



Commissioner Dorothy Y. Douglas

Advisory Neighborhood Commission 7D03

4058 Minnesota Avenue, N.E.

Suite 1400 • Advisory Neighborhood Commission 7D • First Floor

Washington, DC 20019

Phone: (301) 857-1772 • Email: 7D03@anc.dc.gov



Good Morning Mr. Lloyd Jordan, chairperson of the Board of Zoning Adjustment (BZA) and members of the board. My name is Commissioner Dorothy Douglas Advisory Neighborhood Commissioner (ANC) 7D03. I serve as the Sargent-at-Arms/Parliamentarian of ANC 7D, representing neighborhoods in Deanwood, Eastern Avenue, Kenilworth, Sheriff Road, Kane Place and Minnesota Avenue, NE.

I am here today to represent some of the concerns raised by residents within my Single Member District obtained on July 18, 2015 during a public meeting I held. I want the record to reflect that I met with Kurt Weirestal, Project Manager for Valor Development May 16, 2015 to review this project. During that May 16th meeting, Mr. Weirestal explained the project and showed me and Commissioner Hazel (ANC 7D05) architectural renderings of the project and stated he wanted to make a presentation about the proposed project to the full ANC 7D Commission at the June 9, 2015 public meeting to be able to obtain a letter of support from ANC 7D in time for the scheduled July 28, 2015 BZA hearing. On May 16th, I informed Mr. Weirestal that the information and documentation that he provided me was not substantive enough and the Commission requires more detailed information before confirming presenters for the public meeting.

To illustrate how the information should be detailed, I showed him samples of detailed PowerPoint presentations from other developers with proposed projects in ANC 7D (i.e. CI Gilbane Development Parkside 7 LLC/City Interests, LLC Case No. 05-28J) that include all aspects of the project including this partial list:

- Site plan (interior and exterior)
- Development timeline
- Elevations
- Infiltration trenches
- Bio-retention
- Public benefits
- Affordable housing covenant
- Environmental impact analysis
- Traffic studies
- Existing parking impacts
- Landscaping
- First Source Employment Program
- Affordable and Workforce Housing definitions
- Compliance with the Comprehensive Plan for the District of Columbia adopted in 2006, District Elements, Land Use and Small Area Plan, etc.

I nor ANC 7D Commission received the detailed information I requested to accompany a request to present at the June 9, 2015 meeting prior to the June 2 Executive Committee meeting, therefore Mr. Weirestal was not included on the agenda of the June 9, 2015 ANC 7D public meeting. Additionally, Mr. Weirestal was advised that ANC 7D recesses during the months of July and August so Valor would have to come before ANC 7D in the fall of 2015 after receipt of more information.

On July 6, 2015, I received an email with more information attached about the project, unfortunately, it was not adequate time to provide Valor Development with a letter of support from ANC 7D Commission because there would not be a public meeting of the full committee until September. I again informed Mr. Weirestal that this project needed to be reviewed by the community before the next ANC Meeting in September and additional concerns addressed; therefore, the first initial step was to setup a community public meeting and I informed Mr. Weirestal that I would assist with setting up a meeting for the community. On July 6 I suggested July 18 and/or another date that is feasible to allow for sufficient notification to the community, at least one week, was suggested.

I advised Mr. Weirestal that the timeline to meet with the BZA Board on July 28th was unreasonable and should be rescheduled until we (the residents of ANC 7D03 Single Member District and the ANC 7D Commission) receive all the data requested for review, questions in a public forum and unanimous quorum from ANC 7D to even consider supporting this project. I have many questions to address along with the community in particular, how will the existing community benefit from this project? As well as the environmental, safety and noise issues for the buyers of the houses since it is next to CSX railroad and the WMATA trains. Mr. Weirestal declined to request rescheduling of the BZA hearing and the following week I learned from some residents that Mr. Weirestal was going around introducing himself door-to-door to discuss the project and they were concerned about the legitimacy of this and wanted to know more about the project.

At that point, it was evident that Mr. Weirestal/Valor was intent on fast tracking this process, so I organized a community meeting and I distributed over 200 fliers on July 11 and 12 regarding the 4409 Minnesota Avenue Subdivision Project Meeting. The meeting was held on July 18th 2015 from 10:00 am to 2:00 pm located at the Fruit of the Spirit Revival Temple Church on 4311 Sheriff Road Northeast. Twenty-seven residents of SMD 7D03 were in attendance, in which they residents signed a "Sign-In" sheet prior to the start of the discussion. The objectives of this meeting were to enlighten the community on the DC Water Watts Branch Sewer System Evaluation Study (SSES), Smoke Testing and the Valor Development Project Case no. 19055.

I am submitting for the record minutes from the July 18, 2015 meeting. I am also submitting the questions that were given to Mr. Weirestal July 16, 2015 in advance of the meeting from the community. These questions were also read at the July 18 meeting to Mr. Weirestal and other members of the Valor staff and their attorneys Griffin, Murphy, Muldenhauer and Wiggins, LLP. Most of the questions were not answered at the meeting or addressed in the documents that were provided by Valor. Residents attending the meeting and I requested a written response addressing all of the questions and as of today I have not received a response to these questions.

My chief concern is the environmental hazards and impact to the health and safety of my community if this development takes place. Pursuant to the 2007 Minnesota Avenue Extension Environmental Assessment commissioned by the District of Columbia Department of Transportation (DDOT) for the Federal Highway Administration (FHA) in which it states potential hazardous materials exist and pose potential environmental risks (see attached Chapter 3.11 pages 3-58 through 3-65 and Chapter 4.1 pages 4.1 – 4.3.) which clearly cites: **"This area was formerly utilized as Duvall's Towing, an auto storage site, which appears in the FINDS (Facility Index System), PCS (Permit Compliance System) and NPDES (National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System) federal databases, so there exists a reasonable suspicion that OHM (Oil and Hazardous Materials) products were stored, disposed and used at this location. Valor Development's**

Project Manager Kurt Weirestall stated at my July 18, 2015 ANC 7D03 community meeting in response to my question: "What about environmental hazards on this property? Have you done an environmental assessment?"

- "We did a 'phase 1' environmental test. There were no warnings."

Mr. Weirestall's response is inconsistent with the known hazardous materials that were stored and disposed of on that site which pose environmental, health and safety risks to the community as outlined in the DDOT/FHA Environmental Assessment from 2007. I am concerned about the environmental safety of the existing residents and new residents that may purchase these homes and want further environmental impacts studied and presented to the community before any support from the community or ANC 7D03 and ANC 7D's full Commission be provided.

Additionally, regarding the Statement of the Applicant, Section III B, Lot Area (§401.3) - Relief from Lot Area requirements. I question why Valor won't yield to the existing shape of the lot and develop Ranch style homes on the longest narrowest strip of the lot from Sheriff Road to the end of 44th Street, NE (the back of 1050 44th Street, NE) when the lot begins to widen). The assertion of the Applicant that Ranch style homes are out of character with the existing housing stock in the community is not accurate. The newest homes built in the area in the last two decades just two blocks from this project in the 4200 block of Nannie Helen Burroughs Avenue, NE to the 4800 block between Sheriff Road and 48th Street, NE are all Ranch style homes. Additionally, within 200 feet of the project at 1010 44th Street, NE down to 1050 44th Street, NE built within the last four to five years are Ranch style homes. And you must note that my house, at 4401 Minnesota Avenue, NE is a one level Ranch style home that is 108 years old. I believe that style of home will match the existing community.

Regarding the Statement of the Applicant, Section V A4 Tab 8: I have a concern about how DDOT will direct the traffic flow and its impact on existing residents parking, including my own in that I live at 4401 Minnesota Avenue, NE and I require parking in front of house due to a handicap and have a handicap parking placard since 1995. If the Relief sought is granted, will the 6'2 feet allow for two way traffic on Minnesota Avenue, NE leaving enough space for parked vehicles without damaging them?

In closing, I still need answers to the community's questions before ANC 7D03 or ANC 7D can make a determination of support for this project and I hope that the BZA will support the community by deferring any actions on this case giving "Great Weight" to ANC 7D03's concerns until an environmental assessment by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the District Department of Environment (DDOE) and the District of Columbia Department of Transportation can be updated from the 2007 Assessment to determine if there are any environmental, health and safety risks for the community if the site is built upon.

Thank you for your time and consideration of my concerns and statement.

Sincerely,

Commissioner Dorothy Y. Douglas
Parliamentarian/Sergeant-At-Arms
Advisory Neighborhood Commission 7D
Single Member District 7D03



ADVISORY NEIGHBORHOOD COMMISSION 7D03
GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

ANC 7D03 COMMUNITY MEETING

COMMISSIONER DOROTHY Y. DOUGLAS



DISCUSSION

4409 MINESSOTA AVENUE
SUBDIVISION
PROJECT
BZA APPLICATION #19055

**SATURDAY, JULY 18, 2015
11:00 AM – 2:00 PM**

MEETING LOCATION

FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT – REVIVAL TEMPLE
4311 SHERIFF ROAD NORTHEAST – WASHINGTON, DC 20019



ADVISORY NEIGHBORHOOD COMMISSION 7D03
GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

ANC 7D03 COMMUNITY MEETING

COMMISSIONER DOROTHY Y. DOUGLAS



AGENDA

- I. Prayer
- II. Introductions
- III. DC Water Representative
 - a. Watts Branch Sewer System Evaluation Study (SSFS) Smoke Testing
- IV. BZA Case No. 19055
 - a. Kurt Weirestell, Valor Development Company
 - i. Proposed Project at 4409 Minnesota Avenue, NE (Lot 846, Square 5097) Relief Requested to create 31 Single Family Homes.

Current Site	Project Description								
<u>Address and Square/Lot:</u> • 4409 Minnesota Avenue (Lot 846, Square 5097) <u>Zoning:</u> R-2 <u>Existing:</u> • Vacant Lot • Abandoned Garage <u>Shape of the Lot:</u> • Very Long and Shallow Lot • Undeveloped Road • Close to Railroad Tracks	<table><tr><td>Applicant</td><td>Valor Minnesota, LLC</td></tr><tr><td>Proposal</td><td>31 New Single Family Dwellings</td></tr><tr><td>Relief Sought</td><td>Lot Area, Lot Occupancy, Side Yard Setback, Rear Yard Setback and a Special Exception</td></tr><tr><td>Why do we need the relief:</td><td> • The lot is <u>exceptionally shallow</u>, only 70' deep at its widest point. • Lot has never been improved. • Road is <u>not</u> improved - just a dirt path. No sidewalk. • Complying with the Zoning Regulations would result in ranch style homes. • Family Sized semi-detached homes only feasible with variances that account for the shallowness of the lot. </td></tr></table>	Applicant	Valor Minnesota, LLC	Proposal	31 New Single Family Dwellings	Relief Sought	Lot Area, Lot Occupancy, Side Yard Setback, Rear Yard Setback and a Special Exception	Why do we need the relief:	• The lot is <u>exceptionally shallow</u>, only 70' deep at its widest point. • Lot has never been improved. • Road is <u>not</u> improved - just a dirt path. No sidewalk. • Complying with the Zoning Regulations would result in ranch style homes. • Family Sized semi-detached homes only feasible with variances that account for the shallowness of the lot.
Applicant	Valor Minnesota, LLC								
Proposal	31 New Single Family Dwellings								
Relief Sought	Lot Area, Lot Occupancy, Side Yard Setback, Rear Yard Setback and a Special Exception								
Why do we need the relief:	• The lot is <u>exceptionally shallow</u>, only 70' deep at its widest point. • Lot has never been improved. • Road is <u>not</u> improved - just a dirt path. No sidewalk. • Complying with the Zoning Regulations would result in ranch style homes. • Family Sized semi-detached homes only feasible with variances that account for the shallowness of the lot.								

- V. Community Concerns
- VI. Announcements
- VII. Adjourn

If you have additional questions, please contact Commissioner Dorothy Douglas at (202) 640-9584 or via email: or 7D03@anc.dc.gov.



ANC 7D03 COMMUNITY MEETING

COMMISSIONER DOROTHY Y. DOUGLAS



Questions For The 4409 Minnesota Avenue Subdivision Project Meeting
Location: Fruit of the Spirit – Revival Temple ~ 4311 Sheriff Road Northeast
Saturday, July 18, 2015

1. Environment - What measures and precautions are being taken to ensure that the residents will not be affected by any sort of contamination of soil underground?
 - a. Have you made the necessary arrangements to test the environment? If so, when and provide the end results?
2. When will the proposed construction begin and target date to end?
 - a. Who will be the contractors?
 - b. What percentage of Ward 7 residents will be hired for the duration of the project?
 - c. Will this contractor adhere to the DC First Source Agreement Program, which specifies that all job opportunities be listed through the Department of Employment Services (DOES) and at least 51% of new hires will be residents of the District of Columbia?
 - d. Will a job fair be organized by DOES and/or Marshall Heights Community Development or both?
 - e. Will it be a paid internship program?
3. What is the price range for the homes?
 - a. How many will be below market rate (AMI)? In other words, how many of the houses will be affordable?
 - b. How do you define affordable?
 - c. Who will be responsible to ensure that the community is abreast of any changes with this project?
 - d. How often will you report back to the Commissioner representing ANC-7D03 and 7D Commission to ensure that this project is on target and to inform the community of its progress? It is imperative that we receive information on the development phases of this project.
 - e. Will these homes have a tenant association and condo fees; if applicable?
4. Will the project design consist of green space? Please discuss in further detail?
5. In the area of non-performance, what steps will be taken to enforce the agreements of this project design?
6. Will it be designed to have its own recreational center, business center, exercise facility - so the residents can hold meetings and activities?
 - a. What amenities will be offered in this project?
7. Elaborate on any issues foreseeing in the future with PEPCO, WMATA and/or CSX Railroad?
 - a. How will this project impact the lifestyles of current residents, in terms of traffic, noise, street closures, etc.?
 - b. Will they be compensated for their inconvenience?
 - i. If so, how?
8. What plan of action will you take if a resident's property is damaged because of the project?
9. Will you take the Property Manager or Foreman around to access each property before proceeding with the construction?
10. What time will the construction project work begin and end each day?
 - a. Will your project construction work on Saturdays and Sundays?
11. Do you have other partners representing this particular project; such as, government agencies, churches, community business owners, etc. that we should be concerned about?
12. Will you be hiring a security company to police this project?
 - a. If so, what company will represent Valor Development?

Questions Contact Commissioner Dorothy Douglas (202) 640-9584 or via email at 7D03@anc.dc.gov



ANC 7D03 COMMUNITY MEETING

COMMISSIONER DOROTHY Y. DOUGLAS



MINUTES JULY 18, 2015

Advisory Neighborhood Commission 7D Single Member District 7D03 Meeting on DC Water Watts Branch Sewer System Evaluation Study (SSES) Smoke Testing and the Valor Development Project at 4409 Minnesota Ave NE.

The meeting was held on July 18, 2015 from 10:00 am to 2:00 pm at the Fruit of the Spirit Revival Temple located at 4311 Sheriff Road. There were 27 residents of SMD 7D03 in attendance and all signed a sign in sheet (see attached).

Presenters:

- Emanuel D. Briggs, Manager, Community Outreach, DC Water emanuel.briggs@dcwater.com (202) 787-2003
- William Elledge, Manager of Design, DC Water - william.elledge@dcwater.com, 202-898-273
- Kurt Weierstall, Development Manager, Valor Development, 202-821-2257, kurt@valordev.com

Record of the Meeting

Commissioner Douglas opened the meeting by discussing her concerns about the DC Water Smoke Testing.

1. Why is DC Water testing?
2. When will the testing happen-(the start date was not listed on the notice door hangtag)?
3. How many households/residents will be affected?
4. How will people be affected?

Elledge: DC Water is doing repairs and improvements to the Watts Branch Sewer to ensure there isn't a break or spill into the creek. The sewer needs structural repair. Their sensors indicate that the flow in the sewer spikes during rain storms. This shouldn't happen, and means that there are leaks in the sewer. The leaks cause the sewer to get overloaded and increase the danger of it bursting.

The smoke works by finding cracks by coming out of them. Typically, if there's a break, smoke will come out of a manhole or a catch basin. Homes should be unaffected; the smoke should only come out of the sewer vents located on the roofs on houses. If your plumbing is working correctly residents shouldn't see any smoke inside.

We did not specify a day, since we assign crews to regions and they work at their own pace. Some of this depends on the weather.

Q. When was this last done?

Elledge. This is new to us. But it is regular in other places.

Staff Member This is the first use of smoke in many years

Q Drain cleaning schedule?

Briggs You can report drains to DC Water, give specific blocks or addresses There should be stickers on catch basins indicating when they were last cleaned

Q What if someone sees smoke in their homes, what does this mean?

Elledge This means you have a leak in your pipes or a crossed connection You need to call a plumber, because sewer gas can get into your home

Q How would a resident know if sewer gas leaks into one's home?

Barry Lewis (DC Water) Sewer gas smells like rotten eggs There are no known health effects Your drains should have "Drain Traps" or bends in the pipe which store a small amount of water This water keeps gasses from coming into your home

Q What are the chemicals in the smoke?

Elledge The same sorts of chemicals used in smoke machines, like in concerts or Halloween parties

Q We would like a fact sheet on this We need information we can pass on to residents especially seniors

Elledge We can add a FAQ to the flyers

Q Why is the notification to the community on such short notice?

Elledge/Briggs We are required to provide 72 hour advance notice and we distributed door knockers to 300 affected properties

Q You have been planning this project since April 2015 Why didn't you postal mail notifications with detailed fact sheets to residents in advance of the testing so that residents would have time to inquire about anything they need to know about this testing? DC Water is a Billion dollar enterprise and postal mailing more information would cost less than \$200 to each household Additionally, this meeting was organized by Commissioner Douglas in 2 days so the community could have an opportunity to ask questions We want you to organize a town hall meeting at a convenient location in Ward 7 (i.e. DOES building, library or recreation center) with videos to demonstrate what the testing will be and any adverse impacts and provide notification not less than two weeks in advance to residents

Elledge/Briggs We can do that

Kurt Weirestall, Valor Development

Weirestall presented the development site map and building renderings to the community. The project will consist of 31 duplexes in an R2 zone They are seeking relief because Minnesota Avenue cuts 6 feet off of the front of the lots They are granting DDOT an easement on the street to maintain its width

The lots are 70 feet deep at their deepest They will be 20 feet wide, as is common in the neighborhood The developer will add alleys, trees, and street lighting

The development will have an HOA which will handle exterior upkeep of structures, landscaping and snow removal.

The developer is pricing the properties at "Workforce housing" levels.

Q: How do I get in and out of the area?

Weirestall: We are building an alley for garage access. Community traffic should not be impacted by this project.

Q: Do you need any relief from DDOT?

Weirestall: No, we are seeking it from the BZA.

Q: What is the price point for these houses?

Weirestall: \$369,000 for 1900 sq. ft duplexes, and approximately 400,000 for Single family 4 bedroom homes.

Q: Commissioner Dorothy Douglas asked: What about environmental hazards on this property?

Weirestall: We did a "phase I" environmental testing. There were no warnings.

Commissioner Dorothy Douglas referenced the 2007 Minnesota Avenue Extension Environmental Assessment commissioned by the District of Columbia Department of Transportation (DDOT) for the Federal Highway Administration (FHA) in which it states potential hazardous materials exist and pose potential environmental risks (see attached Chapter 3.11 pages 3-58 through 3.65 and Chapter 4.1 pages 4.1 – 4.3.) which clearly cites: "This area was formerly utilized as Duvall's Towing, an auto storage site, which appears in the FINDS (Facility Index System), PCS (Permit Compliance System) and NPDES (National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System) federal databases, so there exists a reasonable suspicion that OHM (Oil and Hazardous Materials) products were stored, disposed and used at this location. Commissioner Douglas stated that she is very concerned about the environmental safety of the community and any workers on this project and wants further environmental impacts studied and presented to the community before any support from the community or ANC 7D could be provided.

Q: Will these homes block my daylight?

Weirestall: No, they should not.

Q: What are you doing about the train noise?

Weirestall: We are installing a sound wall to block sounds. Unfortunately there is no way to block the rumbling from passing trains.

Q: Are you required to do anything with CSX or Metro?

Weirestall: No.

Q: What's the timeline of construction?

Weirestall: We should start this fall/winter. We expect it to take two years. We plan on completing one half at a time.

Q We need to make sure truck traffic doesn't go through the neighborhood Who is in charge of this?

Weirestall We can regulate our subcontractors by making them submit a traffic plan All traffic should go straight to 295 and will not go through alleys Neighbors will get the contact information for the project manager

Q What sort of outreach, public participation is there There's no PUD? How can we deal with the difference in income levels between these properties and surrounding neighborhood?

Weirestall This has never been a PUD process We are not asking for a zoning change that would require that much oversight As for the HOA it maintains the property

Q Outreach to the community?

Weirestall We did a survey recently

Pastor Bennett Our church purchased this property and cleaned it up with plans to develop it ourselves During the financial crisis it was taken from us by Mr Tolsen, who had been brought in to assist the church's finances. He sold the property to Valor in 2014 We were told that we could not develop the site due to its proximity to the railroad

Q What is the government's role in this project? Will they select people to move into affordable units?

Weirestall We will comply with regulations DCHD selects the participants for our affordable units I'm not familiar with this process

Q We're asking you to enhance our community

Weirestall What can we do? Keep the dialogue open I am concerned about communication

Q Will you have internships, jobs for Ward 7 Residents?

Weirestall We have to do the interns off site due to insurance reasons We will coordinate with Commissioner Douglas regarding publicizing jobs



DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA WATER AND SEWER AUTHORITY

Watts Branch Sewer System Evaluation Study (SSES) – Smoke Testing

DC Water will perform smoke testing on the sewer pipes near your property. To ensure a functional system, the test includes a NON-TOXIC, non-staining, white smoke in the sewer system and observes locations where smoke escapes. The smoke has a slight odor, but is harmless. It is unlikely smoke will enter your property, but it does happen on occasion.

Although most people will have no adverse effect, individuals who have been told by their doctor to avoid smoke are encouraged to evacuate the premises prior to smoke testing. If you or anyone in your household requires notification immediately prior to the test, please call the Smoke Testing Hotline listed below upon receipt of this notice to make arrangements.

The smoke testing will take place between the hours of 7:00am and 7:00pm and will be performed by Savin Engineers. Property owners are not required to be present during the test. The smoke will not enter your property if it is properly plumbed, vented, and the water traps contain water.

...continued on back

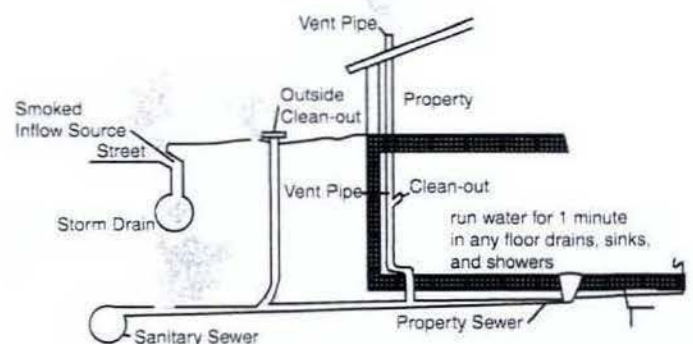
WATER.COM



DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA WATER AND SEWER AUTHORITY

Upon receiving this notification, customers should run each sink and shower in the property for 1 minute to fill the traps, as this will help prevent smoke from entering the property through these fixtures. During the test, it is normal for smoke to escape from the vent pipe through the roof of the property.

If smoke enters the property, open windows for ventilation and the smoke should dissipate quickly. Please notify the crew working in your area to let them know smoke has entered your property. The crew should be working within 1-2 blocks and can also be reached at the smoke testing hotline number.



SMOKE TESTING HOTLINE: (202) 768-5708

PROJECT INFORMATION:

[http://www.dewater.com/workzones/
projects/Watts_Branch_Sewer_System.cfm](http://www.dewater.com/workzones/projects/Watts_Branch_Sewer_System.cfm)

WATER.COM

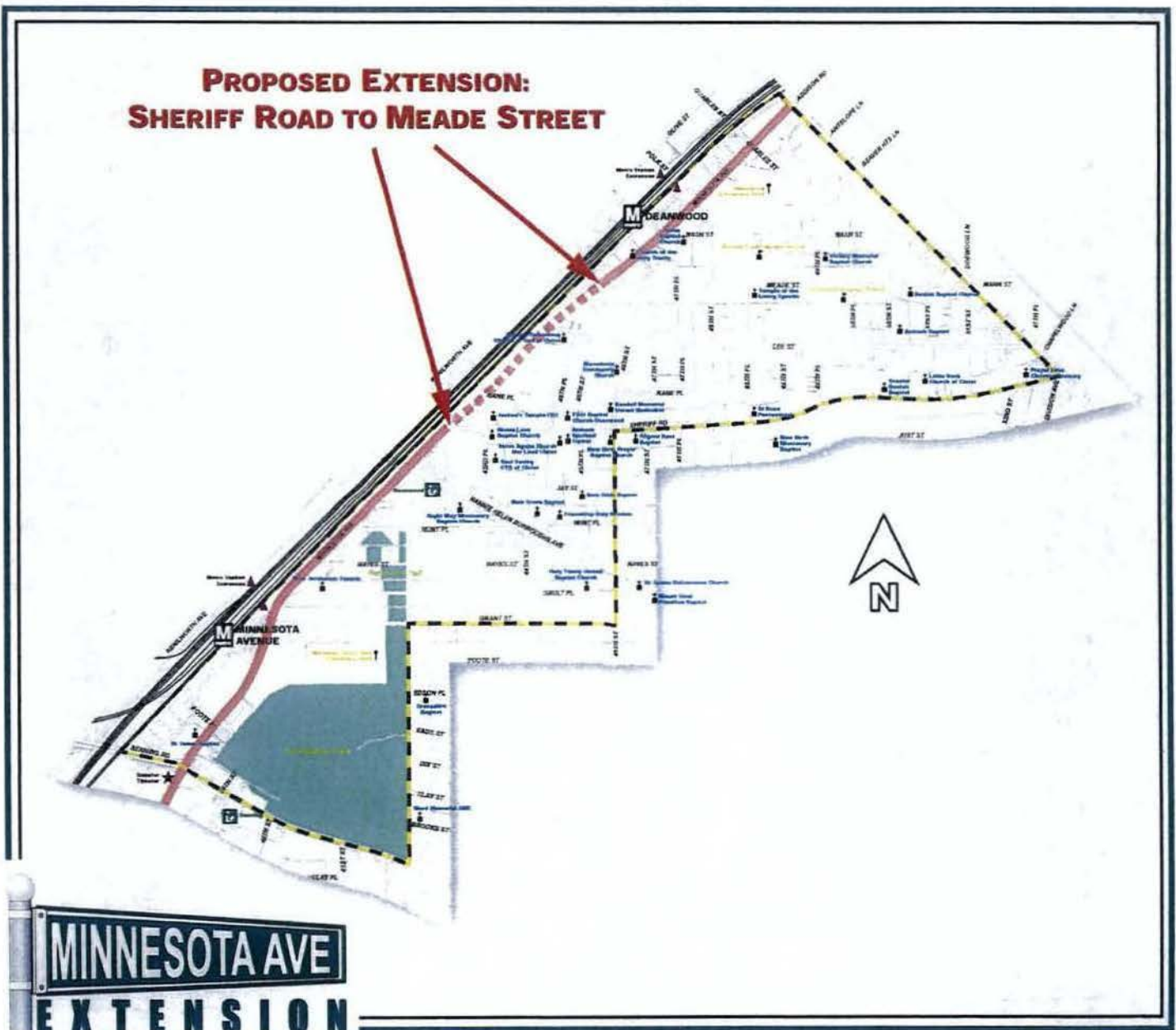
MINNESOTA AVENUE EXTENSION ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

Prepared by:
District Department of Transportation

For:
Federal Highway Administration

June 2007

PROPOSED EXTENSION: SHERIFF ROAD TO MEADE STREET



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

S.1 PROPOSED ACTION

The District of Columbia Department of Transportation (DDOT) is investigating the extension of Minnesota Avenue, N.E., from Sheriff Road to Meade Street. Minnesota Avenue is a major north-south roadway on the east side of the Anacostia River. It is located wholly within the District of Columbia and extends from Good Hope Road near the 11th Street Bridge in Northeast to Eastern Avenue and the District line to the north. Minnesota Avenue provides convenient access to the approaches of the Benning, John Phillip Sousa, and 11th Street Bridges and to residential and commercial areas, religious institutions, schools and public parks along its route. The proposed project is located in the Deanwood neighborhood of Washington, DC and would consist of constructing of a new four-lane roadway and associated intersection improvements, upgrading and installing traffic control measures, modifying or constructing drainage facilities, and adding pedestrian facilities. The proposed extension would complete a long-planned missing segment of Minnesota Avenue between Sheriff Road and Meade Street in the Deanwood neighborhood of Washington, DC.

Deanwood is located within Ward 7 of the District of Columbia and is one of the oldest African-American neighborhoods in the city. Plans for Minnesota Avenue began to appear as early as the 1930s, including a portion of the roadway from Sheriff Avenue to Meade Street that was never constructed. From the earliest days Minnesota Avenue was envisioned as a boulevard to serve residents of Deanwood and the District. Most of the development in the area was constructed in the 1940s – 1950s and the area is now primarily made up of single-family and low-density residential uses, along with churches, some commercial development, and other community facilities.

Minnesota Avenue is currently a discontinuous four-lane arterial with two posted speed limits within the study area: 35 mph on the portion located south of Sheriff Road and 25 mph on the portion located north of Meade Street. On-street parking is permitted at all times in two of the travel lanes.

Since the early 1900s, historical insurance maps have shown the proposed Minnesota Avenue corridor, including the extension currently under evaluation. Right-of-way for the extension was reserved until very recently for the construction of the missing portion of Minnesota Avenue. Although now privately owned, the land use in the area of Deanwood where the proposed extension would be built is almost exclusively undeveloped. The completion of Minnesota Avenue has been planned for years in advance of this Environmental Assessment and is an element of local and District-wide plans.

Deanwood completed a community assessment in 2001 as part of the Strategic Neighborhood Action Plan (SNAP) process. The completion of Minnesota Avenue was one of the priorities identified by the citizens of Deanwood and the local community as part of the SNAP process. In recent years, there had developed a fundamental conflict between cut-through traffic and residential development that resulted from this missing segment of Minnesota Avenue. This assessment is the first step in the process for fulfilling the community's request for a continuous Minnesota Avenue that has long been envisioned and desired.

be constructed using the existing dead-end section of Minnesota Avenue that provides access to Kane Place. The alignment would be located along the existing rail line to the point at which it would intersect 44th Street and Lee Street. Alternative 4A would provide a consistent 90-foot right-of-way until the point at which the roadway would merge with a short section of Meade Street, where the right-of-way would be reduced to minimize impacts to residential and commercial properties. Approximately 200 feet of Meade Street would be re-designated as Minnesota Avenue, and intersection improvements would be incorporated for 45th Street and Meade Street. Minnesota Avenue would then continue its current alignment to Eastern Avenue with no additional improvements.

Alternative 5: 60-foot Right-of-Way with Meade Street Segment

Alternative 5 would include the same infrastructure improvements as Alternative 4A in terms of the number of lanes, buffering, and sidewalks provided, but would provide only a 60-foot right-of-way. In addition to the right-of-way, Alternative 5 would have setbacks along Minnesota Avenue. These setbacks would not be required as part of the public right-of-way, but building restrictions would be imposed along the setbacks to ensure proper sight distances for the extension of Minnesota Avenue. However, it is currently proposed to eliminate the setback requirement to the west of the proposed extension along the rail lines because no development would be feasible in any event along this setback. This proposal would allow the roadway center line of the extension to be shifted closer to the rail facilities and farther away from residential properties, requiring less property acquisition (see Figure 2.3). Alternative 5 would consist of a new four-lane arterial with dedicated right-of-way for trees and sidewalks (see Figure 2.4). This alternative also would provide the same connections and require the same reconstruction of intersections at Kane Place, 44th Street, Lee Street, 45th Street, and Meade Street. Alternative 5 also uses approximately 200 feet of Meade Street.

One difference between Alternatives 4A and 5 would occur along the narrow portion of existing Minnesota Avenue north of Sheriff Road that currently exists and provides access to Kane Place. Because only 60 feet of right-of-way is required for Alternative 5 and the alignment would be shifted close to the existing rail line, this existing dead-end segment of Minnesota Avenue would not be required for construction.

The proposed action would provide a continuous Minnesota Avenue and reduce cut-through traffic on residential streets in Deanwood. It would provide increased and more direct access to the area and provide a more direct transportation corridor for transit, cyclists, and pedestrians between the Deanwood and Minnesota Avenue Metrorail stations. Both alternatives would enhance safety by not only reducing traffic along residential streets, but also by providing additional bicycle and pedestrian facilities.

Cost estimates are an important consideration in the evaluation of EA alternatives. The cost estimates were prepared using standard construction quantity analysis and assumptions with regard to standard pay items and average unit prices. The cost estimates for each alternative are presented in 2006 dollars and include a 20% cost contingency. Alternative 4A is anticipated to cost \$2.72 million, including \$513,000 for right-of-way acquisition and Alternative 5 is estimated to cost \$2.62 million, including \$422,000 for right-of-way acquisition.

S.4 SUMMARY OF IMPACTS

There are several benefits of the proposed action for either build alternative. Construction of the extension would remove traffic from neighborhood streets, create safer operating conditions with the improved facility, allow more direct access to the Metrorail stations, and implement an improvement that is highly desired by the community as included in the SNAP. Making Minnesota Avenue continuous would also provide better access to the community because of improved circulation within the study area as through-traffic is located on an arterial street rather than residential streets. In addition, the proposed extension would provide a connection to the portion of Minnesota Avenue that is part of the Great Streets

TABLE OF CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

S.1 Proposed Action.....	ES-1
S.2 Purpose and Need	ES-2
S.3 Alternatives.....	ES-2
S.4 Summary of Impacts.....	ES-3

List of Tables	iii
----------------------	-----

List of Figures.....	iii
----------------------	-----

SECTION 1 – PURPOSE AND NEED

1.1 Project Overview	1-1
1.2 Purpose and Need for Action	1-3
1.3 Relationship to Other Studies and Plans.	1-4
1.3.1 Transit Alternatives Analysis and Anacostia Streetcar Project.....	1-4
1.3.2 Anacostia Waterfront Initiative.....	1-5
1.3.3. Comprehensive Plan for the District of Columbia	1-5
1.3.4 Cluster 31 Strategic Neighborhood Action Plan (SNAP).....	1-5
1.3.5 Government Centers Initiative	1-5

SECTION – ALTERNATIVES

2.1 No-Build Alternative	2-1
2.2 Proposed Action	2-1
2.2.1 Alternative 4A: Modified 90-Foot Right-Of-Way with Meade Street Segment.....	2-1
2.2.2 Alternative 5: 60-Foot Right-of-Way with Meade Street Segment.	2-2
2.3 Alternatives Removed from Consideration	2-2

SECTION 3 – ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS

3.1 Land Use and Zoning.....	3-1
3.1.1 Land Use.....	3-3

Table of Contents

3.9 Parklands, Recreation Resources and Section 4(f)	3-56
3.10 Visual and Aesthetic Resources	3-57
3.11 Hazardous Materials	3-58
3.11.1 Records Search Results	3-60
3.11.2 Impacts	3-60
3.11.3 Mitigation	3-62
3.12 Construction Impacts	3-62
3.13 Environmental Justice Impacts	3-64
SECTION 4 – AGENCY COORDINATION AND PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT	
4.1 Agency Coordination	4-1
4.2 Public Involvement	4-2
4.2.1 August 13, 2003 Meeting	4-3
4.2.2 February 17, 2004 Meeting	4-3
SECTION 5 – PREPARERS	
SECTION 6 – LITERATURE CITED	
APPENDIX A –HAZARDOUS MATERIALS DATA SEARCH	
APPENDIX B – PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT PROCESS	

List of Tables

Table 3.1 Study Area Land Use	3-3
Table 3.2 Estimated Land Acquisitions by Type	3-4
Table 3.3 Study Area Zoning	3-4
Table 3.4 Community Facilities and Services	3-9
Table 3.5 2003 Existing Levels of Service	3-18
Table 3.6 Intersection Level of Service Comparison	3-26
Table 3.7 CO Concentrations, 2003 (with Background CO)	3-32
Table 3.8 CO Concentrations, Alternatives	3-33
Table 3.9 Estimated Study Area Pollutant Emission Rates	3-33
Table 3.10 Noise Abatement Criteria for Highway Projects for Protected Land Uses	3-39
Table 3.11 Noise Measurement Results	3-40
Table 3.12 Alternative 4A Noise Impact Results	3-43
Table 3.13 Alternative 5 Noise Impact Results	3-43
Table 3.14 Potential Engineering Constraints of Soils within the Project Study Area	3-47
Table 3.15 Invasive Plant Species Observed or With Potential to Occur within the Project Area	3-54
Table 4.1 Agencies and Officials Contacted During Agency Coordination	4-2

PURPOSE AND NEED

This chapter presents the purpose and need for the extension of Minnesota Avenue

1.1 PROJECT OVERVIEW

The District of Columbia Department of Transportation (DDOT) is investigating the extension of Minnesota Avenue, NE, from Sheriff Road to Meade Street. Minnesota Avenue is a major north-south roadway on the east side of the Anacostia River. It is located wholly within the District of Columbia and extends from Good Hope Road near the 11th Street Bridge in Northeast to Eastern Avenue and the District line to the north. Minnesota Avenue provides convenient access to the approaches of the Benning, John Phillip Sousa, and 11th Street Bridges and to residential and commercial areas, religious institutions, schools and public parks along its route. The proposed project is located in the Deanwood neighborhood of Washington, DC (see **Figure 1.1**) and would consist of constructing of a new four-lane roadway and associated intersection improvements, upgrading and installing traffic control measures, modifying or constructing drainage facilities, and adding pedestrian facilities. The proposed extension would complete a long-planned missing segment of Minnesota Avenue between Sheriff Road and Meade Street in the Deanwood neighborhood of Washington, DC.

Deanwood is located within Ward 7 of the District of Columbia and is one of the oldest African-American neighborhoods in the city. The Deanwood area was first settled by the Nacotchtank Indians and the earliest settlements began in the 1800s. Settlement in the area has always been driven by transportation – in 1871 the Southern Maryland Railroad Company laid the railroad tracks that serve as one of the boundaries of the study area used for this analysis. At that time the land was subdivided into three neighborhoods loosely known by the name of Deanwood.

Settlement occurred between that period and 1910 when Deanwood had already become a nucleus of blue and white collar African American families. Important community elements such as the George Washington Carver School and the Nannie Helen Burroughs School were founded, although the community remained semi-rural in character because of its distance from downtown DC. Plans for Minnesota Avenue began to appear as early as the 1930s, including a portion of the roadway from Sheriff Avenue to Meade Street that was never constructed. From the earliest days Minnesota Avenue was envisioned as a boulevard to serve residents of Deanwood and the District. Most of the development in the area was constructed in the 1940s – 1950s and the area is now primarily made up of single-family and low-density residential uses, along with churches, some commercial development, and other community facilities.

Minnesota Avenue is currently a four-lane arterial with two posted speed limits within the study area: 35 mph on the portion located south of Sheriff Road and 25 mph on the portion located north of Meade Street. On-street parking is permitted at all times in two of the travel lanes. The project's boundaries have been extended to include intersections with other major arterials in the area in order to assess traffic impacts related to construction of the extension. The boundaries of the study area include Benning Road to the south, the Metro Orange Line to the west, Eastern Avenue to the north, and 42nd Street, Grant Street, 45th

the proposed extension, as it is located behind the homes. The proposed extension does include right-of-way for treespace that could be used to mitigate any visual impacts.

3.11 HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

During early planning of federal actions, or other actions utilizing federal funding or permits, the location of permitted and non-regulated hazardous waste sites are determined using a combination of reasonably ascertainable records, agency coordination, field reconnaissance and interviews to aid in identifying known or potential hazardous waste sites. If known or potential waste sites are identified using these methods, the locations are clearly marked on a map showing their relationship to the alternatives under consideration. If a known or potential hazardous waste site is affected by any build alternative, information about the site, the potential involvement, impacts and public health concerns of the affected alternative(s), and the proposed mitigation measures to eliminate or minimize impacts or public health concerns are presented.

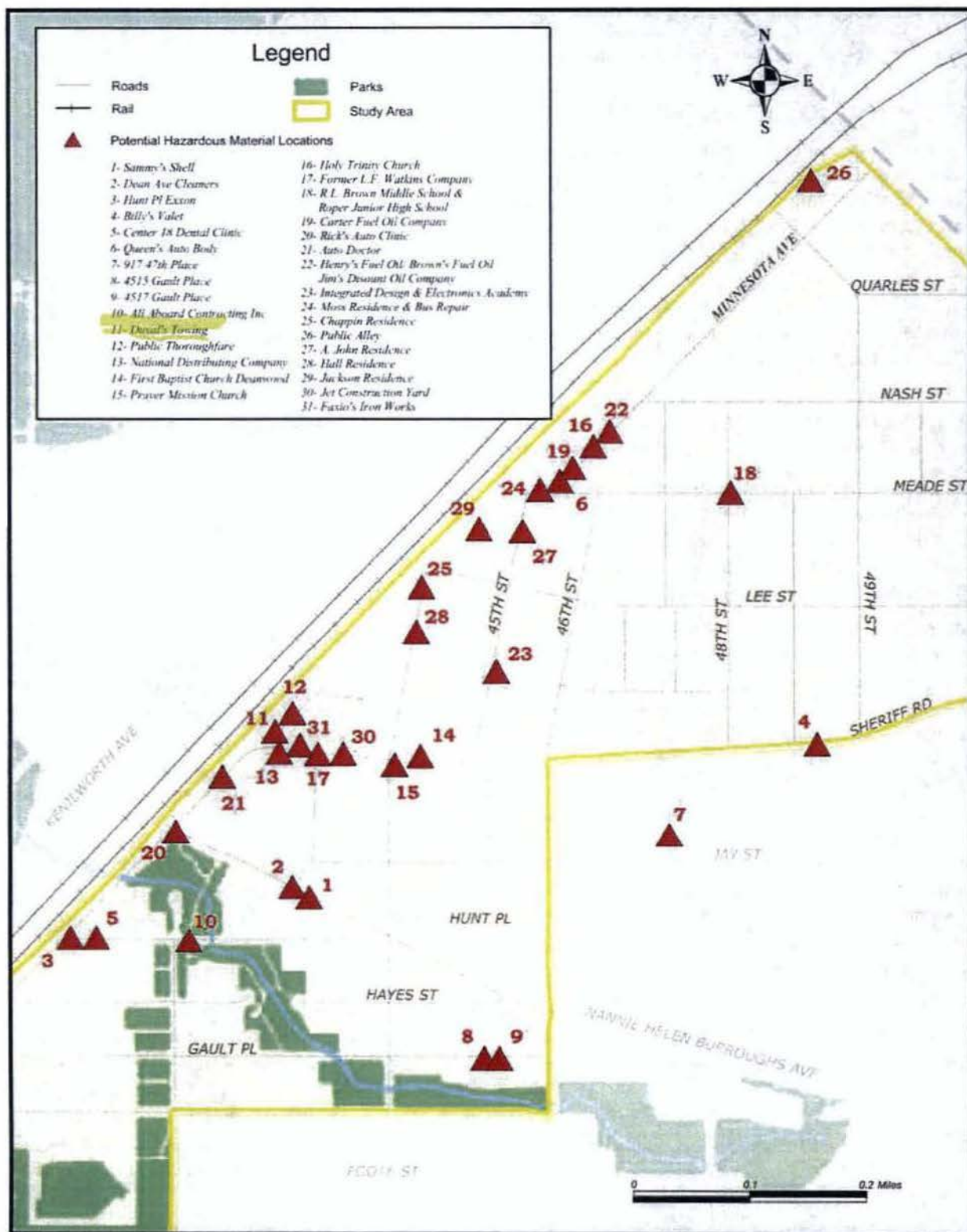
The FHWA Technical Advisory 6640.8A recommends a review of potential hazardous materials in the vicinity of the project area to assess potential impacts from construction activities resulting from a federal action that includes acquisition of additional right of way to implement Build Alternatives.

The Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) and the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA) regulate hazardous waste sites under federal laws. The Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act of 1980 (CERCLA), also known as Superfund, was created to provide the authority and a source of funding for cleaning up hazardous substances released into the environment.

A Phase I Environmental Site Assessment (ESA) is a written report used to identify and analyze the potential environmental risks and liabilities associated with a real estate transaction. It has two basic components: a site inspection, and a historical records search and public agency file review. A Phase II ESA is generally required if the results of the Phase I indicate the possible presence of contaminated substance(s), or the need for additional information. The purpose of the Phase II is to confirm the presence of contamination, determine its type(s), outline the amount of remedial actions required and list any risks to current/future users. They will also identify how much the remediation can cost and how long it may take to complete. During preliminary design, it may be desirable to conduct an ESA prior to acquisition of new right-of-way or any title transfer action. A thorough ESA (Phase I and/or II, as applicable) would be required to quantify the contamination potential or degree of potential risk to public health resulting from known, or suspected oil or hazardous material (OHM), and/or toxic substances documented within the study area. An OHM source refers to a site or incident where there is a documented or suspected potential source of contamination from oil and hazardous materials. Others, as appropriate, will complete an ESA during the design or construction phases of the project.

The methods for this study combined records searches and limited field investigations and interviews with persons encountered during surveys. Federal, state and local agency database information received from Environmental Data Resources, Inc. (EDR), a commercial environmental risk management contractor, was reviewed to determine locations in the general study area where hazardous materials-related activities were reported. Later in the process, a smaller hazardous materials study area was determined, using EDR Report data and other research to refine the area where impairment of the environmental quality of the Candidate Build Alternatives and adjacent properties subject to right-of-way acquisition could be compromised.

After matching accurate municipal address information with the sites identified using the database search information, a hazardous materials study area was established to delineate anticipated construction zones associated with the candidate build alternatives (Figure 3-15). Thereafter, limited field investigations were conducted within the established hazardous materials study area to identify any OHM sources included in the database search reports. Additional personal interviews with property



**MINNESOTA AVE
EXTENSION**

POTENTIAL HAZARDOUS MATERIAL LOCATIONS
FIGURE 3.15

Environmental Effects

and building demolition materials. Containers with residue OHM materials were also found in the solid waste piles including household cleaners, solvents, household, industrial and automotive OHM containers such as motor oil, lubricants, hydraulic oil, auto batteries, and abandoned compressed gas cylinders. Additionally, there is evidence of former structures (razed concrete slab foundations) along this vacant section of Minnesota Avenue. This elevates the possibility for undocumented USTs to be present. Although believed to be minor in extent, further investigation would be required at this location to quantify the observed OHM contamination at this site.

Moss Residence and Bus Repair Facility - 4600 Minnesota Avenue

This property, controlled by A. L. Moss and family, occupies two parcels (Figure 3.15, Site 24). One parcel is a residence/office, and another occupies the fenced lot located at the intersection of 45th and Meade Streets NE. At this location, commercial buses and other vehicles are repaired, maintained and refurbished. During surveys, numerous small (less than five square feet) and some larger (over five square feet) staining of recently released OHM (motor oil/brake fluid) were observed. Other OHM stains were observed on the Moss Property within the secured fenced area. Based on the nature of the business conducted on the site, there is also a potential for undocumented ASTs and USTs. Although believed to be potentially minor, additional field and file investigation and ESA would be necessary to determine the risk

Chappin Residence Garage - 44th & Lee Streets, 1070 44th Street

This fenced residential property, located at 44th and Lee Streets, has a number of inoperative automobiles, and serves as a backyard repair area (Figure 3.15, Site 25). Overt evidence of OHM dumping (possibly used/waste motor oil, oily rags, and oily parts) was observed on the outdoor repair area, in the street and in a municipal storm sewer on Lee Street near the residence on August 21, 2003. Although believed to be relatively minor, additional site investigation would be necessary to determine the risk potential to a portion of the project area resulting from any long-term dumping of OHM at this location.

Minnesota Avenue Public Right of Way

At this location, at least five abandoned/inoperative vehicles, two boats, and other automotive-related debris were observed in the Minnesota Avenue dead-end and on the residential parcel owned by Clarence Jackson. Evidence of automotive repair and maintenance activity was observed in publicly accessible areas (Figure 3.15, Site 29). Additionally, small (less than three square feet) releases of OHM and discarded OHM containers were observed in debris piles and vegetated brambles on lot edges and fencerows. Although believed to be minor in extent, further investigation would be required at this location to quantify the OHM contamination at this site.

Additional research, file inspections, and the completion of an ESA would be required to better define the threats and environmental risks associated with OHM sources identified within the Build Alternative rights-of-way, or future construction zones, and/or associated staging/storage areas.

No-Build Alternative

There would be no impacts to hazardous materials under the No-Build Alternative.

Alternative 4A

Alternative 4A would potentially impact the following properties with current or former hazardous materials producers, spill locations or subsurface contamination:

- Good Success Christian Church Property (Former site of Duval's Towing) – 4300 Minnesota Avenue
- Debris and Stump Dump – 4300 Minnesota Avenue

- Moss Residence and Bus Repair – 4600 Minnesota Avenue
- Chappin Residence – 1077 44th Street
- Minnesota Avenue Public Right of Way

Alternative 5

Alternative 5 would potentially impact the following properties with current or former hazardous materials producers, spill locations or subsurface contamination:

- Good Success Christian Church Property (Former site of Duval's Towing) – 4300 Minnesota Avenue
- Debris and Stump Dump – 4300 Minnesota Avenue
- Chappin Residence – 1077 44th Street
- Minnesota Avenue Public Right of Way

3.11.3 Mitigation

No subsurface testing for contaminated soils has been conducted in association with this assessment. A visual examination of the property cannot be expected to reveal all hazardous materials or situations that may be present on-site; some hazardous materials or conditions may exist and not be detected in the absence of subsurface testing. A phase I investigation for contaminated materials is recommended prior to construction due to the previous use of land in the study area as a dumping site and for industrial uses. If contaminated soils are identified during construction activities mitigation measures will be instituted to comply with federal, State, and local regulations. Both alternatives have potential OHM facilities and involve direct takings of land used for dumping and/or automotive repair facilities (for the sites along Minnesota Avenue and the Chappin Residence). However, only the site at 4300 Minnesota Avenue appears on federal databases and has since been cleaned of the automotive repair facilities. Alternative 4A has a minimal interaction with the bus repair facility at 4600 Minnesota Avenue, requiring only partial acquisition at the edge of the property, so minimal interaction with the main area with potential OHM deposits exists. For the other properties, the potential for OHM sites is considered minimal, since they represent informal, small scale dumping sites and/or automotive repair sites and not more complex hazardous material waste sites that would require extensive clean-up. As currently identified, these small-scale operations that have potential for OHM sites may involve some limited abatement, but not abatement to the level that would interfere with the construction of either alternative.

3.12 CONSTRUCTION IMPACTS

No-Build Alternative

Because there would be no change to existing Minnesota Avenue under the No-Build Alternative, there would be no construction impacts as the result of this alternative.

Alternatives 4A and 5

There would be no difference in construction impacts as the result of the two build alternatives. Therefore construction impacts for both alternatives are discussed in this section.

Air Quality

Alternatives 4A and 5 would cause short-term air-quality impacts, primarily from fugitive dust generated during demolition and construction operations. These short-term impacts are expected to be minimal.

managers/tenants/owners who were encountered during field surveys were conducted to help determine property conditions, with emphasis on hazardous materials and observed releases of OHM in visually accessible areas to identify any additional OHM sources not reported in the EDR Report. Sites identified using these combined methods that could potentially represent a threat to public health are individually mapped within the project's hazardous materials study area (Figure 3.15), and are described in Appendix A.

3.11.1 Records Search Results

A total of 378 hazardous materials related records/incidents were identified within the study area by EDR's search of reasonably ascertainable government records (Appendix A). Of these records, 251 are identified as sites that have potential for possible project area contamination. Based on records analysis of these 251 sites/incidents, there are only 15 sites mapped within 0.25-mile radius of the target property (see Appendix A, Detail Map) with potential of possible project area contamination. These mapped sites represent the highest priority as reported potential contamination sources per applicable ASTM E 1527-00 standards for the project area. Additional research, field reconnaissance/verification and mapping analyses determined there are a total of 31 identified OHM sources within the project's hazardous materials study area.

Eight other miscellaneous sites, representing additional potential environmental risk sources, were identified via website research and/or field methods, but are not considered significant OHM sources based on their transient nature and ability to be eliminated using proper disposal methods. The findings for OHM sources within the project's hazardous materials study area are summarized in Appendix A.

3.11.2 Impacts

The project's hazardous materials study area contains 31 OHM sources. All detailed data for each OHM source is found in Appendix A. Each of these sites is mapped in Appendix A – Detail Map.

Of these 31 OHM sources, only 5 are located within the footprints of Build Alternatives. Alternative 4A has a larger number of OHM sources (5), while Alternative 5 has (4) OHM sources. Details regarding the OHM sources within the project footprints are provided below.

Good Success Christian Church/Duval's Towing - 4300 Minnesota Avenue

This area was formerly utilized by Duval's (or Duvall's) Towing as an auto storage and salvage lot (Figure 3.15, Site 11, labeled Duval's Towing), whose corporate physical address was 4300 Minnesota Avenue NE. Based on Appendix A and ECHO database research, Duval's Towing appears in the FINDS, PCS and NPDES federal databases, so there exists a reasonable suspicion that OHM products were stored, disposed and used at this location. The former owner, was cited in July 1999 for lack of required stormwater (NPDES) permit to discharge lot runoff (oil/grease-laden waste waters) into DC's stormwater system. Compliance reporting for the site continued through August 1, 2000.

There is a reasonable possibility that the site has, or may have had, an undocumented UST or AST somewhere on the parcel now owned by the Good Success Christian Church. Older, well-established auto repair and/or salvage operations frequently maintained unlined, metallic USTs for the storage of waste oil, solvents and other OHM products used in routine operations at their establishments, prior to enactment of modern storage tank regulations. Further detailed investigation would be required to ascertain whether undocumented USTs remain on this property.

Debris and Stump Dump, Public Thoroughfare - 4300 Block Minnesota Avenue, Between Nannie H. Burroughs Avenue NE and Minnesota Avenue

Several small debris accumulations were identified adjacent to and approximately 300 feet southwest of the Good Success Christian Church property along (Figure 3.15, Site 12). Piles contained woody debris, larger stumps, broken glass, oily textiles, white goods (washing machine, refrigerator), discarded lumber

Environmental Effects

To mitigate potential air-quality impacts, construction contractors would be directed to utilize common dust-suppression measures:

- Where possible, water would be used to control dust generated by demolition activities, construction activities, or grading of roads.
- Asphalt, oil, water, or suitable chemicals would be applied to dirt roads, materials stockpiles, and other surfaces that may create airborne dust. Paved roadways should be maintained in a clean condition.
- Hoods, fans, and fabric filters would be installed to enclose and vent the handling of dusty materials.
- ✓ • Adequate containment methods should be employed during sandblasting or other similar operations.
- Soils exposed for more than short periods would be seeded with fast-growing grasses.

Noise

While noise levels could increase substantially for short periods during construction, the impacts are expected to be short-term and concentrated near the area under construction. Impacts on ambient noise levels would include noise from demolition and construction equipment operating at the site as well as from construction or delivery vehicles traveling to and from the site. Noise impacts would vary widely depending on the construction phase (demolition, land clearing and excavation, foundation and capping, construction of new building walls, etc.), the specific task being undertaken, and distance from the activity.

It is not yet known what type of equipment would be used during development of the site. Normally involved are bulldozers and jack hammers during demolition; bulldozers, scrapers, backhoes, and trucks during excavation and grading; backhoes during utility construction; and pile drivers, concrete mixers and pumps, saws, hammers, cranes, and forklifts during construction. Based on typical noise levels generated by such equipment (ranging from 76 to 101 dBA at 15 meters from the equipment), noise-sensitive land uses, such as residences near the construction site, could experience high noise levels.

To mitigate potential major construction-noise impacts, construction activities would comply with District regulations. Standard construction-noise specifications, which require the contractor to make every reasonable effort to minimize noise through abatement measures, would be incorporated in the development of construction plans. Abatement measures could include:

- Equipping all construction equipment powered with internal combustion engines with properly-maintained mufflers.
- Ensuring that air compressors meet current U.S. EPA noise-emission standards.
- Using new construction equipment as much as possible, since it is generally quieter than older equipment.
- Minimizing potential nighttime construction activities.

Aesthetics and Viewsheds

Aesthetics and viewsheds would be temporarily affected by the visibility of construction activity and materials, such as fencing, detour signs, and construction equipment.

Community Facilities

Construction during Alternatives 4A and 5 might lead to short-term, negative impacts by increasing response times for fire, EMS, and police services as a result of traffic detours and construction-related delays. Careful planning for maintenance of traffic flow during construction would minimize disruptions and largely mitigate these potential negative effects on emergency services.

Transportation

Any construction impacts to traffic and transportation systems are anticipated to be short-term in duration. Analysis of potential impacts is not possible at this time due to the lack of information regarding construction staging and phasing. Impacts will be minimized however through the use of best management practices and maintenance and protection of traffic.

3.13 ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE IMPACTS

Minority and low-income groups are often located in areas already experiencing the effects of multiple development projects resulting in social and/or environmental degradation. These areas are likely to be adversely affected by existing industrial, commercial or transportation facilities, and populations in these areas are often not politically organized sufficiently to prevent further adverse development. Typically project impacts could affect areas that are vulnerable due to these factors and impacts that occur in these areas are likely to be considered more severe than the same impacts that would occur in areas not already subject to these conditions.

According to DOT Order 5680.1, a disproportionately high and adverse effect on minority and low-income population is an adverse effect that "(1) is predominately borne by a minority and/or a low-income population, or (2) will be suffered by the minority population and/or low-income population and is appreciably more severe or greater in magnitude than the adverse effect that will be suffered by the non-minority population and/or non-low-income population."

No-Build Alternative

No construction activities would occur under the No-Build Alternative and therefore no impacts would occur under the No-Build Alternative.

Alternative 4A and 5

All environmental impacts identified in Sections 3.1 through 3.12 would be predominantly borne by minority populations (there are no Block Groups that meet poverty thresholds). Because there are no study area populations that are non-minority however, these impacts cannot be characterized as more severe or greater in magnitude than impacts to non-minority and/or low-income populations.

Mitigation

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) guidance suggests a range of mitigation measures for disproportionate impacts to minority and/or low-income communities. Among the mitigation measures suggested under EPA guidance that are most appropriate for highway alignments are:

- Providing assistance to an affected community to ensure that it receives its fair share (i.e., proportional) of anticipated benefits of the proposed action (e.g., job training, construction contracts, and infrastructure improvements).
- Relocating affected residents, upon request or with concurrence from the affected individuals.

- Establishment of a community oversight committee to monitor progress and identify potential community concerns.

According to Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) guidance, "Throughout the process of public participation, agencies should elicit views of the affected populations on measures to mitigate a disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effect....and should carefully consider community views in developing and implementing mitigation strategies." An extensive public involvement program has been developed for this project. This program includes outreach efforts to Environmental Justice (EJ) communities in the affected environment.

Public/Community outreach is a critical element in the assessment of EJ impacts. It is a proactive process that seeks out-of-the-ordinary non-traditional stakeholders. A well-developed public involvement program as well as DDOT outreach community groups on an on-going basis serves as mechanism for mitigation of environmental justice impacts. For this Environmental Assessment, several mechanisms were used to develop alternatives with the support of the local community. Two public workshops were held in the community to discuss the project as well as individual meetings with the Marshall Heights Community Development Organization, local ANC members, and stakeholders in the study area. A mailing list was developed for the project that included over 350 residents and stakeholders. The first public workshop was used to develop the scope of alternatives to be considered and to solicit concerns from the local community. Twenty-seven citizens attended the kick-off meeting. A second meeting was held to present the preliminary concepts and nineteen citizens attended. At this meeting the community provided input into the alternatives and identified community priorities to be used in screening the concepts. As a result of the second meeting, the alternatives were revised to minimize any impacts to commercial properties and to be located along the alignment traditionally supported by the local community. In this manner, the public involvement process was used to design alternatives that reflected the input of the local community.

AGENCY COORDINATION AND PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

4.1 AGENCY COORDINATION

In the process of preparing this draft environmental assessment, Federal and local agencies were contacted to inform them about the proposed extension, identify issues of concern, and obtain information about environmental resources within the project study area. Coordination with the agencies listed in **Table 4.1** was initiated in September 2003. Each agency received a scoping letter introducing the project, listing the specific project elements proposed to be included in the extension, and requesting that they identify any concerns. A map of the study area was enclosed with each letter. Agencies and organizations listed in Table 4.1 will also be provided the opportunity to review and comment on the Environmental Assessment, which is the primary point of coordination with the agencies.

This early notification and coordination provided the opportunity for timely identification, evaluation, and resolution of environmental and regulatory issues. None of the federal or local agencies contacted submitted a formal response to the scoping letter. Additional coordination was conducted with several agencies, including WMATA, the DCHPO, Marshall Heights Community Development Organization Inc. (MCHDO), ANC 7, and CSX Transportation, Inc. WMATA was contacted to discuss transit operations in the study area and provided feedback on the potential for routing bus service more directly on the proposed extension between the Minnesota Avenue and Deanwood Stations. The DCHPO was sent scoping information to initiate the Section 106 process, including identification of the Area of Potential Effect (APE) and they also were provided an early internal draft copy of the EA. Several presentations have been made to the local community, including representatives of ANC 7 and the MCHDO. Local meetings include the following:

- Far N.E. and S.E. Council Meeting in October 2003
- Advisory Neighborhood Commission, (ANC) 7D in November 2003
- Deanwood Citizens Association in November 2003
- ANC 7C in February 2004
- Minnesota Avenue, N.E. Benning Road, N.E. Government Center Community Meeting in June 2004
- Fort Dupont Park Citizens Association Meeting in December 2004
- ANC 7C in February 2005
- Councilmember Vincent Gray's Ward 7 Leadership Meeting in April 2006
- ANC 7C in October 2006
- Councilmember Vincent Gray's Ward 7 Leadership Meeting in October 2006, and
- ANC 7D in November 2006

Table 4.1 AGENCIES AND OFFICIALS CONTACTED DURING AGENCY COORDINATION

FEDERAL AGENCIES Advisory Council on Historic Preservation Commission of Fine Arts U S Army Corps of Engineers, Baltimore Regulatory Branch U S Department of Agriculture - Natural Resources Conservation Service U S Department of Commerce, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, National Marine Fisheries Service Northeast Region U S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, Acting Field Office Director U S. Department of Interior - Fish and Wildlife Service, Northeast Region - National Park Service, National Capital Region - Office of Environmental Compliance and Policy U S Department of Transportation - Coast Guard, Fifth District U S Federal Emergency Management Administration REGIONAL AGENCIES Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments National Capital Planning Commission Northern Virginia Transportation Commission Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority Virginia Railway Express	DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA AGENCIES District of Columbia Department of Health Environmental Health Administration District of Columbia Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs District of Columbia Department of Housing and Community Development District of Columbia Department of Recreation and Parks District of Columbia Office of Planning District of Columbia Water and Sewer Authority District of Columbia Office of Historic Preservation OTHER INTERESTED PARTIES Marshall Heights Community Development Organization, Inc National Trust for Historic Preservation Sierra Club Advisory Neighborhood Commission 7A Advisory Neighborhood Commission 7B Advisory Neighborhood Commission 7C Advisory Neighborhood Commission 7D Fort Dupont Civic Association Benning Ridge Civic Association Capitol View Civic Association Central Northeast Civic Association CSX Transportation, Inc.
--	--

CSX Transportation, Inc. was contacted because their tracks run just outside of the proposed improvements in the rail corridor that abuts the proposed location for the extension (although WMATA owns the rail lines closest to the alignments). CSX indicated that they do not comment on local projects or improvements that do not involve some direct interaction with their facilities or land so they would not be commenting on impacts of this project specifically since it has no direct interaction.

One local organization, the Marshall Heights Community Development Organization Inc. (MHCDO), did respond to the scoping letter. MHCDO expressed its full support of the extension project and cited the following reasons:

- Improved access to the Deanwood Metrorail station.
- Reduction of through-traffic on Deanwood's residential streets, particularly 44th, 45th, 46th, Lee, and Meade Streets.
- Elimination of blight in the area (currently Minnesota Avenue on maps).
- Provision of an alternative route to Benning Road bridge, the Minnesota Avenue Metrorail station, and the proposed Government Center that would reduce the need to widen Benning Road.

4.2 PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

Public involvement has been a full-fledged component of the Minnesota Avenue Extension Project from its inception. Two public information meetings have been held within the project study area, and a formal public meeting is scheduled to be held following the publication of the Environmental Assessment. By these means DDOT has kept the public informed about the progress of the study and provided a conduit for input from interested citizens. All local residents along the proposed extension were included in all

mailings for the project and invited to the local community meetings. Details regarding the public meetings are provided below and information is included in Appendix B.

4.2.1 August 13, 2003 Meeting

The first public information meeting was held on Wednesday, August 13, 2003, at First Baptist Church of Deanwood from 6:00 PM to 9:00 PM. The primary goal of this meeting was to solicit general comments and opinions on the project from interested members of the public. The purpose of the meeting was to introduce the extension project to the public. Attendees were given information regarding the scope of the study, the study goals and objectives, details regarding the NEPA process, a map of the project study area, a project schedule, and contact information.

The meeting was advertised in *The Washington Post*, and *The Washington Afro-American*, and the *East of the River* newspapers. Notices were mailed to the 350 persons, agencies, businesses, and organizations on the project's mailing list. A total of 27 people signed in, and 5 written comment sheets were received. The written comments focused primarily on the consideration of measures to protect pedestrian safety. Topics verbally discussed during the meeting primarily fell into the following categories:

- Right-of-way concerns
- Alignment considerations
- Potential relocations
- Project schedule
- Project costs

4.2.2 February 17, 2004 Meeting

The second public information meeting was held on Tuesday, February 17, 2004, at Holy Trinity Worship Center from 6:30 PM to 8:30 PM. As with the previous meeting, advertisements were placed in *The Washington Post*, and *The Washington Afro-American*, and the *East of the River* newspapers. Notices were mailed to the 222 persons, agencies and businesses or organizations on the revised project mailing list. The primary goal of this meeting was to obtain feedback on alignment concepts and environmental constraints. Attendees were given information regarding the purpose and need for the project, the project development process, alignment concepts, potential traffic impacts, and environmental constraints.

A total of 19 people signed in, and 3 written comment sheets were received. Written comments focused on the desire to minimize residential impacts and the desire for continued public involvement. Topics verbally discussed during the meeting primarily fell into the following categories:

- Alternative alignments
- Modifications to concept right-of-ways
- Public safety considerations
- Traffic control measures
- The property acquisition process

The public involvement process has been used to refine the alternatives under consideration. As discussed in Chapter 2 of this assessment, Alternative 4A was developed to eliminate impacts to a locally-owned business in the community which was one of the goals identified at the local meetings. In addition, the community also expressed concern about Alternative 3, which would re-route Minnesota Avenue onto existing roads in order to avoid private property impacts. The local community expressed a preference for the extension to be located along the previously identified route adjacent to the rail lines and this input was taken into consideration as well in the decision to carry Alternatives 4A and 5 forward into the detailed assessments for this EA.

MINNESOTA AVENUE EXTENSION ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

Prepared by:
District Department of Transportation

For:
Federal Highway Administration

June 2007



ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

for

MINNESOTA AVENUE EXTENSION WASHINGTON, DC

Prepared pursuant to 42 U.S.C. 4332(2)(C)

by

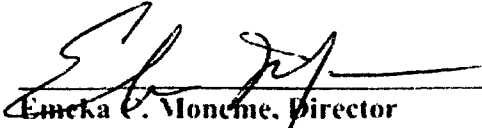
U.S. Department of Transportation

Federal Highway Administration

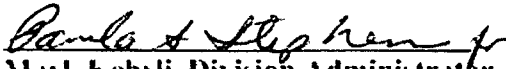
and

District Department of Transportation

6/25/07
Date of Approval


Emeka C. Moneme, Director
District Department of Transportation

June 22, 2007
Date of Approval


Mark Kehrl, Division Administrator
Federal Highway Administration
DC Division Office

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

S.1 PROPOSED ACTION

The District of Columbia Department of Transportation (DDOT) is investigating the extension of Minnesota Avenue, N E , from Sheriff Road to Meade Street. Minnesota Avenue is a major north-south roadway on the east side of the Anacostia River. It is located wholly within the District of Columbia and extends from Good Hope Road near the 11th Street Bridge in Northeast to Eastern Avenue and the District line to the north. Minnesota Avenue provides convenient access to the approaches of the Benning, John Phillip Sousa, and 11th Street Bridges and to residential and commercial areas, religious institutions, schools and public parks along its route. The proposed project is located in the Deanwood neighborhood of Washington, DC and would consist of constructing of a new four-lane roadway and associated intersection improvements, upgrading and installing traffic control measures, modifying or constructing drainage facilities, and adding pedestrian facilities. The proposed extension would complete a long-planned missing segment of Minnesota Avenue between Sheriff Road and Meade Street in the Deanwood neighborhood of Washington, DC.

Deanwood is located within Ward 7 of the District of Columbia and is one of the oldest African-American neighborhoods in the city. Plans for Minnesota Avenue began to appear as early as the 1930s, including a portion of the roadway from Sheriff Avenue to Meade Street that was never constructed. From the earliest days Minnesota Avenue was envisioned as a boulevard to serve residents of Deanwood and the District. Most of the development in the area was constructed in the 1940s – 1950s and the area is now primarily made up of single-family and low-density residential uses, along with churches, some commercial development, and other community facilities.

Minnesota Avenue is currently a discontinuous four-lane arterial with two posted speed limits within the study area: 35 mph on the portion located south of Sheriff Road and 25 mph on the portion located north of Meade Street. On-street parking is permitted at all times in two of the travel lanes.

Since the early 1900s, historical insurance maps have shown the proposed Minnesota Avenue corridor, including the extension currently under evaluation. Right-of-way for the extension was reserved until very recently for the construction of the missing portion of Minnesota Avenue. Although now privately owned, the land use in the area of Deanwood where the proposed extension would be built is almost exclusively undeveloped. The completion of Minnesota Avenue has been planned for years in advance of this Environmental Assessment and is an element of local and District-wide plans.

Deanwood completed a community assessment in 2001 as part of the Strategic Neighborhood Action Plan (SNAP) process. The completion of Minnesota Avenue was one of the priorities identified by the citizens of Deanwood and the local community as part of the SNAP process. In recent years, there had developed a fundamental conflict between cut-through traffic and residential development that resulted from this missing segment of Minnesota Avenue. This assessment is the first step in the process for fulfilling the community's request for a continuous Minnesota Avenue that has long been envisioned and desired.

S.2 PURPOSE AND NEED

Because this project would receive federal funds, it is subject to the provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA), as amended, and associated regulations. One of the first steps in the NEPA process is to document the purpose and need for the proposed project. Regulations and technical advisories promulgated by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) guide the preparation of the Purpose and Need Statement.

The purpose of the proposed action is to improve the functionality of the local and regional roadway system through the construction of the missing segment of Minnesota Avenue within the project limits. The project is intended to construct the extension of Minnesota Avenue and to support the goals of the SNAP adopted for Ward 7, in which the proposed project is located, that cite the completion of Minnesota Avenue as an element of improving access to the Deanwood and Lincoln Heights areas. The discontinuous configuration of Minnesota Avenue creates circuitous routing of traffic in the study area. In addition, the construction would provide better and more direct access to the Deanwood and Minnesota Avenue Metrorail stations.

The missing transportation link on Minnesota Avenue results in vehicles using minor residential streets within the Deanwood neighborhood as alternatives for north-south travel. In the immediate vicinity of the proposed extension, the existing volumes indicate that motorists are using a combination of Meade Street with 45th and 44th Streets to circumnavigate the missing segment of Minnesota Avenue. The use of these streets causes increased vehicular traffic in residential areas and the potential for unsafe conditions for local traffic, bicycles and pedestrians. These traffic volumes are anticipated to increase in future years as investment along the Anacostia waterfront increases.

S.3 ALTERNATIVES

Several alternatives have been analyzed as possible extensions for Minnesota Avenue. Traditionally, the extension has been shown on right-of-way maps for the District as a linear extension located immediately adjacent and east of the current Metrorail Orange Line rail facilities. However, several alternatives were analyzed because a portion of this previously identified right-of-way was purchased and because the northern segment of Minnesota Avenue was constructed slightly to the east of the location depicted in historic maps.

Two build alternatives are being evaluated in this EA: Alternative 4A and Alternative 5. In addition, the No-Build Alternative is also being evaluated as required by the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, as amended.

No-Build Alternative

No-Build Alternative assumes that no improvements would be made to the existing Minnesota Avenue. The southern portion of Minnesota Avenue would continue to end at Minnesota Avenue's divergence from Sheriff Road, even though a small portion of Minnesota Avenue right-of-way extends approximately 420 feet north from this divergence point (this right-of-way is only about 20 feet wide). At the north end of the study area, Minnesota Avenue would continue to be a 90-foot-wide, four-lane arterial between Meade Street and Eastern Avenue. The No-Build Alternative provides a baseline for comparing the operational benefits and potential impacts of the other Build Alternatives being studied.

Alternative 4A: Modified 90-foot Right-of-Way with Meade Street Segment

Alternative 4A would consist of a 90-foot right-of-way and would provide a continuous Minnesota Avenue from Sheriff Road to Meade Street. The use of the 90-foot right-of-way is consistent with the historical right-of-way anticipated for the extension of Minnesota and also matches the right-of-way on the sections of Minnesota Avenue that already exist. Starting from Sheriff Road, Alternative 4A would

Executive Summary

be constructed using the existing dead-end section of Minnesota Avenue that provides access to Kane Place. The alignment would be located along the existing rail line to the point at which it would intersect 44th Street and Lee Street. Alternative 4A would provide a consistent 90-foot right-of-way until the point at which the roadway would merge with a short section of Meade Street, where the right-of-way would be reduced to minimize impacts to residential and commercial properties. Approximately 200 feet of Meade Street would be re-designated as Minnesota Avenue, and intersection improvements would be incorporated for 45th Street and Meade Street. Minnesota Avenue would then continue its current alignment to Eastern Avenue with no additional improvements.

Alternative 5: 60-foot Right-of-Way with Meade Street Segment

Alternative 5 would include the same infrastructure improvements as Alternative 4A in terms of the number of lanes, buffering, and sidewalks provided, but would provide only a 60-foot right-of-way. In addition to the right-of-way, Alternative 5 would have setbacks along Minnesota Avenue. These setbacks would not be required as part of the public right-of-way, but building restrictions would be imposed along the setbacks to ensure proper sight distances for the extension of Minnesota Avenue. However, it is currently proposed to eliminate the setback requirement to the west of the proposed extension along the rail lines because no development would be feasible in any event along this setback. This proposal would allow the roadway center line of the extension to be shifted closer to the rail facilities and farther away from residential properties, requiring less property acquisition (see Figure 2.3). Alternative 5 would consist of a new four-lane arterial with dedicated right-of-way for trees and sidewalks (see Figure 2.4). This alternative also would provide the same connections and require the same reconstruction of intersections at Kane Place, 44th Street, Lee Street, 45th Street, and Meade Street. Alternative 5 also uses approximately 200 feet of Meade Street.

One difference between Alternatives 4A and 5 would occur along the narrow portion of existing Minnesota Avenue north of Sheriff Road that currently exists and provides access to Kane Place. Because only 60 feet of right-of-way is required for Alternative 5 and the alignment would be shifted close to the existing rail line, this existing dead-end segment of Minnesota Avenue would not be required for construction.

The proposed action would provide a continuous Minnesota Avenue and reduce cut-through traffic on residential streets in Deanwood. It would provide increased and more direct access to the area and provide a more direct transportation corridor for transit, cyclists, and pedestrians between the Deanwood and Minnesota Avenue Metrorail stations. Both alternatives would enhance safety by not only reducing traffic along residential streets, but also by providing additional bicycle and pedestrian facilities.

Cost estimates are an important consideration in the evaluation of EA alternatives. The cost estimates were prepared using standard construction quantity analysis and assumptions with regard to standard pay items and average unit prices. The cost estimates for each alternative are presented in 2006 dollars and include a 20% cost contingency. Alternative 4A is anticipated to cost \$2.72 million, including \$513,000 for right-of-way acquisition and Alternative 5 is estimated to cost \$2.62 million, including \$422,000 for right-of-way acquisition.

S.4 SUMMARY OF IMPACTS

There are several benefits of the proposed action for either build alternative. Construction of the extension would remove traffic from neighborhood streets, create safer operating conditions with the improved facility, allow more direct access to the Metrorail stations, and implement an improvement that is highly desired by the community as included in the SNAP. Making Minnesota Avenue continuous would also provide better access to the community because of improved circulation within the study area as through-traffic is located on an arterial street rather than residential streets. In addition, the proposed extension would provide a connection to the portion of Minnesota Avenue that is part of the Great Streets

program. Finally, the proposed design for the project will incorporate sidewalks that are missing on most of the local streets in the study area, thus providing a better environment for pedestrians going to the Metrorail stations

Either alternative built would require the purchase of right-of-way from private land owners in the study area, as addressed in this Environmental Assessment. Either alternative would also impact one single-family residence in the study area that would have to be relocated. In addition, there is a potential for hazardous material contamination in the study area since a portion of the proposed right-of-way was at one time used as a dumping ground. The presence of any hazardous materials and mitigation of such materials would be identified in the design of any alternative selected. In addition, construction of the project would result in noise impacts within the study area for some residences since noise walls would not be feasible as part of the proposed improvements. This Environmental Assessment documents all other areas of potential impact within the study area.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

S 1 Proposed Action	ES-1
S.2 Purpose and Need	ES-2
S 3 Alternatives	ES-2
S 4 Summary of Impacts	ES-3

List of Tables	iii
--------------------------	-----

List of Figures	iii
---------------------------	-----

SECTION 1 – PURPOSE AND NEED

1 1 Project Overview	1-1
1 2 Purpose and Need for Action	1-3
1 3 Relationship to Other Studies and Plans	1-4
1 3 1 Transit Alternatives Analysis and Anacostia Streetcar Project	1-4
1 3 2 Anacostia Waterfront Initiative	1-5
1 3 3 Comprehensive Plan for the District of Columbia	1-5
1 3 4 Cluster 31 Strategic Neighborhood Action Plan (SNAP)	1-5
1 3 5 Government Centers Initiative	1-5

SECTION – ALTERNATIVES

2 1 No-Build Alternative	2-1
2 2 Proposed Action	2-1
2 2.1 Alternative 4A Modified 90-Foot Right-Of-Way with Meade Street Segment	2-1
2 2.2 Alternative 5 60-Foot Right-of-Way with Meade Street Segment	2-2
2 3 Alternatives Removed from Consideration	2-2

SECTION 3 – ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS

3 1 Land Use and Zoning	3-1
3 1 1 Land Use	3-3

3.1 2	Zoning	3-4
3 1 3	Consistency with Local Plans .	3-6
3 2	Land Acquisitions, Displacements and Relocation Impacts	3-6
3 3	Community Resources and Cohesion . . .	3-9
3 3 1	Community Facility Impacts	3-9
3 3 2	Community Cohesion	3-10
3 4	Traffic and Transportation .	3-13
3 4 1	Traffic Data Collection	3-13
3 4 2	Existing Traffic Conditions	3-13
3 4 3	Existing Bus Routes	3-18
3 4 4	Pedestrian and Bicycle Conditions .	3-19
3 4 5	Traffic Forecasts	3-19
3 5	Cultural Resources	3-25
3 5 1	Regulatory Requirements .	3-25
3 5 2	Area of Potential Effect Definition	3-27
3 5 3	Efforts to Identify Archaeological and Architectural Resources	3-27
3 5 4	Archaeological Resources	3-27
3.5 5	Historical Resources	3-29
3 6	Air Quality	3-30
3 6 1	Methodology .	3-30
3 6 2	Impact Analysis	3-30
3 6 3	Temporary Construction-Related Impacts	3-37
3 6 4	Mitigation	3-38
3 7	Noise	3-38
3 7 1	Fundamentals of Noise	3-38
3 7 2	Regulatory Overview	3-39
3 7 3	Existing Noise Environment	3-40
3 7 4	Noise Impacts	3-40
3 7 5	Mitigation	3-43
3 8	Natural Environment .	3-45
3 8 1	Physiography and Topography	3-46
3 8 2	Geology	3-46
3 8 3	Soils	3-46
3 8 4	Water Resources	3-47
3 8 5	Terrestrial and Aquatic Wildlife and Habitat	3-51

Table of Contents

3 9 Parklands, Recreation Resources and Section 4(f)	3-56
3.10 Visual and Aesthetic Resources	3-57
3 11 Hazardous Materials	3-58
3 11 1 Records Search Results	3-60
3 11 2 Impacts	3-60
3 11 3 Mitigation	3-62
3 12 Construction Impacts	3-62
3.13 Environmental Justice Impacts	3-64
SECTION 4 – AGENCY COORDINATION AND PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT	
4 1 Agency Coordination	4-1
4 2 Public Involvement	4-2
4 2 1 August 13, 2003 Meeting	4-3
4 2 2 February 17, 2004 Meeting	4-3
SECTION 5 – PREPARERS	
SECTION 6 – LITERATURE CITED	
APPENDIX A –HAZARDOUS MATERIALS DATA SEARCH	
APPENDIX B – PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT PROCESS	
 List of Tables	
Table 3 1 Study Area Land Use	3-3
Table 3.2 Estimated Land Acquisitions by Type	3-4
Table 3 3 Study Area Zoning	3-4
Table 3.4 Community Facilities and Services	3-9
Table 3 5 2003 Existing Levels of Service	3-18
Table 3 6 Intersection Level of Service Comparison	3-26
Table 3 7 CO Concentrations, 2003 (with Background CO)	3-32
Table 3 8 CO Concentrations, Alternatives	3-33
Table 3 9 Estimated Study Area Pollutant Emission Rates	3-33
Table 3 10 Noise Abatement Criteria for Highway Projects for Protected Land Uses	3-39
Table 3 11 Noise Measurement Results	3-40
Table 3 12 Alternative 4A Noise Impact Results	3-43
Table 3 13 Alternative 5 Noise Impact Results	3-43
Table 3 14 Potential Engineering Constraints of Soils within the Project Study Area	3-47
Table 3 15 Invasive Plant Species Observed or With Potential to Occur within the Project Area	3-54
Table 4 1 Agencies and Officials Contacted During Agency Coordination	4-2

List of Figures

Figure 1 1	Project Study Area	1-2
Figure 2 1	Alternative 4A Modified 90-Foot Right-of-Way with Lee Street Segment	2-3
Figure 2 2	Typical Section for 90-Foot Right of Way	2-4
Figure 2 3	Alternative 5 60-Foot Right-of-Way with Lee Street Segment	2-5
Figure 2 4	Typical Section for 60-Foot Right-of-Way	2-6
Figure 2 5	Alternative 1 90-Foot Right-of-Way	2-7
Figure 2 6	Alternative 2 60-Foot Right-of-Way	2-8
Figure 2 7	Alternative 3 Transportation System Management	2-9
Figure 3 1	Land Use	3-2
Figure 3 2	Zoning	3-5
Figure 3 3	Right-of-Way Requirements	3-8
Figure 3 4	Community Facilities	3-11
Figure 3 5	Study Area Intersections.	3-14
Figure 3 6	2003 Existing Peak Hour Traffic Conditions	3-15
Figure 3 7	2003 Existing Average Daily Traffic Volumes	3-16
Figure 3 8	Study Area Bus Routes	3-17
Figure 3 9	2025 No-Build Average Daily Traffic	3-20
Figure 3 10	2025 Build Average Daily Traffic	3-21
Figure 3 11	2025 No-Build Peak Hour Traffic Conditions	3-23
Figure 3 12	2025 Build Peak Hour Traffic Conditions	3-24
Figure 3 13	Noise Receptors/Monitoring Locations	3-41
Figure 3.14	Water Resources	3-48
Figure 3 15	Potential Hazardous Material Locations	3-59

PURPOSE AND NEED

This chapter presents the purpose and need for the extension of Minnesota Avenue

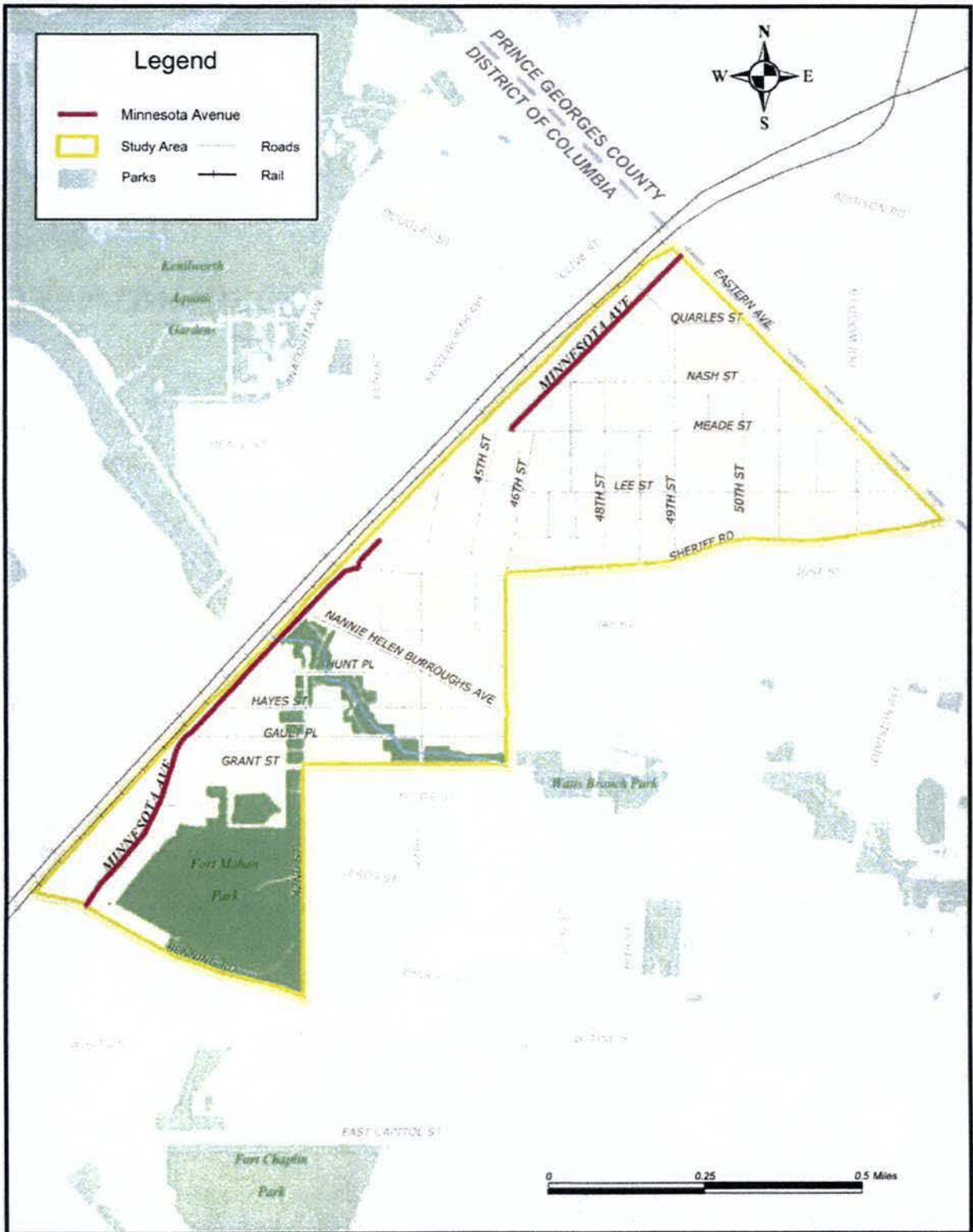
1.1 PROJECT OVERVIEW

The District of Columbia Department of Transportation (DDOT) is investigating the extension of Minnesota Avenue, NE, from Sheriff Road to Meade Street. Minnesota Avenue is a major north-south roadway on the east side of the Anacostia River. It is located wholly within the District of Columbia and extends from Good Hope Road near the 11th Street Bridge in Northeast to Eastern Avenue and the District line to the north. Minnesota Avenue provides convenient access to the approaches of the Benning, John Phillip Sousa, and 11th Street Bridges and to residential and commercial areas, religious institutions, schools and public parks along its route. The proposed project is located in the Deanwood neighborhood of Washington, DC (see **Figure 1.1**) and would consist of constructing of a new four-lane roadway and associated intersection improvements, upgrading and installing traffic control measures, modifying or constructing drainage facilities, and adding pedestrian facilities. The proposed extension would complete a long-planned missing segment of Minnesota Avenue between Sheriff Road and Meade Street in the Deanwood neighborhood of Washington, DC.

Deanwood is located within Ward 7 of the District of Columbia and is one of the oldest African-American neighborhoods in the city. The Deanwood area was first settled by the Nacotchtank Indians and the earliest settlements began in the 1800s. Settlement in the area has always been driven by transportation – in 1871 the Southern Maryland Railroad Company laid the railroad tracks that serve as one of the boundaries of the study area used for this analysis. At that time the land was subdivided into three neighborhoods loosely known by the name of Deanwood.

Settlement occurred between that period and 1910 when Deanwood had already become a nucleus of blue and white collar African American families. Important community elements such as the George Washington Carver School and the Nannie Helen Burroughs School were founded, although the community remained semi-rural in character because of its distance from downtown DC. Plans for Minnesota Avenue began to appear as early as the 1930s, including a portion of the roadway from Sheriff Avenue to Meade Street that was never constructed. From the earliest days Minnesota Avenue was envisioned as a boulevard to serve residents of Deanwood and the District. Most of the development in the area was constructed in the 1940s – 1950s and the area is now primarily made up of single-family and low-density residential uses, along with churches, some commercial development, and other community facilities.

Minnesota Avenue is currently a four-lane arterial with two posted speed limits within the study area: 35 mph on the portion located south of Sheriff Road and 25 mph on the portion located north of Meade Street. On-street parking is permitted at all times in two of the travel lanes. The project's boundaries have been extended to include intersections with other major arterials in the area in order to assess traffic impacts related to construction of the extension. The boundaries of the study area include Benning Road to the south, the Metro Orange Line to the west, Eastern Avenue to the north, and 42nd Street, Grant Street, 45th



**MINNESOTA AVE
EXTENSION**

PROJECT STUDY AREA
FIGURE 1.1

Purpose and Need

Street and Sheriff Road to the west (see Figure 1.1). The study area contains the Minnesota Avenue and Deanwood Metrorail stations and portions of Watts Branch Park, the largest linear city park (more than 1 mile in length). The study area contains portions of the Deanwood and Lincoln Heights neighborhoods.

Since the early 1900s, historical insurance maps have shown the proposed Minnesota Avenue corridor, including the extension currently under evaluation. Right-of-way for the extension was reserved and is almost exclusively undeveloped, although there has been some private acquisition of property along the historic right-of-way in recent years. The completion of Minnesota Avenue has been planned for years in advance of this Environmental Assessment.

Deanwood completed a community assessment in 2001 as part of the Strategic Neighborhood Action Plan (SNAP) process. By this time in its development history, the Deanwood area had experienced a loss of population as had much of the District. Although the area retained much of its historic character and neighborhoods with diverse housing and historical importance, and also had the Deanwood Metro that provided transit access to the neighborhood, several needs were identified by the community. The completion of Minnesota Avenue was one of the priorities identified by the citizens of Deanwood and the local community as part of the SNAP process. In recent years, there had developed a fundamental conflict between cut-through traffic and residential development that resulted from this missing segment of Minnesota Avenue. This assessment is the first step in providing the community their request for a continuous Minnesota Avenue that has long been envisioned and desired.

1.2 PURPOSE AND NEED FOR ACTION

Because this project would receive federal funds, it is subject to the provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA), as amended, and associated regulations. One of the first steps in the NEPA process is to document the purpose and need for the proposed project. Regulations and technical advisories promulgated by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) guide the preparation of the Purpose and Need Statement.

The purpose of the proposed action is to improve the functionality of the local and regional roadway system through the construction of the missing segment of Minnesota Avenue within the project limits. The project is intended to support system linkage, capacity, and multimodal transportation facilities in the area. The elements of need include the following:

- There is a need to improve system linkage by constructing the “missing link” of Minnesota Avenue, which is currently discontinuous. This connection has been identified since the early 1900s as a component of the District’s transportation network.
- There is a need to support the goals of the Strategic Neighborhood Action Plan (SNAP) adopted for Ward 7, in which the proposed project is located, that cite the completion of Minnesota Avenue as an element of improving access to the Deanwood and Lincoln Heights areas. The discontinuous configuration of Minnesota Avenue creates circuitous routing of traffic in the study area.
- There is a need to reduce existing and future traffic diversion through neighborhoods created by the “missing link.” This cut-through traffic occurs on local neighborhood streets that also must accommodate pedestrian and bicycle movements and are not designed for through-traffic.
- There is a need to improve safety by upgrading the transportation network and reducing traffic diversion through residential areas.
- There is a need to support multimodal connections by providing better access to transit and incorporating pedestrian improvements in the neighborhood. Currently, travelers desiring to access both the Deanwood and Minnesota Avenue Metrorail stations have to

be diverted to Kenilworth Avenue due to the missing segment of Minnesota Avenue or onto local streets that cut through the neighborhood

In addition to these basic elements of need, two goals have been incorporated into the development of project alternatives support of area economic development activities, and the improvement of the quality of life in the study area neighborhood

The missing transportation link on Minnesota Avenue results in vehicles using minor residential streets within the Deanwood neighborhood as alternatives for north-south travel In the immediate vicinity of the proposed extension, the existing volumes indicate that motorists are using a combination of Meade Street with 45th and 44th Streets to circumnavigate the missing segment of Minnesota Avenue The use of these streets causes increased vehicular traffic in residential areas and the potential for unsafe conditions for local traffic, bicycles and pedestrians These traffic volumes are anticipated to increase in future years as investment along the Anacostia waterfront increases

1.3 RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER STUDIES AND PLANS

DDOT is in the process of studying major components of the Anacostia-area transportation network that are related to the Minnesota Avenue Extension, as discussed in more detail below

1.3.1 Transit Alternatives Analysis and Anacostia Streetcar Project

DDOT and the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) are conducting a multi-corridor study of transit alternatives in the District This study explores the concept of introducing a third transit mode into the District to bridge the gap between the Metrorail and Metrobus systems

This third mode -- surface rapid transit using either rail or bus technology -- would compliment the existing transit system It would provide a network of efficient, high-quality, high-capacity surface transit routes across the District to provide additional connections between communities, commerce, and Metrorail This new network is expected to bring economic development opportunities to every corner of the District and further enhance the quality of life enjoyed by District residents

Among the four alternative corridors considered for this transit study is the Anacostia Corridor from Minnesota Avenue to National Harbor Known originally as the Anacostia Demonstration Project, this project will test the feasibility of light rail or streetcar technology The demonstration project supports the Anacostia Waterfront Initiative and supports a valuable right-of-way for future public investment The Anacostia Corridor Demonstration Project, as originally conceived, was a six-stop, modern streetcar service designed to travel along a 2.7-mile, unused CSX right-of-way adjacent to the neighborhoods of Fairlawn, Anacostia, and Barry Farm

However, difficulties negotiating a satisfactory agreement for the purchase and/or use of the CSX Shepard Industrial Spur Right-of-Way have prompted consideration of an alignment that uses city streets The proposed street-running alignment would serve the same communities as the original plan, and it provides an opportunity to identify additional stop locations along the proposed route Street-running vehicles would better support community and economic development programs and provide direct access to neighborhoods and commercial areas in Anacostia

The proposed street-running vehicles would start at the intersection of Pennsylvania and Minnesota Avenues SE and proceed southwest on Minnesota Avenue to Good Hope Road SE Traveling west on Good Hope Road, vehicles would then proceed south onto Martin Luther King, Jr Avenue to Howard Road They would then travel northwest to Firth Sterling Avenue and proceed southwest, ending at South Capitol Street in the vicinity of Bolling Air Force Base

The proximity of the Minnesota Avenue Metrorail station to the study area (less than one mile) indicates a relationship between the two studies Because a key goal of the extension project is to support multi-

Purpose and Need

modal connections to the area's transportation system, the extension of Minnesota Avenue has the potential to contribute to regional transit development goals

1.3.2 Anacostia Waterfront Initiative

On March 22, 2000, Mayor Anthony Williams brought together the 20 federal and District agencies that own or control land along the Anacostia River to sign the Anacostia Waterfront Initiative (AWI)

Under the leadership of the District of Columbia Office of Planning, the partnership has produced a draft AWI Framework Plan to guide the revitalization effort. The AWI includes consideration of the design of transportation infrastructure to gain access to waterfront lands and better serve waterfront neighborhoods. The AWI envisions the provision of streets and bridges that become gateways to the river's parks and amenities.

The Minnesota Avenue extension project is located just to the northeast of the River Gateways portion of the AWI. The AWI has the potential to increase travel along Minnesota Avenue as the area develops and the extension of Minnesota Avenue would provide access to several of the planned gateways and the Anacostia waterfront.

1.3.3 Comprehensive Plan for the District of Columbia

The *DC Comprehensive Plan* sets development goals and objectives for the city. It focuses not only on land use, but also includes broad policy guidance on transportation, economic development, housing, downtown development, the environment, historic preservation, and human services. It also includes specific recommendations for each of the eight wards in the District.

The extension of Minnesota Avenue within the project limits is consistent with the priorities established in the *DC Comprehensive Plan*. Minnesota Avenue is designated as a primary north-south arterial in the *DC Comprehensive Plan*. The Ward 7 section of the plan specifically discusses the extension of Minnesota Avenue, as follows:

- (a) Extend Minnesota Avenue from Sheriff Road to Meade Street N E
 - (1) The extension would allow better access to the Deanwood Metrorail station and would eliminate the private bus service company's encroachment on public space, and
 - (2) Recommended action: authorize capital improvements funds to construct the extension of Minnesota Avenue N E, from Sheriff Road to Meade Street,

One of the transportation objectives specified in the Comprehensive Plan is to improve pedestrian, bus and automobile access to the Minnesota Avenue and Deanwood Metrorail stations. The provision of the missing link of Minnesota Avenue will enhance access to both stations by eliminating detours through secondary streets in between Meade Street and Sheriff Road.

1.3.4 Cluster 31 Strategic Neighborhood Action Plan (SNAP)

In the year 2000 the Mayor's office developed a new framework for working with citizens and others to better mobilize and coordinate the resources of government, businesses, nonprofits, the faith community, neighborhood leaders, and citizens. As a part of this new framework, SNAPs for each of the city's 39 neighborhood clusters were developed. The purpose of the SNAP is to identify/develop neighborhood initiatives to solve neighborhood specific issues. The project study area is within the boundaries of the Cluster 31 SNAP and the extension (along with environmental analysis, land acquisition analysis, and engineering design) between Sheriff Road and Meade Street is an important part of the SNAP.

1.3.5 Government Centers Initiative

In accordance with the mayor's City-Wide Strategic Plan for revitalizing neighborhoods, District government officials have launched the Government Centers Initiative. The goal of the initiative is to

locate District agencies within neighborhood commercial districts to spur economic development in areas with the greatest opportunity to influence growth and improve the quality of life

The District government intends to build up to five new Government Centers in areas of the District to be designated by the Mayor. These new Government Centers are intended to spur economic development, create opportunities for the citizens of the District of Columbia and increase tax revenues for the District. One of the Government Centers sites selected for development is near the northwest intersection of Minnesota Avenue/Benning Road just south of the Minnesota Avenue Metrorail station. This site will be developed to accommodate new office buildings for the DC Department of Human Services (DHS) and the DC Department of Employment Services (DOES). The facilities would contain approximately 325,000 gross square feet of office space and 15,000 gross square feet of ground-floor retail in two five-story buildings. On-site parking would be provided in both an above-grade parking structure and underground and groundbreaking has occurred for the facility. The buildings would replace current facilities on H Street, NE, and Martin Luther King Avenue, SE. It is estimated these facilities would generate an additional 2,145 vehicle trips per day above existing traffic levels. Minnesota Avenue will be the primary access/egress route for these vehicles and the extension will provide additional access to the facilities.

ALTERNATIVES

Several alternatives have been analyzed as possible extensions for Minnesota Avenue. Historically, the extension has been shown on right-of-way maps for the District as a linear extension located immediately adjacent and east of the current Metrorail Orange Line rail facilities. However, several alternatives were analyzed because a portion of this previously identified right-of-way was purchased and because the currently existing northern segment of Minnesota Avenue was constructed slightly to the east of the location depicted in the maps that identified the previous corridor location. A total of five alternatives, in addition to the No-Build Alternative were analyzed. Initially, four of the alternatives, Alternatives 1, 2, 4, and 5 were located along the previously identified right-of-way and all would require the acquisition of private land in the study area. Alternative 3 was developed to avoid the purchase of private land associated with the other four alternatives and would be located along existing Sheriff Road and 44th Street. As will be discussed below, based on coordination with the local community and input from the public process, a modified Alternative 4 and Alternative 5 have been carried forward for more detailed analyses in this document.

2.1 NO-BUILD ALTERNATIVE

Under the No-build Alternative, no improvements to Minnesota Avenue would be made. The southern portion of Minnesota Avenue would continue to end at Minnesota Avenue's divergence from Sheriff Road, even though a small portion of Minnesota Avenue right-of-way extends approximately 420 feet north from this divergence point (this right-of-way is only about 20 feet wide). At the north end of the study area Minnesota Avenue would continue to be a 90-foot-wide, four-lane arterial between Meade Street and Eastern Avenue.

2.2 PROPOSED ACTION

The proposed action consists of construction of a continuous segment of Minnesota Avenue from Sheriff Road to Meade Street. Roadway improvements would include the construction of a four-lane arterial consisting of four 12-foot lanes for vehicular traffic, space for trees, lighting and sidewalk facilities on both sides of the roadway, and additional right-of-way. Two right-of-way widths are currently under consideration: Alternative 4A which includes a 90-foot right-of-way and Alternative 5 which includes a 60-foot right-of-way. Both alternatives would require property acquisition in order to be constructed.

2.2.1 Alternative 4A: Modified 90-Foot Right-Of-Way with Meade Street Segment

Alternative 4A would consist of a 90-foot right-of-way and would provide a continuous Minnesota Avenue from Sheriff Road to Meade Street. The use of the 90-foot right-of-way is consistent with the historical right-of-way anticipated for the extension of Minnesota and also matches the right-of-way on the sections of Minnesota Avenue that already exist. Starting from Sheriff Road, Alternative 4A would be constructed using the existing dead-end section of Minnesota Avenue that provides access to Kane Place. The alignment would be located along the existing rail line to the point at which it would intersect 44th Street and Lee Street. Alternative 4A would provide a consistent 90-foot right-of-way until the point at which the roadway would merge with a short section of Meade Street, where the right-of-way would be

reduced to minimize impacts to residential and commercial properties. Approximately 200 feet of Meade Street would be re-designated as Minnesota Avenue, and intersection improvements would be incorporated for 45th Street and Meade Street. Minnesota Avenue would then continue its current alignment to Eastern Avenue with no additional improvements. **Figure 2.1** shows Alternative 4A and **Figure 2.2** shows the proposed typical section using the 90-foot right-of-way.

2.2.2 Alternative 5: 60-Foot Right-of-Way with Meade Street Segment

Alternative 5 would include the same infrastructure improvements as Alternative 4A in terms of the number of lanes, buffering, and sidewalks provided, but would provide only a 60-foot right-of-way. In addition to the right-of-way, Alternative 5 would have setbacks along Minnesota Avenue. These setbacks would not be required as part of the public right-of-way, but building restrictions would be imposed along the setbacks to ensure proper sight distances for the extension of Minnesota Avenue. However, it is currently proposed to eliminate the setback requirement to the west of the proposed extension along the rail lines because no development would be feasible in any event along this setback. This proposal would allow the roadway center line of the extension to be shifted closer to the rail facilities and farther away from residential properties, requiring less property acquisition (see **Figure 2.3**). Alternative 5 would consist of a new four-lane arterial with dedicated right-of-way for trees and sidewalks (see **Figure 2.4**). This alternative also would provide the same connections and require the same reconstruction of intersections at Kane Place, 44th Street, Lee Street, 45th Street, and Meade Street. Alternative 5 also uses approximately 200 feet of Meade Street.

One difference between Alternatives 4A and 5 would occur along the narrow portion of existing Minnesota Avenue north of Sheriff Road that currently exists and provides access to Kane Place. Because only 60 feet of right-of-way is required for Alternative 5 and the alignment would be shifted close to the existing rail line, this existing dead-end segment of Minnesota Avenue would not be required for construction.

The proposed action would provide a continuous Minnesota Avenue and reduce cut-through traffic on residential streets in Deanwood. It would provide increased and more direct access to the area and provide a more direct transportation corridor for transit, cyclists, and pedestrians between the Deanwood and Minnesota Avenue Metrorail stations. Both alternatives would enhance safety by not only reducing traffic along residential streets, but also by providing additional bicycle and pedestrian facilities.

2.3 ALTERNATIVES REMOVED FROM CONSIDERATION

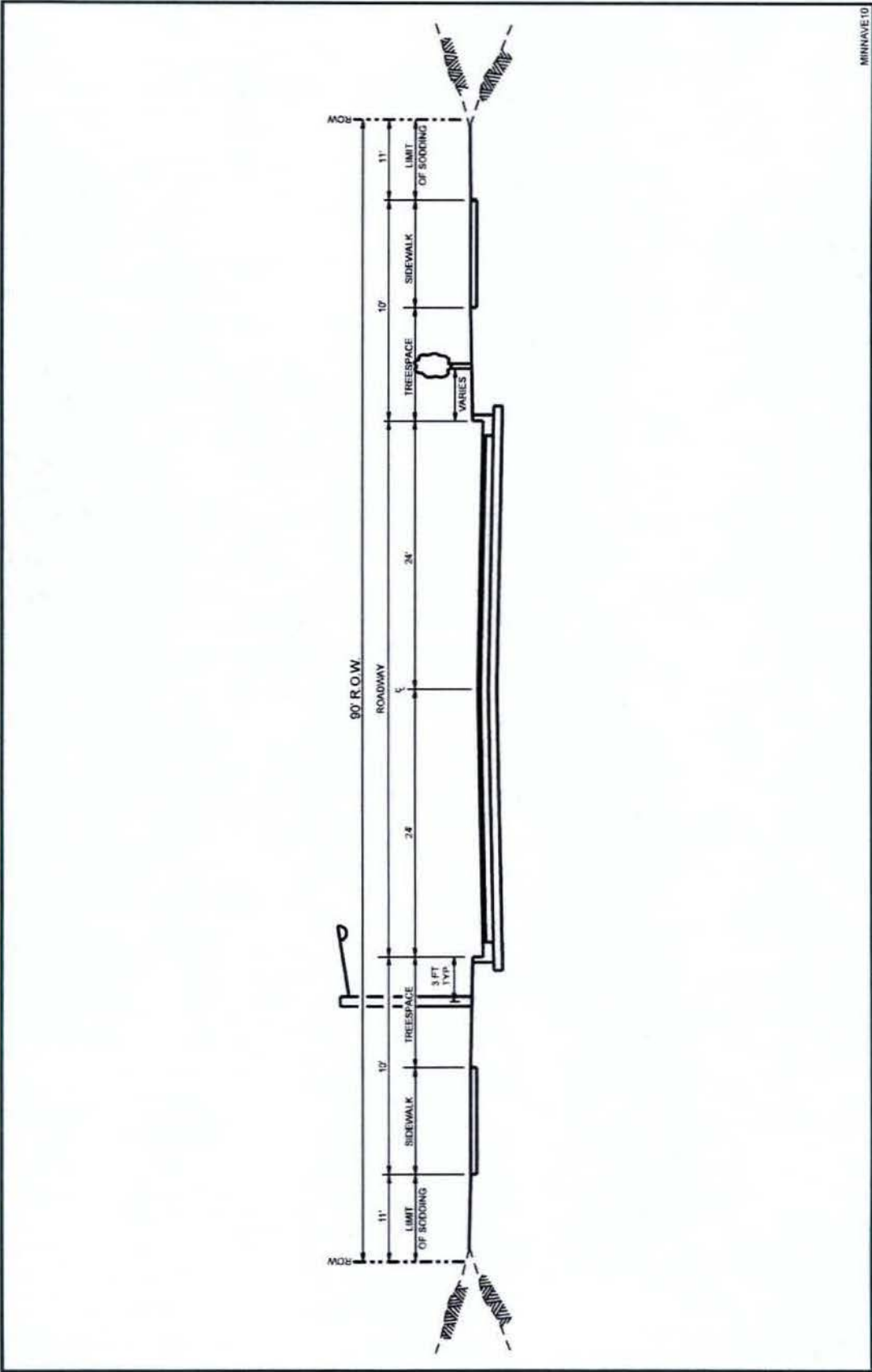
Other alternatives considered as possible extensions of Minnesota Avenue are shown in **Figures 2.5 through 2.7**. Alternatives 1 and 2 would extend Minnesota Avenue without using the Meade Street segment as directly as the proposed action. Alternative 1 would provide a 90-foot right-of-way and Alternative 2 would provide a 60-foot right-of-way. Both alternatives were designed for 40 mph speeds with posted speed limits of 35 mph, which required more direct turning radii at the connection to the northern segment of Minnesota Avenue in the vicinity of Meade Street. Both alternatives required displacement of commercial facilities (a bus repair business and a fuel oil distribution business) and required acquisition of a church property and were eliminated from consideration.

Alternative 3 was developed as a Transportation Systems Management (TSM) alternative, because the full 90-foot right-of-way originally designated for the proposed extension was no longer in public ownership. The TSM alternative was developed to minimize the need for private property acquisition and to use the existing system as a low-cost alternative. Under Alternative 3, Minnesota Avenue would be located along a segment of Sheriff Road and 44th Street, and then a new segment would be constructed from Lee Street to Meade Street in a modified configuration using 10-foot lanes so as to minimize property acquisitions along the residential streets. Alternative 3 was eliminated because of the displacements required at the intersection of 44th Street and Sheriff Road and the continued conflict that would result between vehicular traffic and residences on 44th Street. In addition, the potential increase in traffic along the Minnesota Avenue extension would result in higher levels of noise, a decrease in safety, and visual impacts that were greater than for any of the other alternatives considered.



MINNESOTA AVE
EXTENSION

**ALTERNATIVE 4A: MODIFIED 90-FT RIGHT-OF-WAY
WITH LEE ST SEGMENT**
FIGURE 2.1



MINNAVE10

**TYPICAL SECTION FOR
90 FOOT RIGHT OF WAY**
Figure 2.2

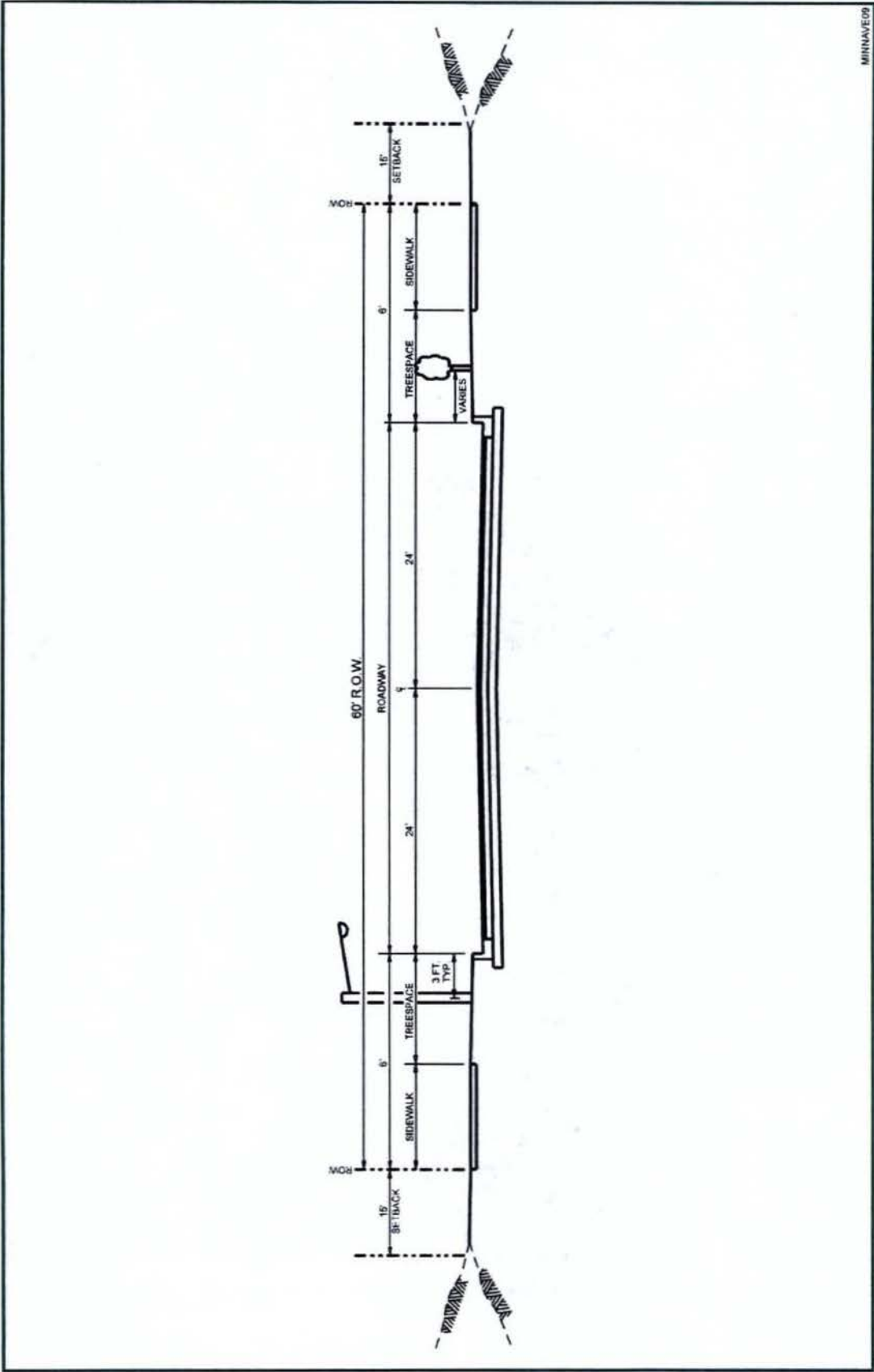
**MINNESOTA AVE
EXTENSION**



**MINNESOTA AVE
EXTENSION**

ALTERNATIVE 5: 60-FT RIGHT-OF-WAY WITH LEE ST SEGMENT

FIGURE 2.3



MINNAVE09

**TYPICAL SECTION FOR
60 FOOT RIGHT OF WAY**
Figure 2.4

**MINNESOTA AVE
EXTENSION**



**MINNESOTA AVE
EXTENSION**

ALTERNATIVE 1: 90-FT. RIGHT-OF-WAY
FIGURE 2.5



MINNESOTA AVE
EXTENSION

ALTERNATIVE 2: 60-FT. RIGHT-OF-WAY
FIGURE 2.6



ALTERNATIVE 3: TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM MANAGEMENT

FIGURE 2.7

ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS

This section describes the existing environment in the study area and the environmental consequences of the alternatives. Three alternatives, as described in Section 2.0, were analyzed for impacts: Alternative 4A, which has a 90-foot right-of-way, Alternative 5, which has a 60-foot right-of-way, and the No-Build Alternative.

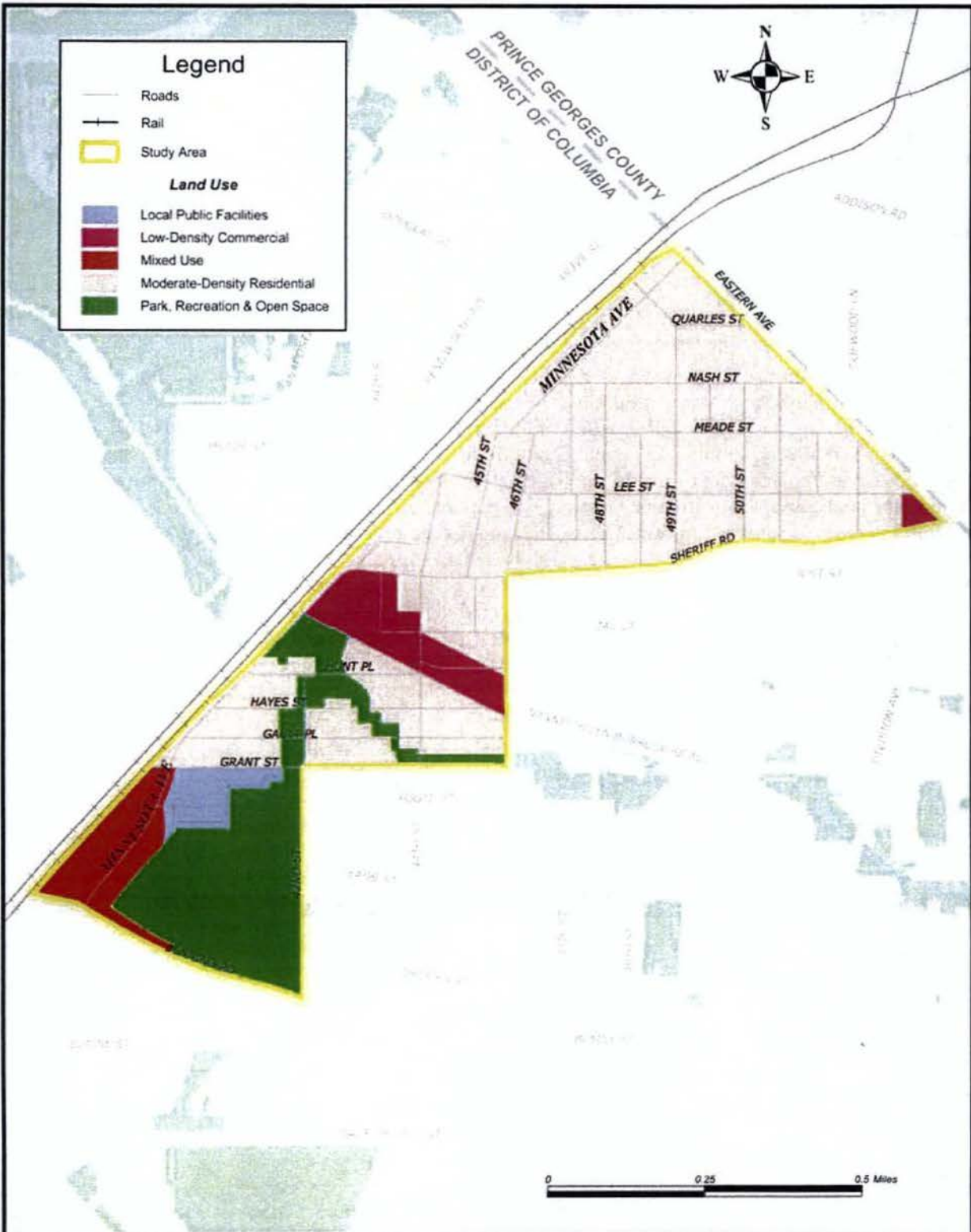
Affected Environment

The proposed project is located within the Deanwood neighborhood of Washington, DC. As shown in the aerials presented in Section 2, both of the alternatives under consideration are located within an undeveloped section of the Deanwood community. The right-of-way proposed for the extension is immediately adjacent and east of the current Metrorail Orange Line rail facilities. Although the land for the proposed extension is primarily vacant and unimproved, the land is privately owned due to recent purchases and will have to be acquired in order to implement the project. In addition, some of the land along the proposed right-of-way has been sub-divided and there is one residential structure on privately-owned land that has been constructed in a location once identified for the proposed Minnesota Avenue extension. As shown in the aerials at the southern segment of existing Minnesota Avenue, land within the primary right-of-way was used at one time unofficially and illegally as a dumping area, which has since been removed.

Immediately adjacent to the right-of-way are residential houses within the Deanwood community. Most of the residential properties are of recent construction and some are multi-family units as well as single-family residences. Along the proposed alternatives there are currently no community facilities, parklands, or improved public open spaces. There are no 4(f) properties and there are no cultural resources that are proposed for or currently eligible for inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places, although no formal surveys have been completed for archeological resources. The area along the proposed extension is highly urbanized and there are no surface waters, forest stands, natural habitats, floodplains, or agricultural features. The following sections describe the environmental consequences of the two alternatives under consideration.

3.1 LAND USE AND ZONING

Both the federal government and the District of Columbia government are responsible for land use planning and control in the District of Columbia. The Comprehensive Plan for the National Capital, developed by the National Capital Planning Commission (NCPC), is a statement of goals, objectives, and planning policies for the growth and development of the National Capital Region as defined pursuant to the National Planning Act of 1952. The plan includes both federal and District of Columbia elements as two separate published documents. The federal elements cover land use on federally owned land, and the District elements cover land use on the District-owned lands. Under the Comprehensive Plan, the NCPC coordinates federal element development activities and the District of Columbia coordinates District element projects. **Figure 3.1** shows current land uses in the study area, as defined in the District of Columbia Generalized Land Use Map of 1995 and verified during site visits.



**MINNESOTA AVE
EXTENSION**

LAND USE
FIGURE 3.1

3.1.1 Land Use

As shown in Figure 3 1, the boundaries of the overall study area include Benning Road to the south, Kenilworth Avenue to the west, Eastern Avenue to the north, and 42nd Street, Grant Street, 46th Street and Sheriff Road to the east. Land use in the study area is predominantly moderate-density residential, interspersed with low-density commercial, parks, recreation and open space, local public facilities, production and technical employment, and mixed use. Transportation uses that include a CSX rail corridor and the Metrorail Orange Line bounds the western edge of the study area, and the Minnesota Avenue and Deanwood Metrorail stations that are located within the study area on Minnesota Avenue. Land use that is classified as parks, recreation and open space include Fort Mahan Park, Fort Circle Park, Woodson Junior Pool, Deanwood (Children's Pool), and Ronald H. Brown Recreation Center. The Ronald Brown Middle School is in the study area as well as a number of churches. Watts Branch Park is located just to the south of Nannie Helen Burroughs Avenue and lines either side of Watts Branch. It is a multi-use park that includes hiking trails as well as a children's playground.

The designated land use for the area (see Figure 3 1) proposed for the extension of Minnesota Avenue between Sheriff Road and Meade Street is moderate-density residential, although much of the land that will have to be acquired for the construction of the project consists of undeveloped, vacant, or abandoned lots. The overall Deanwood area is experiencing little development activity in general that will change the land use in the study area prior to implementation of the project, if a Build Alternative is selected. Within the study area, acquisition of privately-owned land, as discussed in the following section, will be required in order to construct the extension. The land needed to build the extension of Minnesota Avenue was within public ownership until recently. The boundary survey conducted for this project indicates that in 2002 a major portion of right-of-way for the proposed roadway was sold to a private owner, although nothing has been constructed. The owner has indicated that there are plans for the potential development of affordable housing in the study area, although no formal projects have been approved. In addition to the purchase of the previously-reserved right-of-way for Minnesota Avenue Extension, one residential structure has also been constructed within the previously identified right-of-way as a portion of the area was also sub-divided and sold into private ownership. Impacts to these properties are discussed in the following section. This is the only known development in the study area.

Table 3.1 below shows the different land uses in the overall study area and the acreage they cover as defined in the District of Columbia Generalized Land Use Map of 1995 for the broader study area. The locations of these land uses are shown in Figure 3 1.

Table 3.1 STUDY AREA LAND USE

LAND USE	ACREAGE	% OF STUDY AREA
Local Public Facilities	0.7	2.4%
Mixed Use	1.6	5.4%
Park, Recreation & Open Space	5.4	18.3%
Low-Density Commercial	1.5	5.1%
Moderate-Density Residential	20.1	68.1%
Low-Density Commercial	0.2	0.7%
Other	0.5	1.7%
Total Study Area	30.0	100%

No-Build Alternative

Land and/or property acquisition would not occur under the No-Build Alternative; therefore, direct land use impacts are not anticipated under this alternative.

Alternative 4A

Direct land use impacts are anticipated under Alternative 4A and would consist of the conversion of 12,632 square feet of land that is currently privately owned to transportation use due to acquisitions of land needed for the construction of the alternative, as discussed in the following section (Acquisitions) Table 3.2 presents anticipated impacts by type of permitted land use While land use designations provided in Table 3.2 are consistent with those of the DC Office of Planning, land use within the actual limits of disturbance for the proposed extension is primarily undeveloped, although one residential structure will be affected

Table 3.2 ESTIMATED LAND ACQUISITIONS BY TYPE

LAND USE TYPE	NO-BUILD	ALT. 4A		ALT. 5	
		SQUARE FEET	ACRES	SQUARE FEET	ACRES
Low-Density Commercial	0	174	004	218	005
Moderate-Density Residential	0	12,458	286	9,409	216
TOTAL	0	12,632	290	9,627	221

Alternative 5

Alternative 5 would have a smaller impact of 9,627 square feet of land converted for transportation use than Alternative 4A due to the smaller 60-foot right-of-way proposed As with Alternative 4A, land use designations provided in Table 3.2 are consistent with designations those of the DC Office of Planning In reality, much of the land within the limits of disturbance is primarily undeveloped although one residential structure will be affected and private land will be required to be purchased as discussed in the following section

3.1.2 Zoning

Table 3.3 below presents the various zoning categories within the study area and the acreage they cover as defined by the Zoning Map of the District of Columbia April 1, 2003 These zoning classifications are shown in Figure 3.2 The zoning classification for the area proposed for the extension is Single Family Detached Dwellings

Table 3.3 STUDY AREA ZONING

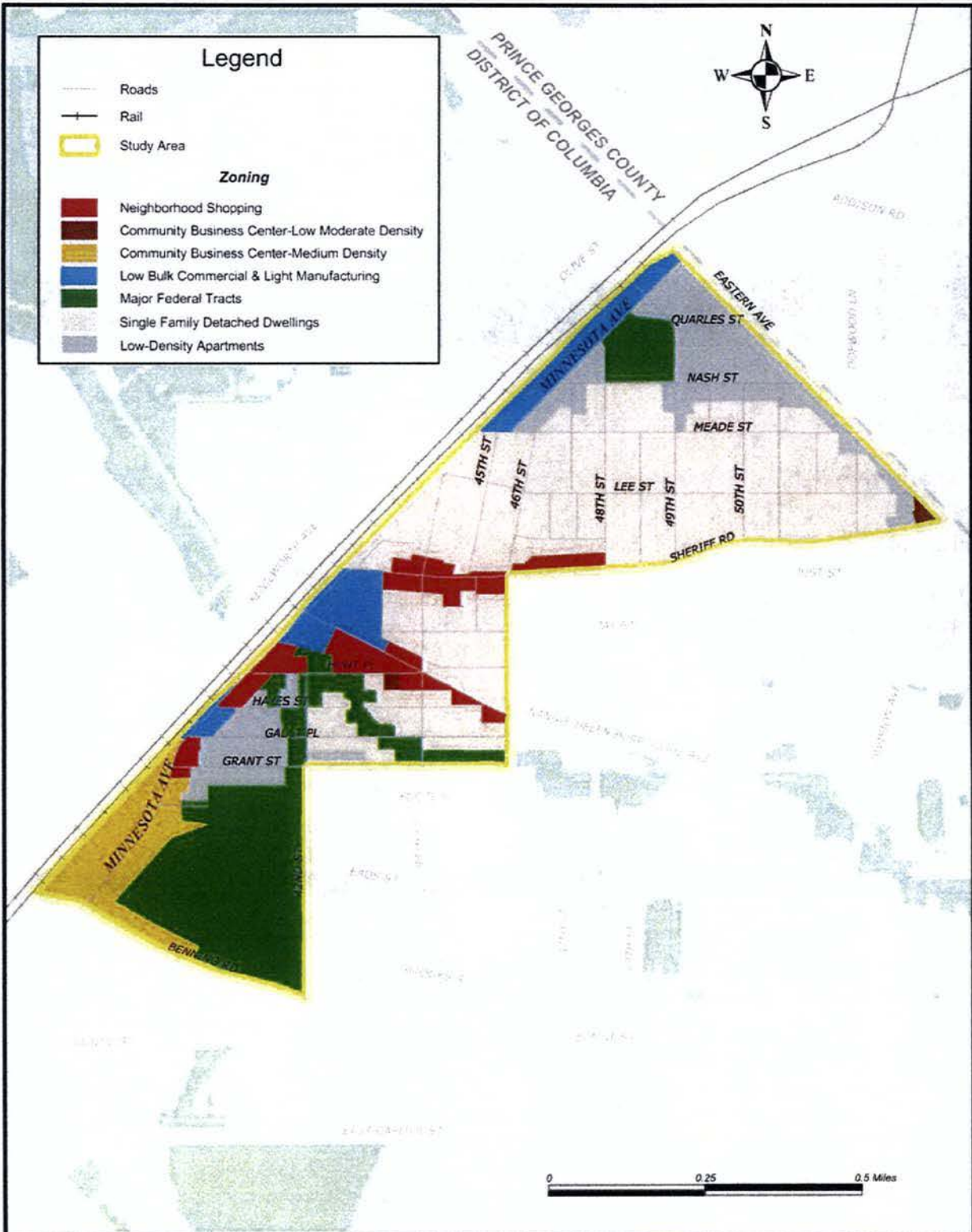
ZONING DESIGNATION	DESCRIPTION	ACRES
C-1	Neighborhood Shopping	1.9
C-2-A	Community Business Center Low- Moderate-density	0.1
C-3-A	Medium Bulk Major Business and Employment	2.1
C-M-1	Low Bulk Commercial and Light Manufacturing	2.3
GOV	Government (Parkland)	6.1
R-2	Single Family Detached Dwellings	13.2
R-5-A	Low-Density Apartments	4.3
	Total	30.0

No-Build

No changes in study area zoning are anticipated under the No-Build Alternative

Alternative 4A

No changes in study area zoning are anticipated under Alternative 4A



**MINNESOTA AVE
EXTENSION**

**ZONING
FIGURE 3.2**

Alternative 5

No changes in zoning are anticipated under Alternative 5. However, there would be a need for implementation of a zoning overlay to implement the proposed 15-foot setbacks that are proposed. The use of overlays would not change the underlying zoning classification, but would restrict building within the setback.

3.1.3 Consistency With Local Plans

The study area is located within Ward 7 of the District of Columbia. The D.C. Comprehensive Plan for Ward 7 includes policies to support the extension of Minnesota Avenue between Sheriff Road and Meade Street. The plan outlines the following priorities:

- Extension of Minnesota Avenue from Sheriff Road to Meade Street N.E., allowing for access to the Deanwood Metrorail station
- Authorization of capital improvements funds to construct the extension of Minnesota Avenue N.E., from Sheriff Road to Meade Street

As an additional goal, the Comprehensive Plan designates the Minnesota Avenue and Benning Road area as a regional commercial center which serves all the neighborhoods of Ward 7. "As the overall economy improves, this area should be developed and upgraded in connection with appropriate urban planning concepts to yield a greater variety of retail commercial shops, sufficient parking spaces, adequate lighting and facade and street improvements." Through the improvement of accessibility to the Minnesota Avenue/Benning Road area, the extension of Minnesota Avenue would support the development of this regional commercial center.

The extension of Minnesota Avenue is also included in the Strategic Neighborhood Action Plan (SNAP) for the Deanwood area. The D.C. Department of Planning has defined neighborhood clusters where the resources of neighborhood leaders, businesses, nonprofit organizations, the faith community, and the District government can be combined to address the needs of communities. The Deanwood neighborhood is a part of Cluster 31 and includes the Burrville, Deanwood, Grant Park, Lincoln Heights, and Northeast Boundary neighborhoods. The Cluster 31 SNAP specifically mentions the extension of Minnesota Avenue as an important planning goal for the cluster.

No-Build Alternative

Because the extension of Minnesota Avenue within the project limits is included in the D.C. Comprehensive Plan and the local SNAP, the No-Build Alternative is inconsistent with local plans.

Alternative 4A

The extension of Minnesota Avenue within the project limits is an integral part of the D.C. Comprehensive Plan, Ward 7 Element. The extension of Minnesota Avenue would allow better access to the Deanwood Metrorail Station and would be consistent with the area's Strategic Neighborhood Action Plan.

Alternative 5

Beneficial impacts of this alternative would be similar to those detailed under Alternative 4A.

3.2 LAND ACQUISITIONS, DISPLACEMENTS AND RELOCATION IMPACTS

Public Law 91-646, the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970, as amended, commonly called the Uniform Relocation Act, is the primary law for acquisition and

Environmental Effects

relocation activities on federal or federally assisted projects such as the Minnesota Avenue extension. The rules provide uniform policy and procedures for the acquisition of real property by all agencies that receive financial assistance for any program or project of the United States Government. If federal funds are used in any phase of the program or project, the rules of the Uniform Relocation Act apply.

Relocation assistance and benefits will be made available to all individuals displaced by the proposed extension in accordance with the Uniform Relocation Act and Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. The Uniform Relocation Act requires that no person shall be displaced until adequate, decent, safe, and sanitary housing is made available. The acquisition and relocation program will be conducted in accordance with 49 CFR Part 24, and the DDOT Right-of-Way Policies and Procedures Manual without discrimination.

No-Build Alternative

There would be no relocations, and therefore no impacts, under the No-Build Alternative. No property would be acquired for the construction of the project.

Alternative 4A

Privately owned land will be required for Alternative 4A. One property acquisition that includes a residential relocation due to the taking of a single-family structure, located at 1070 44th Street, would occur as the result of Alternative 4A (see **Figure 3.3**). No commercial or institutional relocations would occur under this Alternative. A review of real estate listings within the study area indicates that comparable replacement housing is available within the study area for the one residential displacement.

Acquisitions will be required for the construction of Alternative 4A, if selected as the preferred alternative. Acquisitions will be required from a total of 16 privately held parcels in the study area. Eight parcels would be acquired in their entirety, one of which includes a single-family residence. The remaining seven parcels acquired in full for construction are completely undeveloped. Partial acquisitions would be needed from an additional eight parcels. A total of 0.290 acres of land will be acquired for construction of Alternative 4A based on the preliminary design.

The potential relocation and the property acquisitions would be covered under the terms of the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Act of 1970 (42 U.S.C. 4601 et seq., P.L. 91-646) as amended by the Uniform Relocation Act Amendments of 1987 (P.L. 100-17). The Act calls for negotiations with affected persons, relocation assistance, just compensation, and timely notice if a property must be taken. These negotiations will occur following decisions on the preferred alternative. The acquisition and relocation program will be conducted in accordance with the DDOT Right-of-Way Policies and Procedures Manual without discrimination.

Alternative 5

Privately owned land will be required for Alternative 5. One property acquisition that includes a residential relocation due to the taking of a single-family structure, located at 1070 44th Street, would occur as the result of Alternative 5 (see **Figure 3.3**). No commercial or institutional relocations would occur under this Alternative. A review of real estate listings within the study area indicates that comparable replacement housing is available within the study area for the one residential displacement.

Acquisitions will be required for the construction of Alternative 5, if selected as the preferred alternative. Acquisitions will be required from a total of 13 privately held parcels in the study area. Seven parcels would be acquired in their entirety, one of which includes a single-family residence. The remaining six parcels acquired in full for construction are completely undeveloped. Partial acquisitions would be needed from an additional six parcels. A total of 0.221 acres of land will be acquired for construction of Alternative 5 based on the preliminary design.



RIGHT-OF-WAY REQUIREMENTS
FIGURE 3.3

Environmental Effects

The potential relocation and the acquisitions would be covered under the terms of the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Act of 1970 (42 U.S.C. 4601 et seq., P.L. 91-646) as amended by the Uniform Relocation Act Amendments of 1987 (P.L. 100-17). The Act calls for negotiations with affected persons, relocation assistance, just compensation, and timely notice if a property must be taken. These negotiations will occur following decisions on the preferred alternative. The acquisition and relocation program will be conducted in accordance with the DDOT Right-of-Way Policies and Procedures Manual without discrimination.

3.3 COMMUNITY RESOURCES AND COHESION

3.3.1 Community Facility Impacts

Study area community facilities are listed below in **Table 3.4** and depicted in **Figure 3.4**. Facilities identified include police stations, fire and rescue facilities, medical facilities, parks and recreation areas, libraries and schools. The facilities listed either fall within the boundaries of the study area or serve the study area.

Table 3.4 COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES

FIRE STATIONS	SCHOOLS	PARKS AND RECREATION
Engine Company 30 (Truck Company 17) Medic Unit 30, Ambulance 30, Truck 17 2 nd Battalion 50 49 th Street, NE	Benning Elementary School 100 41 st Street, NE	Deanwood Recreation Center 49 th and Quarles Streets
Engine Company 27 Medic Unit 27, Ambulance 27 2 nd Battalion 4201 Minnesota Avenue, NE	Ronald H. Brown Middle School 4800 Meade Street, NE	Fort Mahan Park Benning Road and 42 nd Street
	Houston Elementary School 1100 50 th Place, NE	Watts Branch Park Minnesota Avenue to 46 th Street, South of Nannie Helen Burroughs
	George Washington Carver School Age Learning Center 4525 Lee Street	Woodson Junior Pool 4101 Minnesota Avenue, NE
POLICE STATIONS		LIBRARIES
Sixth District Station 100 42 nd Street, NE	I.D.E.A. Public Charter School 1027 45 th Street, NE	Deanwood Kiosk Corner of Sherff Road and Nannie Helen Burroughs Avenue
	Friendship Edison Charter School Minnesota Avenue, NE	Benning Road Branch 3935 Benning Road
	Hospitals and Clinics	
	Hunt Place Health Center and Clinic 4130 Hunt Place, NE	

No-Build Alternative

Under the No-Build Alternative, Minnesota Avenue would remain as a discontinuous roadway within the project limits. Access to community facilities would not improve under this alternative. Police and fire vehicles will not benefit from more direct access to segments of the Deanwood neighborhood. Emergency vehicles traveling through the study area will continue to be delayed by the circuitous route that they must take along 44th, 45th, 46th or 48th Streets.

Alternative 4A

No community facilities will be directly affected by Alternative 4A. No direct takings or changes in access are anticipated at community facilities under the proposed build alternative except during construction. Under Alternative 4A overall access to and from community facilities in the project area will be improved. In particular, emergency response times would be improved from implementation of a continuous Minnesota Avenue, since Engine Company 27 is located on Minnesota Avenue just south of the proposed extension. In addition, the provision of sidewalks along the route will improve the pedestrian environment and improve access to churches, schools and the Metrorail stations. Another beneficial impact will be the removal of cut-through vehicular traffic from 45th Street to the proposed extension, increasing the pedestrian safety and access to the I.D.E.A. Public Charter School located on 45th Street within the study area.

Alternative 5

No community facilities will be directly affected by the proposed alternative. No direct takings or changes in access are anticipated at community facilities under the proposed build alternatives except during construction. Under Alternative 5 overall access to and from community facilities in the project area will be improved. In particular, emergency response times would be improved from implementation of a continuous Minnesota Avenue, since Engine Company 27 is located on Minnesota Avenue just south of the proposed extension. In addition, the provision of sidewalks along the route will improve the pedestrian environment and improve access to churches, schools and the Metrorail stations. Another beneficial impact will be the removal of cut-through vehicular traffic from 45th Street to the proposed extension, increasing the pedestrian safety and access to the I.D.E.A. Public Charter School located on 45th Street within the study area.

3.3.2 Community Cohesion

Effects on community cohesion can include the physical taking of land, homes, and businesses that serve as community resources; the construction of physical or psychological barriers that would result from new transportation facilities that divide or isolate a section of the community; changes in access or travel patterns within a community; or physical intrusions such as noise, dust, or visual impacts that can negatively affect a community. Community cohesion impacts have been analyzed for the residential area immediately adjacent to the proposed extension and to the larger community of Deanwood. As discussed in Chapter 2 of this Environmental Assessment, many of the alternatives that were eliminated from consideration had unacceptable community impacts that were identified by local citizens during public workshops held during the study.

No-Build Alternative

Although there are no direct impacts associated with the No-Build Alternative, safety conditions will continue to deteriorate as traffic volumes continue to increase on residential streets experiencing cut-through traffic in the future. Minnesota Avenue vehicular traffic that diverts to 44th, 45th, 46th and 48th Streets will have an increased likelihood of conflicts with pedestrians. There would be no barrier, isolation, or other community impacts associated with the No-Build Alternative.

Alternative 4A

Because the majority of the alignment proposed under Alternative 4A would be located next to the CSX rail corridor, this alternative will not create barriers separating existing residences or isolate any residences from the rest of the community. The re-routing of traffic from residential streets onto a safer arterial will enhance the community by creating a safer, more accessible community. No negative community cohesion impacts are projected.