

**FEMA PUBLIC NOTICE OF AVAILABILITY
DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT OF
PROPOSED NEW HOSPITAL IN,
AMERICUS, SUMTER COUNTY, GEORGIA**

Interested parties are hereby notified that the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has prepared an Environmental Assessment (EA) for a proposed new hospital. The new hospital would replace the former Sumter Regional Hospital destroyed by the March 1, 2007 tornado. This proposed action may be funded under a Presidential Disaster Declaration, signed on March 3, 2007 (FEMA-1686-DR-GA).

The Sumter Regional Hospital facilities were recently renamed the Phoebe Sumter Medical Center. This proposed action would include developing a 45-acre site (termed "Proposed New Hospital Site") northwest of the U.S. Highway 19/U.S. Highway 280 intersection in the City of Americus, Sumter County, Georgia. This would include constructing medical office buildings, housing women's and family services, oncology and surgical clinics, and wellness and outpatient rehabilitation to stabilize the healthcare delivery system in this community and surrounding areas. A new four-story 76-bed hospital building would be constructed and the existing temporary hospital services would be transferred to the new building. Activities would include, where necessary, site clearing, grading, road construction, and placement of utilities (electricity, telephones, water, and sewer) for the site. Per the National Environmental Policy Act (42 U.S.C. 4371 *et seq.*), and associated environmental statutes, a Draft EA was written to evaluate the proposed action's potential impacts on the human and natural environment. The Draft EA summarizes the proposed action's purpose and need, site selection process, affected environment, and potential environmental consequences associated with the proposed action.

The public comment period will be 21 days – September 16 to October 6, 2005. Written comments on the Draft EA or related matters can be faxed to FEMA's Region IV Office at (770) 220-5440; emailed to FEMA-R4EHP@dhs.gov; or mailed to FEMA R4 REO Wm. Straw, 3003 Chamblee Tucker Road, Atlanta GA, 30341-4112. The Draft EA can be viewed and downloaded from FEMA's website: <http://www.fema.gov/plan/ehp/envdocuments/ea-region4.shtm>. The Draft EA will also be available for public review at the Lake Blackshear Regional Library, 307 East Lamar Street, Americus, Georgia (hours are 10:00 AM to 8:00 PM Tu-Th; to 6:00 PM Mon; and to 4:00 PM Fri-Sat) and the 3rd Floor City Clerk's Office in the Municipal Building, 101 West Lamar Street, Americus, Georgia (hours are 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM, Mon-Fri).

Based on FEMA's findings to date, we anticipate no adverse affects on historical properties. However, if we receive new information from the Georgia State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), or any other source, that results in a change from no adverse affects on historical properties, then FEMA would revise the findings and issue a second public notice, for additional comments. However, if there are no changes, this Draft EA will become the Final EA.

If no substantive comments are received, the Draft EA and associated Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) will become final and this initial Public Notice will also serve as the final Public Notice. Substantive comments will be addressed as appropriate in the final documents.