

5 AGENCY COORDINATION AND PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

5.1 AGENCY COORDINATION

As part of the planning process for the Broad Branch Road Environmental Assessment (EA), DDOT conducted an agency coordination program. This coordination included project scoping, consultation with resource agencies in accordance with Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act (ESA), consultation with the District of Columbia State Historic Preservation Office (DC SHPO) and the National Park Service (NPS) in accordance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) *and Section 4(f) requirements*, and individual meetings.

5.1.1 AGENCY SCOPING

The District Department of Transportation (DDOT) and Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) held an Agency Scoping Meeting on March 24, 2011. Agencies in attendance included NPS, District Department of Energy & Environment (DOEE), and the National Capital Planning Commission (NCPC). The purpose of the meeting was to provide federal and local agencies with an overview of the proposed project as well as solicit their initial thoughts on issues, concerns, and resources within the study area. Early coordination was also conducted with the US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE).

5.1.2 AGENCY ALTERNATIVES MEETING

DDOT and FHWA held an Agency Alternatives Meeting on August 25, 2011 to update federal and local agencies on the study's process and to solicit their input for concept improvements / preliminary alternatives. Agencies in attendance included NPS, DOEE, DC Office of Planning (DCOP), NCPC, and the DC SHPO.

Agency representatives helped construct preliminary alternatives (concepts) by incorporating various improvement elements including roadway segments, bike lanes, sidewalks, and stormwater management facilities (e.g., curb, swales and rain gardens). Concepts developed by agency representatives are illustrated in **Appendix A**. See Section 2.1 for further details on the concept development process.

5.1.3 DC STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE

The Section 106 process of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) was formally initiated with the DC SHPO on February 24, 2011 after an introductory project meeting on December 8, 2010. During the meeting, DC SHPO was provided an overview of the Broad Branch Road project. After the partial collapse of Soapstone Creek Culvert in April 2011, consultation between the two agencies focused primarily on the immediate effects associated with the temporary repair and proposed permanent replacement of the historic structure. DDOT met with the DC SHPO again on June 21, 2011 to refine the Area of Potential Effects (APE) for the Broad Branch Road project area. DDOT

and DC SHPO met again on August 16, 2011 to further refine the APE. DDOT submitted a letter formally requesting concurrence with the APE in late August 2011.

On September 28, 2011, the DC SHPO approved the revised APE. At that time, the DC SHPO also identified potential historic properties in the APE and requested that DDOT and its consultant complete Determination of Eligibility (DOE) forms for properties that had not been previously evaluated for NRHP eligibility.

In delineating the APE, factors taken into account included the elements of the proposed action; the existence of buildings, vegetation, and terrain; possible visual concerns in terms of changes to viewshed caused by roadway modifications; audible impacts; and construction activities necessary for the proposed action.

DDOT, in consultation with the DC SHPO, defined the APE boundaries as the east bank of Broad Branch between Beach Drive and 27th Street NW; the first row of structures north of Broad Branch Road between 27th Street NW and Nevada Avenue NW; several residences south of Broad Branch Road along Linnean Avenue; and the first row of residences west of Broad Branch Road between 27th Street NW and Beach Drive NW. This APE is considered sufficient to include all proposed repairs or modifications to Broad Branch Road, incorporate any possible construction staging areas, accommodate any modifications and/or replacement of the Soapstone Creek Culvert, and assess any visual or audible intrusions. DC SHPO approved the APE on September 28, 2011. A map of the APE is provided in **Appendix D**.

The Section 106 process has a specific public involvement component, which was satisfied by the public outreach completed in conjunction with the NEPA review process. Specific forms requesting to be Section 106 interested parties were provided at the Public Meeting held on November 8, 2012 and the Public Hearing held on November 5, 2013. One organization, ANC 4A8, and three private citizens requested Section 106 interested party status.

Project and Section 106 information was provided to the interested parties using the project ListServe and the DDOT project website. Notification of the availability of the Section 106 Cultural Resources and Effects Report for review on the project website was sent by mail to the interested parties on November 7, 2013.

On April 18, 2013, FHWA formally initiated consultation under Section 106 of the NHPA with the DC SHPO and requested concurrence with the APE, previously submitted by DDOT for review. Subsequent to the release of the initial EA in October 2013, a Determination of Effect and draft Section 106 Compliance Review was submitted to DC SHPO and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP). A Draft Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) was prepared and submitted for comment to DC SHPO, NPS, and the Commission of Fine Arts (CFA) in February 2014. Subsequently, additional comments on the draft MOA were received from the DC SHPO on April 29, July 18, and August 2 and 8, 2018, from NPS in June 2019 and from FHWA on October 16, 2019 and changes were incorporated into the draft MOA, as appropriate. The draft MOA was posted on the project website for review by the general public, however no comments from the public were received. The Section 106 MOA was executed in July 2020; a copy of the executed document is provided in Appendix O.

Additionally, DC SHPO is the official with jurisdiction over the historic Gatehouse at La Villa Firenze. With the execution of the Section 106 MOA (see Appendix O), DC SHPO has no objections to the project in accordance with Section 4(f).

5.1.4 JOINT AGENCY PROGRESS MEETINGS

During the course of project planning and NEPA evaluations, DDOT and FHWA conducted a series of regularly scheduled meetings with the NPS and DOEE to ensure continuous input from these two agencies. Each agency provided extensive information on existing conditions within the project area and helped coordinate the roadway improvement with on-going improvements in Rock Creek Park – most notably stormwater management and the proposal to “daylight” (or restore) 1,600 linear feet of an unnamed tributary to Broad Branch at the northern end of the proposed Broad Branch Road rehabilitation project. The “daylighting” project was completed in 2014 and is described further in Section 1.6.8.

On April 26, 2013, representatives from DDOT conducted a site visit of the southern portion of the Broad Branch Road project area with FHWA, NPS, and DC SHPO to provide an overview of the project area; identify specific constraints due to limited right-of-way and topography; and address specific resource issues, including cultural resources in Rock Creek Park that may require rehabilitation or replacement to meet project objectives (e.g., existing stone retaining walls).

DDOT also conducted or attended meetings with other agencies about the project. DDOT attended a meeting with CFA on August 8, 2013 to address curb cuts for new access driveways proposed by private landowners subdividing property on the west side of Broad Branch Road in the project area. CFA requested a formal presentation by DDOT before the entire CFA review committee to determine any major issues in the alternatives before the project progresses to the final design stage. CFA received a copy of the initial EA when it was released to the public in October 2013 and a copy of the Revised Draft EA in October 2020, and will receive a copy of this Final EA.

DDOT hosted a meeting with representatives of DC Water on August 20, 2013 to identify potential concerns or conflicts from a proposed project to replace or rehabilitate aging sanitary sewer infrastructure in Soapstone Valley. The DC Water project partially overlaps the Broad Branch Road project area and includes existing sewer lines and manholes in DDOT right-of-way near the Soapstone Creek Culvert. Additional coordination will be required to avoid potential conflicts between the two projects.

5.1.5 COORDINATION WITH MAJOR STAKEHOLDERS

The initial EA was released on October 21, 2013, after which DDOT coordinated with and sent specific information to key stakeholders and/or other interested parties to provide information and receive comments about the proposed project:

- A project notification letter and copies of the EA were sent to the **US State Department and Sovereign Nations** within the corridor on October 21, 2013. A *Summary of Impacts to Properties of Sovereign Nations* technical report was sent to the Italian and Malaysian Embassies on January 9, 2014 (see **Appendix P**). An updated version of the technical

report was submitted to each of the Sovereign Nations in February 2018. Finally, coordination meetings with the embassies were also held, during which potential impacts and right-of-way requirements were reviewed:

- Peruvian Embassy on November 1, 2013; April 26, 2016; and October 23, 2018.
- Malaysian Embassy on February 11, 2014; April 26, 2016; and October 24, 2018.
- Italian Embassy on April 20, 2016; March 6, 2017; September 21, 2017; and November 2, 2018. The Embassy issued a letter dated December 14, 2018, indicating that both Alternatives 3 and 4 would significantly impact the Embassy's gate house and access gate and was "therefore not in a position to agree to Alternative 3 or Alternative 4, nor to any building option that would have a significant impact on the market value of said house and of the property as a whole."
- A project information packet was sent to the **Hillwood Estate, Museum and Gardens** on October 31, 2013, followed by the EA and a *Summary of Impacts to Hillwood Estate, Museum and Gardens* technical report on January 22, 2014 (see **Appendix P**).
- A copy of the EA Summary and a description of Candidate Build Alternative 4 was provided to the **Center for City Park Excellence, Trust for Public Land** on October 29, 2013.
- Following publication of the EA in October 2013, DDOT continued to coordinate with **NPS** regarding potential impacts to Rock Creek Park. A series of seven meetings were conducted between March 2014 and November 2018 where NPS representatives were briefed on revisions made to the candidate build alternatives.
- Following discussions with the US State Department and the decision that no encroachments would be made upon land of any of the Sovereign Nations, design refinements were made to Candidate Build Alternative 3 which shifted the alignment slightly to the east and resulted in minor encroachments on Rock Creek Park. Seven locations were identified where encroachments on to the NPS park property would occur – characterized as very narrow slivers of land generally less than 1-foot wide and a combined total length of 273 feet (see **Appendix P**). Recognizing the location of the encroachments upon relatively steep grades above Broad Branch, DDOT and NPS agreed that the encroachments would not adversely affect the activities, features or attributes of the park land and the roadway improvement would serve to better stabilize slopes at these same locations. The new alternative was titled Candidate Build Alternative 3 Modified and has been identified by DDOT as the Preferred Alternative.
- *NPS continued their role as a Cooperating Agency throughout the preparation of the Revised Draft EA, the Section 4(f) Evaluation, the Section 106 MOA, and this Final EA. NPS was provided with administrative drafts of each document and their comments were incorporated accordingly. The Department of the Interior (DOI), which includes the NPS, reviewed the Revised Draft EA and Section 4(f) evaluation*

and, in a letter dated October 22, 2020, concurred that there are no feasible or prudent avoidance alternatives and that the Preferred Alternative (3 Modified) would cause the least overall harm to park properties (see Appendix Q).

- NPS will continue to cooperate in the post-NEPA phases of the project in that there will be Transfer of Jurisdiction (TOJ) of properties between *DDOT and NPS to implement the project as there is no other feasible alternative. Additionally, temporary project activities on NPS property would be accomplished through a Special Use Permit including access, construction, and site restoration, including stabilization of streams and removal of trees.*

5.2 PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

DDOT held two public meetings, in 2011 and 2012, and a public hearing, in 2013, to help inform as well as solicit input from the general public on the proposed project during the initial EA effort. *Immediately after FHWA approved the Revised Draft EA for public review on October 15, 2020, DDOT conducted a 30-day virtual public involvement process. Each of these efforts are described further below.*

DDOT held a Public Scoping Meeting at the Chevy Chase Community Center, 5601 Connecticut Avenue NW in Washington, DC on July 13, 2011 from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. The purpose of the open house meeting was to introduce the project and to provide all interested persons the opportunity to provide comments regarding the project. Maps, displays, and background information were available for review at the meeting. Twelve citizens signed in at the meeting. Comments were submitted by 17 individuals, including two written comment forms and two verbal comments recorded by a verbatim reporter at the meeting, and 13 comments were submitted by electronic mail (e-mail) during the public meeting comment period.

DDOT held a second Public Meeting at The Methodist Home of DC, 4901 Connecticut Avenue NW in Washington, DC on November 8, 2012 from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. The purpose of this second public meeting was to provide an update on study activities and to afford interested persons an opportunity to provide comments on the preliminary alternatives being considered for the project. Various engineering concepts for reconstruction of the roadway, stormwater management systems, sidewalks, and bikeways were reviewed and discussed at the meeting. Of the citizens who attended the meeting, 33 signed in. Written comments were submitted by 14 individuals at the meeting and a verbatim reporter documented verbal comments from 6 meeting attendees. One form and 22 e-mails were also submitted during the public meeting comment period.

DDOT held a Public Hearing at The Methodist Home of DC, 4901 Connecticut Avenue NW in Washington, DC on November 5, 2013 at 6:30 p.m. The purpose of the public hearing was to provide information and receive comments about the proposed project and the EA (which was made available for public review on October 21, 2013). Maps, displays, and copies of the EA were available at the public hearing, and members of the project team were on hand to discuss the project and answer questions. In addition, a presentation was given to provide background on the project. Of the citizens who attended the hearing, 72 signed in.

Numerous methods were employed to publicize the public meetings and public hearing, including newspaper advertisements in The Current Newspapers and the El Tiempo Latino newspaper, and announcements on the project website located at <http://www.broadbranchrdea.com/index.html>. Postings were also made to the surrounding communities' and Advisory Neighborhood Commission's (ANC) listservs, and announcements were e-mailed to all individuals and special interest groups who requested to be on the project mailing list. No requests for special assistance or translations were received prior to the meetings. Meeting handouts were available in English and Spanish at all public meetings. Both oral (via public testimony) and written statements were taken at the public hearing. A verbatim reporter documented public testimony from the meeting attendees (**Appendix K**). Written comments were received from agencies (**Appendix L**); organizations and interest groups (**Appendix M**); and the general public (**Appendix N**) at the hearing and during the designated comment period, which ended on November 22, 2013 for the initial EA. Responses to all of these comments are included in the appendices.

In order to reduce the risk for COVID-19 (as defined by the Center for Disease Control) and in alignment with Mayor Bowser's current Coronavirus Phase Two Guidance at the time of publication, DDOT and FHWA provided a complete digital copy of the Revised Draft EA, including all technical appendices, on the project website (<http://broadbranchrdea.com/>) for public review and comment. In lieu of a traditional in-person meeting, a narrated video presentation of the project and the findings of the Revised Draft EA were also provided on the website. Announcements of the availability of the Revised Draft EA were emailed to all individuals and special interest groups who requested to be on the project mailing list (n=386), and availability letters were also individually mailed to agencies, elected officials, utility representatives, and other project stakeholders (n=55). Comments on the project were accepted via the website during a 30-day comment period through November 16, 2020. Additionally, during the public review period, DDOT participated in two Advisory Neighborhood Commission (ANC) meetings: ANC 4A on November 4, 2020 and ANC 3/4G on November 9, 2020.

*Input from the public was instrumental in the development and refinement of project alternatives and selection of the Preferred Alternative. Public comments received throughout the process were incorporated into the project designs and/or EA documents accordingly. Throughout the study, DDOT provided a project website that detailed the project history and activities associated with the Broad Branch Road EA. The website provided the public with continuous opportunity to provide comments via e-mail to BroadBranch@parsons.com. Copies of the notifications and materials for the two public meetings, the public hearing, and the virtual public outreach are provided in **Appendices H and I**.*

5.2.1 SUMMARY OF COMMENTS RECEIVED

The following table (**Table 5-1**) is a summary of the comments received via e-mail prior to the July 13, 2011 Public Scoping Meeting (3); at the Scoping Meeting by way of written comment forms (2) and verbal comments (2); and in e-mails following the meeting (10 e-mails) through July 28, 2011.

Table 5-1. Public Comments Received During Project Scoping Phase

COMMENT	NUMBER OF COMMENTS
Prioritize non-motorized traffic (pedestrians and cyclists) / provide both sidewalks and bike lanes along Broad Branch Road	5
Linkages / access to NPS resources (e.g., shoulder for Soapstone Valley Trail, crosswalk to Ridge Road)	4
Keep informed of project information and meetings	4
Traffic safety / public health	3
Repair the roadway	2
Integrate traffic calming measures	2
Vehicle sight line improvements	2
Stormwater management improvements	2
Do not provide sidewalks along Broad Branch Road	1
Improvements for cyclists	1
Sidewalk on the west side of the roadway	1
Path along Broad Branch	1
Bicycle lane for uphill cycling along Broad Branch Road	1
Dedicated bike lanes	1

The following table (**Table 5-2**) is a summary of the written (14) and oral (6) comments received at the November 8, 2012 Public Meeting and the forms and e-mails received following the meeting (1 form and 22 e-mails) through December 17, 2012.

Table 5-2. Public Comments Received During Alternatives Development Phase

COMMENT	NUMBER OF COMMENTS
SAFETY	41
Add sidewalks and bike lanes	25
Traffic calming measures	14
Add crosswalks	2
DESIGN	28
Repair / fix roadway)	11
Add bike lanes	4
No retaining walls; retaining walls excessive	4
Widen roadway	2
Minimize commuter function	2
Lighting	2
Fix dangerous intersection	1
Signage for bicycle use	1
Context sensitive	1
Stormwater management and erosion control	18
Communication and better public outreach	10
Trail / bike access to Rock Creek Park	9
Protect setting, vegetation, and trees	6
Maintain country road feel	5
Alternatives are inadequate	2
Protect Rock Creek Park	2
Manage detours during construction	2
Cost (too expensive)	2
Cultural resources	1
Regulations (cite DC Law correctly)	1

The following table (**Table 5-3**) provides a summary of the comments received from agencies, organizations, and the general public during the 30-day comment period (October 21, 2013 – November 22, 2013) for the initial EA including the November 5, 2013 Public Hearing, which extended through November 22, 2013.

Table 5-3. Comments Received During Initial EA Comment Period

COMMENT	AGENCIES	ORGANIZATIONS	CITIZENS
ALTERNATIVES (Preference for)			
Alternative 1 – No Action	-	-	19
Alternative 2	1	2	15
Alternative 3	-	-	5
Alternative 4	1	2	42
Other	-	-	3
MULTI-MODAL TRANSPORTATION ELEMENTS			
Provide dedicated bicycle / pedestrian facilities	2	5	61
Improve access to Rock Creek Park / Trails	9	2	19
ENGINEERING / DESIGN ELEMENTS			
Minimize limits of disturbance	1	-	54
Improve existing roadway	2	2	38
Improve safety	1	3	34
Cost and funding	-	1	24
Retaining walls (size and appearance)	5	-	8
Context sensitive designs / green infrastructure	1	-	7
Utilities (coordination / improve)	2	2	6
Accelerate construction period	-	1	5
Improve Soapstone Creek culvert	2	-	3
Improve signage	-	-	2
Improve lighting	-	-	1
TRAFFIC			
Traffic calming measures needed	-	-	5
Maintenance of traffic	1	-	-
Additional traffic studies needed	1	-	-
WATER RESOURCES			
Improve stormwater management	7	3	16
Prevent flooding / floodplain encroachment	1	-	6
Limit increase in impervious areas	4	-	2
Include bioretention facilities	3	-	3
Minimize groundwater pollution	3	-	-
Prevent degraded water quality	2	-	2
Stabilize stream	1	-	1
Prevent wetland encroachment	1	-	-

► *Continued.*

Table 5-3. Comments Received During Initial EA Comment Period

COMMENT	AGENCIES	ORGANIZATIONS	CITIZENS
BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES			
Limit loss of trees and vegetation	9	4	32
Minimize impacts to wildlife and habitat	1	-	6
Minimize impacts to migratory birds	1	-	-
Prevent invasive species	1	-	-
HISTORIC RESOURCES			
Identified historic structures and archaeological sites	7	-	-
Section 106 coordination	8	-	-
LAND USE			
Consistent with local land uses / plans	2	1	4
Impacts to Sovereign Nation lands	-	2	4
PARKS			
Impacts to park lands	4	-	17
Ownership / right-of-way issues	4	-	-
Section 4(f) coordination	4	-	-
HAZARDOUS MATERIALS			
Presence of hazardous material sites	2	-	-
VISUAL / AESTHETICS			
Maintain context / setting of area	-	-	16
Minimize visual intrusion	1	-	-
CUMULATIVE IMPACTS			
Consider other local / regional projects	1	-	-
MITIGATION			
Mitigate construction impacts	3	-	-
AGENCY COORDINATION			
Continue coordination efforts	4	-	4
Permit requirements	2	-	-
NEPA PROCESS			
General comments on EA document	6	-	8

Copies of the comments and DDOT's responses to each are provided in **Appendix K – Public Hearing Comments and Responses**, **Appendix L – Agency Comments and Responses on the Initial EA**, **Appendix M – Organization Comments and Responses on the Initial EA**, and **Appendix N – Citizen Comments and Responses on the Initial EA**.

The following table (Table 5-4) provides a summary of the comments received for the Revised Draft EA. During the 30-day comment period for the Revised Draft EA, 171 comments from 42 agencies, elected officials, interest groups, and citizens were received. The comments received on the Revised Draft EA and DDOT responses are provided in Appendix R – Revised Draft EA Comments and Responses.

Table 5-4. Comments Received During Revised Draft EA Comment Period

COMMENT	AGENCIES & ELECTED OFFICIALS	CITIZENS & INTEREST GROUPS
<i>Alternatives & Project Design</i>	15	11
<i>Bicycle Lane & Facilities</i>	7	10
<i>Pedestrian Improvements</i>	4	4
<i>Land Use / Property</i>	2	10
<i>Safety</i>	3	13
<i>Threatened & Endangered Species</i>	1	-
<i>Trees & Vegetation</i>	4	3
<i>Aesthetics & Visual Quality</i>	3	2
<i>Aquatic Resources & Stormwater Management</i>	16	7
<i>Historic Resources</i>	1	2
<i>Hazardous Waste & Materials</i>	1	-
<i>Park Resources / Access</i>	1	3
<i>Vehicle Traffic</i>	-	11
<i>Construction</i>	-	6
<i>Coordination and Schedule</i>	8	22