

S FINAL EA COOPERATING AGENCY COORDINATION

The National Park Service (NPS) is a cooperating agency for the Rehabilitation of Broad Branch Road, NW project. Pursuant to 40 CFR 1501.8 (b)(7), the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) provided NPS an opportunity to review the Final Environmental Assessment (EA) and provide comments prior to its public availability and completion of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process. A copy of the FHWA's letter (dated February 3, 2021) is provided herein.



U.S. Department
of Transportation
**Federal Highway
Administration**

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Washington, DC 20590
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In Reply To: HDA-DC

February 3, 2021

Ms. Tammy Stidham
Deputy Associate Area Director - Lands and Planning
National Park Service
Region 1 - National Capital Area
1100 Ohio Drive SW
Washington, DC 20242

Subject: Rehabilitation of Broad Branch Road, NW Final EA

Dear Ms. Stidham:

The District Department of Transportation (DDOT), in conjunction with the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), has prepared the Final Environmental Assessment (EA) for the rehabilitation of Broad Branch Road between Linnean Avenue and Beach Drive. The National Park Service (NPS) is a cooperating agency for this project; therefore, pursuant to 40 CFR 1501.8 (b)(7), FHWA is providing your agency an opportunity to review the Final EA prior making it available to the public and completing the NEPA process. The following link has been provided to access the Final EA document:

https://dcgovict-my.sharepoint.com/:f/g/personal/krajpurohit_ddot_dc_gov/EnzavMPQOwhGlibHr3s9-VgBgQlkOkXGGtUBIh2XHV_a_VQ?e=dbOTqM

Please note, download of the file may take a few minutes due to its size; to facilitate download, an internet browser should be opened prior to clicking link. **The above link will expire on February 12th, 2021 and we request your agency to submit any comments that you might have by that date.**

The Final EA for the proposed action of the rehabilitation of the 1.5-mile segment of Broad Branch Road, NW, between Linnean Avenue, NW and Beach Drive, NW, a portion of which abuts the southwestern border of Rock Creek Park, has been prepared in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and in compliance with all applicable environmental laws and executive orders. The proposed action would be consistent with the project setting and addresses deficiencies in the existing roadway infrastructure and stormwater management system; improves the safety of motorists, pedestrians, and bicyclists; and enhances linkages to serve pedestrian and bicycle travel along the roadway itself as well as to the Rock Creek Park trail systems (i.e., Rock Creek Trail, Western Ridge Trail, and Soapstone Valley Trail). Project goals were to minimize roadway elements that occur outside the existing DDOT-owned right-of-way. Recognizing the extended period of time since the initial environmental document was published, DDOT and FHWA prepared a Revised Draft Environmental Assessment (EA), which was approved for public review on October 15, 2020 by the FHWA and comments were received for a 30-day period until November 16, 2020, during which virtual public outreach was conducted.

After thorough review and consideration of all comments received, Alternative 3 Modified has been identified as a Preferred Alternative (PA) in the Final EA. DDOT provided administrative copies of the Revised Draft EA to NPS for review. All comments provided by the NPS were addressed prior to releasing the Revised Draft EA for public comment. On October 22, 2020, the Department of the Interior (DOI) responded to FHWA's request to review the Section 4(f) Evaluation of the EA. DOI comments stated that they agree that the project purpose and need cannot be met while avoiding Section 4(f) properties, and that there are no prudent and feasible avoidance alternatives. The DOI concurred with the Section 4(f) determination that the Preferred Alternative (3 Modified) is the alternative that causes the least overall harm. DDOT completed coordination with the District of Columbia State Historic Preservation Office (DCSHPO) during the Section 106 process which focused on minimizing impacts to contributing elements of the Rock Creek Park Historic District (retaining walls and stormwater outfall headwalls) and the Soapstone Creek Culvert. This coordination resulted in the preparation and execution of a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) on July 30, 2020 to mitigate adverse effect resulting from the proposed action. The DOI response letter and executed Section 106 MOA are enclosed for your convenience. To expedite project delivery, please note, the Final EA and Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) will be released concurrently; therefore, if there are additional comments from NPS, those comments will be considered in the Final EA.

With apologies for the short duration given for receipt of comments due to DDOT contract provisions, please submit your comments to Austina Casey (austina.casey@dc.gov) by February 12th, 2021. If there are any questions, please contact Austina Casey or me at Michael.Hicks@dot.gov. Due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic I am working remotely and do not have access to messages sent to my office phone number (202)-493-7023.

Sincerely yours,



Michael Hicks
Environmental Manager\Urban Engineer
District of Columbia Division, FHWA

Enclosures: DOI Response Letter
Section 106 MOA

cc.: Joel Gorder (NPS)
Austina Casey (DDOT)
Kirti Rajpurohit (DDOT)
Wayne Wilson (DDOT)