

**NEW METROBUS GARAGE AND MAINTENANCE FACILITY  
PRELIMINARY DESIGN**

DC Village  
Washington, DC

Finding of No Significant Impact**MAY 26 2010**

Pursuant to Section 102(2)(C) of the National Environmental Policy Act, the Council on Environmental Quality Regulations (40 CFR, Parts 1500-1508), and the National Capital Planning Commission's Environmental and Historic Preservation Policies and Procedures, I have evaluated the preliminary design for the new Metrobus Garage and Maintenance Facility, located in DC Village, SW in Washington, DC, as shown on NCPC Map File No. 84.40(38.00)43054, and the June 2007 environmental assessment (EA) prepared by the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA), and I have determined that the preliminary design for the new Metrobus Garage and Maintenance Facility, as proposed will not have a significant impact on the human environment.

Proposed Action

The proposal is to construct a new secure garage and maintenance facility that will consist of: a maximum 250-space bus parking (standard and articulated spaces) lot; a 300-space employee parking lot; a 24-space bus maintenance parking lot; an 84,000 square foot Maintenance and Administration Building; an 8,100 square foot Fuel Building; a 7,600 square foot Wash Building; a guard booth; a perimeter fence; and underground fuel storage tanks. Employee parking would be provided by an 87,500 square foot parking deck, located above the ground-level bus parking area. A pedestrian bridge would provide a direct connection between the parking deck and the 2<sup>nd</sup> level of the Administration and Maintenance Building for employees.

The EA analyzes two alternatives, the proposed action and a no action alternative. The proposed action is the result of the garage's location in a high value, rapidly redeveloping area, near the new Nationals Park baseball stadium. In addition, the WMATA *Fleet Management Plan* (April 2007) recommended near-term expansion for the bus division that uses the garage, and the existing facility currently operates over-capacity, with no room for expansion. The design is at a preliminary level, and WMATA plans to select a builder to develop a final design and to construct the new facility through a "design-build" contract. The final design will be developed in conjunction with appropriate District and federal agencies, and submitted to NCPC for review and approval.

The new facility will have an eight-foot high decorative perimeter security fence, with access provided at two locations. An emergency entrance will be located along Blue Plains Drive, SW (along the northern side of the site) and a main entrance will be located along DC Village Drive, SW, on the southeastern side of the site, with a guard booth and gate. The facility will employ

approximately 350 personnel and house 115 buses at the time of its scheduled opening in 2012, with work shifts that span 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. The facility is required to attain a LEED Silver Certification, and will ultimately accommodate 250 buses and 600 personnel at some point in the future.

#### Standard for evaluation

Under NEPA, the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations, and NCPC Environmental and Historic Preservation Policies and Procedures, an EA is sufficient and an Environmental Impact Statement need not be prepared if the EA supports the finding that the federal action will not significantly affect the human environment. The EA for this project was prepared in accordance with these standards.

#### Potential Impacts

The EA found that there were both long-term beneficial impacts and adverse impacts associated with the proposed action. Beneficial impacts include improving employment opportunities for local Ward 8 residents, increasing local retail activity as WMATA employees patronize nearby businesses, allowing the downtown garage site to be redeveloped with “higher” and “better” uses (generating additional tax revenue for the city), and re-locating the District Department of Health food distribution center to an area that is more accessible for low-income residents. A limited number of minor to moderate adverse impacts to the environment is also associated with the proposed action. These long-term adverse impacts include increased noise levels in the vicinity of the site, increased outdoor lighting which could affect growing activities at the nearby U.S. Botanical Production Facility, an increase in building area on the site, and the displacement of approximately 100 medium and large trees. None of these impacts was found to be significant.

The Proposed Action includes perimeter landscaping to improve the aesthetic condition of the project site, and WMATA will work with the Architect of the Capitol to ensure that the facility’s outdoor lighting will not impact growing activities at the nearby production facility. While the loss of the medium/large trees is regrettable, NCPC and District agencies will work with WMATA to ensure that perimeter landscaping is maximized to help mitigate the loss, and to provide a robust buffer between the facility and adjacent uses, which include: a District Metropolitan Police Department station, a homeless shelter, a District impoundment lot, a U.S. Department of Labor Job Corps Center, and the U.S. Botanical Production Facility.

The EA states that the Proposed Action conforms to the State Implementation Plan and National Ambient Air Quality Standards. The intersections located in the vicinity of the site would continue to operate well, with no traffic congestion, and the Proposed Action’s impact to I-295 and the area surrounding the Anacostia Metrorail Station, would be little more than projected No Build conditions.

The location of the main building on the far side of the project site (away from the existing Job Corps Center) will likely lessen any noise impacts to the Center’s dormitories, and safety protocols will limit operating speeds of buses and other vehicles on-site, to keep noise levels down. In accordance with the Executive Order on Environmental Justice, the EA states that the Proposed Action would not lead to severance, displacement or isolation of any neighborhood or housing in the general vicinity of the project site.

The project was analyzed through an EA study as required by the facility planning process under the WMATA Compact. Operating under the assumption that federal funding would not be required to support the project, WMATA undertook the study following the Compact's planning process, which does not require a "Finding of No Significant Impact" (FONSI) to conclude an EA study. Accordingly, the study was completed with approval by the Board of Directors after a public comment process in conformance with the WMATA Compact. However, the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) made a determination that project funding was federal and as a result, WMATA submitted the EA study to the FTA for consideration. In a letter dated July 15<sup>th</sup>, 2009, FTA concluded that the project qualifies for a Categorical Exclusion in lieu of issuing a FONSI, as follows: 23 CFR Section 771.117 (d) (8), *Construction of new bus storage and maintenance facilities in areas used predominantly for industrial or transportation purposes where such construction is not inconsistent with existing zoning and located on or near a street with adequate capacity to handle anticipated bus and support vehicle traffic.*

Pursuant to Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA), WMATA consulted with the District of Columbia State Historic Preservation Office (DC SHPO) and conducted a Phase I archeological study of the site. WMATA submitted the survey to the DC SHPO, along with its determination that the undertaking would have no effect on historic and archeological resources. The DC SHPO issued its concurrence of "No Effect" on February 6, 2008, and NCPC concurs with this finding as well.



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Marcel C. Acosta  
Executive Director