



FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

PENNSYLVANIA AVE.—MINNESOTA AVE., S.E. INTERSECTION IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

Washington, DC

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the District Department of Transportation (DDOT), in cooperation with the National Park Service (NPS), prepared an Environmental Assessment (EA) to examine alternative actions and environmental impacts associated with the proposed project to provide transportation improvements at the intersection of Pennsylvania and Minnesota Avenues, S.E., in Washington, D.C. The Pennsylvania and Minnesota Avenues, SE intersection includes NPS property, U.S. Reservation 487 (Twining Square), five small park parcels (U.S. Reservations 487A, B, C, D, and E) fragmented by intersecting roadways and the adjacent roadway medians, totaling approximately 1.44 acres. The proposed project will also include a transfer of jurisdiction of a portion of NPS administered property to DDOT. The jurisdictional transfer will facilitate the proposed reconfiguration of this intersection. The open green space within Twining Square will remain under NPS jurisdiction. The project is needed to improve pedestrian and vehicular safety; create a consolidated, usable park space; improve multimodal connectivity and access; and support improved land use and community needs. The EA was released for agency and public review on October 28, 2013. A public hearing was held on November 13, 2013. Implementation of the proposed action will be administered by DDOT and funded by FHWA.

The EA was prepared in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA), the regulations of the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) for implementing NEPA (40 Code of Federal Regulations [CFR] 1500-1508), FHWA Technical Advisory (T6640.8a), Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA), and NPS Director's Order (DO) 12, *Conservation Planning, Environmental Impact Analysis, and Decision-making*. The statements and conclusions reached in this finding of no significant impact (FONSI) are based on documentation and analysis provided in the EA and associated decision file. To the extent necessary, relevant sections of the EA are incorporated by reference below.

After consultation with DDOT and FHWA, review of the EA and other supporting documentation, the NPS, in accordance with 43 CFR 46.320, is adopting this EA and making its decision to allow DDOT and FHWA to carry out the improvement to the Pennsylvania and Minnesota Avenues, SE intersection and the land transfer to DDOT of NPS property to facilitate the reconfiguration of the intersection. The EA fulfills the requirements of NEPA and applicable regulations, and it meets the policies set forth in the NPS's Director's Order #12, *Conservation Planning, Environmental Impact Analysis and Decision-Making*, and accompanying Handbook

SELECTED ALTERNATIVE

Based on the analysis presented in the EA, NPS, in conjunction with FHWA and DDOT, selected Build Alternative 2 – Conventional Intersection (see page 28 of the EA) for implementation. In addition, Option 2, the one-way flow of traffic on the L'Enfant Square, SE roadway in the north and east direction (described on page 29 of the EA), was the selected option that will be implemented in conjunction with the selected alternative for the Pennsylvania Avenue - Minnesota Ave., S.E. Intersection Improvement Project. The selected alternative and option will reconfigure the intersection to achieve an improved but typical at-grade intersection. Build Alternative 2 will improve the existing split roadway system that currently contains two complex intersections by reducing multiple traffic movements into one signalized intersection. The selected alternative will also provide for left-turn movements in all directions and increase the left-turn bay storage length for vehicles.

Build Alternative 2 will include a jurisdictional land transfer from NPS to DDOT of approximately 1.44 acres of U.S. Reservations 487, 487A, B, C, D, and E to enable the proposed modifications to the intersection and consolidate the green space. Build Alternative 2 will consolidate the two park parcels to the north of Pennsylvania Avenue and the two park parcels to the south of Pennsylvania in order to provide more contiguous park area than exists today for residents and visitors to the area. The selected option, Option 2, will be implemented in conjunction with the selected alternative. Option 2 is a one-way flow of traffic to the north and east along the L'Enfant Square, SE roadway. Under this option, cut-through traffic will be minimized along the L'Enfant Square, SE and residences and the vehicle/pedestrian conflict will be reduced. Option 2 maintains L'Enfant Square, SE as a one-lane roadway with on-street parking on both sides of the street.

RATIONAL FOR DECISION

Build Alternative 2 was selected because it will provide better transportation improvements at the intersection of Pennsylvania and Minnesota Avenues, S.E., in Washington, D.C. Build Alternative 2 will meet the need for the project and improve pedestrian and vehicular safety, create a usable park space, improve multimodal connectivity and access, and support improved land use and community needs, as discussed below:

- Improves safety for pedestrians and vehicles by reducing multiple confusing traffic movements at two adjacent intersections along Pennsylvania Avenue into one signalized intersection. Left-turn bay storage length will be increased for vehicles and a pedestrian-activated crossing signal will be provided to allow safe crossing. Other safety improvements for pedestrians include new bulb-outs to reduce vehicle speeds, shorter crosswalks in some locations, and enhanced traffic signalization. Additionally, the one-way flow of traffic to the north and east under Option 2 is designed to reduce the traffic volume adjacent to the residences along L'Enfant Square, SE, as cut-through traffic will be minimized along L'Enfant Square, SE; Option 2 eliminates right turns from southbound L'Enfant Square, SE onto Pennsylvania Avenue, SE westbound, significantly reducing vehicle-pedestrian conflicts.
- Creates a consolidated, usable park space for intersection users by combining the two reservations north of Pennsylvania Avenue and the two reservations south of Pennsylvania Avenue into two larger, usable park spaces, totaling approximately one acre and 0.4 acres, respectively. This will enhance the park space and the overall intersection for residents and other intersection users by providing usable green space for passive recreation or a public plaza.
- Improves multimodal connectivity and access to and through the intersection by providing a safer environment for pedestrians, bicyclists, vehicles and buses to navigate. The Pennsylvania-Minnesota Avenues, SE intersection is along the proposed route planned for the future Phase 3 of the DC Streetcar. The improvements and design of the selected alternative, Build Alternative 2, will work in tandem with DC Streetcar to further promote mobility for all modes of transportation and particularly for transit users and commuters.
- Supports land use and community needs through providing streetscape, aesthetic and transportation improvements. Proposed improvements under the selected alternative and option will create opportunities to change the public and market perception of the area, which is needed to create an environment capable of supporting and attracting community needs. Additionally, the availability of park land at this intersection provides an opportunity to create a public plaza, an attractant for retail and housing development.

ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED

This EA provided an overview of the proposed project and analyzed two other alternatives and their impacts on the environment: The No Action Alternative (page 27 of the EA); and Build Alternative 1 – Revised Square - (page 27 of the EA. Additionally, one other option (Option 1, described on page 29 of the EA) was considered as part of Build Alternative 2 – Conventional Intersection Alternative (Selected Alternative). Other alternatives were considered in the EA, but were not retained for further analysis, as discussed in Section 2.3, Alternatives Eliminated from Consideration, of the EA (page 34).

NO ACTION ALTERNATIVE:

Under the No Action alternative, no land jurisdiction exchange between NPS and DDOT would occur. The intersection would continue to function as it does today without any modifications to the intersection layout. Existing traffic patterns, crosswalks, signalization, and sidewalks would remain unimproved.

BUILD ALTERNATIVE 1 - REVISED SQUARE:

Under this alternative, the NPS, with DDOT and FHWA, would reconfigure the roadway alignment and intersection configuration to create a “traffic square” concept, which requires all vehicles, with the exception of through-movements on Pennsylvania Avenue, SE, to go around the expanded central park area. The perimeter route is intended as a traffic calming measure, similar to how a traffic circle works, by allowing vehicles to enter and exit the square at locations identified by the intersecting streets. As is the case with Build Alternative 2, Build Alternative 1 requires a jurisdictional land transfer from NPS to DDOT of approximately 1.44 acres of U.S. Reservations 487A, B, C, D, and E to enable the proposed modifications. Build Alternative 1 would consolidate the two park parcels to the north of Pennsylvania Avenue and the two park parcels to the south of Pennsylvania Avenue in order to provide more contiguous park area for residents and visitors to use as green space. In this alternative, L’Enfant Square, SE to the north of the square would be widened to three lanes from the existing one lane to accommodate the traffic traveling around the square. As a result, on-street parking would only be maintained on the north side of the street, adjacent to residences.

OPTION 1 FOR BUILD ALTERNATIVE 2:

Option 1 for L’Enfant Square, S.E, which would include the flow of traffic one-way to the west and south on L’Enfant Square, SE was provided as one of two options under Build Alternative 2 – Conventional Intersection (Selected Alternative). With Option 1, commuter traffic could continue to cut-through the “square” to avoid the Pennsylvania/Minnesota Avenues, SE intersection. Due to the ability to make right turns onto Pennsylvania Avenue, SE (westbound) from L’Enfant Square, SE, right-turning vehicle/pedestrian conflicts to the west of the square would remain.

MITIGATION MEASURES

The selected alternative, Build Alternative 2 – Conventional Intersection incorporates the mitigation measures listed in Appendix A of this document and page 154 of the EA.

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

As documented in the EA the selected alternative and option has the potential for both beneficial and adverse impacts on land use and parks and recreation area; , however, the NPS has determined that the selected alternative can be implemented without significant adverse effects, as defined in 40 CFR § 1508.27.

The selected alternative and option will result in short-term negligible adverse impacts to land use resources because of road closures during construction. As a result of Build Alternative 2, the NPS owned land parcels (U.S. Reservation 487 and 487 A, B, C, D and E) would transfer to DDOT. This land transfer would facilitate the reconfiguration of the intersection. Given the proposed aesthetic enhancements, improved safety, and the operational improvements proposed, the selected alternative and option has the potential to indirectly affect future land use positively in the long term.

Construction-related activities may adversely impact park areas; however, the impacts will be minor and short-term. Under the selected alternative, the reconfigured intersection will include removal of the roadways, which bisect the currently NPS-owned reservations on either side of Pennsylvania Avenue, SE. Additionally, U.S. Reservation 487 and 487 A, B, C, D and E will be reconfigured to facilitate the improvements to the intersection. The result would be consolidated green space which would promote park area continuity. The selected alternative will enhance the park and recreation areas by providing more contiguous green space. Once the property is transferred, DDOT will ensure maintenance according to the agency's policies. The overall impacts to park operation and management under the selected alternative will be minor and beneficial in the long term.

Twining Square (U.S. Reservation 487), which local residents have often referred to as L'Enfant Square because of the road, north of the project, with the same name, is not part of the L'Enfant Plan of the District. Twining Square is not listed in the National Register, nor is it eligible for listing in the National Register. Implementing the selected alternative and option will result in no adverse effects on historic structures. It is anticipated that the proposed undertaking will not diminish the integrity of the setting, design, workmanship, materials, and feeling and association for historic resources in the project vicinity. In a memorandum from DC SHPO dated April 17, 2013 (see Appendix B of this document), DC SHPO concurred with the determination of "No Adverse Effect" on historic resources with the stipulations that further archeological investigation will occur. Phase IB/II archaeological testing is ongoing.

There will be no significant impacts on public health, public safety, or unique characteristics of the region. No prime farmlands, floodplains, wetlands, navigable waters, wild and scenic rivers, coastal zone, aquatic organisms, ecologically critical areas, paleontological resources, sites sacred to American Indians, or other significant ethnographic resources occur within or adjacent to the project area. No highly uncertain or controversial impacts, unique or unknown risks, significant cumulative effects, or elements of precedence were identified. Implementation of the NPS selected alternative will not violate any federal, state, or local environmental protection law.

CONCLUSION

As described above, the selected alternative and option does not constitute an action meeting the criteria that normally requires preparation of an environmental impact statement (EIS). The selected alternative will not have a significant effect on the human environment in accordance with Section 102(2)(c) of NEPA.

Based on the foregoing, it has been determined that an EIS is not required for this project and, thus, will not be prepared.

Recommended: 
Tara D. Morrison
Superintendent
National Capital Parks – East

July 12, 2018
Date

Approved: 
Lisa A. Mendelson-Ielmini
Acting Regional Director
National Capital Region

Nov. 7, 2018
Date

**NON-IMPAIRMENT DETERMINATION OF
PARK RESOURCES OR VALUES**

NON-IMPAIRMENT DETERMINATION OF PARK RESOURCES OR VALUES

The National Park Service (NPS), in cooperation with the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the District Department of Transportation (DDOT), prepared an Environmental Assessment (EA) to examine alternative actions and environmental impacts associated with the proposed project to provide transportation improvements at the intersection of Pennsylvania and Minnesota Avenues, S.E., in Washington, D.C. The proposed project would also include the transfer of land from the NPS to DDOT. The land transfer would facilitate the proposed reconfiguration of this intersection, also known as the Twining Square (U.S. Reservation 487) and its smaller parcels (U.S. Reservation 487A, B, C, D, and E), in southeast Washington, DC. The open green space within Twining Square would remain parkland.

The project area is located at the western end of the Pennsylvania Avenue, SE corridor, at the intersection of Pennsylvania Avenue with Minnesota Avenue, SE, in the immediate vicinity of Twining Square, also referred to by local residents as L'Enfant Square. Twining Square includes five small park parcels fragmented by intersecting roadways and the adjacent roadway medians, totaling approximately 1.44 acres. The roadways split the reservations into areas that effectively function as traffic islands for pedestrians while crossing the street; the pieces of parkland are too small to function as true open space or green space as currently configured. Twining Square lacks aesthetic appeal and is underutilized urban space. The current intersection configuration is dominated by busy lanes of traffic, rendering pedestrian circulation both difficult and dangerous. The project intersection is located on a major commuter route, Pennsylvania Avenue, SE, in an urban environment, at its crossing with the local travel route of Minnesota Avenue, SE. The project intersection carries traffic to and from the bridges that cross the Anacostia River, as well as Minnesota Avenue, SE. The proposed project will provide transportation improvements at the intersection and is needed to improve pedestrian and vehicular safety; create a consolidated, usable park space; improve multimodal connectivity and access; and support improved land use and community needs.

The NPS, in cooperation with FHWA and DDOT, has selected Build Alternative 2: the Conversional Intersection for implementation. In addition, Option 2, the one-way flow of traffic on the L'Enfant Square, SE roadway in the north and east direction was the selected option that would be implemented in conjunction with the selected alternative for the Pennsylvania Ave-Minnesota Ave., S.E. Intersection Improvement Project. The selected alternative and option will reconfigure the intersection to achieve an improved but typical at-grade intersection. Build Alternative 2 would improve the existing split roadway system that currently contains two complex intersections by reducing multiple traffic movements into one signalized intersection. The selected alternative would provide for left-turn movements in all directions and increase the left-turn bay storage length for vehicles. Option 2 is a one-way flow of traffic to the north and east along the L'Enfant Square, SE roadway. Under this option, cut-through traffic would be minimized along the L'Enfant Square, SE and residences and the vehicle/pedestrian conflict would be reduced.

Twining Square (U.S. Reservation 487), which local residents have often referred to as L'Enfant Square because of the road, north of the project, with the same name, is not part of the L'Enfant Plan of the District. Twining Square is not listed in the National Register, nor is it eligible for listing in the National Register.

In light of the impacts described in the EA for the project and with guidance from *NPS Management Policies 2006*, socioeconomic resources information, professional judgment, and considering agency and public comments, the NPS has determined that implementing the selected alternative and option will not constitute an impairment of resources or values for Twining Square (U.S. Reservation 487) and its smaller parcels (U.S. Reservation 487A, B, C, D, and E). Implementing the selected alternative and option will result in no adverse effects on historic structures. Implementation of the selected alternative and option will not result in impairment of resources or values whose conservation is: (1) necessary to fulfill specific purposes identified in the establishing Twining Square, (2) key to the natural or cultural integrity of Twining Square or to opportunities for enjoyment of the park space, or (3) identified in any relevant NPS planning documents as being of significance.

While the selected alternative and options will result in negligible to moderate short-term adverse but long-term beneficial impacts to park resources and management within the project area, these impacts will not affect the National Park Service's ability to fulfill specific purposes for Twining Square. These impacts will not affect resources key to the integrity of the park space, will not affect opportunities for enjoyment of the park space, and will not impair any significant resources identified in relevant NPS planning documents for the park space.

APPENDIX A
MITIGATION MEASURES

MITIGATION MEASURES (EXCERPTED FROM THE EA, SECTION 4.8 ON PAGE 154)

Mitigation measures are presented as part of the Proposed Action and have been developed to lessen the effects. The following mitigation measures are recommended for implementing the Preferred Alternative:

SOILS

Erosion and sediment control plans would be prepared in accordance with DDOE Standards and Specifications for Soil Erosion and Sediment Control and implemented during construction of the reconfigured intersection. The plans would include project-specific measures to avoid and/or minimize soil erosion and transport due to ground-disturbing activities, including potential vegetation clearing and minimal grading. BMPs would be used during construction, to include practices such as stabilized construction entrances, silt fences, temporary sediment traps and filtering devices and earth dikes. Use of BMPs would be detailed in the approved erosion and sediment control plans.

WATER RESOURCES

Similar to the soil mitigation plan, implementation of erosion and sediment control practices would help to avoid temporary impacts to water quality during construction. BMPs such as silt fence and sediment trapping or filtering will lessen the impacts of sediment transport that degrades water quality during stormwater runoff periods.

WILDLIFE

The Study Area likely supports a limited population of birds, small mammals, reptiles and amphibians. Wildlife found in the Study Area are those that are able to adapt to the urban landscape. However, BMPs would be used to mitigate any potential impacts to wildlife. The tree canopy in the Study Area would be preserved and enhanced wherever possible to protect habitat for local wildlife. Erosion and sediment control plans would minimize potential impacts to water quality and thus protect impacts to aquatic habitat within the watershed.

VEGETATION

Measures would be implemented, to the extent practical, to avoid impacts to larger or older tree specimens both inside and outside of the existing DDOT right-of-way. Applying LID principles to the development, the existing tree canopy in the Study Area would be preserved and enhanced wherever possible. Landscaping and replacement of trees will be conducted in accordance with the DDOT Design and Engineering Manual. New trees and vegetation would be planted in appropriate locations to maintain and enhance the tree canopy along the project corridor. Landscaping and tree replacement plans will be reviewed by NPS prior to implementation. Protection to tree specimens may include installation of tree protection fencing at the outer drop line of trees to be saved, staging construction equipment to avoid damage to trees and their root systems, and avoiding collision of construction equipment with trees and vegetation.

Landscaping at the project site would fulfill functional and aesthetic requirements along with those mandated by DDOT policy and Federal regulations, in coordination with NPS. Landscape plans would be developed in accordance with the NPS and DDOT's Urban Forestry Administration. Landscape plans may include planting, grading, erosion control and irrigation systems.

In addition, landscaping would be utilized where possible to improve storm water management features by following the concept of LID. Following development, the landscape would be monitored and maintained to ensure successful establishment.

CULTURAL RESOURCES

To help ensure the protection of natural and cultural resources and the quality of the visitor experience, the following protective measures will be implemented as part of the selected alternative.

The proposed undertaking will include a Phase IB/II archaeological testing of an area within U.S. Reservation 487 near geoarchaeological boring # 4 where an intact historic surface was identified at approximately 0.7 feet below ground surface (see Figure 3-5 of the EA). If construction or the archeological testing occurs prior to land transfer, a permit as required under the Archaeological Resources Protection Act (ARPA) will be obtained from the National Capital Region. If during construction, archaeological resources are discovered, all work in the immediate vicinity of the discovery would be halted until the resources can be identified and documented and an appropriate mitigation strategy developed. If necessary, consultation with the DC SHPO, NPS, and/or the NPS Regional Archeologist will be coordinated to ensure that the protection of resources are addressed. In the unlikely event that human remains, funerary objects, sacred objects, or objects of cultural patrimony are discovered during construction, provisions outlined in the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (25 USC 3001) of 1990 would be followed.

PARKLAND

Users of the intersection parkland would be notified of construction-related closures or changes in traffic patterns. DDOT would use public notification techniques such as posting information on the DDOT and NPS websites to notify residents, merchants and users of the transit and commercial establishments at the intersection of detours or any other restrictions at the intersection.

AESTHETIC AND VISUAL QUALITY

All landscaping and site amenities would consider aesthetics. Landscape plans would be developed in coordination with the NPS and DDOT's Urban Forestry Administration and Landscaping plans and other proposed aesthetic treatments would be submitted to the DC Commission of Fine Arts (CFA), NCPC, and NPS for review and comment.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

During construction, active construction areas of the project site would be closed to pedestrians by using signage and fences. When necessary, areas of the construction site may also be closed off to cars which will be re-routed through or around the intersection. After construction, the intersection would be maintained in order to provide enhanced safety for pedestrians, bicyclists and vehicles using the intersection. Maintenance activities that would ensure protection of the public using the intersection include removing snow and ice during winter months, sealing cracks and filling potholes that may be hazardous to motorists and bicyclists, and policing the area to deter any illegal activities. New pavement markings and signage would be utilized as needed for motorists and pedestrians using the intersection.

COMMUNITY RESOURCES

DDOT would coordinate with the local emergency services before construction with regards to access through the project intersection during periods of construction and how the ultimate intersection design may affect emergency responders.

UTILITIES AND INFRASTRUCTURE

DDOT would consult with all utility companies to determine if and how utility poles and other aboveground utilities in the Study Area would be impacted during construction or with project implementation. Care would be taken during construction activities so as to avoid all underground utilities. This would be done through consultations with each of the respective utilities early in design to determine exactly where, and to what depth the utilities are buried. These areas would then be marked off and carefully excavated to ensure the utilities are not accidentally damaged. Utilities that are determined to be damaged would be repaired prior to the construction of the intersection.

BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN NETWORK

Active construction areas of the project site would be closed to pedestrians and bicyclists by using signage and fencing. Signage will be provided to indicate alternate routes and detours to be used when walkways, paths, or street crossings are blocked.

ROADWAY NETWORK AND TRAFFIC

Plans to maintain traffic during construction will be developed to minimize impacts to local traffic. Work schedules for construction may be adjusted to minimize impacts during peak traffic volumes. Active construction areas of the project site would be closed to motorists by using signage and blockades. Signage will be provided to indicate alternate routes and detours to be used during any road closures. Additionally, DDOT would use public notification techniques such as posting information on the DDOT website to notify residents, commuters, merchants, etc. of temporary roadway closures or any other restrictions at the intersection.

The following maintenance of traffic (MOT) assumptions are anticipated:

- Maintain three lanes of traffic in each direction on Pennsylvania Avenue through the project area;
- Maintain two lanes of traffic in each direction on Minnesota Avenue through the project area;
- Maintain all turning movements during all phases of project construction (note, temporary, short duration lane closures are anticipated during construction);
- Maintain pedestrian and bicycle access through the project area;
- Maintain full access to bus stops, businesses and residences during construction, and;
- Minimize impacts to the local community during construction.

MOT plans are included in Appendix F of the EA, Traffic Analysis Report. MOT plans were developed for Build Alternative 1 only; however the MOT for Build Alternative 2 would be comparable as they both has the same number of phases.

TRANSIT

DDOT would continue to coordinate with WMATA during design and construction to avoid impacts to WMATA's facilities, maintain access, and allow for future access. All bus stops in the Study Area will be designed in accordance with WMATA's guidelines for the Design and Placement of Transit Stops (2009). DDOT will continue to coordinate with WMATA through final planning and design in terms of special signage and roadway markings that will be needed as a result of the intersection improvements.

AIR QUALITY

Particulate emissions during the two anticipated construction seasons, whether from construction equipment diesel exhaust or dust from the construction activities, should be controlled as well as possible. Contractors will follow all DDOT Standard Construction Specification sections that address the control of construction equipment exhaust or dust during construction. Even though construction mitigation measures are not required, there are several measures that could be considered to reduce engine activity or reduce emissions per unit of operating time. Operational agreements that reduce or redirect work or shift times to avoid community exposures can have positive benefits. Also, technological adjustments to construction equipment, such as off-road dump trucks and bulldozers, could be an appropriate strategy. The EPA recommends Best Available Diesel Retrofit Control Technology (BACT) to reduce diesel emissions. Typically, BACT requirements can be met through the retrofit of all diesel powered equipment with diesel oxidation catalysts or diesel particulate filters, and other devices that provide an after-treatment of exhaust emissions.

NOISE

Within the framework of DDOT's criteria, various methods were reviewed to mitigate the noise impact of the proposed improvements. Among those considered were traffic management measures (reduction of

speed limits, restriction of truck traffic to specific times of the day, a total prohibition of trucks), alteration of horizontal and vertical alignments, acquisition of real property or interests therein to serve as a buffer zone to preempt development which would be adversely impacted by traffic noise, and noise insulation of Activity Category D land use facilities listed in Table 3.11, the construction of berms, and the construction of noise barriers.

Reductions of speed limits, although acoustically beneficial, are seldom practical unless the design speed of the proposed roadway is also reduced. Restriction or prohibition of trucks is counter to the project purpose and need. Design criteria, recommended termini and the preliminary design process leading to the preferred alternative preclude substantial horizontal and vertical alignment shifts that would produce noticeable changes in the projected acoustical environment. Acquisition of undeveloped property for buffer zones is typically neither feasible nor reasonable due to the amount of land needed to create an acoustically effective buffer zone and the desire to keep as much land as possible in the local community's tax base. There are no Activity Category D land use facilities that approach or exceed the NAC, so noise insulation was not considered.

A noise berm or barrier must be long enough and tall enough to minimize the noise coming over the top or around the ends of the barrier, such that the noise barrier, according to DDOT's Noise Policy, dated April 5, 2011, provides at least a 5 dB(A) reduction at impacted receptors to be considered feasible. In addition, the noise barrier or berm cannot restrict pedestrian or vehicular access for the mitigation to be considered feasible. The berm or barrier cannot have any holes in the barrier which would seriously degrade the noise reduction capability of the berm or barrier. The construction of noise berms along this project would not be feasible due to the limited space between the traffic and the receptors. Temporary noise impacts would be minimized during construction, however, by utilizing BMPs, as necessary, to meet the requirements of the Washington, DC Noise Control Act.

There is limited space to construct noise barriers between the traffic and receptors. However, all the receptors have access to a parking lane in front of the residences; see Figures 3-15 and 3-16 in the EA. The length of the barriers would be limited by line of sight requirements at intersections. Providing pedestrian access from the residences to the parked cars would create a number of holes in each noise barrier. Therefore, it is not feasible to construct a noise barrier that would provide a 5 dB(A) reduction for the residences abutting the local streets throughout the project area.

Furthermore, DDOT Noise Policy states, "In order for a noise abatement option to be selected, it must be both feasible and reasonable."⁸⁴ As explained above, the proposed project does not meet the criteria for traffic noise mitigation feasibility. Additionally, in determining "reasonableness," for a noise abatement technique to be considered reasonable, all of the criteria must be met. Specifically, the proposed project does not meet Reasonableness criteria #5 in the DDOT Noise Policy: "Future traffic noise levels are all less than 75 dBA and less than 10 dBA higher than existing traffic noise levels."⁸⁵ None of the future (2040) alternatives exceed 75 dBA, nor do any of the alternatives cause the noise levels to increase 10 dBA compared to existing conditions.

APPENDIX B
PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

DDOT sent scoping notices to the public to solicit comments on environmental, historical, cultural and other issues relevant to the proposed project. Scoping notices, scoping letters and project brochures were distributed to the public in September 2012. DDOT provided a project website in the fall of 2012 that detailed the project history and proposed improvements. The public was asked to send comments by mail to DDOT or to leave comments on the project website by October 15, 2012. A summary of comments from the public is presented in *Appendix C, Agency Coordination and Public Involvement* of the EA.

DDOT hand-delivered brochures in the project Study Area in April of 2013 that contained project information and notice of a project presentation at the ANC 7B Monthly Meeting held on May 16, 2013. There were approximately 50 attendees at the meeting. DDOT presented the project purpose and need, Proposed Action and alternatives being carried forward in the EA. Handouts were provided for attendees, along with optional comment cards that could be left at the meeting or mailed to DDOT. The public had an opportunity to ask questions and comment on the information provided. The majority of comments were questions regarding the traffic operations of the alternatives and concerns regarding bicycle and pedestrian movement through the intersection.

The Notice of Availability for the EA and public hearing date was advertised in The Washington Times and as a DDOT Press Release on Monday, October 28, 2013. The EA public review and comment period was officially extended an additional 30 days, through December 31, 2013; however comments continued to be accepted through March 2014. The EA was available for review in hardcopy at DDOT (55 M Street, SE, Washington, DC), FHWA (1990 K Street, NW, Washington, DC) and the Francis A. Gregory Library (3660 Alabama Avenue, SE, Washington, D.C.). A public hearing with an open house and presentation and formal comment period was held at the Francis A. Gregory Library on November 13, 2013 from 6:00 to 8:00 PM. Announcement of the availability of the EA and the public hearing were also advertised on the project website. Electronic and/or hard copies of the EA were submitted to all ANC7B and 8A commissioners, relevant civic associations, the Mayor, and Ward 7 and 8 councilmembers for their review and distribution. Approximately 17 members of the public attended the public hearing and six people provided official testimony. Nine written comments were received from the public or community organizations during and following the public comment period.

DDOT has attended multiple civic association and ANC meetings since the publication of the EA to provide project information and to update the public on the EA's progress. Additionally, this project was included in the projects presented at the public meeting for the DDOT Projects Update: Ward 7 on March 6th, 2014.

The following is a summary of the written and oral comments by general topic received throughout the formal comment period. For each topic, examples of the types of comments are presented.

- The need for improved safety at this intersection, particularly for bicyclists and pedestrians, was a major issue for many commenters. Several commenters specifically referenced the need to make the intersection meet the Architectural Barriers Act Accessibility Standard (ABBAS) and safe for users of all ages.
- Many of the comments received pertained to the need for enhanced green space and less pavement at the intersection. Some comments included suggestions for enhancing the green space as a public space or plaza, with suggestions for monuments and other aesthetic enhancements such as park benches. Several comments noted that permeable pavement and pavers should be utilized at the intersection.

- Residents expressed concern for traffic at this intersection and voiced uncertainty that either of the build alternatives would address their traffic concerns. Several comments indicated that the design appeared to favor commuters and would not be an improvement for residents.
- Several comments requested that the study area be expanded towards Prout Street, Fairlawn Avenue, and that more coordination be conducted with other ongoing DDOT studies and projects.
- Several comments made note of the heavy bus activity and amount of bus riders using this intersection. Commenters stated that the project should accommodate the bus traffic and necessary bus movements.
- The need for DDOT to reach out to individual homeowners and conduct more outreach to the residents around the intersection was noted in several comments. Specifically, the residents along L'Enfant Square, SE were identified as residents that could be impacted by Build Alternative 1.
- Preference was stated for the No Build Alternative by several individuals or organizations. Build Alternative 2 was stated as the preferred alternative if the No Build Alternative was not selected.

Due to the public comments received against Build Alternative 1, the preferred alternative was revised and changed to Build Alternative 2. DDOT and NPS revised the draft EA and released a Final EA in June, 2015. DDOT signed their FONSI on June 17, 2015. Public comments received and DDOT responses to comment, along with public meeting materials, are included in *Appendix C, Agency Coordination and Public Involvement* of the EA.