

**U.S. Department of Homeland Security**  
Louisiana Recovery Office  
1 Seine Court  
New Orleans, Louisiana 70114



**FEMA**

**DRAFT FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT**  
**NORA NAVRA LIBRARY**  
**NEW ORLEANS, ORLEANS, LOUISIANA**  
***FEMA-1603-DR-LA***

**Introduction**

As a result of damages from Hurricane Katrina on August 29, 2005, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) was authorized under a Presidential disaster declaration (FEMA-1603-DR-LA) to provide Federal assistance to designated disaster areas in Louisiana. The Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (PL 93288) Section 406 authorizes FEMA's Public Assistance (PA) Program to provide financial and other forms of assistance to State and local governments to support response, recovery, and mitigation efforts following Presidentially declared disasters.

In accordance with 44 CFR Part 10, FEMA regulations to implement the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), an Environmental Assessment (EA) was prepared. The purpose of the EA was to analyze the potential environmental impacts associated with the relocation of the Nora Navra Library and to determine whether to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) or Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI). The proposed project aims to restore community services lost on August 29, 2005, as a result of Hurricane Katrina. Nora Navra Library served residents of the Seventh Ward as a neighborhood branch library that provided a basic collection of both print and non-print material, public-use computers, community meeting spaces, and enterprise space. Restoration of these literary and educational resources in a location that best serves the local community is needed for the City of New Orleans to achieve its objective. The alternatives considered include 1) the No Action Alternative, 2) Reconstruction/repair of the Nora Navra Library in the same footprint, and 3) Reconstruction of the Nora Navra Library at an alternate location.

**Proposed Action**

The proposed action is for replacement of the Nora Navra Library, which is a 3000 square feet (SF) one-story building with brick exterior walls and slab-on-grade foundation, in an alternate location approximately 500 feet northeast of the present site. The proposed location consists of a triangular lot bounded by Old Prieur Street, Aubry Street, and A.P. Tureaud Avenue in New Orleans, Louisiana. This action would include site preparation, construction of a new building, and installation of necessary utilities and appurtenances.

## **Findings**

FEMA has evaluated the proposed project for significant adverse impacts to water resources (wetlands and floodplains), coastal resources, biological resources, cultural resources, hazardous materials and environmental justice. During the construction period, short-term impacts to soils, water quality, transportation, air quality, and noise are anticipated. Also during the construction period, cultural resources impacts could occur during ground disturbing activities; however, National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) Section 106 consultation would be on-going to limit any potential impacts which could occur. All short-term impacts require conditions to minimize and mitigate impacts to the proposed project site and surrounding areas.

## **Conditions**

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

- In accordance with applicable local, state, and federal regulations, the applicant is responsible for acquiring any necessary permits and/or clearances prior to the commencement of any construction related activities.
- This project is currently under evaluation by FEMA to determine the minimum BFE this facility must be protected against. The City of New Orleans is also required to coordinate with the local floodplain administrator regarding floodplain permit(s) prior to the start of any activities. All coordination pertaining to these permit(s) should be documented to the local floodplain administrator and copies provided to the State and FEMA as part of the permanent project files. Per 44 CFR 9.11(d)(9), mitigation or minimization standards must be applied, where possible. The replacement of building contents, materials, and equipment should be, where possible, wet or dry-proofed, elevated, or relocated to or above the BFE.
- Fill or borrow material used must be sourced from sites that do not contain any buried cultural materials (*i.e.*, wells, cisterns, foundations, basements, prehistoric Indian artifacts, human burials, and the like). If during the course of work, archaeological artifacts (prehistoric or historic) or human remains are discovered, City of New Orleans and/or its contractors must immediately stop work in the vicinity of the discovery and take all reasonable measures to avoid or minimize harm to the finds. The Applicant and GOHSEP must inform the FEMA Public Assistance program, who would in turn contact the FEMA Historic Preservation staff. The Applicant must not proceed with work until FEMA completes the necessary reviews required by Section 106 of NHPA. In addition, if unmarked graves are present, compliance with the Louisiana Unmarked Human Burial Sites Preservation Act is required. In that situation, the Applicant must notify the local law enforcement agency within 24 hours of the discovery, and notify FEMA and the Louisiana Division of Archaeology at (225) 342-8170 within 72 hours of the discovery. Failure to comply with these stipulations may jeopardize FEMA funding of the project.

