

Federal Emergency Management Agency
PUBLIC NOTICE
Notice of Availability of the Draft Environmental Assessment (DEA)
for the Charles Walker Community Center Relocation Project,
Harrison County, Mississippi
FEMA-1604-DR-MS

Interested persons are hereby notified that the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) is proposing to assist in the funding of a flood mitigation project for the Charles Walker Community Center in Harrison County, Mississippi.

The former Charles Walker Community Center, located at 4010 West Beach Boulevard in Gulfport, provided community programs and services to Gulfport area residents. The Center had a capacity to serve 180 people, and was comprised of three buildings (community center, pavilion and Boy Scout storage building), as well as a tennis court. The entire facility totaled 19,827 square feet. The Center was located within the 100-year floodplain (Flood Zone AE). As a result of the 25- to 30-foot storm surge from Hurricane Katrina, only the slabs and foundations remained of the buildings comprising CWCC. Damages to the Center meet FEMA's repair/replacement ratio for the demolition and replacement of the facility.

Under the Proposed Action Alternative, the City of Gulfport would relocate the Center out of the floodplain and advisory base flood elevation (ABFE) zone, protecting it from future storm damages and interrupted service. The Center would be relocated to a 6.64-acre undeveloped, wooded lot off Dedeaux Road, north of Gulfport (Lat/Long: N30.4497, W-89.08224). The proposed project site is approximately 6.4 miles northeast of the existing Center location. The proposed project site is bound on the north by a wooded area, on the east by a subdivision, on the south by Dedeaux Road, and on the west by a partially cleared and vacant parcel of land. The proposed project site is located outside both the 100- and 500-year floodplain (Flood Zone X) and ABFE.

The proposed project site would be completely cleared for the construction of the new center. The proposed facility will contain a community center, pavilion, storage building, and tennis court to replace the damaged facilities. Access to the proposed project site would be from the south via Dedeaux Road. The new center would utilize municipal water, electricity, sewerage, and telephone facilities, with tie-ins from existing lines running parallel to Dedeaux Road.

In accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA), Executive Order 11988, Executive Order 11990, and the implementing regulations of FEMA, an Environmental Assessment (EA) was prepared to assess the potential impacts of the Proposed Action on the human and natural environment. The Draft EA summarizes the purpose and need, alternatives, affected environmental, and potential environmental consequences for the proposed action. The Draft EA is available for comment and can be viewed and downloaded from FEMA's website at

<http://www.fema.gov/plan/ehp/envdocuments/ea-region4.shtm> or viewed and copied at the following locations:

- City Hall, 2309 15th Street, Gulfport, MS 39501
- Orange Grove Library, 12301 Mobile Ave., Gulfport, MS 39503

The comment period will end 15 days from the notice publication date, which is Tuesday, July 17, 2007. Written comments on the Draft EA can be mailed or faxed to the contact below. If no substantive comments are received, the Draft EA and associated FONSI will become final. Substantive comments will be addressed as appropriate in the final documents.

Michael Grisham
FEMA Environmental Liaison Officer
FEMA/State Transitional Recovery Officer
220 Popp's Ferry Road, Building A South
Biloxi, MS 39565
FAX – (228) 385-7884