

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



**FEMA**

**DRAFT FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT  
CHANGE OF LOCATION MAZANT ROYAL HOUSING PROJECT  
NEW ORLEANS, ORLEANS, LOUISIANA  
FEMA-1603-DR-LA**

**Introduction**

On August 29, 2005, Hurricane Katrina, a Category 3 hurricane, struck the Gulf Coast Region. The subsequent storm surge damaged levees, resulting in flooding throughout much of the City of New Orleans. As a result of wind and flooding, HANO's entire portfolio of affordable housing and associated structures were damaged. Scattered sites located at Chef Menteur Highway, Old Gentilly Road, and America Street suffered substantial damage. These buildings provided over 100 bedrooms of affordable housing to HANO's per-Katrina portfolio.

As a result of damages from Hurricane Katrina, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) was authorized under 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.

FEMA proposes to supplement the findings of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's *Environmental Assessment for Proposed Mazant Royal Housing Development Project, New Orleans, Louisiana* (March 2007). U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) prepared the EA dated March 2007, pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), the President's Council on Environmental Quality regulations implementing NEPA (40 Code of Federal Regulations [CFR] Parts 1500-1508), and 24 CFR Part 5. The purpose of the Supplemental Environmental Assessment (SEA) is to update the environmental analyses and to document the potential environmental impacts of the proposed construction and realignment activities.

The Proposed Action includes the construction of eighteen units on the Mazant Royal site. This partially vacant square block is located in New Orleans' Bywater neighborhood and is bounded by Mazant, Royal, France and Chartres Streets. There are two buildings on the site owned by HANO, which have continued to provide affordable housing opportunities. HANO has completed a re-subdivision of the remaining lots in the square and proposes to construct nine new duplex buildings (a total of 18 two and three bedroom units) designed as single story doubles and "camelback" doubles that closely resemble existing architecture in the neighborhood.

### **Findings**

FEMA has made the following determination from the information contained in the HUD's EA:

The above described action would not result in any significant adverse impacts related to geology, soils, hydrology, floodplains, wetlands, water quality, air quality, vegetation, wildlife, state and federally listed threatened and endangered species, cultural resources, socioeconomics (including minority and low income populations), safety, security, noise, hazardous materials, toxic wastes, traffic, or transportation. Based on the information analyzed, FEMA has determined that the implementation of the proposed action would not result in significant adverse impacts to the quality of the natural and human environment. The proposed alternative is not anticipated to have the potential for significant cumulative effects when combined with past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions in accordance with 44 CFR Part 10.8 (d)(3)(x). As a result of this FONSI, an EIS will not be prepared (44 CFR Part 10) and the proposed action as described in the SEA may proceed.

The following summarizes the required mitigation and are the conditions that must be met as part of implementing this proposed project:

### **CONDITIONS AND MITIGATION MEASURES**

Based upon the studies and consultations undertaken in this Supplemental EA, several conditions must be met and mitigation measures must be taken by the applicant prior to and during project implementation.

- Lead hazards can be temporarily reduced by taking actions such as repairing damaged painted surfaces and planting grass to cover soil with high lead levels. These actions (called "interim controls") are not permanent solutions and will need ongoing attention. Permanent abatement (or permanent hazard elimination) methods include removing or sealing lead-based paint with special materials, such as capping. HUD has monitoring and protocols that address lead contamination in soil. EPA has adopted Lead Paint regulations as well(40 CFR Part 745). On-site soil testing will determine appropriate mitigation IAW these regulations.

- Vegetable gardens should be prohibited in lead-contaminated soil. Lead poisoning can result from eating produce grown in leaded soil. Additional recommendations for lead in soil levels between 400 and 5,000 ppm (mg/kg):
  - Cover bare soil by planting grass, piling mulch or sand on top of it, or landscaping with sod and bushes. In areas near children's playgrounds, cover soil with mulch and gravel piled at least 6 inches.
  - Move play areas away from contaminated soil.
  - Put doormats outside and inside all entryways. Remove shoes before entering.
- If soil has a high lead level (usually above 5,000 ppm), remediation and management of the contamination should be initiated in accordance with applicable federal, state, and local regulations.
- All work shall comply with EPA guidelines for removal of contaminated soils. This will include testing for contaminants and determining the area of contamination. Excavation of contaminated soils and safe transport and proper disposal of contaminated soil in a regulated landfill. Excavated contamination area will be lined with a geo textile membrane and clean soil will be used to replace contaminated soils.
- A storm water pollution prevention plan should be prepared and BMP's for storm water management should be implemented to minimize any detrimental effects to water quality during project implementation.
- The conditions for the project include the presence of an archaeological monitor during all ground disturbing activities associated with the construction of the HANO housing including utilities, driveways, and out buildings at the project location. The archaeological contractor must first submit a management summary and then a monitoring report to FEMA's Historic Preservation Department. Both reports must meet the Louisiana Division of Archaeology's report standards (ADD REFERENCE). Any artifacts generated by the project will be washed, catalogued and identified. The material will be curated at the Louisiana Division of Archaeology's Curation Facility at the Galvez Building, Baton Rouge, Louisiana.
- Any fill or borrow material used in the repair activities 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, the applicant shall stop work in the vicinity of the discovery and take all reasonable measures to avoid or minimize harm to the finds. The applicant shall inform their Public Assistance contacts at FEMA, who will in turn contact FEMA Historic Preservation (HP) staff. The applicant will not proceed with work until FEMA HP completes consultation with the SHPO. In addition, if unmarked graves are present, compliance with the Louisiana Unmarked Human Burial Sites Preservation Act (R.S. 8:671 et seq.) is required. The applicant shall notify the law enforcement agency of the jurisdiction where the remains are

