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IN REPLY REFER TO:

U.S. Department
of Transportation

March 19, 2007

**Federal Highway
Administration**



Finding of No Significant Impact:
Route 1 (Study A)

From: Prince William/Stafford
County Line

To: Route 123

State Project: 0001-96A-103,PE100
Prince William County

Mr. Dennis Morrison
District Administrator
Virginia Department of Transportation
Avion Lakeside I
14685 Avion Parkway
Chantilly, Virginia 20151-1104

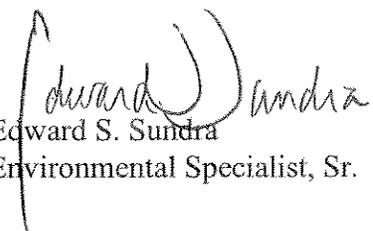
Attention: Mr. John Muse

Dear Mr. Morrison:

On February 28, 2007, we received VDOT's letter dated February 20, 2007, requesting that FHWA issue a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) for the Route 1 improvements – Project A. We have reviewed the letter and its supporting information along with our files and issued a FONSI, which is attached. Please make a copy of the FONSI available in accordance with 23 CFR 771.121(b). If you have any questions, please contact me at (804) 775-3338.

Sincerely,

Roberto Fonseca-Martinez
Division Administrator

By: 
Edward S. Sundra
Environmental Specialist, Sr.

Attachment

FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

FOR

ROUTE: Route 1 (Study A)

LOCATION: Prince William County

FEDERAL PROJECT: STP-96A-9(008)

STATE PROJECT: 0001-96A-103, PE100
PPMS No. 18857

FROM: Prince William/Stafford County Line (just south of the Route 1/Russell Road Interchange)

TO: Route 123 (Gordon Boulevard) Interchange

The FHWA has determined that this proposed project will not have any significant impact on the environment. This finding of no significant impact is based on the attached Environmental Assessment (EA) and supporting documentation which has been independently evaluated by the FHWA and determined to adequately and accurately discuss the environmental issues and impacts of the proposed project. All substantive environmental comments received as a result of the early coordination process, the public hearings, and the public clearinghouse notification process have been considered. This EA and supporting documentation provides sufficient evidence and analysis for determining that an Environmental Impact Statement is not required. The FHWA takes full responsibility for the accuracy, scope, and content of the attached EA and supporting documentation.

3/19/07
Date

Edward J. Junda
Senior Environmental Specialist

Rationale for Finding of No Significant Impact

Route 1 – Project A

Prince William County

I have reviewed VDOT's February 20, 2007, submittal of the Environmental Assessment (EA) and their attachment to finalize the EA and request for a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) for the subject project. VDOT did not submit a final EA for this project nor is one required under 23 CFR Part 771. Instead, VDOT resubmitted the EA with a transmittal letter that reflects the 1) changes in the proposed action and mitigation resulting from comments received on the EA; 2) a summary of findings, agreements and determinations required for the proposal; and 3) a summary of pertinent comments received on the EA and their responses. This approach is acceptable under NEPA and is prescribed in FHWA Technical Advisory T6640.8A under Section II(h). To summarize the transmittal letter: 1) there were several changes to the proposed action that are described below; 2) FHWA is making, in conjunction with the issuance of this FONSI, a determination that the proposed project will have an adverse effect on historic resources, a wetland finding, and a PM2.5 project level conformity determination (see relevant resource discussion below); and 3) VDOT has summarized, considered and responded in their transmittal letter to the comments received at the March 25, 2003, Location Public Hearing and the comments submitted by the Marine Corps Base Quantico (MCBQ) on the Environmental Assessment.

The proposed project is one of three projects planned as part of the Route 1 Corridor Study improvements from Russell Road near the Prince William/Stafford County line to Huntington Avenue in Fairfax County, just south of the Capital Beltway. In December of 1999, I met with VDOT to discuss the results of the 27 mile-long Route 1 Corridor Study and the type of environmental documentation that would be needed to proceed with the development of the proposed improvements. I reviewed the study that was developed along with the traffic data and the consultant's recommendations; I also rode the corridor with VDOT to determine if the proposed improvements could be broken into smaller, more manageable projects, with logical termini and independent utility. Based on that effort, the proposed corridor improvements were broken into three separate projects for purposes of complying with the National Environmental Policy Act. Before arriving at a final decision, CEQ's regulations regarding connected actions, cumulative actions, and similar actions were considered to determine if each segment could proceed separately. Documentation of this review and the resulting determination can be found in the project files. It is important to note that the three projects that came out of the location study are not physically linked; they are separated from each other by other proposed improvements that have completed the NEPA process and have progressed further in the project development process. The limits of the first project that came out of the corridor study and the subject of this FONSI, Project A, is from Russell Road near the Prince William/Stafford County line to approximately 0.47 miles south of the existing Route 1/Route 123 intersection. The EA for this project was approved on February 20, 2003. A separate EA was developed and a FONSI issued for the proposed Route 1/Route 123 interchange on January 4, 2000. The limits of the second project that came out of the corridor study, Project B, are from approximately 0.38 miles north of the existing Route 1/Route 123 intersection to Armistead Road; a distance of approximately 3.3 miles. An EA was approved for Project B on January 10, 2003, and a FONSI was issued on May 28, 2004. A separate EA was developed and a FONSI issued for a multiple intersection improvement project from .07 miles south of Lorton Road (i.e. Armistead Road) to .22 miles north of Telegraph Road on April 20, 1999. This project has since been

constructed and open to traffic. The limits of the third project that came out of the corridor study, Project C, are from Belvoir Woods Parkway (i.e. .22 miles north of Telegraph Road) on the south to Huntington Avenue on the north. An EA was approved for Project C on March 28, 2003. Project C has since been shelved pending the outcome of the Telegraph Road Connector project, a Defense Access Road Program project with a terminus near Route 1 and Woodlawn Plantation. The project was also shelved pending decisions by Fairfax County on the role of transit in the corridor.

Existing Route 1 is a four-lane undivided highway with no access control and a posted speed limit of 35 to 55 mph. It is the principal north/south route in eastern Prince William and Fairfax Counties, providing direct access to numerous businesses and residential development via intersecting roadways and breaks in access. As proposed, two different cross-sections will be used within the project limits, one with a 45 mph design speed and one with a 55 mph design speed. Generally speaking, the proposed project will widen the existing facility to six lanes with an oversized outside lane to accommodate bicyclists and a sixteen-foot raised, landscaped median. On one side of the widened road there will be a landscaped strip and an all-purpose asphalt trail. On the other side, there will be another landscaped strip and a six-foot concrete sidewalk. All horizontal and vertical configurations will be consistent with or exceed current American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials' (AASHTO) standards. Based upon my review, I have determined that NEPA and all other applicable environmental requirements have been adequately addressed and have concluded that the project will not have any significant environmental impacts warranting the preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement. Rationale for that conclusion follows below.

The purpose and need for the project includes several components. The primary ones recognize the need to correct operational deficiencies posed by the existing facility (e.g. the lack of a median to separate opposing traffic, the lack of left turn lanes and inadequate storage with existing turn lanes, the lack of adequate pedestrian and bicycle facilities and linkage, and the lack of access controls); the need to provide improved capacity to meet projected traffic demand; the need to foster economic and aesthetic revitalization, and the need to improve modal interrelationships. Without the improvements, the corridor is forecasted to operate at levels of service E and F in the design year of 2025 given traffic projections alone. Failure to address operational issues and modal interrelationships will further compromise capacity and safety in the corridor.

The EA documents the alternatives analysis that was used to narrow down the build alternatives carried forward for detailed study in the environmental document. The Location Study Alignment was the build alternative included in the EA; it was initially based on the centerline of the existing road, and then adjusted where possible to avoid and minimize adverse impacts to the resources located in the corridor. As documented in the EA, several options for shifting the Location Study Alignment at select locations within the corridor were considered as an alternative to that alignment at these select locations. Specifically, alternatives to the Location Study Alignment in the form of localized alignment shifts were considered at Locust Shade Park (one option), in Triangle (two options), at Brady's Hill in Dumfries (one option), in Dumfries itself (one option), at Possum Point in Dumfries (one option), and at Dale Boulevard (one option). Additional options were developed at Possum Point and Dale Boulevard (one option each) following the Location Public Hearing based on public feedback. Additionally, the mass transit alternative, the TSM alternative, and alternatives that would have limited widening primarily to the east or west of the existing facility were considered but eliminated. Alternatives that would have widened entirely to the west of Route 1 in the vicinity of Locust Shade Park and in the vicinity of Cecil W. Garrison Park in the Town of Dumfries were also considered but eliminated due to the legal standards of Section 4(f).

The Commonwealth Transportation Board selected the Location Study Alignment along with Locust Shade Option 1, Brady's Hill Option 1, Dumfries Option 1, Possum Point Option 2, and Dale Boulevard Option 2 on July 15, 2004, based, in part, on the recommendation of the project Steering Committee composed of elected members of the Virginia General Assembly and the Fairfax and Prince William County Boards of Supervisors, the endorsement of the Town of Dumfries, and public feedback from the Location Public Hearing. Since the CTB decision, the Locust Shade Option 1 has been further modified following coordination with the MCBQ in order to reduce impacts to their property. These modifications include reducing the typical section and adding an entrance for the new Marine Corps Heritage Museum (which has already been processed with a Categorical Exclusion and constructed). Therefore, the alternative that FHWA is approving and covered by the FONSI includes the alternative adopted by the CTB along with the refinements to Locust Shade Option 1 developed in coordination with the MCBQ.

The following social and environmental impacts were identified in the Environmental Assessment and supporting documentation and will result from the implementation of the preferred alternative described above:

* **Socioeconomic:** The existing corridor is primarily developed with adjacent land uses consisting of industrial, commercial and residential development. At the southern end of the project, adjacent land uses are dominated by Locust Shade Park and Marine Corps Base Quantico. The project will disrupt some established communities/residential developments but because the proposed project follows the existing road alignment, this disruption consists primarily of edge impacts; it is not anticipated that any neighborhoods will be split or community cohesion significantly impacted as a result of the project. In addition, 68% of the residential development that will be impacted is in the form of apartments, which, generally speaking, tend to lack a sense of community because of the transient nature of the occupants and the high level of turn over that characterizes apartment complexes. Despite relocation impacts (which are discussed in greater detail below), the project is anticipated to have a positive impact on community cohesion to a certain extent because the design of the facility includes a sidewalk and asphalt all-purpose trail, which will promote pedestrian and bicycle use and more readily allow residents to safely access services in the corridor. The project is also intended to improve transit service in the corridor by decreasing delays that existing transit providers experience due to the operational deficiencies, which discourages transit patronage.

The economic impact from lost real estate tax revenues was estimated at \$0.6 million in the EA. It is not possible to determine lost tax revenues from businesses that may be impacted by the project because it is unknown how many will re-establish elsewhere in the County. There has been no organized opposition to the project to date. The preferred alternative is responsive to concerns raised by the project Steering Committee including concerns raised by the Town of Dumfries and the Marine Corps Base Quantico.

* **Right-of-Way/Relocations:** It is estimated that the alternative covered by this FONSI will displace 75 families occupying 7 single-family homes, 7 condominiums, 51 apartments, and 10 mobile homes. While the number of displacees is substantial on the surface, the impact must be considered in the context of the environment in which the project is located. The proposed project is more than 11 miles in length and located in a highly developed corridor, which includes numerous residential resources. Compared to the number of residential resources located in the corridor, the residential relocations from the project are not considered significant. As stated in the

EA, the displacements are concentrated in three areas: in Triangle, in an area east of Route 1 just south of Powells Creek, and in an area along Sandra Drive. The area south of Powells Creek will account for 36 of the 51 apartment impacts and all of the condominium impacts. Impacts in Triangle will account for the remainder of the apartment impacts and all but one of the single-family home impacts. There is ample replacement housing in the general project area, but the cost of replacement housing may require VDOT to supplement some of the payments or provide housing of last resort in the case of the mobile home impacts. In addition to residential relocations, 136 businesses will be displaced. Of the 136 businesses, 20 are owner/operators and the rest are tenants. As with the residential displacees, the number of business displacees is substantial on the surface, but the impact must be considered in the context of the environment in which the project is located. Because of the length of the project and highly developed nature of the corridor, which includes numerous businesses, the business relocations are not considered significant. As stated in the EA, the business displacements are concentrated in a couple of locations: approximately 70% are concentrated along the northernmost 2.4 mile section of the project between Delaware Drive and Occoquan Road and approximately 19% are concentrated in Triangle. The remaining displacements are dispersed throughout the project. VDOT will attempt to relocate the businesses as soon as possible following their acquisition, and all measures will be taken to ensure an orderly displacement and reestablishment process. All affected businesses will be compensated for moving and re-establishment expenses if they choose to relocate and re-establish their businesses. Otherwise, businesses will be paid an in-lieu of payment should they decide not to re-establish. The acquisition and relocation program for all displacements will be conducted in accordance with the Uniform Relocation and Real Property Acquisition Act of 1970 as amended. Relocation resources and services will be available to all displacees without discrimination.

* **Environmental Justice:** Based on Census block information, minority group members comprise 48% of the population bordering the Route 1 corridor in the study area making it likely that there are minority populations present adjacent to the project as defined by Executive Order 12898 on environmental justice. Based on Census block data, the location of these populations are: areas east of Route 1 through Dumfries, areas on both sides of Route 1 north of Dumfries, areas east of Route 1 near Dale Boulevard, and areas on both sides of Route 1 between Opitz Boulevard and Occoquan Road. A majority of the projects relocations would occur in two of these areas: on the east side of Route 1 just south of Powell Creek and on the west side of Route 1 a short distance north of Opitz Boulevard. It is not known how many of these relocations involve minorities, but visual observations in the Powell Creek area suggests that some at this location may.

Based on Census block information, 4.4% of Prince William County's population is below the poverty levels. Throughout the Route 1 corridor, the proportion of the population below the poverty level is comparable to the countrywide level with a few exceptions. In Census block groups lying east of Route 1 in Triangle and Dumfries, the percent of the population below the poverty level is 10.9 to 12.5 percent greater than the countywide average. These areas are characterized by mobile homes and multi-family housing. Although no door-to-door surveys were conducted, one could assume that the 10 mobile homes that will be displaced by the project are occupied by low income families. In the Triangle area, the project would displace upwards of 22 families living in apartments and single-family dwellings. The estimated household income of the families that would be displaced in this area are well above the poverty level.

Based on a window-survey of the corridor in developing the Right-of-Way and Relocation Report, it is not evident that the relocation impacts would be borne predominantly by a minority or low

income populations or that the impacts themselves suffered by minorities or low income families is disproportionately higher than the impacts suffered by those not in these categories. Although there are pockets in the corridor where impacts will be borne predominantly by minorities or low income families because that is where they are concentrated, overall, the percentage of minority displacements and impacts to low income families is expected to be comparable to the percent of minorities and low income families in the corridor.

* **Historic/Archeological Resources:** Because of the modern development that has occurred in the corridor, few cultural resources remain. Consequently, only one historic structure (the Williams Ordinary) and two archeological sites (site 44PW1226 and 44PW1229) eligible for the National Register of Historic Places were identified in the corridor. The proposed project will not adversely alter any of the characteristics that qualify the Williams Ordinary for the National Register. In addition, Site 44PW1229 is located outside the Area of Potential Effect. In contrast, site 44PW1226 will be adversely affected by the proposed project. Accordingly, the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (Council) was notified of the adverse effect by letter dated December 1, 2005, but they declined to participate in consultation. A Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) that documents how the adverse effect to site 44PW1226 will be taken into account was developed with Prince William County, the Virginia Council of Indians, and the Marine Corps Base Quantico serving as consulting parties. The MOA has been executed and a copy filed with the Council on August 16, 2006.

* **Section 4(f) Resources:** There are two parks located in the project corridor. They include Locust Shade Park and Cecil W. Garrison Park. Neither park will be used by the proposed project. The cross section of the corridor in the vicinity of Locust Shade Park has been reduced to avoid any use of Locust Shade Park while minimizing impacts to Marine Corps Base Quantico. Because of the developed nature of the corridor, the proposed project will not have a Section 4(f) constructive use of these public parks either. Archeological site 44PW1229 is not considered a Section 4(f) resource because it is only important for the information that it contains. Accordingly, data recovery has been prescribed for the portion of the site that will be impacted by the proposed project.

* **Agricultural and Ecological Resources:** Because of development and urbanization occurring in the project area, there are no farmlands present.

The proposed project will displace approximately 59 acres of forest. Because the proposed project involves the widening of an existing facility, forest resources in the corridor will be reduced. In contrast, the conversion of forest to accommodate the transportation improvements can be characterized as edge impacts that will not result in the bisecting or fragmentation of any core forested areas in the study area.

* **Wildlife/Endangered Species:** A survey for the federally listed small whorled pogonia did not locate any of the plants. No other occurrences or concerns over federally listed threatened or endangered species or critical habitat were identified in the study area by federal or state officials. All stream crossings were surveyed for the state-listed threatened wood turtle as requested by the Virginia Division of Natural Heritage. No live or dead turtles, carcasses, carapaces, or plastrons of wood turtle were observed.

* **Hazardous Materials:** There are no Superfund or National Priority List hazardous waste sites

located along the proposed project. According to the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality, there are no cases of leaking underground storage tanks along the corridor. The only sites with potential hazardous material concerns include several gas stations. Demolition of residential dwellings acquired because of the project may require adherence to strict health and safety requirements for the handling and removal of asbestos.

- * **Air Quality:** An air quality analysis was conducted which modeled concentrations of carbon monoxide at five sites located in the corridor. The sites represent the worst-case conditions (because of their proximity to the edge of the pavement) that could be expected in the project corridor in the design year. Using background concentrations of six and three ppm for the one and eight-hour carbon monoxide level, respectively, the analysis determined that the project would only marginally impact carbon monoxide levels when compared to existing levels (less than or equal to 1.2 ppm). Accordingly, the carbon monoxide levels for this project, including background, are well below the one and eight hour National Ambient Air Quality Standard for carbon monoxide, and the project is not expected to cause any violations of the standard.

The northern Virginia area is part of the Washington, D.C. Metropolitan Area 8-hour ozone nonattainment area, subjecting it to the transportation planning conformity requirements of the Clean Air Act. The subject project comes from the FY 2005 fiscally constrained long range plan and FY 2006-2011 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) found to conform with the State Implementation Plan (SIP). FHWA and FTA issued an 8-hour conformity finding for the Washington, D.C. Metropolitan Area TIP and Plan on December 21, 2005. The project for which this FONSI is being issued is identified as project VP1a in the air quality conformity analysis (i.e. it falls within those project limits) and was modeled in the 2015 network. Subsequent phases of this project (i.e. right-of-way acquisition and construction) are not yet included in the FY 2006-2011 TIP for the region because those phases are not expected to take place within the timeframe of the TIP.

The northern Virginia area is also part of the Washington, D.C. Metropolitan Area PM_{2.5} nonattainment area. The subject project comes from the FY 2005 fiscally constrained long range plan and FY 2006-2011 TIP found to conform in accordance with EPA's PM_{2.5} Final Rule. FHWA and FTA issued a PM_{2.5} conformity finding for the Washington, D.C. Metropolitan Area TIP and Plan on February 21, 2006. The project was also evaluated in light of EPA's PM_{2.5} Hot-Spot Analysis and Project-level Conformity Determinations Final Rule. Based on the final rule and subsequent guidance, it has been determined that the project is not of air quality concern as defined in 40 CFR Part 93.123(b)(1) based on the forecasted traffic volume and percentage of trucks. Instead, the project is considered a non-exempt project that meets the requirements of the Clean Air Act without a hot-spot analysis. Therefore, in accordance with 40 CFR Part 93.116, the project will neither cause nor contribute to any new localized PM_{2.5} violations.

Finally, the project was assessed for mobile source air toxics (MSATs) in accordance with FHWA's February 3, 2006, interim guidance for addressing MSATs in NEPA documents. Based on that guidance, a qualitative analysis was prepared and included in VDOT's transmittal package. That analysis demonstrates that despite increases in vehicle miles traveled, MSAT emissions in the design year will be lower than present levels because EPA's national control programs are projected to reduce MSAT emissions by 57 to 87 percent between 2000 and 2020.

- * **Noise:** A noise analysis was conducted using 2025 traffic. Noise impacts from the project were

considered at 23 noise sensitive areas in the corridor representing multiple receptors. Of the 23 areas analyzed, 10 contain receptors that will experience noise levels that approach or exceed the noise abatement criteria. Of these 10 areas, 6 will experience noise levels that approach or exceed the noise abatement criteria under the no-build scenario. Noise barriers were found to be the only feasible form of noise mitigation and were considered to mitigate the noise impact. Based on that effort, only three noise barriers were found to be reasonable and feasible based on preliminary information; these barriers will receive further consideration during final design when traffic is updated and the design is developed further. Elsewhere, reasonable and feasible noise barriers could not be designed because of access requirements and because breaks in the barrier would render the barriers ineffective.

- * **Visual Quality and Aesthetics:** Because of the developed nature of the corridor, it is not expected that the proposed project will have a negative impact on the areas visual quality. If anything, the project will enhance visual quality because one of the components of the purpose and need is aesthetic revitalization and the design of the project includes landscaping in the median and on either side of the road.
- * **Aquatic Resources/Wetlands:** The project, as designed would impact approximately 2.6 acres of wetlands spread over 32 locations. Because the project will widen an existing facility, most of the impacts are associated with wetlands located in small depressions along the roadside, in areas adjacent to streams, and in the disturbed edges of forested wetlands immediately adjacent to existing Route 1. Therefore, the ability to avoid and minimize wetland impacts is limited. The most notable wetland encroachments would be associated with the forested wetland floodplains of Quantico Creek, Powell Creek, and Cow Branch. Of the alternatives and variations that were considered, wetland impacts ranged from 2.4 acres to 3.8 acres. Therefore, wetland impacts have been avoided and minimized to the extent practicable while balancing those impacts to the impacts from other resources. In accordance with Executive Order 11990, Protection of Wetlands, it has been determined that there is no practicable alternative to the proposed construction in wetlands and that the proposed project includes all planning to minimize harm to wetlands which may result from such use. Avoidance and minimization will be given further consideration during the final design phase and during permit coordination when more information on the design details of the project will be known.
- * **Secondary and Cumulative Impacts:** Secondary, or indirect, impacts are usually a concern on projects that open up access to developable land where that access does not currently exist. New terrain facilities are an example of these types of projects. Secondary impacts can also be a concern on projects which make access more readily available or improves the ease by which access is possible. A test often applied to determine if development is a result of a proposed transportation improvement is the "but-for-test" (i.e. but for the roadway, the development would not occur). Because Route 1 is already highly developed and access to adjoining properties is readily available and largely uncontrolled, it is not expected that the proposed improvements to Route 1 represented by this project will be a catalyst for secondary development and consequently, secondary impacts.

Generally speaking, cumulative impacts are all of the impacts that a resource or area has or will experience because of past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future projects. As documented in the EA, the resources in the project area have experienced dramatic impacts and changes from the time human settlement was recorded in Fairfax County. These impacts and changes have been

so extensive, cumulatively, that the existing environment and landscape hardly resembles what it historically used to be. Given the degree to which the corridor has been developed makes it unlikely that the incremental impacts resulting from the proposed project documented in the EA, when viewed in the context of impacts associated with other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future projects, will rise to a level of cumulative impact that can be considered significant.

Mitigation and Minimization Commitments: FHWA, in conjunction with VDOT, has committed to the following mitigation and minimization measures as part of this project:

- ▶ Mitigation for wetland impacts will be developed in accordance with the USACOE sequencing guidelines.
- ▶ Based on preliminary information, three barriers appear reasonable and feasible and will be given further consideration during final design.
- ▶ The acquisition and relocation program will be conducted in accordance with the Uniform Relocation and Real Property Acquisition Act of 1970 as amended. Relocation resources and services will be available to all displacees without discrimination.
- ▶ Adverse effects to archeological site 44PW1226 will be resolved in accordance with the Memorandum of Agreement that was developed and executed by FHWA, VDOT and VDHR and concurred in by the Virginia Council on Indians, Prince William County, and Marine Corps Base Quantico.
- ▶ The cross-section of the roadway improvements adjacent to Locust Shade Park and Marine Corps Base Quantico has been reduced to minimize impacts to the base while avoiding any use of Locust Shade Park. This will be accomplished by locating the asphalt trail on Locust Shade Park property with the trail will become a feature of the park. The sidewalk that has been shown on the east side of Route 1 will be eliminated adjacent to Marine Corps Base Quantico. Five feet of landscaping will be eliminated from both sides of the road, and the outside lane width will be reduced from 15 feet to 12 feet.
- ▶ Erosion and sedimentation controls and stormwater management measures will be incorporated into the project to control runoff and erosion during construction and after the facility is open to traffic.

Public Involvement: This project came out of the Route 1 Corridor Study that culminated in 1997. As a part of that corridor study effort, VDOT conducted an extensive public involvement effort, which included citizen information meetings, newsletters, focus group meetings, citizen advisory committee meetings, civic group and homeowner association presentations, etc. For this specific project, Project A, VDOT continued to publish a newsletter. In addition, a Location Public Hearing was held on March 25, 2003, which consisted of two parts: an informal information session and a formal informational presentation and question/answer session. A total of 130 individuals signed the attendance sheet, and comments were submitted by 58 individuals/entities. The majority of commentors supported the widening of Route 1, or supported it on condition that certain modifications be made. MCBQ submitted several comments on the EA.

In 40 CFR § 1508.27, the Council on Environmental Quality's regulations identify ten criteria that should be considered in determining if the intensity of a project's impacts are significant enough to warrant the preparation of an EIS. Those ten criteria are discussed below:

1. *Impacts that may be both beneficial and adverse* – In addition to the adverse effects of the project described above which FHWA believes are neither significant individually nor

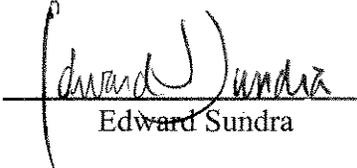
cumulatively, it is not anticipated that the project will have a significant beneficial impact on the natural environment. The social environment, represented by the users of the facility (social environment) and those living within the corridor, will benefit from the proposed improvements due to increased capacity and operational efficiency, reduced congestion, and improved safety. In addition, the project will provide some benefits for pedestrians and bicyclists by enhancing and improving existing facilities as well as improving the interrelationship between the roadway and transit.

2. *The degree to which the project affects public health or safety* – It is not anticipated that the project will adversely affect public health or safety. As explained above, carbon monoxide levels associated with the proposed improvements will be well below the National Ambient Air Quality Standards for CO. Likewise, the proposed improvements come from a Transportation Improvement Program and Constrained Long Range Plan found to conform with the SIP meaning that the proposed improvements, when taken in conjunction with all of the other programmed regionally significant roadway improvements, will not increase existing violations or lead to any new violations of the air quality standard for ozone. Nor is the project considered a project of air quality concern with respect to PM_{2.5} or MSATs. Finally, the project will enhance safety by eliminating and reducing operational deficiencies, reducing congestion, and providing for safer pedestrian and bicyclist facilities.
3. *Unique characteristics of the geographical area such as proximity to historic or cultural resources, park lands, prime farmlands, wetlands, wild and scenic rivers or ecologically critical area* – There are no unique characteristics related to the geographical area. There are virtually no cultural resources, no prime farmlands, no wild and scenic rivers, and no ecologically critical areas adjacent to the project. There are two parks located immediately adjacent to the project (Locust Shade Park and Cecil W. Garrison Park), which will be not be impacted by the proposed improvements. Finally, the wetlands located in the project area are primarily small isolated wetlands with limited functional value.
4. *The degree to which the effects on the environment are expected to be highly controversial* – The effects on the environment attributed to this project are not expected to be controversial let alone highly controversial; none of the comments received during the public hearing and subsequent comment period lead one to this conclusion. The MCBQ had concerns over impacts to their property, which have been resolved through additional coordination with them.
5. *The degree to which the effects on the quality of the human environment are highly uncertain or involve unique or unknown risks* – There are no known impacts on the quality of the human environment associated with this project that can be considered highly uncertain or involve unique or unknown risks. The anticipated impacts, including residential and commercial relocations, have all been sufficiently documented using accepted means in order to make an informed decision. Localized air quality impacts will be nominal and the resulting regional air quality levels will be within acceptable levels. Noise barriers have been considered to mitigate noise impacts and will be implemented where determined to be reasonable and feasible.
6. *The degree to which the action may establish a precedent for future actions with significant effects or represents a decision in principle about a future consideration* – This action will not establish a precedent for future actions with significant effects or represent a decision in principle about a future consideration. This project will not restrict the consideration of alternatives for other reasonably foreseeable projects in the project area. The northern terminus of the project will tie into the proposed Route 1/Route 123 interchange, for which an EA has already been completed and alternatives considered. Also, as documented above,

the relationship of this project to other projects in the Route 1 corridor has been considered in arriving at a decision on logical termini and independent utility. This project, as proposed, is compatible with local land use and the comprehensive plan developed by the locality.

7. *Whether the action is related to other actions with individually insignificant but cumulatively significant impacts* – As mentioned above, the Route 1 Corridor Study, the Route 1 corridor and the proposed improvements were reviewed in determining logical termini and independent utility. After arriving at a preliminary conclusion on these issues, the resulting projects were reviewed to determine if they represented related, similar, or cumulative actions that should be considered in the same environmental document. These decisions were documented in the file and serve as the basis for proceeding with this project independent of the other improvements in the Route 1 corridor. Finally, the cumulative impacts of the other Route 1 improvements proposed for the corridor were considered in the EA, and the conclusion was reached that they were not significant.
8. *The degree to which the action may adversely affect districts, sites, highways, structures, or objects listed in or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places or may cause loss of significant scientific, cultural, or historic resources* – As documented above, the project will not adversely effect any resource on or eligible for the National Register of Historic Places or any other type of resource that may be considered a significant scientific, cultural, or historic resource.
9. *The degree to which the action may adversely effect an endangered or threatened species or its habitat that has been determined to be critical under the Endangered Species Act* – The project will not adversely effect any listed endangered or threatened species or its habitat. A survey for the small whorled pogonia did not locate any specimens. Aside from this plant, there are no other species currently listed as threatened or endangered under the Endangered Species Act in the vicinity of the preferred alternative.
10. *Whether the action threatens a violation of Federal, State, or local law or requirements imposed for the protection of the environment* – The proposed action does not knowingly threaten a violation of any Federal, State, or local law for the protection of the environment. There are no known state or locally designated Agricultural/Forestral Districts in the vicinity of the project nor any concerns with species protected under the Virginia Endangered Species Act. A survey of all stream crossings for wood turtles, a State-listed threatened species, was conducted but did not locate any specimen. The project will include erosion and sedimentation controls during construction and include stormwater management controls in the design of the facility in keeping with State law.

Based on the information contained in the EA and other supporting documentation provided by VDOT, I have concluded that the proposed project will not have any significant impact on the environment, either individually or cumulatively. Therefore, an EIS is not warranted, and a Finding of No Significant Impact has been issued accordingly.


Edward Sundra