REEVALUATION OF
2011 ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT (EA)
for

I-95 EXPRESS LANES SOUTHERN TERMINUS EXTENSION
STAFFORD COUNTY, VIRGINIA

State Project Number: 0095-969-720, P101, R201, C501; UPC 108315

I. Proposed Action

The Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT), in cooperation with the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), is proposing to extend the Interstate 95 (I-95) Express Lanes in Stafford County by approximately 2.5 miles from a new terminus at mile marker 142.5 to the existing terminus at mile marker 145.0 (**Figure 1**). The project involves construction of a single reversible lane in the median that splits into northbound and southbound merging slip ramps. A new southbound exit ramp will carry I-95 Express Lanes traffic past the Route 610 interchange (Garrisonville Road) and back into the I-95 southbound general-purpose lanes. A new left entry ramp from northbound I-95 general-purpose lanes will be located south of the Route 610 interchange. Additional elements of the project include installation of ITS devices (DMS signs, cameras, gates, etc.) and wayfinding signs for reversible operations of the I-95 Express Lanes as well as stormwater management facilities. Improvements are intended to lessen congestion at the entrance and exit points at the southern terminus of the I-95 Express Lanes.

The Fredericksburg Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (FAMPO) approved an amendment for the construction phase of the proposed project into the FY2015-2018 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). Additionally, the National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board also approved their amended FY2015-2018 TIP. Subsequently, the project's construction phase has been amended into the FY2015 State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). The current cost of the proposed project is estimated at approximately $54 million.

II. BACKGROUND

Creation of the I-95 Express Lanes involved 10 years of planning, environmental review, competitive procurement under the Private-Partnership Process (P3) and public engagement. Under provisions of Virginia's Public-Private Transportation Act of 1995 (PPTA), VDOT and private partners Fluor Virginia, Inc. and Transurban USA, Inc. (Fluor-Transurban) proposed to construct reversible high-occupancy toll (HOT) lanes within the median of I-95 south of Dumfries and convert the existing reversible high-occupancy vehicle (HOV) lanes to reversible HOT lanes from Dumfries to the Capital Beltway (I-495).

In accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) regulation for implementing NEPA (23 CFR 771), an Environmental Assessment (EA) was prepared for the project (VDOT Project No. 0095-96A-107. P101; UPC 70849) The project study area extended approximately 46 miles, beginning approximately 1.10 miles south of U.S. Route 17 (Mills Drive) near Spotsylvania, proceeding northward along existing I-95, and ending at the Capital Beltway in Fairfax County. At the northern terminus, the transition to the existing I-395 HOV lanes and general-purpose lanes occurs just north of the I-395/Edsall Road interchange.

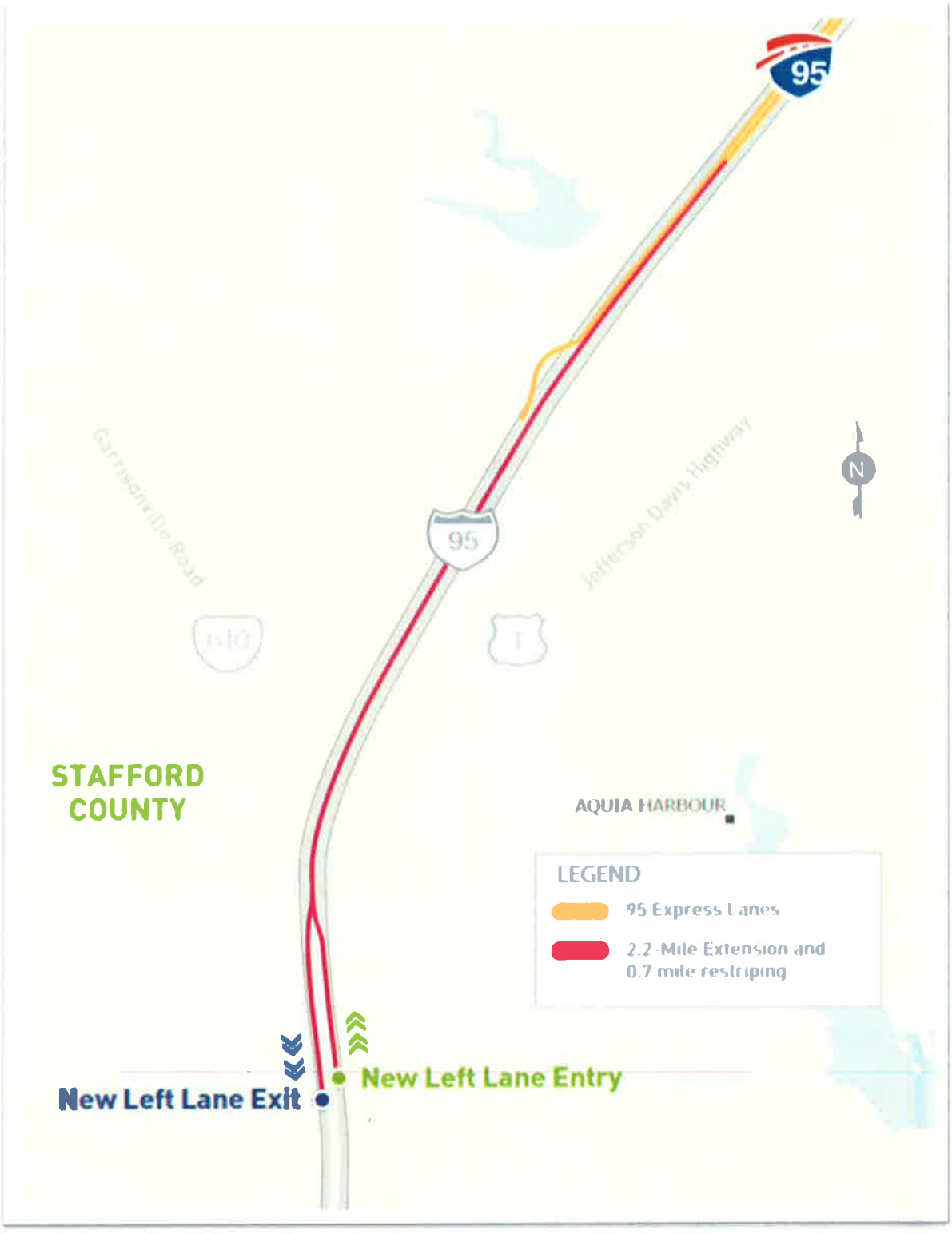

Figure 1 – Project Location

The purpose and need of the I-95 HOT Lanes Project documented in the EA is to address the following needs:

1. Reduce daily congestion and accommodate travel demands more efficiently. Existing traffic volumes exceed available highway capacity and the forecasts prepared using the regional travel demand models show continuing traffic growth in the corridor, with much of the Fredericksburg region's workforce continuing to commute north.

2. Provide higher reliability of travel times. People place a high value on reaching their destinations in a timely manner, and in recent years, I-95 has become so congested that the existing I-95 facilities cannot provide reliable travel times during the peak periods.

3. Expand travel choices by increasing the attractiveness and utility of ridesharing and transit usage while also providing an option for single-occupant vehicles to bypass congested conditions.

The EA was approved for public availability by FHWA on September 8, 2011. Based on information set forth in the EA and a review of public comments, a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) was issued by FHWA on December 5, 2011.

As planned, the HOT lanes project would be constructed and open to traffic in two phases. The northern section phase, approximately 30 miles from north of the Route 610 (Garrisonville Road) interchange and ending just north of I-495 at the I-395/Edsall Road (Route 648) interchange, was opened to traffic in December 2014 as the "I-95 Express Lanes. The remaining improvements for the I-95 HOT Lanes, southern section phase, will be constructed in the future when additional funding has been identified under the P3 Comprehensive Agreement with the private partners.

The current reversible I-95 Express Lanes operate in the northbound direction during the a.m. hours on weekdays, after 4 p.m. on Saturdays and all day on Sundays. Conversely, the highway facility operates in the southbound direction during p.m. hours on weekdays and on Saturdays until 2 p.m. At its southern terminus, northbound traffic on the I-95 general-purpose lanes enters the I-95 Express Lanes via a left-lane slip ramp north of Route 610. Southbound I-95 Express Lanes traffic merges with the I-95 general-purpose lanes traffic through a flyover ramp exit.

Since the opening of the I-95 Express Lanes, delays due to congestion and heavy merging/weaving volumes at I-95 Express Lanes entrance and exist points have become progressively worse. During the typical a.m. peak hour, 641 vehicles on average from the northbound I-95 general-purpose lanes plus 274 vehicles from the Garrisonville Road interchange ramps access the I-95 Express Lanes. The new left-side on-ramp entrance south of the Garrisonville Road interchange would allow the 641 vehicles to enter the I-95 Express Lanes earlier resulting in improved travel times on the I-95 northbound general-purpose lanes (**Figure 2**). The existing left-lane entrance would remain for Garrisionville Road traffic as well as an alternative for northbound vehicles on the I-95 general-purpose lanes.

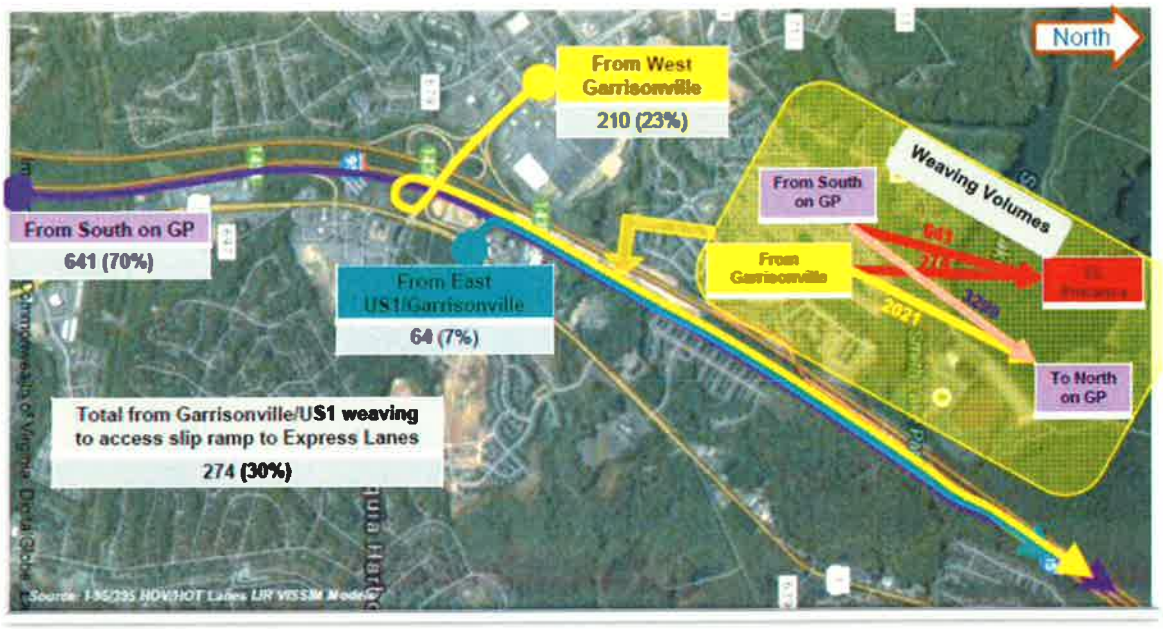

Figure 2 – Existing Northbound I-95 Express Lanes Demand (AM Peak Hour)

For the typical p.m. peak hour, 1390 vehicles exit the express lanes via the current flyover ramp. Within this mix of vehicles, 1,014 continue south past the Garrisonville Road interchange and remaining vehicles head to the Garrisonville Road exits. The new off-ramp exit will reduce the mix of vehicles using the current fly-over ramp (**Figure 3**). The existing flyover ramp will remain for Garrisonville Road-bound motorists while providing an alternative for I-95 Express Lanes traffic continuing south.

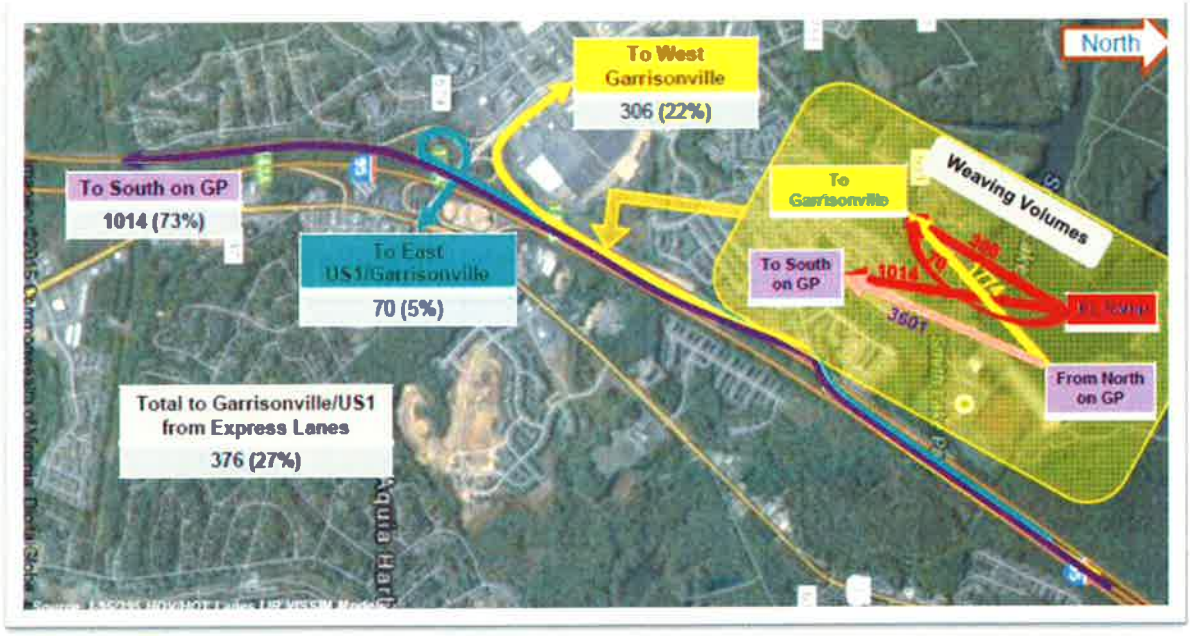

Figure 3 – Existing Southbound I-95 Express Lanes Demand (PM Peak Hour)

In order to alleviate these problems and improve traffic safety, construction of a reversible, single lane in the median to extend the I-95 Express Lanes south in the median with additional northbound and southbound left-lane slip ramps between the Express Lanes and general-purpose lanes is proposed. The I-95 northbound and southbound general-purpose lanes configurations with the new express lanes ramps are shown in **Figure 4**.

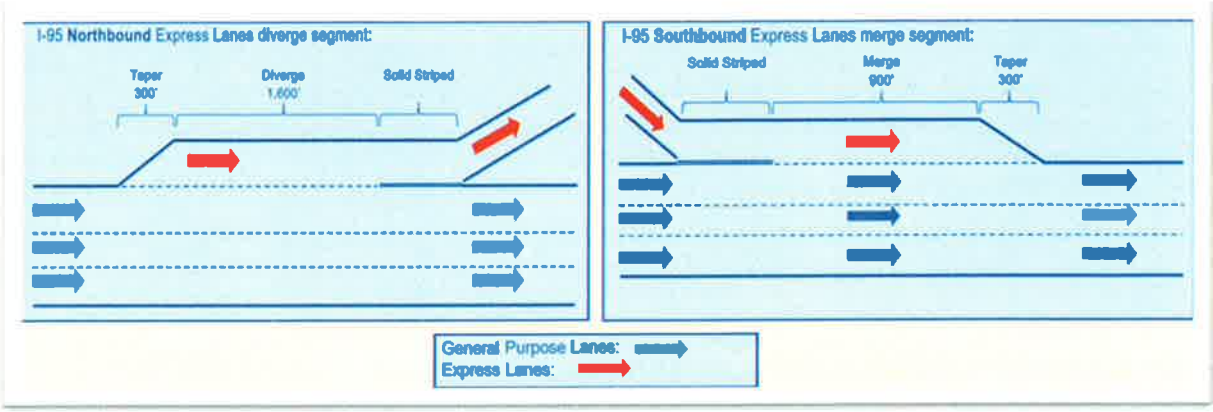

Figure 4 – Schematics of New Express Lanes Ramps

III. EXISTING ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITIONS AND CONSEQUENCES

Construction of the proposed project is anticipated to occur within the VDOT right-of-way with the majority of construction in the I-95 median. **Table 1** summarizes whether there are substantive changes to or additions to the Environmental Conditions and Consequences documented in the 2011 EA and their relevance to the current proposed project. **Table 2** quantifies the impacts relative to the proposed project and whether there has any change in from the 2011 EA. Key issues requiring further discussion are addressed following the tables.

TABLE 1: Environmental Issues Reevaluation

Resources/Issue	Changes since 2011 EA	Comments
Land Use & Socioeconomics	None	The project is consistent with local land use plans and would not cause a divisive or disruptive effect on the general community served and is located entirely within of the I-95 right-of-way where land cover within the I-95 median in the southern section where HOT lanes would be extended primarily consists of woods and grass.
Right of Way/ Relocations	None	No right-of-way (R/W) acquisition or relocations will be necessary and no right-of-way acquisition is anticipated as all proposed work will be within the existing interstate right-of-way.
Environmental Justice	None	The I-95 HOT lanes project was developed in accordance with Executive Order 12898, *Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low Income Populations*. No minority or low income populations in the current project study area would suffer adverse effects let alone disproportionately high and adverse environmental effects from the project.
Parks and Recreation	None	The publicly owned Smith Lake Park abuts the I-95 right-of-way; however, no construction is planned outside of the existing R/W near this property. The proposed project will not require any direct Section 4(f) use or constructive uses of this public park. No Section 6(f) [Land and Water Conservation Fund] resources would be impacted
Water Quality	None	Water quality in streams along the corridor is affected by surrounding development. Stormwater management facilities would be incorporated into the project to minimize long term effects of the project on water quality.
Floodplains	None	No appreciable changes to 100-year floodplain elevations are expected from the proposed project.
Waters of the U.S., including Wetlands	None	Approximately 400 linear feet of an unnamed tributary to Aquia Creek and approximately 1,340 square feet of Palustrine Forested (PFO) wetlands would be impacted, which is consistent with the impacts from the 2011 EA for this section of the project.
Water Quality Permits	Yes	Anticipated permits include a USCOE Special

Resources/Issue	Changes since 2011 EA	Comments
		Programmatic General Permit (SPGP) and a DEQ Virginia Water Quality Protection (VWP) General Permit.
Agricultural and Forestal Districts, Prime Farmland and Soils	None	There are no agricultural or forestal districts located in the project area. Soils categorized as prime farmland are present within the project area; however, all construction work will be in existing R/W which is already converted or committed to transportation development.
Threatened and Endangered Species	Yes	Northern Long-eared bat was listed as federally threatened on May 4, 2015. USFWS concurred with conclusions of an Acoustic Bat Survey and Habitat Evaluation conducted for the project area that the probability that the study area supports a viable population of northern long-eared bats is low and this species is presumed absent. No impacts to federally listed threatened or endangered species have been identified, otherwise.
Invasive Species	None	In accordance with Executive Order 13112, *Invasive Species*, the potential for the establishment of invasive terrestrial or aquatic animal or plant species during construction of the proposed project would be minimized by following provisions in VDOT's *Road and Bridge Specifications*. These provisions require prompt seeding of disturbed areas with mixes that are tested in accordance with the Virginia Seed Law and VDOT's standards and specifications to ensure that seed mixes are free of noxious species. While the proposed right-of-way is vulnerable to the colonization of invasive plant species from other portions of the site and from adjacent properties, implementation of the stated provisions will reduce the potential for the establishment and proliferation of invasive species.
Air Quality	None	A qualitative assessment of the 2011 Air Quality Analysis was performed. The assessment concluded the peak CO concentrations generated today would be lower than the peak CO concentrations generated in 2011. Additionally, the CO background concentrations used in 2011 to calculate peak CO concentrations have been revised down by VDEQ, which would further reduce the previously calculated peak CO concentrations. A quantitative MSAT analysis conducted in 2011 showed that MSAT emissions would decline 10.6% to 31.2% for the seven toxics analyzed when comparing the 2035 build/no-build scenarios. Because those results were based on the greater roadway network and its associated traffic, changes to the 2035 traffic projections in the vicinity of the Garrisonville Road interchange would not have a noticeable effect on the regional network traffic. A build scenario would still

Resources/Issue	Changes since 2011 EA	Comments
		be expected to show a greater reduction in MSAT emissions over a no-build scenario.
Noise	None	A qualitative assessment of the 2011 Preliminary Noise Analysis was performed. Three common noise environments (CNEs) were previously identified in the vicinity of the Garrisonville Road interchange as part of the 2011 Preliminary Noise Analysis. Two of those CNEs – CNEs LL and MM – are located north of the interchange, and the noise barriers developed for those CNEs have already been constructed as part of the I-95 Express Lanes project. CNE NN is located in the southwest quadrant of the Garrisonville Road interchange adjacent to the proposed extension of the express lanes and the addition of northbound and southbound lane slip ramps. Based on the 2011 preliminary Noise Analysis, a feasible and reasonable noise barrier was identified to address noise impacts associated with this CNE. Based on the updated traffic, PM peak hour traffic in the corridor (i.e. traffic on the I-95 southbound lanes, northbound lanes, and express lanes) adjacent to the proposed improvements is forecasted to decrease by 8% compared to the PM peak hour traffic used for the 2011 analysis. Because there is a reduction in traffic, the slip ramp project is not expected to increase noise impacts associated with CNE NN; any effect that the proposed project will have on noise levels is expected to be nominal given the nominal effect that the I-95 Express Lane project was forecasted to have at this location (i.e. range of 0 to 2 dB(A)). Accordingly, the proposed improvements will not have a significant impact when it comes to noise impacts, and it is expected that a feasible and reasonable noise barrier can be designed to address the noise impacts associated with CNE NN similar to the barrier identified in the 2011 analysis. A final design noise analysis will be prepared during the design phase of the project to determine the final location and dimensions of any noise barriers found to be feasible and reasonable.
Hazardous Materials	None	All proposed work will be within the existing interstate right-of-way. No hazardous materials issues have been identified nor are anticipated.

Resources/Issue	Changes since 2011 EA	Comments
Cultural Resources	None	The potential effects of the project are limited to existing right of way which has been previously disturbed and does not contain any structures over 50 years old or any archaeological sites or battlefields recorded in the DSS. A "No Effect" Determination was made on November 30, 2015 in accordance with the efficiencies of quarterly reporting provided by Stipulation 2 of the 1999 Programmatic Agreement between VDOT and VDHR for determinations of No Effect. The proposed project will not require any direct, temporary, or constructive Section 4(f) uses of historic properties.

TABLE 2: Impacts Summary

Category	Impact	Change from 2011 EA
Owner/Tenant Families Displaced*	0	No change
Businesses Displaced*	0	No change
Schools Displaced*	0	No change
Non-Profit Business (tenant)*	0	No change
Other Community Facilities	0	No change
4(f) Property Use (acres)	0	No change
Wetland Impacts (acres)	1,340 square feet	No change
Stream Impacts (linear feet)	400 linear feet	No change
Threatened and Endangered Species	0	No change
Cultural Resources	0	No change
Forest Land Displaced (acres)	0	No change
Farmland Displaced (acres)	0	No change
Impacted Noise Receptors	17	No change
Hazardous Materials Sites impacted	0	No change

A. Land Use and Socioeconomic Impacts

Since issuance of the FONSI in 2011, no statutory/regulatory/policy changes been implemented which would render the proposed project less-viable or less-needed from a socioeconomic perspective. The proposed project is consistent with local land use plans and would not cause a divisive or disruptive effect on the general community served. The southern extension improvements are located entirely within of the I-95 right-of-way where land cover within the I-95 median in the southern section where HOT lanes would be extended primarily consists of woods and grass. The proposed project would not cause a divisive or disruptive effect on the general community served.

B. Aquatic Resources

Although natural stream attributes would be maintained wherever practicable, approximately 400 linear feet of an unnamed tributary to Aquia Creek and approximately 1,340 square feet of Palustrine Forested (PFO) wetlands within the existing right-of-way would be unavoidably impacted. However, all practicable measures will be taken to avoid and minimize impacts to water resources.

Minimization measures could include:

- The use of Best Management Practices (BMP) and strict adherence to applicable state and local erosion and sediment control/stormwater management laws and regulations.
- Minor design refinements to avoid or minimize impacts.
- Temporary and permanent stormwater management measures.
- Use of retaining walls.
- Open bottom or countersunk culverts to retain natural stream bottoms.
- Ensuring culverts maintain low flow depths and high flow conveyances to avoid impairing stream hydraulics and assure fish passage during low flow periods.
- Conducting stream work in the dry.

A detailed avoidance, minimization, and mitigation (if required) plan will be developed for coordination with the environmental review agencies during the water quality permitting process

C. Threatened and Endangered Species

Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act outlines consultation procedures for federal interagency cooperation to conserve federally listed species and designated critical habitats. Since the 2011 FONSI, the Northern Long-ear Bat *(Myotis septentrionalis)* was federally listed as threatened effective on May 4, 2015; the listing applies to the entire Commonwealth of Virginia.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) database for Information, Planning, and Conservation System (IPaC) was accessed to confirm whether Section 7 Consultation is required. The IPaC database search found potential habitat for Harperella *(Ptilimnium nodosum),* Bald Eagle *(Haliaeetus leucocephalus)* and Northern Long-ear Bat *(Myotis septentrionalis).* A field assessment for Harperella concluded no potential habitat within the project limits and there are no documented Bald Eagle nests within 660 feet of the project limits. A habitat evaluation and acoustic survey plan developed for the Northern Long-eared Bat was approved by the USFWS field office on June 30, 2015 to determine the extent of suitable Northern Long-eared bat habitat and to determine the presence or probable absence of this species within the potentially suitable summer habitat areas. The study (dated July 30, 2015) concluded the probability that the study area supports a viable population of northern long-eared bats is low and this species is presumed absent. On September 8, 2915, the USFWS concurred a "Not Likely to Adversely Affect" determination for Northern Long-eared Bat.

D. Air Quality

A qualitative assessment of the 2011 Air Quality Analysis was performed using updated 2035 traffic data:

1) **Carbon Monoxide (CO):** The Air Quality Analysis completed for the I-95 Hot Lanes Project in September 2011 evaluated the worst-case interchanges on I-95 in the project corridor for CO impacts. The Garrisonville Rd. interchange (Exit 143) was not included since it did not rise to the level of being worst-case. The 2011 Air Quality Analysis evaluated the interchanges at the Springfield (I-95 Exits 169 & 170), Lorton Road (Exit 163), and Gordon Boulevard (Exit 160) interchanges which had 2035 ADT build projections approximately 123%, 11%, and 13%, respectively, higher than at the Garrisonville Road interchange. Similarly, 2018 build ADT projections at these interchanges were 138%, 18%, and 26% higher, respectively, than at the Garrisonville Road interchange. In the 2011 Air Quality Analysis, the peak CO concentrations at the worst-case interchanges (estimated using numerous worst-case assumptions) for the opening (2015/2018) and design (2035) year build scenarios were predicted to be 7.6 ppm and 5.3 ppm for the 1-hour and 8-hour CO standards, respectively, which are both well below the 1-hour and 8-hour CO NAAQS of 35 ppm and 9 ppm, respectively.

   The updated traffic generated for the proposed project confirms that the peak-hourly traffic volumes anticipated in 2015 and 2035 in the vicinity of the Garrisonville Road interchange are still well below the peak-hourly volumes that were evaluated for the interchanges referenced above in the 2011 Air Quality Analysis. Specifically, the 2035 PM peak hourly volumes for the NB, SB, and Express lanes at the Lorton Road interchange were 5865, 7525, and 4610, respectively, whereas the updated 2035 traffic volume projections just north of the Garrisonville Road interchange (where volumes are highest) were 4300, 6785, and 1800, respectively. Similar trends are found for the 2015/2018 analysis year, and for the other worst-case interchanges analyzed in the 2011 Air Quality Analysis.

   Since the interchanges analyzed in the 2011 Air Quality Analysis were more worst-case than the Garrisionville Rd interchange and peak CO concentrations were found to remain well below the CO NAAQS, and since the projected peak-hour traffic volumes at the Garrisonville Rd interchange for this project remain well below the traffic volumes analyzed in the previous analysis, the findings from the 2011 Air Quality Analysis remain valid to satisfy all federal air quality requirements pertaining to CO.

   Further, the current EPA emissions factor model (MOVES) generates even lower CO emission factors than those generated from MOBILE6 which was used in the 2011 Air Quality Analysis; therefore, peak CO concentrations generated today are expected to be even lower using the updated model. Lastly, the 1-hour and 8-hour CO background concentrations used in the 2011 Air Quality Analysis were 2.9 and 2.3 ppm, respectively, and due to improvements to overall air quality, recently updated 1-hour and 8-hour CO background concentrations were found to be 1.6 and 1.4 ppm, respectively, which would further reduce peak CO concentrations.

Based on these conclusions, the CO concentrations for the proposed project are predicted to be well below the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) in both the Opening Year (2015 or 2018) and Design Year (2035). Therefore, no exceedances are anticipated as a result of the proposed project and no mitigation measures are required.

2) **Mobile Source Air Toxics (MSAT):** A quantitative MSAT analysis was completed as part of the 2011 Air Quality Analysis and it showed that MSAT emissions are expected to decline significantly from Existing Year conditions to the project Opening Year (2018) build conditions, and will continue to decline even further out to the Design Year (2035) build conditions. In addition, a comparison of emission levels for the Design Year build and no-build conditions shows that the project is expected to reduce MSAT emissions between 10.6% and 31.2% for each of the MSATs analyzed. Therefore, the project will not only improve regional congestion and average speeds, but it will also provide a substantial MSAT benefit. FHWA released updated MSAT Guidance on December 6, 2012 based on the updated MOVES model that showed the same general trends over time. Specifically, it showed that MSAT emissions are expected to be reduced a combined 83% nationally between 2010 and 2050, even if vehicle miles traveled increases by 102% over that time, which is consistent with the trends found in the 2011 Air Quality Analysis. The quantitative MSAT analysis completed as part of the 2011 Air Quality Analysis was a regional analysis that encompassed the entire project corridor including the affected network. A graphic of the affected network for the 2018 and 2035 analysis years is shown in Table 3. The changes in traffic volumes anticipated as a result of this project are insignificant compared to those used in the regional analysis. In addition, the total traffic volumes on I-95 (all lanes combined) north and south of the Garrisonville Road interchange are not expected to change as a result of the project; only the traffic volumes within the project corridor will change as a result of the additional slip ramps and extended merge lanes. Therefore, the quantitative MSAT analysis completed as part of the 2011 Air Quality Analysis is still considered valid for this project.

3) **Particulate Matter (PM):** The 2011 air study included a qualitative PM hotspot analysis. However, the project area for this re-evaluation focuses on the Garrisionville Road interchange area that lies in Stafford County which is an attainment area for PM2.5, and therefore PM conformity requirements do not apply. Declining PM2.5 background concentrations in the region and the lack of any impact on diesel truck traffic anticipated from this project further reinforces the conclusion that PM is not a concern with the proposed project.

Emissions may be produced in the construction of this project from heavy equipment and vehicle travel to and from the site, as well as from fugitive sources. Construction emissions are short term or temporary in nature. In order to mitigate these emissions, all construction activities are to be performed in accordance with VDOT Road and Bridge Specifications, which requires construction equipment to be outfitted with certain emission controls.

TABLE 3 – Projected Annual Production of MSAT Pollutants on "Affected Network"

		Acrolein	Benzene	1,3-Butadiene	Diesel PM	Formaldehyde	Naphthalene	Polycyclic Organic Matter	Million Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT)*
2011	Existing	42.22	2426.57	286.78	303.17	822.76	34.27	36.12	52.42
2018	No-Build	12.16	649.76	82.22	84.73	241.94	14.24	15.50	57.63
	Build	11.99	637.70	81.15	86.47	239.04	14.45	15.75	59.83
	Difference (Build vs. No-Build)	-1.4%	-1.9%	-1.3%	2.1%	-1.2%	1.5%	1.6%	3.8%
	Difference (Build vs. Existing)	-76.1%	-73.7%	-71.7%	-71.5%	-70.9%	-57.8%	-56.4%	14.1%
2035	No-Build	12.17	647.79	81.86	29.47	245.22	15.13	16.50	66.14
	Build	8.67	445.67	58.45	26.36	175.54	12.89	14.21	69.43
	Difference (Build vs. No-Build)	-28.8%	-31.2%	-28.6%	-10.6%	-28.4%	-14.8%	-13.9%	5.0%
	Difference (Build vs. Existing)	-79.5%	-81.6%	-79.6%	-91.3%	-78.7%	-62.4%	-60.7%	32.4%

Note: All values represent Tons per year
**Annual vehicle miles traveled within the "affected network"*

E. Noise

A qualitative assessment of the 2011 Preliminary Noise Analysis was performed using updated 2035 traffic data:

1) **Traffic Noise**: Per the Federal noise regulations and State noise policy, the scope of the proposed project qualifies as a Type I improvement, and a noise study update was prepared. A common noise environment of residential receptors within the proposed project area south of Garrisonville Road and west of Interstate 95 was evaluated for noise impacts in the 2011 Preliminary Noise Analysis identifying 17 noise impacted receptors. The evaluation for noise abatement concluded a conceptual noise barrier (4410 feet in length averaging 20 feet in height) benefitting 68 receptors met all three of VDOT's abatement criteria and was recommended for further consideration. Upon comparing the design year build traffic data for the proposed project with the data used in the 2011 Preliminary Noise Analysis, it was determined that the two sets of data were similar, thus the qualitative reevaluation of the noise study was undertaken. Specifically, based on the traffic data comparison, the design year build traffic volumes for areas south of the interchange were expected to decrease. Because of the reduction in traffic volumes, the proposed project is not expected to increase noise impacts at the noise sensitive sites located in these areas.

However, for some areas north of the interchange, an increase in traffic volumes was noted. These areas have noise barriers that were recently constructed as part of the I-95 Express Lanes project. A noise barrier system comprised of three barriers was constructed north of Garrisonville Road and west of Interstate 95; the barrier system (6,255 feet in length ranging from 12-24 feet in height) benefits one hundred and fifty-two (152) receptors, providing 1 to 13 decibels of noise reduction. A noise barrier system comprised of one noise barrier was built north of Garrisonville Road and east of Interstate 95; the barrier system (2,696 feet in length ranging from 14 to 17 feet in height) benefits ninety-two receptors (92), providing 2 to 14 decibels of noise reduction. Both barrier systems are expected to be feasible and reasonable under the proposed southern terminus extension. In addition, any effect that the proposed project will have on noise levels is expected to be nominal.

In conclusion, there is no need to update the 2011 preliminary noise study for the proposed project; the qualitative analysis of the 2011 noise analysis is sufficient for this EA reevaluation. A final design noise analysis will be prepared during the design phase of the project to determine the final location and dimensions of any noise barriers found to be feasible and reasonable.

2) **Construction Noise:** Construction activity may cause intermittent fluctuations in noise levels. During the construction phase of the project, all reasonable measures will be taken to minimize noise impact from these activities. At a minimum, the contractor will be required to conform to VDOT's *Road and Bridge Specifications* to reduce the impact of construction noise on the surrounding community.

IV. Public Involvement

A Public Information Meeting was held from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. on February 17, 2016 at H.H. Poole Middle School located at 800 Eustace Road in Stafford, Virginia. The meeting was held to provide an opportunity for any person, organization or agency to provide comments. One-hundred and thirty (130) citizens, including locally elected officials attended the meeting. A brief presentation about the proposed project was made. VDOT representatives were available to discuss the project and answer questions. The public was also encouraged to submit any written comments as well. A few verbal comments about noise barrier walls were received by VDOT – Environmental staff representatives at the meeting who explained the noise abatement process. Copies of the 2011 EA and 2011 FONSI were also made available for review and the public was informed of this reevaluation to satisfy NEPA compliance.

V. Findings

The proposed action was evaluated to determine whether any changes to the scope of the I-95 Express Lanes project presented in the 2011 EA and whether new information or circumstances associated with the proposed action relevant to environmental concerns will have any environmental impacts not already considered in 2011 that could be considered significant. Based on the foregoing presentation of the results of that evaluation, no new adverse environmental impacts have been identified let alone significant environmental impacts. Accordingly, the 2011 FONSI remain valid and no further environmental studies are needed.

I concur with this finding:

Edward Sundra
Federal Highway Administration

March 2, 2016
Date