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# FEMA

**FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT**  
CITY OF CEDAR RAPIDS MAIN LIBRARY  
CEDAR RAPIDS, IOWA  
FEMA-1763-DR-IA

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) is working with local, state and other federal agencies to coordinate the response to the Midwest storms of 2008, a federally declared disaster in Iowa. Beginning on June 11, 2008, the Cedar Rapids Main Library on 1<sup>st</sup> Street SE experienced extensive damage from the flooding of the Cedar River and its tributaries which flooded large portions of Cedar Rapids and the surrounding area. The current, damaged location of the Main Library is 500 1<sup>st</sup> Street SE and the temporary locations are in Westdale Mall at 2600 Edgewood Road SW and 221 3<sup>rd</sup> St SE, in Cedar Rapids, Iowa. The Cedar Rapids Main Library serves the population of Cedar Rapids with a 2010 population of 126,326 and the surrounding metropolitan area. Since the June 2008 floods, the functional use of the existing damaged Cedar Rapids Main Library has been terminated and the services have been relocated to temporary facilities in order to continue to meet the needs of the community, as the current structure was extensively damaged by flood waters. The Cedar Rapids Main Library provides essential educational services to the city and surrounding Linn County communities. These services include access to public information, reading and viewing materials, children's educational opportunities, and assistance to the general public in conducting research.

The principal criterion, established by the Library Working Group, and guiding the site identification process was a downtown location outside of the 100-year and 500-year floodplains. Equally important was adequate space to accommodate appropriate parking for this facility size. The Proposed Action is the construction of a three-story 89,481 total square-foot building, of which 41,902 square-feet will constitute the foundation footprint on the lot. The proposed new Main Library is designed to occupy the majority of the site and will substantially conform to the original facility's design, capacity, and function with the addition of an auditorium, green roof, and elevation on a 2 foot 6 inch building pad. The design also includes a skywalk to connect the adjacent 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue Parkade. Two roof cisterns are proposed to provide water for irrigation on the green roof and "Stormtech" underground stormwater detention chambers are also included in the design. The project is intended to be a Certified LEED Platinum Building. The proposed Cedar Rapids Main Library site is identified by the National Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM) as being located in a Zone X, an area determined to be outside the 100-year floodplain, and thus be consistent with Executive Order 11988.

FEMA was authorized under Presidential Disaster Declaration, FEMA-DR-1763-IA, to provide federal disaster assistance to Linn County, Iowa, as a result of damages during the incident period beginning May 25, 2008 and ending August 13, 2008. (Section 408 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act, 42 USC 5121-5206, as amended (Stafford Act, Public Law 93-288). The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969 requires that FEMA evaluate the potential environmental effects of the agency's proposed and alternative actions prior to obligating disaster assistance funds. The President's Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) has developed a series of regulations for implementing the NEPA. These regulations are included in Title 40 of the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), Parts 1500-1508.

The CFR requires that a Draft Environmental Assessment (EA) include an evaluation of alternative means of addressing damages caused in declared disasters, and a discussion of the potential environmental effects of the proposed Federal Action. In accordance with both CEQ and FEMA regulations implementing NEPA in 44 CFR Part 10, FEMA prepared a Draft Environmental Assessment (EA) to identify and evaluate potential environmental impacts resulting from the alternatives presented in the EA and to determine whether the potential effects of the Proposed Action will require preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) or a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI). The EA contains an evaluation of the potential impacts associated with constructing the Cedar Rapids Main Library at its new location. Alternatives evaluated in the EA include: 1) no action, i.e. continued termination of the Main Library resources. 2) Construction of the new Cedar Rapids Main Library (proposed). Other alternatives were considered but not carried forth and are described in the EA. The proposed action is the preferred alternative due to the site being situated outside of the 100-year floodplain. The Draft EA was made available for public review and comment from June 9 to July 9, 2011. FEMA did not receive substantive comments on the Draft EA.

#### **FINDING**

Based upon the project scope of work, site design, and EA; and in accordance with FEMA's regulations in 44 CFR Part 10 for environmental consideration, including Executive Orders (EO) addressing floodplains (EO 11988), wetlands (EO 11990), and environmental justice (EO 12898), FEMA determined the Proposed Action will not significantly affect the quality of the natural and human environment and to the best of our knowledge, does not 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 the information and analysis contained in the environmental assessment, a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) has been prepared. An Environmental Impact Statement will not, therefore, be prepared based on the fact that there will be no long-term adverse impacts to the natural or human environment as a result of this project and therefore, based upon the findings above, the project may proceed.

#### **APPROVAL**

  
Kenneth Sessa

Regional Environmental Officer

Federal Emergency Management Agency, Region VII

7/9/2011