

SCOPING DOCUMENT

**ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT FOR THE SELECTION OF
LONG ISLAND RAIL ROAD ELECTRIC TRAIN STORAGE FACILITIES
ON THE HUNTINGTON/PORT JEFFERSON BRANCH**

A. INTRODUCTION AND ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW PROCESS

The Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) Long Island Rail Road (LIRR) proposes to select a site or sites and construct additional electric rail yard facilities on the Huntington/Port Jefferson Branch to provide much-needed storage capacity for its electric train equipment. The MTA and LIRR, in cooperation with the Federal Transit Administration (FTA), intend to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) on the proposal. The FTA will serve as lead agency for the EIS, which will be prepared in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). As required by the Record of Decision issued by the FTA on May 21, 2001 in connection with the LIRR East Side Access Project, the EIS will be tiered from the Final EIS issued for East Side Access in March 2001.

This Scoping Document describes the project and its purpose and need, the study area and the site selection process conducted to date, and the analyses to be conducted for the EIS to evaluate the potential impacts of the proposal. As part of the Scoping process, FTA and LIRR are seeking public input on the site selection process, alternatives to be considered, factors to be considered in evaluating alternatives, and environmental issues that should be addressed in the EIS.

To solicit public input on the issues to be considered in site selection and the environmental review process, the MTA and LIRR held a public meeting on June 16, 2003 at East Northport Middle School, and comments were accepted through August 31, 2003 following that meeting. Four additional Scoping meetings will be held in November 2003 with interested individuals, organizations, and federal, state, and regional and local agencies. The Scoping meetings will be held at the following dates, locations, and times:

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|---|---|
| ■ Wednesday, November 5, 2003
Kings Park High School
Route 25A
Kings Park, New York | ■ Wednesday, November 12, 2003
East Northport Middle School
Fifth Avenue, east of Larkfield Road
East Northport, New York |
| ■ Thursday, November 6, 2003
Smithtown High School
100 Central Road
Smithtown, New York | ■ Thursday, November 13, 2003
Huntington Intermediate School
155 Lowndes Avenue
Huntington, New York |

■ SCHEDULE FOR ALL MEETINGS ■

5-7 PM: Information Open House

Poster boards depicting site selection and
NEPA processes

7-9 PM: Public Hearing

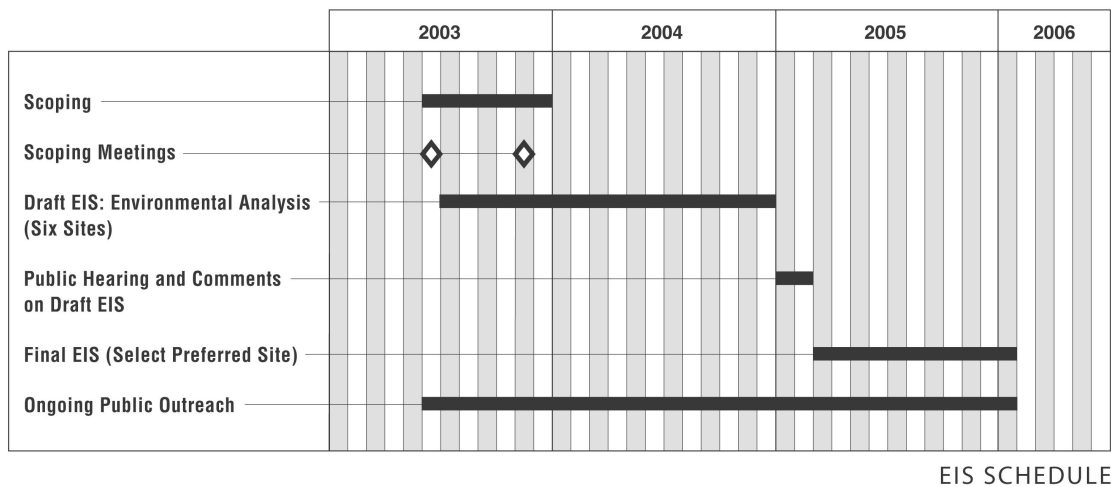
Brief formal presentation followed by
forum for public comments

Comments may be submitted orally or in writing at those meetings, or in writing through **December 31, 2003**. Comments should be addressed to:

Peter Palamaro
 Editorial Officer
 LIRR Public Affairs Department
 Jamaica Station, Mail Code 0536
 Jamaica NY 11435

All comments, including those received in person at the Scoping meetings and during the comment period, will be considered equally.

Based on the Scoping document, a Draft EIS (DEIS) will be prepared and circulated for public review. A public hearing will be scheduled with a period for submitting written comments on the DEIS. This will be followed by preparation and circulation of the Final EIS (FEIS), which will include written responses to address public comments made on the DEIS. The schedule for the environmental review of this project is shown below.



B. PROJECT DESCRIPTION AND BACKGROUND

NEEDS AND BENEFITS OF THE PROPOSED PROJECT

The LIRR has immediate and long-term storage needs for its electric train fleet. The immediate need to store electric train equipment and to deal with storage capacity constraints is most evident in Huntington on the Port Jefferson Branch. Huntington is the eastern terminus for electric service. Presently, electric train storage on the Huntington/Port Jefferson Branch relies on a siding east of Huntington Station, with a three-train capacity that is already inadequate for current train storage. Due to the lack of car storage capacity to originate service, LIRR currently must bring five empty trains to Huntington from its West Side Yard in Manhattan each morning to serve the westbound AM peak service. This will become increasingly impractical as the LIRR increases service to west end terminals during the morning peak period in the future.

Within the next 10 years, there will be an additional need for storage capacity on LIRR's Huntington/Port Jefferson Branch as a result of planned electric car fleet expansion and associated service improvements. The LIRR plans to increase its electric fleet by up to 40 percent over the next decade. This will meet increased passenger demands and projected ridership growth; reduce the number of trains in which passengers must stand; and increase the availability of spare cars for maintenance. This increase will allow the demand for service to be met in the long term. In addition, the LIRR will also increase service throughout its system, including on the Huntington/Port Jefferson Branch, to provide new service to Grand Central Terminal by 2012 (the "East Side Access Project").

With respect to future weekday AM peak hour ridership, the Huntington/Port Jefferson Branch, specifically from Huntington, is projected to have the highest ridership growth of any LIRR branch over the next 10 years. With a new storage yard, the LIRR will add up to nine electric trains to morning peak service from Huntington. Six of these trains will be bound for Grand Central Terminal as part of the East Side Access service.

Because the existing LIRR system does not have adequate storage capacity for the new electric cars, the planned service improvements on the Huntington/Port Jefferson Branch cannot be made unless additional space is obtained for storage of electric train cars on this branch. To meet the need for new storage space, LIRR is in the process of expanding existing rail yards throughout its system. However, LIRR cannot provide enough space to store all its new rail cars at its existing yards. New storage space for electric rail cars on the Huntington/Port Jefferson Branch is critical to providing new service in the future.

STUDY AREA

The study area for the site selection and analysis is the corridor along the LIRR's Huntington/Port Jefferson Branch between Huntington Station and Smithtown Station. This area is shown on Figure 1.

From an operational perspective, storage space for electric trains should be provided east of the terminus of electric service on the Huntington/Port Jefferson Branch. This allows trains to be moved from and to the terminal station without having to operate in a reverse direction, and therefore eliminates congestion, facilitates operational flexibility, and increases the number of trains that can be moved. Since the eastern terminus of electric service is currently Huntington Station, the study area for possible new yards begins immediately east of Huntington Station.

A new electric storage yard beyond Huntington Station will require electrification of the branch as far as the yard (this is discussed below), so the cost of electrification must be a factor in siting the yard. The LIRR has long-term plans to electrify the entire 22-mile branch to Port Jefferson Station, but the cost of full electrification makes it infeasible at this time. Moreover, if the existing diesel yard at Port Jefferson Station were converted to an electric yard, it could not provide enough capacity to store the additional 16 electric train sets for which a new yard is being sought. Given the high cost of electrification as well as the lack of available space at Port Jefferson Yard, the study area for a new electric yard terminates at Smithtown Station.

DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSAL

NEW STORAGE YARD(S)

The LIRR is seeking space to provide storage capacity for up to 16 electric railcars. This could be provided in one or several sites, depending on the availability of space in the study area. The proposed yard(s) would accommodate the following functions:

- Overnight storage for electric trains (no diesel trains would be stored at the yard).
- Light interior cleaning.
- Toilet servicing.
- Inspection and brake tests.
- Light maintenance (i.e., repairing doors and lights and replacing brake shoes).

To accommodate these functions, the new yard(s) would include layup tracks and platforms, a substation for electric power distribution, walkways and driveways, buildings housing employee facilities (such as offices, storage rooms, equipment rooms, locker and toilet facilities), parking, and an access roadway. Overhead lighting would be provided on overhead wires, to direct lighting into the yard rather than surrounding areas.

The new yard(s) may be surrounded by high-security fencing; depending on the site selected, a berm or barrier wall might also be included to buffer the yard from surrounding uses.

ELECTRIFICATION TO THE YARD(S)

If the new yard is created east of Huntington Station, the Port Jefferson Branch must be electrified as far east as the new yard. The existing single track and passing sidings would be electrified from Huntington Station to the new lay-up location. New electric substations would be required approximately every 2 miles along the right-of-way between Huntington Station and the new yard. These substation locations will be analyzed in the DEIS. Minor track improvements in the newly electrified area may also be warranted.

C. IDENTIFICATION OF POTENTIAL SITES

The DEIS will analyze alternative sites and/or strategies to meet the LIRR's need for storage of electric train cars on the Huntington/Port Jefferson Branch. An alternatives screening process is being used to identify alternatives that meet the LIRR's need for electric rail storage capacity on the branch. The screening process is designed to ensure that feasible sites are identified and a logical methodology is used to select the best of those sites. It involves the following four steps:

1. Developing a long list of possible sites;
2. Evaluating them to eliminate flawed sites;
3. Reevaluating the remaining sites in the DEIS with more analysis related to environmental and operational impacts to identify the best sites; and
4. Selecting a preferred site in the FEIS.

The first two steps of this work have been conducted to date, and six alternative sites have been selected for evaluation in the DEIS based on the screening process. After these sites have been evaluated in the DEIS and public hearings have been held to receive input on the analyses, a decision will be made on which site best meets the LIRR's needs for electric train storage

capacity while minimizing environmental and community impacts, and a final site will be selected for the FEIS.

The screening process used to identify the six sites is described below. The sites identified in the screening process are shown in Figure 2. Following that discussion, the six sites to be evaluated in the DEIS are described.

ALTERNATIVES SCREENING PROCESS USED TO IDENTIFY SITES

As a first step to creating the long list of possible yard sites for assessment, three basic criteria were established for identification of sites. All sites were identified that met those three basic criteria, as follows:

- *Location:* The site should be located between Huntington and Smithtown, and within a reasonable distance (approximately ¼ mile) of the LIRR right-of-way, with a means of creating rail access between the site and the right-of-way.
- *Size:* The site should be able to accommodate the 1,800-foot-long by 425-foot-wide parcel required for a 16-track rail yard or the 1,800-foot-long by 250-foot-wide parcel needed for an 8-track rail yard (a total of two 8-track yards would be required).
- *Use:* The site should be either vacant or underutilized. For sites that are not adjacent to the tracks, the route for rail access to the site should also be vacant or underutilized.

Using these three criteria, a total of 19 sites were identified using maps and aerial photographs of the right-of-way and surrounding area. All 19 sites were then reviewed to eliminate sites with obvious fatal flaws. Sites were considered fatally flawed using the following criteria:

- *Constructability issues:* The site's geography would make it difficult to grade the approach to a slope of no more than 3 percent and/or the yard to a slope of no more than 1 percent.
- *Conflicts with major infrastructure:* Construction at the site would require moving or displacing major sewage, electrical, water, or other significant infrastructure.
- *Use:* The site is substantially occupied by active uses, including residential uses, community facilities/institutional use (e.g., schools, hospitals, police stations, firehouses, etc), recreational uses (including designated parks), or active businesses that would be difficult to purchase or to relocate.
- *Protected natural area:* The site is protected as a significant natural resource such as mapped wetlands or a New York State Department of Environmental Conservation preserve (Critical Environmental Area), or is designated as parkland.
- *Historic structures:* Construction on the site would require the demolition of a designated federal, state, or local historic structure(s).
- *Prior studies:* The site has been determined infeasible or inappropriate for use as a rail yard by prior study.

The results of the fatal flaw screening analysis are presented in Table 1, below. Of the 19 potential yard sites evaluated against the fatal flaw criteria, 6 passed the fatal flaw screen. These sites will be examined in greater detail in the DEIS. The studies to be conducted for the DEIS are described later in this document.

SITES TO BE EVALUATED IN THE DEIS

Six sites remain for further evaluation in the DEIS. These sites are listed in Table 1, below, as **Still Under Consideration**. They are illustrated on Figures 3 through 8.

Table 1
Initial Evaluation Conducted for 19 Sites

Site No.	Yard Size (8 or 16 tracks)	Location and Current Use	Evaluation
1	8	Adjacent to Huntington Station; north side of right-of-way. Commercial and industrial uses including Nassau-Suffolk Lumber and others.	Eliminated. Fatally flawed because substantially occupied by active businesses that would be difficult to purchase or relocate
2	16	Adjacent to Huntington Station; south side of right-of-way, east of Manor Field Park and north of 5th Street. Adjacent to New York State Armory, Manor Field Park, and Huntington Commons Industrial Park. Vacant and wooded.	Still under consideration. Requires further evaluation of potential for conflicts with future land use plans for the site, and potential conflicts with nearby park and residences.
3	16	Close to Huntington Station at Park Ave; north side of right-of-way. Commercial and industrial uses including self storage, tree care, Burt Lumber, and Kleet Lumber.	Eliminated. Fatally flawed because substantially occupied by active businesses that would be difficult to purchase or relocate
4	16	South side of right-of-way in Huntington, between Park Ave and Lake Rd. Commercial, industrial, and community facility uses, including Keyspan substation and health care facility.	Eliminated. Fatally flawed because substantially occupied by active businesses and community facility that would be difficult to purchase or relocate.
5	16	South side of right-of-way in Greenlawn, east of Lake Rd. Vacant and vegetated.	Eliminated. Determined infeasible/ inappropriate by prior study.
6	8	South side of right-of-way in Greenlawn, west of Cuba Hill Rd. Driveways and lawn areas of BAE manufacturing facility (also potentially includes recharge basin).	Eliminated. Determined infeasible/ inappropriate by prior study.
7	8	South side of right-of-way in Greenlawn, east of Taylor Ave. Harborfield H.S. ballfields, landscaping business	Eliminated. Fatally flawed because fully occupied by school playing field.
8	8	North side of right-of-way in East Northport, west of Elwood Rd. Northport H.S. property and Lewis A. Wilson Technical Center	Eliminated. Fatally flawed because fully occupied by school playing field.
9	16	North side of right-of-way in East Northport, at V.A. Hospital. Wooded area.	Eliminated. Fatally flawed because access tracks area occupied by recreational use/park.
10	16	North side of right-of-way, west of Bread and Cheese Hollow Rd and south of Pulaski Rd. Includes wooded, vacant land; LIPA power supply and natural gas pipelines; industrial operations (Channing Supply Co).	Still under consideration. Requires further investigation because of potential slopes that could be difficult to grade; potential conflicts with major infrastructure that crosses the site. May also be infeasible because of future plans for substation on this site.

Table 1 (cont'd)
Initial Evaluation Conducted for 19 Sites

Site No.	Yard Size (8 or 16 tracks)	Location and Current Use	Evaluation
11	16	North side of right-of-way in Kings Park, east of Bread and Cheese Hollow Rd and south of Pulaski Rd. Industrial uses including Kings Park Concrete, sand mining activity, DeJana Truck and Utility Company.	Still under consideration. Requires further investigation because of potential slopes that could be difficult to grade.
12	16	South of right-of-way in Kings Park, east of Bread and Cheese Hollow Rd. Industrial uses including Kings Park sand mine and Gibney truck storage.	Still under consideration. Requires further investigation because of significant grading required and possible acquisition of residential property.
13	16	North of right-of-way in Kings Park, at former psychiatric center. Mostly vacant and wooded.	Still under consideration. Requires further investigation because of need for at-grade crossing at Main St (Rte 25A) for track access; location near center of Kings Park that could affect businesses; potential conflict with future plans for the site being implemented by the Empire State Development Corporation.
14	8	North of right-of-way in Kings Park. Kings Park H.S. playing fields.	Eliminated. Fatally flawed because fully occupied by school playing field.
15	16	South of right-of-way in Kings Park, west of Lawrence Rd. Conservation area.	Eliminated. Fatally flawed because of its status as preserved natural area.
16	16	North of right-of-way in Smithtown at St. Catherine of Siena Medical Center. Largely wooded area at St. Catherine of Siena Medical Center, includes one small building.	Still under consideration. Requires further investigation because of potential slopes that could be difficult to grade and need for relocation of one small hospital building.
17	16	North of right-of-way in Smithtown, south of Route 25A just west of intersection with Route 25. Vacant and wooded.	Eliminated. Fatally flawed because predominantly preserved natural area (wetlands).
18	16	North of right-of-way in Smithtown, north of Route 25A. Vacant and wooded Suffolk County Parkland.	Eliminated. Fatally flawed because preserved natural area and dedicated parkland.
19	8	North of right-of-way in Smithtown, south of Main St. Partially vacant and wooded (and for sale), also occupied by Paul T. Given Park (Suffolk County Park), retail, lumberyard, and gas station.	Eliminated. Fatally flawed because substantially occupied by recreational use/parkland and businesses.

D. SCOPE OF ANALYSES FOR ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

A Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) will be prepared to analyze the project's potential for significant adverse impacts during both construction and operation and to identify feasible mitigation measures to minimize or avoid those impacts. The DEIS will include a discussion of the purpose and need for the project, the alternatives considered, the environmental setting (existing conditions), and the direct and indirect short-term and long-term environmental consequences of the alternatives. The DEIS will assess impacts associated with construction activities required to build the new yard, operations at the new yard once it is complete, and new rail operations on the branch with the yard in place.

As described below, the DEIS will include detailed studies of a full range of environmental issues relevant to the alternatives being analyzed. The alternatives will include the six alternative sites as well as the No Action Alternative, which considers the effect of not building a new yard.

ROLE OF SCOPING PROCESS AND PUBLIC INPUT

An initial public Scoping meeting was held on June 16, 2003 at East Northport Middle School in East Northport. At this meeting, public input was sought on the studies to be included in the DEIS. This meeting was the beginning of an extensive public outreach process that will be conducted for this project. Public outreach activities will include meetings with local organizations, public meetings, distribution of study fact sheets, and other outreach mechanisms. Every effort will be made to ensure that the widest possible range of public participants has the opportunity to attend general public meetings (i.e., Scoping meetings and public hearings) held by the LIRR to solicit input. Attendance will be sought through mailings, notices, advertisements, and press releases.

The LIRR received numerous comments at the June Scoping meeting and in letters received subsequent to that meeting. Some of the critical issues identified as important for the EIS included the following:

- Possible conflicts of the yard with surrounding residential areas, parks, and schools, and related effects on community character and property values;
- Possible conflicts of a new yard with future plans for the sites and/or surrounding areas;
- Effects of the yard and any service changes on traffic and parking conditions on nearby roadways;
- Noise from operations at the yard;
- Nighttime lighting at the yard;
- Effects on groundwater and sewer systems;
- Effects on public health; and
- Possible air pollution resulting from activities at the yard.

These concerns and others received during the Scoping process will be addressed in the DEIS.

STUDIES TO BE INCLUDED IN THE DEIS

PURPOSE AND NEED FOR THE PROPOSED ACTION

This chapter of the DEIS will explain the purpose and need for a new yard on the Huntington/Port Jefferson Branch. Existing storage yard infrastructure and constraints will be described and the need for improving storage capacity to serve electrical train equipment on LIRR's Huntington/Port Jefferson Branch will be described. The chapter will also discuss the current planning context for the project including other related planning efforts that may affect or be affected by the proposed project.

ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED

The "Alternatives Considered" chapter will describe the six alternative yard locations and the No Action Alternative. The process to identify and select the six sites will be presented, including the criteria used in the evaluation. For the six sites, the operational and construction activities required to implement each alternative will be discussed in sufficient detail to support the technical impact analyses. Conceptual designs and site plan diagrams will be prepared that will include site boundaries delineated on maps or aerial photos and layouts of track and other yard components.

LAND USE, ZONING AND PUBLIC POLICY, COMMUNITY CHARACTER, AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS

This chapter will evaluate the compatibility of the proposed project with surrounding uses. For each of the six alternative yard sites, the EIS will assess impacts on land use, zoning, public policy, neighborhood character, community facilities (parks and neighborhood institutions, such as schools, libraries, hospitals, etc.), demographic characteristics (based on census data), and the potential for displacement of residents or community facilities. This chapter will also identify proposed plans and local policies for the site and surrounding areas, to determine whether any conflicts might occur between a new yard and future uses planned on the sites or nearby. The study area for the DEIS will include all areas where impacts from operational or construction activities may occur, including the areas surrounding the six alternative rail yard sites. The size of the study areas will be determined after considering the potential for traffic, air, noise and other impacts associated with project activities, so that appropriate land use information can be gathered to support those analyses.

OPEN SPACE/SECTION 4(F) STATEMENT

Section 4(f) of the USDOT Act (49 U.S.C. Section 303(c)) of 1969, as amended, requires the Secretary of U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT) to cooperate with other federal departments and the states in developing transportation plans and programs that include measures to maintain or enhance the natural beauty of the lands traversed. Under the Act, the Secretary of USDOT cannot approve a program or project that requires the "use" of any land from a public park, recreation area, wildlife and waterfowl refuge, or historic site unless there is no feasible and prudent alternative and such project or program includes all possible planning to minimize harm. "Use" may be direct (i.e., direct impact, disturbance, or demolition) or indirect (effects on context, setting, or access, which is known as a "constructive" use).

An analysis of the six sites' potential for impacts to parks and parkland will be conducted, and if any adverse effects are identified, a Section 4(f) Statement that analyzes alternatives to such use will be prepared.

ECONOMIC CONDITIONS, DISPLACEMENT, AND RELOCATION

This chapter will discuss the specific uses and ownership of the sites. If any displacement of active uses is required for the yard, the effects of that displacement and the federal and state protection measures for the landowner(s) and tenant(s) will be discussed. The chapter will also consider the effects of a new yard on economic conditions in the immediate area, including any benefits from increased activity at the yard as well as any potential for negative effects.

VISUAL CHARACTER

The EIS will consider the appearance of the sites as viewed from the surrounding area, as well as any views across the sites. It will then consider the effect of a new yard on those views including changes to view corridors, duration of views, and sensitivity of views. Photomontages illustrating the appearance of the new yard will be provided. This analysis will also consider the effects of nighttime yard lighting on surrounding land uses. The assessment will also take into account the effects of any potential visible noise mitigation measures such as noise walls or buffers that may be created around the site.

HISTORIC AND ARCHEOLOGICAL RESOURCES

The EIS will identify known and potential historic resources on or in the vicinity of the six alternative yard sites. This will include National Historic Landmarks, properties listed on or determined eligible for the State and National Registers of Historic Places, and properties recognized by local governments as historic. If any historic structures are identified, the chapter will describe the project's effects on those resources in accordance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act and the Criteria of Effect established by the implementing regulations for Section 106. Direct and indirect effects on historic resources will be described.

The EIS will also evaluate each site's potential to contain buried archaeological resources and identify whether the project could affect any areas where such resources may exist. The sites' background histories and existing resource data will be reviewed and summarized to identify archaeologically sensitive areas.

Both the historic and archaeological assessments will involve coordination with local preservation societies as well as the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) at the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation.

TRANSPORTATION

The EIS will consider the effect of the new rail yard on transportation, including traffic and parking, as well as rail transportation and LIRR service. Based on possible changes to service, the analysis will consider the impacts to local roadways and parking capacity of any new LIRR commuters driving to and parking at affected rail stations. It will also evaluate the localized effects on vehicular traffic that might occur because of new employees driving to or from the yard, changes in roadway operations resulting from new access drives to the yard, and changes in operations and/or safety at nearby at-grade crossings.

AIR QUALITY

As an electric rail yard, the project would not have the potential to result in changes to the operations of diesel trains on the LIRR system. The analysis in the EIS will consider the potential for localized pollution from increased motor vehicle activity on nearby roadways.

NOISE AND VIBRATION

For the proposed new yard, the noise analysis will consider noise generated at the rail yard from rail activity; along the Port Jefferson Branch; along local streets near the rail yards from increased vehicular traffic; and by construction activities (see construction section below). Noise generated in residential and other sensitive areas during late-night hours is an important concern.

The noise and vibration assessment will be consistent with the guidance provided in Transit Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment, Federal Transit Administration (FTA), April 1995. Using FTA guidance, a screening and General Assessment will be performed for the potential rail yard sites and for locations along the Port Jefferson Branch where rail traffic would increase. Distance to sensitive land uses will be taken into account in the screening assessment. If the results of the General Assessment demonstrate the need for a detailed assessment, FTA's Detailed Assessment methodology will then be used to determine impacts at receptor locations in selected study areas. Existing noise levels will be monitored at a number of surrounding sensitive uses and noise levels with the proposed project will be predicted at sensitive uses.

NATURAL RESOURCES

This chapter will evaluate potential effects of the project on existing natural resources on and in the immediate vicinity of the yard site. These resources can include groundwater; surface water; wetlands; floodplains; coastal zone; agricultural lands; and rare, threatened, and endangered plant and animal species and their associated habitats. Fieldwork will be performed to identify the natural resources on the six alternative rail yard sites. To assess the effects of a new yard on any important natural resources identified, the EIS will analyze yard elements, including the areas where construction or paving is proposed and the stormwater and sewage disposal methods to be used.

HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

Like any construction project, there is the potential to encounter contaminated soil and groundwater during construction of the rail yard. Particular locations of concern include sites where there have been previous known industrial activities. The potential for contamination of soils and groundwater at the sites will be evaluated by reviewing federal, state and local databases (e.g., spill data, active and inactive hazardous waste sites, etc.), land use and/or historical maps of the project sites to determine past activities, and field surveys of the project site and a reconnaissance of neighboring properties to identify off-site areas that may have affected the sites. If the potential for significant impacts is identified, measures to protect public and worker health will be identified and a remediation plan and health and safety plan will be described in the EIS. This chapter will also evaluate the effects of the activities in the new yard on soil and groundwater conditions and identify design measures to be implemented to prevent significant adverse impacts.

INFRASTRUCTURE, UTILITIES, AND ENERGY

This chapter will assess the suitability and available capacity of the candidate sites to handle the water, sewer, and electricity needs of a new yard. Potential significant adverse impacts will be identified.

SAFETY AND SECURITY

This analysis will consider the effects of the new yard on safety and security, and will describe measures to be taken to safeguard the safety and security of the yard, LIRR system, and surrounding community. The analysis will also consider any potential health issues that might be raised by the presence of the new yard.

CONSTRUCTION IMPACTS

This chapter will describe what is required for construction of the new electric rail yard and the impacts associated with those construction activities. Impacts to be considered include conflicts with surrounding land uses, potential traffic impacts from construction vehicles, emissions of air pollutants related to fugitive dust and diesel emissions, noise and vibration, effects on natural resources, and possible effects related to hazardous materials.

ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

As required by Executive Order 12898, “Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations,” the EIS will consider the potential for disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects of the project on minority and low-income populations. This analysis will be conducted in accordance with the Executive Order and the latest guidance, including the federal Council on Environmental Quality’s “Environmental Justice Guidance under the National Environmental Protection Act” (December 1997), and the USDOT’s “Final Order on Environmental Justice” (April 1997). A population profile of the surrounding community will be developed using the socioeconomic data gathered from the U.S. Census, and the project’s impacts on that population, based on the technical assessments conducted for the EIS, will be considered to determine whether there would be any disproportionate effects on low-income or minority populations.

MITIGATION MEASURES

Specific mitigation measures will be developed and discussed as part of each of the EIS technical chapters. This information will be summarized in one chapter of the document. This chapter will identify potential significant adverse environmental impacts and describe the mitigation measures proposed to minimize or avoid them, where feasible.

OTHER CHAPTERS

The EIS will also include chapters describing the secondary, cumulative, and growth-inducing effects of the project, as well as the irretrievable and irreversible commitments of resources required for the project. The EIS will also include a brief Executive Summary that summarizes the alternatives and their environmental effects. ■