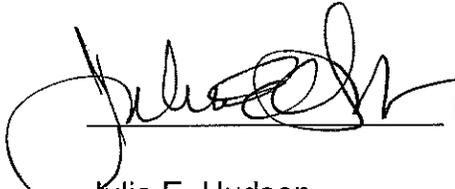


**FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT
FOR PERIMETER SECURITY IMPROVEMENTS AT THE
ALBERT V. BRYAN U.S. COURTHOUSE
ALEXANDRIA, VA**

FINDING

In accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), Council on Environmental Quality Regulations for Implementing NEPA (40 CFR 1500-1508), U.S. General Services Administration (GSA) Order ADM 1095.1F: Environmental Considerations in Decision Making, and the Public Buildings Service NEPA Desk Guide, I find that the perimeter security improvements, as described in the attached Environmental Assessment (EA), are not a major Federal action significantly affecting the quality of the human environment. Therefore, an Environmental Impact Statement will not be prepared.

APPROVED:

 Date: <u>2/22/12</u>	 Date: <u>2/22/12</u>
Julia E. Hudson Regional Administrator U.S. General Services Administration National Capital Region	for Cathleen C. Kronopolus Regional Commissioner Public Buildings Service U.S. General Services Administration

This FONSI will become final 15 days after publication of its Notice of Availability in the Washington Post, provided that no information leading to a contrary finding is received or comes to light during the 15-day review period.

BASIS FOR FINDING

GSA, in cooperation with the U.S. Marshals Service (USMS), prepared an Environmental Assessment (EA) which analyzes the environmental impacts that could result from the perimeter security improvements at the Albert V. Bryan U.S. Courthouse (A.V. Bryan Courthouse). 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, and the Public Buildings Service NEPA Desk Guide. The EA documents the direct, indirect, and cumulative impacts of an Action Alternative and a No Action Alternative.

The environmental issues addressed in the EA were identified through early public involvement (scoping), which included consultations with Federal, state, and local agencies and other stakeholders. The Final EA responds to comments and concerns received during the 15-day scoping period open through November 4, 2011. 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 purpose of the proposed action is to provide the required level of protection for the A.V. Bryan Courthouse, while enhancing the quality of the public realm and improving pedestrian and vehicular circulation in the area.

The permanent perimeter security measures are necessary in order to meet the security requirements for the tenants and the building. USMS and GSA developed the security measures in accordance with the Interagency Security Committee (ISC) Security Design Criteria. The ISC Security Design Criteria require that security measures be based on a building-specific risk assessment resulting in a level of protection. The level of protection is determined by tenant mission, adjacent facilities and targets, significance of the facility, and building size and location. The security measures were developed to meet the agency's need within the confines of the building's tightly defined urban setting and to respect the interests of neighboring property owners, nearby residents, and pedestrians. Permanent perimeter security measures are also necessary in order to allow for the removal of the existing Jersey barriers that surround the building.

II. DESCRIPTION OF ALTERNATIVES

Two alternatives were considered in detail in this EA, one Action Alternative and a No Action Alternative. The essential characteristics of these alternatives as documented within the EA are summarized below.

No Action Alternative

Under the No Action Alternative, the perimeter security improvements would not be undertaken. The existing temporary security measures, including Jersey barriers and planters, would remain in place and Courthouse Square South would remain closed to vehicular traffic.

Action Alternative

Under the Action Alternative, permanent perimeter security elements would be constructed along Jamieson Avenue, Courthouse Square South, and Elizabeth Lane on property owned by the Carlyle Community Council. In order to achieve this, GSA would need to enter into an agreement with the Carlyle Community Council on the occupation of the property and coordinate with the City of Alexandria prior to any construction.

On Jamieson Avenue, a hardened garden fence would be installed between the face of the building and the inside of the sidewalk. The existing planting bed would be widened, allowing for the potential preservation of the six mature street trees. The garden fence would be a minimum of 30 inches high and stepped with the building to accommodate the change in grade. The Jamieson Avenue curblines would be moved to the west, allowing for the expansion of the public realm; the area between the face of the building and the curblines would increase from approximately 13 feet to approximately 29.5 feet wide. The narrowing of the roadway would require the relocation of the storm drains along the roadway. In addition, the Delta barrier near the intersection of Jamieson Avenue and Mill Road would be removed. At the garage entry, a line of retractable/removable bollards would run between the garage and the curblines. The existing Delta barriers at the entry would be maintained as a secondary security measure.

Courthouse Square South is currently closed to vehicular traffic. Under the Action Alternative, the roadway width would be narrowed approximately 10 feet to allow for the expansion of the public realm in front of the courthouse, the road would be reopened to vehicular traffic, and a raised crosswalk would be installed to provide a connection to the park to the east. In addition, a combination of hardened garden fence panels and bollards would be installed approximately 3 feet from the curblines to serve a security function. The fence panels would enclose expanded tree boxes for the street trees and low plantings. The bollards and fence panels would be a minimum of 30 inches high and would allow for 4 feet of clearance between the elements. The existing planting bed along the face of the building would be maintained and street trees would be planted that would frame the building's primary entrance.

On Elizabeth Lane, a line of ornamental fence panels and bollards would be installed just inside of the existing curb, and a consistent line of street trees would be established. In conjunction with the perimeter security improvements, the City of Alexandria would reconfigure the intersection of Mill Road and Jamieson Avenue. Improvements at this intersection would be implemented concurrently with or following the implementation of the perimeter security improvements at the A.V. Bryan Courthouse. Under the proposed road improvements, the northbound through-travel/left-turn lane on Mill Road south of the intersection would be converted to a through-travel/right-turn lane, resulting in double right-turn lanes onto eastbound Jamieson Avenue. Jamieson Avenue east of the intersection would be reconfigured to include two eastbound travel lanes, which would narrow to a single lane prior to the entrance to the courthouse's underground parking garage. The Jamieson Avenue improvements would also include a combined westbound through-travel lane/right-turn lane onto northbound Mill Road, a center westbound through-travel lane, and a dedicated left-turn lane onto southbound Mill Road. After PM peak hours, the curbside westbound through-travel/right-turn lane on Jamieson Avenue would be used for parking.

III. SELECTED ALTERNATIVE

GSA's Preferred Alternative is the Action Alternative as it best meets the purpose and need for the action by providing the necessary level of permanent perimeter security at the courthouse. In addition, it would allow for the expansion of public space along Jamieson Avenue and Courthouse Square South, and a better connection between the main entrance of the courthouse and the park to the northeast. Finally, it would allow for the reopening of Courthouse Square South, facilitating better vehicular circulation patterns in the surrounding neighborhood, and would accommodate planned improvements on Jamieson Avenue.

IV. ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

Several issues were initially considered for evaluation in the EA, but were eliminated from detailed study because short- and long-term direct and indirect impacts would be negligible. These issues include economic and fiscal resources, community facilities, demographics and environmental justice, archaeological resources, historic resources, wildlife, climate change, hazardous materials, utilities, air quality, and floodplains and wetlands.

The following is a summary of the impacts associated with implementing the Action Alternative. Where applicable, mitigation measures have been identified. A full description of the impacts from implementing the Action Alternative or No Action Alternative can be found in the Final EA.

Land Use and Planning Policies

There would be no impacts to land use as a result of the perimeter security improvements. Minor adverse impacts would result from the placement of security elements at corners, with beneficial impacts resulting from the enhancement of public space, and the reduction in impervious surface and increase in vegetation.

Public Space

Minor adverse impacts to public space would result from the potential restriction of pedestrian flow on area sidewalks, with beneficial impacts resulting from the removal of the temporary security measures and their replacement with permanent measures that are consistent with surrounding streetscape design.

Mitigation Measures

- To ensure uniformity with urban design elements in the Carlyle District and the Jamieson Precinct, the design of the perimeter security improvements will be subject to the approval of the Carlyle Design Review Board, in conformance with the *Carlyle Streetscape Design Guidelines*.

Visual Resources

Impacts to views along Jamieson Avenue, Courthouse Square South, and Elizabeth Lane would be beneficial, due to the enhancements to the public realm and the elimination of the temporary security measures.

Vegetation

Impacts to vegetation under the Action Alternative would be beneficial, due to the establishment of new planting beds on Jamieson Avenue and the expansion of the tree boxes on Courthouse Square South, thereby increasing the vegetative area on the site. Although street trees would be removed along Courthouse Square South and Elizabeth Lane, the existing specimens are small and the trees would be replaced, establishing consistent green edges along the two rights-of-way.

Stormwater Resources

There could be minor short-term construction-related impacts to stormwater quality due to increased sediment flow, and long-term beneficial impacts to stormwater due to the reduction in impervious surfaces. To the greatest extent practicable, GSA will comply with the intent of the Chesapeake Bay Preservation Act and Executive Order 13508.

Mitigation Measures

- GSA will coordinate with the City of Alexandria to move and replace the storm drain inlets.
- GSA will prepare an Erosion and Sediment Control Plan and a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan.
- GSA will employ Best Management Practices during the construction of the improvements to reduce sediment/other pollutants in runoff.

Vehicular and Non-Vehicular Circulation and Parking

A Transportation Impact Study (TIS) was completed in January 2012 and analyzes the impact to the area intersections. The TIS indicates area intersections would continue to operate at acceptable levels of service following the implementation of the perimeter security improvements and lane reconfiguration on Jamieson Avenue. There would be short-term impacts to vehicular circulation during construction, and minor long-term adverse impacts due to the reduction in queue space on Jamieson Avenue at the garage entry. However, there would also be long-term beneficial impacts due to improvement in operations at the intersections of Jamieson Avenue and Courthouse Square, Jamieson Avenue and Mill Road, and Jamieson Avenue and Dulany Street, and beneficial impacts from operational improvements at the Jamieson Avenue garage entry.

There would be long-term beneficial impacts to parking due to the increase in curb parking on Jamieson Avenue between Courthouse Square and Mill Road. The perimeter security improvements would result in minor short-term adverse impacts, and long-term beneficial impacts, to pedestrian circulation in the vicinity of the A.V. Bryan Courthouse. There would be no impacts to bicycle circulation.

Mitigation Measures

- Prior to construction of the perimeter security improvements, GSA will require the construction contractor to develop a construction management plan that identifies methods of routing vehicular, bicycle, and pedestrian traffic away from construction zones and work areas.
- GSA will explore ways to improve security processing rates without compromising security.
- GSA will seek to limit the height of the security fence near the garage exit so as not to impede sight distance.
- GSA and the City of Alexandria will phase the Jamieson Avenue/Mill Road intersection improvements with the perimeter security in order to maintain satisfactory ingress and egress at the garage entry and traffic flows along Jamieson Avenue.

Noise Levels

Short-term minor adverse impacts may result during construction; however, there would be no long-term impacts to noise levels.

Mitigation Measures

- Construction activities will be restricted to the hours specified by the City of Alexandria's noise control code.
- The construction contractor will employ appropriate BMPs during construction.

Sustainability

Long-term beneficial impacts would result from the reduction in impervious surfaces and the increase in vegetation on the site.

Mitigation Measures

- GSA will evaluate the site use of Low Impact Development (LID) measures in the detailed design for the improvements in order to further reduce stormwater quantity and improve stormwater quality on the site.