

**Lower Merion Township**

**Federal Transit Administration**

**Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority**

**Public Presentation  
and Open House**

**Ardmore Transit Center Project  
Environmental Assessment**

## **Purpose of the Presentation and Open House**

- **Introduce the Environmental Assessment Process**
- **Present Overview of the Environmental Tasks Involved**
- **Obtain Input from the Community**

# Project Background

## Planning Process

### ■ Phase 1

- Vision and Conceptual Plan

### ■ Phase 2

- Implementation Feasibility Analysis
- Approval of Ardmore Redevelopment Area Designation

# Project Background

## Planning Process

### ■ Phase 3

- Selection of the Preferred Redevelopment Option
- Redevelopment Plan Approval

### ■ Phase 4

- National Environmental Policy Act – Transit Center Project
- Traffic Improvements Design

# Presentation and Open House Agenda

1. Project Environmental Team
2. National Environmental Policy Act
3. Environmental Assessment Process
4. Environmental Tasks
5. Environmental Resource Agency  
Coordination
6. Public Involvement Program
7. Schedule

# Project Environmental Team

## **Lower Merion Township**

- **Sponsoring Agency**

## **Hillier Architecture**

- **Prime Consultant, Planning Process**

## **Gannett Fleming, Inc.**

- **Environmental Assessment**

## **Cultural Heritage Research Services, Inc.**

- **Cultural Resources**

# National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)

## Purpose

**Legislation: National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, as amended, plus numerous other related statutes and orders**

- **Established National Policy for Federal Agencies to Examine the Consequences of Proposed Actions on the Environment**
  - Regulations
  - Guidance
- **Mandates Consideration of Environmental Issues in Decision-Making**
- **Creates Council of Environmental Quality – CEQ**
  - Regulations
  - Guidance
  - Integrate NEPA with other Planning and Environmental Requirements and Procedures
- **Requires the Preparation of Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) on Major Federal Actions that Significantly Affect the Environment**

# NEPA Applicability

## Federal Actions Affecting the Quality of the Human Environment

- Federal Funding
- Action
- Effect



# Integrated, Concurrent Process

## NEPA

- 8th US of Civil Rights Act of 1957
- National Motor Vehicle Inspection and Road Repair Act of 1956
- American with Disabilities Act
- Executive Order 11888 (Professional Justice)
- Executive Order 11889 (Protection of Environment)
- Section 404 of RCRA Act (1976)
- Clean Air Act
- Safe Water Drinking Act
- Federal Election Campaign Act
- National Endowment Act
- Civil Works Program Act
- National Conservation and Recovery Act of 1980
- Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act
- Superfund Act (1980)
- National Map Amends (1982)
- National American Game Protection Act
- National Highway (1982)
- Highway Beautification (1982)
- Federal Election Campaign Act
- National Trade Shows Act
- Land and Water Conservation Fund Act
- Waterbank Act
- Executive Order 11888 (Military)
- Emergency Wetlands Resources Act of 1970
- Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (1973)
- Emergency Planning and Community Right-to-Know Act of 1986
- Safe and Sound: Passenger Act
- Research, Statistics and Consumer Credit of Highway
- Highway Safety Standards
- Public Reading Requirements
- Jackson National Historic Preservation Act
- Jackson National Historic Preservation Act
- Act for the Preservation of Louisiana's Wetlands
- American Indian Religious Freedom
- National Defense Act of 1980
- Executive Order 11888 (1980)
- Endangered Species Act of 1973
- National Park Service Management and Statistics Act of 1982
- Fish and Wildlife Conservation Act
- Wetlands Act
- Coastal Zone Management Act of 1972
- Coastal Barrier Resources Act
- National Radio System Act
- Executive Order 11888
- 1980

# NEPA Process Actions

## 3 Types of NEPA Class Actions

- **Class 1 – Environmental Impact Statements (EIS)**
  - Actions that Have a Significant Impact on the Environment
- **Class 2 – Categorical Exclusions (CE)**
  - Actions that Do Not Result in a Significant Impact on the Environment
- **Class 3 – Environmental Assessments (EA)**
  - Actions for Which the Significance of the Impact on the Environment is Not Clearly Established

## **NEPA Process Actions**

### **NEPA Class Action Determination**

- **FTA Makes NEPA Class Action Determination**
- **Under FTA Guidelines, Proposed Transit Centers Require an EA**

# Significance

## Review Context and Intensity

### ■ Context

- Geographic Scale
- Varies for Setting
- Short and Long Term

### ■ Intensity = Severity of Impact

- Uniqueness of Area
- Adverse
- Beneficial
- Public Controversy
- Public Health and Safety
- Degree of Uncertainty
- Precedent Setting Action
- Cumulative Impacts
- Regulated Protected Environmental Resources

# NEPA Class and the Proposed Action

## Ardmore Transit Center Project

### ■ NEPA Lead Federal Agency

- Federal Transit Administration (FTA)

### ■ Cooperating Agencies

- Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority (SEPTA)
- Lower Merion Township
  - Sub-Grantee

# Ardmore Transit Center Project

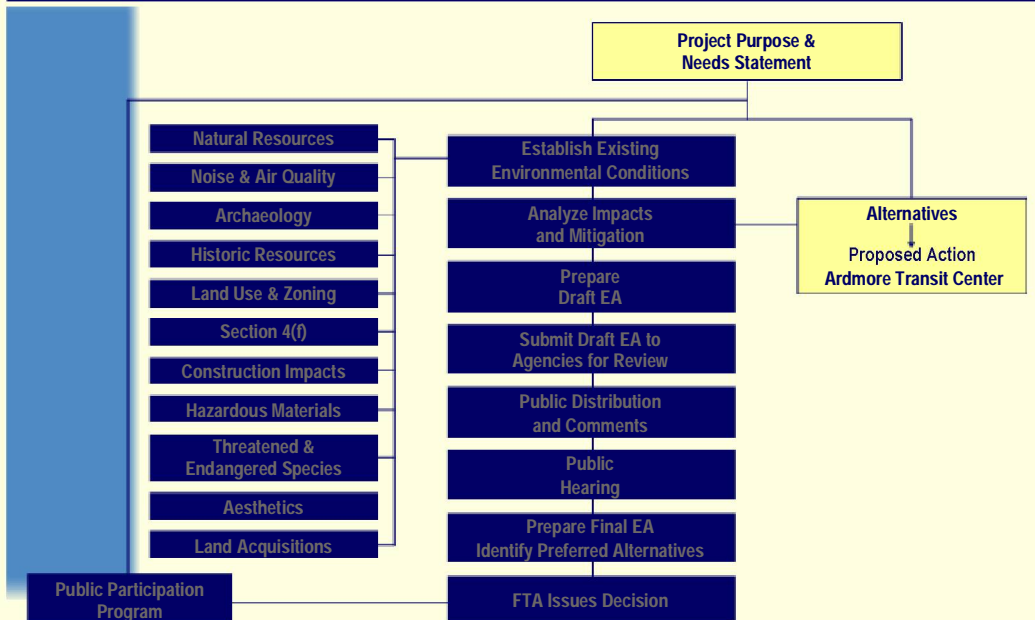
## NEPA Class Action

### Environmental Assessment (EA)

#### ■ Purpose

- The EA is to provide the FTA with information to allow a determination of the proposed project's impacts on the environment
- The EA is a tool to provide sufficient evidence and analysis for determining whether to prepare an EIS or a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) based on the proposed action

# Environmental Assessment Process



# Environmental Resource and Regulatory Coordination

## Section 106 of National Historic Preservation Act

### ■ Purpose

- Federal Agencies to Consider Effects of their Actions on Historical and Archaeological Resources

### ■ Section 106 Participants

- Lead Federal Agency – FTA
- Advisory Council on Historic Preservation
- Section 106 Consulting Parties



# Environmental Resource and Regulatory Coordination

## Section 106 of National Historic Preservation Act

### ■ Section 106 Process

- Current Identification of Resources
- Identification of Effect
- Minimize Impact
- Mitigate

# Environmental Resource and Regulatory Coordination

## Section 106 of National Historic Preservation Act

### ■ Known Cultural Resources in the Project Area

- Ardmore Historic District / Ardmore Commercial Historic District
- Mainline of the Pennsylvania Railroad

## Section 4(f)

### **U.S. Department of Transportation Act**

#### **■ Purpose**

- Protect Publicly Owned Land (Parks, Recreation Areas, Wildlife/Waterfowl Refuges) and Historic Sites Regardless of Ownership

#### **■ Only Applies to Agencies in U.S. Department of Transportation (i.e., FTA, FHWA, FAA, FRA,USCG)**

## Section 4(f)

### U.S. Department of Transportation Act

#### ■ Mandate

- Transportation Program/Project Requiring Use of Section 4(f) Resources Can Only Occur if:
  - There is No Prudent and Feasible Alternative to Using that Land
  - Program/Project Includes All Possible Planning to Minimize Harm

## Section 4(f)

### U.S. Department of Transportation Act

#### ■ "Use"

- Fee Simple
- Easements
- Constructive Use

# Public Involvement

- Open Houses
- Website
  - [www.lowermerion.org](http://www.lowermerion.org)
- Public Hearing

# Schedule

## Environmental Assessment Anticipated Schedule

TASK	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Purpose and Need:	[Bar]				
Alternatives Development:		[Bar]			
Environmental Impact Assessment:			[Bar]		
Public Open House:					[Diamond]
Prepare Draft EA / Section 4(f):					[Bar]
Draft EA / Section 4(f):					[Bar]
Public Open House:					[Diamond]
Public Hearing:					[Diamond]
Final EA / Section 4(f):					[Bar]
Environmental Agency Coordination:					[Bar]

**Lower Merion Township  
Federal Transit Administration  
Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority**

**Thank You for Attending This  
Presentation and Open House**

**Please Proceed to the Lobby**