



October 2, 2024

Tim Zinn  
Michael Baker International, Inc.  
100 Airside Drive  
Moon Township, PA 151080000

RE: ER Project # 2018PR13984.036, NORFOLK SOUTHERN PITTSBURGH VERTICAL CLEARANCE,  
Department of Transportation (PennDOT), Pittsburgh City, Allegheny County

Dear Tim Zinn,

Thank you for the Determination of Effects Report Addendum for the above listed project. This addresses changes that have been made to the project designs, including removal of the Washington Avenue Bridge and the Columbus Avenue Bridge projects and changes to designs for the Allegheny Commons Pedestrian Bridge and the West North Avenue Bridge projects. Our office commented on the potential effects of the various projects in previous response letters.

#### **Above Ground Resources**

##### *Assessment of Effect*

The following historic properties will not be adversely affected by the above listed projects due extensive coordination with local preservation interests and efforts made to minimize adverse effects: Allegheny Commons Historic District (Resource # 1999RE00182); Allegheny Second Ward Industrial Historic District (Resource # 2019RE06933); and the International Harvester Company of America: Pittsburg Branch House (Resource #2020RE00935). We agree that the project has the potential to adversely affect historic properties, specifically the Pennsylvania Railroad: Main Line (Pittsburgh to Ohio State Line) (Resource # 1993RE01080), due to the removal of the West North Avenue Bridge, a contributing feature. Therefore, an overall project finding of **Historic Properties Adversely Affected** is appropriate. It is our opinion there has been adequate consideration of alternatives to avoid and minimize effects to the railroad district through the Design Advisory Team meetings and other consultation. We agree with the proposed minimization measures and request they be commemorated in the mitigation agreement for the project.

##### *Resolution of Adverse Effect*

Regarding mitigation, we have received your proposal to repair and paint the wrought-iron fences along the south side of the rail corridor within the Allegheny Commons Historic District between the West North Avenue and Allegheny Commons Pedestrian Bridge. Our letter of June 13, 2023, notes the following as an identified minimization measure: "Protection for/repairs to contributing features within the Pennsylvania Railroad district including bridge abutments, retaining walls, and decorative fencing." Were repairs to the fencing, which is a contributing feature within the railroad district, part of the larger project, or is this an item that is being added to offset the loss of the West North Avenue Bridge, also a contributing resource to the Pennsylvania Railroad district?

Additional mitigation ideas have been presented over the course of the consultation for the project. Please provide documentation of consideration of these ideas and any other suggested by consulting parties to the project:

- Placement of public art (murals) within the railroad corridor
- Restoration of stone building near the tennis courts

- Additional ideas outlined in the plan for Allegheny Commons Park

*Continued Consultation*

The local preservation interests have until October 12, 2024 to provide their comments on the Determination of Effect Report. Please provide a copy of any comments received to our office.

For questions concerning above ground resources, please contact Barbara Frederick at [bafrederic@pa.gov](mailto:bafrederic@pa.gov).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "B. Frederick".

Barbara Frederick  
Environmental Review Division Manager