



MCPB
Item # 5
5-1-2008

Date: April 25, 2008
To: Montgomery County Planning Board
VIA: Dan Hardy, Acting Transportation Planning Chief *DKH*
From: Shahriar Etemadi, Transportation Planning
Subject: BRAC Final Environmental Impact Statement Evaluation

Staff's Review and Discussion

The Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) for the Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) for the National Naval Medical Center (NNMC) in Bethesda, Maryland establishes the potential environmental impacts of relocating major functions of the Walter Reed Army Medical Center from Washington, DC to the National Naval Medical Center in Bethesda, Maryland.

The BRAC FEIS was released on April 4, 2008, kicking off a 30-day Wait Period prior to publication of the Record of Decision (ROD), which is anticipated to be published on or about May 5, 2008. The ROD is expected to formalize the recommendations contained in the FEIS, which were developed based on extensive interagency and public coordination.

The FEIS makes specific recommendations regarding the selection of Alternative One as the Preferred Alternative. The FEIS also identifies further federal and state procedures to implement the on-base improvements and actions to mitigate adverse impacts. While the FEIS does not contain a specific response to the Planning Board's request for future mandatory referral submissions, we have a process to stay informed of the separate on-site implementation activities and off-site improvement studies, we will keep the Planning Board apprised of the BRAC progress and informed of any decision points.

Staff proposes that the Chairman transmit the correspondence included as Attachment A to this memorandum.

Both Chairman Hanson and senior staff have been actively participating in Montgomery County's BRAC Implementation Committee (BIC) during the EIS process. The BIC transmitted its comments on the FEIS to County Executive Leggett on April 16, 2008; these comments are included as Attachment B to this memorandum.

Prior Planning Board and County Council Actions

The DEIS was reviewed by the Planning Board in a Public Hearing on January 10, 2008. The Board transmitted staff's recommendations under cover of a letter from Chairman Hanson, included as Attachment C. On January 14, 2008, Chairman Hanson and staff briefed the County Council on our findings and recommendations. The County Council endorsed the Board's recommendations.

Background

The BRAC realignment impacting Montgomery County derives from the transfer of multiple medical functions from the Walter Reed Army Hospital Complex to the Bethesda Naval Medical Center, creating the Walter Reed National Military Medical Center (WRNMMC) at Bethesda. The BRAC law calls for completion of the merger, establishment of the WRNMMC, and closure of Walter Reed to be accomplished by September 15, 2011. This combined center is to serve as the premier Department of Defense medical center that includes specialized facilities for the most seriously injured service members, as well as ongoing services to veterans and military retirees. It will serve as the American military's "*worldwide tertiary referral center for casualty and beneficiary care.*" That stated intent in this merger is to permit the joint military Services to "efficiently consolidate and utilize available health care resources and personnel."

Current Status

The FEIS was released on April 4th and on that day, a 30-day Wait Period (no action period) has begun. Comments received during the FEIS 30-day Wait Period (no action period) will be considered in reaching the final decision on the proposed action. Following the 30-day Wait Period (no action period), a Record of Decision (ROD) will be prepared and published in the Federal Register. The ROD is a concise summary of the decision made by the Secretary of the Navy (or his designee) from the alternatives presented in an FEIS. The ROD will state the decision regarding the alternative selected for implementation.

Alternative One has been identified as the Preferred Alternative in the FEIS that would add approximately 1,144,000 square feet (SF) of new building construction, provide approximately 508,000 SF of renovation to existing building space at NNNMC, and provide approximately 824,000 SF of new parking facilities (or nearly 2,500 new parking spaces). The primary difference between Alternative One and Alternative Two relates to site layout.

Approximately 12.2 acres (8.8 acres of construction on existing Final Environmental Impact Statement National Naval Medical Center ES-8 impermeable surfaces requiring demolition and 3.4 acres of new construction on open space) under the Preferred Alternative and up to 12.7 acres (8.0 acres of construction on existing impermeable surfaces requiring demolition and 4.7 acres of new construction on open space) under Alternative Two would be disturbed by the new facilities. The current impermeable

surface area at NNMC is estimated at approximately 98 acres; the Preferred Alternative and Alternative Two would increase impermeable surface area at NNMC by approximately 3.5 percent and 4.8 percent respectively. Although the Preferred Alternative increases the impermeable surface less than Alternative Two by 1.3 acres, it results in demolishing historic Building 12. For this reason, staff had recommended Alternative Two as the Preferred Alternative.

Transportation

The transportation study conducted in support of EIS evaluated the existing condition as well as the impact of the build alternatives at the NNMC. The analysis was based on the 2,500 additional employees expected on campus as the result of BRAC. The NNMC currently has about 8,000 employees and receives approximately 435,000 visitors a year. It is estimated that upon implementation of total build out of the campus, the number of visitors would increase by 484,000 additional visitors annually. The study recommends mitigation measures to limit the impact of additional traffic generated to the site by employees and visitors.

The US Congress has passed an Omnibus Appropriations bill that includes a \$2 million earmark for a MD 355 corridor study. This funding will be available for studying the MD 355 transportation corridor in the vicinity of NNMC. This funding provides for feasibility studies of the recommended mitigation measures in the area adjacent to NNMC campus.

The State of Maryland has allocated \$45 million for major improvements at four intersections and other transportation improvements in the area. The Navy has requested funding through the Defense Access Road (DAR) program to improve the Naval Hospital's main gates and provide turn lanes at these locations to reduce congestion and queuing on adjacent streets and to possibly provide one kiss and ride lot within the campus. The request for funding also includes financing of the underpass connecting NNMC campus to the Medical Center Metro station. Attachment D contains the FEIS recommendations regarding mitigation of transportation impact. Staff is supporting all these efforts to mitigate BRAC's impact.

The primary staff concern relating to the FEIS recommendations is that the timeframe for coordinating these studies is not yet known, particularly relating to both continuing a robust public outreach process while expediting the decision making and implementation process. Further coordination will be occurring with the Navy, NCPC, and the state, regional and local transportation agencies.

Parking

The new on-campus construction will result in demolishing 700 of the existing parking spaces on campus. The FEIS has recommended an additional 2,500 new parking spaces. Therefore, the proposed development on NNMC campus projects a net increase of 1,800 parking spaces. This combined with remaining existing parking on site provides

approximately 7,923 parking spaces on site. NNMC total future employees on site are estimated at 10,500. This results in a parking space/employee ratio of 1:1.3. This is a high parking space/employee ratio for a site so close to the Metro station and exceeds the NCPC guidelines for parking/employee ratio to encourage mass transportation use. More information will be needed in the Transportation Management Plan regarding the mix of parking spaces dedicated to NNMC employees, visitors, and temporary residents. Staff proposes to continue to pursue this interest in limiting parking to the extent feasible during continuing mandatory referral reviews.

Environmental Impact

The FEIS is providing potential improvement measures for sediment and erosion control, stormwater management, air quality control during construction and noise reduction. For example, they propose to minimize the increase in development runoff and provide grass channels for stormwater management. The Navy's plan for new construction intends for all new buildings to be certified as Silver in Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Program according to the U.S. Green Building Council.

Cultural Resources Measures

The Navy is pursuing formal Section 106 consultation to resolve all adverse effects to historic properties at the future National Naval Medical Center property. The Navy letter of intent and Final Environmental Impact Statement National Naval Medical Center ES-15 Maryland concurrence with the Navy approach is included in Appendix A, Part I.

The Historic Preservation Section would like to commend the Navy for their efforts in designing proposed Buildings A and B so they are sensitive to the adjacent Central Tower Block and environmental setting of the property. The Navy recently completed an evaluation of adaptive reuse for National Register Eligible Building 12, which would be the site of the NICoE™ under the Preferred Alternative. The evaluation determined that adaptive reuse is not practical. Therefore, Section 106 consultation will include an option to demolish Building 12, an adverse effect. The Historic Preservation Section supports the development of a mitigation strategy by the Maryland Historical Trust/Maryland State Historic Preservation Office (MHT/MDSHPO) for the demolition of Building 12 at the property. Under the Preferred Alternative, the Navy will make every attempt to reuse/renovate or mothball Buildings 18 and 21 as part of the 106 consultation process with MHT/MD SHPO. In the event that no reasonable agreement with MHT can be reached for construction and reuse of the area behind building 17, the administrative functions would be located at the current sites of Buildings 53 and 141 and Lot E along with the fitness center and third parking structure. The construction contractors should take measures to control/minimize any visual intrusion the construction staging area will have on the viewshed.

Land Use

Staff notes that while the improvements planned as part of this BRAC were envisioned in the Bethesda/Chevy Chase master plan, they were not expected to take place all at once and this early in the life of the master plan. As the result, pressure may exist to alter land development plans outside of the NNMCC. However, the State of Maryland has allocated \$45 million to improve transportation system in the area and mitigate the traffic generated by BRAC. The Navy also recognized this concern and requesting funding through the Defense Access Road program to improve their access points, providing turning lanes and possibly providing a direct underground access from the Medical Center Metro on the west side of MD 355 to NNMCC. These improvements should be sufficient to mitigate BRAC's impact and remove the possibility of altering the land use outside of the campus due to traffic increase.

The potential need for off-campus lodging is a greater concern for the Community-Based Planning staff. The Community Based Planning Staff reiterates its concern regarding the possible need for additional temporary housing in the vicinity of the National Military Medical Center. The Final EIS did not provide any additional information regarding where those not housed on the base would be staying, or how many civilian or military families of those recuperating on the base could be anticipated to need temporary housing. The one sentence that addressed this concern was not a sufficient answer to our concerns. (Page 4-68 "There is believed to be adequate lodging planned or existing on Base for the increased patients and visitors under the Preferred Alternative.")

The staff does not question the rooms provided on the base for patients, but we do not see how the limited rooms available for visiting families or other loved ones visiting the wounded personnel (42 rooms in two new Fisher Houses and an unidentified in size expansion of the Navy Lodge) can provide sufficient housing for the stated 1,860 patients and visitors per day that are anticipated. We will continue to seek additional information so that we can address the need for this type of housing as we make land use and zoning decisions in the Bethesda and North Bethesda areas.

Next Steps

1. The on-site construction timeline is shown in the following table.

Construction Action	2009	2010	2011
Medical Care - New Construction			
Medical Care - Renovation			
Patient, Visitor and Staff Parking			
Warrior Transition Unit			
Administrative Space			
Fitness Center			
NICoE			
BEQ			
Fisher Houses™			

2. *Mandatory Referrals* –The Navy and NCPC have agreed to use the Maryland Department of Planning’s clearinghouse services to distribute plans and seek comments from reviewing agencies for their construction and renovation buildings. We propose to review them administratively; keeping the Board informed of our progress.
3. *The State Highway Administration* transportation study has begun with data collection and the first meeting of state and county agencies involved in the study process is scheduled for May 15, 2008. SHA is expecting that all studies and design of intersection improvements will be complete within two years. However, a more defined schedule will be announced in late May or June of 2008.
4. *WMATA* will be involved with the planning and design of the future underpass connecting the Medical Center Metro station to the NNMC campus. They have done a very preliminary concept plan and estimate a cost of approximately \$20 million to build the underpass. Staff has no definite information on their planning schedule.



MONTGOMERY COUNTY PLANNING BOARD
THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

OFFICE OF THE CHAIRMAN

May 1, 2008

Rear Admiral Richard R. Jeffries
Medical Corps, U. S. Navy
Commander, National Naval Medical Center
8901 Wisconsin Avenue
Bethesda, MD 20889

Dear Admiral Jeffries:

The Montgomery County Planning Board reviewed the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) for the Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) activities at the National Naval Medical Center (NNMC) in Bethesda, Maryland at its regularly scheduled meeting of May 1, 2008.

The Board is pleased with the Navy's recognition of the needs for mitigating the transportation impact of BRAC in our area. The request for funding through the Defense Access Road (DAR) program for construction of the turn lanes at NNMC gates to reduce congestion and queuing on adjacent streets, construction of a Kiss and Ride area, and possible funding of an underpass connecting the Medical Center Metro station to NNMC are encouraging. Your support for DAR certification of these projects is greatly appreciated as it will be critical to secure federal funding for these projects. The Board requests that all necessary steps be taken to achieve DAR certification by the Department of Defense and that the members of Congress be informed that this funding is crucial for our community.

Cultural resources are expected to be negatively impacted by the selection of Alternative One as the Preferred Alternative due to the proposed demolition of historic Building 12. However, the Navy should be commended for the sensitivity of the design for proposed Buildings A and B at the property. Our Historic Preservation staff will continue coordination with you under the Section 106 consultation process. The Board strongly recommends that the intent of local laws be followed in mitigating all adverse impacts associated with BRAC, including the erosion and sediment control and forest conservation activities described in the FEIS.

Finally, the Board is looking forward to review and comment on your NNMC Master Plan currently being updated. In that plan, the Board will look for a comprehensive Transportation Management Plan that takes into consideration reduction of parking spaces and incentives for use of mass transportation for NNMC employees to reduce traffic congestion on our roadway system.

Rear Admiral Richard R. Jeffries
April 25, 2008
FEIS and BRAC at National Naval Center
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Thank you for your consideration of these comments. We look forward to staying informed of, and involved in, the BRAC implementation process.

Sincerely,

Royce Hanson
Chairman

**MONTGOMERY COUNTY
BRAC IMPLEMENTATION COMMITTEE**
101 Monroe Street, 2nd Floor
Rockville, MD 20850

April 16, 2008

Honorable Isiah Leggett
County Executive
101 Monroe Street, 2nd Floor
Rockville, MD 20850

Dear Mr. Leggett:

I am writing to convey the views of the BRAC Implementation Committee (BIC) on the Final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) on the BRAC action at the National Naval Medical Center (NNMC) that was published on April 4, 2008. The Committee appreciates the positive nature of the Final EIS and believes the Navy gave careful consideration to concerns expressed by the BIC and the community at large. The Navy has recognized that it is a stakeholder in the community and has taken responsibility for significant impacts of the BRAC action.

Above all, the Committee appreciates the Navy's change of position regarding the applicability of the Defense Access Road (DAR) program to two projects necessitated by the BRAC action that will establish the world-class Walter Reed National Military Medical Center (WRNMMC) in Bethesda. The NNMC Base Commander has acknowledged that traffic mitigation projects outside the NNMC fence are integral to the success of the BRAC-mandated mission to provide the finest care and treatment for our country's active and retired servicemen and service women. The Navy's newfound support for DAR certification for these projects – improving access to the Medical Center Metro station by constructing elevators and a pedestrian underpass from the east side of MD 355, and constructing turn lanes into the main NNMC gates from MD 355 – is a critical first step in a complex process that could lead to federal funding.

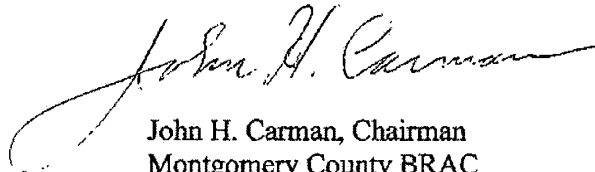
The Committee also appreciates that the Navy has taken steps to address housing and parking needs of patients on campus, and that the Navy intends new construction to be certified Silver according to the U.S. Green Building Council's Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Program. We await publication of the Master Plan to clarify the need and supply of housing and parking, and to provide specific information about a Transportation Management Plan (TMP). While the Committee appreciates the Navy's hiring a transportation coordinator, the Committee is concerned that the Final EIS did not include a site-specific TMP which is essential to help mitigate the increased traffic that will result from BRAC.

Finally, the Committee believes the Navy should reconsider the BIC recommendation to establish a formal and ongoing community relations liaison. BIC sees immense benefit to early establishment of such a liaison outside the purview of BIC whose charter ends when the BRAC construction is completed. The formal Navy-community liaison is a strategic link as the BRAC construction phase commences and serves the long-term interest and integration of BRAC into Bethesda. Such a liaison would provide contractor accountability and an avenue of ongoing communication with NNMC and its neighbors, especially as the Navy develops and implements specific plans to mitigate traffic impacts on the surrounding neighborhoods.

The Committee believes that the Montgomery County Government must work urgently and proactively with NNMC and all levels of government to fully fund and implement traffic mitigation projects that have been identified as worthy of DAR certification, as well as intersection upgrades, pedestrian path improvements, a feasibility study for a Beltway slip ramp, and a comprehensive area-wide transportation study. County residents are concerned that county and state efforts to mitigate the effects of the additional traffic will not be completed by the September 15, 2011 statutory deadline for the expanded medical center to be fully operational. Now that the Navy has completed its studies, the county – as the jurisdiction most immediately affected by the move – must seize the initiative.

Now that the NEPA process is nearing its end we must look forward to the eventual grand opening of the expanded Walter Reed National Military Medical Center, the centerpiece of military medicine in the National Capital Region. Like you, the BRAC Implementation Committee is proud that Montgomery County will be home to the world's finest military medical center. It is essential that the County takes the lead to ensure that patients, doctors and emergency vehicles will have ready access to the campus. We continue to stand ready to assist you in this important endeavor.

Sincerely,



John H. Carman, Chairman
Montgomery County BRAC
Implementation Committee

JHC/pa

**MONTGOMERY COUNTY PLANNING BOARD**
THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION**OFFICE OF THE CHAIRMAN**

January 11, 2008

Mike Knapp, President of County Council
100 Maryland Avenue, 6th floor
Rockville, MD 20850

RE: Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) at National Naval Medical Center (NNMC)

Dear Mr. Knapp:

On January 10, 2008 the Montgomery County Planning Board heard public testimony on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for BRAC. The Board endorsed the staff recommendations regarding the DEIS in the attached memorandum and this letter highlights those elements of greatest concern to the Board, including elements of implementation beyond the DEIS process itself.

The Walter Reed National Military Medical Center in Bethesda will serve a critical part of the mission to provide health care for our nation's men and women returning from combat. As we have seen during the past year, the Walter Reed facility is not just an element affecting the county, State, or region, but rather is of national significance. We therefore believe the federal government needs to take a more active role in establishing the Walter Reed National Military Medical Center as a first-class medical center that helps to restore our nation's pride in our ability to care for our troops. This role requires sufficient funding to ensure that patients, visitors, and employees all have good choices for lodging and access to the site.

Unfortunately, the DEIS does not contain the detailed information needed to develop the specific recommendations regarding housing, transportation, or site layout that would facilitate the establishment of a first-class facility. In particular, additional information is needed on patient and visitor needs for access and lodging and on how specific Transportation Management Plan objectives and programs will be tailored to meet those needs.

The Transportation Management Plan needs to consider all feasible land use and modal alternatives available to serve employees and visitors. We urge the Federal government to provide strong leadership in reducing reliance on auto travel; a short-term need given the levels of traffic congestion in Bethesda that supports a long-term mission to address broader concerns of energy cost and greenhouse gas emissions. The cost of both transportation and housing for visitors needs to be incorporated into consideration of increased on-site lodging. Excellent access to Metrorail is paramount, including both a station entrance on the east side of Rockville Pike and convenient connections between the campus gate and key buildings. Available

Mike Knapp
January 11, 2008

RE: Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) at National Naval Medical Center (NNMC)
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information in the DEIS suggests that many more parking spaces are proposed than are really needed, particularly with additional on-site housing and an emphasis on alternative travel modes.

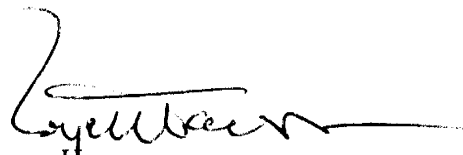
More attention must be paid to the environmental resources on the site. To provide guidance on optimal site layout and impact minimization we need information regarding stream valley buffer protection and the degree to which the site layout will comply with state and local forest conservation requirements. We urge the federal government to provide leadership in committing to green building technologies for both design and construction.

The need for additional information is infused throughout the attached staff recommendations. We trust that much of this information can be incorporated into the Final Environmental Impact Statement. But perhaps the most important recommendation is that we continue to participate in site development through our mandatory referral process. Continuing interaction with adjacent communities through a more formal liaison process would also streamline public involvement.

Finally, we believe the federal government should reconsider its assessment of impacts mitigation responsibility. For many BRAC actions across the nation, the introduction of new jobs into a community is a needed economic boost to an area where infrastructure capacity is underutilized. For instance, the funding limitations of the Defense Action Roads program may make sense in many such areas; they do not translate well to the failing state highways serving the NNMC campus.

A common theme of the testimony we heard was that adjacent communities would be proud to welcome the Walter Reed National Military Medical Center as long as it proves to be a good neighbor. We believe this good-neighbor objective is possible, and look forward to continuing coordination on this critical project.

Sincerely,



Royce Hanson
Chairman

RH:DH:tc

Attachment

CC: Marcel C. Acosta, AICP, Acting Executive Director

- Design considerations and project layout approaches including measures such as construction of temporary noise barriers, placing construction equipment farther from noise-sensitive receptors, and constructing walled enclosures/sheds around especially noisy activities such as pavement breaking
- Sequencing operations to combine especially noisy operations to occur in the same time period
- Alternative construction methods, using special low noise emission level equipment, and selecting and specifying quieter demolition or deconstruction methods

Control measures for sensitive receptors include: sequencing operations, use of alternative construction equipment and methods and instituting other special control measures to reduce the transmission of high noise levels to noise-sensitive areas. A construction phasing plan would be coordinated with patient moves to avoid impacts to patients.

Compliance with the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) standards for occupational noise exposure associated with construction (29 CFR 1926.52) would address the construction workers hearing protection.

Potential Measures to Address Traffic Impacts from NNMC Actions: The EIS identifies potential traffic improvements for the 2011 implementation of the alternatives. These measures are both external and internal to NNMC. As discussed in the following sections, potential funding sources for these improvements measures vary. Figure 4-2 at the rear of Section 4.7.4 shows the location of these potential improvement projects.

Potential External Roadway and Intersection Improvements

Potential improvement measures were identified and evaluated for those intersections external to NNMC that would operate above the intersection capacity under both the Preferred Alternative and Alternative Two. These improvement measures would remedy impacts from additional traffic caused by the BRAC alternatives by bringing the intersections back to a level of service equal to or better than that from background traffic under the No Action Alternative conditions. Refer to Tables 4-15 through 4-18 in Section 4.7.4, which compare intersection service with the recommended improvements to service under the No Action Alternative and the BRAC alternatives.

Each of these potential improvements is under the jurisdiction of either Montgomery County or the State of Maryland and would require funding and implementation through the appropriate Montgomery County or State of Maryland Transportation Organizations. The State of Maryland has programmed approximately \$45 Million over the next four years for intersection improvements around NNMC.

The Navy has coordinated the traffic analysis and these potential improvements with the State transportation agencies and remains committed to cooperate to the maximum extent allowed by law with these agencies in the implementation of any or all of the proposed improvement measures. Measures include:

Rockville Pike (MD 355) at Cedar Lane operates above capacity in both AM and PM peak hours. Recommended measures:

- 1) Add a left-turn lane on the westbound and eastbound approaches of Cedar Lane, or other feasible roadway improvements (including signal optimization), based on further engineering and design studies undertaken by the public transportation agencies.
- 2) Add an additional lane in each direction along Rockville Pike between Jones Bridge Road and Cedar Lane, per recommendation of the 1990 Bethesda Chevy Chase Master Plan. NNMC Bethesda will cooperate by providing frontage along MD 355 to accommodate the implementation of this measure if the State of Maryland and Montgomery County determine it appropriate to implement. Appropriate real estate easements would be coordinated and implemented to permit widening of Rockville Pike.

Old Georgetown Road (MD 187) at Cedar Lane operates above capacity in the PM peak hour. Recommended measures:

- 1) Provide an additional left-turn lane along the southbound approach of Old Georgetown Road and provide two receiving lanes along Cedar Lane eastbound, based on further engineering and design studies undertaken by the public transportation agencies.
- 2) Provide an additional through lane in each direction along the Old Georgetown Road approaches to Cedar Lane, per recommendation of the 1990 Bethesda Chevy Chase Master Plan.

Rockville Pike (MD 355) at Jones Bridge Road operates above capacity in the PM peak hour. Recommended measures:

- 1) Stripe the inner lane as a left-turn only lane and the right lane as shared through and right lane on the eastbound approach of the intersection.
- 2) Add an additional lane in each direction along Rockville Pike, per recommendation of the 1990 Bethesda Chevy Chase Master Plan. NNMC Bethesda will cooperate by providing frontage along MD 355 to accommodate the implementation of this measure if the State of Maryland and Montgomery County determine it appropriate to implement. Appropriate real estate easements would be coordinated and implemented to permit widening of Rockville Pike.

Connecticut Avenue (MD 185) at Jones Bridge Road operates above capacity in both AM and PM peak hours (based on further engineering

and design studies undertaken by the public transportation agencies). Recommended measures:

- 1) Provide an additional left-turn lane to the eastbound approach of the intersection.
- 2) Provide a separate right-turn lane along the southbound approach of the intersection.

Note that pedestrian walkways could also be improved if necessary to meet code for any roadways that are widened.

The local funding of necessary improvements may sometimes include federal grants. In addition, under limited circumstances, the Department can provide funding for road improvements outside its property if the projects meet the criteria for Defense Access Road (DAR) program certification. The DAR Program provides a methodology to determine whether the military can legally pay their fair share of the cost of public highway improvements necessary to mitigate an unusual impact of a defense activity. The DAR program itself does not have funds for such improvements. As with other construction programs, the funding for such improvements (if found eligible) would come through the annual appropriations request process. Under the DAR program, an unusual impact could be a significant increase in personnel at a military installation (currently defined as one that doubles existing traffic at the year of implementation), or one that requires relocation of an access gate, or the deployment of an oversized or overweight military vehicle or transporter unit. The potential improvements listed above in this section do not readily meet the guidance or criteria for DAR certification.

Recommended Internal Improvements for NMMC

The EIS also identifies potential internal traffic improvement measures for the 2011 implementation of the alternatives (See Figure 4-2, Section 4.7.4). These improvements are within the purview of the Navy for implementation and the Navy has programmed funding for the following on-Base traffic mitigation projects. Gate and other improvements would be expected to speed vehicle entry and egress, improve circulation, and reduce queuing at the gate.

North Wood Road Gate:

- 1) Expand the number of lanes from two lanes to three lanes, with two inbound lanes in the morning peak period and two outbound lanes in the evening peak period.
- 2) Conduct a study at North Wood Road at Rockville Pike to determine if a traffic signal is warranted and suitable for submission of a request to state and local transportation authorities for funding and implementation.

South Wood Road Gate: Expand the number of lanes from two lanes to three lanes, with two inbound lanes in the morning peak period and two outbound lanes in the evening peak period.

Gunnell Road Gate (Navy Exchange Gate): Expand the number of lanes from two lanes to three lanes, with two inbound lanes in the morning peak period and two outbound lanes in the evening peak period.

Grier Road Gate (Navy Lodge Gate):

- 1) It is recommended that this gate serve inbound and outbound traffic throughout the day.
- 2) Provide for separate outbound right and left turn lanes. This approach would need to be widened to include a single receiving/inbound lane.

University Road Gate (USUHS Gate): Expand the number of lanes from two lanes to three lanes, with two inbound lanes in the morning peak period and two outbound lanes in the evening peak period.

Perimeter Road: Widen and improve Perimeter Road on NNMC.

NIH Commercial Vehicle Inspection Station: Conduct a study at the NIH Commercial Vehicle Inspection Station on Rockville Pike to determine if a traffic signal is warranted and suitable for submission of a request to state and local transportation authorities for funding and implementation.

Brown Road/Palmer Road North:

- 1) Widen the northbound approach of the intersection and provide a separate left-turn lane and a shared through/right turn lane.
- 2) Widen the eastbound approach of the intersection and provide a separate right-turn lane and a shared through/left turn lane.

Gate Improvements/Queuing Reduction and Mitigation Study: A safety and security analysis is being conducted by DOD at the NNMC gates to improve security and safety, reduce queuing on Base and off Base, and reduce damage to gates and guard houses. This analysis would include potential improvements or queuing mitigation measures at all of the access gates, to include: North Wood Road Gate, South Wood Road Gate, Gunnell Road Gate, Grier Road Gate, and University Road Gate (USUHS' Gate).

Potential External Improvements for NNMC Access

Several potential improvements external to NNMC that could directly enhance access to NNMC are also being evaluated and the Navy is submitting a request for DAR certification for those that are recommended for implementation. These are further discussed below and Figure 4-2 shows the location of these proposed improvements.

Potential Roadway Improvements External to NNMC for DAR

Certification: As noted in the previous section, the Navy is evaluating potential improvements at each NNMC gate, to include

potential improvements to reduce queuing off Base. The evaluation off Base includes potential improvements at the gate access intersections on Rockville Pike and Jones Bridge Road. For any such improvements recommended from the gate studies, the Navy is submitting a request for DAR certification. These potential improvements include, but are not limited to:

- 1) Add a right turning lane along northbound Rockville Pike into the South Wood Road Gate.
- 2) Add a right turn lane along westbound Jones Bridge Road into Gunnell Road Gate.
- 3) Add storage into left turn lanes along southbound Rockville Pike at North Wood Road Gate and South Wood Gate, and along eastbound Jones Bridge Road at the Gunnell Road Gate. This storage would lengthen the turning lanes to allow more cars to wait for the turn without blocking the through lanes.

These improvement measures would be intended to move turning traffic out of the travel through lanes on Rockville Pike and Jones Bridge Road, minimize the backup of traffic being processed through security from backing up onto local roadways and blocking through traffic, and address incoming employees resulting from the BRAC action without degrading the quality of the intersections.

Pedestrian Access from Medical Center Metro Station: To improve pedestrian safety at the Rockville Pike from the Medical Center Metro Station to NNMC, the Navy is submitting a request for DAR certification for pedestrian access to the Medical Center Metro Station. This project would enhance public safety and would require close cooperation with WMATA.

If each of these projects is found to be DAR program eligible, the Department of Defense will need to make a determination of whether and how to fund the projects as part of its internal budget process.

Additional Potential Measures

In addition to the measures listed above, other potential improvement measures outside the jurisdiction of the Navy that address existing and future regional transportation issues are discussed in Appendix C, Transportation Study.

Measures within the Navy's purview include an update of the existing NNMC Transportation Management Plan (TMP) in conjunction with a master plan update. The goals of the existing 1997 TMP are to reduce traffic congestion, conserve energy, and improve air quality by seeking to reduce the number of employee Single Occupant Vehicle (SOV) trips in the workday commute, to better utilize existing parking spaces, and, to maximize the use of alternative transportation options. The existing TMP is currently implemented at NNMC and the Navy remains

committed to promoting the use of mass transit for its employees and will continue to promote alternate commuting. Current TMP strategies in use at NNMC include:

- 1) Shuttle Services - On campus, shuttle service includes peak AM and PM periods from/to the Medical Center Metrorail Station. Off Campus shuttle service is provided to military hospitals and bases in the Tricare Area, including WRAMC, Marine Corps Base Quantico, Annapolis Naval Station, and Patuxent River Naval Air Station.
- 2) Mass Transportation Fringe Benefit (MTFB) Program - Reimburses employees a monthly amount, up to the limit set by the Department of Transportation.
- 3) Parking - Staff carpools are strongly encouraged at NNMC. Participants must register for the parking pass and are allotted reserved parking, whereas other employee parking areas are on first-come first-serve basis.
- 4) TRANSHARE - A NNMC clean-air program, targeted a 60-percent reduction in air pollution by setting goals to increase the percentage of employees using options to single-occupant vehicles.

It is the Navy's intent that the update to the TMP will reflect the changes that have taken place in the intervening years. It will include recommendations for such physical or operational changes as telecommuting, transit subsidies, shuttle bus services, pedestrian improvements, and bicyclist improvements. A transportation coordinator has been added to the NNMC staff to facilitate implementation of TMP strategies.

Additionally, in comparison to WRAMC, NNMC is more accessible via public transportation due to its close proximity to the Medical Center Metrorail Station. Therefore, the Navy expects that the BRAC realignment to NNMC will result in an overall traffic volume reduction in the region from the greater number of public transportation options that are available.

Cultural Resources Measures: Further consultation under Section 106 and through other design review processes on the design of these facilities are ongoing to minimize and mitigate as necessary any potential adverse impacts. Due to the potential impacts on the historic and cultural resources around Building 1, the historic tower, the Navy has developed a concept plan of the proposed inpatient and outpatient facilities. This concept plan for the two Buildings A and B was coordinated with Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission (M-NCPPC) and Maryland State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO). After consultations, the Navy received approval to submit the concept plan to the National Capital Planning Commission (NCPC) meeting on 04 October 2007 (the parking garages were not reviewed).

NCPC's core function is "site and building plan approval/review" for all projects on Federal land in the National Capital Region. NCPC, however, participates in reviews under both the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA), and the staff of the SHPO - in Maryland, the Maryland Historical Trust, also works closely with the NCPC staff on projects of mutual interest. The Commission adopted the Executive Director's Recommendation (EDR), which noted that "The Maryland Historical Trust (i.e. the Maryland SHPO) accepted the concept design with regard to location, footprint, and massing; and requested Section 106 consultation to move forward with fenestration design, materials selection, and other design and planning details." A copy of the Commission Action is included in Appendix A, Part I.

The Navy is pursuing formal Section 106 consultation to resolve all adverse effects to historic properties. The Navy letter of intent and Maryland concurrence with the Navy approach is included in Appendix A, Part I.

Human Health and Safety Measures: By following NNMC SOPs and applicable regulations, no impacts are expected and no additional mitigation measures or improvement measures are required for human health and safety. Activities at sites designated as SWMUs/AOCs would occur only with USEPA concurrence. RMW increase can be handled on site with space reconfiguration; off-site incinerator has capacity for any increases in RMW.