

## 6.0 AGENCY COORDINATION AND PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

### 6.1 Agency Coordination

DDOT conducted agency coordination as part of the planning process for the Pennsylvania and Minnesota Avenues, SE EA. Agency coordination included project scoping, consultation with resource agencies in accordance with Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act (ESA), consultation with the DC SHPO and NPS in accordance with Section 106 of the NHPA, and individual scoping meetings. Agency correspondence is included in *Appendix C, Agency Coordination and Public Involvement*. Coordination with the DC SHPO is included in *Appendix E, Section 106 Consultation and Cultural Resources Information*.

#### Agency Scoping

FHWA, NPS and DDOT held an inter-agency meeting on September 6, 2012 at the DDOT headquarters in Southeast D.C.

The following agencies were sent initial project information and were invited to the interagency meeting at DDOT headquarters:

- Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)
- National Park Service (NPS)
- US Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS)
- US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE)
- National Capital Planning Commission (NCPC)
- DC State Historic Preservation Office (DC SHPO)
- Washington Metropolitan and Transit Administration (WMATA)
- Commission of Fine Arts (CFA)
- DC Water and Sewer Authority (DC Water)
- DC Office of Planning (DC OP)

Agencies in attendance included DC SHPO, WMATA, EPA, and CFA. The purpose of this scoping meeting was to solicit feedback from the agencies that could potentially affect the scope or content of the EA and to analyze the potential environmental impacts of the improvements to be made at the intersection of Pennsylvania Avenue and Minnesota Avenue, SE.

The NCPC provided scoping comments on October 15, 2012 stating that a request that the EA analyze all potential action alternatives for consistency with applicable planning policies of the Comprehensive Plan for the National Capital: Federal Elements, and also noting that any transfer of jurisdiction of lands between NPS and DDOT is subject to review and approval of NCPC. NCPC was invited to be a cooperating agency on the EA and as a consulting party under Section 106 in a letter dated September 27, 2012.

### NPS and FHWA Meetings

Initial discussions with the NPS regarding the project intersection took place in 2006 with the development of the Pennsylvania Avenue Great Streets Program given that NPS owns some of the land at this intersection.

At the commencement of the EA planning process, DDOT, NPS and FHWA attended a kick-off meeting in August of 2010 to re-introduce the project to NPS and FHWA and to discuss agency roles for the development of the EA. NPS and FHWA were both involved during the concept design phase in 2006 and 2007 throughout the Great Streets Concept Design Report. Following the initial kick-off meeting, the agencies met several times throughout the EA planning process to discuss the alternatives and the resource impact categories. Following the Agency Scoping Meeting in September of 2012, NPS and FHWA determined that FHWA would be the lead federal agency because they would be contributing funds to the project, and NPS would be a cooperating agency due to the transfer of land jurisdiction between NPS and DDOT.

Letters were submitted to NPS and the National Capital Planning Commission (NCPC) on September 27, 2012 with an invitation for these agencies to become cooperating agencies in the development of the EA.

### DC SHPO

Coordination with the D.C. SHPO commenced about the project intersection originally began in 2006 with the development of the Pennsylvania Avenue Great Streets Program when tasked with considering the environmental constraints. When DDOT began refining the project alternatives at the start of the EA process, DDOT submitted a letter to the D.C. SHPO on December 17, 2010 to formally initiate the Section 106 process in accordance with the NHPA. DDOT held a meeting to re-introduce DC SHPO staff to the project on February 2, 2011 to discuss the project status, any cultural resources in the project vicinity, the potential APE, and any necessary consulting parties. In March of 2011, DDOT requested DC SHPO's concurrence with the project APE. The DC SHPO responded with their concurrence on April 8, 2011.

In July of 2011, DDOT submitted an *Archaeological Assessment of Potential* to the DC SHPO with recommendations for archaeological survey.

On October 26, 2011 the DC SHPO provided additional Section 106 comments on the project with response that no previously identified historic properties are located in the APE and that if the Build 1 Alternative – Revised Square Alternative (referred to as Modified Square Alternative in the letter), the project would likely have no adverse effect on historic properties. Geoarchaeological coring was requested to further investigate the potential for archaeological resources. A Special Use Permit was obtained from NPS and the testing was conducted in November of 2012 (signed copy of Special Use Permit is included in *Appendix E, Cultural Resources*). The *Geoarchaeological Interpretations in the Vicinity of the Intersection of Pennsylvania and Minnesota Avenues in the Anacostia Section of Washington, D.C.* provides the results of the preliminary testing.

NCPC was invited to be a cooperating agency on the EA and as a consulting party under Section 106 in a letter dated September 27, 2012.

Coordination with the DC SHPO and cultural reports submitted are provided in *Appendix E, Cultural Resources*.

## **6.2 Public Involvement**

### Public Scoping

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*.

### Public Meetings

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.

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