



U.S. Department
of Transportation
**Federal Transit
Administration**

REGION I
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Massachusetts,
New Hampshire,
Rhode Island, Vermont

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Honorable John Fabrizi
Mayor
City of Bridgeport
999 Broad Street
Bridgeport, Connecticut 06604

AUG 19 2003

Re: Bridgeport Intermodal Transportation Center Finding of No Significant Impact

Dear Mayor Fabrizi:

Based upon a review of the environmental documentation, the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) has issued a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) for the Bridgeport Intermodal Transportation Center. The purpose of the project is to facilitate improved connectivity between multiple existing and proposed transportation modes in the heart of the central business district. The combination of commuter and high-speed rail, ferry, intra-and inter-city bus, taxi, limousine, airport shuttle, automobile, and pedestrian modes into a single facility is expected to be an important transportation and economic development magnet to the downtown and waterfront areas. Each component will be constructed as a stand-alone operating entity, designed to efficiently connect with the other components of the project as they are completed. As a result of the facility's increased passenger convenience, the project is expected to maximize ridership on Metro-North commuter rail, Amtrak intercity rail, and local bus service.

Please be advised that in accordance with 23 CFR 771.121, the City of Bridgeport is required to transmit a notice of availability of this FONSI to all affected Federal, state and local governmental entities. In addition, under §106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, the FTA has determined that this project will have an adverse effect on historic resources. Therefore, FTA, the Connecticut State Historical Preservation Office, and the City of Bridgeport have signed a Memorandum of Agreement outlining measures that must be carried out as a result of this project's effect on historic properties.

Please let me know if you have any questions regarding this matter. FTA looks forward to continuing to work with the City of Bridgeport on this important transit improvement.

Sincerely,

Richard H. Doyle
Regional Administrator

Attachment

**FEDERAL TRANSIT ADMINISTRATION
REGION 1**

Finding of No Significant Impact

Project: *Bridgeport Intermodal Transportation Center*

Applicant: *City of Bridgeport*

Project Location: *Bridgeport, Connecticut*

Proposed Project

The City of Bridgeport, CT is proposing to construct a new multi-modal transportation center in downtown Bridgeport that will improve access to and between a variety of alternative transportation modes and the Bridgeport CBD. This multi-phased capital project involves the planning, design and construction of facilities to enhance access for transit riders commuting to and from downtown Bridgeport as well as to simplify intermodal transfers and connections. The combination of commuter and high-speed rail, ferry, intra-and inter-city bus, taxi, limousine, airport shuttle, automobile, and pedestrian modes into a single facility is expected to be an important transportation and economic development magnet to the downtown and waterfront areas. Each component will be constructed as a stand-alone operating entity, designed to efficiently connect with the other components of the project as they are completed. As a result of the facility's increased passenger convenience, the project is expected to maximize ridership on Metro-North commuter rail, Amtrak intercity rail, and local bus service. Key features of the Bridgeport Intermodal Transportation Center (BITC) include:

- **Phase 1 (complete):** A new parking garage for transit users. The "Transit Center Garage at Harbor Yard," located on S. Frontage Road, south of I-95, opened in 2000.
- **Phase 2A:** A new, relocated bus terminal. The replacement facility will be built on City owned land currently used as a commuter parking lot. The new terminal will increase capacity, providing seventeen bus berths on two boarding platform locations that will interface both local and intercity service, and facilitating improved bus circulation. The facility will include over 2,000 square feet of waiting space, which will include passenger amenities such as seating, ticketing, rest rooms, retail space, and real time ITS features providing passengers with pertinent route-level information. Included in this phase will be a covered link connecting the facility to the train station. Also in this phase, the commuter parking spaces currently occupying the site will be relocated to an additional two tiers to be built on top of the new parking structure at Harbor Yard, originally constructed as Phase 1 of this project.
- **Phase 2B:** A new train station, replacing an operationally inefficient and obsolete facility with poor passenger waiting area and amenities. The new station will include an improved overhead crossover connecting inbound and outbound platforms and a new boardwalk linking the station to the ferry terminal. The new station will include improved passenger amenities including furniture, lighting, and open sight lines.
- **Phase 3:** Construction of the BITC's gateway connection to downtown via a major entrance from Main Street. The new entranceway will provide pedestrian linkages

between BITC and the CBD that will include passenger amenities including a restaurant and food court, and an additional commuter parking garage with retail space on the ground floor.

Agency Coordination and Public Opportunity to Comment

On December 17, 2002 a public scoping process was initiated for the project by the Connecticut Department of Economic and Community Development under the Connecticut Environmental Policy Act (CEPA) by issuing a Scoping Notice in Connecticut's Environmental Monitor. An Environmental Assessment (EA) and §4(f) Evaluation was published on June 17, 2003, and a Public Hearing on the documents was held on July 21, 2003. July 31, 2003 was the close of the 45-day public comment period. All comments received, both orally at the Hearing and in writing through the end of the public comment period were responded to by the City and incorporated into the EA as an appendix. In addition to the general public, the City sought and received comments from various public agencies, which were also addressed and incorporated into the EA.

Determinations and Findings

National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) Finding

FTA served as the lead agency under NEPA for the project. The City of Bridgeport prepared an Environmental Assessment (EA) in compliance with NEPA, 42 U.S.C. 4321 *et seq.*, and with FTA's regulations, 23 CFR Part 771. The EA analyzes and describes the project's potential for significant impact.

After reviewing the EA and supporting documents, as well as public comments, FTA finds under 23 CFR 771.121 that the proposed project will have no significant impact on the environment. The record provides sufficient evidence and analysis for determining that an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is not required.

National Ambient Air Quality Standards

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has developed National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) for each of six criteria air pollutants: SO₂, NO₂, CO, O₃, Pb, and particulate matter less than or equal to 10 micrometers (PM₁₀). Current air quality designations for the region, as determined by EPA, are "attainment" for SO₂, NO₂, CO, Pb, and PM₁₀. The current designation for O₃ is "severe non-attainment." The Project is projected to yield no adverse air quality impacts—in fact, as a result of the improved circulation patterns and traffic mitigations and increased transit use facilitated by the project, the end result is projected to be improved local air quality. In a July 30, 2003 letter, Connecticut DEP commented that "Recognizing the air quality benefits to be realized by increasing transit use, the Department supports implementation of this project. Providing updated bus and railroad stations and facilitating linkages between transportation modes should encourage alternatives to single occupant vehicle use."

Water Quality Impacts

The City projects that the proposed action will provide beneficial impacts to coastal waters and the estuarine embayment through the construction of an upgraded storm water management system. The proposed outbound train station will extend over the river with the support of piles approximately the same distance as the existing outbound station. The proposed boardwalk will extend beyond the outbound station. In order to line up with the existing boardwalks located to the north and south of the proposed boardwalk, the boardwalk will extend approximately 35 feet over the river. It has been designed so as to avoid encroaching on the federal navigation channel. By

proposing a water taxi and a continuous boardwalk to expand and encourage recreational use of the site, the planned action promotes marine related uses, which is the coastal management policy for this developed shorefront. The City commits to coordinating with the Office of Long Island Sound Programs (OSLIP) to ensure that the proposed structures will be designed, constructed, and maintained in such a way as to minimize any adverse impacts on coastal resources, circulation and sedimentation patterns, and water quality. No fill is being proposed water ward of the High Tide Line (HTL).

Prior to any construction activity affecting or within the jurisdiction of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and the U.S. Coast Guard, coordination, review, and any applicable approvals and permitting will occur.

Hazardous Materials

A *Phase I Environmental Site Assessment (ESA)* of the project area concluded that several properties within the Project limits are potential sources of contamination. An asbestos and lead survey was conducted for the existing train station, indicating the presence of small amounts of both, which will be subject to appropriate mitigation measures during construction in accordance with Federal, State and local requirements. An environmental records search of federal or state environmental database records yielded no known contaminants in the construction bounds of each phase of the project. The City commits to conducting a Phase II ESA for all three phases of the project prior to final design to further identify and confirm the presence of contamination, and, if warranted, a Phase III ESA. The City will follow all recommendations of the assessments. Should further investigation or remediation be required, the City will conform to all relevant guidelines. As part of the construction effort, a Health and Safety Plan will be developed and implemented to ensure that the potential for exposure to construction workers and other citizens proximate to the construction area is minimized. All materials removed from the site will be disposed of in compliance with applicable laws and regulations.

Environmental Justice

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and Federal Executive Order 12898 of 1994, "Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations," prohibit discriminatory practices and mandate the equal distribution of benefits and burdens in programs receiving federal funds. The project area is encompassed by US Census Block Group 1 Track 706, which has a minority population (African-American, Latino, Asian, Inuit, and Native American) of 58%, and a low-income population (population at or below the poverty level) of 35%, compared to a 55% minority level and 18% low-income level for the city as a whole, indicating the effected area is an Environmental Justice community.

This project imposes no burdens on the area's Environmental Justice community and confers significant benefits, providing area residents with long term social and quality of life improvements, economic improvements, and safety and security improvements. In particular, the transit improvements resulting from the project will have positive impacts on the users of the local transit agency, the Greater Bridgeport Transit Authority (GBTA), whose ridership is disproportionately composed of transit dependent minority and low-income riders.

§ 106 Compliance

§106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, requires the review of federally assisted projects for impacts to districts, sites, buildings, structures and objects listed in, or eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places. Federal agencies must

coordinate with the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) and potentially affected Tribes to make this determination. The Advisory Council on Historic preservation (ACHP) has established procedures for the protection of historic and cultural properties in, or eligible for, the National Register (36 CFR Part 800).

The western portion of the project area includes the eastern segment of the Bridgeport Downtown South Historic District, which was placed on the National Register in 1987. The section of the historic district that falls within the project area includes the Mechanics and Farmers Savings Bank (1930) and the Bridgeport City Market (1912). During Phase 2B of the Project, the remains of three sunken canal barges, Berkshire No.7, Elmer S. Dailey and Priscilla Dailey, which were listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1975 before they sank in Bridgeport Harbor during Hurricane Gloria (1985), will be removed. As part of Phase 3, the Bridgeport City Market will be demolished and the Mechanics and Farmers Savings Bank is proposed for rehabilitation following the Secretary of Interior's Standards and will serve as the new entrance to the facility

Correspondence was sent to SHPO on February 18, 2003 requesting a determination of effect for the proposed project. SHPO provided a response in a letter dated April 14, 2003, stating that it was understood that construction and operation of the proposed transportation facilities will require the demolition or alteration of the Bridgeport City Market, Mechanics and Farmers Savings Bank, and the three sunken canal barges. SHPO noted that this would constitute an adverse effect upon Connecticut's cultural heritage, but concurred that no feasible or prudent alternative exists which would retain these resources and facilitate the development of the BITC. A Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) was prepared in coordination with Connecticut SHPO, to include terms to avoid, minimize or mitigate the adverse effects of the project. FTA, Connecticut SHPO and the City of Bridgeport signed the MOA in August 2003.

On June 2, 2003 ACHP was provided documentation specified in 36 CFR 800.11(e) and afforded the opportunity to participate in the consultation process to resolve the adverse effects. By letter dated July 10, 2003, ACHP determined that their participation in the consultation process was not needed.

§4(f) Findings

§4(f) of the Department of Transportation Act of 1966, codified at 49 U.S.C. 303, articulates a national policy affirming that a special effort shall be made to preserve the natural beauty of the countryside, public park and recreational lands, wildlife and waterfowl refuges, and historic sites. The Secretary of Transportation may not approve transportation projects that adversely affect such resources unless a determination is made that there is no feasible and prudent alternative, and that all possible planning has been done to minimize harm (23 CFR 771.135).

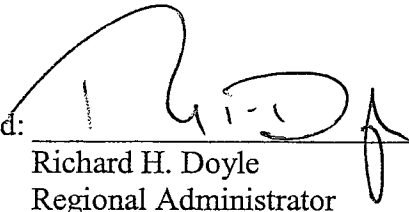
There are no public parks and recreation lands or wildlife and waterfowl refuges located within the proposed BITC Project area. In a letter dated January 28, 2003, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service conferred that there were no endangered species likely to be affected by the project, due to the distance between the project location and the coastal habitats of any endangered species. There are historic resources that the BITC will impact, listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Project documentation was submitted to the Department of Interior (DOI) for review and comments. Via letter dated August 14, 2003, DOI offered concurrence that there are no prudent and feasible alternatives to the proposed project, if project objectives are to be met, and expressed no objection to §4(f) approval of the project. DOI also agreed to the stipulations in the MOA.

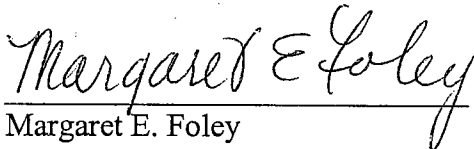
Permits

The City of Bridgeport will be required to obtain all necessary permits and approvals prior to the construction of this project.

Incorporation by Reference

The full text of the *Federal Transit Administration/Connecticut Department of Economic and Community Development Environmental Assessment and 4(f) Evaluation* for the Bridgeport Intermodal Transportation Center, prepared by the City of Bridgeport and dated June 17, 2003, is hereby incorporated by reference in this Finding of No Significant Impact.

Approved:  Date: 8/19/03
Richard H. Doyle
Regional Administrator
FTA, Region I

Concur:  Date: 8/19/03
Margaret E. Foley
Regional Counsel