



Draft Environmental Assessment
Options Building Relocation and Reconstruction
Linn County, Iowa
FEMA DR-1763-IA
October 9, 2009



FEMA

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Section 1 Introduction

The City of Cedar Rapids, population 128,056 in 2000, is located in Linn County, Iowa. Cedar Rapids lies on both banks of the Cedar River, 20 miles (32 km) north of Iowa City and 100 miles (160 km) east of Des Moines, the largest city and state's capital. City Hall and the County Courthouse are located on Mays Island, on the Cedar River. Downtown Cedar Rapids is one of few cities in the world with governmental offices on a municipal island.

A flourishing center for arts and culture in Eastern Iowa, Cedar Rapids is home to the Paramount Theatre, the Cedar Rapids Museum of Art, Theatre of Cedar Rapids, and the Iowa Cultural Corridor Alliance. Cedar Rapids is an economic hub of the state, located in the core of the Interstate 380 Cedar Rapids/Iowa City Technology Corridor of Linn, Benton, Jones, Johnson, and Washington counties.

Cedar Rapids was incorporated on January 15, 1849. According to the United States Census Bureau, the city has a total area of 64.4 square miles (166.8 km²), of which, 63.1 square miles (163.5 km²) of it is land and 1.3 square miles (3.3 km²) of it (1.99%) is water. The City is governed by a five member, elected city council.

The Linn County Options Building is a 50,322 square foot facility that was constructed in 1966 and serves as a public service rehabilitation and educational facility providing services to persons with physical and mental disabilities. For more than 40 years, Options of Linn County has formed partnerships between local, regional, and national businesses and persons with disability, enabling both to grow and thrive. Employing more than 350 individuals they are the only county operated employment agency for people with disabilities in Iowa. The original Options Building is located at 1019 Seventh Street in downtown Cedar Rapids.

Between June 11 and June 16, 2008 during the Spring Mid-West Storms, a federally declared disaster in the State of Iowa, floodwaters caused the Cedar River to overtop their banks. As a result the entire City of Cedar Rapids was inundated with flood waters. The majority of land within the City of Cedar Rapids is located within a floodplain. As a result of the June 2008 storms, the Options Building was inundated with flood water. Due to the extent and depth of flood waters in and around the facility, it was not possible to bring equipment to pump out standing water for three days. As a result, standing water remained in parts of the facility for a period of three days.

Flood water permeated every section of the 50,322 square foot facility. Heavy rainfall combined with flooded stream water carried pollutants from damaged sewage treatment plants, animal wastes storage, and underground gasoline and oil storage tanks among other sources of toxic fluids and materials into the facility. This mixture of contaminants is hazardous to public health and destructive to standing structures and their contents. Due to the extended duration of standing water, the Options Building was red tagged as uninhabitable by the Linn County Environmental Health Department. Standing water created mold throughout the structure. Public access to the facility was prohibited.

Once flood waters receded, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) damage assessment teams examined each of the building's operating systems in addition to the structural integrity of the facility itself. Standing water destroyed the building's heating and cooling systems, in addition to its external and internal electrical terminals and connections. Office equipment, supplies, and computers also were lost. FEMA's assessment teams determined that the Options Building was damaged in excess of 50 percent of its value. As a result, Linn County has applied through the Iowa Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Management and FEMA Region VII Public Assistance Program for funding to relocate and reconstruct the Options Building.

FEMA proposes to provide Public Assistance funds to rebuild the Options Building outside the Special Flood Hazard Area. These funds would be provided pursuant to the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act, Public Law 93-88, as amended and its implementing regulations codified at Title 44 of the Code of Federal Regulations (44 CFR) Part 206.

FEMA has prepared this Environmental Assessment (EA) to evaluate the potential effects to the natural environment and the human environment from the implementation of the Options Building relocation and reconstruction. The EA has been prepared according to the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA), the Council on Environmental Quality regulations implementing NEPA (CFR Parts 1500-1508), and FEMA's implementing regulations at 44 CFR, Part 10.

The EA process provides steps and procedures to evaluate the potential environmental, social and economic impacts of the Proposed Action and its alternatives. This process ensures that the public in addition to local, state and federal agencies have the opportunity to provide input into the Linn County Options Building relocation/reconstruction project, including potential impacts associated with this Proposed Action. The reader should note that this EA has been prepared as a "Focused EA", which limits its assessment of potential impacts only to those resource topics related to the Options Building and its immediate project area.

Section 2 Purpose and Need

FEMA's Public Assistance Program provides funds to repair or replace disaster-damaged, publicly owned facilities. The purpose of the proposed federal action is to restore the important functions to the disabled citizens of Cedar Rapids that were provided through employment opportunities in the Options Building. Currently, the Linn County Options Building is operating out of an inadequate temporary facility as a result of the June 2008 floods. Action is needed to restore these important public services permanently to the population of the City of Cedar Rapids.

Section 3 Alternatives Analysis

NEPA regulations require an investigation and evaluation of reasonable alternatives as part of the NEPA process. Following FEMA guidelines for relocating Facilities, the City of Cedar Rapids adopted the criterion that any prospective site would have to be located outside the Special Flood Hazard Zone (100-year floodplain), in addition to the 500-year floodplain. A large percentage of Cedar Rapids incorporated limits comprise land classified by the National Flood Insurance Program as either within Zone A (Special Flood Hazard Area) or Zone B, the Moderate Flood Hazard Area (500-year floodplain). These conditions limited the available project relocation alternatives. Linn County also screened prospective sites according to their accessibility to Cedar Rapids citizens. For example, prospective sites would need to be located on “all weather roads” (snow routes, elevated roadways).

Section 3.1 Alternatives Considered But Eliminated From Further Review

3.1.1 Reconstruction in Place

Linn County considered reconstructing the Options Building in its pre-disaster location, and elevating the facility outside the floodplain. This initial concept was subsequently rejected, because of the size and costs associated with elevating a 50,322 square foot building in the Special Flood Hazard Area.

There also were concerns that should another catastrophic flood occur similar to the June storms, the Options Building might escape flooding; however, flood waters surrounding the facility would isolate the building and its services from Cedar Rapids citizens. In addition, wheel chair ramps cannot exceed a slope or rise of one inch per twelve inches of run (1:12). With the requirement to elevate the facility above the advisory base flood elevation the length of the ramps would go beyond the property boundaries. For these reasons, this alternative was eliminated from further consideration.

3.1.2 Downtown Cedar Rapids Commercial District Sites

A number of parcels within Cedar Rapids’ Central Business District were reviewed. A downtown Options Building would place city services closer to the population center of the community. After reviewing three sites in the downtown vicinity it was determined that there were no parcels available within the downtown area that met the size requirements of the Options Building and its multi-purpose functions.

The majority of parcels in downtown Cedar Rapids are also located in the floodplain. Placing a facility within the 500-year floodplain would require elevating the facility. For these reasons, these alternatives were rejected from further consideration.

Section 3.2 Alternatives Carried Forward For Review

3.2.1 Prairie Ridge Business Park –Proposed Action

As noted, the principal criterion guiding the site relocation process was finding a parcel outside the designated floodplain. Equally important was a site easily accessible to citizens. The 50,322 square foot one story Options Building would be located at a 7.74 to 8.75 acre parcel within the proposed 42.53 acre Prairie Ridge Business Park, located on the corner of 12th Street and 26th Avenue is classified by the National Flood Insurance Program as a Zone C, an area determined to be outside the 100-and 500-year floodplains. The site is an undeveloped vegetated tree and grass covered parcel located on former agricultural lands at the western edge of Cedar Rapids. New development within the city is planned in this area, because it is outside the floodplain of the Cedar River and areas flooded in the June 2008 floods.

3.2.2 No Action Alternative

Inclusion of a No Action Alternative in the environmental analysis and documentation is required under NEPA. The No Action Alternative is defined as maintaining the status quo with no FEMA funding for an alternative action. The No Action Alternative is used to evaluate the effects of not providing eligible assistance for the project, thus providing a benchmark against which “action alternatives” may be evaluated. For the purposes of this alternative, it is assumed that Linn County would not be able to rebuild the Options Building and provide the facilities to house the services provided within the building. As a focused Environmental Assessment, only the No Action Alternative and the Proposed Action will be carried forward for review.

Section 4 Affected Environment and Potential Impacts

Soon after the land of east central Iowa opened to settlers in the late 1830s, a stretch of land along the Cedar River in Linn County known for its swift flowing rapids was identified as a prospective town site. The bowl-shaped valley was nearly three miles wide with tree covered hills close to the river on either side both above and below the town. The possibilities that water power at the site offered for the operation of mills attracted both settlers and land speculators. The rich land in the nearby hills and prairies promised to sustain a steady supply of agricultural produce. The most farsighted observers anticipated that a steamboat landing could be developed here where the rapids would impede further movement upstream (City of Cedar Rapids, 1997).

The City of Cedar Rapids’ current population of 128,056 persons counted in the special 2008 census. Historically, heavy industry, including manufacturing, has been a part of the city’s economy. The City of Cedar Rapids sits between two distinct ecological zones – prairie lands converted to agriculture and forested lands associated with wetlands and surface waters of the Cedar River. The riparian zones associated with these surface waters contain numerous species of bottomland hardwood trees including native bur oak and black cherry. Residential development in Cedar Rapids historically has been

concentrated within the environs of the Cedar River. Prairie lands to the west have been dedicated to cultivation of planted row crops. However, new residential development is occurring farther to the west, outside the floodplain.

The proposed project area is located in this area of southwest Cedar Rapids, which is characterized by vacant and developed land. The elevation of the property ranges from approximately 700 to 800 feet above mean sea level. There is approximately 100 feet of topographic relief at the property. The property is located in the northeast Iowa landform region known as the Iowan Surface, typified by a gently rolling terrain shaped by recent glacial conditions (21,000 to 16,000 years ago). Glacial boulders lie scattered across the landscape. Surface soils on the property belong to the loamy alluvial land Sparta-Spillville association, typified by nearly level to moderately sloping, dark to light colored, excessively to poorly drained soils formed in sandy and loamy material on bottom lands and stream benches (USDA, 1973)

The Iowa Department of Soil Conservation analyzes soil types throughout the state and assigns a rating to farmlands called the Corn Suitability Rating. Corn suitability ratings provide a relative ranking of all soils mapped in the state of Iowa based on their potential to be utilized for intensive row crop production. The Corn Suitability Rating is an index that can be used to rate one soil's potential yield against another over a period of time.

The Corn Suitability Rating considers average weather conditions as well as frequency of use of the soil for row crop production. Ratings range from 100 for soils that have no physical limitations, occur on minimal slopes, and can be continuously row cropped to as low as 5 for soils with severe limitations for row crops.

The average corn suitability rating for the Options Parcel (Proposed Action) in Linn County is 32, suitable for corn production, but not considered State Prime Farmland (USDA, 2009).

4.1 Land Use and Traffic Circulation

The project area is located within the city limits of Cedar Rapids on land zoned as “I-1” (Light Industrial). However, the owners of the parcel has applied to the City of Cedar Rapids Department of Community Development for a Land Use Amendment to change the zone to “I-2” (General Industrial). The current I-1 zoning classification is intended to accommodate wholesale establishments, warehouses, and industrial activities that do not create appreciable nuisances or hazards, and that serve an area larger than a single neighborhood or area of the city. High intensity retail uses are incompatible with this district. The I-2 designation district is intended to accommodate those industrial activities that may produce moderate nuisances or hazards in areas that are relatively remote from residential and commercial development. This zone allows for public service facilities such as the Options Building.

The major roadways providing access to the relocated Options Building are Wilson Avenue on the North and 12th Street SW on the east. . Wilson Road is a four lane road

classified by Linn County as a primary road and 12th Street SW is a two lane road classified as a secondary roads.

It is estimated that an average of 350 persons use the facilities housed in the Options Building daily. The relocation of the Options Building to 12th SW Road would add approximately 150 to 200 vehicles per day to Wilson Road near the intersection with 12th Street SW. The City of and Linn County Secondary Roads Department do not consider that this addition to traffic on Wilson Road would reduce the Level of Service on either Wilson Road or 12th Street SW.

4.1.1 No Action Alternative

Under the No Action Alternative, no new construction is proposed, thus there would be no potential to affect traffic service on streets within the City of Cedar Rapids.

4.1.2 Prairie Ridge Business Park –Proposed Action

While the relocation of the Options Building will result in additional traffic on 26th Avenue Court SW Road, it is not anticipated that the additional traffic accessing the relocated facility would adversely affect traffic circulation on either Wilson Road or 12th Street SW.

4.2 Water Resources, Wetlands, and Floodplain Management

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) is responsible for permitting and enforcement functions dealing with building in U.S. waters and discharging dredged or fill material into U.S. waters. USACE regulations for building or working in navigable waters of the United States are authorized by the Rivers and Harbors Act of 1899.

These regulations often go hand in hand with Section 404 of the Clean Water Act, which establishes the USACE permit program for discharging dredged or fill material. The regulations are often used together because building in navigable waters of the United States also constitutes discharging dredged or fill material into water of the United States. In addition to regulating construction or work being done in navigable water of the United States, USACE regulates discharging into wetlands through the Section 404 permit program.

The Clean Water Act, as amended in 1977, established the basic framework for regulating discharges of pollutants into the waters of the United States. The USACE regulates the discharge of dredged or filled material into waters of the U.S., including wetlands, pursuant to Section 404 of the Clean Water Act. Additionally, Executive Order (EO) 11990 (Protection of Wetlands) requires federal agencies to avoid, to the extent possible, adverse impact of wetlands. EO 11988 requires the federal government to minimize the occupancy and modification to floodplains. Specifically, EO 11988 prohibits federal agencies from funding new construction in the 100-year floodplain, or 500-year floodplain for a critical facility (e.g. Evacuation Shelter), unless there are no

practical alternatives. As noted, the largest portion of the populated areas within Cedar Rapids, including the downtown and residential neighborhoods are within either the Special Flood Hazard Zone or the 500-Year Floodplain. This is due to the close proximity of the Cedar River.

4.2.1 No Action Alternative

The existing Options Building is located within an area classified by the National Flood Insurance Program as a “Flood Zone A”, inside the Special Flood Hazard Area (100-year floodplain). The No Action would not be consistent with Executive Order 11988 and would not affect wetlands. No construction activities would occur with the selection of the No-action Alternative.

4.2.2 Prairie Ridge Business Park –Proposed Action

The site identified for the relocated Options Building would not be located in either the Special Flood Hazard Area (100-year floodplain), or the 500-year floodplain, and thus would be consistent with Executive Order 11988. In addition, a review of the National Wetlands Inventory Map indicates no wetlands are located on or immediately adjacent to the proposed project site. The Contractor would implement specific best management practices to reduce or eliminate runoff impacts during proposed construction activities of the Proposed Action and to reduce the potential for soil erosion after construction, regardless of whether a National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Permit or a waiver from the permit requirement is secured.

4.3 Hazardous Materials

A search was conducted of the maintained by the Iowa Department of Natural Resources for hazardous materials sites, including abandoned underground/gasoline tanks, abandoned waste dumps, or areas of concentrated pollutants. The Iowa Department of Natural Resources maintains records for the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency’s Resource Conservation and Recovery Act.

In addition, the developer of the Prairie Ridge Business Park completed a Phase I Environmental Site Assessment for the entire 42.53 acre development in order to identify and recognized environmental conditions that could affect soil, groundwater and surface water quality at the property. The assessment revealed no recognized environmental conditions in connection with the property.

4.3.1 Alternative 1 – No Action Alternative

The No Action Alternative e would not involve new construction or relocation of facilities to a new site and thus would not affect any hazardous materials sites identified by the State of Iowa or the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

4.3.2 Prairie Ridge Business Park –Proposed Action

The proposed project would cause some disturbance of the shallow soils as part of the site preparation work. No obvious evidence of potential environmental degradation was noted within the project area. 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 would be initiated in accordance with applicable federal, state, and local regulations. The contractor would take appropriate measures to prevent, minimize, and control the spill of hazardous materials in the construction staging area.

4.4 Biological Resources

For natural resources supporting plant and animal species, the State of Iowa is considered the most altered state in the nation. As settlers reached Iowa and discovered its rich prairie soils, agriculture quickly became the greatest source of income in the state. Forests were cut; wetlands were filled and the topography of the prairie was reshaped to accommodate large tracks of row crops. In recent years, ecologists, local Conservation Boards and the Iowa legislature have undertaken initiatives to bring back native species throughout Iowa.

As noted earlier, the land within Cedar Rapids encompasses two distinct ecological zones – prairie lands converted to agriculture and forested lands associated with the Cedar River. The riparian zones and areas upland of the surface waters surrounding and crossing the City.

Examples of resident tree species in the area include bur oak (*Quercus macrocarpa*), Black oak (*Quercus velutina*), White oak (*Quercus alba*), black cherry (*Prunus serotina*), and the Ohio Buckeye (*Aesculus octandra*). Common plants and shrubs in and around Cedar Rapids include false indigo (*baptisia australis*), round headed clover (*Lerspedeza capitata*), big blue star (*amsonia ciliate*), elderberry (*Sambucus canadensis*), and wild plum (*Prunus americana*). Wildlife in and around the project area could include the bald eagle (*Haliaeetus lencocephalus*), Blue herons (*Ardea Herodias*), turkeys (*Meleagris galgano*), Canadian geese (*Branata canadensis*), white tailed deer (*Odocoileus viginicus*), muskrats (*Ondatra zibethicus*), raccoons (*Procyon lotor*), mink (*Neovision vison*), and river otter (*Lutra canadensis*)

Endangered Species

Section 7 of the federal Endangered Species Act requires federal agencies to determine if proposed projects have the potential to affect species listed or proposed for listing by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. This includes habitat that would support threatened or endangered species or federal designated habitat supporting protected species. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service have identified two listed species found in Linn County, Iowa: the Western prairie fringed orchid (*Platanthera praeclara*), which occurs in a wide variety of habitats, from mesic prairie to wetlands such as sedge meadows, marsh edges,

even bogs. It requires full sun for optimum growth and flowering and a grassy habitat with little or no woody encroachment. A symbiotic relationship between the seed and soil fungi, called mycorrhizae, is necessary for seedlings to become established. This fungi helps the seeds assimilate nutrients in the soil. In addition, the Prairie bush clover (*Lespedeza leptostachya*), which is found in dry to mesic prairie with gravelly soil.

Using a Geographic Information System data base mapping system, which contains documented geographic sites where state/federal protected species have been observed, FEMA examined the project area in the City of Cedar Rapids. No sites were identified that would support federal or state protected species. In addition, a site visit was conducted by FEMA to survey for appropriate habitat identified by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service on September 10th, 2009. No habitat that would support the listed species was indentified as the site has been heavily modified by earth moving equipment.

FEMA also conducted a search of the National Wetlands Inventory to determine if the project area would encroach on jurisdictional wetlands or areas associated with surface waters of the U.S. The National Wetlands Inventory indicates that the project would not affect wetlands of the U.S. (Executive Order 11990).

4.4.1 Alternative No 1 - No Action Alternative

Because no new construction is proposed under the No Action Alternative, it would have no effect on state/federal protected species or wetlands/waters of the U.S.

4.4.2 Prairie Ridge Business Park –Proposed Action

The Prairie Ridge Business Park would not affect habitat supporting state or federal protected species or encroach on wetlands or waters of the U.S.

4.5 Cultural Resources

The location of present-day Cedar Rapids was in the territory of the Fox and Sac tribes. The first permanent settler, Osgood Shepherd, arrived in 1838. When Cedar Rapids was first established in 1838, William Stone named the town Columbus. In 1841 it was resurveyed and renamed by N.B. Brown and his associates. They named the town Cedar Rapids, for the rapids in the Cedar River at the site. The river was named for the large number of red cedar trees that grew along its banks. Cedar Rapids was incorporated on January 15, 1849.

The area around Cedar Rapids was considered ideal for settlers moving into Iowa from the east due to its extensive stands of forest lands, advertised during the period as “ideal for homes and fuel” forestry comprised the first source of income for early settlers to the Cedar Rapids area. It was not until the turn of the century that row crops, cultivation of corn in particular took off as the economic engine of Cedar Rapids and Linn County.

The area proposed for relocation and reconstruction of the Options Building was historically used for agriculture by early settlers and was located outside of the developed City of Cedar Rapids.

FEMA has received and reviewed the Phase I Environmental Site Assessment report completed by Bonestroo/Northern Environmental Technologies, Inc. of Cedar Rapids, and a site plan completed by Foth Infrastructure and Environment, LLC of Cedar Rapids for the proposed relocation project site.

In order to determine the potential effects of the proposed action on cultural resources in the area, FEMA staff conducted a site survey of the project area. The parcel is part of a proposed 42.53 acre business park development site, which has been profoundly disturbed. Site surveys indicate that the Prairie Ridge Business Park (Proposed Action) would not affect any standing historic structures.

FEMA has determined the area of potential effect for this project is limited to the 8.75 acre parcel located at 26th Avenue Court SW and 12th Street SW in Cedar Rapids.

FEMA has searched the State Historical Society of Iowa (SHPO), Iowa Site Inventory and the University of Iowa-Office of the State Archeologist, Archeological Site File to determine if cultural resources have been identified within the area of potential effect. A search was done of the Sanborn Library, LLC Collection; fire insurance maps covering the project area were not found. Mid-20th century aerial photographs depict what appears to be a farmstead located on the northeast corner of the site. The tree covered portion of the site is restricted from development and tree removal, and is protected by an easement agreement and use restriction. The proposed project is planned to avoid any disturbance in this area.

In accordance with Section 106 review procedures for Federal Undertakings under the National Historic Preservation Act and its implementing regulation 36 CFR Part 800, FEMA finds, and SHPO has concurred in a letter dated September 29, 2009 (see Appendix) that no historic properties within the area for potential effect for the proposed Linn County-Options building relocation project in Cedar Rapids will be affected as a result of the proposed action.

The proposed project would require approximately 18 months of construction and would require the use of some heavy equipment including a bulldozer, scraper, and a backhoe. In the event that archaeological deposits (soils, features, artifacts, other remnants of human activity, particularly human remains) are unexpectedly discovered the project shall be halted, the applicant will stop all work immediately in the vicinity of the discovery and take reasonable measures to avoid or minimize harm to the finds. The applicant will inform Iowa Homeland Security and Emergency Management Division (IHSEMD), will secure all archaeological findings and restrict access to the area. IHSEMD shall notify FEMA and FEMA will consult with SHPO and the Iowa Archaeologist. Work in sensitive areas may not resume until consultations are completed or until an archaeologist who meets the Secretary of the Interior's professional

qualification standards determines the extent and historical significance of the discovery. Work may not resume at or around the delineated archaeological deposit until the applicant is notified by IHSEMD.

Section 4.5.1 No Action Alternative

Because no new construction is proposed under the No Action Alternative there would not be any affect to standing historic structures, or pre-historic cultural sites.

Section 4.5.2 Prairie Ridge Business Park –Proposed Action

No historic properties within the area of potential effect for the proposed Linn County-Options building relocation project in Cedar Rapids will be affected as a result of the proposed action.

4.6 Noise and Air Quality

Linn County is an attainment area under the federal Clean Air Act. As noted the project area is zoned R-1. There are no sensitive receptors within or adjacent to the project area. These would include hospitals, health care facilities, and schools.

The federal Noise Control Act was enacted in 1972 (P.L. 92-574). Inadequately controlled noise presents a growing danger to the health and welfare of the nation's population. Noise levels are ranked by a "decibel scale", a decibel level of 40-50 is considered a relatively quiet (background) ambient level. Noise levels between 75 and 100 are considered potentially intrusive to human activity. Ambient noise levels in the project area range from 60 to 72 decibels. Short-term decibel levels in excess of this range often originate from vehicle and tractor trailer traffic on 26th Avenue Court SW Road.

4.6.1 No Action Alternative

The No Action Alternative would not affect air quality or noise levels, because no new construction would occur.

4.6.2 Prairie Ridge Business Park –Proposed Action

Construction equipment would create elevated noise levels within the vicinity of the project site; however, these impacts would be of short duration. Pollutant emissions from construction equipment may result in minor, temporary effects to air quality in the area immediately surrounding the construction activity. Vehicular exhaust emissions would be produced by the operation of diesel engines and other construction equipment. These effects would be localized and of short duration. The contractor would be required to keep all equipment in good working order to minimize air pollution.

Section 5 Executive Order 12898 Environmental Justice

The City of Cedar Rapids estimated population as of the of the 2000 census, there were 128,056 persons in the City. The Year 2000 census counted 49,820 households and 30,838 families residing within the city. The population density was 1,912 people per square mile. The racial makeup of the town was 91.86 percent white; 3.71% African American, 1.77% Asian; 0.25% Native American, 0.06% Pacific Islander, 0.55% from other races and 1.79% from two or more races. Hispanic or Latino of any race was 1.71 % of the population.

There were 49,820 households out of which 29.9% had children under the age of 18 living with them, 48.4% were married couples living together, 10.0% had a female householder with no husband present, and 38.1% were non-families. 30.2% of all households were made up of individuals and 9.7% had someone living alone who was 65 years of age or older.

The average household size was 2.36 and the average family size was 2.96. In the city the population was spread out with 24.5% under the age of 18, 10.8% from 18 to 24, 30.7% from 25 to 44, 20.9% from 45 to 64, and 13.1% who were 65 years of age or older. The median age was 35 years. For every 100 females there were 95.0 males. For every 100 females age 18 and over, there were 92.1 males.

The median income for a household in the city was \$43,704, and the median income for a family was \$54,286. Males had a median income of \$37,217 versus \$26,251 for females. The per capita income for the city was \$22,589. About 4.9% of families and 7.5% of the population were below the poverty line, including 8.8% of those under age 18 and 6.9% of those age 65 or over. Based upon U.S. Census tract data, there would be little likelihood of disproportionate impacts on any low-income or minority group.

Section 5.1 No Action Alternative

The No Action Alternative would not result in a disproportionately high or adverse impact on low income or minority populations.

Section 5.2 Prairie Ridge Business Park –Proposed Action

The Proposed Action would not result in a disproportionately high or adverse impact on low income or minority populations.

Section 6 Cumulative Impacts

Cumulative impacts are defined as impacts on either the human or natural environment, which result from the incremental impact of an action when added to past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions.

Section 6.1 No Action Alternative

Under the No Action Alternative, no new construction would occur, thus there would be no potential to result in a cumulative impact upon the City of Cedar Rapids or surrounding area.

Section 6.2 Prairie Ridge Business Park –Proposed Action

The Options Building relocation would comprise the replacement of a use in place prior to the 2008 Mid-West Storms and would not introduce a new facility to the area that would have the potential to result in a cumulative impact upon the City of Cedar Rapids or surrounding area.

Summary of Impacts

Environmental Resource	No-Action	Proposed Action
Land Use, Planning, and Traffic Circulation	No Impact	No Impact
Executive Order 11988 Floodplains	No Impact	The proposed action is not located in a floodplain
Hazardous Materials	No Impact	No Impact
Biological Resources	No Impact	No Impact
Threatened and Endangered Species	No Impact	No Impact
Cultural Resources	No Impact	No historic properties within the area of potential effect for the proposed Linn County-Options building relocation project in Cedar Rapids will be affected as a result of the proposed action.
Noise	No impact	The proposed action would result in a slight increase in noise during The increase in noise is expected to be minor and short term. No permanent changes to noise levels in the area are expected to be associated with the proposed project.
Air Quality	No impact	Pollutant emissions from construction equipment may result in minor, temporary effects to air quality in the area immediately surrounding the construction activity. Vehicular exhaust emissions would be produced by the operation of diesel engines and other construction equipment. These effects would be localized and of short duration. The contractor would be required to keep all equipment in good working order to minimize air
Water Quality/Water Resources	No Impact	No Impact
Corn Suitability Lands State Prime Farm Land	No Impact	No Impact
Executive Order 11990 Wetlands	No Impact	No Impact
Executive Order 12898 Environmental Justice	No Impact	No Impact
Cumulative Impacts	No Impact	No Impact

Section 7 Coordination and Permits

Re-location of the Options Building would require a building permit from the County Zoning Department. As noted above, in the event that archaeological deposits (soils, features, artifacts), or other remnants of human activity are uncovered, or if archaeological deposits are found during project construction, the project shall be halted and the applicant shall stop all work immediately in the vicinity of the discovery, and take reasonable measures to avoid or minimize harm to finds. The applicant shall inform the Iowa State Historic Preservation Office and FEMA immediately. Work in sensitive areas cannot resume until a qualified archaeologist determines the extent of the discovery, consultations between Iowa State Historic Preservation Office and FEMA are complete, and the applicant has been notified by Iowa State Historic Preservation Office and FEMA.

Section 8 Public Participation

FEMA is the lead federal agency for conducting the NEPA compliance for this project. It is the lead federal agency's responsibility to expedite the preparation and review of NEPA documents in a way that is responsive to needs of the City of Cedar Rapids residents while meeting the spirit and intent of NEPA and complying with all NEPA provisions.

FEMA will advertise the availability of the Draft Environmental Assessment (DEA) in the "Cedar Rapids Gazette" newspaper. The public comment period will extend for a period of 30 days. The DEA can be viewed and downloaded from FEMA's website at <http://www.fema.gov/plan/ehp/envdocuments/index.shtm>

If no substantive comments are received, the Draft EA will become final and this initial Public Notice will also serve as the final Public Notice. Then this DEA will be moved to the archives page at http://www.fema.gov/plan/ehp/envdocuments/archives_index.shtm

Section 9 Parties Consulted and References

Parties Consulted

City of Cedar Rapids

Steve Estenson
Linn County Risk Management

Linn County Conservation Board

Dennis Goemaat

Iowa Department of Natural Resources

John Pearson

References

“Historical and Architectural Reconnaissance Survey Report for the Downtown and Industrial Corridors in Cedar Rapids, Iowa”

Prepared for the City of Cedar Rapids, Department of Development, Cedar Rapids Historic Preservation Commission. Prepared by Marlys A. Svendsen, 1997

U.S. Resource, Conservation and Recovery Act Data Base

Iowa State Department of Natural Resources
502 East Ninth Street
Des Moines, IA 50319

Iowa State Archaeological Survey, University of Iowa

700 Clinton Street Building
Iowa City, IA 52242

U.S. Bureau of the Census, 20009

www.census.gov

U.S Department of Agriculture, 1973

Soil Survey of Linn County, Iowa

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. “Endangered Species in Iowa, County Distribution of Federally Threatened, Endangered, Proposed and Candidate Species”,

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service,
Rock Island Ecological Service Office, September 2009
1511 47th Avenue
Moline, Il 61265

Section 11 List of Preparers

11.1 Government Preparers

Eric Wieland, Iowa Recovery Center Environmental and Historic Preservation Branch Chief, Federal Emergency Management Agency

Kenneth Sessa, Regional Environmental Officer, Federal Emergency Management Agency, Region VII

Teri Toyne, Historic Preservation Specialist, Federal Emergency Management Agency

11.2 Contractor Preparers

Matthew Estes, Contractor Support to Iowa Floods, Environmental Specialist

Appendix

Figure 1: Proposed Site for Cedar Rapids Options Building



Figure 2: SHPO Concurrence Letter

090357098
U.S. Department of Homeland Security
Federal Emergency Management Agency SEP 29 2009
Iowa Recovery Center
FEMA-1763-DR-IA
4149 NW 120th Street
Urbandale, IA 50323
Phone: (515) 251-3501



09/29/2009

Douglas W. Jones
Review and Compliance Program Manager
State Historical Society of Iowa
600 East Locust Street
Des Moines, IA 50319-0290

**Re: FEMA-1763-DR-IA PW #: 1030, Permanent Relocation Request, Linn County-
Options Building, Cedar Rapids**

**FEMA Public Assistance program submission – standard project review for non-
emergency undertakings**

Dear Mr. Jones:

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) proposes to administer Federal disaster assistance pursuant to the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act, P.L. 93-288, as amended. FEMA has received a funding request from Linn County to relocate the Linn County Options building that was substantially damaged by severe flooding which resulted in the federally declared disaster DR-1763-IA.

FEMA is initiating a Section 106 review for the above referenced property in accordance with Title 36 Code of Federal Regulations Part 800.

FEMA has determined the area of potential effect (APE) for this project is limited to the 8.75 acre parcel located at 26th Avenue Court SW and 12th Street SW in Cedar Rapids.

FEMA has received and reviewed the Phase I Environmental Site Assessment report completed by Bonestroo/Northern Environmental Technologies, Inc. of Cedar Rapids, and a site plan completed by Foth Infrastructure and Environment, LLC of Cedar Rapids for the proposed relocation project. FEMA has searched the State Historical Society of Iowa, Iowa Site Inventory File and the University of Iowa-Office of the State Archeologist Archeological Site File to determine if cultural resources have been identified within the APE. The parcel is part of a 42 acre business park development site, which has been profoundly disturbed. A search was done of the Sanborn Library, LLC Collection; fire insurance maps covering the project area were not found. Mid-20th century aerial photographs depict what appears to be a farmstead located on the northeast corner of the site. The tree covered

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portion of the site is restricted from development and tree removal, and is protected by an easement agreement and use restriction. The proposed project is planned to avoid any disturbance in this area.

In accordance with Section 106 review procedures for Federal Undertakings under the National Historic Preservation Act and its implementing regulation 36 CFR Part 800, FEMA finds that no historic properties will be affected as a result of the proposed Linn County-Options building relocation project.

FEMA respectfully requests your concurrence with this finding within the 10-day agreed upon timeframe. If you have any questions or comments, please contact Teri Toye at (540) 359-5929 or by email at teri.toye@dhs.gov.

Sincerely,



Lois Coulter
Historic Preservation Specialist
FEMA-1763-DR-IA

I concur that no historic properties within the APE for the proposed Linn County-Options building relocation project in Cedar Rapids will be affected as a result of the proposed action pursuant to 36 CFR Part 800.

I do not concur with your findings for the following reason:



Douglas W. Jones
Review and Compliance Program Manager, Archaeologist

Date 10/2/2009