

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT
for
HIGHLAND CITY FIRE DEPARTMENT
HIGHLAND, ARKANSAS
FEMA-1751-DR-AR

BACKGROUND

In accordance with 44 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) for the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), Subpart B - Agency Implementing Procedures, Section 10.9, an environmental assessment (EA) was prepared pursuant to Section 102 of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969. The purpose of the EA was to analyze the potential environmental impacts associated with the proposed construction of relocating the fire station within the city of Highland, Arkansas and to determine whether to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) or a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI).

The participation of FEMA in the proposed action is dictated by the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act, PL 93-288, as amended, and implementing regulations at 44 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 206, Federal Disaster Assistance for Disasters Declared on or after November 23, 1988. These rules control the eligibility and funding for public assistance disaster relief. Any assistance FEMA can provide is determined and controlled by these regulations.

As a result of the tornado on 5 February, 2008 the existing fire station located in Highland, AR was destroyed. The proposed project is needed to provide a fire station for the city. The proposal being evaluated in the environmental assessment would involve relocating this facility from its existing site on LouAnn Drive to 1998 Hwy 62/412 in Highland, AR. The project alternatives were 1) No Action 2) Reconstruction at Original Site and 3) Construction of an Improved Fire Station at an Alternate Location-Proposed. The No Action alternative would not reconstruct or replace the facilities destroyed by the tornado. As a consequence, the city of Highland would be without a fire station, therefore unable to provide fire protection to the 1,600 residents that it services. Alternative two would be to reconstruct the destroyed fire station on the original site to pre-disaster configuration, function and capacity. The previous site was under a land use agreement and not owned by the city.

The proposed new building is located in the City of Highland, Sharp County, Arkansas. The project location is on a site previously known as the Midway Plaza, approximately two blocks from the original fire station. The new fire station will be constructed on an existing concrete slab and will be approximately 5,388 square feet with office space, a meeting room, four large bays, a kitchen, two rest rooms, storage rooms and overhead storage.

A legal notice was posted in the local newspapers, *The Villager Journal* and *The News* on October 7 and 8, 2008 and the Draft Environmental Assessment was made available for public review at the Sharp County Public Library and the Sharp County Courthouse for a 15-day period. No public comments were received.

FINDINGS

FEMA has made the following determinations from the information contained in the EA:

The proposed project as described in the EA will not result in any significant adverse impacts to existing land use, water resources (surface water, groundwater, waters of the United States, wetlands, and floodplains), air quality, noise, biological resources (vegetation, fish and wildlife, state and Federally listed threatened or endangered species and critical habitats), safety, hazardous materials and waste, cultural resources, or result in disproportionately high or adverse effects on minority or low-income populations. The proposed action is also in compliance with all relevant Federal, state and local laws, including Executive Orders (EO) 11988, Floodplain Management, EO 11990, Protection of Wetlands, and EO 12898, Environmental Justice.

CONDITIONS


The following conditions must be met as part of this project. Failure to comply with these conditions may jeopardize Federal funds:

- 1) The EA and this FONSI apply only to the project area that has been specifically described and evaluated in the EA. Any other areas beyond the project area that may be impacted due to changes in the project plan must be evaluated for compliance with NEPA and other applicable Federal, State and local environmental and historic preservation laws, regulations, and Executive Orders.
- 2) Best management practices for sedimentation and erosion control will be utilized where appropriate during construction and for as long as deemed necessary.
- 3) Construction noise will be limited to workday, daylight hours to the greatest extent practicable.
- 4) If hazardous constituents are unexpectedly encountered in the project area during the proposed construction operations, appropriate measures for the proper assessment, remediation and management of the contamination will be initiated in accordance with applicable Federal, state, and local regulations. The contractor will take appropriate measures to prevent, minimize, and control the spill of hazardous materials in the construction staging area and project work area.
- 5) No historic or cultural remains are likely to be encountered during the construction activity; however, in accordance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, should unanticipated historic or cultural materials be encountered during construction, all construction activities shall cease immediately until their cultural affiliation and ultimate disposition is determined in consultation between FEMA and the State Historic Preservation Officer.


CONCLUSIONS

Based on the findings of the attached EA, coordination with the appropriate agencies, comments from the public, and adherence to the project conditions set forth in this FONSI, FEMA has determined that the proposed project qualifies as a major Federal action that will not significantly affect the quality of the natural and human environment, nor does it have the potential for significant cumulative effects. As a result of this FONSI, an EIS will not be prepared (44 CFR Part 10.9) and the proposed project as described in the attached EA may proceed.

APPROVAL


Donald R. Fairley, REM
Regional Environmental Officer
FEMA Region VI

Date 10/24/08


William Peterson
Regional Administrator
FEMA Region VI

Date 10/27/08