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Interstate 295 Connector Road : Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI), April 6, 2002

Maine Department of Transportation

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FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

INTERSTATE 295 CONNECTOR ROAD, PORTLAND, CUMBERLAND COUNTY, MAINE

PIN 7589.00, Federal Project No. STP- NH-7589 (00)

Description of Action

The Maine Department of Transportation (MDOT) proposes to construct a two-lane highway connecting the Interstate 295/Congress Street (I-295) interchange with U.S. Route 1 (Route 1) at Veterans Circle in Portland, Maine.

Along this route from I-295 to Route 1, the two-lane Connector Road would cross the Guilford Springfield Transportation Railroad on structure. From the intersection with Route 1, the proposed improvement extends easterly from Route 1 to a new signalized intersection of Commercial Street and relocated West Commercial Street. The proposed improvement includes creation of new signalized intersections of Route 1 with St. John Street, Valley Street, and Danforth Street and the elimination of Veterans Circle.

Access into the industrial land currently allowed from Veterans Circle along Industrial Drive would be eliminated and would be relocated to the proposed signalized intersection of Commercial Street and relocated West Commercial Street.

A bicycle and pedestrian pathway would be constructed the length of the Connector Road.

A limited number of access points would be allowed along the Connector Road to previously developed land to the north.

The Environmental Assessment (EA), dated July 2002, documents the selection of the Preferred Alternative (see Figure 4-1, page 4-2 of the EA) through an alternatives analysis that included three alternative crossing locations of the Guilford Springfield Transportation Mountain Division Railroad line and the No-Build Alternative. The Preferred Alternative, described as Alternative A in the Environmental Assessment, minimizes the environmental impacts and achieves the study Purpose and Needs.

Public Involvement has included a public hearing, a public informational meeting, and a Public Advisory Committee comprised of members of the Portland community.

Comments received on the Environmental Assessment have been addressed and the responses are available.

Environmental Issues

The Study Area includes a section of Portland bounded by Thompsons Point, West Commercial Street, Congress Street, and the Fore River.

The Preferred Alternative will alter approximately 1,485 square meters (15,995 square feet) of wetlands. The Preferred Alternative will not impact any Wetlands of Special Significance.

The Preferred Alternative will require the acquisition of 7 hectares (17 acres) of private property.

Decision

The FHWA has determined that the Preferred Alternative, Alternative A, will have no significant impact on the human environment. This FONSI is based on the Environmental Assessment (EA), dated July 2002, which has been independently evaluated by the FHWA and determined to adequately and accurately discuss the need, environmental issues, and impacts of the proposed project and mitigation measures. It provides sufficient evidence and analysis for determining that an Environmental Impact Statement is not required. The FHWA takes full responsibility for the accuracy, scope, and content of the Environmental Assessment.

4-6-02
Date


Paul L. Lariviere, Maine Division Administrator, FHWA