

## 1 1.0 Introduction

2 The Federal Railroad Administration (FRA), jointly with the District Department of Transportation  
3 (DDOT), prepared this Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) and Section 4(f) Evaluation in  
4 compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA)<sup>1</sup> and the Council on  
5 Environmental Quality (CEQ) Implementing Regulations for NEPA,<sup>2</sup> the FRA *Procedures for Considering*  
6 *Environmental Impacts*,<sup>3</sup> *Efficient Environmental Reviews for Project Decisionmaking*,<sup>4</sup> and Section 4(f) of  
7 the United States Department of Transportation (USDOT) Act of 1966 (Section 4[f]).<sup>5</sup>

8 Consistent with these regulations and procedures, this DEIS identifies the potential effects of the Long  
9 Bridge Project (the Project) on the human and natural environment. The DEIS also identifies measures to  
10 avoid, minimize, or mitigate potential adverse impacts.

11 The DEIS documents FRA and DDOT's compliance with Federal, state, and local environmental laws and  
12 regulations. These include, but are not limited to:

- 13 • Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (NHPA),<sup>6</sup>
- 14 • Clean Air Act of 1970,<sup>7</sup>
- 15 • Clean Water Act of 1972 (CWA),<sup>8</sup>
- 16 • Endangered Species Act of 1973,<sup>9</sup>
- 17 • Executive Order (EO) 11988 on Floodplain Management of 1977,<sup>10</sup>
- 18 • USDOT Order 5650.2 on Floodplain Management of 1979,<sup>11</sup>
- 19 • EO 11990 on Protection of Wetlands of 1977,<sup>12</sup>
- 20 • Coastal Zone Management Act of 1972,<sup>13</sup> and
- 21 • EO 12898 on Environmental Justice (1994).<sup>14</sup>

22 The analysis in this DEIS and the Draft Section 4(f) Evaluation informed FRA and DDOT's consideration  
23 and decision-making regarding the Project's alternatives, including the identification of a Preferred

---

<sup>1</sup> 42 USC 4321

<sup>2</sup> 40 CFR Part 1500-1508

<sup>3</sup> 64 FR 28545

<sup>4</sup> 23 USC 139

<sup>5</sup> 49 USC 303

<sup>6</sup> 36 CFR 800

<sup>7</sup> 42 USC 7401

<sup>8</sup> 33 USC 1251

<sup>9</sup> 16 USC 1531

<sup>10</sup> EO 11988

<sup>11</sup> USDOT Order 5650.2

<sup>12</sup> EO 11990

<sup>13</sup> 16 USC 1461

<sup>14</sup> EO 12898

24 Alternative. Concurrent with publication of this DEIS for review, the public and other agencies will  
25 have the opportunity to provide comments at a public hearing and via written communication during a  
26 45-day public comment period. Pursuant to the Fixing America’s Surface Transportation Act of 2015  
27 (FAST Act), FRA and DDOT plan to issue a single document consisting of the Final Environmental Impact  
28 Statement (FEIS), Final Section 4(f) Evaluation, and Record of Decision (ROD). FRA and DDOT plan to  
29 publish a combined document that considers all comments from the comment period unless statutory  
30 criteria or practicability considerations preclude issuing a combined document.<sup>15</sup>

## 31 **1.1 Proposed Action**

32 The Proposed Action (referred to as “the Project” in the DEIS) consists of potential improvements to  
33 Long Bridge Corridor and related railroad infrastructure located between RO Interlocking in Arlington,  
34 Virginia, and L’Enfant (LE) Interlocking near 10th Street SW in the District of Columbia (District).<sup>16</sup> The  
35 Project proposes to address planning year 2040 railroad service needs. The Project connects logical  
36 termini,<sup>17</sup> has independent utility,<sup>18</sup> and does not restrict consideration of alternatives for other  
37 reasonably foreseeable transportation projects in the area.

38 Constructed in 1904, Long Bridge is the only railroad crossing over the Potomac River between the  
39 District and Virginia. CSX Transportation (CSXT), a Class I freight railroad, owns and operates the existing  
40 two-track railroad bridge. The Long Bridge Corridor (see **Section 1.2, Project Area and Setting**), currently  
41 serves freight (CSXT), intercity passenger (Amtrak), and commuter rail (Virginia Railway Express [VRE]).  
42 Maryland Area Regional Commuter (MARC) rail, which currently terminates at Washington Union  
43 Station in the District, has plans to expand into the Corridor. Norfolk Southern, a Class I freight railroad,  
44 has trackage rights on Long Bridge, but does not currently exercise those rights.

## 45 **1.2 Project Area and Setting**

46 The Project Area, shown in **Figure 1-1**, encompasses the 1.8-mile Long Bridge Corridor. The Project Area  
47 is in the Washington Monumental Core, the symbolic and Federal center of the District. The Long Bridge  
48 Corridor is part of viewsheds to and from the Washington Monument, Lincoln Memorial, and other  
49 prominent monuments, buildings, and lands. Long Bridge is also a contributing element to the East and  
50 West Potomac Parks Historic District and lies within the viewshed of the George Washington Memorial  
51 Parkway (GWMP). The National Park Service (NPS) administers the land on the District and Virginia sides  
52 of the bridge, as well as the riverbed.

53 The Project Area includes the full length of Long Bridge, which spans the Potomac River, as well as the  
54 north and south approaches to the bridge between RO and LE Interlockings. The Project Area includes  
55 these approaches because changes to Long Bridge will also require changes to railroad facilities and  
56 infrastructure between the interlockings.

---

<sup>15</sup> 23 USC 139(n)(2)

<sup>16</sup> An interlocking is a segment of railroad infrastructure comprised of track, turnouts, and signals linked (interlocked) in a way that allows trains to safely move from one track to another, or across tracks, preventing conflicting train movements. Note that the proper name of RO Interlocking is “RO.” It is not an acronym.

<sup>17</sup> Logical termini are rational endpoints for both a transportation improvement and a review of the environmental impacts.

<sup>18</sup> A project has independent utility if it is usable and a reasonable expenditure even if no additional transportation improvements in the area are made.

57 **Figure 1-1 | Long Bridge Project Area**



58

59 Long Bridge is comprised of 22 through-girder spans and a double-span swivel-swing truss for a total of  
60 24 spans over the Potomac River, totaling 2,529 feet. The bridge spans a Federal navigational channel. In  
61 addition to Long Bridge, the Corridor includes four railroad bridges over roadways, the Metrorail Yellow  
62 Line, and a bridge across the Washington Channel.

### 63 **1.3 Project Background**

64 Passenger, commuter, and freight railroad services play an important part in supporting economic  
65 growth and vitality. Long Bridge is an essential component of the regional commuter railroad network,  
66 the national intercity passenger railroad system, and freight railroad service, linking the Northeast  
67 Corridor and Southeast High-Speed Rail Corridor. Projections indicate that passenger and freight growth  
68 will exceed capacity of the current two-track bridge across the Potomac River. Future demand will  
69 require expanded infrastructure to provide service to economic centers north and south of Long Bridge,  
70 including the new Amazon HQ2 headquarters in Crystal City, Virginia.<sup>19</sup> Expanding the Long Bridge  
71 Corridor infrastructure would enable efficient continuous movement of passengers and goods across  
72 the Potomac River and throughout the Eastern Seaboard.

73 In 2011, DDOT received a High-Speed Intercity Passenger Rail grant from the FRA to complete a  
74 two-phase feasibility and planning study of the rehabilitation or replacement of Long Bridge. The Phase I  
75 study, completed in 2015 before initiation of the EIS for the Project, considered concepts to address the  
76 deficiencies of the Long Bridge Corridor. Phase II of the Long Bridge Study commenced in Fall 2015 and  
77 included development of a long-range service plan based on future demand in the Corridor, further  
78 refinement of engineering concepts, and development of draft evaluation criteria to identify and screen  
79 concepts carried forward for analysis in the EIS process.

80 In 2016, FRA awarded DDOT a Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) grant  
81 for Phase III, which includes the NEPA process. The grant funds the development of the EIS, Section 4(f)  
82 Evaluation, and ROD, including conceptual and preliminary engineering to support the analysis of  
83 alternatives, analysis of environmental impacts, and identification of a Preferred Alternative.

### 84 **1.4 NEPA Process**

85 NEPA requires Federal agencies assess environmental effects of Federal actions prior to  
86 decision-making. The NEPA process involves:

- 87 • Examination of a reasonable range of alternatives;
- 88 • Analysis of impacts to environmental resources;
- 89 • Coordination with Federal, state, and local agencies, the public, and other project  
90 stakeholders; and
- 91 • Identification of measures to avoid, minimize, or mitigate potential environmental impacts.

---

<sup>19</sup> Arlington County. "Northern Virginia's National Landing Selected for Major New Amazon Headquarters." November 13, 2018. Accessed from <https://www.arlingtoneconomicdevelopment.com/resources/news/news-releases/northern-virginias-national-landing-selected-for-major-new-amazon-headquarters/>. Accessed December 20, 2018.

92 FRA and DDOT initiated the formal NEPA process for the Long Bridge Project with publication of the  
93 Notice of Intent (NOI) in the Federal Register on August 26, 2016. The NOI announced FRA and DDOT's  
94 intent to prepare an EIS, provided background information on the Project, presented the draft Purpose  
95 and Need Statement, explained the alternatives development process, and provided an initial list of  
96 environmental resources to be analyzed. The NOI also announced the Public Scoping Meeting and  
97 invited the public and other interested parties to submit early coordination comments through  
98 September 26, 2016. FRA subsequently extended the 30-day Scoping period to October 14, 2016, in  
99 response to a public request to have 30 days to review the materials presented at the public meeting on  
100 September 14, 2016. FRA published an extension notice in the Federal Register on October 11, 2016.  
101 **Chapter 25.1, Scoping**, provides more information on the Scoping process. **Appendix A1, Scoping**  
102 **Report**, includes the Scoping Report with comments addressed, the NOI, and the Scoping comment  
103 period extension notice.

#### 104 **1.4.1 Lead Agencies**

105 FRA is the Lead Federal Agency preparing the Long Bridge Project DEIS. FRA is a modal administration  
106 with USDOT. DDOT, as the recipient of the TIGER grant, is a Joint Lead Agency. Lead Agencies are  
107 responsible for ensuring that the NEPA process is conducted properly and in accordance with all  
108 applicable environmental regulations. Lead Agencies have the authority and responsibility to take  
109 proper and necessary actions to facilitate the expeditious resolution of the NEPA process.<sup>20</sup> FRA and  
110 DDOT's future actions on behalf of the Project may include issuing approvals and providing funding for  
111 construction of the Project.

#### 112 **1.4.2 Cooperating Agencies**

113 FRA and DDOT invited agencies with jurisdiction by law or with other special expertise on resources for  
114 the Project to be Cooperating Agencies.<sup>21</sup> FRA and DDOT identified potential Cooperating Agencies in  
115 accordance with CEQ Implementing Regulations for NEPA and *Efficient Environmental Reviews for*  
116 *Project Decisionmaking*.<sup>22,23</sup> These agencies and their roles and jurisdiction on behalf of the Project  
117 include:

- 118 • **National Park Service (NPS)**, the Federal agency responsible for managing the National Park  
119 System. Actions that would require an NPS decision will require that NEPA compliance for this  
120 Project be easily adoptable by NPS.<sup>24</sup> The NEPA process should meet the policies set forth in

---

<sup>20</sup> 23 USC 139(c)(6)

<sup>21</sup> Cooperating Agency means any Federal agency other than a Lead Agency that has jurisdiction by law or special expertise with respect to any environmental impact involved in a proposal (or a reasonable alternative) for legislation or other major Federal action significantly affecting the quality of the human environment. The selection and responsibilities of a cooperating agency are described in 40 CFR 1501.6. A state or local agency of similar qualifications or, when the effects are on a reservation, an Indian Tribe may by agreement with the Lead Agency become a Cooperating Agency.

<sup>22</sup> 40 CFR 1500-1508

<sup>23</sup> 23 USC 139

<sup>24</sup> 43 CFR 46.120

- 121 NPS’s Director’s Order 12: Conservation, Planning, Environmental Impact Analysis, and Decision-  
122 Making<sup>25</sup> and the NPS NEPA Handbook (2015).<sup>26</sup>
- 123 NPS has jurisdiction over Federal park property in the Project Area, including GWMP,  
124 National Mall and Memorial Parks, Captain John Smith Chesapeake National Historic Trail,  
125 the Star-Spangled Banner National Historic Trail, Potomac Heritage National Scenic Trail,  
126 the Washington-Rochambeau Revolutionary Route National Historic Trail, and the Potomac  
127 River bottom.
- 128 • **National Capital Planning Commission (NCPC)**, the Federal government’s central agency for  
129 planning and development in the National Capital Region. Through planning, policymaking, and  
130 project review, NCPC protects and advances the Federal government’s interest in the region’s  
131 development. NCPC has approval authority over Federal projects within the District. This  
132 includes all land transfers and physical alterations to Federal property. In addition, NCPC has  
133 review authority in the National Capital Region. This includes Arlington County, pursuant to the  
134 National Capital Planning Act of 1952.<sup>27</sup>
  - 135 • **United States Coast Guard (USCG)**, the Federal agency responsible for permitting bridge  
136 projects in or over navigable waterways, pursuant to Section 9 of the River and Harbors Act.
  - 137 • **United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) – Baltimore District and Norfolk District**, the  
138 Federal permitting agency responsible for impacts to rivers (including the Potomac River),  
139 streams, and wetlands under the Rivers and Harbors Act of 1899, Section 10, and the CWA  
140 Sections 401 and 404. The Norfolk District designated Baltimore District as the lead USACE  
141 District for the Project.
  - 142 • **Federal Transit Administration (FTA)**, is a modal administration within the USDOT. FTA’s  
143 purview is in public transportation and transit systems. They provide expertise regarding  
144 commuter railroad facilities. FTA is a potential source of funding for project construction.
  - 145 • **Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT)**, the state agency that oversees  
146 railroad and transit planning and funding in Virginia. DRPT is a contributor of local funding for  
147 the preliminary engineering, NEPA, and final design phases. DRPT will be the project sponsor for  
148 final design and construction.
  - 149 • **Virginia Railway Express (VRE)**, the commuter railroad agency that operates on the existing  
150 bridge. VRE is a contributor of local funding for the PE and NEPA phases.

---

<sup>25</sup> Conservation Planning, Environmental Impact Analysis, and Decision-Making. National Park Service Director’s Order 12. Accessed from [https://www.nps.gov/policy/dorders/do\\_12.pdf](https://www.nps.gov/policy/dorders/do_12.pdf). Accessed April 29, 2018.

<sup>26</sup> NPS. National Parks Service NEPA Handbook. 2015. Accessed from [https://www.nps.gov/subjects/nepa/upload/NPS\\_NEPAHandbook\\_Final\\_508.pdf](https://www.nps.gov/subjects/nepa/upload/NPS_NEPAHandbook_Final_508.pdf). Accessed January 12, 2018.

<sup>27</sup> Pub. L. 592

151 **1.4.3 Participating Agencies**

152 FRA and DDOT invited Federal, District, state, and local agencies with an interest in the Project to be  
153 Participating Agencies.<sup>28</sup> FRA and DDOT identified potential Participating Agencies in accordance with  
154 *Efficient Environmental Reviews for Project Decisionmaking*.<sup>29</sup> **Chapter 25.4.2, Public Involvement and**  
155 **Agency Coordination, Participating Agencies** describes the role of a Participating Agency and **Table 25-2**  
156 lists the Participating Agencies for the Project.

157 **1.4.4 Project Sponsor**

158 DRPT will be the project sponsor for final design and construction, including implementation of any  
159 mitigation measures identified in this document, has not yet been identified. DRPT will be responsible  
160 for ensuring all commitments and mitigation measures in the ROD are implemented during construction  
161 and operation of the Project.

162 **1.5 Bike-Pedestrian Crossing Opportunities**

163 While not part of the Purpose and Need for the Long Bridge Project, FRA and DDOT explored the  
164 potential opportunity to accommodate connections to the pedestrian and bicycle network that follow  
165 the trajectory of the Long Bridge Corridor. Public comments received throughout the planning for the  
166 Project included requests for considering a bike-pedestrian crossing. As a result, FRA and DDOT assessed  
167 the feasibility of a bike-pedestrian crossing and considered whether a path could be designed to be  
168 consistent with railroad operator plans and pursuant to railroad safety practices.

169 NPS agreed that the bike-pedestrian crossing could serve as USDOT Act Section 4(f) mitigation for  
170 impacts to its parks. The crossing would provide a connection between the parks and the regional trail  
171 system and would therefore have a regional recreational benefit. **Chapter 22, Bike-Pedestrian Crossing,**  
172 provides detailed information on the bike-pedestrian crossing. With a ROD commitment for a bike-  
173 pedestrian crossing as mitigation for Section 4(f) impacts, DRPT would be obligated to construct the  
174 bike-pedestrian crossing with the Project.

---

<sup>28</sup> A Participating Agency as defined in 23 USC 139(d) is any Federal and non-Federal agency that may have an interest in the project. Any Federal agency that is invited by the Lead Agency to participate in the environmental review process for a project shall be designated as a Participating Agency by the Lead Agency unless the invited agency informs the Lead Agency, in writing, by the deadline specified in the invitation that the invited agency: (a) has no jurisdiction or authority with respect to the project; (b) has no expertise or information relevant to the project; and (c) does not intend to submit comments on the project.

<sup>29</sup> 23 USC 139