

# Air Quality Technical Memorandum

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**Date:** January 11, 2024

**To:** Shandra Davis-Sanders, EI  
FDOT District 4 – Noise Specialist

**From:** Mariano Berrios  
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**Subject:** Air Quality Analysis  
Broward County Rail South  
Broward County, Florida  
FM No.: 452240-1

## Project Description

The proposed Broward Commuter Rail (BCR) South Project will add commuter rail service to the existing freight rail and intercity passenger rail services that currently operate on the Florida East Coast Railway (FECR) corridor between the City of Aventura, located in Miami-Dade County and the City of Fort Lauderdale, located in Broward County, approximately 11.5 miles. The project proposes three new passenger stations at the following locations:

- Hollywood (between Tyler Street and Taylor Street)
- Fort Lauderdale-Hollywood International (FLL) Airport
- South Fort Lauderdale (between SW 15th Street and SW 17th Street)

The project is proposed to continue the planned commuter rail service in Miami-Dade County, referred to as the Northeast Corridor, which is currently a New Starts project in Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Project Development (PD). Currently, the proposed BCR South weekday service is intended to have 60-minute base headways, with 30-minute peak service, and 60-minute weekend and holiday service, consistent with the Miami-Dade Northeast Corridor. The weekday peak hours are generally estimated to be between 5:00 a.m. and 9:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. Coordination is ongoing between Broward County, the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT), Miami-Dade County, FECR, and Brightline (the passenger easement holder) regarding proposed schedules, corridor modeling, and anticipated number of trains.



## Purpose and Need

The purpose of the PD&E study is to determine if a continuation of Northeast Corridor into Broward County is an alternative and reliable transportation option for north-south travel in southeastern Broward County that connects major activity centers and neighborhoods while enhancing intermodal connectivity and supporting economic and land development policies in eastern Broward County. Without implementing a high-capacity transit service that provides an alternative to private vehicle travel on already congested roadways, transportation mobility in the project area, and development and population growth in southeastern Broward County will be severely constrained. BCR South will provide a sustainable and permanent transportation investment that is strongly supported by local land use plans, Broward County, the City of Hollywood, the City of Hallandale, the City of Dania Beach, the City of Fort Lauderdale, and the surrounding communities.

The primary needs for the project are based on providing an alternate mode of transportation for critical north-south regional and local travel capacity and serving the existing and future population growth in the region and corresponding sustainable land use and economic development in the study area.

The secondary needs for the project are based on enhancing intermodal connectivity by developing a seamlessly integrated multimodal network and improving transit service in the eastern high-density travel market. The project also enhances intermodal connectivity by providing quality access to transit-dependent populations and improving the environment and transportation safety. It will help address congestion issues by providing person trip capacity via a regional commuter rail transit option in the FECR railroad corridor.

## Air Quality Analysis

As part of the PD&E Study, the project has been reviewed for air quality impacts consistent with the guidance provided by Federal Transit Administration (FTA) and in Part 1, Chapter 14 of the FDOT PD&E Manual entitled Transit Project Delivery (dated July 1, 2023). The purpose of this Technical Memorandum is to document the findings of the air quality analysis performed in accordance with the FTA guidance contained in their Air Quality Conformity web page [Air Quality Conformity | FTA \(dot.gov\)](#).

Public transportation projects proposed for federal funding must meet the requirements of the Clean Air Act (42 USC § 85) in addition to NEPA. The purpose of the Clean Air Act is to protect and enhance air quality to promote public health and welfare of the nation. To accomplish this, the Act addresses criteria air pollutants that are regulated through the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS). The transportation-related pollutants are ozone (O<sub>3</sub>), carbon monoxide (CO), small particulate matter (PM<sub>2.5</sub>, PM<sub>10</sub>), nitrogen dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>) and its precursors oxides of nitrogen (NO<sub>x</sub>). Projects proposed for federal funding have to satisfy the air quality conformity

process intended to ensure that FTA funding goes to transit activities that are consistent with the air quality goals set forth in the Clean Air Act. Areas with an ambient concentration below the NAAQS are designated attainment, while areas exceeding the NAAQS are designated nonattainment. Projects funded by FTA and located in non-attainment areas, or previously have not met the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) for a transportation-related pollutant, must find that the project meets the project-level conformity requirements before FTA can make a grant for any element of that project's implementation.

A transit project must not cause or contribute to any air quality hotspots as explained in the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (USEPA) conformity regulation at [40 CFR § 93.116](#). A hot spot is a small geographic area within the metropolitan area, where pollutant emissions build up to a level that exceeds the NAAQS for that pollutant. The requirement applies only to projects that are located in a nonattainment or maintenance area for CO, PM2.5, or PM10. Other transportation pollutants (ozone and nitrogen dioxide) are regional in nature and do not form hot spots. Projects located in CO, PM2.5, or PM10 nonattainment or maintenance areas would require a quantitative CO hot-spot analysis during the environmental review process.

If the project is in an attainment area for all transportation-related pollutants and that area is not on the verge of falling into nonattainment, then the environmental document should state that air quality is not a concern for their project.

The USEPA EPA maintains a list of nonattainment areas for all six principal pollutants on their Green Book web site [Nonattainment Areas for Criteria Pollutants \(Green Book\) | US EPA](#). Broward County is not listed as a non-attainment area for criteria pollutants.

## Conclusion

In accordance with the requirements of Clean Air Act and Federal Transit Administration (FTA) guidance, air quality is not a concern for the subject project since the project is located in an attainment area for all transportation-related pollutants and is not on the verge of falling into non-attainment. Therefore a formal air quality analysis is not necessary.