1942, the site was part of the Arlington Hall Girls' School, a private women's college. In 1942, the U.S. Army obtained the property, using the existing facilities and constructing new facilities to house and conduct intelligence activities. The main building, Arlington Hall, was the headquarters of the U.S. Army Signal Intelligence Service cryptography effort during World War II. In 1988, the U.S. Intelligence and Security Command transferred the property to the Department of the Army. In the Military Construction Act of 1986, the Department of State was granted approximately 72 acres of the former 87-acre Arlington Hall for the construction of a National Foreign Affairs Training Center. The Army retained the remaining 15 acres, which are now occupied by the ArNG. The historic main building, Arlington Hall is located on the Department of State's land. No historic structures are located on ArNG land.

## **ARMY NATIONAL GUARD READINESS CENTER: Existing Conditions**



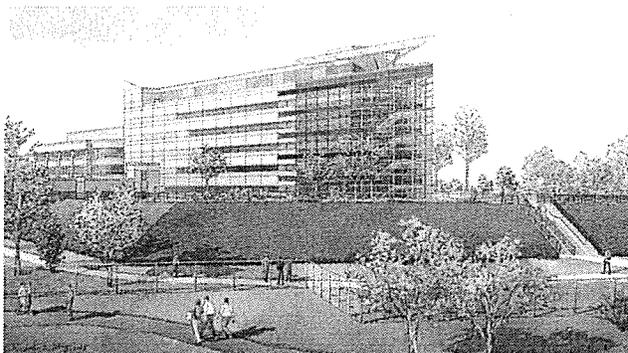
The ARNG Readiness Center houses administrative and resource functions that provide liaison and support to the National Guard in the 54 states and territories, and to the federal government.

About 1,300 staff are currently based at the facility. Approximately half of the staff is active duty military and the remaining staff is Department of the Army civilian or contracted employees. The 2005 Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) actions require the realignment of Jefferson Plaza 1 (JP-1) in Crystal City by relocating the National Guard Bureau Headquarters (NGB), the Air National Guard Headquarters, and elements of the Army National Guard Headquarters to the Army National Guard Readiness Center in Arlington and to the Andrews Air Force Base, in Maryland. As part of this BRAC action, 1,200 NGB Joint Staff and ArNG Staff will be relocating to the Readiness Center. The 1,200 personnel are required to be out of leased space and into the Readiness Center by 2011.

Prior Commission Actions

The Commission approved the last Master Plan for the Army National Guard Readiness Center at its October 4, 1990 meeting. The proposed master plan retains, and expands upon, much of the prior general development principles in order to meet the requirements of the 2005 BRAC Action.

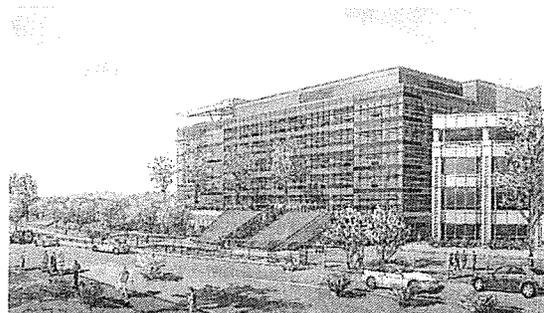
The Army National Guard Readiness Center building addition, the largest construction project included in the master plan, was reviewed and approved by the Commission at its February 5, 2009 meeting (NCPC File No. 6882). The building was reviewed prior to the master plan due to the BRAC implementation schedule. As part of the building addition approval, the Commission recommended that the Army National Guard continue to coordinate with NCPC staff regarding TMP measures and parking ratios and with Arlington County and the U.S. Department of State regarding access to the site and impacts to the surrounding road network.



READINESS CENTER BUILDING  
ADDITION: WEST PERSPECTIVE

EAST PERSPECTIVE

View seen from U.S. State Department land



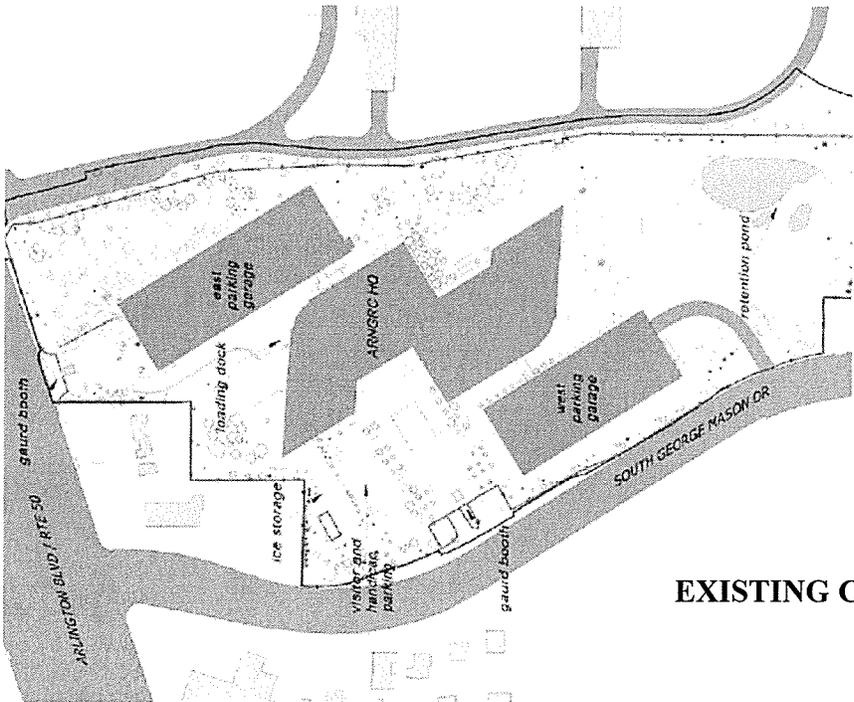
## Proposal

### *The Army National Guard Readiness Center Master Plan*

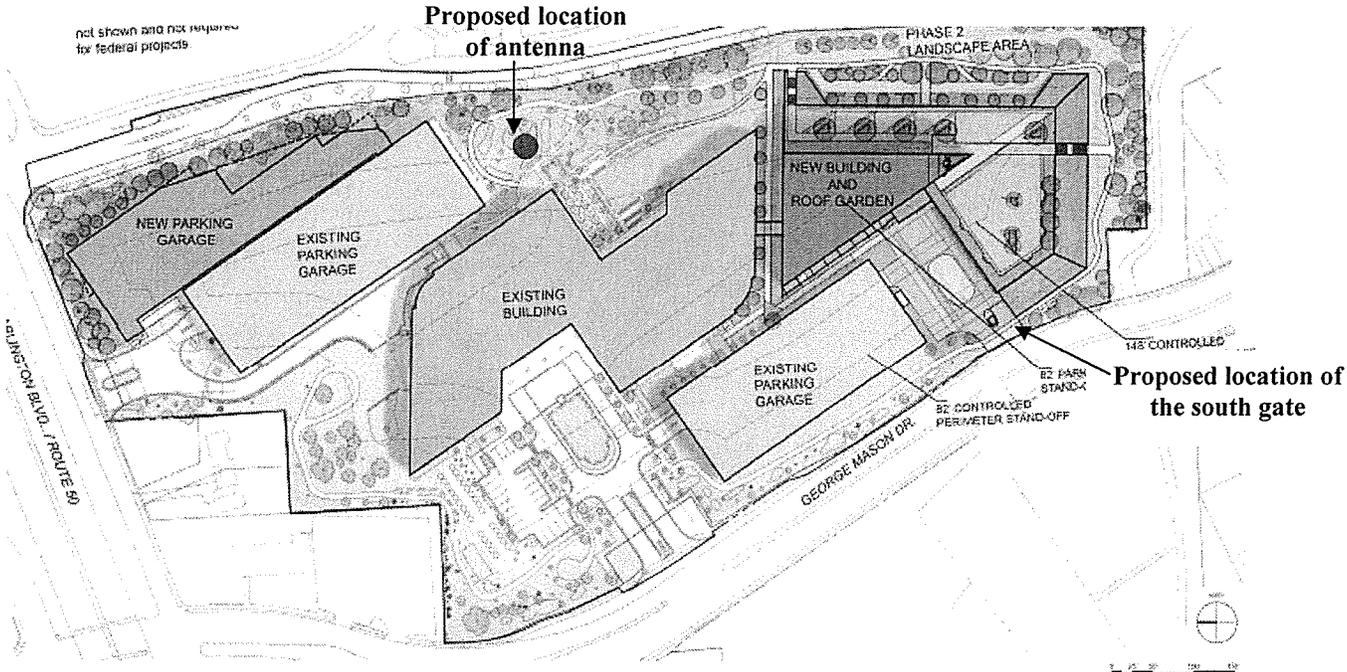
The ARNG has submitted a final Master Plan for the Army National Guard Readiness Center in Arlington, Virginia. The master plan outlines the following actions to be undertaken at the facility in the future:

- 1) Construction of a Headquarters Addition. The headquarters addition will be located east of the existing building at the location of the existing retention pond. The addition is approximately 250,000 square feet. The building is designed to have three floors underground and five above. The addition is to meet LEED Silver requirements. The headquarters addition has also been submitted for preliminary and final review and is discussed later in the report.
- 2) Construction of a multi-level employee parking garage. The proposed parking garage that will accommodate staff parking 456 spaces will be sited east of the existing parking garage. It is. Currently, the Readiness Center has two parking multi-level garages that have a total of 656 parking spaces. The total parking for staff under the proposed plan is 1112 parking spaces.
- 3) Removal and replacement of the existing, onsite stormwater retention pond with underground stormwater detention tank. As a result of the headquarters addition being constructed on the site of the existing stormwater retention pond, a new underground stormwater detention tank is proposed to replace the functions of the retention pond. The proposed stormwater detention tank is intended to temporarily store excess stormwater runoff and realize it at a slower rate. The detention tank will reduce peak flow from approximately 74 cfs to approximately 17 cfs.
- 4) Relocation the existing southern-most gate along South George Mason Drive. The gate will be relocated to the north by approximately 50 feet and be used primarily for limited loading, dock access, visiting VIPs, and an emergency existing from the existing west garage. The relocation of the south gate will require a new curb cut and repair of existing curb cut, as well as a median modification in the center of South George Mason Drive to align with the new gate location.
- 5) Removal of 400 to 450 cubic yards of petroleum-contaminated soil, as recommended by Virginia Department of Environmental Quality. Petroleum-contaminated soil is located at the site of the proposed headquarters addition. When the addition is to be constructed approximately 400 to 450 cubic yards of the contaminated soil will require excavation, testing, and disposal.
- 6) Relocation of the existing, onsite radio tower to the north, next to the east parking garage. The current tower location is in the footprint of the proposed new headquarters building.

- 7) Replacement of the tree canopy at the site in order to comply with the Chesapeake Bay Preservation Ordinance. The ARNG plans to plant trees in retained landscaped areas over the plaza, and along the Arlington Hall site boundary.



EXISTING CONDITIONS



PROPOSED SITE PLAN

NCPC guidelines require a Transportation Management Plan (TMP) to be submitted along with a Master Plan if a federal facility increases its full time employee level by more than 500 and new construction is required to accommodate the increase. The primary goals of the Readiness Center's TMP are:

- Develop and implement Transportation Demand Management (TDM) strategies that will reduce Single Occupancy Vehicles (SOV) trips to the ArNG site in an effort to achieve Arlington County's overall TDM goal of reducing peak hour work travel and NCPC master planning requirements by 2020.
- Ensure adequate on-site secure parking is available to support key and essential personnel during a national or regional crisis or incident.
- Develop and implement incentives to maximize the use of public transit and ridesharing for work commuting trips to reduce SOV trips to the site.

In order to achieve the goals, the TMP outlines six objectives.

1. Increase awareness of current and future ArNG Readiness Center employees of the TDM Strategies. By July 2008, information will be made available to employees summarizing the goals and objectives of the program.
2. Create a physical, automated commuter center at the Readiness Center
3. Increase overall average Mass Transit ridership. By 2011, when the relocation of employees is complete, mass transit ridership should increase to 40 percent of all employees.
4. Coordinate with JP-1 staff for full implementation of the TMP program prior to the physical relocation of the staff.
5. Reduce Single Occupant Vehicle (SOV) trips to the site. Reduce SOV trips to less than 21 percent by 2011.
6. Increase carpooling participation. A total of 300 parking spaces will be designated for carpool participants. These spaces along with other incentives will increase carpool modal split to 30 percent by 2011.

On the next page is a table located within the TMP discussing TMP objectives, their start dates, and their desired outcomes. A noteworthy TMP objective is to provide direct shuttle service from the Pentagon, Ballston, and Crystal City Metrorail stations, and the Crystal City VRE station to the ARNG Readiness Center prior to the relocation of the JP-1 staff from Crystal City. The shuttle service pilot program between Ballston Metrorail station and the Center is expected to start in spring 2009 and the pilot program between the Pentagon and Crystal City stations is expected to begin in October of 2009. Full-scale shuttle service is anticipated to start in October 2010.

TMP/TDM Objectives	Projected Start Date	Proposed Location/Action	Effect
Develop TMP, implement TDM Strategies.	September 2007	ARNGRC, Assemble Draft TMP	Begin development and implementation of TDM Strategies.
Create web-based system to assist rideshare participants match-up	February 2008	Interactive web page hosted on Guard Knowledge On-line (GKO) web site (under NCR/Express Lane page), available to all ARNGRC Staff	Provides convenient virtual location to facilitate non-SOV commuting via ridesharing
Emplace "Commuter Info Center" kiosks: atrium of ARNGRC, Lobby of JP1	December 2008 Delayed	Atrium of the ARNGRC and lobby of JP-1; will facilitate access to Commuter assistance literature and tools	Provide a convenient physical location to promote non-SOV commuting interest.
Develop and implement an Electronic Slug Line (i.e., sign up on-line to get a ride home)	December 2008	GKO/NCR/Express Lane Web page/ Kiosk/Commuter Info Center in ARNGRC atrium and JP-1 lobby	Facilitate and promote non-SOV commuting.
Promote increased participation in DoD Mass Transit Benefit Program at both the ARNGRC and JP1	October 2008 Started	Commuter Info Centers, "Express Lane" Web page; periodic announcements and briefings to solicit increased involvement in DoD Mass Transit Benefit Program	Increase use of public transit
Promote "Guaranteed Ride Home By Commuter Connection"	December 2008	Specific GKO web page set up for on-line registration, same-day service; periodic announcements and briefings to solicit increased awareness of program	Facilitate non-SOV commuting by providing staff with commute method in case of unexpected overtime
Re-designate ARNGRC onsite parking spaces to increase car/vanpool (rideshare) parking	February 2009	Within existing onsite parking garages; up to 300 spaces may be designated as "Rideshare Reserved"	Provide incentive to ARNGRC Staff to rideshare to work; increase ridesharing and decrease SOV trips

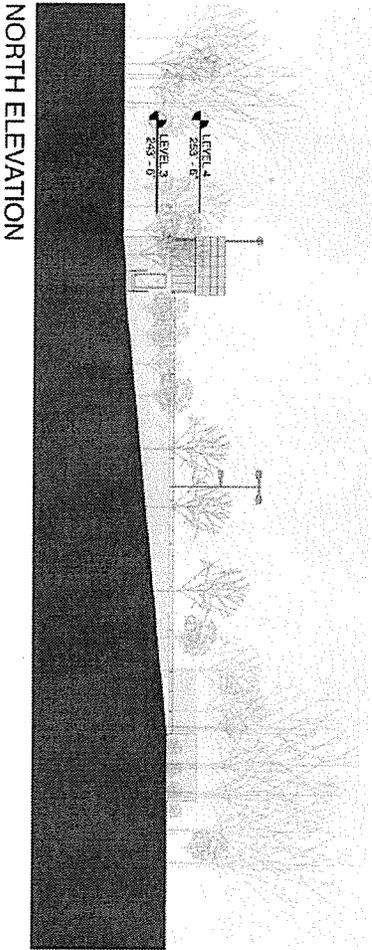
TMP/TDM Objectives	Projected Start Date	Proposed Location/Action	Effect
★ Provide convenient, direct shuttle bus service to the ARNGRC from Metrorail, VRE Stations or other local transportation Hub.	March 2009	Pilot peak hour service between Ballston Metrorail Station and ARNGRC	Increase use of public transportation (Metrorail and VRE) by providing convenient connections to the ARNGRC, providing direct service every 10 to 15 minutes during ARNGRC peak hours: 6:00 AM to 9:00 AM-3:00 PM to 6:30 PM
	October 2009	Pilot peak hour service expanded to include between the ARNGRC and Pentagon, Crystal City VRE Station, and Crystal City Metrorail Station	
	October 2010	Full-scale peak hour service to priority locations, based on results of pilot tests	
★ Provide Flex-Car/Zip-Car Outlet at the ARNGRC (short-term, hourly rental car for Staff to run daytime errands/appointments)	June 2009	At the ARNGRC; specific onsite designated parking spaces for these hourly rental cars in onsite parking garages	Decrease use of SOVs by providing Staff with convenient option to run daily errands

*Northeast Parking Garage*

The ARNG has also submitted preliminary and final site and building development plans for a multi-level parking garage east of the existing east parking garage; identified in the master plan as the northeast garage. The access to the northeast garage will be through the existing east garage entrance along the Arlington Boulevard access road. The parking garage will add 435 parking spaces to the existing 656 spaces. Of those 435 spaces, 291 spaces will be open to all employees of the Readiness Center. The remaining 144 spaces will be restricted spaces for visitors, fleet vehicles, official business vehicles, and green (hybrid) vehicles.

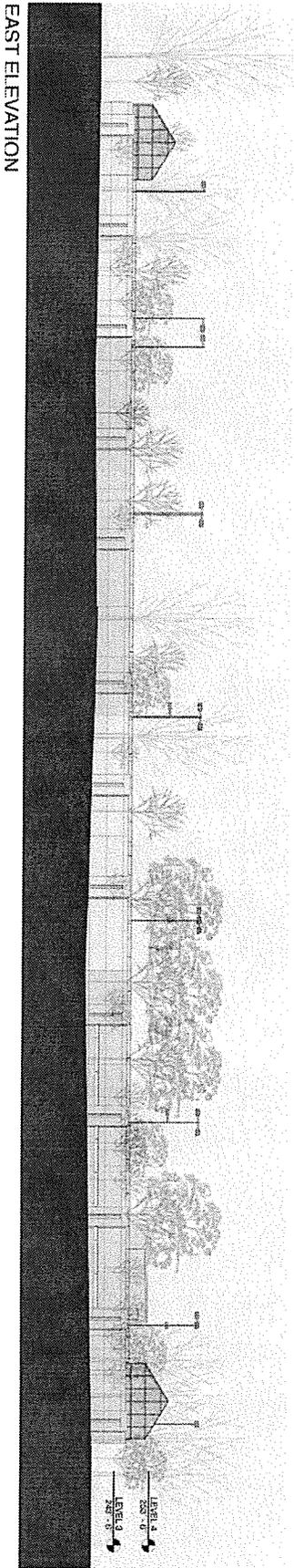
The garage will be five levels with two levels underground. The building footprint is approximately 177' x 391' with a total area of 172,335 square feet. The overall roof height is approximately 50' above grade. The proposed parking garage is at the same height as the adjacent east garage and will be constructed with the same building materials.

PARKING GARAGE ELEVATIONS



NORTH ELEVATION

(View from Route 50 access road)



EAST ELEVATION

(View from State Department)

**PROJECT ANALYSIS**

*Antenna Relocation*

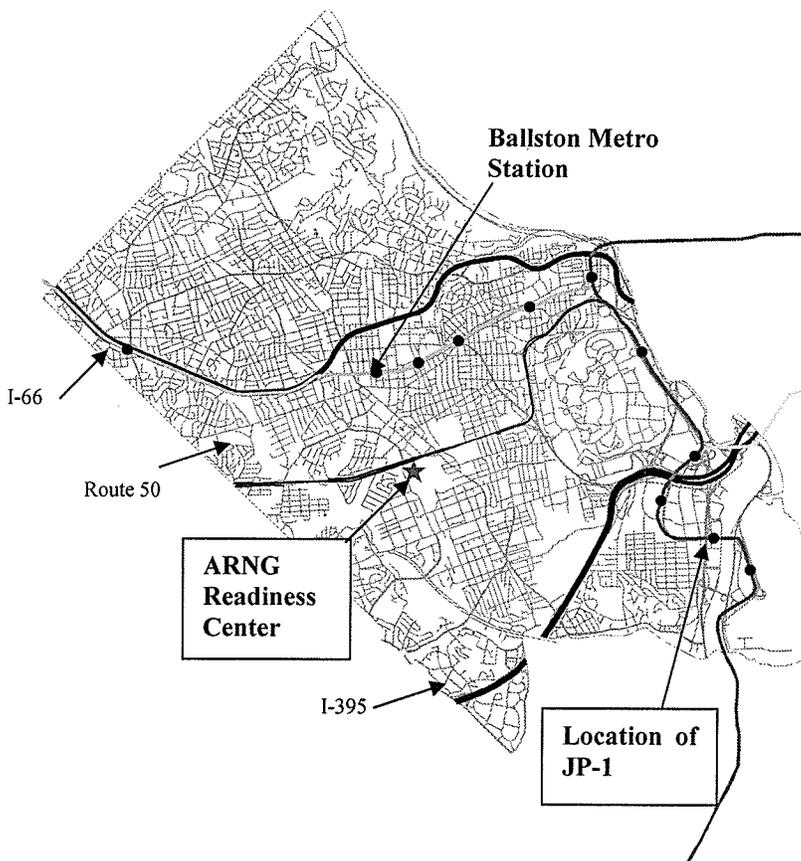
While the relocation of the radio antenna tower is necessary to build the approved building addition, staff notes that prior to the relocation of the radio tower the Army National Guard is required to submit the tower relocation proposal to the Commission. The current tower is located in the area where the headquarters building addition is to be constructed. The ARNG proposes to relocate the antenna next to the east parking garage; approximately 100 feet from its current location. The Commission approved the existing antenna tower in 1999 for a period not to exceed five years. The ARNG has not requested renewal of the antenna permit since the approval expired in 2004.

Once relocated, the radio antenna tower will be in the viewshed of the historic Arlington Hall building, located on State Department land. The ARNG will submit the required information to the Virginia State Historic Officer to ensure the relocation will not have an adverse affect on Arlington Hall. Staff also needs to evaluate the antenna information and radiofrequency radiation analysis to insure safety for the personnel at the Readiness Center prior to the approval of the relocation of the antenna next to the east parking garage. Therefore, staff recommends the Commission **require the Army National Guard to submit the radio antenna to NCPC for review, consistent with the Commission's applicable Guidelines and Submission Requirements for Antennas.** The Army National Guard is aware of the requirement and plans on submitting the required documents for review.

LOCATION OF ARNG READINESS CENTER  
IN RELATION TO METRO STATIONS

*Transportation Management Plan and  
Parking Ratios*

The Transportation Element of the Comprehensive Plan recommends a ratio of 1:4 for federal facilities within the Historic Boundaries of Washington D.C. The ARNG Readiness Center's TMP outlines a ratio of 1:3.5 in 2012 with a target of 1:4 by 2020. The goal of 1:4 by 2020 is consistent with the neighboring State Department's facility. Staff finds the proposed ratios sufficient for the ARNG Readiness Center because of the location of the Center within Arlington County. The ARNG Readiness Center is located in the part of the County less served by transit and is approximately 1.4 miles from the closest metro station, Ballston Metro Station.



The following tables outline the population projection for the Center, the parking ratio, the number of parking spaces, and the modal split goals of the TMP. Currently, 70 percent of the employees at the Center commute to work in a Single Occupancy Vehicle (SOV). The TMP outlines a strategy to lower the SOV rate to 20 percent, through such initiatives as the direct shuttles, carpool programs, and transit substitutes. Staff commends the ARNG for setting an aggressive goal to lower the SOV rate to the site and as a result lower the negative impacts to the surrounding road network.

<b><u>Population</u></b>	<b><u>2007</u></b>	<b><u>2008</u></b>	<b><u>2009</u></b>	<b><u>2010</u></b>	<b><u>2011</u></b>	<b><u>2012</u></b>
ARNG Readiness Center	1273	1335	1548	1663	1804	1934
Joint Staff Relocation Staff	0	0	0	0	1226	1376
<b>Total Installation Population</b>	<b>1273</b>	<b>1335</b>	<b>1548</b>	<b>1663</b>	<b>3030</b>	<b>3310</b>

Related Parking Ratio (people per parking spaces)	1:1.98	1:2.08	1:2.41	1:2.59	1:3.24	<b>1:3.54</b>
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<b><u>Parking</u></b>	<b><u>Restricted Parking*</u></b>	<b><u>Non-restricted Parking</u></b>	<b><u>Total</u></b>
Existing Parking (east and west garages)	13	643	656
Proposed Parking (northeast garage)	<u>144</u>	<u>291</u>	<u>435</u>
<b>Total Parking</b>	<b>157</b>	<b>934</b>	<b>1091</b>

\*Restricted parking includes: Parking spaces for fleet vehicles, visitors, official business, PMO, and hybrid cars

<b><u>How People Get to Work</u></b> <b><u>(Modal Split)</u></b>	<b><u>ARNG Readiness Center</u></b> <b><u>(2008 personnel)</u></b>	<b><u>JP-1</u></b>	<b><u>Overall</u></b>	<b><u>TMP Goal</u></b>
Personal Vehicle (SOV)	68.87 %	29.52 %	53.42 %	20 %
Public Transportation	7.13 %	56.12 %	26.5 %	40 %
Carpool/Vanpool	20.87 %	5.59 %	14.83 %	35 %
Walk/Bike/Slug	2.78 %	8.78 %	5.12 %	4 %
Telecommute	0.17 %	0 %	0.1 %	1 %

The ARNG has hired an Employee Transportation Coordinator (ETC) who is already working with staff to work toward the goals of the TMP. The ETC will promote alternative modes of transportation and will also review and revise the TMP on a regular basis as conditions change.

*Prior Commission Recommendations*

When the Commission approved the ARNG Readiness Center building addition, the Commission recommended that the ARNG continue to coordinate with NCPC staff regarding TMP measures and parking ratios. That ARNG has worked with NCPC staff to improve the parking ratio from the 1:2.76 for 2012 in the draft TMP to 1:3.4 in the final TMP. The ARNG has committed to increase restricted parking for carpool vehicles and hybrid cars. The ARNG has also refined the number of personnel, that will be located on the site, to a more detailed number than in the draft TMP.

The Commission also recommended that the ARNG work with Arlington County and the U.S. Department of State regarding access to the site and impacts to the surrounding road network. Arlington County's comments and the ARNG responses to the comments are located in the coordination section of the Executive Directors Recommendation.

As identified in the Final Environmental Assessment, staff notes the critical need to improve the local transportation network and the need to lower the Single Vehicle Occupancy (SOV) rate in order to minimize congestion related to increased traffic to the Center. Staff encourages the Commission to **recommend that the Army National Guard continue to coordinate with Arlington County regarding transit improvements and impacts to the surrounding road network and with the U.S. Department of State regarding joint transit opportunities.** Staff supports the ongoing coordination between the ARNG and Arlington County regarding roadway improvements including the intersection of South George Mason Drive and the main gate to the facility and the intersection of South George Mason Drive and Route 50. Staff also encourages the ARNG and the State Department to work collaboratively to meet the required 1:4 parking ratios for their facilities. Programs that could be combined between the two facilities, such as shuttle service, carpools, and vanpools are recommended.

## CONFORMANCE

### Comprehensive Plan for the National Capital

Staff finds the proposed master plan is not inconsistent with the Comprehensive Plan for the National Capital. The master plan adheres to the following goals within the Federal Workplace Element of the Comprehensive Plan:

- Utilize available federally owned land or space before purchasing or leasing additional land or building space. Agencies should continuously monitor utilization rates of land and building space to ensure their efficient use.
- Minimize development of open space by selecting disturbed land or brownfields for federal workplaces or by reusing existing buildings or sites.
- Locate employees near other federal agencies and departments with which they regularly interact.

The master plan and the TMP adhere to the following goals within the Federal Transportation Element of the Comprehensive Plan:

- Give priority to carpool and vanpool parking over for single-occupant vehicles
- Maximize telecommuting strategies for employees in accordance with federal law
- Employ compressed and variable work schedules for employees, consistent with agency missions
- Steadily increase transit subsidy rates, and consider applying subsidies and incentives to other modes, such as biking, walking, carpooling, and vanpooling.
- Provide secure and sheltered bicycle parking spaces or bicycle lockers in close proximity to building entrances at federal buildings and on federal campuses.

As stated before, the Comprehensive Plan outlines a parking ratio of 1:4 for federal facilities located within the historic boundaries of Washington D.C. The ARNG has created goals and objectives to make this goal by 2020.

There are goals outlined in the Federal Workplace Element of the Comprehensive Plan that the master plan cannot conform to as a result of requirements of BRAC such as the goal of locating federal facilities within walking distance of existing or planned fixed guideway transit services, such as Metrorail, MARC, and VRE; light rail transit (LRT); or bus rapid transit (BRT).

#### Relevant Federal Facility Master Plan

The existing Readiness Center Master Plan, approved in 1990, will be replaced by this plan as submitted by the Army National Guard for review by NCPC.

#### National Environmental Protection Act (NEPA)

The Army National Guard completed an Environmental Assessment for the master plan to analyze the proposal for conformance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). As a result of the location of the Readiness Center outside of the District of Columbia, NCPC does not have independent NEPA responsibility.

On August 22, 2008, the Army National Guard issued a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) for the proposed master plan actions. The FONSI outlines one mitigation measure required for the implementation of the master plan not to have a significant impact on the environment. The mitigation measure requires the Army National Guard to attain the Modal Split Objectives outlined in the Transportation Management Plan. The mitigation measure includes implementing direct shuttle service between the Army National Guard Readiness Center and the Ballston Metrorail Station by 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter of FY 2009; direct shuttle service between the Readiness Center and the Crystal City Virginia Railway Express and Metrorail stops and the Pentagon by the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter of FY 2009; an electronic slug line; and increased carpool/vanpool use to meet Modal Split Objectives and as a result reduce traffic and parking impacts.

#### National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA)

The Army National Guard has found that the master plan and the proposed construction projects resulting from the master plan will not affect any buildings listed on the Register of Historic Places. The Virginia Department of Historic Resources has concurred with the Army National Guard that the action will not have an adverse effect. As a result of the location of the master plan outside the District of Columbia, NCPC does not have independent Section 106 responsibility.

#### Federal Capital Improvements Plan

The 2009-2014 Federal Capital Improvements Plan (FCIP) includes the Army National Guard Readiness Center Addition and parking facility. The estimated total project is \$124,200,000; the project has received \$10,600,000 in prior funding.

## CONSULTATION

In accordance with the Commission's Procedures for Intergovernmental Cooperation in Federal Planning in the National Capital Region, the Army National Guard Readiness Center Master Plan and the parking garage were referred to the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT), the Washington Metropolitan Council of Governments (WMCOG), the U.S. State Department, and the Arlington County BRAC Office on October 20, 2008. The comments received from Arlington County and VDOT are attached. No comments were received from WMCOG.

### Arlington County

Arlington County urges the ARNG to take responsibility for the construction of a traffic light at the intersection of South George Mason Drive and the main gate entrance to the ARNG Readiness Center, as well as for improvements to the bridge where South George Mason Drive passes over US Route 50.

In response to Arlington County's concerns, the ARNG has submitted for consideration to the Army BRAC Office the installation of a traffic signal at the main gate on George Mason Drive as well as the expansion of the bridge on South George Mason Drive over US Route 50 for potential Defense Access Road (DAR) money. The Army BRAC Office has not yet determined if the projects will be funded.

The ARNG notes that they will continue to post Federal Police Officers at the intersection of South George Mason Drive and the main gate for traffic management duties on a daily basis during peak traffic periods.

Arlington County also urges the ARNG to have an entrance to the proposed northeast garage off of the neighboring State Department access road. The access road runs from the Route 50 access ramp to 6<sup>th</sup> Street. An entrance off of the State Department's access road would allow ARNG personnel to access the garage from South George Mason Drive, minimizing the amount of vehicles on the Route 50 access ramp. The State Department does object to an entrance to the proposed garage from their land. Coordination between the Army National Guard and the State Department is ongoing.

### Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT)

VDOT expressed that given the current budgetary constraints, the Route 50/South George Mason Drive is unlikely to be improved by either VDOT or Arlington County. VDOT also commented on the fact that there is no internal vehicular access between the parking garages in the northeast section of the ARNG property and the parking garages on the west side; this will therefore place additional traffic on the Route 50/George Mason Drive interchange.

**ATTACHMENTS**



OFFICE OF THE COUNTY MANAGER

2100 Clarendon Blvd., Suite 302 Arlington, VA 22201  
TEL 703 228.3120 FAX 703 228 3218 www.arlingtonva.us

December 4, 2008

Ms. Cheryl Kelly  
NCPC  
401 9<sup>th</sup> Street, NW  
Suite 500, North Lobby  
Washington, DC 20004**Re: MP033 – Comments on the proposed final Master Plan for the ARNGRC and the final site and building schemes for the planned construction**

Dear Ms. Kelly:

Thank you for the opportunity to review the proposed final Master Plan for the Army National Guard Readiness Center (ARNGRC) and the final site and building schemes for the planned construction. The relocation of the National Guard Bureau to the ARNGRC site as part of the 2005 BRAC mandate is significant for the Arlington community and the County is committed to its completion with minimal disruption to neighborhood networks.

After review of the final documents, Arlington County still has serious concerns regarding the proposed garage, TDM full implementation, and funding sources for identified and proposed infrastructure "improvements". Additionally, Arlington County hopes that the ARNGRC will appoint a community liaison to ensure that all affected parties be kept duly informed on the progress of construction at the Readiness Center Site.

The ARNGRC delineated the following among its goals and objectives of its Master Plan:

- To ensure minimal negative site impacts of new development,
- To balance the goals of the [Army National Guard] ARNG to provide adequate onsite parking to alleviate additional auto impacts and,
- To coordinate additional mass transit options.

While Arlington County does not challenge the merits of these goals and objectives, we are challenged by the proposed plans and mitigations outlined to reach the same. To that end, we present the attached concerns for your consideration. Please contact Andrea Morris, Arlington County BRAC Coordinator, 703-228-0865, [aymorris@arlingtonva.us](mailto:aymorris@arlingtonva.us), with any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ron Carlee".

Ron Carlee  
County ManagerCc ✓ Andrea Morris, Arlington County, BRAC Coordinator  
Robert Gibson, Arlington County, DES  
Gabriela Acurio, Assistant County Manager

**ATTACHMENT – ARLINGTON COUNTY COMMENTS RE: MP033****Location of the Proposed Garage**

Arlington County does not support the location of the new East Garage in the Preferred Action Alternative. The project proposes a new 456 space garage to be located east of the existing East Garage. The garage would be accessed using the existing site entrance from the eastbound Route 50 Access Road. The proposed garage would focus over 70% of the site generated traffic on the access road which only provides limited access to the site.

The traffic impact analysis (TIA), prepared by Versar Company dated February 13, 2008 and revised June 10, 2008 as part of the Finding of No Significant Impact (FNSI) and Final Environmental Assessment (EA), shows that the traffic generated by the Proposed Action would have "significant traffic impacts" on the surrounding roadways, particularly the Route 50/George Mason Drive interchange. Arlington County is very concerned that the project does not address offsite improvements needed to support the Preferred Action Alternative.

The TIA shows that under the Preferred Action Alternative, the George Mason Drive/Eastbound Route 50 access road intersection would degrade to a level of service (LOS) F during the AM Peak hour, with an average delay of 86.6 seconds per vehicle, if improvements are not made. The increase in the number of left turns made at the intersection due to the location of the garage would result in the entire interchange failing if improvements are not made. The TIA indicates the existing level of service at the intersection can be maintained by adding an additional left-turn lane from southbound George Mason Drive to the eastbound Route 50 access road; however the FNSI specifically indicates that "funding of these improvements would remain the responsibility of VDOT and/or Arlington County". The FNSI justifies this by indicating that these improvements would be needed even under the No Action alternative. This assessment is not consistent with the findings of the traffic impact analysis for the project.

The TIA only performed a conceptual design for the required improvements needed to maintain an acceptable level of service at the intersection; it did not assess its feasibility or its cost. As a result of an incomplete study it is impossible to determine what the total cost to improve the signal operation at the interchange would be to support the proposed site expansion. If the interchange and associated bridge need to be replaced and/or widened, the improvements could cost tens of millions of dollars. According to the FNSI, the ARNGRC would be exempt from funding these improvements. This recourse would put an unacceptable burden on the State and/or Arlington County to fund off-site improvements associated with the Preferred Action Alternative.

Arlington would prefer to see the garage location and access point as identified in "Scenario 1" of the TIA (accessing the property and the new garage located in the northeast quadrant of the property via 6<sup>th</sup> street and the existing State Department access). This action requires greater cooperation between the ARNG and the State Department; however, it would greatly reduce the impacts of the Preferred Action

Alternative on the surrounding roadway network and reduce the likelihood for the need of potentially cost prohibitive improvements to the Route 50/George Mason Drive interchange.

#### **Funding to Support Transportation Demand Management Plan and Activities**

For the Preferred Action Alternative to meet its identified Modal Split goals (35% public transit use, 28% carpool/vanpool use and 7% other non-SOV use) it is critical for the Transportation Demand Management (TDM) plan to be adequately funded. The Preferred Action Alternative would move 1,200 employees from Crystal City, to the ARNGRC, which offers only limited access to public transportation to current employees.

The Final EA indicates that "regardless of method, the ARNG will be required to achieve these Modal Split goals," however it does not indicate that there will be any oversight of the effectiveness of the TDM plan other than through internal monitoring. If the site fails to meet its TDM goals, there is no mechanism to require the ARNG to follow through with the goals established in the Preferred Action Alternative. Moreover, the Final EA stipulates that findings from internal monitoring results will not automatically be shared with Arlington County, but must be requested every year. Since fulfillment of mitigation requirements is the attainment of modal split goals, Arlington considers that this information should be made available to the County upon annual completion in order to ensure the minimal impact on adjacent communities and the surrounding roadway network. NCPC has previously cited the importance of committing to transportation management plan objectives for federal facilities, specifically citing expectations for the State Department to incorporate the Commission's objectives in its September 16, 2004 approval of the National Foreign Affairs Training Center (NFATC) revised master plan. The routine release of this information to Arlington County will support the meeting of these goals.

As noted in the Final EA, the Preferred Action Alternative could have significant impacts on the surrounding roadway network. The ARNG is relying on one mitigation measure in this Alternative—the annual attainment of modal split goals. As a result, Arlington County is concerned that if monitoring results show a need for increased funding to meet the identified goals, the funding may not be available. If the TDM plan is not sufficiently funded it is likely that the Preferred Action Alternative could have "significant traffic impacts" to the surrounding roadway network which would be the responsibility of either Arlington County or VDOT to mitigate as indicated in the Final EA.

#### **Commitment to Design and Construct a New Signal at Main Gate and South George Mason Drive**

With the significant increase in use of public transportation, as identified in the Preferred Action Alternative, it will be critical that the project include appropriate pedestrian improvements. These improvements will support the nearly 900 employees projected to use public transit to access the site. Arlington considers that

the most important improvement is the installation of a new traffic signal with crosswalks and pedestrian controls at the intersection of the ARNG main gate and South George Mason Drive. This was identified by existing National Guard employees as a needed improvement to facilitate the safe pedestrian crossing of South George Mason Drive. Arlington County supports this improvement; however we are concerned that the ARNG has not fully committed to designing and constructing the signal as apart of the Preferred Action Alternative. The Alternative indicates the ARNG will only "review the potential to install a traffic signal at the intersection of the ARNGRC Site Access Road (Main Gate) and S. George Mason Drive, working with Arlington County". Arlington would like the Preferred Action Alternative to be updated to include the design and construction of the new signal at the intersection of South George Mason Drive and the Main Gate with review by Arlington County.

#### **Improved Access to Public Transportation**

In order for the Preferred Action Alternative to limit its impact on the surrounding roadways, it is critical that the project meet its modal split goals. To do this, access to public transportation must be improved adjacent to the site. Arlington County looks forward to continuing to work with the ARNG to improve public transportation access to the site, with a phased increase in service, supporting the expansion of the site. The ARNG notes in the Final EA that it will be responsible for funding measures to attain modal split goals, including shuttle service from transit hubs to the ARNGRC.

**COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA**

DAVID S. EKERN, P.E.  
COMMISSIONER

**DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION**

14685 Avion Parkway  
Chantilly, VA 20151  
(703) 383-VDOT (8368)

December 9, 2008

David W. Levy, R.A., A.I.C.P.  
National Capital Planning Commission  
401 9<sup>th</sup> Street, N.W.  
Suite 500, North Lobby  
Washington, D.C. 20004

Re: Army National Guard Readiness Center MP033  
Arlington Hall  
U.S. Route 50 Arlington Boulevard and George Mason Drive  
Arlington County, Virginia

Dear Mr. Levy:

Thank you for your October 20, 2008 letter to Mr. Tom Fahrney, our BRAC Coordinator, transmitting the proposed Master Plan, Final Environmental Assessment, and Project Renderings for the above site. He requested that I respond to your letter. We offer the following comments:

VDOT provided comments dated April 8, 2008 on the Draft Environmental Assessment. Many of those comments continue to apply. The Traffic Impact Analysis identified significant impacts to the public street intersections adjacent to this site. To mitigate those impacts, the assessment assumes that TDM strategies will encourage transit usage comparable to the existing usage at the JP-1 site rather than the usage currently evident at the Arlington Hall site. This appears to be an overly optimistic assumption.

The Traffic Impact Analysis and Environmental Assessment recommended that the Route 50/George Mason Drive interchange be improved. However, the Environmental Assessment assumes that such improvements would be accomplished using State and County resources. Given current budget constraints, this is unlikely.

While we do not normally comment on internal site design with no direct physical impact on our facilities, we note that the new parking will be in the northerly portion of the site, accessed only by the Route 50 EB interchange ramp. There appears to be no internal vehicular access between the northerly ("East") and westerly parking structures without a circuitous detour via nearby public streets or through the adjacent State Department site. This puts the full burden of additional traffic on the Route 50/George Mason Drive interchange.

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Army National Guard Readiness Center

December 9, 2008

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We understand that Arlington County authorities share many of the same concerns, as well as others that relate to the county street network.

If you have any questions, please call Mr. Tom Fahrney at (703) 383-2489.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'T. B. VanPoole', written in a cursive style.

Thomas B. VanPoole, P.E.  
Senior Transportation Engineer