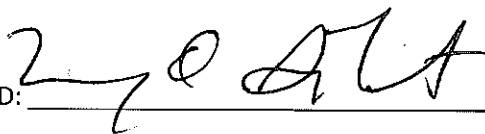


**FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT  
FOR THE NATIONAL FOREIGN AFFAIRS TRAINING CENTER 2017 MASTER PLAN UPDATE**

In accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), the Council on Environmental Quality Regulations for Implementing NEPA (40 CFR 1500-1508), the U.S. General Services Administration Order ADM 1095.1F: Environmental Considerations in Decision Making, and the Public Buildings Service NEPA Desk Guide, and Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA), as amended, I find that the 2017 Master Plan Update for the U.S. Department of State's George P. Shultz National Foreign Affairs Training Center, at Arlington Hall in Arlington, Virginia, as described in the attached Environmental Assessment, is not a major Federal action significantly affecting the quality of the human environment. Therefore, an Environmental Impact Statement will not be prepared.

APPROVED:  Date: 4.6.17

Mary D. Gibert  
Regional Commissioner  
Public Buildings Service  
U.S. General Services Administration  
National Capital Region

*This FONSI will become final 30 days after publication of its Notice of Availability in The Washington Post, the Washington Times, and the Arlington Connection Newspaper provided that no information leading to a contrary finding is received or comes to light during the 30-day review period.*

## **BASIS FOR FINDING**

GSA prepared an Environmental Assessment (EA) analyzing the environmental impacts that could result from implementation of the 2017 Master Plan Update for the U.S. Department of State's (DOS) George P. Shultz National Foreign Affairs Training Center (NFATC), at Arlington Hall in Arlington, Virginia. The EA was prepared pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, the Council on Environmental Quality Regulations for Implementing NEPA (40 CFR 1500-1508), GSA Order ADM 1095.1F: Environmental Considerations in Decision Making, the Public Buildings Service NEPA Desk Guide, and Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended. The EA documents the direct, indirect, and cumulative impacts for the Proposed Action and No-Action alternatives.

The environmental issues addressed in the EA were identified through scoping and analysis, including a scoping meeting, site visits, review of environmental documentation, and site surveys. Based on this information, an EA was prepared. The Final EA is incorporated by reference into this Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI).

## **I. PURPOSE OF AND NEED FOR THE PROPOSED ACTION**

The DOS is updating the 1989 Master Plan for the approximately 72-acre George P. Shultz NFATC located at the former Arlington Hall Station in Arlington Virginia. NFATC is the primary training facility for the Foreign Service Institute (FSI). GSA is the lead federal agency for the EA.

The last update to the NFATC campus Master Plan was completed in 2005. The 2017 Master Plan Update follows the previously established vision and includes the approved buildings of the original 1989 Master Plan and the 2005 update<sup>1</sup>. It provides updated information to meet the main goals of the 2017 Master Plan Update: construction of a new training/classroom building (Building B), expansion of the Childcare Center (Building L), and perimeter security enhancements that reflect updated requirements for federal facilities.

The NFATC is located on approximately 72 acres in Arlington County, Virginia at the southeast intersection of Arlington Boulevard (Route 50) and George Mason Drive. It is approximately seven miles west of the U.S. Capitol Building and monumental core of Washington, D.C. The NFATC is comprised of two major parcels: an approximately 65-acre main academic campus, and the approximately 7-acre West Parcel, used by FSI for satellite parking and by Memorandum

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<sup>1</sup>

of Understanding with Arlington County, as a public park. The gross square footage (GSF) of buildings on the NFATC campus now totals 623,547 GSF. With the implementation of the 2017 Master Plan Update, the primary uses of the NFATC campus will remain unchanged.

Since the 2005 Master Plan Update, training and security requirements for DOS and FSI have changed to reflect changes in world politics, diplomacy, education, and technological advances. Worldwide terrorism and increased threats against federal enclaves and employees have resulted in enhanced federal security requirements for federal facilities. The perimeter of the NFATC campus must be made secure and done so in accordance with the standards set forth in "The Risk Management Process for Federal Facilities: An Interagency Security Committee Standard August 2013 – 1st Edition" (issued pursuant to Executive Order 12977, October 19, 1995, as amended by Executive Order 13286, March 5, 2003).

Over the intervening years, training methodologies have moved away from lecture-based instruction towards more interactive and experiential methods incorporating increased use of technology. Modern, reactive training methodology requires flexible, reconfigurable spaces that are not currently available on the campus. There is a need for additional facilities to accommodate new, specialized training programs which require a combination of smaller classrooms, as well as larger classrooms and areas to support flexible class configurations. New approaches to interactive training include role plays, simulation exercises, holographic interaction, and case studies integration.

FSI's mission is to provide highly specialized training programs, varying in duration from one day to one year. Training may occur either on site, through the internet, or as a combination, referred to by FSI as blended learning. Digital video e-learning originates from studios on the NFATC campus to a worldwide audience.

The 2017 Master Plan Update states that since 2004, substantial growth and policy requirements have increased the number of DOS employees worldwide by approximately 32%, from 55,655 to 73,268 in 2015. FSI also serves employees from other Federal agencies. This growth, along with accompanying training requirements for each DOS employee and US Government staff, have increased FSI classroom enrollment 69%, from 37,367 in 2004 to 63,093 in 2015 with a combined classroom and distance learning enrollment increase of 361%, from 39,017 to 179,949.

Expansion within the NFATC must accommodate the increased number of instructors and support personnel who will create and maintain these programs, as well as expanded e-learning and mentored distance learning programs.

With change in security requirement, continuous evolving training methods, and the increase<sup>37</sup> in personnel/students, DOS needs to enhance security and increase the density of the existing campus.

## **II. DESCRIPTION OF ALTERNATIVES**

Two alternatives were considered in detail in this EA, the No-Action Alternative and the Proposed Action . These alternatives are summarized below.

### **No-Action Alternative**

Under the No-Action Alternative, improvements proposed under the Proposed Action would not occur. No new facilities would be constructed and existing buildings would not be expanded. Because the No-Action Alternative does not include campus improvements, its features are the same as the Existing Condition. Implementation of the No-Action Alternative would not provide DOS and FSI with sufficient training and support space for present and anticipated methods of instruction, increased student population, increased training hours, and new program security requirements. The 2020 consolidation of off-site FSI classroom training onto the NFATC campus would not occur. Off-campus training at the DOS-acquired space in Rosslyn, Virginia would continue hosting 450 students and faculty.

### **Build Alternatives and the Proposed Action**

The 2017 Master Plan Update considered three Build Alternatives: Build Alternative 1, Build Alternative 2, and Build Alternative 3. As documented in the EA, Build Alternatives 2 and 3 were eliminated from further consideration. The Build Alternative 1 is the Proposed Action carried forward in the EA for detailed evaluation.

The Proposed Action retains the existing buildings on campus, generally continuing their current use. It is consistent with the original 1989 Master Plan and the subsequent 2005 Master Plan Update. The Proposed Action would provide an additional 310,197± GSF of new and expanded facilities. This represents a 50% increase in square footage over the No-Action Alternative. Expanded or new construction would occur incrementally, as needed and as funding is available. Improvements would be as follows:

- A new Visitor Center south of the existing Visitor Center (Building A, additional 6,800 GSF). The existing Visitor Center would be repurposed as a student center.

- A new training/classroom building (Building B, 200,232 GSF) located south of the existing Gym (Building D).
- A new training wing north of Building F (Building F, additional 75,000 GSF).
- An addition to the Chiller Plant (Building G, additional 6,165 GSF), as needed, to supplement the campus expansion.
- An addition to Building K to the west for an auditorium (Building K, additional 12,000 GSF).
- An addition to the Childcare Center (Building L, additional 10,000 GSF) on the southern side of the existing facility.
- Closure of public access to the existing jogging/bike trail to comply with enhanced security requirements.

The Proposed Action incorporates previously identified, smaller construction projects from earlier Master Plans and provides flexibility to accommodate growth as needed. In addition to the new and expanded buildings, improvements under the Proposed Action include physical security enhancements with new perimeter fencing, upgraded guard booths, bollards, and signage.

No campus expansion is proposed under the Proposed Action; all improvements would occur within the existing property boundary, including new and/or additional perimeter fencing. Consolidation of FSI training programs on campus would eliminate some duplicate support requirements, enhance the student experience by providing access to their peers who are also going abroad, and provide access to the FSI immunization and family support resources. The training facility space located in Rosslyn, VA would be consolidated onto the NFATC campus. No changes to the West Parcel of the NFATC campus are proposed in the 2017 Master Plan Update.

### **III. ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES**

The direct, indirect, and cumulative impacts of the alternatives are analyzed in EA Chapter 3, "Affected Environment and Significance of Effect". Under the guidance of NEPA, the term "significant" has specific meaning and implications. Determination of the significance of an impact is based on the consideration of two variables: "context" and "intensity" (40 CFR 1508.27). Context means the significance of an action must be analyzed in its current and proposed short-and long-term effects on the whole of a given resource (e.g.-affected region). Intensity refers to the severity of the effect.

#### **Land Use and Zoning**

Implementation of the Proposed Action would not have a significant impact on Land Use and Zoning. All proposed buildings would remain consistent with Arlington County's zoning

ordinance for Special District S-3A.

**Resource Protection Area (RPA)**

Implementation of the Proposed Action would not result in a significant impact to the RPA. There would be a short-term minor impact to the RPA with the installation of the perimeter fencing. There would be no increase in impervious surface runoff. Parts of the existing trail are located in the RPA. Removal of the trail would reduce the amount of impervious surface in the RPA resulting in a long-term beneficial impact to the RPA

**Parks and Recreation**

Implementation of the Proposed Action would not have any impact on the surrounding recreational parks.

**NFATC Jogging/Bike Trail, Pedestrian Tunnel, and Neighborhood Connectivity**

Implementation of the Proposed Action would not have a significant impact on neighborhood connectivity. Arlington County has an established walking network of sidewalks and trails adjacent to the NFATC campus. Eliminating public access to the jogging/bike trail would add approximately 1.5 to 6.7 minutes of walking time using an alternate route via sidewalks. The impact of closing the jogging and bike trail is not considered significant given the context and intensity of the change. From a context standpoint, alternative routes are readily accessible in place of the jogging/bike trail. These include public sidewalks and the Alcova Heights Park's dirt path cut-through. From an intensity standpoint, use of these alternate routes would add between 1.5 to 6.7 minutes to the user's walk depending on where the pedestrian originated from. While this is an increase in walking time, it is not considered a severe or significant change.

GSA and DOS strive to be a good neighbor and will continue to explore opportunities for alternate trail routes and public access points with Arlington County. Decisions regarding alternative trail routes and public access points will be made within the context of an ongoing process that is beyond the scope of this EA. Any future projects identified will comply with the requirements of NEPA.

**Environmental Justice**

Implementation of the Proposed Action would not result in disproportionately high or adverse human health or environmental effects on minority or low-income populations or children.

**Historic Resources, Landscape and Viewshed, and Perimeter Security**

GSA and DOS have consulted with the Virginia State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) and determined that the Proposed Action has the potential to have an adverse effect on the

Arlington Hall Station Historic District. Because construction of the various buildings and improvements under the Proposed Action would be phased over time, a Programmatic Agreement (PA) between GSA, DOS, FSI, SHPO, the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, and the National Capital Planning Commission (NCPC), and other consulting parties is currently being developed. The PA will establish the protocol for continuing the Section 106 process as construction plans for the Proposed Action advance. The PA will be signed prior to NCPC approval and will be executed prior to any construction activities on the NFATC.

Continued consultation with SHPO and implementation of the PA will mitigate the potential adverse effect of the Proposed Action and will result in no significant impacts on Historic Resources.

#### **Traffic Volumes and Levels of Service**

The implementation of the Proposed Action would not have a significant impact on traffic volumes and level of service. The operational analysis of the Proposed Action indicates that the intersections studied will operate with the same level of service when compared to the existing conditions.

#### **Parking and Alternative Modes of Transportation**

The Proposed Action will not have a significant impact on parking. No new parking will be constructed. To meet the parking ratio goal of 1 car per three people on campus (1:3 ratio) and long-term goal of a 1:4 parking ratio, DOS will apply the updated Traffic Management Plan (TMP) and continue to revisit and update the TMP every two years. Strategies presented in the updated NFATC TMP provide numerous options to reduce the use of single-occupant vehicles and increase the use of alternative transportation modes. The TMP is included in the 2017 Master Plan Update.

#### **Cumulative Effects**

The EA individually evaluated environmental, historic, and social issues relative to the No-Action and Proposed Action Alternatives. We have evaluated each of these resources individually and cumulatively and determined there will not be a significant impact.

GSA and DOS have consulted with SHPO and determined that the Proposed Action has the potential to have an adverse effect on the Arlington Hall Station Historic District. The implementation of the signed PA will mitigate the adverse impact and will result in a non-significant impact individually and cumulatively.