

Long Bridge Project

Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)

Scoping Report

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U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Railroad Administration



District Department of Transportation

Long Bridge Project EIS

Scoping Report

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1.0 Introduction

This Long Bridge Project Scoping Report summarizes the scoping process that was undertaken for the Long Bridge Project (the Project) in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA); the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) Regulations for Implementing the Procedural Provisions of NEPA in 40 CFR parts 1500–1508; Federal Railroad Administration’s (FRA) Procedures for Considering Environmental Impacts in 64 FR 28545, dated May 26, 1999 and 78 FR 2713, dated January 14, 2013; and 23 U.S.C. § 139. Scoping engages both the public (i.e., citizens, elected officials, and key stakeholders) as well as local, state, and Federal agencies during the early stages of the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) development. This Scoping Report summarizes the agency and public involvement efforts undertaken, comments received during the scoping period, and additional comments received before the report was finalized.

1.1. Project Description

The Long Bridge Project consists of potential improvements to the bridge and related railroad infrastructure located between the Virginia Railway Express (VRE) Crystal City Station in Arlington, Virginia and Control Point Virginia near 3rd Street, SW in Washington, DC (see **Figure 1**). The Long Bridge Corridor is owned and operated by CSX Transportation (CSXT), a Class I freight railroad. In addition to CSXT freight, the bridge is currently utilized by Amtrak and VRE.

The EIS for the Project is preceded by several years of preliminary project development activities. In 2011, the District Department of Transportation (DDOT) received a High Speed Intercity Passenger Rail grant from the FRA to complete a two-phase feasibility study of the rehabilitation or replacement of the Long Bridge. Phase I included a preliminary operations plan; visual inspection of the corridor; initial evaluation of existing and future capacity needs; and preliminary development of conceptual alternatives. Phase II included development of a draft EIS Purpose and Need Statement; Environmental Data Collection Report (EDCR); Long Range Service Plan; further refinement of engineering concepts; and development of evaluation criteria to identify and screen concepts that will be carried forward for analysis in the EIS. In 2016, FRA awarded DDOT a Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) grant for Phase III, which includes preparation of the EIS.

Figure 1: Long Bridge Project - Study Area



1.2. NEPA and the Scoping Process

NEPA is a procedural law that mandates an interdisciplinary environmental review and documentation process for all federally funded projects. The NEPA documentation process ensures that the following goals have been met before a project is implemented:

- All applicable laws, regulations, policies, and guidance have been adhered to;
- Federal, state, and local agencies, the public, and other project stakeholders have been involved in the decision-making process;
- A reasonable range of alternatives have been examined; and
- Impacts to environmental resources have been considered.

An EIS is being prepared in accordance with NEPA for the Project. FRA is the lead Federal agency under NEPA. DDOT, as Project sponsor, is a joint lead agency.

The EIS will document compliance with other applicable Federal, state, and local environmental laws and regulations, including but not limited to: Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act; the Clean Water Act; Section 4(f) of the U.S. Department of Transportation Act of 1966; the Endangered Species Act; Executive Order (EO) 11988 and USDOT Order 5650.2 on Floodplain Management; EO 11990 on Protection of Wetlands; the Magnuson-Stevens Act, related to Essential Fish Habitat; the Coastal Zone Management Act; and EO 12898 on Environmental Justice.

The purpose of the scoping process is to determine and clarify issues that are relevant to the scope of the study. During the scoping process, open lines of communication are established between the lead agencies and other stakeholders. The scoping process included the following major elements:

- Federal Register Notice of Intent (NOI);
- Scoping Initiation Letters;
- EIS Scoping Interagency Coordination Meeting (ICM);
- Public Scoping Meeting;
- Scoping Comment Period; and
- Project Scoping Report.

2.0 Scoping Process

2.1. Pre-NEPA Public Outreach

Public outreach for the Project was initiated in 2012, prior to the initiation of the NEPA process, with the Phase I Study and development of the Project website (www.longbridgeproject.com). The Phase I Study included three public meetings conducted in an open-house format between November 2012 and December 2013 (**Table 1**). Meetings were announced through advertisements in the *Washington Post*, postcards distributed at Metro stations during morning commute hours, and email distribution to the Project mailing list.

Following the initiation of the Phase II Study, a public meeting was held on February 10, 2016 (**Table 1**). The intent of this meeting was to update the public on the Project status and schedule. This meeting was announced through an advertisement in the *Washington Post Express*, website notification, and email distribution to the Project mailing list.

Table 1 | Summary of Pre-Scoping Public Outreach

MEETING DATE	LOCATION	# OF ATTENDEES	MEETING TOPICS
November 13, 2012 4:00 - 6:00 p.m.	Westminster Presbyterian Church 400 I Street, SW	29	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feasibility study introduction and overview • Request for input and issues of interest
June 6, 2013 4:00 - 7:00 p.m.	Westminster Presbyterian Church 400 I Street, SW	23	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communicate initial concepts and receive feedback • Communicate possible footprint for a new bridge
December 5, 2013 4:00 - 7:00 p.m.	St. Augustine's Episcopal Church 600 M Street, SW	26	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Present results of analysis and demand forecasting • Communicate next steps and solicit comments on alternatives
February 10, 2016 4:00 – 7:00 p.m.	L'Enfant Plaza Club Room 470 L'Enfant Plaza, SW	42	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update public on Project status

2.2. Notice of Intent

FRA and DDOT initiated the formal NEPA process with publication of the Notice of Intent (NOI) in the *Federal Register* on August 26, 2016. The NOI announced FRA and DDOT's intent to prepare an EIS;

provided background information on the Project; presented the draft EIS Purpose and Need Statement; addressed the alternatives development process; and provided an initial list of environmental resources to be analyzed. The NOI also announced the public scoping meeting (see Section 2.4.2) and invited the public and other interested parties to submit scoping comments through September 26, 2016. FRA subsequently extended the 30-day scoping period to October 14, 2016 in response to a public request to have 30 days to review the materials presented at the public meeting on September 14, 2016. The NOI and extension notice published in the *Federal Register* are included in **Appendix A**.

2.3. Agency Outreach

2.3.1. Scoping Initiation Letters

Potential cooperating agencies and participating agencies were initially identified by the lead agencies in accordance with 40 CFR 1501.6 and 23 U.S.C. § 139¹. FRA sent scoping initiation letters to primary agency points of contact (POCs) by U.S. Mail on August 15, 2016 (**Appendix B-1**). Copies of these same letters were e-mailed to agency secondary POCs on August 18, 2016.

The letters notified agencies of the Project and invited their participation in preparation of the EIS as a cooperating or participating agency. The letters also invited agency representatives to attend the EIS Scoping ICM (see Section 2.3.2); visit the Project website; submit comments during the 30-day scoping period; and attend the public scoping meeting (see Section 2.4.2).

Table 2 identifies cooperating and participating agencies POCs based on the returned signed agreements.

¹ *Cooperating agency* means any Federal agency other than a lead agency which 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 §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.

A *participating agency* is any Federal and non-Federal agencies 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.

Table 2 | Agency Roles and Points of Contact (POCs)

AGENCY	POINT OF CONTACT (POC)	TITLE
LEAD AGENCIES		
Federal Railroad Administration (FRA)	Amanda Murphy	Environmental Protection Specialist
District Department of Transportation (DDOT)	Anna Chamberlin	Manager, Project Review
COOPERATING AGENCIES¹		
Virginia Dept. of Rail & Public Transportation (DRPT)	Randy Selleck	Rail Planning Project Manager
Virginia Railway Express (VRE)	Oscar Gonzalez	Project Manager
National Park Service (NPS)	Tammy Stidham	Chief of Planning
Federal Transit Administration (FTA)	Daniel Koenig	Environmental Protection Specialist
U.S. Coast Guard (USCG)	Hal Pitts	Commander
National Capital Planning Commission (NCPC)	Michael Weil	Urban Planner
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) – Baltimore District and Norfolk District	Steven Harman	Project Manager, Operations Division/Regulatory, Baltimore District
PARTICIPATING AGENCIES¹		
Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)²	<i>No Response</i>	---
Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) – Eastern Federal Lands Highways Division²	<i>No Response</i>	---
Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) – DC Division²	<i>No Response</i>	---
Federal Aviation Administration (FAA)	Susan Stafford	Environmental Protection Specialist
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)	Barbara Rudnick	NEPA Team Leader
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (USFWS)²	<i>No Response</i>	---

AGENCY	POINT OF CONTACT (POC)	TITLE
U.S. General Services Administration National Capital Region (GSA NCR)²	<i>No Response</i>	---
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration National Marine Fisheries Service (NOAA-NMFS)	Kristy Beard (Potomac)	Marine Habitat Resource Specialist
U.S. Commission of Fine Arts (CFA)	Frederick Lindstrom	Assistant Secretary
District of Columbia Office of Planning (OP)	Dan Emerine	Senior Transportation Planner
District of Columbia State Historic Preservation Office³ (DC-SHPO)	Andrew Lewis	Senior Historic Preservation Specialist
District Department of the Environment & Energy (DOEE)	Raymond Montero	Remedial Project Manager
DC Water and Sewer (DC Water)	Moussa Wone	Design Manager, DC Clean Rivers Project
Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA)	Jonathan Parker	Senior Planner
Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT-MTA)	Bradley Smith	Director, Office of Freight and Multimodalism
Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT)	Nicholas Roper	Assistant District Engineer
Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries (VDGIF)³	<i>No response</i>	---
Virginia Marine Resources Commission (VMRC)	Mark Eversole	Habitat Management
Virginia Department of Historic Resources (VDHR)	Ethel Eaton	Senior Policy Analyst
Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (VDEQ)	Daniel Burstein	Regional Enforcement Specialist
Arlington County	J. Daniel Malouff	Regional Transportation Planner
City of Alexandria	Lee Farmer	Transit Capital Program Manager
Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (MWCOG)	Jon Schermann	Transportation Planner III
Metropolitan Washington Aviation Authority (MWA)	Erik Schwenke	Environmental Planner

NOTES: ¹ Cooperating agencies are participating agencies, but not all participating agencies are cooperating agencies, in accordance with 23 U.S.C. § 139(d)(5).

² In accordance with 23 U.S.C. § 139, invited Federal agencies are participating agencies unless they inform the lead agency, in writing, that the agency has no jurisdiction or authority with respect to the Project; has no expertise or information relevant to the Project; and does not intend to submit comments on the Project.

³ A signed agreement to act as participating agency has not been received as of January 10, 2017. DC-SHPO and VDGIIF remain listed in this table because continued coordination is required pursuant to additional regulatory requirements, including National Historic Preservation Act, Section 106 and Endangered Species Act, Section 7.

2.3.2. EIS Scoping Interagency Coordination Meeting

FRA and DDOT hosted the EIS Scoping Interagency Coordination Meeting (ICM) on September 14, 2016 at DDOT headquarters. The ICM included a presentation by the Project team, including representatives from DDOT and FRA. **Table 3** lists meeting attendees. The Project team provided agency contacts with the draft EIS Purpose and Need Statement and the EDCR by e-mail dated September 9, 2016, prior to the ICM.

At the ICM, the Project team reviewed the existing conditions and simulation modeling; the draft EIS Purpose and Need Statement; alternatives development and screening; environmental considerations; the proposed EIS schedule; and agency and public coordination. At the meeting’s conclusion, agency comments were requested on the information presented at the ICM, environmental and cultural resources within each agency’s jurisdiction, and any agency plans and initiatives related to the Study Area. The presentation and minutes were e-mailed to attendees and invitees on October 18, 2016 and are provided as **Appendix B-2**.

Table 3 | September 14, 2016 ICM Attendees

AGENCY	ATTENDEE
FRA	Amanda Murphy (meeting presenter) Shreyas Bhatnagar Frances Burg Adam Denton (via phone) Michael Johnsen Lyle Leitelt (via phone) Paz Aviles, contractor (via phone) Bradley Decker, contractor
DDOT	Anna Chamberlin (meeting presenter) Steve Plano
DRPT	Randy Selleck Emily Stock (via phone)
VRE	Oscar Gonzalez T.R. Hickey
NPS – George Washington Memorial Parkway (GWMP)	Brenda Wasler (via phone) Joshua Nadas (via phone)

AGENCY	ATTENDEE
NPS – National Capital Region (NCR)	Joel Gorder (via phone)
NPS – National Mall and Memorial Parks (NAMA)	Melissa Mertz (via phone) Catherine Dewey
NPS – National Mall and Memorial Parks (NAMA)	Melissa McGill (via phone)
FTA	Dan Koenig
FAA	Susan Stafford (via phone)
USACE – Baltimore District	Kathy Anderson (via phone) Chikita Sanders
USACE – Norfolk District	Lee A. Fuerst (via phone)
USACE – North Atlantic Division	Jim Haggerty (via phone)
NCPC	Michael Weil
VDOT	Robert Josef (via phone)
VDHR	Ethel Eaton (via phone)
WMATA	Danielle Wesolek (via phone) Jonathan Parker (via phone)
MWCOG	Jon Schermann
City of Alexandria	Lee Farmer
Arlington County	Dan Malouff (via phone)
WMAA	Erik Schwenke (via phone)
Consultant staff	Eric Almquist Henry Kay Michele Lockhart Bill Lipfert

2.4. Public Outreach

Members of the public, including citizens, elected officials, and other key stakeholders (i.e., community associations, local institutions, and Study Area-adjacent property owners), are important participants in the EIS process and were regarded as such throughout scoping. These entities will be consulted throughout the EIS process at various project milestones. Public input gathered during the scoping phase of the EIS helps inform the purpose and need of the Project, and guide the development of the EIS.

2.4.1. Outreach and Notification

In addition to publication of the NOI (see Section 2.2), public scoping outreach and notification occurred through a range of outreach methods and activities outline below.

2.4.1.1. Website

On August 26, 2016 the Project website (www.longbridgeproject.com) was updated with a link to the published NOI, a figure depicting the EIS Study Area, the draft EIS Purpose and Need Statement, and information regarding the scoping period and public scoping meeting (see Section 2.4.2). On September 13, 2016, the website was updated with public scoping meeting materials, including display boards and a Long Bridge Project EIS Fact Sheet. The website provides an opportunity for the public to become involved in the Project by submitting comments and questions at any time throughout the NEPA process via a comment form. The website also includes a Project e-mail address (info@longbridgeproject.com) and a postal mailing address (Long Bridge Project, 55 M Street, SE, Suite 400, Washington, DC 20003).

2.4.1.2. Social Media

On September 13 and 14, 2016, FRA Twitter and Facebook posts included information regarding the public scoping meeting and a link to the Project website (see **Appendix C-1**). FRA has approximately 11,500 Twitter and 12,000 Facebook followers.

2.4.1.3. Mailing Lists

FRA and DDOT developed electronic and traditional mailing lists that include 49 elected officials and 55 stakeholders, including property owners adjacent to the Study Area, community groups, and members of the public with an interest in the Project. An e-mail to elected officials was distributed on August 15, 2016 and encouraged them to forward information on to their constituents. An e-mail to stakeholders was distributed August 26, 2016. Additionally, printed copies of the e-mail were sent by U.S. Mail to 31 adjacent property owners for whom no e-mail address was available. Copies of these materials and the distribution lists are attached with **Appendix C-1**. The notifications included an invitation to the public scoping meeting with information regarding the meeting time and place. Notifications also included a description of the Project, the NEPA process, a Study Area map, and instructions for submitting public comments or requesting special accommodations.

2.4.1.4. Newspaper Advertisements and Press Releases

FRA and DDOT advertised the public scoping meeting and comment period in the *Washington Post Express* and *Washington Post* Legal Notices Section on August 26, 2016 (see **Appendix C-1**). Both advertisements invited the public to attend the public scoping meeting, provided information regarding the meeting time and place, meeting format, the 30-day public scoping period, the publication of the NOI, Project website address, and instructions for submitting public comments or requesting special accommodations.

Additionally, DDOT issued an electronic press release on September 2, 2016 (see **Appendix C-1**) inviting the public to attend the public scoping meeting, providing meeting time and place, information regarding the public scoping period, and instructions for submitting public comments or requesting special accommodations. This distribution included up to 2,000 media outlets and community groups or organizations, including all local radio, television, and newspaper outlets and many listservs in the District. Media outlets include the *Washington Post*, WTOP, *Washington Business Journal*, *Borderstan*, and neighborhood newspapers.

2.4.2. Public Scoping Meeting

FRA and DDOT conducted a public scoping meeting for the Project EIS on Wednesday, September 14, 2016, from 3:00 pm to 6:00 pm. The meeting was held in the Club Room of L'Enfant Plaza on the Promenade Level, 470 L'Enfant Plaza, SW, Washington DC. Fifty-two attendees signed in.

The meeting was organized in an open-house format with 13 display boards providing an overview of the Project. The boards included the following topics: existing conditions, Project overview, EIS Study Area map, the draft EIS Purpose and Need Statement, preliminary concepts, environmental considerations, EIS milestones, and related studies and projects. A large-scale map of the Study Area was provided at the meeting. Attendees were invited to make comments on sticky notes and place them on the map. Meeting attendees were provided comment cards, DDOT Title VI survey forms, and a Long Bridge Project EIS Fact Sheet. Copies of the display boards and Long Bridge Project EIS Fact Sheet are included in **Appendix C-2**.

Meeting attendees were encouraged to share comments and questions with the Project team. Attendees were encouraged to submit comments by mail, electronically to the Project email address (info@longbridgeproject.com), through the Project website, or as written comments submitted at the meeting. Several attendees submitted written comments at the public scoping meeting using forms made available, as summarized in Section 3.2.

3.0 Scoping Comments

During the scoping period, the Project received 21 comment submissions from agencies, as summarized in Section 3.1, and 80 comment submissions from the public, as summarized in Section 3.2. The total number of scoping comment submissions are summarized in **Table 4**.

Table 4 | Total Number of Scoping Comment Submissions

NUMBER RECEIVED	SOURCE
21	AGENCY SUBMISSIONS
10	Verbal comments at ICM
11	Letters from participating and cooperating agencies
80	PUBLIC SUBMISSIONS
21	E-mails submitted via the Project website or to info@longbridgeproject.com
2	Letters mailed to FRA
16	Long Bridge Project comment forms*
41	Sticky note comments on large-scale map

* The comment form count includes DDOT Title VI Public Involvement Questionnaires which were used by some meeting attendees in lieu of Project comment forms.

3.1. Agency Comments

By scoping initiation letter (August 15, 2016), the Project team invited agencies to provide comments at the EIS Scoping ICM and by e-mail or letter on the draft EIS Purpose and Need Statement, EDCR, Study Area, screening criteria, preliminary concepts, resources within each agency’s jurisdiction, and agency plans and initiatives. During the EIS Scoping ICM meeting, the Project team documented ten verbal comments from agency representatives. An additional 11 letters were received from cooperating and participating agencies during the scoping period.

3.1.1. Verbal Comments Received at Interagency Coordination Meeting

Table 5 summarizes verbal comments provided by individual agency representatives during the ICM, and responses to those comments, consistent with the EIS Scoping ICM minutes (see **Appendix B-2**).

Table 5 | Summary of Verbal Comments Received at Interagency Coordination Meeting

COMMENTS	RESPONSE
FRA Environmental analysis may need to consider the 500-year floodplain instead of the 100-year floodplain, in light of new guidance.	The Project will consider the 500-year floodplain and potential impacts as the NEPA process continues.
VRE Could a new corridor concept cross the Anacostia River?	Yes.
NPS The bottom of the river is under the jurisdiction of NPS, so any dredging, short-term or permanent use of the bottom needs to be approved by and coordinated with NPS.	Noted.

COMMENTER	COMMENT	RESPONSE
NPS	NPS is having a similar discussion with the USCG about the required navigation clearance under the Memorial Bridge and suggested starting the discussion about getting a decision about the bridge clearance sooner rather than later.	Noted.
NPS	NPS or other agencies may decide to adopt FRA's EIS (or portions of the NEPA document) and issue a ROD that could apply to subsequent project actions. It would be beneficial to ensure that the Long Bridge Project purpose and need meet NPS' needs and does not preclude future actions planned by NPS.	Noted.
FTA	Was only the maximum level of service simulated, or were other levels of service were considered?	Each of the rail operators provided a 2040 operating plan that was used for the simulations. The unconstrained 2040 plans create the condition in which the bridge and adjacent railroad network are stressed, which is the preferred way to determine effectiveness of a particular build alternative. The railroads' service plans already reflect network constraints outside the geographic and analytical limits of the model; therefore, it would not be useful to test multiple service levels on the bridge.

COMMENTS	COMMENT	RESPONSE
FTA	"Enhance network connectivity" should be more clearly defined.	The importance of enhancing network connectivity will be defined in the screening criteria. The Network Connectivity screening criteria measures whether a concept creates a system that makes it easy for passengers to connect to various transportation modes and whether freight trains can continue to access the network beyond the Long Bridge Corridor. Aspects of connectivity for freight include access to yards and customers within the District of Columbia and beyond as well as intermodal facilities. Aspects of connectivity for passengers include access to stations within the corridor; transfers to other services such as Metrorail; and pedestrian access to home and employment sites. FRA will revise the draft EIS Purpose and Need Statement to provide a clearer definition of network connectivity.
FTA	How does FRA reconcile public investments being used to improve privately owned infrastructure?	This is a policy issue that FRA addresses frequently because most of the national rail network is privately owned. FRA studies seek to balance the needs of the owner and the needs of the public.
FTA	Could all of the alternatives, including those in a 'new location,' fit within this Study Area?	In the context of the draft EIS Purpose and Need Statement, the Study Area can evolve based on the concept or alternative being analyzed and on the environmental resources affected.
USACE	Navigational clearances need to be coordinated with USCG.	Noted.
WMATA	The draft EIS Purpose and Need Statement does not include the potential benefits to the transit network. If MARC was extended to L'Enfant, it could alleviate some of the Metrorail passenger congestion at Union Station. WMATA encouraged the Project team to include these benefits under 'resiliency' and 'redundancy.'	The draft EIS Purpose and Need Statement includes a discussion of this issue in the Network Connectivity section. Specifically, it states "The Proposed Action could provide the opportunity for alleviating future transfers to Metrorail, which also would allow for increased operational flexibility and system redundancy."

3.1.2. Agency Comment Letters

FRA and DDOT received signed agency agreements and/or comment letters from the following agencies: DRPT, VRE, NPS, FTA, NCPC, USCG, USACE Baltimore and Norfolk Districts, FAA, EPA, CFA, DC Office of Planning, DC SHPO, DOEE, DC Water, WMATA, MDOT-MTA, VDOT, VMRC, VDHR, VDEQ, Arlington County, City of Alexandria, MWCOG, and MWAA. All substantive comments received are presented in **Appendix D-1: Agency Scoping Comment Matrix, Appendix D-2: Agency Scoping Letters**, and summarized below.

3.1.2.1. Virginia Department of Rail & Public Transportation

DRPT requested to be included as a joint lead agency for the EIS by letter dated September 1, 2016. FRA responded that cooperating agency is the appropriate DRPT role for the EIS. DRPT concurred on its role as a cooperating agency for the EIS by e-mail communication dated January 10, 2017. FRA provided DRPT and VRE with a draft Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to further clarify the roles and responsibilities of a cooperating agency on September 30, 2016.

3.1.2.2. Virginia Railway Express

VRE requested to be joint lead agency for the EIS by letter dated August 30, 2016. FRA responded that cooperating agency is the appropriate VRE role for the EIS. VRE concurred on its role as a cooperating agency for the EIS by signed agreement dated October 7, 2016, and requested that their role be further defined in a MOU with FRA and DDOT. In response, FRA provided VRE a draft MOU, as mentioned above in Section 3.1.2.1.

3.1.2.3. National Park Service

NPS concurred on its role as a cooperating agency for the EIS by signed agreement dated August 26, 2016. NPS provided scoping comments by letter dated October 13, 2016 and indicated that it would like to be a consulting party for the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) Section 106 process. NPS expressed concern about the Project's potential to negatively affect NPS-administered lands, and specifically raised the following concerns: noise and vibration, ingress/egress to Hains Point, impacts to riparian areas and the river bottom, and impacts to cultural resources. NPS also commented that because actions associated with the Project would require NPS decisions, the NEPA process should meet policies of NPS Director's Order 12: Conservation, Planning, Environmental Impact Analysis, and Decision-Making (DO-12) and the *NPS Compliance Handbook* (2015). NPS requested a better understanding of the compliance pathway and NPS integration. Comments on the content of the Environmental Data Collection Report were provided as follows:

1. Potomac Heritage National Scenic Trail (POHE) and the Washington-Rochambeau Revolutionary Route Historic Trail (W3R) should be listed as Section 4(f) resources.
2. Reference to Captain John Smith Chesapeake Historic Trail (CAJO) should state, “in [the Study Area] CAJO follows the Potomac River and is accessed from the various sites supporting public access to the water.”
3. Reference to the Star-Spangled Banner National Historic Trail (STSP) should state, “the trail also follows the Potomac River and is accessed from the various sites supporting public access to the water.”

3.1.2.4. U.S. Coast Guard

USCG has not provided a signed agreement to serve as a cooperating agency for the EIS; however, in accordance with a 2013 MOU between USCG and FRA, the USCG will act as a cooperating agency for the EIS. By email dated November 9, 2016, USCG provided a copy of its Bridge Permit Application Guide (July 2016) with directions regarding the timing of submittals to initiate USCG’s involvement in the NEPA process.

3.1.2.5. U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

USACE-Baltimore District agreed to serve as a cooperating agency for the EIS by letter dated December 9, 2016. The Baltimore District indicated its intent to issue the USACE permit decision at the conclusion of the NEPA process. The letter further explained that the Draft EIS would serve as the USACE Section 404/10 permit application for the Project; therefore, the Project team and USACE should work closely together to ensure that the NEPA document is adequate to fulfill the requirements of USACE regulations, the Clean Water Act Section 404(b)(1), and the USACE public interest review process. In accordance with USACE regulations, USACE will need to concur on the range of alternatives retained for detailed study in the EIS. The alternative analysis should evaluate alternative bridge and railroad improvement designs, locations, and alignments; plans for dredging; alternative dredge material disposal sites; and a complete description of the criteria used to identify, evaluate, and screen alternatives. The EIS should also document methods to avoid and minimize impacts to Waters of the U.S. The Baltimore District’s letter made a request that several resource topics within its area of expertise and jurisdiction be comprehensively evaluated in the EIS.

USACE-Norfolk District, by letter dated October 14, 2016, noted that the Study Area encompasses Norfolk District and Baltimore District boundaries. USACE-Norfolk District identified the USACE-Baltimore District as lead within USACE for this Project. USACE-Norfolk District expressed interest in

participating in any interagency meetings and field reviews, and requested regular coordination. Should a Norfolk District permit application be submitted, Norfolk District requested to receive public comments and a transcript of public hearings related to the EIS.

USACE-Norfolk District requested that the term *reliability* be better defined and related to the other need elements in the draft EIS Purpose and Need Statement. It requested that waters and wetlands be identified and mapped before developing a full range of alternatives.

USACE-Norfolk District stated that its regulations require that it consider a full range of environmental, social, and economic factors, and conduct an alternatives analysis to identify the least environmentally damaging practicable alternative. This alternative is the only one USACE can authorize. To this end, USACE-Norfolk District authorizes FRA and DDOT to conduct Section 106 coordination on its behalf. Any Memorandum of Agreement prepared by FRA and DDOT under 36 CFR 800.6 should include:

"WHEREAS, pursuant to Section 10 and/or Section 404 of the Clean Water Act, a Department of the Army permit will likely be required from USACE for the Project, and USACE has designated FRA and DDOT as the lead Federal agencies to fulfill Federal responsibilities under Section 106." USACE-Norfolk District authorizes FRA and DDOT to conduct Section 7 coordination and Magnuson-Stevens Act consultation on its behalf.

3.1.2.6. National Capital Planning Commission

NCPC concurred on its role as a cooperating agency for the EIS by signed agreement dated August 24, 2016. NCPC provided scoping comments by letter dated October 14, 2016. NCPC noted the need to enhance the existing bridge in order to meet passenger and freight rail demand. NCPC noted prominent viewsheds of the U.S. Capitol Building, Washington Monument, Lincoln Memorial, and other memorials and monuments. NCPC described its approval authority over Federal projects within the District of Columbia, including all Federal land transfers and physical alterations to Federal property. Federal properties noted in the comment letter include: GWMP, Potomac River Bottom, East Potomac Park, and Reservation 113. NCPC explained that Federal property transfers require submission of an official legal plat with a line for the NCPC Chair's signature and transfers should be addressed in the EIS with exact area of land transfer, change in impervious surface area, number of trees to be removed, and proposed mitigation. The Record of Decision should include a section addressing each transfer, along with a signature line for NCPC's Director. Changes to Federal property should be submitted for NCPC review with appropriate supporting plans, narrative, graphics, and NEPA and Section 106 documentation. NCPC recommended FRA and DDOT brief the NCPC early in the EIS development process to allow for

comment. FRA should submit Concept, Preliminary, and Final Engineering review based on NCPC agency submission policies. Additionally, NCPC recommended the study consider:

1. Maintaining an unobstructed, attractive viewshed toward memorials and monuments on the National Mall, and along Maryland Avenue toward the U.S. Capitol;
2. Providing for four tracks to accommodate freight and maximizing commuter rail capacity to L'Enfant Station (the VRE Station at 7th Street) and Union Station;
3. Increasing number and size of passenger platforms at L'Enfant Station for expanded VRE, MARC, and Amtrak service;
4. Maximizing pedestrian and bicycle use and connectivity in a manner that ensures pedestrian access between transit modes;
5. Protecting and promoting reestablishment of the historic L'Enfant Plan street grid, and allowing vehicular connectivity to distribute traffic between Independence and Maine Avenues;
6. Depressing train tracks to deck the rail line between 9th and 15th Streets, SW to re-establish and support the design and development of the Maryland Avenue corridor; and
7. Enhancing intermodal connections by considering ways in which modes of transportation will operate and travel along Maryland Avenue corridor between 4th and 15th Streets.

3.1.2.7. Federal Aviation Administration

FAA concurred on its role as a participating agency for the EIS by signed agreement dated September 7, 2016. FAA provided scoping comments by letter dated September 26, 2016. FAA does not anticipate that the Project will impact air safety or efficient use of the navigable airspace around Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport (DCA). However, FAA form 7460-1, Notice of Proposed Construction or Alteration must be filed with the FAA as required by Title 14 of the Code of Federal Regulations (14 CFR Part 77.9) due to the proximity and unknown height of Project elements to DCA. Notice should be filed using the FAA's Obstruction Evaluation / Airport Airspace Analysis (OE/AAA) web portal at <https://oeaaa.faa.gov>.

3.1.2.8. District of Columbia State Historic Preservation Officer

The DC-SHPO has not provided a signed agreement to serve as a participating agency for the EIS; however, National Historic Preservation Act Section 106 consultation comments were provided by letter dated October 26, 2016. DC-SHPO is therefore included as a participating agency for the EIS. The DC-SHPO provided a list of organizations and agencies that it recommended be included in Section 106 consultation.

3.1.2.9. DC Water and Sewer

DC Water has not provided a signed agreement to serve as a participating agency for the EIS; however, scoping comments were provided by letter dated October 7, 2016. DC Water is therefore included as a participating agency for the EIS. DC Water provided detailed information regarding existing and planned utility infrastructure within the Study Area. The Potomac Force Mains include six-foot and eight-foot diameter pipelines running parallel along the western shoreline of East and West Potomac Park through the Study Area. The EIS should consider how existing water and sewer infrastructure will be protected, in addition to providing access for inspection, repair, and replacement of utilities. The Project team should coordinate with Mark Babbitt, Supervisor, Interagency Planning and Permitting. The combined Sewer System Long Term Control Plan (LTCP), also known as the DC Clean Rivers Project, includes the Potomac River Tunnel (PRT) Project, currently in planning. DC Water, as co-lead agency with NPS is currently preparing an EIS for the Project. Alternatives for the Project, including tunnels, should be coordinated with DC Water.

3.1.2.10. Virginia Marine Resources Commission

VMRC declined FRA's invitation to act as a participating agency for the EIS by email dated September 28, 2016. FVMRC indicated that no permit is likely to be required from the VMRC for work in the Potomac River in the Study Area. However, should there be any impacts to tidal wetlands or to streams located in Virginia, a permit may be required from VMRC. The Joint Permit Application should be completed and submitted to VMRC for review and permitting decisions.

3.1.2.11. Virginia Department of Historic Resources

VDHR concurred on its role as a participating agency for the EIS by signed agreement dated September 9, 2016. By letter dated October 14, 2016, VDHR provided a list of organizations and agencies that they recommended be included in Section 106 consultation.

3.1.2.12. Virginia Department of Environmental Quality

VDEQ has not provided a signed agreement to serve as a participating agency for the EIS; however, scoping comments were provided by email dated September 6, 2016. VDEQ is therefore included as a participating agency for the EIS. VDEQ provided the following comments for consideration during the development of the EIS.

- **Land Protection Division:** If any solid or hazardous waste is generated or encountered during construction, FRA and DDOT should follow applicable Federal, state, and county regulations for disposal.

- **Air Compliance/Permitting:** During construction, the Project is subject to the Fugitive Dust/Fugitive Emissions Rule 9 VAC 5-50-60 through 9 VAC 5-50-120. In addition, should the Project install fuel burning equipment (Boilers, Generators, Compressors, etc.), or any other air pollution emitting equipment, the Project may be subject to 9 VAC 5-80, Article 6, Permits for New and Modified sources. Contact the Air Permit Manager VDEQ-Northern Regional Office prior to installation or construction, and operation, of fuel burning or other air pollution emitting equipment for a permitting determination. Should any open burning or use of special incineration devices be employed in the disposal of land clearing debris during demolition and construction, the operation would be subject to the Open Burning Regulation 9 VAC 5-130-10 through 9 VAC 5-130-60 and 9 VAC 5-130-100.
- **Virginia Water Protection Permit (VWPP) Program:** A VWPP from VDEQ may be required should impacts to surface waters be necessary. VDEQ VWPP staff recommends that the avoidance and minimization of surface water impacts to the maximum extent practicable as well as coordination with the USACE. Upon receipt of a Joint Permit Application for the proposed surface water impacts, VDEQ VWPP staff will review the proposed Project in accordance with the VWPP program regulations and current VWPP program guidance.
- **Water Permitting/VPDES Program/Stormwater:** All applicable regulations related to stormwater management and erosion and sediment controls should be followed.

3.1.2.13. Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority

MWAA concurred on its role as a participating agency for the EIS by signed agreement dated September 7, 2016. By letter dated October 6, 2016, MWAA provided a figure showing maximum allowed heights for the proposed Project (heights of rail cars, utility poles, and other structures) based on airport critical surfaces. These heights are preliminary and are for planning purposes only. MWAA indicated that additional coordination with FAA (including submittal of a Form 7460 – Notice of Proposed Construction or Alteration) would likely be required.

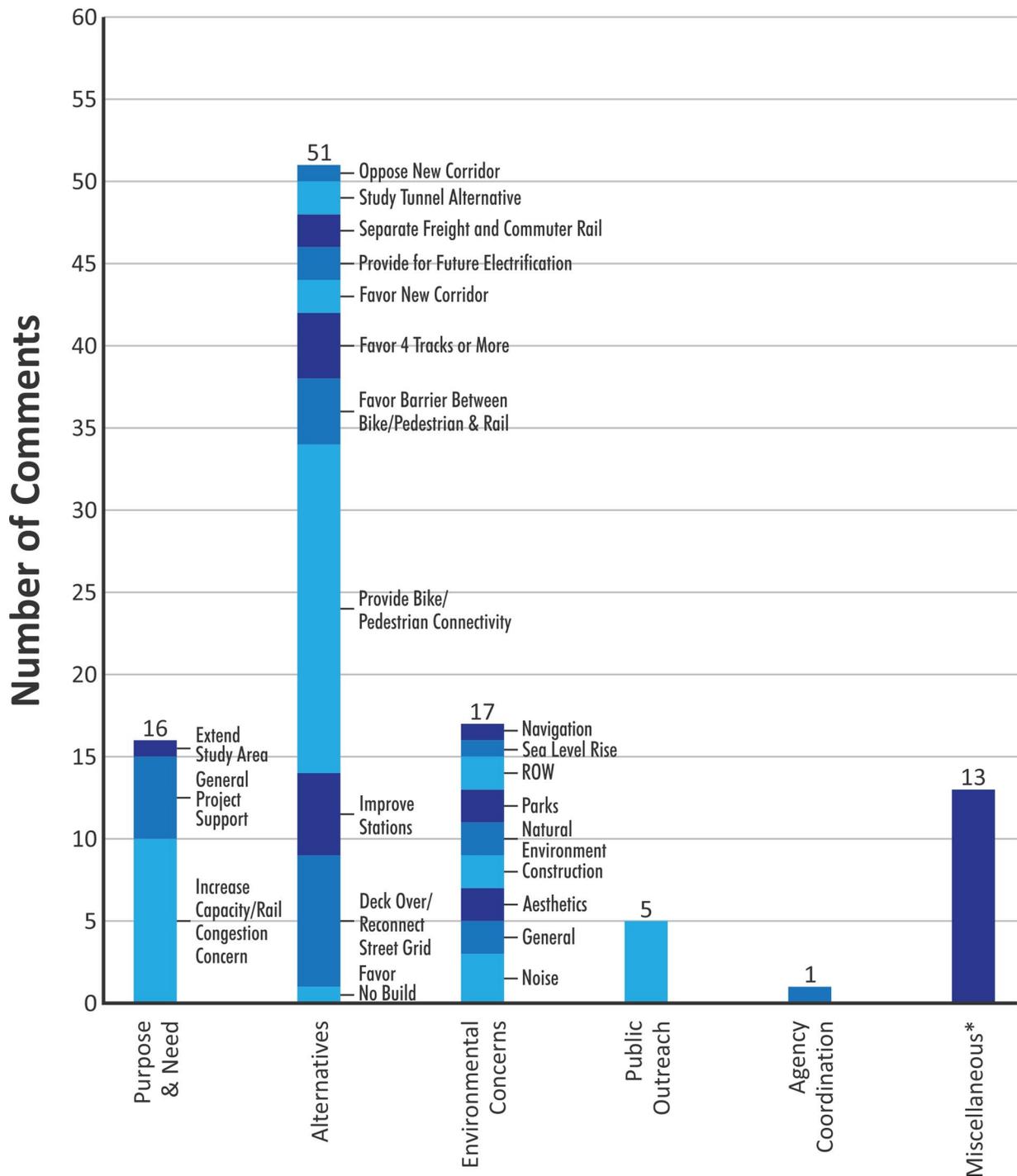
3.2. Public Comments

Eighty public comment submissions were received during the scoping period, which included 16 written comment forms and 41 “sticky notes” from the public meeting, 21 submissions through the Project website or directly to the Project e-mail address, and two letters mailed to the FRA Environmental Protection Specialist. Public e-mailed comments also include submissions from the following six organizations (**Appendix E-2**):

- The Committee of 100 on the Federal City
- Virginians for High Speed Rail
- Friends of Long Bridge Park
- Crystal City Civic Association
- Southern Environmental Law Center
- Washington Area Bicyclist Association (WABA)

The Project team reviewed each submission to identify individual comments. **Appendix E-1: Public Scoping Comments Matrix** includes all individual comments which are summarized in **Figure 2** by topic area and discussed in the sections that follow. Note that an individual submission may have contained multiple comments; therefore, the total number of comments shown in **Figure 2** is greater than the 80 submissions received.

Figure 2: Topical Summary of Public Scoping Comments



* Miscellaneous comments include requests to be added to the Project e-mail list, notes indicating that an individual's comments would be submitted at a later date, or comment/Title VI forms submitted at the public meeting with no written comments provided. Additionally, two "sticky notes" commented on property or resources outside of the scope of the Project.

3.2.1. Draft Purpose and Need

Five comments offered general support for the Project. Ten comments supported the Project and cited the need to increase rail capacity or concerns for rail congestion across the Potomac River. One comment suggested that the Study Area should be extended 0.5 mile further south to study a dual platform Crystal City VRE station to provide access between DCA and Crystal City.

The Committee of 100 (C100) expressed concern that the current estimates of trains using the bridge are not accurate and therefore impact the 2040 estimates and capacity analysis. The C100 also commented that the EIS should consider the potential increase in passenger demand from high-speed rail and planned increases in commuter rail, including run-through trains, which will increase estimated rail traffic. The C100 indicated that increased rail traffic results in a need for at least a five-track bridge, but the right-of-way (ROW) only allows for four.

Virginians for High Speed Rail concurred on the need for the Project and noted that the projected 159 percent increase in the number of trains by 2040 will leave no elasticity or redundancy in the rail network to deal with any problems that may arise. They noted that the projected decrease in on-time performance for Amtrak trains will reduce reliability, resulting in a quantifiable impact on ridership. This further increases the operational investment needed from the taxpayers of Virginia.

WABA stated that the draft EIS Purpose and Need Statement is too narrowly focused on the needs of freight and passenger rail. WABA further suggested that expanding the capacity, redundancy, and regional connectivity of the bicycle trail network should be a core element of the draft EIS Purpose and Need Statement and selection criteria.

3.2.2. Alternatives

Comments received during scoping were generally in support of a build alternative. One comment opposed a build alternative on a new corridor alignment. Two comments suggested that the team further study a tunnel alternative. Two comments suggested the team consider an alternative that separates freight and interstate rail from commuter services. Two comments requested that the build alternatives provide the potential for future electrification of the rail line. Two comments were in favor of providing a new corridor crossing the Potomac. Four comments supported further study of alternatives that included at least four tracks. Four comments cited the importance of providing a safety barrier separating bikes and pedestrians from rail. Twenty comments supported providing bike and pedestrian access. Five “sticky note” comments at the public meeting suggested potential

improvements to stations within the Corridor. Eight “sticky note” comments suggested decking over the existing rail lines or otherwise reconnecting the existing street grid. One comment favored the “No Build” alternative.

In order to accommodate future freight and passenger traffic on five tracks, the C100 requested that the EIS evaluate two river crossings - the Long Bridge Corridor, and an additional corridor between the Southeast quadrant of the District and Alexandria, Virginia.

The Friends of Long Bridge Park and Crystal City Civic Association noted their support for alternatives providing increased local access for the Crystal City community by including a pedestrian and bike lane from Long Bridge Park to the Mt. Vernon Trail and the District.

The Southern Environmental Law Center recommended against further consideration of alternatives that would add general purpose automobile lanes at this crossing due to potential impacts to community and environmental resources. However, it was recommended that the EIS further consider a bicycle and pedestrian crossing to connect existing trail networks and reduce air pollution by promoting greater usage of these travel modes.

3.2.3. Environmental Concerns

Two comments cited general environmental concerns regarding the impacts of build alternatives. Comments regarding potential impacts to specific resources included: construction (2), noise (3), aesthetics (2), natural environment and habitat (2), sea level rise and stormwater (1), navigation (1), ROW (2), and parks (2).

The Friends of Long Bridge Park and Crystal City Civic Association noted concern about trains blowing whistles at the VRE station and the noise of the trains generated by increased train traffic. They also noted concern about impacts to the environment including Roaches Run, other parks, local wildlife, and vegetation.

The Southern Environmental Law Center noted that the Study Area includes significant historic, community, and environmental resources. It requested that the EIS thoroughly evaluates potential impacts to these resources, as well as options to avoid and minimize these impacts.

3.2.4. Public Outreach

Four comments provided positive feedback on the meeting venue, advertisement of the meeting, displays, and knowledge of the Project team. However, there was some concern that the meeting venue

was dimly lit. One comment suggested that the NOI, draft EIS Purpose and Need Statement, and Project sponsors could be more clearly identified.

3.2.5. Agency Coordination

One comment, from C100, questioned how this study and other major rail studies looked at the use of Long Bridge, and how approaches are being coordinated among FRA, the District, Virginia, Amtrak, and civic and local development interests interested in restoring Maryland Avenue to its original ROW.

3.3. Railroad Stakeholder Comments

3.3.1. Amtrak

Amtrak provided scoping comments by e-mail dated January 18, 2017 (see **Appendix F**). Amtrak expressed its interest in working with FRA/DDOT and CSXT to enhance capacity, frequency, and safe rail operations over the Long Bridge. Additionally, Amtrak noted that during the Phase I and II of the Project it provided information about future rail operations over the bridge. Amtrak will continue to coordinate with the Project team during development of the EIS to work towards an outcome that will suit all bridge users. Amtrak recognizes the importance and significance of Long Bridge to the operations of CSXT, VRE, and Amtrak.

3.3.2. CSTX

CSXT, owner and freight rail operator of the Long Bridge, provided scoping comments by letter dated October 14, 2016 (see **Appendix F**). CSXT clarified its intent to comment throughout the EIS process, and suggested that certain concepts be included or excluded as alternatives as the screening analysis progresses. CSXT comments regarding the draft EIS Purpose and Need Statement and alternatives are summarized below.

3.3.2.1. Purpose and Need

CSXT confirmed the Long Bridge Corridor is a "critical link in the local, regional, and national railroad network," and the only freight rail crossing of the Potomac River between the District and Virginia. CSXT cited the National Gateway program investment of nearly a billion dollars in rail infrastructure and intermodal terminals to link Mid-Atlantic ports with Midwestern markets, including a double-stack cleared route for intermodal movements through the District. CSXT also cited Virginia's \$1.4 billion Atlantic Gateway project, which includes construction of a fourth track from the south bank of the Potomac River to Alexandria as well as funding to advance engineering of improvements to the Long

Bridge. Atlantic Gateway is funded in part with a \$165 million Federal Fostering Advancements in Shipping and Transportation for the Long-term Advancement of National Efficiencies (FASTLane) grant.

CSXT explained that the Long Bridge has sufficient capacity to support the current and future needs of CSXT's freight rail network; however, CSXT tracks accommodate Amtrak and VRE, which has led to significant congestion and delays to CSXT's freight trains. Any proposed action must ensure that CSXT has the right to use the bridge or comparable facilities to meet the present and future demands of its freight network, and that passenger issues are resolved in a manner that allows CSXT's freight network to operate at full capacity. An alternative that impairs the operation of CSXT's rail network is neither feasible nor reasonable in its opinion.

CSXT noted that expanded passenger usages would impact the rail network beyond the Long Bridge Corridor which would require analysis, modeling, and funding of infrastructure improvements, all of which would require the participation of various public authorities and the consideration and approval of CSXT. CSXT cited four core principles imperative to passenger service projects on the CSXT network: safety, capacity, liability, and compensation.

3.3.2.2. Alternatives

CSXT also commented on the alternatives screening criteria, as summarized below:

1. Safety must be a critical consideration in all alternatives.
2. No alternative can interfere with the operation of the freight network.
3. Alternatives need to consider the existing infrastructure immediately north and south of the Long Bridge.
4. Existing operations must be accommodated during construction.
5. Bridge concepts should include alternative and separate structures.
6. The corridor should support interoperability and commingled freight and passenger service.

3.4. Initial Responses to Scoping Comments

3.4.1. Purpose and Need

The Project EIS will clearly present the Purpose and Need for the Project, including existing and projected train volumes that have been established through railroad stakeholder coordination.

3.4.2. Alternatives

The Project EIS will evaluate a range of alternatives that will meet the Purpose and Need, including addressing the capacity deficiencies of the Long Bridge. FRA will define these alternatives and evaluate their suitability for further study in the EIS using screening criteria developed through the agency and public coordination process. The alternatives must facilitate the movement of people and freight, including connections to other parts of the network; consistent with adopted transportation plans, now and in the future. The Project team has developed a two level screening process for the EIS:

1. Preliminary concepts will be screened by FRA and DDOT to determine those most reasonable based on criteria from the Purpose and Need statement and comments received during scoping period; and
2. Concepts that pass through preliminary screening will undergo detailed engineering and environmental screening to identify alternatives to be analyzed in the EIS.

3.4.3. Environmental Concerns

In accordance with FRA's Procedures for Considering Environmental Impacts and CEQ's NEPA regulations, the EIS will evaluate the potential impacts to the full range of environmental issues and concerns in the categories listed below. The EIS will consider agency and public scoping comments in the analysis.

- Transportation
- Social and economic conditions
- Property acquisition
- Historic and archaeological resources
- Parks and recreational resources
- Visual and aesthetic resources
- Air quality
- Aquatic navigation
- Greenhouse gas emissions and resilience
- Noise and vibration
- Ecology (including wetlands, water and sediment quality, floodplains, and biological resources)
- Threatened and endangered species
- Hazardous waste and contaminated materials
- Environmental Justice

3.4.4. Public Outreach

FRA and DDOT will provide opportunities for public involvement throughout the NEPA process through the Project website, contact list, public information meetings, and public comment periods. FRA and DDOT prepared the *Long Bridge Project EIS Agency and Public Coordination Plan* (November 2016) in

accordance with the requirements of 23 USC 139. The *Agency and Public Coordination Plan* describes the strategies for public involvement and was made available to the public on the Project website November 23, 2016.

3.4.5. Agency Coordination

Throughout the NEPA process, agency coordination will occur in compliance with NEPA and other applicable regulatory requirements. Concurrent with the EIS, FRA and DDOT will work toward obtaining permits and approvals pursuant to, but not limited to: Section 106 of the NHPA, Sections 9 and 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act; the Clean Water Act, Sections 401 and 404; Section 4(f) of the Department of Transportation Act of 1966; the National Capital Planning Act of 1952; FAA's 14 CFR 77.9; and EO 12898. The *Agency and Public Coordination Plan* (November 2016) describes the strategies for keeping agencies informed and involved in the Project's environmental review to ensure that their concerns are addressed.

4.0 Conclusion and Next Steps

Comments submitted during scoping will be taken into consideration by the Project team throughout the development of the EIS. The ideas and concerns shared during scoping, in addition to any received throughout the remainder of the study, will be considered in the content of the EIS, including the public and agency involvement process, EIS Purpose and Need Statement, alternatives development, and environmental resources evaluation.

Public and agency involvement in the Project will extend throughout the development of the EIS as described in the *Long Bridge Project EIS Agency and Public Coordination Plan* available on the Project website (www.longbridgeproject.com).