

RECORD OF DECISION

Potomac Yard Metrorail Station Project City of Alexandria, Virginia by the Federal Transit Administration

1.0 DECISION

The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) has determined, pursuant to Title 23 of the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), Part 771, and Title 40 CFR Parts 1500-1508, that the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA) have been satisfied for the Potomac Yard Metrorail Station project (the Project). This Record of Decision (ROD) memorializes FTA's review and approval of the Preferred Alternative described in the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) dated June 1, 2016, with design refinements as described in **Attachment C** of this ROD, in compliance with NEPA and other applicable laws.

As the Project sponsor, the City of Alexandria served as the joint lead agency with FTA in conducting the environmental review process. The Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) and the National Park Service (NPS) served as cooperating agencies. NPS has a Federal action associated with the Project as described in **Section 6.8** of this ROD.

FTA will require the City of Alexandria to design and build the Project as presented in this ROD. Any changes to the Project that are inconsistent with this ROD must be evaluated in accordance with 23 CFR Sections 771.129 and 771.130.

2.0 BASIS FOR DECISION

The documents considered in making this decision include the March 25, 2015 Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS), the June 1, 2016 FEIS and Final Section 4(f) Evaluation, the Commitments and Mitigation Measures (**Attachment A**), the Section 106 Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) (**Attachment B**), design refinements since the FEIS (**Attachment C**), FEIS corrections contained in the Errata Sheet (**Attachment D**), the Nets Benefit Agreement (**Attachment E**), agency correspondence received on the FEIS (**Attachment F**), comments and responses regarding the FEIS (**Attachment G**), and a summary of the environmental impacts of all reasonable alternatives (**Attachment H**) as well as technical memoranda, correspondence, and other documents in the Project file. The FEIS presented the purpose and need for the Project; a chronology of the alternatives development and analysis for the Project, including a description of the alternatives considered; technical memoranda evaluating impacts of alternatives; secondary and cumulative effects; measures for avoiding, minimizing, or mitigating adverse impacts; a summary of public outreach and agency coordination; and a summary of comments received on the DEIS and responses to those comments.

2.1 Background

The construction of a Metrorail station in Potomac Yard was considered and planned in early WMATA planning documents. At the time the Blue and Yellow Line tracks were built, the area was occupied by the Richmond, Fredericksburg & Potomac (RF&P) Railroad Potomac Yard, and a location was identified for a station to be added later. The *Final Environmental Impact Statement, Metropolitan Washington Regional Rapid Rail Transit System* (August 1975, p. 188) cites the provision for a future station at Potomac Yard, although at the time, the City of Alexandria decided to proceed with a station near existing development further south at Braddock Road. Beginning in the late 1980s, the rail yard was phased out, and the area was being considered for redevelopment. By 1992, the existing rail yard was rezoned to allow for redevelopment, and, by the late 1990s, commercial stores were built, followed by residential units, office space, retail, and park space. The commercial stores on the northern portion of the site within the City of Alexandria were intended as an interim use, until

demand was sufficient for higher-density uses. Currently, portions of Potomac Yard are still under development, either under construction or planned for higher-density mixed-use redevelopment.

Since removal of the former rail yard, multiple plans have included construction of a Metrorail station in Potomac Yard to serve new development. A Potomac Yard Metrorail Station was included in WMATA's 1999 *Transit Service Expansion Plan*, the 2010 *Financially Constrained Long-Range Transportation Plan for the National Capital Region* (CLRP), and earlier WMATA and regional transportation plans. A Metrorail station at Potomac Yard was also included in the City of Alexandria's 1992 and 2008 *Transportation Master Plans* and 2010 *North Potomac Yard Small Area Plan* (NPYSAP). In the *Potomac Yard Metrorail Station Concept Development Study* (2010), the City of Alexandria and WMATA collaborated to identify, examine, and screen potential locations for a Potomac Yard Metrorail station. The study analyzed eight potential locations.

On January 27, 2011, FTA and the City of Alexandria issued a Notice of Intent (NOI) in the Federal Register (Volume 76, No. 18) which initiated the NEPA planning process for the Project. NPS served as a cooperating agency due to the potential for project impacts to the George Washington Memorial Parkway (GWMP) and the adjacent Greens Scenic Area easement administered by NPS. The GWMP, including the historic Mount Vernon Memorial Highway (MVMH), commemorates the first president, preserves the natural setting, and provides a quality entryway for visitors to the nation's capital. Three interrelated historic properties listed in the National Register of Historic Places are associated with the GWMP and located within the project site: the MVMH, the GWMP, and the Parkways of the National Capital Region, 1913-1965 (PNCR). The Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) also has served as a cooperating agency on the Project because it owns and operates the Metrorail system.

2.2 Project Purpose and Need

The purpose of the Project is to improve local and regional transit accessibility to and from the Potomac Yard area adjacent to the U.S. Route 1 corridor for current and future residents, employees, and businesses.

Currently, the Project area is not served by direct access to regional transit services, which provide frequent, higher-speed, and all-day service across multiple jurisdictions of the metropolitan area. This area is served by local bus services that operate in the U.S. Route 1 corridor, including the Crystal City/Potomac Yard Transitway (also known as "Metroway"). Direct access to direct or connecting transit service to/from key regional destinations, with widely spaced stations, and generally dedicated right-of-way (ROW), separated from general vehicular traffic, will facilitate regional trips.

Traffic congestion will increase on U.S. Route 1 even without the proposed development in Potomac Yard. Increasing the share of transit trips would help to manage congestion, reduce auto trips and emissions along transit corridors, and make efficient use of existing infrastructure.

Due to the constrained capacity of the roadway network, additional transportation options are needed to accommodate travel demand through transit and other non-auto modes. Direct regional transit access would provide more transportation choices for residents and workers and would enhance connections to regional employment and activity centers. See FEIS Section 1.3, *Project Purpose and Need*, for more detailed discussion of the Project needs.

2.3 Alternatives Considered

The development and evaluation of alternatives included the initial development of alternatives during the scoping period for the Project, screening of alternatives, detailed study, selection of a locally preferred alternative (LPA), and refinement of the LPA, resulting in identification of a Preferred Alternative in the FEIS and ROD. Development of the alternatives is described in greater detail in the DEIS and FEIS, the October 2011 *Initial Screening of Alternatives* technical report, and the March 2012 *Refinement of Alternatives, Constructability, and Construction Staging* technical report. Alternatives were reviewed based on a range of factors, including their ability to meet the Project's purpose and need, cost effectiveness, environmental impacts, and comments received.

2.3.1 Draft Environmental Impact Statement

2.3.1.1 Scoping and Alternatives Development

The scoping process for the EIS was conducted from January 27, 2011 through March 15, 2011 and identified a full range of potential alternatives. Following scoping, a total of 36 initial alternatives were evaluated and screened to select those that were responsive to the Project's purpose and need, consistent with land use and development plans, and technically feasible. This review is described in detail in the DEIS, Section 2.2 *Screening Process*. Build Alternatives A, B, and D – representing three different Metrorail station locations – emerged from the Scoping process. A design option of Build Alternative B, identified as “B-CSX Design Option,” was developed at the request of NPS in an effort to avoid and minimize impacts of Alternative B to the GWMP.

2.3.1.2 Alternatives Evaluated

Four alternatives as well as the No Build (No Action) Alternative were evaluated in detail:

- **No Build Alternative:** The existing transportation network, plus all of the committed transportation projects within the study area, except the Potomac Yard Metrorail Station. These projects include: completion of the Potomac Yard street network, future pedestrian/bicycle bridge between Potomac Yard and Potomac Greens, and expansion of local bus services.
- **Build Alternative A:** The construction of a new Metrorail station along the existing Metrorail tracks between the CSXT railroad tracks and the north end of the Potomac Greens neighborhood, generally within the “Metrorail Reservation” identified as part of the *Potomac Yard/Potomac Greens Small Area Plan* (1999).
- **Build Alternative B:** The construction of a new Metrorail station along a segment of realigned tracks, between the GWMP and the CSXT railroad tracks, north of the Potomac Greens neighborhood and east of the existing Potomac Yard Shopping Center. Portions of this alternative were located within the Greens Scenic Area easement.
- **B-CSX Design Option:** A variation of Build Alternative B with the construction of a Metrorail station located east of the existing Potomac Yard movie theater on land currently occupied by the CSXT tracks. This design option was developed at the request of NPS and would require the relocation of the CSXT tracks to the west, providing the room necessary for the station and realigned Metrorail tracks to avoid GWMP property and the Greens Scenic Area easement. B-CSX Design Option required construction access only from the Rail Park and Potomac Yard.
- **Build Alternative D:** The construction of a new Metrorail station west of the CSXT railroad tracks near the existing Potomac Yard Shopping Center. This alternative would require elevated tracks, starting north of Four Mile Run, crossing over the CSXT tracks into Potomac Yard, and then crossing over the CSXT tracks again to reconnect to the existing Metrorail line near the Potomac Greens neighborhood. Build Alternative D required construction access from the GWMP to construct the realigned track near Four Mile Run, in addition to construction access from Potomac Greens Drive, the Rail Park, and Potomac Yard.

Build Alternatives A and B included two temporary construction access options for the purposes of comparing effects despite the fact that NPS policies prohibit commercial vehicles under *NPS Management Policies 2006* and Federal regulations at 36 CFR 5.6:

- **Construction Access Option 1** provided temporary construction access from the GWMP, Potomac Greens Drive, the Rail Park, and relatively limited access from Potomac Yard.
- **Construction Access Option 2** provided temporary construction access from Potomac Greens Drive, the Rail Park, and relatively limited access from Potomac Yard. No access was provided from the GWMP roadway in this option.

2.3.2 Identification of the Locally Preferred Alternative

On May 20, 2015, Build Alternative B, Option 2 Construction Access (No Construction Access from the GWMP) as described in the DEIS, was identified by the City of Alexandria City Council as the LPA for the Project. Prior

to the Council's consideration of the LPA, City staff provided to City Council members for their review copies of the DEIS, City staff summary of comments received during the public comment period, the City staff recommendation report (*Potomac Yard Metrorail Station: Staff Recommendation for the Preferred Alternative*, April 24, 2015), and copies of resolutions by City boards and commissions regarding the LPA. The City Council's selection of the LPA is documented in Alexandria City Council Resolution 2676 (https://www.alexandriava.gov/uploadedFiles/2015-04-24%20Staff%20Report_w%20appendices.pdf).

2.3.3 Selection of FTA's Preferred Alternative

Based on the comparison of the environmental effects of each alternative and the degree to which they meet the stated purpose and need, along with supporting technical memoranda, the DEIS, and the FEIS, FTA has selected as its Preferred Alternative Build Alternative B, Option 2 Construction Access. The Preferred Alternative also represents FTA's environmentally preferable alternative in accordance with 40 CFR 1505.2. The selection of the environmentally preferable alternative is based on the overall benefits of the Preferred Alternative and the beneficial impact of the mitigation commitments for the Preferred Alternative balanced against the long-term adverse impacts of the other build alternatives. Further, FTA has determined that the environmental benefits of the total mitigation commitments for the Preferred Alternative make it environmentally preferable to the No Build Alternative. In selecting the Preferred Alternative, and in making the decisions set forth in this ROD, FTA considered the environmental consequences of the Preferred Alternative, Alternatives A and D, and B-CSX Design Option from both the DEIS and the FEIS, as summarized in **Attachment H**. FEIS Section 2.3.3, *Support for Project Purpose and Need*, evaluates the degree to which each of the alternatives evaluated support the purpose and need. DEIS Section 2.5.2 *Evaluation of Alternatives, Environmental Consequences*, provided a comparison of the environmental effects of each of the alternatives evaluated in the DEIS.

A summary of the specific reasons for FTA's selection of the Preferred Alternative is set forth below.

The Preferred Alternative: Alternative B Option 2 Construction Access was selected as the Preferred Alternative because it best meets the purpose and need of the Project while providing environmental benefits to the GWMP through a Net Benefits Agreement with NPS. The Preferred Alternative would be located within walking distance of the highest-density development in North Potomac Yard and would best support the highest density and greatest mix of uses, including office uses, to be constructed. The Preferred Alternative would facilitate the highest number of trips taken by transit and encourage a variety of transportation options due to the dense mix of uses that it enables. At a cost of \$268 million (estimate cited in *Potomac Yard Metrorail Station: Staff Recommendation for the Preferred Alternative*, April 24, 2015, based on DEIS cost estimate), the Preferred Alternative has the most economic, community, and transportation benefits of all the alternatives.

Alternative A: Alternative A was not selected as the Preferred Alternative because it provides less support for the Project purpose and need compared to Alternative B and would impose substantial impacts on the Potomac Greens neighborhood. Alternative A would have located the station immediately adjacent to the Potomac Greens community. Residents of the Potomac Greens community would have experienced noise impacts from operation of the station immediately adjacent to residences and vibration impacts from new track switches in proximity to residences, as described in the DEIS, Section 3.12.3.3. Construction impacts would also be greater than Alternative B due to the proximity of the station to the neighborhood.

Alternative A would locate the station furthest from the dense redevelopment and planned office uses in North Potomac Yard (1,650 feet away walking distance) making this location a potentially less attractive option for riders. Because Alternative A would be furthest from the development at North Potomac Yard, the planned redevelopment would have less density and fewer office uses than in the approved North Potomac Yard plan. This would result in decreased economic benefit, fewer riders, and fewer benefits to surrounding neighborhoods when compared to Alternative B.

B-CSX Design Option: The B-CSX Design Option was not selected as the Preferred Alternative because it provides less support for the Project purpose and need compared to Alternative B and would require the use of 5 acres of land in Potomac Yard that would otherwise be available for development. The B-CSX Design Option would undermine the City's goal of facilitating transit-oriented development at Potomac Yard. The B-CSX Design Option would also cost substantially more than Alternative B. The DEIS estimated that the B-CSX Design Option would cost \$83 million more than Alternative B (estimate cited in *Potomac Yard Metrorail Station: Staff Recommendation for the Preferred Alternative*, April 24, 2015, based on DEIS cost estimate),. That increase is likely to be greater given the conditions CSXT has placed on its agreement, as discussed below.

In addition, there are substantial questions about whether the City could secure the property rights needed to build the B-CSX Design Option. Construction of the B-CSX Design Option would require the relocation of the CSXT tracks and right-of-way, which are used extensively by CSXT freight railroad operations, Amtrak intercity passenger operations, and the Virginia Railway Express commuter service. In comments on the DEIS, both the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation (May 4, 2015 letter) and the Virginia Railway Express (VRE) (May 15, 2015 letter) objected to the B-CSX Design Option based on impacts to railroad operations. The relocation of the CSXT tracks was anticipated to result in substantial disruption to CSXT, Amtrak, and VRE rail operations along the line due to track shutdowns during construction. VRE expressed concern in its comments that the disruptions would degrade its on-time performance and customer satisfaction and reduce its ridership in an unacceptable manner.

Because the B-CSX Design Option calls for the station to be located on the current CSXT right-of-way, the City and WMATA would have to obtain the consent of CSXT, which holds a permanent easement for its existing right-of-way. Neither WMATA nor the City may use its power of eminent domain to acquire CSXT's property. Although CSXT has not categorically ruled out the possibility of its agreement, it stated in its April 30, 2015 letter that it strongly preferred that the B-CSX Design Option not be chosen for the Project due to anticipated disruption of CSXT's operations. Moreover, in both the April 30, 2015 letter and an earlier May 28, 2014 letter, CSXT set certain general conditions that must be met if any agreement were to be reached. Those conditions include reimbursement for all of CSXT's costs for the relocation, including design, land acquisition, construction, and payment of passenger delay costs and penalties to Amtrak and VRE, additional pedestrian access structures, and additional undefined roadway and railroad access. The potential amount of those costs has not been determined and it is uncertain that the City could pay the necessary amount. Furthermore, negotiations could take considerable time with no certainty that an agreement could be reached (or reached at a cost-effective price). Accordingly, it is not certain that the B-CSX Design Option could be built and even pursuing the B-CSX Design Option exposes the Project to substantial risk, uncertainty, and delay while an agreement with CSXT is pursued.

Alternative D: Alternative D was not selected as the Preferred Alternative because it provides less support for the Project purpose and need compared to Alternative B, costs substantially more, and imposes greater environmental impacts. Alternative D would also require the use of the GWMP for construction access, which NPS will not permit given the availability of other alternatives (e.g., Alternative B).

To build Alternative D, which would be located in Potomac Yard, the Metrorail alignment would have to cross the CSXT tracks on an elevated structure to get into Potomac Yard and then re-cross the railroad to re-connect with the existing Metrorail alignment. The aerial design of the station, two bridge structures, and greater real estate acquisition needs make Alternative D substantially more expensive than the other alternatives. The City of Alexandria found that Alternative D would cost an estimated \$493 million compared to Alternative B's cost estimate of \$268 million (estimates cited in *Potomac Yard Metrorail Station: Staff Recommendation for the Preferred Alternative*, April 24, 2015, based on DEIS cost estimate). The City concluded that Alternative D was financially infeasible.

In addition, Alternative D would impose greater environmental impacts, including the acquisition of the greatest amount of public parkland of any of the Alternatives, 1.43 acres of the GWMP and 5.38 acres from City of Alexandria parks. The elevated alignment necessary for Alternative D would also cause noise and vibration impacts (DEIS Section 3.12.3.6) and increased visual impacts to residents of Potomac Greens (DEIS Section 3.8.3.5). Alternative D would have also required the construction of a new bridge over Four Mile Run, a tributary to the Potomac River and Navigable Water of the United States, and would also result in the greatest increase in new impervious surface (9.24 acres), when compared to the other Alternatives.

Finally, Alternative D would occupy parts of the area planned for parks and dense office and mixed-use development, reducing the amount of parkland and overall development potential of North Potomac Yard. Alternative D would also displace one existing business. Alternative D would require construction access from the GWMP, which NPS will not permit.

2.3.4 The Preferred Alternative

The Preferred Alternative would locate the new Metrorail station between the GWMP and the CSXT ROW, north of the Potomac Greens neighborhood and east of the existing Potomac Yard Shopping Center (North Potomac Yard) and the CSXT ROW. The site is partially within Potomac Greens Park, the GWMP, and the Greens Scenic Area easement. The station will be at-grade with a side platform layout. Additional station facilities will include two pedestrian bridges from the station over the CSXT ROW to the existing and planned development. The bridge at the southern end of the station will provide pedestrian/bicycle access between Potomac Yard and the Potomac Greens neighborhood.

The Preferred Alternative includes the realignment of approximately 650 feet of existing track, as well as the installation of approximately 1,450 feet of new track to provide a straight section of track for the station location and meet other WMATA track design requirements. Special track work – a double crossover – will be required approximately 100 feet north of the station. The Preferred Alternative will include standard station elements for an urban Metrorail station without Park & Ride or off-street Kiss & Ride facilities. The mezzanine level will include a station manager's kiosk, fare gates, and fare vendors. Service and ancillary rooms required for electrical, mechanical, and plumbing services will be located between the mezzanine and platform levels. The tracks and ties will remain in place for the segment of the existing Metrorail line that will no longer be needed.

The Preferred Alternative includes the design refinements included in Section 2.5.2 and Table 2-3 of the FEIS, and additional design refinements following the FEIS that incorporated more detailed engineering and architectural design that further minimized visual, property, wetlands, and other impacts to the GWMP and Greens Scenic Area easement, as authorized by 23 USC 139(f)(4)(D). **Section 4** of this ROD, Design Refinements since the FEIS, discusses these refinements further, and the refinements are detailed in **Attachment C**. Because the design of Alternatives A, B-CSX Design Option, and D did not change, no further analysis of those alternatives was performed for the FEIS. **Attachment H** provides a summary of the environmental impacts of all of the alternatives studied.

2.4 Transportation Effects of the Preferred Alternative

Table 1 summarizes the long-term, permanent effects to transportation systems. Specific commitments and mitigation measures for the effects from the Preferred Alternative are listed in **Attachment A** of this ROD.

Table 1: Summary of Preferred Alternative Transportation Effects

Resource	Permanent Effects
Transportation	
Traffic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No impacts to overall level of service of intersections in vicinity Increased auto trips may be noticeable at specific intersection approaches or on streets that currently have very low traffic volumes
Metrorail Operations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Additional train needed midday off-peak on Yellow Line to maintain assumed service plan headways Direct Metrorail access
Station Ridership	11,300 weekday boardings (year 2040)
Surface Transit (bus)	No impacts
Pedestrian and Bicycle Accommodations	Improved bicycle/pedestrian access between Potomac Yard and Potomac Greens
Parking and Access Facilities	Potential impact to on-street parking where there are no parking restrictions
Airport Facilities and Operations	Improves transit access to airport from Potomac Yard

2.5 Environmental Impacts of the Preferred Alternative

Table 2 summarizes the long-term, permanent impacts to environmental and community resources that will result from the Preferred Alternative. Specific commitments and mitigation measures for the effects from the Preferred Alternative are listed in **Attachment A** of this ROD.

Table 2: Summary of Preferred Alternative Permanent Impacts¹

Resource	Permanent Impacts
Land Acquisitions and Displacements	
GWMP Land Acquisition	0.16 - 0.33 acre
City of Alexandria Land Acquisition	3.44 - 3.67 acres
Private Land Acquisition	0.52 acre
Total Land Acquisition	4.12 - 4.52 acres
Displacements	No residences or businesses displaced
Impacts to Greens Scenic Area Easement	1.71 - 1.94 acres
Land Use, Zoning and Local Plans	
Land Use	Station, entrance facilities, and realigned track occupy existing public open space
Zoning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consistent with adopted North Potomac Yard (Coordinated Development District #19) zoning • Refined station design meets the HD1 Height District limit
Consistency with Local and NPS Plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consistent with City of Alexandria plans • Consistent with regional transportation plans • Not applicable to GWMP plans and governing laws • Project Statement of Findings for Floodplains and Wetlands published to comply with NPS Director's Orders
Neighborhoods and Environmental Justice	
Neighborhoods, Demographics, and Community Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved mobility with access to Metrorail • Increased economic activity due to Metrorail access • Visual impacts to views from Potomac Yard and Potomac Greens neighborhoods
Environmental Justice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No disproportionately high and adverse impacts on minority and/or low-income populations • Beneficial effects to minority and/or low-income populations by providing direct access to the regional transit system
Visual Resources	
Short-term (2020) Impacts to Visual Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visual impacts to GWMP reduce visual quality for six out of nine viewsheds and the Continuous Corridor: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - One from Very High to Moderate - Two from High to Moderately High - One from Moderately High to Moderate - Two from Moderate to Moderately Low - Continuous Corridor from Very High to High • Visual impacts to Potomac Yard/ Potomac Greens reduce visual quality for two out of three viewsheds: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Two from Moderate to Moderately Low
Long-term (2040) Impacts to Visual Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visual impacts to the GWMP reduce visual quality for six out of nine viewsheds and the Continuous Corridor: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - One from Very High to Moderately High - Two from High to Moderately High - One from Moderately High to Moderate - Two from Moderate to Moderately Low - Continuous Corridor from Very High to High • Visual impacts to Potomac Yard/ Potomac Greens reduce visual quality for two out of three viewsheds: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - One from Moderately Low to Low

Resource	Permanent Impacts
	- One from Moderate to Moderately Low
Cultural Resources	
Section 106 Adverse Effects on GWMP/MVMH/PNCR	Yes
Construction area on GWMP/MVMH/PNCR Land (requires permit from NPS)	0.58 acre
Construction area on Greens Scenic Area easement (requires release of easement)	2.86 - 3.09 acres
Permanent Transfer of GWMP/MVMH/PNCR Land	0.16 - 0.33 acre
Permanent Transfer of Greens Scenic Area Easement Land	1.71 - 1.94 acres
Construction of non-historic elements within historic properties	Permanent construction of station facilities, realigned track, and retaining wall or earthen berm within the MVMH/GWMP boundaries and Greens Scenic Area easement
Visual Impacts	Temporary and permanent impacts diminish GWMP/MVMH landscape architecture
Number of Trees removed in areas of original GWMP/MVMH Design	10 to 15 trees
Acres of Trees and associated vegetation removed on GWMP/MVMH/Green Scenic Area Easement Land	0.84 - 1.11 acres
Archaeological Sites Affected	No adverse effect
Parklands	
Impacts to Parks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City of Alexandria: 3.00 - 3.23 acres (includes 1.71 - 1.94 acres of Greens Scenic Area easement administered by NPS) • Federal (NPS): 0.16 - 0.33 acre of GWMP
Air Quality	
Impacts to Air Quality	No impacts expected on regional air quality
Noise & Vibration	
FTA Noise Criteria	No exceedances predicted
WMATA Noise Criteria	No new exceedances predicted (7 sites would continue to exceed WMATA criteria as in current condition)
Station Noise (announcements and door chimes)	Yes
FTA Vibration Criteria	No exceedances predicted
WMATA Vibration Criteria	No exceedances predicted
Water Resources	
Increase in Impervious Surface	2.22 acres
Wetlands	<u>U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Wetlands</u> 1.22 - 1.56 acres <u>NPS Wetlands</u> 1.13 - 1.45 acres <u>Total Wetlands</u> 1.28 - 1.65 acres (total includes areas of overlap)
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Regulated Surface Waters	No impacts (both outside and within NPS property/easement)

Resource	Permanent Impacts
100-year Floodplain Impacts	<u>GWMP</u> 0.05 - 0.19 acre <u>Greens Scenic Area easement</u> 1.26 - 1.48 acres <u>Other Land</u> 0.17 - 0.22 acre <u>Total Land</u> 1.48 - 1.89 acres
500-year Floodplain Impacts (excludes 100-yr floodplain)	0.95 - 0.98 acre
Navigable Waterways and Coastal Zones	
Impacts to Navigable Waterways	No impacts
Resource Protection Areas	<u>GWMP</u> 0.10 - 0.23 acre <u>Greens Scenic Area easement</u> 1.71 - 1.94 acres <u>Other Land</u> 1.58 - 1.63 acres <u>Total Land</u> 3.39 - 3.80 acres
Coastal Zone Consistency	Project is consistent with Virginia's Coastal Zone Management Program
Ecosystems and Endangered Species	
Protected Species	No impacts
Ecologically Sensitive Areas	No impacts
Natural Habitat Impacts	2.58 - 3.02 acres
Sustainability	
Sustainability Policy Impacts	Consistent with local sustainability requirements
Hazardous and Contaminated Materials	
Hazardous and Contaminated Materials Impacts	No adverse effects due to mitigation
Safety and Security	
Safety and Security Impacts	No impacts
Utilities	
Utilities Impacts	Rerouting stormwater and water utilities
Soils and Geological Conditions	
Soil Impacts	No impacts
Groundwater Impacts	No impacts

1. Permanent resource impact notes:

- The Cultural Resources section addresses the requirements of Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966. The other sections in the table address the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).
- Some permanent impact areas are expressed as a range due to the two design options evaluated in the FEIS. The single design for the Preferred Alternative described in this ROD has impacts within the ranges.

Table 3 summarizes the temporary construction-related impacts to environmental and community resources that will result from the Preferred Alternative. Specific commitments and mitigation measures for the effects from the Preferred Alternative are listed in **Attachment A** of this ROD.

Table 3: Summary of Preferred Alternative Temporary Construction Impacts²

Resource	Temporary Construction Impacts
Transportation	
Metrorail Operations	Affects Metrorail operations, including weekend and evening off-peak shutdowns
CSXT ROW and Operations	Short duration impacts to CSXT from installation of certain structures
Public Roadways and Private Driveways	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lane closures, use of flagmen, sidewalk closures, wear and tear due to construction activities • Construction access from Potomac Greens Drive, Carpenter Road, and Potomac Avenue during approved times
Land Acquisitions and Displacements	
Greens Scenic Area Easement Impacts	2.86 - 3.09 acres
Land Use and Zoning	
Impacts to Land Use and Zoning	Temporary construction staging in existing public and private open space and commercial land
Neighborhoods, Demographics, and Community Resources	
Impacts to Children's Health and Safety	Temporary closure of one public and one private playground
Environmental Justice	
Impacts to minority and/or low-income populations	No disproportionately high and adverse impacts on minority and/or low-income populations
Visual Resources	
Impacts to Visual Resources <i>(Acreages are for acres of treed area and vegetation removed)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Removal of trees on GWMP/MVMH/Greens Scenic Area Easement land: 0.97 - 1.24 acres • Visible construction equipment & materials
Parklands	
Impacts to Parks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City of Alexandria: 10.24 - 10.47 acres (includes 2.86 - 3.09 acres of Greens Scenic Area easement administered by NPS) • Federal (NPS): 0.25 - 0.42 acre of GWMP parkland
Air Quality	
Impacts to Air Quality	Direct emissions from construction equipment, increased emissions from motor vehicles, and fugitive dust emissions
Noise and Vibration	
Noise and Vibration Impacts	Bulk of construction of during daylight hours; some during nighttime and weekends; may include noise and vibration from pile driving; expected to affect only the closest residences and commercial properties in the vicinity of station and new track
Water Quality	
Impacts to Water Quality	Potential effects as the result of erosion and sedimentation occurring at the construction site and washing into surface waterways

Resource	Temporary Construction Impacts
Waters of the United States (Wetlands)	
Wetlands	<u>U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Wetlands</u> 2.88 - 3.22 acres <u>NPS Wetlands</u> 2.92 - 3.24 acres <u>Total Wetlands</u> 2.92 - 3.24 acres (total includes areas of overlap)
Floodplains	
100-year Floodplain Impacts	3.03 - 3.44 acres
500-year Floodplain Impacts (excludes 100-yr floodplain)	0.43 - 0.46 acre
Navigable Waterways and Coastal Zones	
Impacts to Navigable Waterways	No impacts
Resource Protection Areas	<u>GWMP Land</u> 0.16 - 0.29 acre <u>Greens Scenic Area easement</u> 2.86 - 3.09 acres <u>Other Land</u> 2.33 - 2.38 acres <u>Total Land</u> 5.35 - 5.76 acres
Coastal Zone Consistency	Project is consistent with Virginia's Coastal Zone Management Program
Ecosystems and Endangered Species	
Temporary Wetland, Riverine, and Upland Habitat Impacts	<u>WOUS and Wetlands</u> 2.98 - 3.34 acres <u>Treed Upland</u> 0.41 - 0.48 acre
Sustainability	
Sustainability Policy Impacts	Consistent with local sustainability requirements
Hazardous and Contaminated Materials	
Impacts to Hazardous and Contaminated Materials	Potential to encounter contaminated materials, which would be disposed off-site and replaced with clean structural fill
Safety and Security	
Safety and Security Impacts	Potential for unauthorized access to construction site and staging area and issues related to construction worker safety and emergency response
Utilities	
Utilities Impacts	No impacts
Soils and Geological Conditions	
Soil Impacts	10.24 - 10.99 acres
Groundwater Impacts	Minor localized alteration of shallow seasonal perched aquifer

2. Temporary construction impact notes:

- Construction impact areas include only the temporary impact areas and exclude the permanent impact areas listed above in Table 2.
- Some permanent impact areas are expressed as a range due to the two design options evaluated in the FEIS. The single design for the Preferred Alternative described in this ROD has impacts within the ranges.

Section 6 of this ROD describes the determinations and findings regarding compliance with other federal laws and agency requirements: air quality conformity under the Clean Air Act, Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, Section 4(f) of the U.S. Department of Transportation Act, Executive Order 12898 on environmental justice, Section 404 of the Clean Water Act regarding wetlands, Executive Orders 11988 and 13690 on floodplains and flood risk, the Endangered Species Act, and the Organic Act.

2.6 Measures to Avoid, Minimize, and Mitigate Effects

The FEIS and **Attachment A** of this ROD describe the mitigation measures that are now incorporated into the Project to avoid and minimize adverse impacts. FTA will ensure that the City of Alexandria designs and builds the Project in accordance with the mitigation measures contained in **Attachment A**. In addition, FTA will require that the City of Alexandria, in coordination with WMATA, establish a mitigation-monitoring program to ensure adequate communication of mitigation and design commitments to the teams working on final design and construction, and to provide a means for the City of Alexandria, WMATA, and FTA to track the progress in accomplishing the mitigation commitments. FTA will monitor implementation of mitigation measures through quarterly reviews during design and construction or other appropriate means.

3.0 UPDATES TO INFORMATION IN THE FEIS

Since publication of the FEIS, minor items have been identified that warrant clarification or correction. Minor typographical errors are corrected by the Errata Sheet provided in **Attachment D** of this ROD. FTA has determined that the nature of these updates is minor and does not substantially change the determinations and decisions FTA has made in the FEIS or this ROD.

4.0 DESIGN REFINEMENTS SINCE THE FEIS

The environmental impacts evaluated in the June 1, 2016 FEIS were based on conceptual engineering plans. The City of Alexandria and WMATA, in coordination with the FTA and NPS, refined the conceptual engineering plans of the Project to respond to more detailed engineering and architectural design and to reduce environmental impacts. **Attachment C** lists each refinement, the reason for the refinement, and effects of the refinements. Some of the refinements were considered prior to the publication of the FEIS and were presented at City of Alexandria public meetings during the spring of 2016 related to the station design and City planning and zoning approvals. However, the refinements were not incorporated into the FEIS due to the need to coordinate with the public and agencies and complete the environmental analysis. The current architectural design that incorporates the refinements is documented in the *City of Alexandria Potomac Yard Metro and Parks Staff Report on the Master Plan Amendment, Rezoning and Development Special Use Permits and Plans for the Station (June 2016)* which are provided as attachments to the Section 106 MOA, which is included as **Attachment B** of this ROD. The current engineering design that incorporates refinements to retaining walls and earthen berms along the eastern face of the station and realigned track is based on the July 2016 engineering plans.

FTA and the City of Alexandria assessed each refinement individually and then collectively to determine the anticipated change in effects, if any, to the natural and built environment. FTA has determined that these design refinements since the FEIS are typical of refinements made by a project sponsor as public and agency outreach continues and engineering design advances in response to that outreach during the NEPA process. In addition, FTA has determined in accordance with 23 CFR 771.129 and 771.130 that the design refinements do not result in new impacts beyond those evaluated in the FEIS. Refinements that affect historic resources have been included in the Section 106 MOA. No NEPA supplemental documentation is required.

5.0 PUBLIC OUTREACH AND OPPORTUNITIES TO COMMENT

A number of different approaches were used to ensure that the public remained informed of developments and were provided an opportunity to comment throughout the Project planning and design process. A Project website and e-mail list were developed and maintained; public meetings were held at key stages during the process; Project materials were distributed at City of Alexandria libraries and community centers; and Project presentations were made at local civic association meetings and in coordination with the City of Alexandria's Potomac Yard Metrorail Implementation Work Group (PYMIG). The public meetings conducted at key stages presented Project information and solicited public comments on Project scoping, alternatives considered, and preliminary environmental effects. A public hearing and comment period were held to solicit oral and written comments on the DEIS.

5.1 Public Scoping

The NOI was published in the Federal Register (Vol. 76, No. 18) on Thursday, January 27, 2011.

- Potential cooperating and participating agencies were invited to attend an interagency scoping meeting held on Thursday, February 10, 2011, at the Cora Kelly Recreation Center, 25 West Reed Avenue, Alexandria, Virginia. In addition to presenting an overview of the Project, the meeting provided an opportunity for the early identification of significant issues related to the Project.
- Two public scoping meetings were held on Thursday, February 10, 2011, at the Cora Kelly Recreation Center, 25 West Reed Avenue, Alexandria, Virginia, at 4:30 pm and 6:00 pm. Public input was sought on the purpose and need for the Project, alternatives being considered, key environmental considerations, and the public involvement and agency coordination process.
- A public meeting to review the EIS alternatives was held on Thursday, April 19, 2012, at the Cora Kelly Recreation Center, 25 West Reed Avenue, Alexandria, Virginia. In addition to presenting an overview of the Project, the environmental review process, the EIS alternatives, Project schedule, and next steps, the meeting provided an opportunity for public comment. Comments were incorporated into materials for subsequent public meetings, and the DEIS incorporated additional explanation, where needed, to address questions from the public.

5.2 Public Review of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS)

EPA published its Notice of Availability (NOA) for the DEIS in the Federal Register (Vol. 80, No. 64) on Friday, April 3, 2015, which marked the beginning of the public comment period. In accordance with 23 CFR 771.123(i), the Federal Register public availability notice established a minimum 45-day comment period. The City of Alexandria held three public meetings in late March/early April 2015 to provide the public the opportunity to learn more about the potential environmental effects of the Project and the technical analyses in the DEIS in advance of the public hearing. The meetings used an "open house" format in which participants were able to review display boards and ask Project staff questions.

After the release of the DEIS, the general public and resource and regulatory agencies were offered the opportunity to review and comment on the DEIS during the public review process. This process included a public hearing and a 46-day comment period from Friday, April 3, 2015, through Monday, May 18, 2015.

The public hearing was advertised through notices in the Washington Post, the Washington Hispanic, and El Tiempo newspapers; on the Project and City of Alexandria websites; through hand-delivered and mailed flyers to property owners; and through email to the Project's email distribution list. The public hearing on the DEIS was held on Thursday, April 30, 2015, at Cora Kelly Recreation Center, 25 West Reed Avenue, in Alexandria, Virginia. Approximately 100 people attended the public hearing. Before the public hearing, an informal open house was held from 6:30 pm to 7:00 pm.

160 comment submissions were received during the comment period. Comments were submitted on behalf of public entities (including the Federal government, state government, local government, and public agencies), community organizations/non-profits, businesses, and individuals. The Project team received correspondence electronically through e-mail, by comment card, and by testimony during public hearings. Most comment submissions addressed multiple topics, resulting in a total of 379 comments broken down by topic area. A number of comments focused on support for Build Alternative B, financial resources, vehicle traffic, construction

impact, taxes, and bicycle access. Chapter 6 of the FEIS contains the detailed summary of the comments with Project team responses. Copies of all original comments submitted are included in the *WMATA Public Hearing Staff Report* found in Volume II of the FEIS.

5.3 Public Release of the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS)

The City of Alexandria held a series of public meetings in April through June 2016 to provide an opportunity for the public to learn more about the potential construction impacts of the Project, status of the FEIS, and other ongoing work related to the Project.

EPA published its NOA for the FEIS in the Federal Register (Vol. 81, No. 112) on Friday, June 10, 2016, which marked the beginning of the 30-day review and no-action period. The review period ended on Monday, July 11, 2016. Determinations and findings regarding issues frequently raised in comments on the FEIS are provided in **Attachment G** of this ROD.

5.4 Continued Public and Stakeholder Outreach and Communication

Public outreach activities and information exchange will continue after the environmental review process. A Public Communication Plan will be developed to continue outreach through the design, engineering and construction phases of the Project. Information regarding final design and construction activities will be disseminated via the City of Alexandria Project website, the City's social media accounts, the Project e-mail distribution list, newsletters, public meetings, and news releases, as necessary. The City of Alexandria's PYMIG will function as a forum for the public outreach process through station opening and allow the group to consider the variety of issues that will arise as the Project moves into design and construction.

6.0 DETERMINATIONS AND FINDINGS REGARDING OTHER LAWS

6.1 Conformity with Air Quality Plans

Inclusion of the Project in the conforming CLRP designates it as a conforming transportation project and precludes the need for a separate regional emissions analysis. Impacts to air quality from EPA-designated criteria pollutants were assessed for compliance with EPA Transportation Conformity Rule (40 CFR Part 93), consistent with the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS).

As the Project does not propose improvements to bus services beyond those included in the No Build Alternative, and because the Project is not expected to significantly degrade the level of service (LOS) at nearby congested intersections, neither a qualitative nor a quantitative PM_{2.5} or CO hotspot analysis is required for this project. The Clean Air Act Amendments and the Transportation Conformity requirements are met without a hot-spot analysis because this Project has been found not to be of local air quality concern under 40 CFR 93.123(b)(1). Consequently, the Project meets statutory and regulatory transportation conformity requirements for PM_{2.5} without a hot-spot analysis.

As described in the FEIS Section 3.11, the eight-hour O₃ concentrations at Site M1 (Pentagon City) exceeded the limit of 0.075 ppm in 2011 and 2012 but did not exceed the limit in 2013 and 2014. Although the region is also currently in non-attainment for PM_{2.5}, concentrations at Site M1 did not exceed the 24-hour criterion limit of 35 µg/m³ or the annual average limit of 15µg/m³ in any of the previous three years. Similarly, recent concentrations of PM₁₀, CO, and all of the other pollutants are reported to be well below their respective standards for the three most recent years for which data are available. These trends are expected to continue for the foreseeable future through the 2020 opening year.

The Project is included in a conforming transportation plan (2015 CLRP), is not considered a project of local air quality concern, and no violations of the NAAQS are anticipated; therefore, FTA finds that the Project conforms to air quality plans for the area.

6.2 Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act

FTA completed consultation in accordance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (as amended), which requires federal agencies to consider the impacts of their undertakings on historic properties. Section 106 regulations require that FTA identify historic properties listed in or eligible for listing in

the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) within the Project's Area of Potential Effects (APE); assess effects to historic properties; avoid, minimize, and/or mitigate any adverse effects; and consult with Virginia's State Historic Preservation Officer, as represented by the Virginia Department of Historic Resources (DHR), and other consulting parties throughout the Section 106 process. NPS served as a consulting party to FTA's Section 106 consultation. In that role, NPS participated in meetings with FTA and the other consulting parties regarding Project effects on historic properties, including GWMP, MVMH and PNCR.

FTA determined, with DHR concurrence, that the Project will result in adverse effects on the GWMP, the MVMH, and PNCR. The adverse effects result from permanent land transfers, construction of the station facility and realigned track including a retaining wall or earthen berm within the boundaries of the historic properties, temporary construction access and staging areas, temporary and permanent visual effects, and temporary and permanent loss of vegetation and plantings. The Greens Scenic Area easement is eligible as a contributing resource to the GWMP, MVMH, and PNCR, so effects by the Preferred Alternative on the easement are described under those NRHP-listed properties. For the Preferred Alternative, permanent transfers will be necessary for the permanent operation of the Metrorail station facility.

A fully executed Section 106 MOA between FTA, the City of Alexandria, WMATA, NPS, and DHR containing conditions and stipulations regarding the Project on and near the GWMP, is provided in **Attachment B** of this ROD. The MOA is a refinement of the draft MOA that was included in the FEIS. Refinements to the MOA since the FEIS was published, are the result of further coordination among FTA, the City of Alexandria, WMATA, NPS, and DHR regarding Project minimization and mitigation commitments related to the affected historic properties and how best to define those in the MOA.

6.3 Section 4(f)

Section 4(f) applies to all transportation projects that require funding by the USDOT. As a USDOT agency, and because the Preferred Alternative will use portions of several properties protected by Section 4(f) including the GWMP, FTA completed a Section 4(f) evaluation as part of the FEIS in accordance with the Section 4(f) regulations at 23 CFR Part 774.

As stated in the Final Section 4(f) Evaluation in Appendix D of the FEIS, the Preferred Alternative will result in:

- Permanent use, not *de minimis*, of the GWMP, MVMH, PNCR, Greens Scenic Area Easement, and Potomac Greens Park; and
- Temporary occupancy (not a use) of the planned Rail Park.

For the purposes of Section 4(f), the GWMP is considered a park and a historic property. Coinciding with the area of the Parkway at the Project site are two other historic properties, the MVMH and PNCR. The Preferred Alternative will require the total use of 0.58 acre of the GWMP, MVMH, and PNCR related to a land transfer along the western boundary of the park and historic properties that will be permanently used for realigned track (approximately 0.16-0.33 acre) and a permit from NPS for temporary use of the GWMP necessary for construction staging areas (approximately 0.25-0.42 acre). The land transfer will result in the removal of existing vegetation that currently provides a visual barrier between the GWMP and Potomac Yard. Construction staging and material laydown areas will require a permit from NPS for the clearing of vegetation and disturbance of soils in the areas designated for these activities for the Preferred Alternative. The Preferred Alternative will not provide access for construction vehicles from the GWMP to the proposed station location and construction staging areas.

For the purposes of Section 4(f), the Greens Scenic Area easement is considered a park and a historic property. The Preferred Alternative will require the total use of 4.80 acres of the Green Scenic Area easement related to a land transfer along the western boundary of the park that will be permanently used for station facilities and realigned track (approximately 1.71-1.94 acres) plus a permit for temporary use of the Greens Scenic Area easement necessary to provide a staging area for construction equipment (approximately 2.86-3.09 acres). The permanent use will impact existing vegetation intended to provide a visual buffer to the CSXT tracks and Potomac Yard from the Potomac Greens Park. Construction staging, material laydown areas, and access driveways will require a permit from NPS for the clearing of vegetation and disturbance of soils in the areas designated for these activities for the Preferred Alternative.

The Final Section 4(f) Evaluation was included in the FEIS, which was made available to the public for a 30-day review period. In a letter dated July 7, 2016, the U.S. Department of the Interior provided concurrence with FTA's findings of the least overall harm analysis contained within the Project's Final Section 4(f) Evaluation, dated June 1, 2016.

FTA finds that there is no feasible and prudent alternative to the use of Section 4(f) properties for the Project and that FTA has identified the Alternative B Option 2 Construction Access as the alternative with the least overall harm. FTA and the City of Alexandria have committed all possible planning to minimize harm to these resources by implementing measures of the Section 106 MOA and the Net Benefits Agreement between the City of Alexandria and NPS. The measures to minimize harm to Section 4(f) resources are included in the list of mitigation measures in **Attachment A** and in the MOA (for historic properties) in **Attachment B**.

6.4 Clean Water Act and Executive Order 11990 on Protection of Wetlands

Wetlands exist in the area to the east and north of Potomac Greens, between the WMATA tracks and GWMP, and in the vicinity of Four Mile Run. The Preferred Alternative will impact 1.22 to 1.56 acres of wetland regulated by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) under the Clean Water Act. Permanent and temporary impacts to wetlands regulated by the USACE will be mitigated through specific strategies developed in the Joint Permit Application process in accordance with Section 404 of the Clean Water Act.

Some of the wetlands impacted by the Project are also regulated by NPS. Permanent and temporary impacts to NPS wetlands will be mitigated in accordance with the NPS Statement of Findings for Floodplains and Wetlands provided in the NPS Record of Decision. During final design, the City of Alexandria will coordinate with USACE, the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (VDEQ), the Virginia Marine Resources Commission (VMRC), and NPS to obtain the necessary permits and will continue to consider measures to reduce permanent and temporary wetland impacts further. The Project will satisfy all requirements of necessary permits.

FTA finds that with the mitigation measures identified in **Attachment A** of this ROD, the Project meets the requirements of the Clean Water Act (Section 404) and Executive Order 11990 on Protection of Wetlands.

6.5 Executive Orders 11988 and 13690 on Floodplains and Flood Risk

The Project will impact both 100-year and 500-year flood zones, east of the existing Metrorail tracks. The impacted flood zones span the GWMP from the Potomac River. The Preferred Alternative is located as far west as possible within the area technically feasible to minimize permanent impacts to the floodplain. The station platform and realigned track will be constructed on retained or graded fill for a segment approximately 1,400 feet in length. The eastern station wall, fill, and retaining walls or earthen berms will be constructed within the 100-year flood zone. However, all habitable areas of structures would be elevated above the 500-year flood zone, including station facilities, railroad tracks, and storage and utilities which serve the station.

Construction of the Metrorail station will slightly reduce floodplain function by decreasing the flood storage capacity of the floodplain and reducing the ability of the floodplain to recharge and infiltrate stormwater. Based on discussions with the City of Alexandria and Arlington County's engineering staff, the Preferred Alternative is not expected to raise the 100-year Base Flood Elevation within the study area if constructed within the flood zones. This statement is based on the location of the large surface area of the Potomac River relative to the station area.

Some of the floodplains impacted by the Project are also regulated by NPS. Permanent and temporary impacts to NPS floodplains will be mitigated in accordance with the NPS *Statement of Findings for Floodplains and Wetlands* provided in the NPS Record of Decision.

Mitigation will include wet flood-proofing and other design techniques for the elements of the foundation within the floodplain that would prevent the structure from collapsing or being damaged during a flood. As described above, all structures will be elevated above the 500-year flood zone, including station facilities, railroad tracks, and storage and utilities which serve the station. The local, state, and Federal agencies are expected to offer project specific design recommendations to mitigate floodplain impacts at the permitting stage. Proposed mitigation will be consistent with permitting requirements and local, state, and Federal regulatory requirements, including the NPS *Statement of Findings for Floodplains and Wetlands*, and with Executive Order (EO) 13690.

6.6 Environmental Justice

The City of Alexandria implemented a public outreach strategy that created meaningful opportunities for public engagement for all members of the community, including members of minority and low-income populations. Participation of low-income and minority populations in the Project decision-making process has been advanced through:

- Two scoping meetings, held at the Cora Kelly Recreation Center, located in the Alexandria neighborhood, which has a high proportion of minority and low-income residents and is within the Project's analysis area;
- One public meeting presenting Project alternatives also held at the Cora Kelly Recreation Center;
- Three public community open house meetings presenting the analyses from the DEIS were held at the City Hall Council Workroom, the Charles Houston Recreation Center, and Cora Kelly Recreation Center. The three facilities are accessible by multiple public transportation services;
- Public hearing held at the Cora Kelly Recreation Center. A shuttle bus provided direct service to the event from the nearby Metrorail station;
- Availability of Spanish-speaking staff at all public involvement events;
- Translation of outreach materials into Spanish, pursuant to EO 13166 ("Improving Access to Services for Persons with Limited English Proficiency");
- Meetings with local neighborhoods and civic associations, including the Lynhaven Citizens Association, which includes minority and low-income communities; and
- Creation of the PYMIG by the City of Alexandria, which has served as a venue for interested members of the public as well as City officials to stay informed of the EIS process.

Concerns and issues raised by the community members have been considered carefully in the development of the Project. The City of Alexandria has committed to ongoing outreach to members of the public, including minority and low-income populations, to address their concerns. Specific commitments to outreach activities from the Preferred Alternative are listed in **Attachment A** of this ROD.

Based on the analysis in the FEIS, and as stated in FEIS Section 3.7.3.3, FTA has concluded that the Preferred Alternative will not have disproportionately high and adverse effects on minority and low-income populations. The Project complies with EO 12898 and meets the requirements of FTA's Environmental Justice Circular (FTA C 4703.1).

6.7 Endangered Species Act

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) Threatened and Endangered Species Database System was used to identify Federal and state species listed within the Project area. A database query was conducted July 17, 2015, and USFWS issued its Online Project Certification Letter on September 3, 2015. Subsequent database queries were conducted on March 28, 2016 and October 20, 2016. No federally listed threatened or endangered species and no critical habitat is identified by USFWS within the Project area. Prior to construction, the USFWS and the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries will be consulted to ensure that no changes to the status of listed species in the Project area have occurred.

As no federally listed threatened or endangered species or designated critical habitat are identified by USFWS within the Project area, FTA finds that the Project meets the requirements of Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act.

6.8 National Park Service

The portions of the GWMP and the Greens Scenic Area easement within the Project area are owned by the U.S. Government and managed by the NPS under the provisions of the NPS Organic Act of 1916 (54 USC 100101, et seq.). The law gives the NPS the management authority to protect the resources and values of the parks it operates.

In preparing to make that decision regarding the Project, NPS participated in the NEPA process as a cooperating agency due to the potential for Project impacts to the GWMP and the adjacent Greens Scenic Area easement administered by NPS. NPS has worked collaboratively with the City of Alexandria, FTA, and WMATA throughout the environmental review process. In consultation with NPS during the FEIS and prior to the NPS and FTA RODs, FTA, the City of Alexandria, and WMATA identified and committed to implementing specific minimization and mitigation measures to reduce the impact of the Preferred Alternative on the visual, cultural, and natural aspects of the GWMP and Greens Scenic Area easement. The minimization and mitigation measures are provided in the Section 106 MOA and the Net Benefits Agreement between the City of Alexandria and NPS, which are found in **Attachment B** and **Attachment E** of this ROD, respectively.

NPS will adopt its ROD for the Potomac Yard Metrorail Station EIS to satisfy its NEPA obligations.



Terry Garcia Crews
Regional Administrator

10-31-16

Date of Approval