

**Federal Emergency Management Agency
PUBLIC NOTICE**

Notice of Availability of the Draft Environmental Assessment for the City of Mercedes Community Safe Room Project
Hidalgo County, Texas
HMGP-DR-1791-TX, Project #330

Interested persons are hereby notified that the City of Mercedes has applied to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), through the Texas Division of Emergency Management (TDEM), for Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) funding under Section 404 the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act. FEMA's Hazard Mitigation Grant Program provides grants to states and local governments to implement long-term hazard mitigation measures that reduce the loss of life and property due to natural disasters and to enable mitigation measures to be implemented during the immediate recovery from a disaster.

FEMA proposes to provide funding to the City for the construction of a new stand-alone monolithic dome safe room in a vacant field located at Tangerine Avenue & North Street (Latitude: 26.1642917; Longitude: -97.9212863). The purpose of the proposed project is to provide protection to citizens and emergency responders in the event of a tornado or hurricane.

A Programmatic Environmental Assessment (PEA) for Hazard Mitigation Safe Room Construction was prepared and a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) was issued in June 2, 2011, in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA), the Council for Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations implementing regulations of NEPA (40 CFR Parts 1500 – 1508), the National Historic Preservation Act, and the implementing regulations of FEMA (44 CFR Parts 9 and 10). FEMA's environmental planning and historic preservation review reveals that all environmental areas of concern are appropriately accounted for in the PEA with the exception of floodplain impacts. A Tiered Site-Specific Environmental Assessment (SEA) has been prepared in accordance with the June 2011 PEA to focus on Executive Order (EO) 11988 requirements and floodplain impacts of the proposed project. The SEA evaluates the (1) No Action and (2) the Proposed Action, construction of a community safe room. The proposed project is located within Zone B of the 500-year floodplain.

The Draft SEA is available for comment and can be viewed at the City Hall Planning Department at 400 S. Ohio Avenue, Mercedes, TX, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m, Monday through Friday, between August 18 and September 4, 2012. An electronic version of the Draft SEA can be requested from Dorothy Weir, FEMA Region 6, at dorothy.weir@fema.dhs.gov or viewed at FEMA's website at <http://www.fema.gov/library/index.jsp>.

The comment period will end September 4, 2012. Written comments on the Draft SEA can be mailed, emailed, or faxed to the contact listed below. If no substantive comments are received, the Draft SEA will become final and a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) will be issued for the project. Substantive comments will be addressed as appropriate in the final documents.

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