

# FREDERICK DOUGLASS TUNNEL PROGRAM

## Archaeology Fact Sheet

### Project Background

Amtrak is committed to an archaeological program for the Frederick Douglass Tunnel Program (“FDT Program”). The archaeological program includes analysis and evaluation of the FDT Program’s engineering designs to assess effects to archaeological historic properties. Archaeological investigations may include site identification (Phase IB), site evaluation (Phase II), and mitigation of effects (Phase III), as well as consultation with FDT Program stakeholders about archaeology. The archaeological program for the FDT Program was codified in a Programmatic Agreement (PA) executed by the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA), Maryland’s State Historic Preservation Officer - the Maryland Historical Trust (MHT), the National Railroad Passenger Corporation (Amtrak), and Preservation Maryland.



### Site Background

The Phase IB/II area is located within the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) listed **Reservoir Hill Historic District** (Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties #B-1379). This predominately residential neighborhood was founded in the 1870s. At that time, the neighborhood was largely populated by German and Eastern European Jewish families who immigrated to the city during the second half of the 19th Century.

The site of the future Intermediate Ventilation Facility (IVF) is located where a series of former late 19th/early 20th-century rowhomes once stood along Linden Avenue within the Reservoir Hill neighborhood. Seven rowhouses on Linden Avenue were removed by 1957 as an aerial photograph shows the survey area contained a paved parking lot at that time (Nationwide Environmental Title Research [NETR] 1957).

### Goals and Objectives of the Archaeological Investigation

The compliance goal of the Phase IB/II archaeological investigation is to locate and evaluate archaeological resources that may be eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). The following goals were set for the Phase IB/II investigation:



- 🔍 Identify and inventory archaeological resources within the survey area that may be eligible for inclusion in the NRHP;
- 🔍 Define the horizontal and vertical limits of identified archaeological sites and deposits within the survey area;
- 🔍 Characterize, interpret, and assess the potential significance of identified archaeological resources;
- 🔍 Assess the effect of the construction activity on any identified archaeological resources; and
- 🔍 Determine the need for additional archaeological investigations, if warranted.

The research goal of the investigation is to determine whether intact yard deposits and features associated with the former late nineteenth-century rowhouses are present underneath the Linden Avenue parking lot (see typical yard deposits and features below).

The presence of building remains and artifacts would indicate an archaeological site; however, for the site to be considered significant (i.e., eligible for inclusion in the NRHP), the site would need to have the potential to yield important information about the past. Research questions that the site may help to address include, but are not limited to, the following:

- 🔍 Are there builder's trenches, cellar deposits, or other non-structural site deposits that can inform researchers and the public about either the people who built the rowhouses or the people who lived in the rowhouses?
- 🔍 Are there yard waste deposits such as middens or trash pits that can illuminate the consumption patterns and material culture of the rowhouse inhabitants?
- 🔍 Is there evidence of ethnicity/religion that can be seen in artifacts or features at the site? Examples might include Judaica or a mikvah.
- 🔍 Are there archaeological features in the yard, such as outbuilding foundations or arrangements of posthole remains, that can inform the organization of yard space beyond what is known from historic maps and atlases?

As noted above, the site would also have to have sufficient integrity of deposits to yield potentially important information on the site's occupants. As an example, Judaica recovered from a mixed fill deposit might not have sufficient integrity to meet established eligibility criteria.



## Work Plan

The 2023 Supplemental Phase IA Archaeological Study for the FDT Program identified the 2000 Linden Avenue parking lot at the Intermediate Ventilation Facility (IVF) as one of two areas having archaeological potential and provided a work plan for Phase IB and Phase II investigations. The field studies for those investigations, which are scheduled to take place in spring 2024, will consist of the excavation of eight test pits in the parking lot. The test pits will be approximately 5' x 4' and will be excavated with a backhoe or mini-excavator, with a maximum anticipated depth of 4-feet (below the current surface).

Archaeological work will be conducted and monitored under Federal standards to expose, document, and sample archaeological findings. Remnants of old rowhouse structures are anticipated in the test pits close to Linden Avenue, and topsoil and shed remains are anticipated in the central and southern limits of the former backyards. The artifacts collected will be sent to a specified laboratory for washing and analysis. At the conclusion of the investigation, artifacts will be sent to the Maryland Archaeological Conservation Laboratory (MAC Lab) or a repository of Amtrak's choosing. (Artifacts recovered from the site are considered property of the landowner, in this case Amtrak.)

All work will be conducted in accordance with the FDT Program PA, the approved work plan, and the Maryland State Historic Preservation Officer's standards and guidelines (1994).

