

North Carolina Department of Transportation Rail Division



Locomotive and Railcar Maintenance Facility Mecklenburg County, North Carolina

State TIP Project No. P-2918F
State WBS Project No. 49999.1.STR8

Administrative Action Finding of No Significant Impact

Submitted Pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act
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US Department of Transportation
Federal Railroad Administration (FRA)
and
North Carolina Department of Transportation

Prepared in accordance with FRA's Environmental Procedures
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1.0 GENERAL DESCRIPTION AND BACKGROUND INFORMATION

1.1 PROJECT BACKGROUND

The North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) Rail Division, in conjunction with the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA), is studying alternatives for the Piedmont Improvement Program (PIP) Locomotive and Railcar Maintenance Facility Project (LMRF or Project). The NCDOT State Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) number for this Project is P-2918F. The Project study area is located in the City of Charlotte, Mecklenburg County, North Carolina.

The Project will construct a new locomotive and passenger railcar maintenance facility southwest of Uptown Charlotte (City Center) to replace the current Charlotte maintenance facility located adjacent to the Norfolk Southern (NS) Charlotte Yard northeast of Uptown. The new facility will include the following elements:

- Railcar service and storage tracks
- Enclosed facility for major maintenance operations
- Fuel pad and onsite fuel tank
- Additional space for the storage of spare parts and equipment
- Enclosed train wash facility
- Train crew base for up to 20 crew members

The proposed Charlotte LRMF is a component of the PIP, which is an initiative by the NCDOT, NS, and the North Carolina Railroad Company (NCR) to improve passenger and freight railroad operations along the Piedmont Corridor from Raleigh to Charlotte. The Piedmont Corridor consists of the Greensboro to Charlotte portion of the NS Washington to Atlanta Mainline and the NS/NCR H-Line, which runs from Greensboro to Raleigh. The PIP consists primarily of railroad capacity projects and crossing safety projects that will facilitate the introduction of up to 12 daily (six round trip) passenger trains along the Raleigh to Charlotte corridor. The PIP also includes station and facility projects that will improve service to passengers and improve the maintenance operations for the passenger trains serving the corridor. The full build of the LRMF will provide capacity to support the operation of the 12 daily (six round trip) passenger trains on the Piedmont Corridor.

The NCDOT Piedmont Corridor is also part of the federally designated Southeast High Speed Rail (SEHSR) corridor. This corridor connects the northeastern states and Washington, DC through Richmond, VA to Raleigh and Charlotte, NC to Atlanta, GA. In Atlanta, the SEHSR extends southeast to Savannah, GA and Jacksonville, FL; and the Gulf Coast High Speed Rail (GCHSR) corridor extends across the southwest through New Orleans, LA, Mobile, AL and Houston, TX. The full build of the LRMF also provides the capacity to support the SEHSR trains operating on the Piedmont Corridor through Charlotte.

Finding of No Significant Impact

In 2002, NCDOT, the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT), the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), and the FRA completed a Tier I Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and the FRA and FHWA jointly issued a Record of Decision (ROD) for the portion of the SEHSR corridor between Charlotte and Washington, DC. The Environmental Assessment (EA) NCDOT prepared for the LRMF is one of several Tier II, or project level, studies being undertaken for the portion of the SEHSR corridor between Charlotte and Richmond, VA. The FRA and the Virginia DRPT will study the portion of the SEHSR between Richmond and Washington, DC in a Tier II EIS. FRA awarded approximately \$45 million to Virginia to fund the EIS and preliminary engineering. The Tier II EIS process for the Raleigh to Richmond portion is currently in the Final EIS development phase. The LRMF EA anticipated completion of a ROD in 2014; however, FRA now anticipates issuance of the ROD in 2015 due to additional review of the Tier II EIS documentation.

This Build Alternative in this FONSI includes the scope of the full build of the LRMF; however, NCDOT has prepared the design for the completion of the Project in phases to complement the incremental growth of intercity passenger rail and development of SEHSR service in North Carolina. The first phase, Phase 1A, will be constructed to have the capacity to support the layover and servicing of the NCDOT Piedmont fleet and the Carolinian for up to 12 daily (six round trip) passenger trains on the Piedmont Corridor. Phase 1A is fully funded and supports the infrastructure capacity being constructed by NCDOT and FRA on the Piedmont Corridor through the PIP¹. A detailed description of Phase 1A is included in Section 3.1 of this document. Later phases, which are not currently funded, will construct the four maintenance facility tracks, maintenance building, and train wash facility, as previously described.

1.2 PROCEDURAL HISTORY AND NEPA COMPLIANCE

In January 2010, the FRA awarded to North Carolina \$545 million in American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) funds to continue development of high speed intercity passenger rail along the Raleigh to Charlotte segment of the SEHSR corridor. A portion of those ARRA funds were allocated for this Project.

The Project is included in the NCDOT *2012-2018 State Transportation Improvement Program* (STIP) as Project number P-2918F.

Effects to the human and natural environment due to the Project were addressed in the EA approved and signed by NCDOT and FRA on September 30, 2013.

¹ The PIP includes infrastructure capacity on the Piedmont Corridor to support the operation of up to 10 daily (five round trip) trains between Raleigh and Charlotte with reserve capacity for up to 12 daily (six round trip) trains between Greensboro and Charlotte.

The FRA is the lead Federal agency for the Project under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), and NCDOT is the lead State agency. This FONSI was prepared in accordance with FRA's Procedures for Considering Environmental Impacts (FRA Procedures).²

2.0 STATEMENT OF PURPOSE AND NEED

2.1 PURPOSE OF THE NCDOT PIEDMONT IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

The purpose of NCDOT's PIP is to improve intercity passenger train service schedule reliability, reduce congestion, increase overall corridor capacity, and enhance the safety and efficiency of railroad operations along the Piedmont Corridor between Raleigh and Charlotte. The PIP will facilitate the introduction of up to 12 daily (six round trip) passenger trains along the Raleigh to Charlotte Piedmont Corridor. This includes future SEHSR corridor trains that will travel between Charlotte and Washington, DC. Eventually the SEHSR corridor will extend beyond Charlotte to Atlanta and points south. The PIP also includes improvements to passenger train stations to enhance services to passengers and improved facilities to maintain and service the passenger trains traversing the corridor.

Increased usage of North Carolina's highway system has led to congestion and increased motor vehicle emissions. To address congestion and air quality concerns, the NCDOT Rail Division is improving passenger rail service (as well as freight) by upgrading the existing rail infrastructure. Ultimately, these improvements will also benefit the infrastructure for high speed and traditional passenger rail service in North Carolina.

2.2 PURPOSE OF THE LOCOMOTIVE AND RAILCAR MAINTENANCE FACILITY

The purpose of the Project is to construct a new locomotive and passenger rail maintenance facility southwest of Uptown Charlotte adjacent to a proposed multi-modal transportation center (Charlotte Gateway Station). The new LRMF will replace the existing Charlotte maintenance facility located adjacent to the NS Charlotte Yard, and will serve the increasing number and length of intercity passenger trains serving the region. The Project will provide capacity to support the future development of high speed passenger service on the federally designated SEHSR corridor.

The Project will make capacity and safety improvements to the passenger rail infrastructure in Charlotte, North Carolina. The Project will address the following needs:

1. Improve the safety and efficiency of the maintenance and service operations for existing and future intercity passenger trains in the Charlotte area; and
2. Assist in the implementation of the SEHSR by providing a facility that can service future high speed train sets.

² 64 FR 28545 (May 25, 1999)

2.3 PROJECT NEED ELEMENTS

1. Improve the efficiency of the maintenance and service operations for existing and future intercity passenger trains in the Charlotte area - Currently, eight Amtrak passenger trains (Crescent trains #19 and #20, Carolinian trains #79 and #80, and Piedmont trains #73, #74, #75 and #76) serve the existing Amtrak station located at 1914 North Tryon Street and enter the NS Charlotte Yard on a daily basis. The Piedmont and Carolinian trains are all serviced at the existing Charlotte maintenance facility located adjacent to the existing Amtrak station and within the NS Charlotte Yard. The current facility cannot service additional train sets, due to limits in space for train sets, parts, equipment and train crews, nor does the facility have the ability to wash trains or allow major servicing of passenger trains. The new LRMF will also be near the proposed Charlotte Gateway Station in Center City Charlotte to maximize the efficiency of the passenger rail operations once the new station is completed.

A new maintenance facility will also provide better safety, security and environmental protection than current passenger rail maintenance operations in Charlotte. The proposed service facility will be more secure with better safety systems, such as fences, which are not provided at the existing site. The new facility will also have storm water retention, train water wash recycling and other environmental protection features that the current maintenance facility in the NS Charlotte Yard does not have.

2. Assist in the implementation of the SEHSR by providing a facility that can service the future high speed train sets - In addition to improving the operational efficiency and safety for the existing passenger rail services to Charlotte, the Build Alternative will have enough capacity to serve future high speed rail services. The Build Alternative will be large enough to accommodate the longer fixed consist train sets anticipated with future high speed rail, and will have the proper space for the storage of equipment and spare parts, an enclosed facility to complete maintenance and repairs of the high speed trains, space for additional train crews, and a train wash facility.

3.0 ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED

NCDOT considered a reasonable range of alternatives for the proposed action. These alternatives included the No-Build Alternative, and various Build Alternatives. NCDOT assessed each alternative with respect to its ability to meet the Project's purpose and need, as well as the Project's potential impacts on both the human and natural environment.

3.1 PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE

Project Full Build: The LRMF includes two service and inspection tracks that will pass through a service building to allow for maintenance, cleaning, and servicing of passenger trains, as well as other open-air tracks for switching, pass-through, repair, storage and refueling of trains. The LRMF will provide mid-day layover as well as overnight service of state-sponsored Carolinian and Piedmont trains. The LRMF will also be the primary maintenance and service location for the future SEHSR train sets.

Finding of No Significant Impact

The LRMF includes the construction of a total of eight tracks, including: four open-air tracks on the western half of the parcel (one lead track, two storage tracks and one car wash track), and four tracks on the eastern half of the parcel serving the enclosed maintenance facility. The lead track and car wash track as well as two of the maintenance facility tracks will extend across West Summit Avenue at a consolidated four-track at-grade crossing.

The lead track will connect to the eastern NS mainline track at the north and south end of the LRMF. From the north connection, and heading south under the I-277 overpass, the lead track will run west of the maintenance building, and will branch into two open-air storage tracks west of the lead track terminating north of the West Summit Avenue grade crossing. Prior to crossing West Summit Avenue, the lead track will have a second branch to the east also crossing West Summit Avenue that will serve the train wash shed. Both the lead and train wash tracks will cross West Summit Avenue.

Also, at the north end near the junction with the two open-air storage tracks, the lead track will branch into four maintenance tracks to the east of the lead track. These four tracks will serve the enclosed maintenance building with two tracks terminating at the maintenance building and the other two tracks extending through the building to the south end of the yard across West Summit Avenue. Both of the maintenance tracks will cross West Summit Avenue.

In total, four maintenance facility tracks will cross West Summit Avenue at a consolidated four track crossing that is separate from the existing NS mainline crossing (Crossing No. 716 172N, NS milepost 378.4).

The LRMF will be segregated into two primary functions north and south of West Summit Avenue, with the service building, and other structures, located on the north side of West Summit Avenue, and the train wash facility located on the south side of West Summit Avenue. The LRMF will also include a staff building with a crew base to accommodate train crews, maintenance staff, and train parts storage; refueling and train wash equipment; and parking for crew and employees. The staff building will encompass at least 7,000 square feet in a single-level structure with at least 24 parking spaces, and will be located on the eastern end of the Project site near the intersection of West Palmer Street and South Graham Streets.³

It should be noted that while the LRMF lead track will be connected to the existing NS mainline, the LRMF trackage will be designed at an adequate off-set to accommodate the construction of a future third mainline track east of the existing NS mainline. This future third mainline track will be part of other track improvements to be constructed by NCDOT or NS under a separate project, the NS Mainline Track Improvements project (unfunded at this time).

³ Depending on the final design of the staff building, NCDOT may expand it to as much as 10,000 square feet with up to 40 parking spaces; however, the building and parking lot will fit on the same lot, and there are no additional impacts due to the increased size.

Finding of No Significant Impact

Proposed Project Phasing: The Build Alternative includes the full build of the LRMF; however, certain components of the Project are designed to complement the incremental growth of intercity passenger rail and development of SEHSR service in North Carolina. Phase 1A will be constructed to have the capacity to support the layover and servicing of the NCDOT Piedmont fleet and the Carolinian for up to 12 daily (six round trip)⁴ trains on the Piedmont Corridor. This initial phase, as shown on Figure 11 in Appendix B, is fully funded and will consist of right-of-way acquisition for the entire LRMF Project and construction of the following components, which will be limited to the property north of West Summit Avenue:

- Lead track connecting to the NS mainline;
- Two open-air storage tracks;
- Amtrak crew and maintenance contractor staff building near West Palmer and Graham Streets;
- Access driveway from West Summit Avenue.

Later phases, which are not currently funded, will construct the four maintenance facility tracks, maintenance building, and train wash facility, as previously described.

The proposed LRMF will not only replace the current Charlotte maintenance facility, but will also complement the existing Capital Yard maintenance facility in Raleigh. Ultimately, the proposed LRMF will service half of NCDOT's sponsored trains. Trains that layover in Raleigh will continue to be serviced at Capital Yard.

Table 1 describes the train schedule of the new maintenance facility, assuming six round-trip trains between Raleigh and Charlotte and Amtrak's Crescent.

Table 2 describes the services and activities that occur at the existing and proposed maintenance facilities. A conceptual layout plan for the proposed LRMF can be found in Appendix B.

⁴ The PIP includes capacity to support the operation of up to 10 daily (five round trip) trains between Raleigh and Charlotte with reserve capacity for up to 12 daily (six round trip) trains between Greensboro and Charlotte.

**Table 1 - Proposed Train Operations for
Charlotte Locomotive and Railcar Maintenance Facility**

Train No.	Direction	Enters Charlotte LRMF	Overnight in...	Train becomes	Train No.	Direction	Leaves Charlotte LRMF
#79	Southbound	10:40 PM	Charlotte	=>	#80	Northbound	6:40 AM
New 5 th Piedmont	Southbound	8:20 AM	Raleigh	=>	#74	Northbound	1:40 PM
#71	Southbound	11:20 AM	Raleigh	=>	#76	Northbound	4:50 PM
#73	Southbound	2:25 PM	Raleigh	=>	New 5 th Piedmont	Northbound	7:20 PM
#75	Southbound	5:05 PM	Charlotte	=>	New 6 th Piedmont	Northbound	4:50 AM
New 6 th Piedmont	Southbound	8:22 PM	Charlotte	=>	#72	Northbound	9:40 AM
#19	Southbound	1:30 AM	Layover in Charlotte for Refuel Only		#19	Southbound	1:45 AM
#20	Northbound	2:30 AM	Layover in Charlotte for Refuel Only		#20	Northbound	2:45 AM

Notes:

1. Trains #19 and #20 (Amtrak's *Crescent*) only refuel at the facility.
2. The train schedule in this table represents the anticipated timetable for passenger service operating through Charlotte. The actual schedules are subject to change and will include service operations at the LRMF throughout a 24 hour period.

Source: NCDOT Rail Division

Table 2 - Comparison of North Carolina Existing and Proposed Passenger Rail Maintenance Facilities

Activity	Current Charlotte Maintenance Facility (N. Tryon St.)	Proposed Charlotte LRMF (W. Summit Ave.)	Existing Raleigh Facility (Capital Yard)
Interior Cleaning	2 person contract cleaning crew cleans both <i>Piedmont</i> trains. Amtrak contracts 2 person crew to interior clean <i>Carolinian</i> train.	Same as current Charlotte facility.	3 person crew cleans <i>Piedmont</i> trains.
Refueling	Amtrak refuels <i>Carolinian</i> and <i>Crescent</i> trains at Charlotte station via truck. No refueling of <i>Piedmont</i> trains at current Charlotte station.	Fuel pad for Amtrak to refuel <i>Carolinian</i> and <i>Crescent</i> trains via contractor. On-site tank to refuel NCDOT sponsored trains.	Fuel <i>Piedmont</i> trains via 10,000 gallon tank.
Minor Servicing	Replace brake shoes, etc.	Same as current Charlotte facility.	Similar to current Charlotte and Raleigh facilities.
Major Repair	None - no capacity.	Will be similar to Raleigh - facility will include a shop with two tracks and one pit.	Major repairs for <i>Piedmont</i> trains occur here via shop and pit.
Train Parts Storage	Minimal - little storage space.	Expanded with part storage building area, similar to Raleigh.	Have parts storage, similar to proposed Charlotte facility.
Exterior Train Washing	None - no capacity.	Inside wash shed and automated.	Outside (hand wash only).
Crew Base	Modular building with space for <i>Carolinian</i> , <i>Piedmont</i> , and <i>Crescent</i> crew members; plus expansion for 6 to 8 additional crew members as additional frequencies added.	Building with space for 20 <i>Crescent</i> , <i>Piedmont</i> , and <i>Carolinian</i> crew members.	Modular unit with space for 15 <i>Piedmont</i> crew members. Will increase to 20 or 22 crew members with additional frequency.
Future Passenger and High Speed Services	No room to accommodate additional passenger rail trains, nor high speed train sets.	Capacity to expand passenger rail services, and site will become the main facility to service future fixed consist high speed rail trains.	Some expansion capacity, but not space to accommodate future high speed train sets.

Source: NCDOT Rail Division

Finding of No Significant Impact

The estimated total cost for the LRMF Project is approximately \$67,000,000 for the full build, including \$36,750,000 for the maintenance facility and \$30,250,000 for right-of-way acquisition for the full build Project site. The initial cost for the Project will include the full cost for right-of-way and approximately \$15,500,000 for Phase 1A of the maintenance facility.⁵

The right-of-way required for the full LRMF Project consists of nine parcels totaling 33.2 acres. Figure 7 (Appendix B) shows the parcels to be acquired. Phase 1A of the LRMF includes construction of the lead track, two open-air storage tracks, the proposed Amtrak and contractor staff building near West Palmer and Graham Streets, and an emergency access driveway from West Summit Avenue. Concept plans for both phases of the LRMF are included in Appendix B.

3.2 ALTERNATIVES ELIMINATED FROM FURTHER CONSIDERATION

NCDOT considered other alternatives but eliminated them from further study, as discussed below. In accordance with NEPA, NCDOT also considered a No-Build Alternative but eliminated it because it does not meet the Project purpose and need.

3.2.1 2002 NCDOT Feasibility Study

NCDOT Rail Division's 2002 Feasibility Study for the Charlotte Multi-Modal Station and Area Track Improvements (2002 Feasibility Study) identified a location in Uptown Charlotte for a new multi-modal transit station (Charlotte Gateway Station) on West Trade Street to serve passenger rail and other transit options, plus additional track improvements. The study also identified a site south of Uptown Charlotte near West Summit Avenue for a new passenger rail maintenance facility. Over 80 public and stakeholder meetings were held during the two year planning study, including extensive coordination with NS, CSX, the City of Charlotte, Greyhound, the Charlotte Area Transit System (CATS), FRA, Amtrak, and the Friends of Fourth Ward (a neighborhood association).

While developing the 2002 Feasibility Study and subsequent studies NCDOT considered three locations for a new locomotive and railcar maintenance facility. The first location considered was between West 6th and 9th Streets immediately north of the proposed Charlotte Gateway Station and east of the NS mainline tracks. NCDOT rejected this site for two primary reasons. First, a majority of the site was immediately adjacent to the Fourth Ward historic district, which is mostly residential. Second, the area is mostly zoned for residential and mixed-use, which is not compatible with the rail activities for the proposed facility.

⁵ The EA included an estimated total cost for the LRMF Project of approximately \$51,000,000 for the full build, including \$21,000,000 for the maintenance facility and \$30,000,000 for right-of-way acquisition for the full build Project site. NCDOT has revised the cost estimate to reflect the most current engineering design.

Finding of No Significant Impact

The second site NCDOT considered was at the old Southern Railway freight yard near Parkwood Avenue, east of the existing NS Charlotte freight yard. This site was zoned for industrial use and adjacent to an active rail freight yard. However, CATS and the City of Charlotte had plans to develop the area for a future CATS Light Rail vehicle maintenance facility, and/or future high density mixed-use development to support a light rail station. Moreover, the NCCR and NS had plans to possibly renovate the old yard for expanded freight services. Due to these conflicting plans, this site was dropped from further consideration.

The third site NCDOT considered was south of the proposed Charlotte Gateway Station near West Summit Avenue. This site was in an area zoned for industrial use, and adjacent to the I-277 freeway and the Charlotte Pipe and Foundry factory. This West Summit Avenue location then became the site shown in the 2002 Feasibility Study, and ultimately became the Build Alternative considered for the new Charlotte LRMF in this EA.

3.2.2 Post-2002 Feasibility Study Concept Development

After completion of the 2002 Feasibility Study, NCDOT determined that a larger facility was needed for the proposed site for the following reasons:

- To accommodate larger train sets (for high speed rail operations), additional train set storage/layover, and additional maintenance functions.
- To relocate the passenger train crew base from the existing NS Charlotte Yard to the new service facility.
- To allow trains to access the facility from both the north and the south, minimizing potential interference with the passenger station operations and NS freight operations.

Building upon the 2002 Feasibility Study, NCDOT continued to develop the plan for the location near West Summit Avenue due to its adequate size and functionality with relation to railroad operations.

More detailed descriptions of the alternatives considered can be found in chapter 2.0 of the EA.

4.0 RESULTS OF ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

The FRA Procedures provide a list of potential environmental impact areas that should be considered in the environmental assessment process. All areas have been addressed in the EA in Chapters 1 through 4. Table 3 below summarizes the resulting impacts for the Preferred Alternative, along with a listing of the sections where they are described in more detail in the EA and proposed mitigation, if applicable.

Table 3 - Summary of Impacts and Proposed Mitigation for Preferred Alternative

Summary of Environmental Consequences for the Build Alternative		
Section of EA	Summary of Impacts	Proposed Mitigation
3.1.1 Air Quality	<p>No Impact. The results of the Applicability Analysis, as part of the General Conformity process, showed the Build Alternative to be below threshold and regionally insignificant.</p> <p>For air quality analysis of the LRMF operations, see 3.7, Public Health.</p>	Not Applicable.
3.1.2 Noise and Vibration	<p>Minor Impact. Existing noise levels at three site receptors in the Wilmore neighborhood are significantly high. These high noise levels are due to existing noise generated from nearby interstates, existing rail traffic, and activity at Charlotte Pipe and Foundry.</p> <p>None of the three receptors will be impacted by the noise generated by the LRMF only. However, two sites will be moderately impacted by the noise from additional trains sounding their horns while crossing West Summit Avenue, when combined with the noise generated by the LRMF. These future noise levels will be 1 to 2 dBA above existing levels, an increase which is not perceived by humans.</p> <p>No Impact. No vibration impacts will result from construction or operation of the LRMF.</p>	<p>Currently, the City of Charlotte is developing a policy regarding the initiation of quiet zones on city streets. As part of the unfunded full build phase of the Project, NCDOT will install infrastructure along West Summit Avenue that will need to be in place should the City of Charlotte apply for a quiet zone at the crossing of <u>West Summit Avenue and the LRMF access tracks</u>. The existing signals and gates at the crossing of West Summit Avenue and the Norfolk Southern mainline tracks will not be improved as part of this project, or in future phases. Should NCDOT secure additional funding for the Project, and at such time as the LRMF tracks extend across Summit Avenue, then per the NCDOT Roadway Design Manual⁶, the following equipment will be installed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 4-foot wide raised concrete

⁶ <https://connect.ncdot.gov/projects/roadway/pages/roadway-design-manual.aspx>

Finding of No Significant Impact

Summary of Environmental Consequences for the Build Alternative		
Section of EA	Summary of Impacts	Proposed Mitigation
		<p>monolithic median with reflective vertical tubular markers on 6-foot centers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Standard two-quadrant gates which includes gates, lights, and bells
3.1.3 Water Quality	<p>No Impact. The Build Alternative will not permanently impact water quality, and will not cause a change in the Class C classification designated by NCDENR DWQ. Temporary impacts associated with construction stormwater and sedimentation may occur as part of construction activities.</p>	<p>NCDOT will undertake BMPs in accordance with NCDENR DWQ's <i>Design Standards in Sensitive Watersheds and Stormwater Best Management Practices</i>.</p>
3.1.4 Water Bodies and Waterways	<p>Minor Impact. Construction of the Build Alternative will involve crossing an unnamed ephemeral railroad drainage ditch. This activity will result in permanent impacts to the Mecklenburg County 30-foot, post-construction SWIM buffer established for this drainage feature. Temporary impacts associated with construction stormwater and sedimentation may occur as part of construction activities.</p>	<p>NCDOT will undertake BMPs in accordance with NCDENR DWQ's <i>Design Standards in Sensitive Watersheds and Stormwater Best Management Practices</i>.</p>
3.1.5 Floodplains	<p>No Impact. The Build Alternative will not permanently impact any FEMA designated 100-year floodplain areas.</p>	<p>Not Applicable.</p>
3.1.6 Wetlands	<p>No Impact. There are no wetlands within the Project area. Therefore, the Project will not have permanent, temporary, secondary or cumulative wetland impacts.</p>	<p>Not Applicable.</p>

Finding of No Significant Impact

Summary of Environmental Consequences for the Build Alternative		
Section of EA	Summary of Impacts	Proposed Mitigation
3.1.7 Coastal Zones	No Impact. This Project is located in Mecklenburg County, which is not one of North Carolina's 20 coastal zone counties.	Not Applicable.

Finding of No Significant Impact

<p>3.1.8 Farmland</p>	<p>No Impact. The areas adjacent to the Project area are developed and urban in nature. No land exhibiting the criteria of farmland is present within or adjacent to the Project area.</p>	<p>Not Applicable.</p>
<p>3.2.1 Ecologically Sensitive Areas</p>	<p>No Impact. A survey of the Project area found no ecologically sensitive areas, wildlife habitat, or designated critical areas.</p>	<p>Not Applicable.</p>
<p>3.2.2 Threatened and Endangered Species</p>	<p>No Impact. Field surveys found no evidence of Federally-listed or State-listed Threatened and Endangered Species within the Project area.</p>	<p>Not Applicable.</p>
<p>3.3.1 Transportation</p>	<p>Minor Impact. The Build Alternative will improve servicing operations for passenger rail.</p> <p>Vehicular, pedestrian, and bicyclist traffic impacts will occur at the West Summit Avenue at-grade crossing by creating two separately operating at-grade railroad crossings. Minor delays to Charlotte Area Transit System (CATS) bus route 2 will likely occur due to increased train traffic crossing West Summit Avenue.</p> <p>Each Carolinian and Piedmont trains will cross West Summit Avenue three times while being serviced at the LRMF maintenance building and the train wash. As noted in Table 3 of the EA (page 14), there are six NCDOT sponsored trainsets that will be serviced at the facility, therefore, the crossing will be closed 18 times per day for these trains. NCDOT estimates that each Piedmont trainset (400 feet long) will create 1.75 minutes of total closure per</p>	<p>Traffic delays at the West Summit Avenue crossing will be minor (average number of vehicles per day is fewer than 3,300). Other streets in the area will provide alternative routes for traffic when the crossing gates are down. FRA and NCDOT do not believe that these impacts are significant, and FRA does not believe that they should prevent issuance of this FONSI.</p>

	<p>crossing. Carolinian trainsets (trains #79 and #80 in Table 3 on page 14 of the EA) are longer, and will create 2.75 minutes of closure per crossing. This calculation is based upon a yard speed of 5 MPH, with the gates down 30 seconds before and 15 seconds after the train crosses. As noted in Table 3 of the EA, all NCDOT sponsored trains will enter the facility between the hours of 8 a.m. and 11 p.m., and thus a majority of the crossing activity will be during this time period. It should be noted that the Crescent trains (#19 and #20) will only enter the facility for refueling, and will not cross West Summit Avenue multiple times. The Crescent will enter the facility sometime between 1 a.m. and 2 a.m., and will block the crossing approximately 3 minutes.</p> <p>The Build Alternative will eliminate existing surface parking on NCDOT-owned property. These surface lots are currently leased to the Carolina Panthers for use during events at the Stadium and are not for public parking. The existing surface parking agreement allows NCDOT to terminate the lease with a 45-day notice. Prior to construction, NCDOT will terminate the surface parking lease per the existing agreement. The removal of this parking will not impact the amount of parking spaces available for use during normal workdays in Uptown Charlotte.</p>	
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Finding of No Significant Impact

<p>3.3.2 Land Use, Zoning, and Property Acquisition</p>	<p>Minor Impact. The Build Alternative will have a minimal impact on both land use and zoning as the future land use and zoning designations associated with the Build Alternative will be consistent with all existing land use plans and local planning documents. The Build Alternative will require acquisition of 10 parcels from 3 separate property owners.</p>	<p>NCDOT will follow applicable Federal and State laws on property acquisition and relocations.</p>
<p>3.3.3 Environmental Justice and Community Disruption</p>	<p>No Impact. As shown in the tables included in Section 3.3.3 of the EA, the neighborhoods adjacent to the Project area do have a higher than average percentage of minority and low-income populations when compared to the averages for the State of North Carolina, Mecklenburg County, and the City of Charlotte. However, all of the properties impacted by the Build Alternative are commercial. No residential homes, community housing projects, or community centers will be directly impacted by the Build Alternative. In addition, the Build Alternative will not result in the disruption or segmentation of existing communities. <i>Therefore, the Build Alternative will not have a disproportionately high or adverse effect on minority and/or low-income populations.</i> Thus, the mandates set forth in Executive Order 12898 (Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority and Low-Income Populations) have been satisfied.</p>	<p>Not Applicable.</p>

Finding of No Significant Impact

<p>3.3.4 Hazardous Materials Inventory</p>	<p>Minor Impact. Surveys identified two potential hazardous materials sites within the Project study area.</p>	<p>If soil disturbing activities will impact the potential hazardous material sites, NCDOT will submit a work plan to NC Department of Natural Resources addressing how hazardous materials will be handled and disposed.</p>
<p>3.3.5 Cultural Resources</p>	<p>No Adverse Effect. FRA and NCDOT determined, and SHPO concurred, that the Build Alternative will have no effect on historic resources. However, the Build Alternative will require the acquisition of 3 separate tax parcels (owned by one owner) included in the locally designated Wilmore Historic District boundary.</p>	<p>Prior to construction of the full build phase of the LRMF, NCDOT will apply for a Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) from the Charlotte Historic Districts Commission for the 1 vacant lot, which consists of 3 separate tax parcels owned by the same owner, that are part of the Wilmore Historic District.</p>
<p>3.3.6 Section 4(f) Resources</p>	<p>No Impact. The Build Alternative will have no impacts to Section 4(f) resources. FRA and NCDOT determined, and SHPO concurred, that the Project would have no effect on the historic resources in the Project area.</p>	<p>Not Applicable.</p>
<p>3.3.7 Section 6(f) Resources</p>	<p>No Impact. There are no Section 6(f) resources in the Project study area.</p>	<p>Not Applicable.</p>
<p>3.4.1 Construction Transportation Impacts</p>	<p>Minor Impacts. Construction activities will result in some delays for pedestrians, cyclists, motor vehicles and buses traveling West Summit Avenue. During construction West Summit Avenue will be closed for extended periods, requiring signed detours.</p>	<p>NCDOT will coordinate with the City of Charlotte on detour routes.</p>
<p>3.4.2 Solid Waste Disposal</p>	<p>No Impact. Accumulated solid waste will be disposed of in accordance with State and local requirements throughout the duration of construction.</p>	<p>Not Applicable.</p>

Finding of No Significant Impact

<p>3.4.3 Use of Energy Resources</p>	<p>Minor Impact. During construction, there will be an increase in energy usage due to construction related activities. The facility will provide more services than the existing facility in NS' Charlotte Yard. As such, the proposed facility will result in more energy consumption than the existing locomotive servicing facility. However, the Project will assist in implementing NCDOT's plan to improve passenger rail service, which should result in fewer automobile trips, and thus lower overall energy usage.</p>	<p>Not Applicable.</p>
<p>3.4.4 Use of Other Natural Resources</p>	<p>No Impact. The use of other natural resources is anticipated to be minimal during construction of the selected preferred alternative. NCDOT will use BMPs during construction to minimize adverse impacts to natural resources both onsite and adjacent to the construction boundary.</p>	<p>Not Applicable.</p>
<p>3.5 Aesthetic and Design Quality Impacts</p>	<p>Minor Impact. All of the parcels to be acquired are zoned for commercial or industrial use. The Project area is adjacent to the Wilmore neighborhood, and will create changes in the visual landscape.</p> <p>Temporary visual impacts attributed to construction activities will be greatest for those directly adjacent to the construction site. Views of heavy equipment and material stockpiles will be commonplace throughout the duration of construction.</p>	<p>Where feasible, NCDOT will follow City of Charlotte requirements for berms, landscaping, and setback requirements to minimize the visual impacts to the surrounding neighborhood.</p> <p>Prior to construction, NCDOT will apply for a Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) from the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Historic Landmarks Commission for the impacts to the Wilmore Historic District.</p>

Finding of No Significant Impact

<p>3.6 Possible Barriers to Elderly and Handicapped</p>	<p>No Impact. Construction of the Build Alternative is not anticipated to result in barriers to the elderly and handicapped populations.</p>	<p>Not Applicable.</p>
<p>3.7 Public Health</p>	<p>No Impact. No impacts to public health are anticipated during construction of the Build Alternative. Air quality assessments performed showed the impacts from project construction to be below air quality thresholds and thus considered regionally insignificant.</p> <p>NCDOT does not anticipate impacts to public health from LRMF operations. All existing NCDOT locomotives comply with current EPA emission requirements, and all new locomotives to be serviced at the facility will be Tier 0+ and Tier II compliant with the Clean Air Act. Given the fairly moderate year-round temperatures, trains will not be idling overnight or for extended periods during the day. NCDOT will locate wayside power on-site to provide electricity to the passenger cars and locomotives during servicing, and therefore no head-end power engines will be required to run for extended periods of time between train arrivals and departures at the maintenance facility. Existing area noise levels are already significantly high due to the noise generated by the existing NS rail line, nearby freeways, and the operations of Charlotte Pipe and Foundry. Maintenance operations will be in an enclosed facility, and future noise levels in the project area are projected to be</p>	<p>Not Applicable.</p>

Finding of No Significant Impact

	1 to 2 dBA above existing levels, an increase which is not perceived by humans.	
3.8 Public Safety	<p>Positive Impact. Given the nature of the operations of the proposed Project (train movements, etc.), NCDOT will give particular attention to safety in the Project design. NCDOT will construct a more secure facility than existing, which will result in a higher degree of public safety.</p> <p>The Project will include typical hazards associated with a construction site, and NCDOT will give particular attention to the maintenance of public safety for the duration of construction.</p>	<p>The Build Alternative will address public safety in the facility's permanent design through appropriate fencing, gates, video surveillance cameras, and other safety and security measures. NCDOT will add protection (gates, flashers) to the new at-grade crossing at West Summit Avenue.</p> <p>Public access to the construction site will be limited to the greatest extent possible. This can be accomplished through the use of temporary fencing, warning signs, or other safety precautions.</p>
3.9 Recreational Opportunities	<p>No Impact. Construction of the Build Alternative is not anticipated to impact recreational opportunities in and around the Project study area. The Build Alternative will not permanently alter access to local recreational resources.</p>	Not Applicable.
3.10 Secondary and Cumulative Impacts	<p>Positive Impacts. The Build Alternative will remove passenger rail maintenance activity from the NS Charlotte Yard, which will improve both passenger and freight rail operations in the Charlotte area by separating passenger and freight operations. The Build Alternative will also locate maintenance activities closer to the proposed Charlotte Gateway Station, which will result in more efficient train movements and operations.</p> <p>The Build Alternative will also help</p>	Not Applicable.

	<p>NCDOT implement the Piedmont Improvement Program (PIP), which is a larger effort to increase capacity and speeds in the Piedmont Corridor.</p> <p>NCDOT does not anticipate secondary impacts from construction and operation of the LRMF, such as growth-inducing changes in nearby land uses.</p>	
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5.0 PUBLIC AND AGENCY COORDINATION

5.1 CIRCULATION OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT (EA)

The EA for the Project was approved by FRA and signed by NCDOT and FRA on September 30, 2013. The EA was made available for public review at various government offices. Copies were distributed to state and federal environmental resource and regulatory agencies and local governments. A public hearing map of the Project and a copy of the EA were made available for public review at the NCDOT District Engineer's Office, 7605 District Drive, Charlotte, and the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Government Center, 600 East Fourth Street, Charlotte. Comments were provided by reviewing agencies as well as members of the public. The public hearing map also was available at <http://www.ncdot.gov/projects/publicmeetings/>. The EA is also available for download in .pdf format on the project website at: <http://www.ncdot.gov/projects/charlotterailmaint/>. Comments on the EA were accepted by NCDOT through December 27, 2013.

5.2 DESIGN PUBLIC HEARING

Following circulation of the EA for comments, a design public hearing was held on December 12, 2013 from 5:00 to 7:00 p.m. at the Calvary United Methodist Church, 512 West Boulevard in Charlotte. Notifications were mailed on November 18, 2013 to 336 property owners and a public notice ran in the newspaper 30 days prior to the hearing. The public notice, handout and comment form for the hearing are included in Appendix C. The Design Public Hearing was held in an informal setting to answer questions and receive comments regarding the proposed Project. Public Hearing Maps and conceptual plans presenting the Project design as well as environmental constraints were available for viewing. NCDOT provided handouts to attendees and a comment form and encouraged attendees to review the public hearing map. A rendering of the proposed Project was also on display and copies of the EA were available. Comments were received through December 27, 2013.

Approximately 29 people attended the Design Public Hearing. Four public comments were submitted during the comment period. All public comments received are summarized in Appendix D with responses for each comment.

5.3 AGENCY COMMENTS RECEIVED ON THE ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

Federal, state, and local agencies provided comments during the comment period. Comments from the agencies, and the responses to these comments, are summarized in Appendix D.

5.4 PUBLIC COMMENTS RECEIVED ON THE ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

Four comments (forms, emails, and letters) were received from the public during the comment period. Questions from the public generally focused on project noise, project timing, operations at the maintenance facility, and possible impacts to the Wilmore neighborhood. Appendix D summarizes all the comments received from the public and the individual response to each comment.

5.5 ERRATA/ADDITIONS TO THE ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

Based upon the public and agency comments received during the review period, NCDOT has made minor revisions to the EA document. Most of these changes are to clarify the number of trains that will cross West Summit Avenue, and to clarify that the Charlotte Historic Districts Commission will be consulted for a Certificate of Appropriateness for the Project. A complete list of errata and additions to the EA are provided in Appendix A.

6. ENVIRONMENTAL COMMITMENTS

During the NEPA process, commitments are made to avoid, minimize, or mitigate Project impacts. Commitments result from public comment or through the requirements of, or agreements with, environmental resource and regulatory agencies. The following special Project commitments have been agreed to by the NCDOT.

NCDOT will take a proactive approach to implementing sediment and erosion control Best Management Practices (BMPs) throughout Project Development and Design. NCDOT will implement all sediment and erosion control BMPs in accordance with North Carolina Department of Environment and Natural Resources (NCDENR) Division of Water Quality's *Design Standards in Sensitive Watersheds*⁷ to reduce potential for nutrient runoff into Irwin Creek.

Design plans will incorporate the treatment of stormwater runoff through the use of appropriate BMPs as defined in the most recent version of the NCDENR Division of Water Quality's *Stormwater Best Management Practices*⁸ (July 2007).

⁷ 15A NCAC 04B .0124 Design Standards In Sensitive Watersheds,
<http://ncrules.state.nc.us/ncac/title%2015a%20-%20environment%20and%20natural%20resources/chapter%2004%20-%20sedimentation%20control/subchapter%20b/15a%20ncac%2004b%20.0124.pdf>

⁸ <http://portal.ncdenr.org/web/wq/ws/su/bmp-manual>

Finding of No Significant Impact

In accordance with the Mecklenburg County Board of County Commissioners October 1996 "Creek Use Policy", efforts will be made to avoid, minimize, or mitigate impacts to designated Surface Water Improvement and Management (SWIM) buffers. Where impacts are determined to be unavoidable, coordination with the County will be conducted prior to the start of construction activities. All work to be conducted within a County designated SWIM buffer will be completed in accordance with the *Charlotte-Mecklenburg Land Development Standards Manual*⁹ for stabilization of disturbed areas to minimize negative water quality impacts.

Where feasible, NCDOT will follow City of Charlotte requirements for berms, landscaping, and setback requirements to minimize the visual impacts to the surrounding neighborhood.

The City of Charlotte is developing a policy regarding the initiation of quiet zones on city streets. As part of the unfunded full build phase of the Project, NCDOT will install infrastructure along West Summit Avenue that will need to be in place should the City of Charlotte apply for a quiet zone at the crossing of West Summit Avenue and the LRMF access tracks. The existing signals and gates at the crossing of West Summit Avenue and the Norfolk Southern mainline tracks will not be improved as part of this project, or in future phases. Should NCDOT secure additional funding for the Project, and at such time as the LRMF tracks extend across Summit Avenue, then per the NCDOT Roadway Design Manual¹⁰, the following equipment will be installed:

- 4-foot wide raised concrete monolithic median with reflective vertical tubular markers on 6-foot centers
- Standard two-quadrant gates which includes gates, lights, and bells

The Project will impact one vacant lot that consists of three separate tax parcels owned by White Consolidated Industries that are included within the Wilmore Historic District boundary. This impact will be due to the construction of the full build phase of the project. Since the construction of Phase 1A does not impact these properties, NCDOT will obtain a Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) from the Charlotte Mecklenburg Historic District Commission¹¹ prior to initiating construction of the full build phase.

⁹ <http://charmeck.org/city/charlotte/epm/Services/LandDevelopment/StandardsManual/Pages/default.aspx>

¹⁰ <https://connect.ncdot.gov/projects/roadway/pages/roadway-design-manual.aspx>

¹¹ <http://charmeck.org/city/charlotte/planning/HistoricDistricts/Pages/Home.aspx>

7. CONCLUSION

FRA finds that the impacts of the Preferred Alternative, as assessed in the *Locomotive and Railcar Maintenance Facility Project, TIP Project # P-2918F, Mecklenburg County, NC Environmental Assessment* (September 30, 2013) and this *Finding of No Significant Impact* satisfy the requirements of FRA's *Procedures of Considering Environmental Impacts*, and that the Project will not have a significant impact on the quality of the human or natural environment following the implementation of identified mitigation measures.



Joseph C. Szabo, Administrator
Federal Railroad Administration



Date

Finding of No Significant Impact

FRA Contact Person

John Winkle
Environmental Protection Specialist
Federal Railroad Administration
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Washington, DC 20590
202.493.6067

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APPENDIX A

Additions and Errata to Environmental Assessment

ERRATA

Locomotive and Railcar Maintenance Facility Project Environmental Assessment NCDOT Project No. P-2918F

This document includes corrections, revisions and or additions to the Environmental Assessment (EA) for the Locomotive and Railcar Maintenance Facility (LRMF) Project, subsequent to the signed approval by the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) and the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) on September 30, 2013.

Green Sheet

Page 2 of 2 -Replace "Charlotte Mecklenburg Historic Landmarks Commission" with "Charlotte Historic Districts Commission."

Executive Summary

Page v - Under 3.3.5, Cultural Resources, Proposed Mitigation, replace "Charlotte Mecklenburg Historic Landmarks Commission" with "Charlotte Historic Districts Commission."

Page vii - Under 3.5, Aesthetic and Design Quality Impacts, Proposed Mitigation, replace "Charlotte Mecklenburg Historic Landmarks Commission" with "Charlotte Historic Districts Commission."

Chapter 3.0

Page 28, 3.3.3 Environmental Justice and Community Disruption - Under Community Disruption, the fourth sentence should be replaced and read: "However, the Build Alternative will result in only 12 total train trips (6 trainsets operating roundtrip as 12 total train trips). These 12 train trips will be in addition to the 2 Amtrak Crescent passenger trains that traverse the crossing today."

Page 31 - Under 3.3.5, Cultural Resources, second paragraph, replace "Charlotte Mecklenburg Historic Landmarks Commission" with "Charlotte Historic Districts Commission."

Page 33 - Under 3.5, Aesthetic and Design Quality Impacts, second paragraph, replace "Charlotte Mecklenburg Historic Landmarks Commission" with "Charlotte Historic Districts Commission."

APPENDIX B

Project Maps & Figures

Figure 1: CRISP Projects

Figure 2: Project Location

Figure 3: Project Study Area

Figure 4: Aquatic Resources

Figure 5: Future Land Use

Figure 6: Zoning

Figure 7: Property Acquisitions

Figure 8: Environmental Justice

Figure 9: Existing At-Grade Railroad Crossings

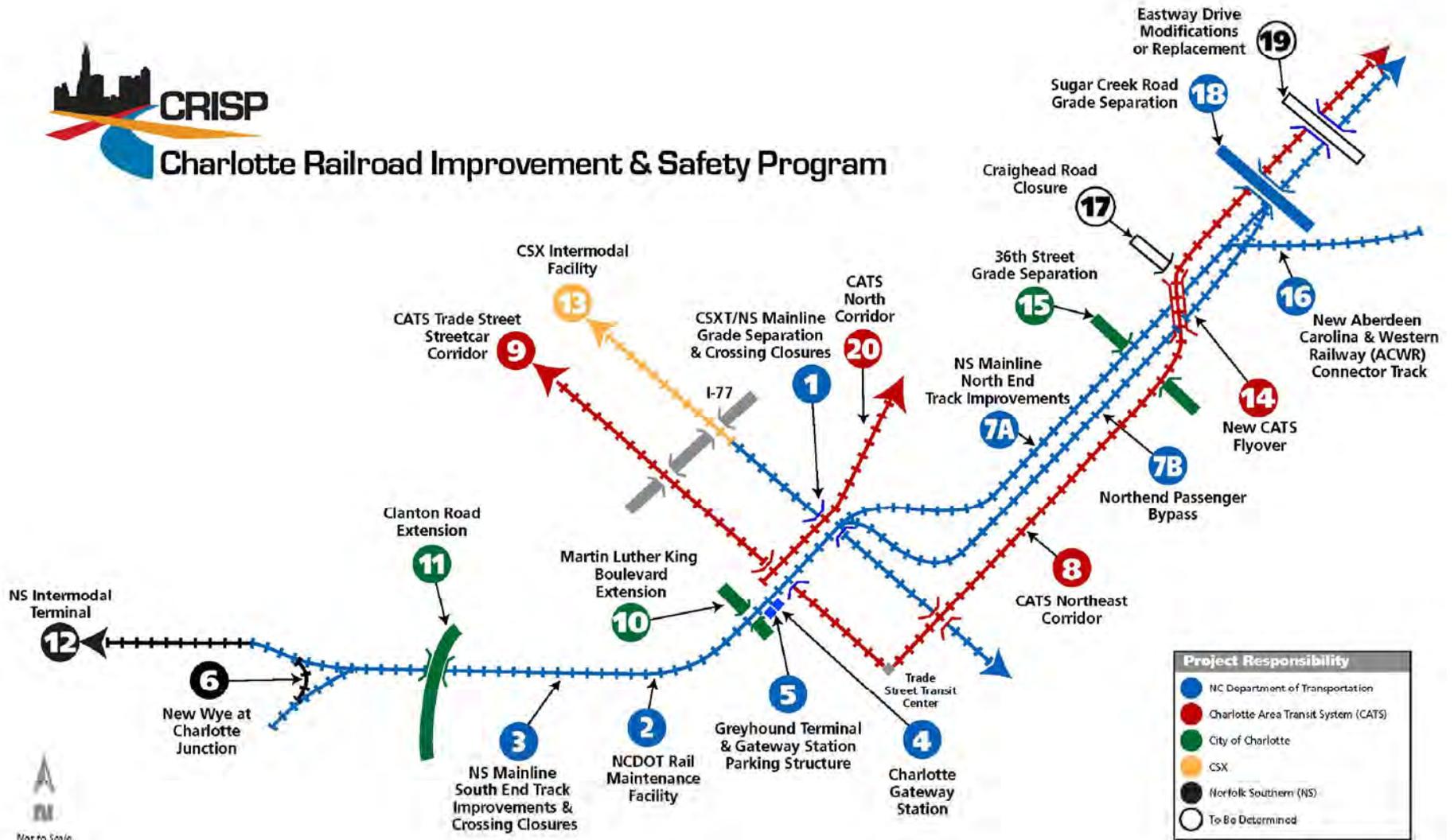
Figure 10: Potential HAZMAT Properties

Figure 11:-Conceptual Layout Phase 1A

Figure 12:-Conceptual Layout Project Build-Out



Charlotte Railroad Improvement & Safety Program



North
Not to Scale
Revised December 16, 2011

Charlotte Railroad Improvement & Safety Program (CRISP)
 Locomotive and Rrailcar Maintenance Facility Project
 TIP No. P-2918F



CRISP Projects

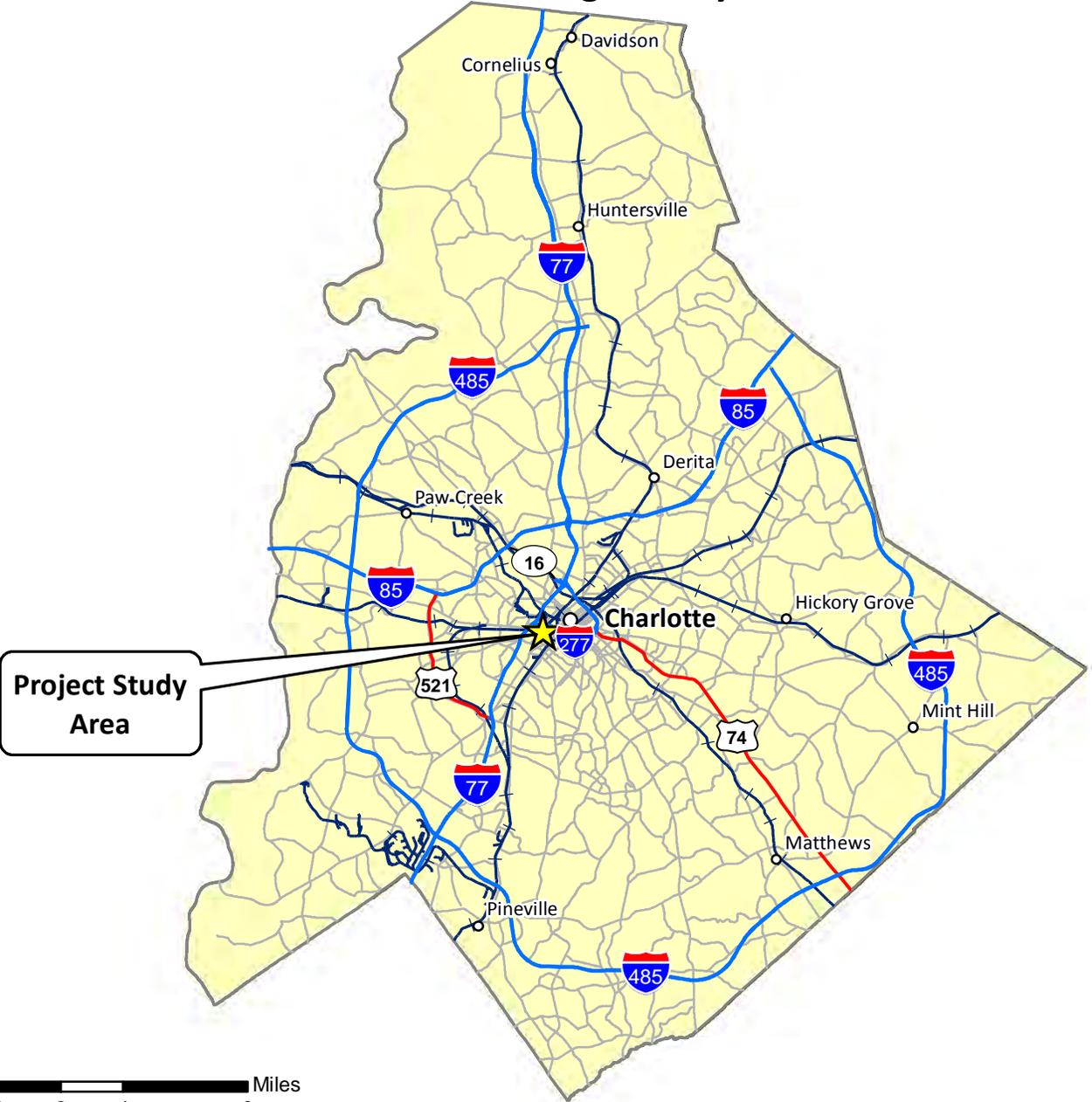
Mecklenburg County, North Carolina
 January 2014

North Carolina



Mecklenburg
County

Mecklenburg County



Project Study
Area



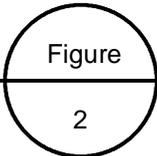
Charlotte Railroad Improvement & Safety Program
Locomotive and Railcar Maintenance Facility
TIP No. P-2918F

Data courtesy of Charlotte-Mecklenburg Geospatial Information Services



Project Location

Mecklenburg County, North Carolina
January 2014





Proposed Locomotive
and Railcar
Maintenance Facility

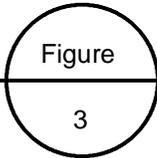
Charlotte Railroad Improvement & Safety Program (CRISP)
Locomotive and Railcar Maintenance Facility Project
TIP No. P-2918F

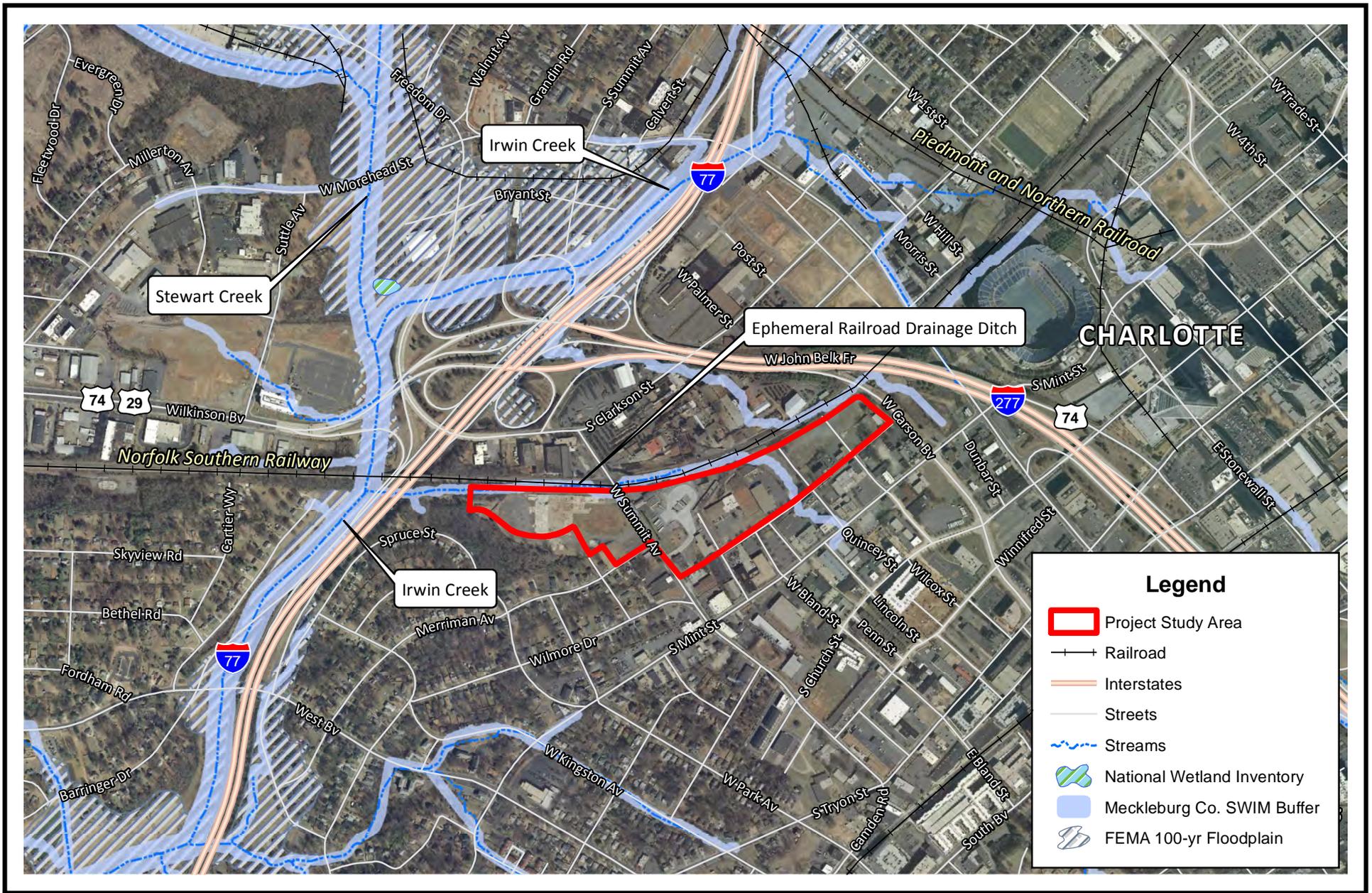
Data courtesy of Charlotte-Mecklenburg Geospatial Information Services



Project Study Area

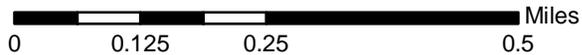
Mecklenburg County, North Carolina
January 2014





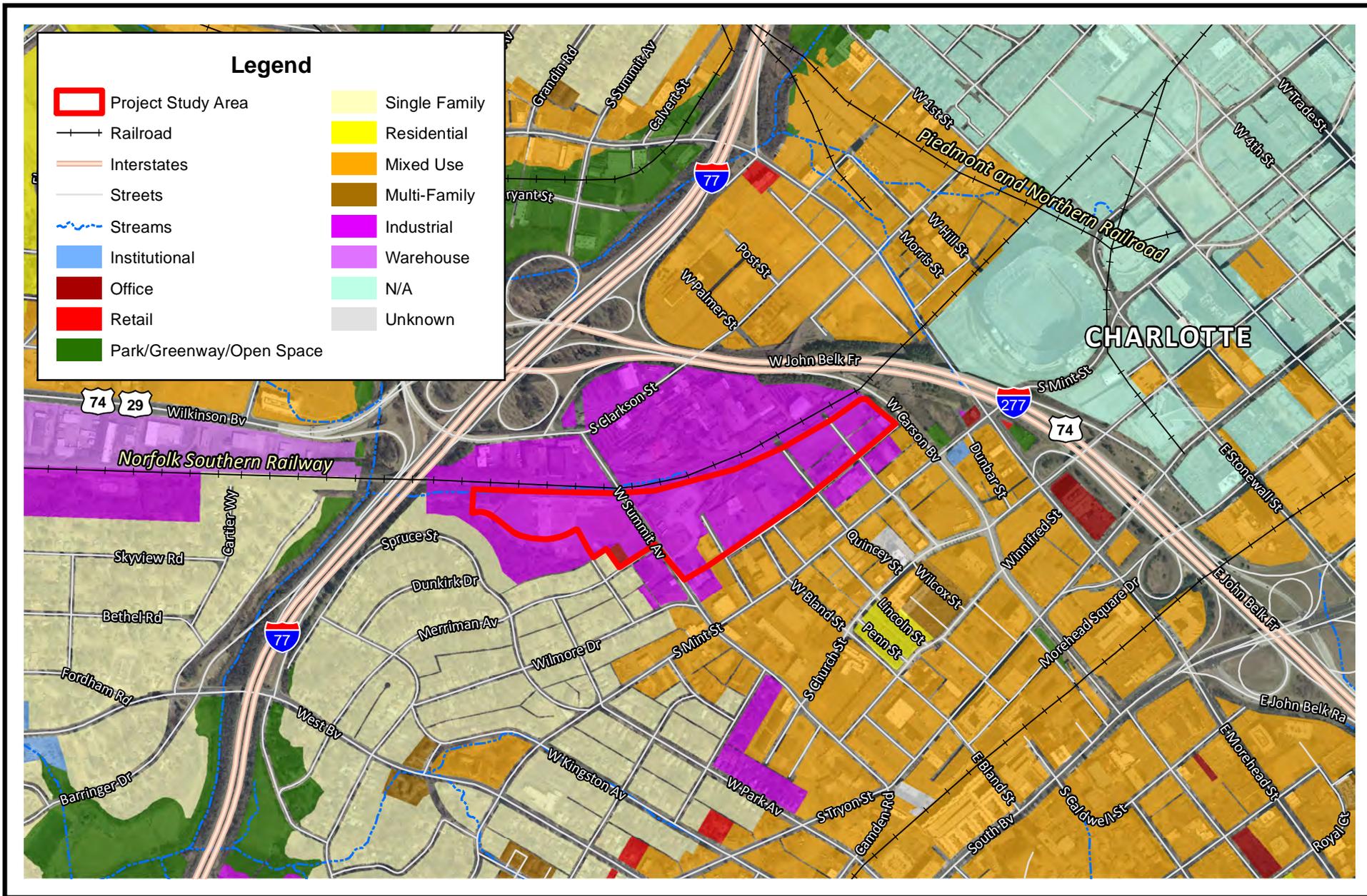
Charlotte Railroad Improvement & Safety Program (CRISP)
 Locomotive and Railcar Maintenance Facility Project
 TIP No. P-2918F

Data courtesy of Charlotte-Mecklenburg Geospatial Information Services



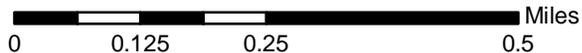
Aquatic Resources

Mecklenburg County, North Carolina
 January 2014



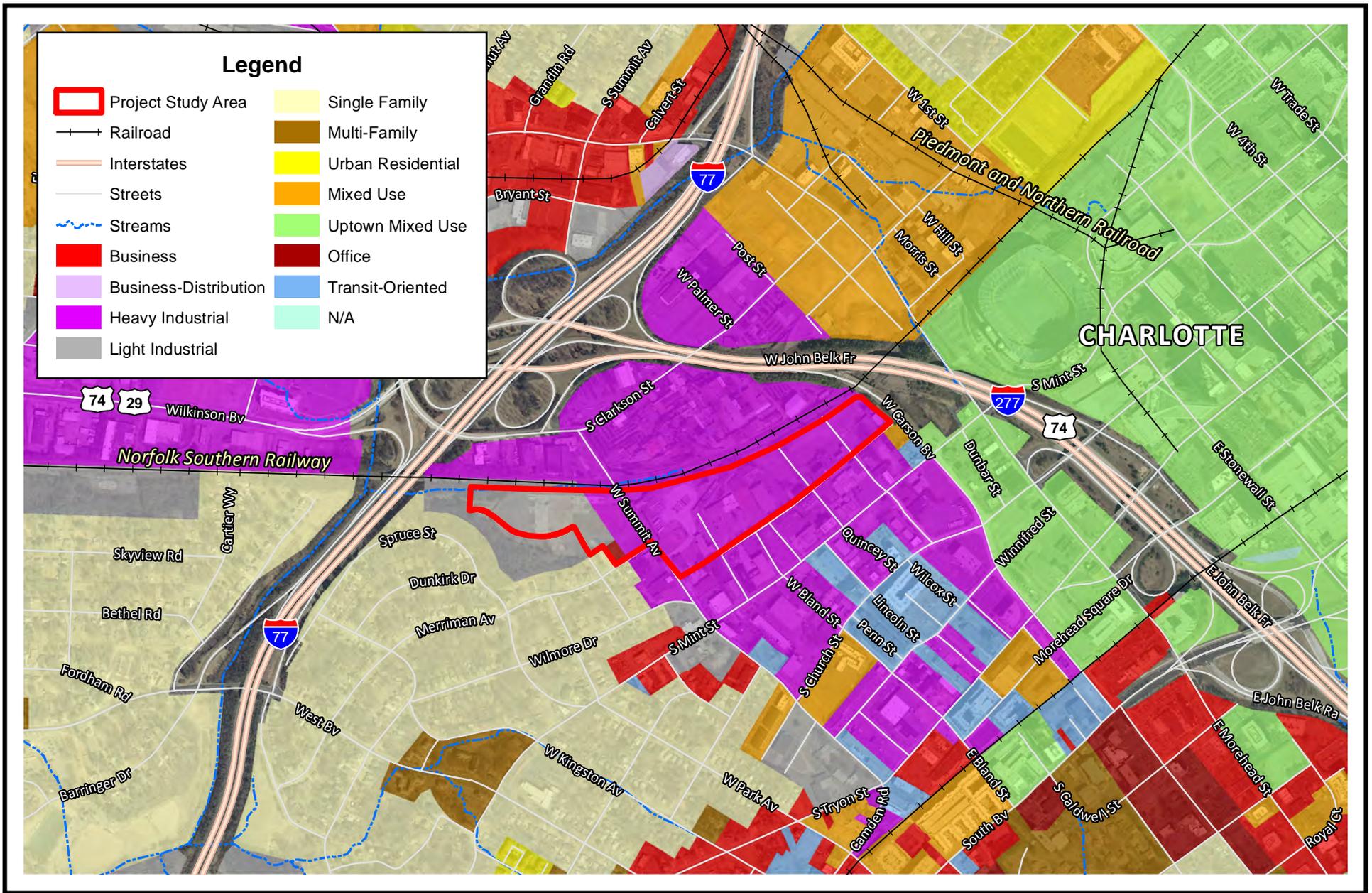
Charlotte Railroad Improvement & Safety Program (CRISP)
 Locomotive and Railcar Maintenance Facility Project
 TIP No. P-2918F

Data courtesy of Charlotte-Mecklenburg Geospatial Information Services



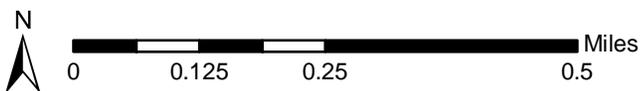
Future Land Use

Mecklenburg County, North Carolina
 January 2014



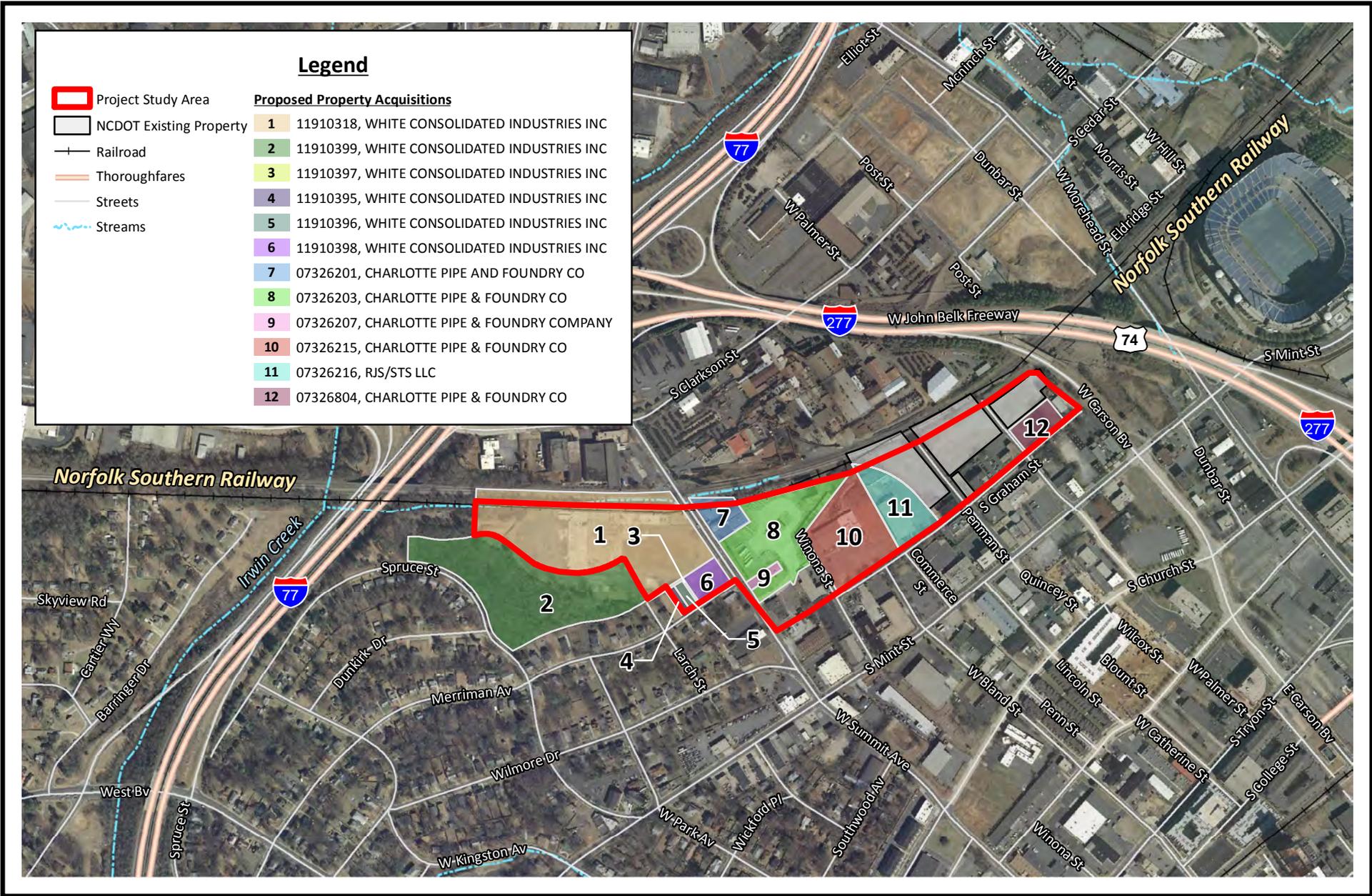
Charlotte Railroad Improvement & Safety Program (CRISP)
 Locomotive and Railcar Maintenance Facility Project
 TIP No. P-2918F

Data courtesy of Charlotte-Mecklenburg Geospatial Information Services



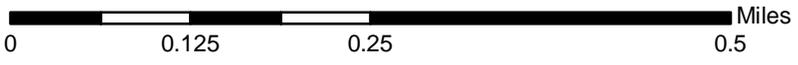
Zoning

Mecklenburg County, North Carolina
 January 2014



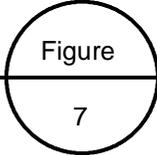
Charlotte Railroad Improvement & Safety Program (CRISP)
 Locomotive and Railcar Maintenance Facility Project
 TIP No. P-2918F

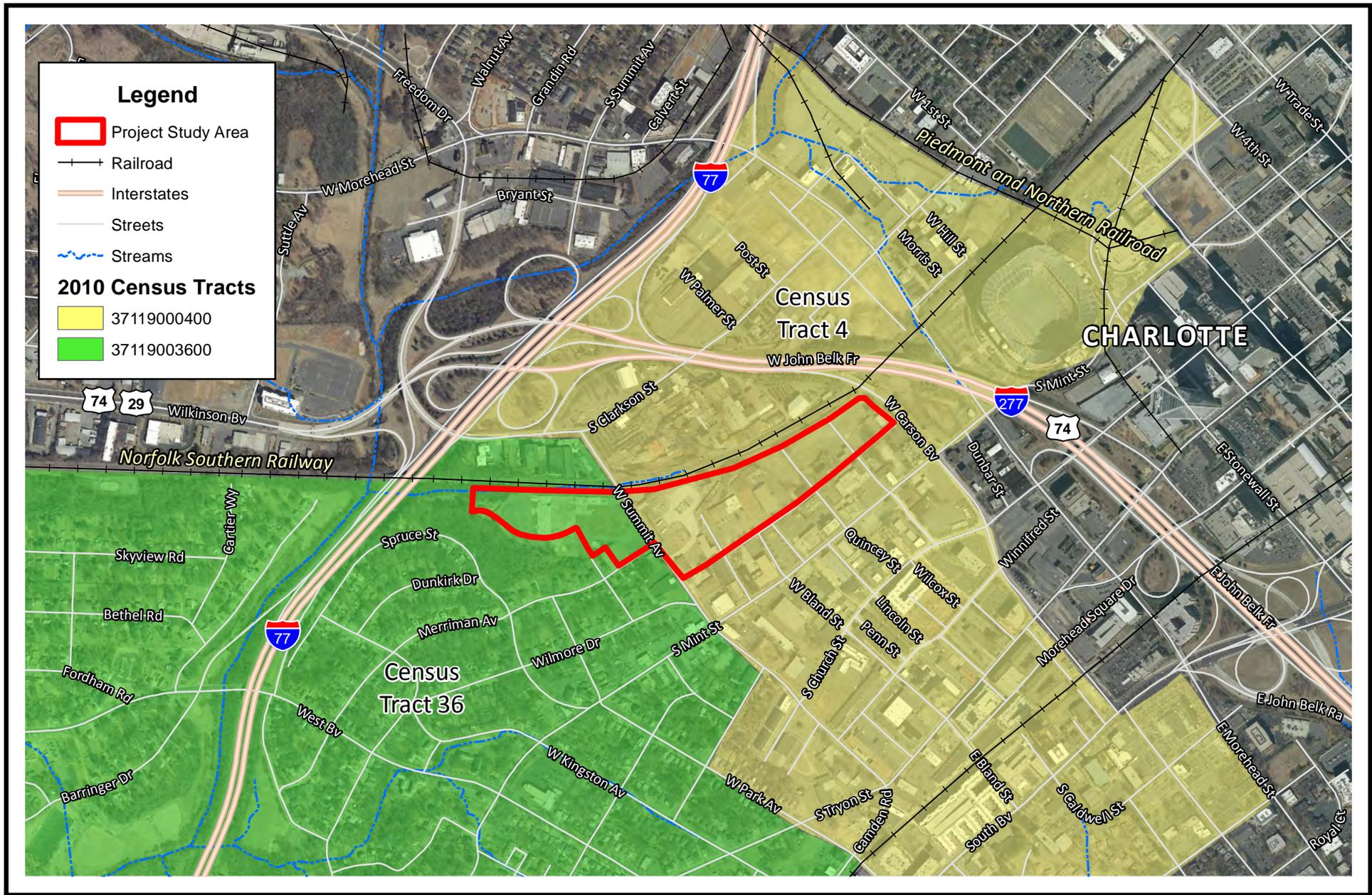
Data courtesy of Charlotte-Mecklenburg Geospatial Information Services



Property Acquisitions

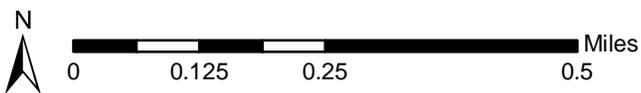
Mecklenburg County, North Carolina
 January 2014





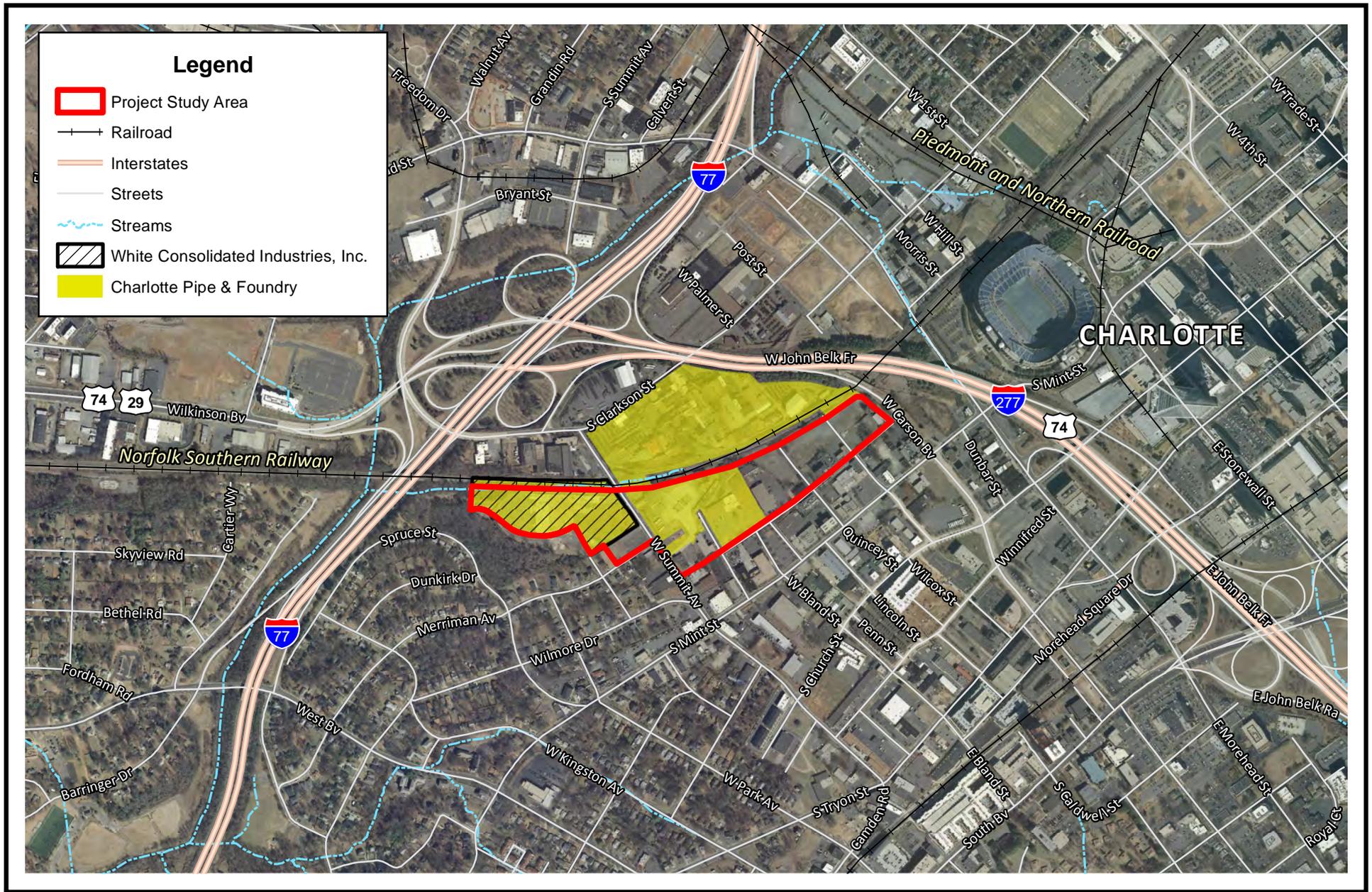
Charlotte Railroad Improvement & Safety Program (CRISP)
 Locomotive and Railcar Maintenance Facility Project
 TIP No. P-2918F

Data courtesy of Charlotte-Mecklenburg Geospatial Information Services



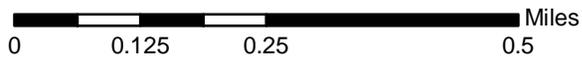
Environmental Justice

Mecklenburg County, North Carolina
 January 2014



Charlotte Railroad Improvement & Safety Program (CRISP)
 Locomotive and Railcar Maintenance Facility Project
 TIP No. P-2918F

Data courtesy of Charlotte-Mecklenburg Geospatial Information Services

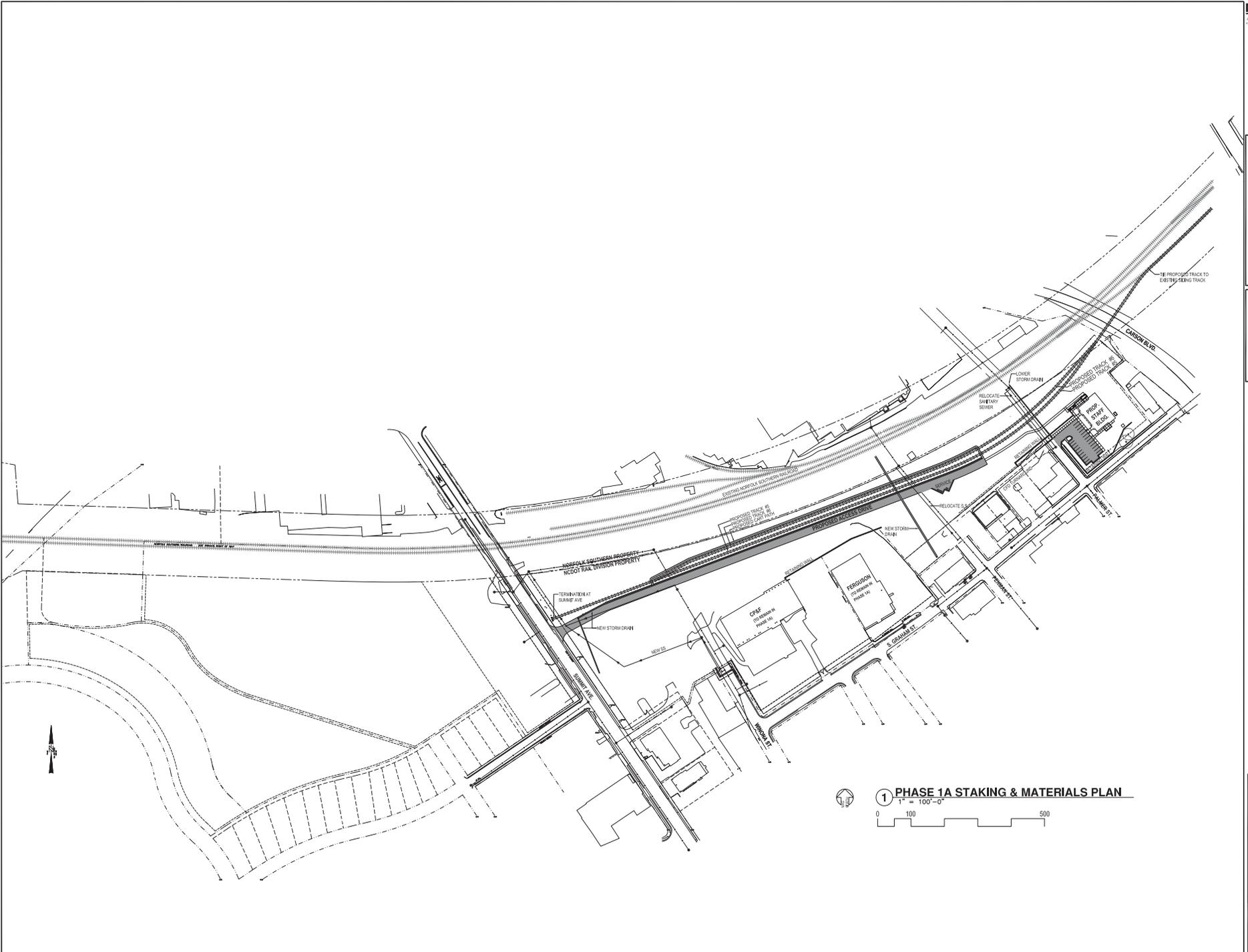


Potential HAZMAT Properties

Mecklenburg County, North Carolina
 January 2014

DATE:	04/23/2014
BY:	STV
FOR:	STV
PROJECT:	LOCOMOTIVE & RAILCAR MAINTENANCE FACILITY
SHEET:	PHASE 1A STAKING & MATERIALS
SCALE:	1" = 100'-0"

PROJECT NUMBER:	100863403
PROJECT NUMBER:	1102
SHEET TITLE:	PHASE 1A STAKING & MATERIALS
SHEET NUMBER:	C3
PROJECT COMPANIE:	SITE



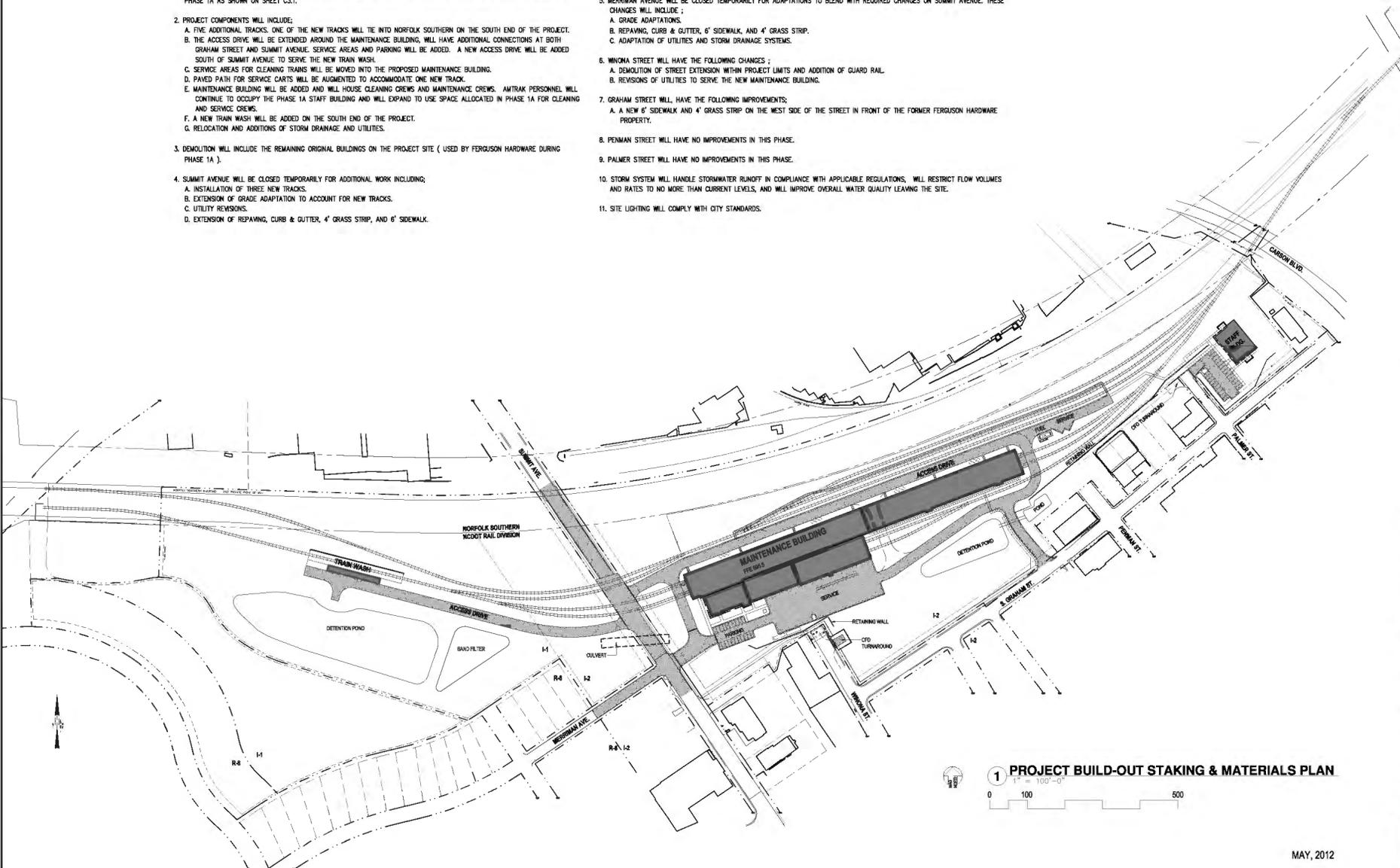
1 PHASE 1A STAKING & MATERIALS PLAN
1" = 100'-0"
0 100 500

Figure 11 - Conceptual Layout Phase 1A

PLOTTED Jan 28, 2014 - 10:58am

NOTES FOR PROJECT BUILD-OUT

1. THE PROJECT BUILD-OUT INCLUDES ALL IMPROVEMENTS SHOWN ON THIS SHEET EXCEPT FOR COMPONENTS TO BE COMPLETED IN PHASE 1A AS SHOWN ON SHEET C3.1.
2. PROJECT COMPONENTS WILL INCLUDE:
 - A. FIVE ADDITIONAL TRACKS. ONE OF THE NEW TRACKS WILL TIE INTO NORFOLK SOUTHERN ON THE SOUTH END OF THE PROJECT.
 - B. THE ACCESS DRIVE WILL BE EXTENDED AROUND THE MAINTENANCE BUILDING. WILL HAVE ADDITIONAL CONNECTIONS AT BOTH GRAHAM STREET AND SUMMIT AVENUE. SERVICE AREAS AND PARKING WILL BE ADDED. A NEW ACCESS DRIVE WILL BE ADDED SOUTH OF SUMMIT AVENUE TO SERVE THE NEW TRAIN WASH.
 - C. SERVICE AREAS FOR CLEANING TRAINS WILL BE MOVED INTO THE PROPOSED MAINTENANCE BUILDING.
 - D. PAVED PATH FOR SERVICE CARTS WILL BE AUGMENTED TO ACCOMMODATE ONE NEW TRACK.
 - E. MAINTENANCE BUILDING WILL BE ADDED AND WILL HOUSE CLEANING CREWS AND MAINTENANCE CREWS. AMTRAK PERSONNEL WILL CONTINUE TO OCCUPY THE PHASE 1A STAFF BUILDING AND WILL EXPAND TO USE SPACE ALLOCATED IN PHASE 1A FOR CLEANING AND SERVICE CREWS.
 - F. A NEW TRAIN WASH WILL BE ADDED ON THE SOUTH END OF THE PROJECT.
 - G. RELOCATION AND ADDITIONS OF STORM DRAINAGE AND UTILITIES.
3. DEMOLITION WILL INCLUDE THE REMAINING ORIGINAL BUILDINGS ON THE PROJECT SITE (USED BY FERGUSON HARDWARE DURING PHASE 1A).
4. SUMMIT AVENUE WILL BE CLOSED TEMPORARILY FOR ADDITIONAL WORK INCLUDING:
 - A. INSTALLATION OF THREE NEW TRACKS.
 - B. EXTENSION OF GRADE ADAPTATION TO ACCOUNT FOR NEW TRACKS.
 - C. UTILITY REVISIONS.
 - D. EXTENSION OF REPAVING, CURB & GUTTER, 4' GRASS STRIP, AND 6' SIDEWALK.
5. MERRIMAN AVENUE WILL BE CLOSED TEMPORARILY FOR ADAPTATIONS TO BLEND WITH REQUIRED CHANGES ON SUMMIT AVENUE. THESE CHANGES WILL INCLUDE:
 - A. GRADE ADAPTATIONS.
 - B. REPAVING, CURB & GUTTER, 6' SIDEWALK, AND 4' GRASS STRIP.
 - C. ADAPTATION OF UTILITIES AND STORM DRAINAGE SYSTEMS.
6. WINOMA STREET WILL HAVE THE FOLLOWING CHANGES:
 - A. DEMOLITION OF STREET EXTENSION WITHIN PROJECT LIMITS AND ADDITION OF GUARD RAIL.
 - B. REVISIONS OF UTILITIES TO SERVE THE NEW MAINTENANCE BUILDING.
7. GRAHAM STREET WILL HAVE THE FOLLOWING IMPROVEMENTS:
 - A. A NEW 6' SIDEWALK AND 4' GRASS STRIP ON THE WEST SIDE OF THE STREET IN FRONT OF THE FORMER FERGUSON HARDWARE PROPERTY.
8. PENMAN STREET WILL HAVE NO IMPROVEMENTS IN THIS PHASE.
9. PALMER STREET WILL HAVE NO IMPROVEMENTS IN THIS PHASE.
10. STORM SYSTEM WILL HANDLE STORMWATER RUNOFF IN COMPLIANCE WITH APPLICABLE REGULATIONS, WILL RESTRICT FLOW VOLUMES AND RATES TO NO MORE THAN CURRENT LEVELS, AND WILL IMPROVE OVERALL WATER QUALITY LEAVING THE SITE.
11. SITE LIGHTING WILL COMPLY WITH CITY STANDARDS.



1 PROJECT BUILD-OUT STAKING & MATERIALS PLAN
 1" = 100'-0"
 0 100 500

MAY, 2012



DATE: _____
 20% SCHEDULE DESIGN: _____
 75% DESIGN DEVELOPMENT: _____
 100% CONSTRUCTION DOCUMENTS: _____
 PREPARED BY: _____

RAIL DIVISION
LOCOMOTIVE & RAILCAR MAINTENANCE FACILITY
 Charlotte, North Carolina

PROJECT NUMBER: 100863403
 AREA PROJECT NUMBER: 1102
 SHEET TITLE: PROJECT BUILD-OUT STKG. & MAT.
 SHEET NUMBER: C3.1
 PROJECT COMPONENT: **SITE**

APPENDIX C

Design Public Hearing Summary

**Design Public Hearing Summary
Locomotive & Railcar Maintenance Facility
TIP Project P-2918F
December 12, 2013
Calvary United Methodist Church, Charlotte, NC**

1. Purpose and Intent

The purpose of the Design Public Hearing was to inform the public of and to solicit public input on the Locomotive & Railcar Maintenance Facility Project. Specifically, the public hearing was to allow the public an opportunity to comment on the recently completed Environmental Assessment (EA) for the Project. The Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Project Number is P-2918F. The project is sponsored by the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) Rail Division. The US Department of Transportation's Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) is the lead agency for the EA.

The hearing also served to comply with requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) environmental study process for this project. Through this effort, both written and verbal comments were solicited and received. Comments are detailed within this hearing summary. Open dialogue between the public and the project team was encouraged.

The hearing at the Calvary United Methodist Church, Social Hall was attended by local business owners, property owners, and residents living along the Project study area. Questions from the public generally focused on project noise, project timing, operations at the maintenance facility, and possible impacts to the Wilmore neighborhood.

2. Hearing Date, Time, and Location

The hearing was held on December 12, 2013 at the Calvary United Methodist Church Social Hall (512 West Boulevard, Charlotte) from 5 p.m. to 7 p.m.

3. Public Notices

3.1. Mailings

In advance of the hearing, approximately 336 notices were mailed around November 18, 2013 to addresses adjacent to and near the Project boundaries. A copy of the notice is attached.

3.2 Newspaper Announcements

Newspaper advertisements invited the public to participate in a discussion about the rail project. The advertisements were published in local newspapers and appeared on the following dates:

- *The Charlotte Observer* on November 24, December 1, December 8, and December 11, 2013
- *The Charlotte Post* on November 27, December 4, and December 11, 2014
- *La Noticia* on November 27, December 4, and December 11, 2014
- *Hola News* on November 26, December 3, and December 10, 2014

3.3 Other Communications

In addition to mailings and newspaper advertisements, the NCDOT employed the following hearing notification methods:

- Press releases sent on November 25, 2013
- Notices sent to NCDOT Division 10 staff and City of Charlotte staff and elected officials on November 25, 2013
- NCDOT's website, including <http://www.ncdot.gov/projects/publicmeetings/> and <http://www.ncdot.gov/projects/charlotterailmaint/>

3.4 Handouts and Displays

Information materials were provided to each hearing attendee. These materials included the following documents:

- Write-ups describing the project and purpose of hearing
- Project area map
- Comment sheet
- Title VI Public Involvement Form

The following poster-size displays were set up at the hearing and were available for viewing:

- Hearing map showing the footprint and layout of the proposed facility
- Architect's rendering of facility building
- Plans showing possible Project phasing

Copies of these handout materials and the displays are attached to this summary.

4. Hearing Procedure

4.1. Design Public Hearing

A Design Public Hearing was held between 5 p.m. and 7 p.m. The hearing was organized as an open house format where citizens or officials could review the handouts with descriptions of the Project and the environmental process and also could view aerial maps of the Project study limits with the proposed Project footprint. Staff from NCDOT, along with staff from Gannett Fleming, the NCDOT's project consultant, were on hand to describe the project and answer questions as needed.

Participants were asked to complete comment sheets regarding the projects and to note concerns they might have. The data compiled from the comment sheets are summarized in Section 5.

4.2 Attendance

Twenty-nine (29) persons attended the hearing in addition to four persons from NCDOT and Gannett Fleming who were on hand to discuss the Project with attendees and to answer questions and comments.

5. Summary of Public Input

5.1 Verbal Questions and Comments

Many hearing attendees wanted information on the project, including information on possible noise and air quality impacts, when the facility will operate, and when trains will enter the facility. Many attendees were residents of the Wilmore neighborhood. Others had questions about whether other locations were considered for the facility, and the site selection process.

5.2 Phone Calls and Emails

Prior to and after the hearing, NCDOT received no phone calls asking for information on the Project.

5.3 Comment Sheets

Comment sheets were distributed to each of the hearing attendees. The comment sheet stated that individuals were allowed to submit comments to NCDOT on the project through December 27, 2013. NCDOT received comments from four (4) individuals. The commenters had questions on the facility's operations, design, and possible noise and visual impacts, and suggestions on possible landscaping or other buffers for the Wilmore neighborhood.

5.4 Other Media

There were no television, web or print media stories on the Project or the hearing. No news media were present at the hearing. As noted above, NCDOT did send out press releases advertising the Design Public Hearing.

6. Additional Outreach

During the Project design and development from 2010 through 2013, NCDOT held various formal and informal meetings with property owners most impacted by the Project, such as Charlotte Pipe and Foundry. NCDOT also held a Citizens Information Workshop for the Project on March 27, 2012 that was advertised in a similar manner to the Design Public Hearing. NCDOT also conducted a tour in April 2012 for residents of the Wilmore neighborhood and others of NCDOT's Capital Yard rail maintenance facility in Raleigh, to allow them to have a better understanding of the type of operations to be undertaken proposed facility and to ask additional questions. To address the concerns expressed by the public, in May 2012 NCDOT modified the Project design to relocate driveways, revise the building orientation, and add vegetation buffers. NCDOT then held another meeting with the Wilmore neighborhood association in June 2012 to review the revised Project plan.

Attachments

- Mailer/Newspaper Advertisement/Webpage Press Release (2 pages)
- Hearing Handout (12 pages)
- Hearing Displays: Hearing Map, Architect's Rendering, and Phase Plans (4 pages)

NCDOT TO HOLD A PUBLIC HEARING DECEMBER 12th FOR THE PROPOSED LOCOMOTIVE AND RAILCAR MAINTENANCE FACILITY IN CHARLOTTE

TIP Project No. P-2918F

The N.C. Department of Transportation will hold a public hearing regarding the proposed construction of a new locomotive & railcar maintenance facility in Mecklenburg County. The new facility will replace the existing facility next to the Norfolk Southern Railway Charlotte yard.

The hearing will be held Thursday, Dec. 12, from 5-7 p.m. at the Calvary United Methodist Church Social Hall, 512 West Blvd, in Charlotte. Interested citizens may attend at any time. NCDOT representatives will be available to answer questions and receive comments regarding the proposed project. The public is urged to share their ideas, thoughts and suggestions with department staff. The opportunity to submit written comments or questions will be provided and is encouraged. There will not be a formal presentation.

The purpose of the proposed facility is to serve the increasing number of conventional passenger trains and support the Southeast High Speed Rail Corridor. The proposed facility will be in the vicinity of West Summit Avenue and West Carson Boulevard and will include:

- Enclosure for major maintenance operations;
- Fuel pad and onsite fuel tank;
- Additional space for spare parts and equipment storage;
- Enclosed train wash facility; and
- Train crew base for as many as 20 crew members.

The public can view maps displaying the location and design of the project, and a copy of the EA online at <http://www.ncdot.gov/projects/publicmeetings>, as well as at the following locations:

- City of Charlotte – Office of the City Manager
600 East 4th St., Charlotte
- Division 10 District Engineer's Office
7605 District Dr., Charlotte

For additional information, contact Diane Wilson, NCDOT-Human Environment Section at 1598 Mail Service Center, Raleigh, N.C. 27699-1598, by phone at (919) 707-6073 or by email at pdwilson1@ncdot.gov. All comments must be received no later than Friday, December 27, 2013.

NCDOT will provide auxiliary aids and services under the Americans with Disabilities Act for disabled persons who wish to participate in this hearing.

Anyone requiring special services should contact Wilson as early as possible so that arrangements can be made.

Persons who speak Spanish and do not speak English, or have a limited ability to read, speak or understand English, may receive interpretive services upon request prior to the meeting by calling 1-800-481-6494.



NORTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Charlotte Locomotive and Railcar Maintenance Facility Project

WBS Number 49999.1.STR8
TIP PROJECT P-2918F

Mecklenburg County

Design Public Hearing

5:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.
Calvary United Methodist Church
Social Hall
512 West Boulevard, Charlotte

December 12, 2013

PURPOSE OF PUBLIC HEARING

Today's hearing is another important step in the North Carolina Department of Transportation's (NCDOT) procedure for making you, the public, a part of the project development process. The purpose of the hearing is to obtain public input on the design of the project.

Planning and environmental studies on the rail project are provided in the planning and environmental document – Environmental Assessment (EA). Copies of that report together with today's hearing maps are available for public review at the following locations:

- NCDOT District Engineer's Office at 7605 District Drive, Charlotte; and
- City of Charlotte – Office of the City Manager, 600 East Fourth Street, Charlotte

The map is also available online at:

<http://www.ncdot.gov/projects/publicmeetings/>
<http://www.ncdot.gov/projects/charlotterailmaint/>

YOUR PARTICIPATION

Now that the opportunity is here, you are encouraged to participate by making your comments and/or questions a part of the public record. This may be done by writing them on the attached comment sheet. Several representatives of the North Carolina Department of Transportation are present. They will be happy to talk with you, explain the design to you and answer your questions. You may write your comments or questions on the comment sheet and leave it with one of the representatives or mail or email them by **December 27, 2013** to the following address:

Ms. Diane Wilson
NCDOT - Human Environment Section
1598 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, NC 27699-1598
Email: pdwilson1@ncdot.gov

Everyone present is urged to participate in the proceedings. It is important, however, that **THE OPINIONS OF ALL INDIVIDUALS BE RESPECTED REGARDLESS OF HOW DIVERGENT THEY MAY BE FROM YOUR OWN.** Accordingly, debates, as such, are out of place at workshops. Also, the workshop is not to be used as a **POPULAR REFERENDUM** to determine the location and/or design by a majority vote of those present.

WHAT IS DONE WITH THE INPUT?



A post-workshop meeting will be conducted after the comment period has ended. NCDOT staff representing Rail, Planning, Design, Traffic Operations, Highway Division 10, Right of Way, Public Involvement & Community Studies and others who play a role in the development of a project will attend this meeting. The project will also be reviewed with federal agencies such as the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) and the US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), as well as state agencies such as the NC Department of Environment and Natural Resources and Historic Preservation Office. When appropriate, local government staff will attend.

All spoken and written issues are discussed at the post-hearing meeting. Most issues are resolved at the post-hearing meeting. The NCDOT considers safety, costs, traffic service, social impacts and public comments in making decisions. Complex issues may require additional study and may be reviewed by higher management, Board of Transportation Members and/or the Secretary of Transportation.

Minutes of the post-hearing meeting will be summarized and are available to the public. If you note your request on the attached comment sheet, the summary will be sent directly to you.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT

Comments received from the hearing about the design of the proposed Charlotte Locomotive and Railcar Maintenance Facility project will be reviewed at the post-hearing meeting and incorporated, where feasible, into the design plans for the project. The design plans will also be refined including efforts to further reduce impacts to the human and natural environment. The project will then proceed to the right of way acquisition phase of the project upon approval of the final environmental document.

STATE-FEDERAL RELATIONSHIP

This proposed project may involve the use of Federal funds and thus will be considered a Federal-Aid Project. Financing of this project may come from Federal Funds and State Funds. The Board of Transportation is responsible for the selection and scheduling of projects, their location, design, and maintenance cost after construction.

PURPOSE AND NEED OF PROJECT

The purpose of the Project is to construct a new locomotive and passenger railcar maintenance facility southwest of Uptown Charlotte adjacent to a proposed multi-modal transportation center (Charlotte Gateway Station). The new Locomotive and Railcar Maintenance Facility (LRMF) Project will replace the existing Charlotte maintenance facility located adjacent to the Norfolk Southern (NS) Charlotte Yard, and will serve the increasing number and length of intercity passenger trains serving the region. The Project will provide capacity to support the future development of passenger service on the federally designated Southeast High Speed Rail (SEHSR) corridor.

The Project will address the following needs:

1. Improve the efficiency of the maintenance and service operations for existing and future intercity passenger trains in the Charlotte area; and
2. Assist in the implementation of the SEHSR by providing a facility that can service future high speed train sets.

The proposed Charlotte Locomotive and Railcar Maintenance Facility is a component of the Piedmont Improvement Program (PIP), which is an initiative by the NCDOT, NS, and the North Carolina Railroad Company (NCR) to improve passenger and freight railroad operations along the Piedmont Corridor from Raleigh to Charlotte. The PIP consists primarily of railroad capacity projects and crossing safety projects that will facilitate the introduction of up to 12 daily (six round trip) passenger trains along the Raleigh to Charlotte corridor. The PIP also includes station and facility projects that will improve service to passengers and improve the maintenance operations for the passenger trains serving the corridor.

The NCDOT Piedmont Corridor is also part of the federally designated SEHSR corridor. This corridor connects the northeastern states and Washington, DC through Richmond, VA to Raleigh and Charlotte, NC to Atlanta, GA. From Atlanta, the SEHSR extends southeast to Savannah, GA and Jacksonville, FL; and the Gulf Coast High Speed Rail (GCHSR) corridor extends across the southwest through New Orleans, LA, Mobile, AL and Houston, TX.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Project Phasing: The Project shown at this hearing includes the Full Build of the Locomotive and Railcar Maintenance Facility; however, certain components of the Project are designed to complement the incremental growth of intercity passenger rail and development of SEHSR service in North Carolina. NCDOT will construct the Locomotive and Railcar Maintenance Facility Project in phases. An initial phase (called Phase 1A) will include acquisition of right-of-way for the Project, construction of the lead track, two open-air storage tracks, the proposed Amtrak and contractor staff building near West Palmer and Graham Streets, and an emergency access driveway from West Summit Avenue.

Project Full Build: The Project includes two service and inspection tracks that will pass through a service building to allow for maintenance, cleaning, and servicing of passenger trains, as well as other open-air tracks for repair, storage and refueling of trains. The Facility will provide mid-day layover as well as overnight service of state-sponsored Carolinian and Piedmont trains. The LRMF will also be the primary maintenance and service location for the future SEHSR train sets.

The Locomotive and Railcar Maintenance Facility Project includes the construction of a total of eight tracks, including: four open-air tracks on the western half of the parcel (one lead track, two storage tracks and one car wash track), and four tracks on the eastern half of the parcel serving the enclosed maintenance facility. The lead track and car wash track as well as two of the maintenance building tracks will extend across West Summit Avenue at a consolidated four-track at-grade crossing.

The lead track will connect to the eastern NS mainline track at the north and south end of the Project. From the north connection, and heading south under the I-277 overpass,

the lead track will run west of the maintenance building, and will branch into two open-air storage tracks west of the lead track terminating north of the West Summit Avenue grade crossing. Prior to crossing West Summit Avenue, the lead track will have a second branch to the east also crossing West Summit Avenue that will serve the train wash shed. Both the lead and train wash tracks will cross West Summit Avenue.

Also, at the north end near the junction with the two open-air storage tracks, the lead track will branch into four maintenance tracks to the east of the lead track. These four tracks will serve the enclosed maintenance building with two tracks terminating at the maintenance building and the other two tracks extending through the building to the south end of the yard across West Summit Avenue. Both of the maintenance tracks will cross West Summit Avenue.

In total, four maintenance facility tracks will cross West Summit Avenue at a consolidated four track crossing that is separate from the existing NS mainline crossing (Crossing No. 716 172N, NS milepost 378.4).

The Locomotive and Railcar Maintenance Facility Project will be segregated into two primary functions north and south of West Summit Avenue, with the service building, and other structures, located on the north side of West Summit Avenue, and train wash facility located on the south side of West Summit Avenue. The Facility will include a service building with a crew base to accommodate train crews and train parts storage; refueling and train wash equipment; and parking for crew and employees. It should be noted that while the Locomotive and Railcar Maintenance Facility lead track will be connected to the existing NS mainline, the Facility trackage will be designed at an adequate off-set to accommodate the construction of a future third mainline track east of the existing NS mainline. This future third mainline will be part of other track improvements to be constructed by NCDOT or NS under a separate project, the NS Mainline Track Improvements project (unfunded at this time).

The proposed Locomotive and Railcar Maintenance Facility will replace the current Charlotte maintenance facility, and will also complement the existing Capital Yard maintenance facility in Raleigh. Ultimately, the proposed Facility will service half of NCDOT's state-sponsored trains. Trains that layover in Raleigh will continue to be serviced at Capital Yard.

PROJECT INFORMATION

Length: **Street/Roadway** - ~ 0.2 miles
 Rail - ~ 0.75 miles

Right of Way: **Railroad** - Approximately 200 feet

Access Control: Fencing and other security features will be added to prevent unauthorized access into the Facility

Relocatees: Ten properties are anticipated to be acquired from three separate property owners, requiring some business relocations

Project Cost: Phase 1A: \$12,600,000
 Full Build: \$44,000,000

Current

Schedule: The *tentative* schedule is shown below. A number of factors can affect a project schedule, so schedules are subject to change.

(Schedule is for Phase 1A only)

Right of Way Acquisition – Spring 2014

Construction –Summer 2015

Completion – Fall/Winter 2016

The attached map shows the location of the Project.

At today's Design Public Hearing are boards with the Project Hearing Map (showing the project Full Build), the proposed Phase 1A components, and a rendering of the Locomotive and Railcar Maintenance Facility building.

RIGHT-OF-WAY PROCEDURES

After decisions are made regarding the final design, the proposed right-of-way limits will be staked in the ground. If you are an affected property owner, a Right-of-Way Agent will contact you and arrange a meeting. The agent will explain the plans and advise you as to how the project will affect you. The agent will inform you of your rights as a property owner. If permanent right-of-way is required, professionals who are familiar with real estate values will evaluate or appraise your property. The evaluations or appraisals will be reviewed for completeness and accuracy, and then the Right-of-Way Agent will make a written offer to you. The current market value of the property at its highest and best use when appraised will be offered as compensation. The Department of Transportation must:

1. Treat all owners and tenants equally.
2. Fully explain the owner's rights.
3. Pay just compensation in exchange for property rights.
4. Furnish relocation advisory assistance.

RELOCATION ASSISTANCE

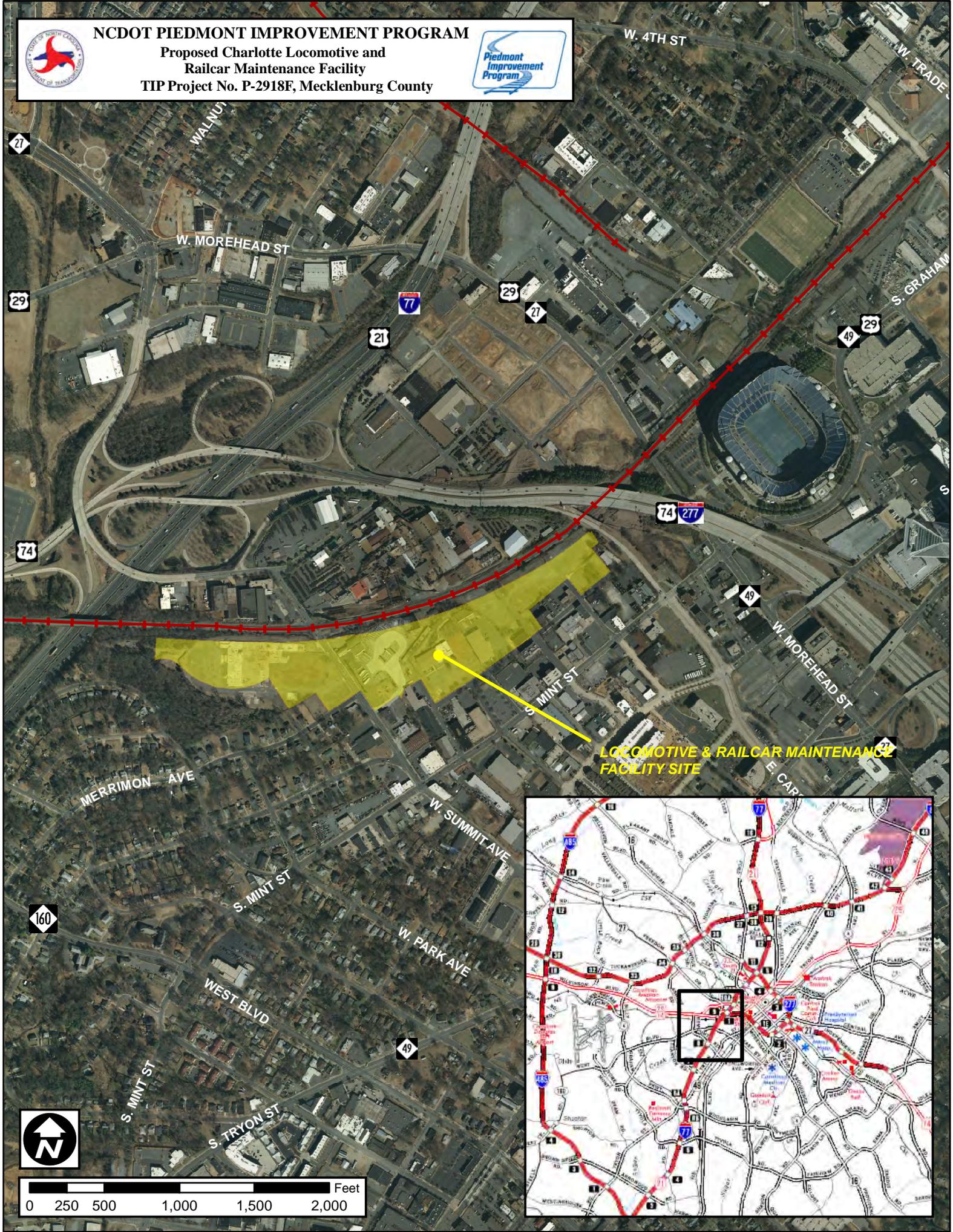
If you are a relocatee, that is, if your residence or business is to be acquired as part of the project, additional assistance in the form of advice and compensation is available. You will also be provided with assistance on locations of comparable housing and/or commercial establishments, moving procedures, and moving aid. Moving expenses may be paid for you. Additional monetary compensation is available to help homeowners cope with mortgage increases, increased value of comparable homes, closing costs, etc. A similar program is available to assist business owners. The Right-of-Way Agent can explain this assistance in greater detail.

NOTE: PAMPHLETS SUMMARIZING RIGHT OF WAY AND RELOCATION PROCEDURES ARE AVAILABLE AT THE SIGN-IN TABLE.

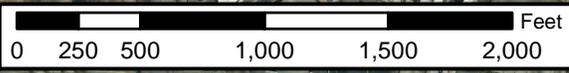


NCDOT PIEDMONT IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

Proposed Charlotte Locomotive and Railcar Maintenance Facility
TIP Project No. P-2918F, Mecklenburg County



LOCOMOTIVE & RAILCAR MAINTENANCE FACILITY SITE



TITLE VI PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT FORM

Completing this form is **completely** voluntary. You are not required to provide the information requested in order to participate in this meeting.

Meeting Type: Design Public Hearing	Date: December 12, 2013
Location: Charlotte, Mecklenburg County	
TIP No.: P-2918F	
Project Description: Charlotte Locomotive and Railcar Maintenance Facility	

In accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and related authorities, the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) assures that no person(s) shall be excluded from participation in, denied the benefits of, or subjected to discrimination under any of the Department's programs, policies, or activities, based on their race, color, national origin, disability, age, income, or gender.

Completing this form helps meet our data collection and public involvement obligations under Title VI and NEPA, and will improve how we serve the public. Please place the completed form in the designated box on the sign-in table, hand it to an NCDOT official or mail it to the PDEA-Human Environment Section, 1598 Mail Service Center, Raleigh, NC 27699-1598.

All forms will remain on file at the NCDOT as part of the public record.

Zip Code: _____	Gender: <input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female
Street Name: (i.e. Main Street) _____	Age: <input type="checkbox"/> Less than 18 <input type="checkbox"/> 45-64 <input type="checkbox"/> 18-29 <input type="checkbox"/> 65 and older <input type="checkbox"/> 30-44
Total Household Income: <input type="checkbox"/> Less than \$12,000 <input type="checkbox"/> \$47,000 – \$69,999 <input type="checkbox"/> \$12,000 – \$19,999 <input type="checkbox"/> \$70,000 – \$93,999 <input type="checkbox"/> \$20,000 – \$30,999 <input type="checkbox"/> \$94,000 – \$117,999 <input type="checkbox"/> \$31,000 – \$46,999 <input type="checkbox"/> \$118,000 or greater	Have a Disability: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Race/Ethnicity: <input type="checkbox"/> White <input type="checkbox"/> Black/African American <input type="checkbox"/> Asian <input type="checkbox"/> American Indian/Alaskan Native <input type="checkbox"/> Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander <input type="checkbox"/> Hispanic/Latino <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify): _____	National Origin: (if born outside the U.S.) <input type="checkbox"/> Mexican <input type="checkbox"/> Central American: _____ <input type="checkbox"/> South American: _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Puerto Rican <input type="checkbox"/> Chinese <input type="checkbox"/> Vietnamese <input type="checkbox"/> Korean <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify): _____

How did you hear about this meeting? (newspaper advertisement, flyer, and/or mailing) _____

For more information regarding Title VI or this request, please contact the NCDOT Title VI Section at (919) 508-1808 or toll free at 1-800-522-0453, or by email at slipscomb@ncdot.gov.

Thank you for your participation!



**NCDOT - PDEA
Human Environment Section
Attn: Diane Wilson
1598 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, NC 27699-1598**

COMMENT SHEET

Charlotte Locomotive and Railcar Maintenance Facility Project

Design Public Hearing

TIP Project No. P-2918F

Mecklenburg County

NAME:

ADDRESS:

EMAIL ADDRESS:

COMMENTS AND/OR QUESTIONS:

Comments may be mailed by December 27, 2013 to:

Ms. Diane Wilson, Sr. Public Involvement Officer
NCDOT - Human Environment Section
1598 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, NC 27699-1598
Phone: 919.707.6073 FAX: 919.212.5785
Email: pdwilson1@ncdot.gov

Ms. Diane Wilson
NCDOT - Human Environment Section
1598 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, NC 27699-1598



DESIGN PUBLIC HEARING
P-2918F
MECKLENBURG COUNTY

CHARLOTTE LOCOMOTIVE AND RAILCAR MAINTENANCE FACILITY

NORFOLK SOUTHERN RAILWAY AT
M.P. 379 TO M.P. 378.23

Wilmore Historical District
 (Recommended Eligible)



LEGEND	
[Solid Yellow]	PROPOSED BUILDINGS
[Purple]	EXISTING RIGHT OF WAY
[Purple]	PROPOSED RIGHT OF WAY
[Hatched Yellow]	PROPOSED ASSESSMENTS DRAINAGE, CONSTRUCTION, AND UTILITIES
[Hatched Green]	EXISTING ROADWAY
[Hatched Green]	EXISTING ROADWAY TO BE REMOVED
[Hatched Green]	EXISTING ROADWAY TO BE RETAINED
[Hatched Green]	EXISTING ROADWAY TO BE RESURFACED
[Hatched Green]	PROPOSED ROADWAY
[Hatched Green]	PROPOSED SUBGRADE
[Hatched Green]	PROPOSED STRUCTURES, ISLAND, CURB AND GUTTER
[Hatched Green]	EXISTING STRUCTURES, ISLAND, CURB AND GUTTER TO BE RETAINED
[Hatched Green]	EXISTING RAILROAD CORRIDOR
[Hatched Green]	PROPOSED TRAIN LINE FENCE
[Diamond]	BARBADO WILDFLORET
[Dotted]	PROPERTY LINES
[Dotted]	HISTORIC PROPERTY

INCOMPLETE PLANS
 DO NOT USE FOR R/W ACQUISITION

PRELIMINARY PLANS
 DO NOT USE FOR CONSTRUCTION

Note: The facility will be constructed in phases, with the first phase consisting of two tracks and the contractor staff building near W. Palmer Street. The remainder of the facility will be constructed in later phases.



NCDOT Locomotive & Railcar Maintenance Facility

Charlotte, NC NCSCO #1008634-03

Morris•Berg
ARCHITECTS



NORTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
RAIL DIVISION



Charlotte Railroad Improvement & Safety Program



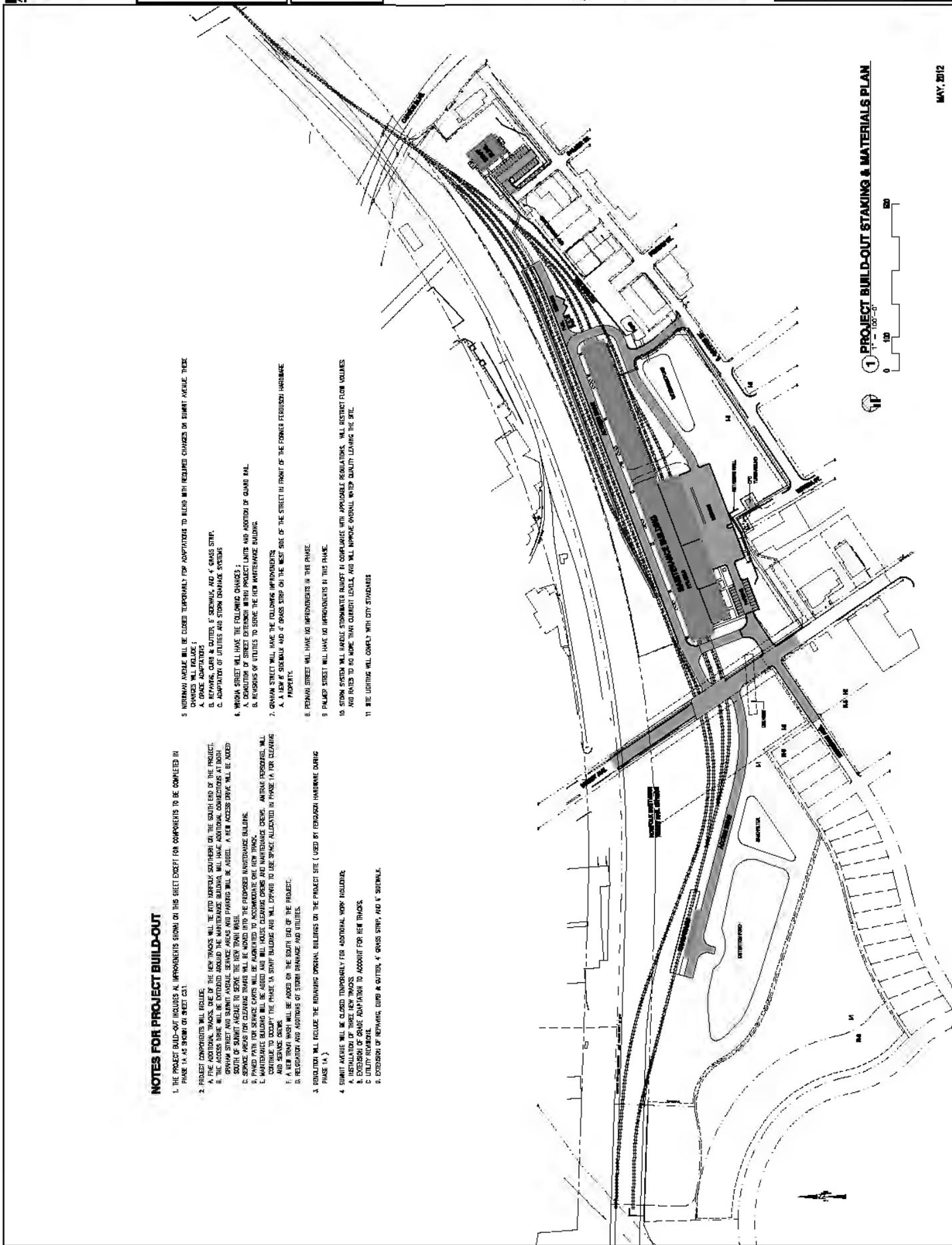
May, 2012

NOTES FOR PROJECT BUILD-OUT

1. THE PROJECT BUILD-OUT INCLUDES ALL IMPROVEMENTS SHOWN ON THIS SHEET EXCEPT FOR COMPONENTS TO BE COMPLETED IN PHASE 1A AS SHOWN ON SHEET C3.1.
2. PROJECT COMPONENTS WILL INCLUDE:
 - A. THE ADDITIONAL TRACKS SOUTH OF THE EXISTING TRACKS WILL BE ADDED IMMEDIATELY SOUTH OF THE EXISTING TRACKS.
 - B. THE ADDRESS RANGE WILL BE DETERMINED AROUND THE MAINTENANCE BUILDING. MAINTENANCE BUILDING WILL HAVE ADDITIONAL CONNECTIONS AT BOTH ENDS OF SUMMIT AVENUE TO SERVE THE NEW TRAIL WORK.
 - C. SERVICE AREAS FOR CLEANING TRAINS WILL BE MOVED INTO THE PROPOSED MAINTENANCE BUILDING.
 - D. MAINTENANCE BUILDING WILL BE ADDED AND WILL HOUSE CLEANING CREWS AND MAINTENANCE CREWS. ANIMAL WASTE REMOVAL WILL CONTINUE TO OCCUPY THE PHASE 1A STAFF BUILDING AND WILL EXPAND TO USE SPACE ALLOCATED IN PHASE 1A FOR CLEANING AND SERVICE CREWS.
 - E. A NEW TRAIN WASH WILL BE ADDED ON THE SOUTH END OF THE PROJECT.
 - F. RECONFIGURE AND ADJUSTMENTS OF STORM DRAINAGE AND UTILITIES.
3. BUILDINGS WILL INCLUDE THE REMAINING ORIGINAL BUILDINGS ON THE PROJECT SITE (USED BY FERGUSON HARBORWAY CLEARING PHASE 1A).
 - A. SUMMIT AVENUE WILL BE CLOSED TEMPORARILY FOR ADDITIONAL WORK INCLUDING:
 - i. INSTALLATION OF NEW FERTY TRACKS
 - ii. ADJUSTMENT OF ADDRESS RANGE TO ACCOMMODATE NEW TRACKS
 - iii. UTILITY REARRANGING
 - B. EXTENSION OF REPAIRING, CURB & GUTTER, 4" GRASS STRIP, AND 6" SIDEWALK.

5. INTERIM AVENUE WILL BE CLOSED TEMPORARILY FOR ADJUSTMENTS TO BLEND WITH REQUIRED CHANGES ON SUMMIT AVENUE. THESE CHANGES WILL INCLUDE:
 - A. GRADE ADJUSTMENTS
 - B. CURB & GUTTER, 4" SIDEWALK, AND 6" GRASS STRIP.
 - C. ADAPTATION OF UTILITIES AND STORM DRAINAGE SYSTEMS
6. WIRMAN STREET WILL HAVE THE FOLLOWING CHANGES:
 - A. REVISIONS OF UTILITIES TO SERVE THE NEW MAINTENANCE BUILDING.
 - B. REVISIONS OF UTILITIES TO SERVE THE NEW IMPROVEMENTS
7. GOWAN STREET WILL HAVE THE FOLLOWING IMPROVEMENTS:
 - A. A NEW 8" SIDEWALK AND 4" GRASS STRIP ON THE WEST SIDE OF THE STREET IN FRONT OF THE FORMER FERGUSON HARBORWAY PROPERTY.
8. PENNACI STREET WILL HAVE NO IMPROVEMENTS IN THIS PHASE.
9. PALMER STREET WILL HAVE NO IMPROVEMENTS IN THIS PHASE.
10. STORM SYSTEM WILL HANDLE STORMWATER RUNOFF IN COMPLIANCE WITH APPLICABLE REGULATIONS. WILL RESTRICT FLOW VOLUMES AND RATES TO MORE THAN CURRENT LEVELS AND WILL IMPROVE OVERALL WATER QUALITY LEAVING THE SITE.
11. SITE LIGHTING WILL COMPLY WITH CITY STANDARDS

100863463
1102
PROJECT BUILD-OUT STKG. & MAT.
C3.1
SITE



PROJECT BUILD-OUT STAKING & MATERIALS PLAN

 1" = 100'-0"

MAY 2012

APPENDIX D

Agency & Public Comments and Responses



*Excellence Delivered **As Promised***

Summary of Public and Agency Comments and Responses Locomotive and Railcar Maintenance Facility Project (TIP Project No. P-2918F)

Date of Summary: January 8, 2014

Date of Design

Public Hearing: December 12, 2013

Introduction

As required by the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) Rail Division completed a formal agency and public comment period after publishing the Environmental Assessment (EA) for the Locomotive and Railcar Maintenance Facility (NCDOT Project No. P-2918F). NCDOT and the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) approved the EA on September 30, 2013. Copies of the EA were distributed to various federal, state and local government agencies for their review and comment.

NCDOT held a design public hearing on December 12, 2013 from 5 PM to 7 PM at the Calvary United Methodist Church Social Hall, 512 West Boulevard in Charlotte. The hearing was advertised using a public notice mailed to 336 addresses on November 18, 2013 using a list of addresses in the Project study area. 29 attendees signed in at the hearing, in addition to 4 NCDOT staff members.

Design Public Hearing Comments

The following are written comments received from the public during the public comment period, along with responses from NCDOT.

1. **Lance Reagan (3303 Old Chapel Lane, Charlotte):** Comment: "I support the facility where it is proposed. My only addition to the discussion is: while I desire to keep Summit Ave. open, if closing the grade crossing is necessary to stop the horn sounding of passing trains, then so be it."

RESPONSE: In 2011, the NCDOT and City of Charlotte completed a study of the railroad/roadway at-grade crossings in west Charlotte, known as the West Charlotte Traffic Separation Study (TSS), TIP Project No. P-3309K. The TSS included an evaluation of the West Summit Avenue at-grade crossing, and recommended keeping the West Summit Avenue crossings open, with a further evaluation of the crossing once the full facility is constructed.

2. **Gwen Cook, Planner, Mecklenburg County Park and Recreation (5341 Brookshire Boulevard, Charlotte):** Comment: "Consider the noise reduction that might be achieved by semi-enclosure of ends of wash station - like plastic strips - or berm/wall combination."

We encourage White Consolidated Industries to dedicate the remaining woods to the

County to preserve the buffer of woods adjacent to the train wash area. Can this be a condition of the railroad purchase of the ROW? Of course it can."

RESPONSE: NCDOT anticipates that the noise generated by the wash facility will be at lower levels than the locomotives and other maintenance facility noise in the area. The noise analysis determined that the Project will only create a 1 dB increase over existing noise levels. A 1 dB change in sound level is not perceived by humans.

Regarding the additional property owned by White Consolidated Industries, NCDOT has previously encouraged Mecklenburg County and White Consolidated Industries to discuss a possible agreement for the County to acquire the remaining property. Because this Project will use American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) funds, NCDOT must follow Federal law for Project property acquisition (Uniform Act) and FRA guidelines for ARRA funds, which require NCDOT to only acquire the property necessary to construct the Project.

3. **Jessica Barnwell (531 Spruce Street, Charlotte):** Comment: "I visited the facility in Raleigh. I seem to recall being told about the waste from the toilets on the trains being stored underground. What is the case with this new facility in Charlotte?"

RESPONSE: There is no storage of waste from the toilets on the trains at the facility in Raleigh. Rather, the waste from the toilets is drained into the city's sanitary sewer system while at the facility. The proposed facility in Charlotte will have a similar waste disposal system as used in Raleigh.

4. **Darius Johnson (1536 Merriman Avenue, Charlotte):** Comment: "My name is Darius Johnson. I live in the Wilmore community where the planned Railcar Facility is planned to be constructed. My property is right against the facility, literally in my backyard. With two small kids 2 and 5 I have a lot of concerns when it comes to safety, pollution and the quality of life that we are providing not just for my kids but the kids in our community. I have attached my comments as well as a proposed idea that the community is comfortable with. I have also typed my comments below for clarity.

I hope that these concerns can be used to make this project a better one and maybe even save the quality of life I hope to raise my kids in.

Thank you,
Darius Johnson

1. Add 10 foot tall sound wall along the edge of the project 50 feet behind rear property line of houses that back up to the project.
2. Line the sound wall with very tall evergreen trees.
3. Work with city to include the sound wall and tree buffer to phase one of the railcar maintenance facility project.
4. Work with city to include the Park on the corner of Summit Ave. and Merriman Ave. (Dog park, Basket ball and Tennis court).

5. Improve Design of facility to be more architecturally significant."

[Additional Comment Sheet attached, with the follow comments:]

"1. Add a 10 foot sound wall (brick masonry) fifty feet from houses near property line.

2. Line the sound wall with large trees (evergreen). Refer to attached doc. from the City [attached was PowerPoint slide showing additional trees/vegetation buffers between the proposed facility and adjacent properties].

3. Work with City to include sound wall (brick 10') and 50' tree buffer to Phase one of project.

4. Work with City on include park (dog park, basketball court) - see attached doc from City (corner of Summit Ave. and Merriman).

5. Review design of facility to be more architecturally friendly to community.

6. Try to use maintenance facility as learning facility for local schools.

7. Review reducing the size and amount of retention pond/sand filter."

RESPONSE: As noted in Section 3.5 of the EA, where feasible, NCDOT will follow City of Charlotte requirements for berms, landscaping, and setback requirements to minimize the visual impacts to the surrounding neighborhood, in both phases of the Project.

Regarding the park concept at the corner of West Summit Avenue and Merriman Avenue, NCDOT will only acquire the right-of-way necessary to construct the Project. NCDOT has previously encouraged Mecklenburg County and While Consolidated Industries to discuss a possible agreement for the County to acquire the remaining property. Because this Project will use American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) funds, NCDOT must follow Federal law for project property acquisition (Uniform Act) and FRA guidelines, which would require NCDOT to only acquire the property necessary to construct the Project.

Regarding the facility design, NCDOT has modified the building orientation and design based upon public feedback received from previous public meetings. NCDOT will strive to make sure that the facility is compatible with the surrounding area. NCDOT will construct the minimum sized retention pond and filter area necessary to accommodate the needs of the facility and meet the local ordinance requirements.

Finally, safety and security requirements will not allow for the facility to be used as a learning facility with local schools. However, NCDOT is open to having limited tours of the facility for school or other community groups.

Agency Comments

The following is a summary of written comments received from agencies, along with NCDOT's response.

NC Wildlife Resources Commission - Western NCDOT Permit Coordinator

1. Encourages that NCDOT and the City of Charlotte minimize impervious coverage for this project and maximize stormwater treatment. (November 20, 2013)

RESPONSE: NCDOT will follow Best Management Practices (BMPs) for the Project. Minimizing impervious coverage and maximizing stormwater treatment is one of NCDOT's design goals for the Project.

NC Department of Environment and Natural Resources - Mooresville Regional Office

1. The following permits will be required: sedimentation and erosion control; 401 Water Quality Certification; Abandonment of any wells; and Notification if Underground Storage Tanks are discovered during excavation. (November 22, 2013)
2. May need a non-discharge recycle permit, depending on the details of how the wash facility is constructed, it could be considered deemed permitted. (November 22, 2013)

RESPONSE: NCDOT will acquire the necessary permits for the Project.

NC Department of Environment and Natural Resources - Division of Waste Management

1. The Mooresville Regional Office (MRO) UST Section recommends removal of any abandoned or out-of-use petroleum USTs or petroleum above ground storage tanks (ASTs) within the project area. The UST Section should be contacted regarding use of any proposed or on-site USTs or ASTs. (November 8, 2013)
2. Any petroleum spills must be contained and the area of impact must be properly restored. Petroleum spills of significant quantity must be reported to the North Carolina Department of Environment and Natural Resources - Division of Waste Management Underground Storage Tank Section in the Mooresville Regional Office at 704-663-1699. (November 8, 2013)
3. Any soils excavated during demolition or construction that show evidence of petroleum contamination, such as stained soil, odors, or free product must be reported immediately to the local Fire Marshall to determine whether explosion or inhalation hazards exist. Also, notify the UST Section of the Mooresville Regional Office at 704-663-1699. Petroleum contaminated soils must be handled in accordance with all applicable regulations. (November 8, 2013)

RESPONSE: NCDOT will follow Best Management Practices (BMPs) for the Project. NCDOT also has had the NCDOT Right-of-Way Unit complete a screening of each property to be acquired to determine possible USTs and ASTs, or other environmental contaminants. Copies of these screening reports are attached to this comment and responses summary.

NC Department of Cultural Resources - State Historic Preservation Office

1. The EA adequately addresses our concerns and we concur that the project, as proposed, will have no adverse effect on historic resources. (November 4, 2013)
2. The Wilmore Historic District was designated a local historic district by the Charlotte Historic Districts Commission, not the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Historic Landmarks Commission. The Green Sheet, and elsewhere throughout the EA as necessary, should be revised accordingly to show this. (November 4, 2013)

RESPONSE: Noted. The Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) document will note changes to the EA text to clarify that the Wilmore Historic District was designated a local historic district by the Charlotte Historic Districts Commission.

US Army Corps of Engineers - Asheville Regulatory Office

1. The Corps needs to verify the jurisdictional status of the feature labeled as a "ephemeral railroad drainage ditch" which is proposed to be impacted by the project. If the feature is determined to be jurisdictional, then a Section 404 permit will be required to impact this feature. (December 11, 2013)

RESPONSE: NCDOT will acquire the required Section 404 permit if the ephemeral railroad drainage ditch is determined to be jurisdictional.

City of Charlotte - Charlotte Department of Transportation

1. The LRMF would be located in an industrial area of Charlotte that nonetheless is within a quarter-mile of the Wilmore neighborhood. The noise analysis states that the increase in noise volume due to the LRMF will only be 1-2 dBA, described as a "minor impact" in the EA. However, the noise analysis and the qualitative "minor impact" seemingly fail to account for the number and frequency of times that train will sound their horns. Trains entering or exiting the LRMF will have to blow their horns as they cross W. Summit Avenue on one of the four proposed tracks, something which they do not need to do in the current Charlotte Yard location. We believe that these increases in frequency will constitute noise impacts in and of themselves, above and beyond the simple volume of each. Therefore, we believe that the new crossing should be established as a Quiet Zone in order to minimize or mitigate these impacts. (November 27, 2013)

RESPONSE: By regulations, NCDOT cannot apply nor approve the establishment of a quiet zone. Therefore, the City of Charlotte must request the establishment of a quiet zone from the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA). More information on quiet zones can be found at <http://www.fra.dot.gov/Page/P0104>

The noise analysis did account for the Locomotive and Railcar Maintenance Facility (LRMF) operation as well as the Amtrak passenger train operations. The noise modeling analysis included the train locomotive, passenger rail cars, train horn and crossing signal bells. The noise analysis was based on the following assumptions:

- Number of Train Locomotive: 1
- Number of Passenger Cars: 7
- Speed of Train and Cars: 5 mph
- Number of Trains during Daytime: 9 trains (between 7 a.m. and 10 p.m.)

- Number of Trains during Nighttime: 3 trains (between 10 p.m. and 7 a.m.)
- Due to LRMF operations and the proximity to Summit Avenue, it was assumed that each train will cross the Summit Avenue grade crossings 4 times and activate the train horn each time
- Number of Train horn blows during Daytime: 36 times (between 7 a.m. and 10 p.m.)
- Number of Train horn blows during Nighttime: 14 times (between 10 p.m. and 7 a.m.)

The noise analysis was conducted based on the **FTA Transit Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment guidance** which is more restrictive than the FRA CREATE guidance and resulted in two receptors (M-23 and M-24) *having a moderate impact* (as shown in Table 5 in the noise report), with the combined sound level of 73 dBA only 1 dB increase over existing noise levels. *A 1 dB change in sound level is not perceived by humans.*

If the noise analysis had been based on the **FRA CREATE Freight Noise and Vibration Model user guide**, according to the regulation, the focus will be on the “increase over existing” sound levels. For this Project, the “increase over existing” is 1 dB for both sites M-23 and M-24. According to FRA CREATE noise guidelines (CREATE manual, Table 4-6), this level of “increase over existing” results in there being no noise impact for the Project.

2. The Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) requires that train horns have a volume of 96 to 110 dBA (source: <http://www.fra.dot.gov/Page/P0104>). This requirement is different than the Federal Transit Administration's (FTA) 80 dBA guidance shown in Figure 1 of the noise analysis. Since the FRA and not FTA has jurisdiction for the LRMF project, the FRA standards should be used (because of the types of trains involved). (November 27, 2013)

RESPONSE: Figure 1, in the noise report, provides an example of typical noise environment and is not meant to be an indication of train horn noise level. The noise level associated with the train horns are specific to this train consist and speed, the noise level is an energy average over 24-hour and does include the noise from the train horn, as well as, the noise from the locomotive and rail cars. Also, according to the FTA noise assessment guidance (Chapter 5, Table 5-1, page 5-5), the horn noise level is set to 110 dBA which is the same level as the FRA train horn reference noise level.

Furthermore, according to FRA noise assessment guidelines: *“FTA transit noise and vibration impact assessment procedures are relied on by FRA in evaluating improvements to conventional passenger rail lines and stationary rail facilities and for horn noise assessment.”* (<http://www.fra.dot.gov/Page/P0216>). Therefore, there is no substantial difference in using either the FRA or FTA approach when evaluating the noise resulting from the Amtrak Passenger operations and LRMF.

3. For Table 6 of the noise analysis, our calculations indicate that the LRMF Predicted Noise level for receptor M-25 should be approximately 64 dBA if the maximum 110 dBA horn is sounded. Combined with the existing background noise of 72 dBA, the combined volume should be approximately 73 dBA, over the FTA Severe Impact threshold. The noise analysis concludes with the recommendation that the train horn not be sounded,

but the EA does not appear to contain such a commitment. Given that the proposed 4 track crossing of W. Summit Avenue will be less than 500 feet from residences, the FONSI needs to include a commitment to install the necessary infrastructure to allow trains operating on the 4-track crossing to not sound their horns. (November 27, 2013)

RESPONSE: Based on our interpretation of your comment, it appears that CDOT is incorrectly applying the FRA and FTA noise assessment guidance documents. Table 6, in the noise report, presents the future sound level for both the LRMF and the Amtrak passenger trains (train locomotives, rail cars, train horn activation during crossing back and forth to use the LRMF and the crossing bell signals).

Based on the example provided by CDOT for M-25 calculation, the Project related future sound level is 64 dBA, the existing sound level is 72 dBA and the combined sound level is 73 dBA. FRA CREATE noise assessment guidelines states that the "project related future sound level = 64 dBA" should be compared to the impact threshold criteria as shown in Table 3-1 in the FTA noise manual. Using Table 3-1 and existing sound level of 72 dBA, the result is a finding of no noise impact if the Project noise level is below 66 dBA. Hence, there is no noise impact for M-25.

In addition, FRA CREATE noise assessment guidelines states that the "total combined sound level=73 dBA" should be compared to the increase in cumulative noise levels as shown in Figure 3-2 and Table 3-3 in the FTA noise manual. Using Table 3-3 and Figure 3-2, the increase of existing sound level of 1 dBA ($73 - 72 = 1$) is below 2 dBA. Therefore, there is no impact for M-25.

4. It is unclear from the site plan provided in Appendix B what screening of the facility and tracks will be provided. Because of the facility's proximity to an historic neighborhood, we recommend that there be provisions for screening walls, landscaping, etc., well in excess of the minimums required by City ordinances. (November 27, 2013)

RESPONSE: NCDOT will provide details on visual screening (such as walls, berms, vegetation) during the next phase of design. NCDOT will work with the Charlotte Historic Districts Commission on developing requirements as part of the Certificate of Appropriateness (CoA) process, as well as with the City of Charlotte.

5. It is unclear how many total trains per day the LRMF will serve. Table 3 on page 14 lists a schedule of 8 trains per day, while page 28 says that there will be 12 trains per day. Also, do those figures include numbers of trains being sent to the LRMF for maintenance, such as major servicing? If not, please indicate an estimate of those also. (November 27, 2013)

RESPONSE: The text on page 28 will be revised to state that there will be 6 NCDOT sponsored trainsets that will use the facility, which operate as *12 total round trip trains*. These 6 trainsets are in addition to the 2 Amtrak Crescent passenger trains that traverse that crossing today; this is equal to the 8 round trip (16 total) NCDOT/Amtrak passenger trains that will be served at the facility as stated in Table 3 on page 14. The FONSI document will note changes to the EA text to clarify this.

Any major maintenance or major servicing of trains will most likely occur after the train discharges passengers at the Charlotte station and stops at the facility for standard

refueling and servicing. NCDOT does not have other trainsets or "spares" that will travel to the LRMF at other times. In other words, *all* NCDOT sponsored passenger trainsets will be serviced daily at the LRMF in some capacity, so there will be few if any "deadhead" train trips to the facility.

6. Section 3.3.1 states that there will be "minor" delays to pedestrians, bicyclists, and transit due to there being two independent rail crossings of W. Summit Avenue. However, no information is provided in the EA to justify the "minor" determination. Please provide estimates at buildout of the LRMF of both the expected number of times the W. Summit Avenue/LRMF crossing will be closed per day, and what the expected duration of each closure would typically be. (November 27, 2013)

RESPONSE: Each Carolinian train and Piedmont train will cross West Summit Avenue three times while being serviced at the LRMF maintenance building and the train wash. As noted in Table 3 of the EA (page 14), there are six NCDOT sponsored trainsets that will be serviced at the facility, therefore, the crossing will be closed 18 times per day for these trains. NCDOT estimates that each Piedmont trainset (400 feet long) will create 1.75 minutes of total closure per crossing. Carolinian trainsets (trains #79 and #80 in Table 3 on page 14 of the EA) are longer, and will create 2.75 minutes of closure per crossing. This calculation is based upon a yard speed of 5 MPH, with the gates down 30 seconds before and 15 seconds after the train crosses. As noted in Table 3 of the EA, all NCDOT sponsored trains will enter the facility between the hours of 8 a.m. and 11 p.m., and thus a majority of the crossing activity will be during this time period. It should be noted that the Crescent trains (#19 and #20) will only enter the facility for refueling, and will not cross West Summit Avenue multiple times. The Crescent will enter the facility sometime between 1 a.m. and 2 a.m., and will block the crossing approximately 3 minutes.

7. Please explain why the study area for the project is limited to only those parcels that NCDOT has acquired or will acquire. Given the previous comments about noise and aesthetics, we expect that impacts from the project will be felt well outside the study area. (November 27, 2013)

RESPONSE: The Project study area delineates the limits of where improvements will be made, not the limits of potential impacts. The study area established for this Project is similar to other rail project NEPA studies completed by NCDOT. The EA did investigate noise, vibration, transportation, air quality, and community impacts that extend beyond the immediate Project area boundary.

8. Section 3.3 does not make it clear if some or all of the Demographic Analysis Area meets environmental justice (EJ) criteria. Socioeconomic data presented show that the area is predominantly minority and poorer than Charlotte, Mecklenburg County, or the state as a whole; while the language used in Section 3.3 seems to imply that EJ criteria are met. The EA needs to clearly state if EJ criteria have been met. If they have, it is even more important that the noise and aesthetic impacts listed above be mitigated so as not to degrade the quality of life for affected residents. (November 27, 2013)

RESPONSE: As shown in the tables included in Section 3.3.3 of the Environmental Assessment document, the neighborhoods adjacent to the Project area do have a higher than average percentage of minority and low-income populations when compared to the

averages for the State of North Carolina, Mecklenburg County, and the City of Charlotte. However, all of the properties impacted by the Build Alternative are commercial. No residential homes, community housing projects, or community centers will be directly impacted by the Build Alternative. In addition, the Build Alternative will not result in the disruption or segmentation of existing communities. *Therefore, the Build Alternative will not have a disproportionately high or adverse effect on minority and/or low-income populations.* Thus, the mandates set forth in Executive Order 12898 (Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority and Low-Income Populations) have been satisfied.

9. Please explain what coordination, if any, was done with the Wilmore Historic District during the 2002 Feasibility Study. (November 27, 2013)

RESPONSE: NCDOT did not meet with the Wilmore Historic District in 2002, although the plan was placed on the NCDOT website (and linked on the CATS website) and was available for public review. The 2002 Feasibility Study was not a NEPA study and did not investigate impacts under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. Moreover, the proposed facility in the 2002 Feasibility Study was smaller in scale and did not border the Wilmore Local Historic District, and therefore no coordination would have been expected. Any Section 106 coordination would have been done with the Charlotte Historic Districts Commission, not with the historic neighborhood. Furthermore, the Wilmore Local Historic District was established in 2006, four years after the completion of the 2002 Feasibility Study.

10. The track circuits of both the Norfolk-Southern Mainline (NS) and the proposed LRMF crossings of W. Summit Avenue should be designed to prevent motor vehicles from being trapped between the two crossings with the gates down on both. Suggestions include an interlock such that a train on the mainline preempts the LRMF signaling (i.e., a train on the LRMF tracks sees a red signal) and vice-versa, and in-pavement vehicle detection to delay gates from coming down on the vehicle departure quadrant. (November 27, 2013)

RESPONSE: NCDOT will consider the City's recommended safety measures during future design phases. However, NS would not allow a stop signal on the NS mainline prior to the West Summit Avenue crossing. Signage will instruct drivers to not stop on the tracks. Vehicles stopped between both crossings when the gates are activated will need to wait until the crossing is clear to proceed, which on average should be approximately one or two minutes.

11. Section 3.3.1 states that, "Other streets in the area will provide alternative routes for traffic when the crossing gates are down." W. Summit Avenue is the only crossing of the NS Mainline in the area: with the nearest non-freeway crossings a half-mile away to the north (Morehead St.) and over a mile away to the west (Remount Rd.). Please identify what the reasonable detour route(s) would be when the LRMF crossing is closed and how drivers will know to take that alternative route prior to turning on to W. Summit Avenue. (November 27, 2013)

RESPONSE: NCDOT believes that the Morehead Street and Remount Road are viable alternatives for drivers. The West Summit Avenue crossing gates will be activated and stop traffic for approximately 1.75 to 2.75 minutes each time approximately 18 to 20

times per day for passenger rail servicing. As with all other at-grade crossings in Charlotte, traffic can wait until the crossing is cleared, or find an alternate route. Future traffic can use the same alternate routes that are used currently when stopped or delayed at the current crossing at West Summit Avenue.

12. As part of the construction of the LRMF crossing of W. Summit Avenue, please provide sidewalks across the 4 tracks in order to maintain pedestrian connectivity. The crossing also needs to accommodate bicycles. (November 27, 2013)

RESPONSE: NCDOT will include a wider asphalt shoulder with appropriate striping at the crossing, which is similar to the construction seen on other recent crossing improvements in Charlotte. This design is due to the lateral movement of the tracks which can cause damage to concrete sidewalk when installed too close to the track. NCDOT will work with the City on an appropriate pavement marking plan.

13. All streets affected by this project are City-maintained. The City's street standards call for a minimum 8-foot planting strip. This dimension needs to be provided wherever possible instead of the 4-foot planting strips shown on the site plans in Appendix B. Should constraints prevent there from being an 8-foot planting strip, NCDOT staff needs to work with City of Charlotte staff to determine an acceptable alternate. (November 27, 2013)

RESPONSE: NCDOT will work with the City on the crossing plan during the next phase of design, and will include an 8-foot planting strip where appropriate or will work with the City on an alternative design. The Project will not include a planting strip in the immediate area of the crossing due to maintenance issues with vegetation within the railroad right-of-way.

14. It is hard to differentiate the land uses used in Figures 5 and 6 of Appendix A. Many similar shades of red, green, and blue were used making it is hard to tell one land use or zoning category from another (such as the shades of red used to show Park/Open Space, Industrial, and Single-Family Residential in Figure 5). (November 27, 2013)

RESPONSE: Revised Project maps will be included in the FONSI document.

15. The Charlotte Fire Department, Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Department, and MEDIC should be contacted in order to determine the impacts to each department's response times in the area that a new crossing will create. (November 27, 2013)

RESPONSE: NCDOT has requested from CDOT information regarding potential impacts to their response times. NCDOT's understanding is that the City of Charlotte distributed the EA document to the various City departments for review and comment. Moreover, the EA document is available for review online.

16. According to City of Charlotte Stormwater Services, construction of the LRMF may be subject to the City's Post-Construction Controls Ordinance. (November 27, 2013)

RESPONSE: Noted.

17. What provisions will be made on the LRMF complex to contain fuel spills from the fuel pad or on-site fuel storage tank? (November 27, 2013)

RESPONSE: The design will be similar to that at NCDOT's Capital Yard facility in Raleigh and will follow National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) codes and standards. For example, the facility will include a double-walled fuel tank with sensors to indicate if there is a fuel breach in between the walls. The refueling facility will include an emergency shutoff system, and NCDOT-contract staff members are required to follow strict controls during refueling in an effort to prevent a fuel spill.

18. Please explain what specific measures required by DENR for locomotive maintenance facilities and wash areas will be used at the LRMF to protect water quality and/or treat runoff and effluent from the site. (November 27, 2013)

RESPONSE: According to comments received on November 26, 2013 from DENR via the State Clearinghouse, the Project will require the following permits:

- Wastewater/sewer construction
- Sedimentation and erosion control
- 401 Water Quality Certification
- Abandonment of any wells
- Notification if Underground Storage Tanks are discovered during excavation
- Possible non-discharge recycle permit (depending on how wash facility is constructed)

19. Environmental protection during construction is not specifically detailed in the EA section 3.4 "Construction Impacts." The last sentence in section 3.4.4 is vague; and environmental concerns should be listed, such as noise abatement, dust control, runoff containment, and sediment control. (November 27, 2013)

RESPONSE: The level of detail on construction impacts in this EA is appropriate and standard for the NEPA process. Possible construction activity impacts to public health were also included in Section 3.7 of the EA. More detailed information on the proposed construction practices will be developed during the permitting process. NCDOT will follow Best Management Practices (BMPs) for construction impacts, and will obtain the necessary permits as noted in the question and response above. The city can inform NCDOT of specific construction impacts that should be considered, and NCDOT will investigate and determine if other considerations should be noted in the construction bid documents.

Attachment: NCDOT Right-of-Way Branch property screening reports