

Environmental Assessment
Harbor George Facility Renovation

College Point, Queens County, NY

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FEMA

U.S. Department of Homeland Security
Federal Emergency Management Agency
Region II, 26 Federal Plaza, NY, NY 10278

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LIST OF ACRONYMS & ABBREVIATIONS

| | |
|--------|---|
| DEP | New York City Department of Environmental Protection |
| E.O. | Executive Order |
| EA | Environmental Assessment |
| EIS | Environmental Impact Statement |
| EPA | United States Environmental Protection Agency |
| FEMA | Federal Emergency Management Agency |
| FONSI | Finding of No Significant Impact |
| NEPA | National Environmental Policy Act |
| NHPA | National Historic Preservation Act |
| NYPD | New York City Police Department |
| NYS | New York State |
| NYSDEC | New York State Department of Environmental Conservation |
| NYSDOS | New York State Department of State |
| OSHA | Occupational Safety and Health Administration |
| PEA | Programmatic Environmental Assessment |
| SHPO | New York State Historic Preservation Office |
| TANF | Temporary Assistance for Needy Families |
| THPO | Tribal Historic Preservation Office |

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The New York City Police Department (NYPD) has applied for funding from the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) Port Security Grant Program, to renovate an existing harbor facility known as "Harbor George" located in College Point, Queens, New York. The project site (Block 4044, Lot 1) is located along Flushing Bay at the terminus of 14th Avenue (see Appendix A: Location Maps). The existing facility includes a 1,690 square foot, two-story building surrounded by 24 parking spaces, as well as piers in Flushing Bay for mooring of NYPD harbor patrol vessels. The NYPD seeks to expand the facility by approximately 710 square feet, which would result in a 2,400 square foot building. The site is located in an M2-1 zoning district and is surrounded primarily by industrial uses. The current height of the existing facility is 14'. The proposed addition would not expand the footprint of the existing building but would add 11'6" to the height of the building, resulting in a three-story, 25'6" structure. The proposed renovation also includes replacing the existing masonry floor with a dry flood proof floor. The renovated Harbor George facility would function as a back-up command center for harbor events, alerts, and emergencies.

FEMA is required as a federal agency to evaluate the potential environmental impacts of its proposed action, and alternatives to the proposed action, in order to make an informed decision in defining a proposed project for implementation. FEMA must consider and incorporate, to the extent practicable, measures to avoid, minimize or mitigate adverse impacts to the human environment. The environmental analysis is conducted in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), and its implementing regulations at 40 CFR parts 1500-1508 and FEMA's regulations at 44 CFR Part 10. FEMA evaluates financial assistance projects prior to grant approval.

This Environmental Assessment (EA) serves as documentation of FEMA's analysis of the potential environmental impacts of the proposed renovation to the existing Harbor George facility, including analysis of project alternatives, and identification of impact minimization measures. The document serves as written communication of the environmental evaluation for public and interested party comment. Public involvement is a component of NEPA to inform an agency's determination of whether to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) or issue a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI).

2.0 PURPOSE AND NEED

The purpose of the Port Security Grant Program is to provide funding for activities which help to enhance the security and safety of ports in the United States. The purpose of the proposed project is to renovate and upgrade the existing Harbor George facility so that it could function as a back-up command center that is capable of supporting an ad-hoc assembly of personnel capable of controlling harbor and related activities for and during harbor events, alerts, and emergencies.

The need for the proposed project is to enhance harbor security and safety in New York City. The proposed renovations and improvements to the existing Harbor George facility would

address this need by allowing Harbor George to function as a back-up command center during harbor events, alerts, and emergencies. The existing facility for Harbor George is outdated and does not meet the standard NYPD architectural program requirements for a back-up harbor command center. Rooms are undersized or improperly configured, and the systems of the existing building cannot accommodate current technologies. The proposed renovation of the Harbor George facility would provide an adequately sized and modern command room, administrative spaces, locker rooms, kitchen, and lavatories.

3.0 ALTERNATIVES

The following alternatives are being considered:

3.1 ALTERNATIVE 1 – NO ACTION ALTERNATIVE

If no federally funded project were implemented, the NYPD would not renovate and expand the Harbor George facility. Current programs and services would continue within the existing facility. It is anticipated that with the No Action alternative, the NYPD may be limited in its ability to provide harbor security in New York City.

3.2 ALTERNATIVE 2 – EXPANSION OF EXISTING FACILITY (PROPOSED ACTION)

The scope of work for the proposed project would include the renovation and expansion of the existing Harbor George facility. As discussed above, the existing facility includes a 1,690 square foot, two-story building surrounded by 24 parking spaces, as well as piers in Flushing Bay for mooring of NYPD harbor patrol vessels. The NYPD seeks to expand the facility by approximately 710 square feet, which would result in a 2,400 square foot building. The site is located in an M2-1 zoning district and is surrounded primarily by industrial uses. The current height of the existing facility is 14'. The proposed addition would not expand the footprint of the existing building but would add 11'6" to the height of the building, resulting in a three-story, 25'6" structure. The proposed renovation also includes replacing the existing masonry floor with a dry flood proof floor. The renovated Harbor George facility would function as a back-up command center for harbor events, alerts, and emergencies.

4.0 AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT AND POTENTIAL IMPACTS

Potential environmental impacts and proposed mitigation measures associated with the Proposed Action and the No Action alternative are presented in the following sections and are summarized in Table 1 below.

Table 1 – Summary of Potential Environmental Impacts for Evaluated Alternatives

| Resource | No Action Alternative | Proposed Action |
|--|---|---|
| Geology, Topography, Climate | No adverse impacts | No adverse impacts, as no in-ground disturbance would result |
| Site Contamination and Solid/Hazardous Waste | No adverse impacts | No adverse impacts, as no in-ground disturbance would result |
| Air Quality | No adverse impacts | No significant impacts. Minor, temporary impact associated with dust during construction |
| Water Resources and Floodplain Management | No adverse impacts | No adverse impacts, as all applicable NYC/waterfront building codes and design guidelines would be followed. The applicant is responsible for coordinating the project with the local floodplain management administrator |
| Water Quality | No adverse impacts | No adverse impacts |
| Wetland | No adverse impacts | No adverse impacts |
| Coastal Resources | No adverse impacts | No adverse impacts |
| Endangered Species and Critical Habitats | No adverse impacts | No adverse impacts |
| Wildlife and Fisheries | No adverse impacts | No adverse impacts |
| Cultural, Archaeological, Visual | No adverse impacts | No adverse impacts |
| Socioeconomic Conditions | No adverse impacts | No adverse impacts |
| Environmental Justice | No adverse impacts | No adverse impacts |
| Noise | No adverse impacts | No significant impacts. Minor, temporary noise disturbance during construction |
| Traffic | No adverse impacts | No adverse impacts, as the required construction is relatively small-scale. Expanded facility would not impact traffic |
| Public Services and Utilities | No adverse impacts | No adverse impacts |
| Public Health and Safety | Negative impact due to continued vulnerability of harbor operations | Positively impact public health and safety by increasing security on the harbor and allowing NYPD to be better prepare for emergencies, natural disasters, and terrorist attacks |
| Climate Change | No adverse impacts | No adverse impacts |

4.1 GENERAL SITE DESCRIPTION

The existing harbor facility is situated at the terminus of 14th Avenue in College Point, Queens, New York (Latitude 40° 47'07" N, Longitude 73° 51'31" W). A site location map is presented in Appendix A. With the exception of Flushing Bay to the west, the area surrounding the site is characterized by industrial uses and parking lots. The existing facility includes a 1,690 square

foot, two-story building surrounded by 24 parking spaces, as well as piers in Flushing Bay for mooring of NYPD harbor patrol vessels.

4.2 GEOLOGY, TOPOGRAPHY, AND CLIMATE

Since the existing facility is partially situated on filled material in the littoral zone of Flushing Bay, there are no mapped soils on the project site. The other half of the site extends outwards onto the bay and has a ground elevation of approximately 3 feet. The surrounding topography is characterized by generally flat terrain.

The climate of the area is generally described as a humid continental climate, with hot wet summers and cold, snowy winters. New York receives approximately 47 inches of rain and 28 inches of snow annually. Coastal storms, including nor'easters, tropical storms, and hurricanes, can and do affect New York City. Due to regional geography, hurricanes in New York City – though infrequent – can cause significant damage. Severe thunderstorms are common but tornadoes are rare.

4.2.1 Alternative 1 – the No Action Alternative

No adverse impacts would occur as a result of the No-Action alternative.

4.2.2 Alternative 2 – Expansion of the Existing Facility (Proposed Action)

It is anticipated that the expansion of the existing NYPD facility would have no adverse impacts on geology because no in-ground disturbance would result. The climate will not be affected due to the expansion of the existing facility.

4.3 SITE CONTAMINATION AND SOLID & HAZARDOUS WASTES

4.3.1 Alternative 1 – the No Action Alternative

No adverse impacts would occur as a result of the No-Action alternative.

4.3.2 Alternative 2 – Expansion of the Existing Facility (Proposed Action)

As the proposed project is the addition of a third floor to the existing NYPD facility, there would be no in-ground disturbance. In addition, the installation of the dry flood proof floor would not result in any in-ground disturbance. As such, the proposed project would not disturb the existing site and would have no significant impact with regards to site contamination and solid and hazardous wastes.

4.4 AIR QUALITY

According to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, the New York City metropolitan area, including portions of Long Island, New Jersey, and Connecticut, is a designated criteria pollutant nonattainment area. In 2006, PM-2.5 pollutant levels exceeded national air quality standards and received the “nonattainment” classification. In 2008, the region was classified as “marginal” for 8-Hour Ozone levels. The State of New York is also treated as a moderate nonattainment area for

ozone because of its position within the Ozone Transportation Region, which includes New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, New England, Washington D.C., and portions of Virginia (NYSDEC, 2012).

4.4.1 Alternative 1 – the No Action Alternative

No adverse impacts would occur as a result of the No-Action alternative.

4.4.2 Alternative 2 – Expansion of the Existing Facility (Proposed Action)

It is anticipated that the expansion of the existing facility would result in only temporary adverse impacts to air quality resulting from the operation of light construction equipment and vehicles. Impacts will occur only as the result of emissions from engine exhaust. Best management practices would be used during construction to minimize air quality impacts. The temporary increase in emissions would have no significant adverse impact on the air quality of the project site, neighborhood, or region.

4.5 WATER RESOURCES AND FLOODPLAIN MANAGEMENT

According to the New York State Emergency Management Office, the project site is located within a coastal storm impact zone, meaning it is susceptible to hurricane storm surge for wind speeds greater than 74 mph. FEMA flood insurance maps indicate the project site is located in a Zone AE with a 1% annual chance of flooding and a base flood elevation of 14 feet. Based on 1983 benchmarks, the existing ground elevation is approximately 3 feet.

4.5.1 Alternative 1 – the No Action Alternative

No adverse impacts would occur as a result of the No-Action alternative.

4.5.2 Alternative 2 – Expansion of the Existing Facility (Proposed Action)

In order to reduce the impact of flooding, the proposed project would comply with all applicable New York City and coastal building codes and design guidelines. Specifically, the proposed project would not locate new structures or equipment below the base flood elevation of 14 feet, would use the first floor exclusively for storage, and would replace the existing masonry floor with dry flood proof flooring. Furthermore, the facility is functionally dependent upon its location near the water, given its function as a command center for NYPD harbor patrol and emergency vessels. The Executive Order 11988 Floodplain Management Decision-Making Process is summarized in Appendix D.

4.6 WATER QUALITY

According to the New York City Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), Flushing Bay is a highly modified system that will always have “less than ideal” water quality due to the irreversible changes that have been made to its watershed. Over the past century, extensive development and infill has occurred along the shorelines of the bay for industrial, commercial, and residential uses. Water quality in the area is improving however, as DEP has determined that

Flushing Bay is “near its practical limit for improvement with respect to real gains in aquatic life use (2011).”

4.6.1 Alternative 1 – the No Action Alternative

No adverse impacts would occur as a result of the No-Action alternative.

4.6.2 Alternative 2 – Expansion of the Existing Facility (Proposed Action)

As the proposed project is the addition of a third floor to the existing NYPD facility, no adverse impacts to the water quality of Flushing Bay are anticipated.

4.7 WETLANDS

Executive Order (EO) 11990 Wetlands Protection requires that federal agencies take action to minimize the destruction, loss, or degradation of wetlands, and to preserve and enhance the natural beneficial effects of wetlands. Compliance with this EO is insured through the application of the Eight Step Planning Process for Wetland Protection. The first step of the process involves identifying whether the action will be located within or potentially affect wetlands.

Careful review of wetland mapping and aerial photography provided by Oasis NYC has revealed that there are no identifiable wetlands within the project site or within an approximate 1 mile buffer.

4.7.1 Alternative 1 – the No Action Alternative

No adverse impacts would occur as a result of the No-Action alternative.

4.7.2 Alternative 2 – Expansion of the Existing Facility (Proposed Action)

As the proposed project is not within or near any wetland resources, it is anticipated that there will be no significant adverse impact to wetlands.

4.8 COASTAL RESOURCES

The project site is located within the coastal zone as defined by the New York State Department of State (NYSDOS) Division of Coastal Resources.

4.8.1 Alternative 1 – the No Action Alternative

No adverse impacts would occur as a result of the No-Action alternative.

4.8.2 Alternative 2 – Expansion of the Existing Facility (Proposed Action)

In accordance with the requirements of the Coastal Zone Management Act of 1972, FEMA had determined that the Proposed Action would not adversely impact coastal resources. According to

15CFR § 930.33 (2) “If the Federal agency determines that a Federal agency activity has no effects on any coastal use or resource, and a negative determination under § 930.35 is not required, then the Federal agency is not required to coordinate with State agencies under section 307 of the Act.”

4.9 BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

With the exception of Flushing Bay to the west, the area surrounding the project site is almost entirely urbanized. The project site itself has minimal habitat to support wildlife and is mostly covered with impervious pavement or dirt.

4.9.1 THREATENED AND ENDANGERED SPECIES AND CRITICAL HABITAT

Threatened and endangered species and critical habitat within the project site were reviewed through analysis of existing data sources. According to the New York City Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) 2011 report on the Flushing Bay waterbody and watershed facility plan, there are no known endangered, protected, or threatened species in the Flushing Bay area (2011).

4.9.1.1 Alternative 1 – the No Action Alternative

No adverse impacts would occur as a result of the No-Action alternative.

4.9.1.2 Alternative 2 – Expansion of the Existing Facility (Proposed Action)

It is anticipated that the expansion of the existing facility would have no adverse impacts on threatened and endangered species and critical habitats, as there are no known habitats of concern at the project site.

4.9.2 WILDLIFE AND FISHERIES

The project site is located approximately 50 feet from Flushing Bay. The area surrounding the bay is almost entirely urbanized. According to the New York City Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), Flushing Bay supports aquatic communities which are similar to those found throughout the NY/NJ Harbor in areas of similar water quality and sediment type. Common aquatic species found in the bay include: striped bass, weakfish, winter flounder, and crabs.

4.9.2.1 Alternative 1 – the No Action Alternative

No adverse impacts would occur as a result of the No-Action alternative.

4.9.2.2 Alternative 2 – Expansion of the Existing Facility (Proposed Action)

It is anticipated that the expansion of the existing facility would have no adverse impacts on wildlife in the area, as no new land would be cleared or habitats destroyed.

4.10 CULTURAL, ARCHAEOLOGICAL, AND VISUAL RESOURCES

The National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) directs federal agencies to take into account the effect of any undertaking on historic properties. “Historic property” is any district, building, structure, site, or object that is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) because the property is significant at the national, state, or local level in American history, architecture, archaeology, engineering, or culture. Typically, a historic property must be at least 50 years old and with retained integrity (Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, 2009).

4.10.1 Alternative 1 – the No Action Alternative

No adverse impacts would occur as a result of the No-Action alternative.

4.10.2 Alternative 2 – Expansion of the Existing Facility (Proposed Action)

There are no New York City or New York State designated historic or scenic districts, homes, landmarks, or other cultural, archaeological, and visual resources within the immediate vicinity of the project site. Furthermore, as the proposed project is the addition of a third floor to the existing facility, there would be no in-ground disturbance. Thus, it is expected that construction would not physically disturb any potential cultural or archaeological resources nearby. The proposed project would have no significant impact with regards to cultural, archaeological, or visual resources.

4.11 SOCIOECONOMIC RESOURCES

The project site is located in Queens Community District 7, which according to the NYC Department of City Planning had a total population of 247,354 persons in 2010. Approximately 36% of the community district receives some form of income support (cash assistance (TANF), supplemental security income, Medicaid only). According to the 2010 U.S. Census, the median household income for Queens County from 2006-2010 was \$55,291.

4.11.1 Alternative 1 – the No Action Alternative

No adverse impacts would occur as a result of the No-Action alternative.

4.11.2 Alternative 2 – Expansion of the Existing Facility (Proposed Action)

Expansion of the existing facility would not result in a disproportionate adverse impact upon the surrounding community and would not result in appreciable increases in noise, traffic, or emissions.

4.12 ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

EO 19898, entitled “Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations,” directs Federal agencies to “make environmental justice part of its mission by identifying and addressing, as appropriate, disproportionately high and adverse

human health or environmental effects of its programs, policies, and activities on minority populations and low-income populations” (Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), 1994). According to the 2010 U.S. Census, the three largest ethnic groups in Community District 7 include Asian or Pacific Islander (49%), White (30%), and Hispanic (17%). As stated earlier, the median household income for Queens County from 2006-2010 was \$55,291.

4.12.1 Alternative 1 – the No Action Alternative

No adverse impacts would occur as a result of the No-Action alternative.

4.12.2 Alternative 2 – Expansion of the Existing Facility (Proposed Action)

The proposed expansion of the existing facility would have no disproportionately high or adverse impacts on the human health and human environment of minority or low-income populations.

4.13 NOISE

Noise can be defined as unwanted sound, or more specifically as any sound that is undesirable because it interferes with speech and hearing, is intense enough to damage hearing, or is otherwise annoying (EPA, 1976). The project site is located in an industrial zone of Queens and ambient noise levels are commensurate with the activity.

4.13.1 Alternative 1 – the No Action Alternative

No adverse impacts would occur as a result of the No-Action alternative.

4.13.2 Alternative 2 – Expansion of the Existing Facility (Proposed Action)

Short-term noise impacts are anticipated due to operation of construction equipment. However, as these effects would be temporary and the area is primarily industrial with few sensitive receptors, no significant adverse noise impacts are expected. Furthermore, construction activity is expected to be restricted to the hours between 7:00 AM and 5:00 PM on weekdays.

4.14 TRAFFIC

There are no major interstates, highways, or railroads in the immediate vicinity of the existing facility. Traffic in the area is generally light and characterized by local-traveling vehicles. 14th Avenue is the busiest thoroughfare with two way traffic separated by a painted line.

4.14.1 Alternative 1 – the No Action Alternative

No adverse impacts would occur as a result of the No-Action alternative.

4.14.2 Alternative 2 – Expansion of the Existing Facility (Proposed Action)

It is expected that there would be minimal short-term increases to local traffic associated with construction vehicles. During operation as a backup facility, the Proposed Action would generate

some additional traffic temporarily and these increases are anticipated to be modest. Therefore, no significant adverse impacts are anticipated as a result of the proposed expansion.

4.15 PUBLIC SERVICES AND UTILITIES

All necessary public services and utilities are currently available at the project site. The existing NYPD facility has access to public drinking water, sewers, natural gas, electric, and cable.

4.15.1 Alternative 1 – the No Action Alternative

No adverse impacts would occur as a result of the No-Action alternative.

4.15.2 Alternative 2 – Expansion of the Existing Facility (Proposed Action)

As the existing NYPD facility currently has access to all necessary public services and utilities, it is expected that the Proposed Action would not require the extension of existing public services or utilities to the project site. Therefore, no adverse impacts are expected as a result of the proposed expansion.

4.16 PUBLIC HEALTH AND SAFETY

4.16.1 Alternative 1 – the No Action Alternative

The No-Action alternative would not address the need for a modern back-up command center for harbor events, alerts, and emergencies, resulting in a more vulnerable harbor, as compared to the Proposed Action Alternative.

4.16.2 Alternative 2 – Expansion of the Existing Facility (Proposed Action)

The Proposed Action Alternative would increase security on the harbor and allow the NYPD to be better prepared for emergencies, natural disasters, and terrorist attacks. Thus, renovation and expansion of the existing facility has the potential to positively impact the health, safety, and welfare of the public and environment.

4.17 CLIMATE CHANGE

Climate change could potentially increase temperatures in the northeast, cause more severe weather conditions, and result in rising sea levels. Consideration of climate change does not change the decision-making to implement the proposed project. As stated previously, the new renovated and expanded facility would be equipped with dry flood proof flooring to reduce the risk of future flood damage to the structure. The proposed expanded facility would be designed to current codes and standards to ensure the structure will be sound.

4.18 CUMULATIVE IMPACTS

Table 1 summarizes the potential environmental impacts of the No Action and Proposed Action alternative. Neither alternative would significantly adversely impact the environment due to the cumulative assessment of potential impacts. There are no known past or reasonably foreseeable

future actions in the project vicinity that would change the cumulative impact determination for the Proposed Action.

5.0 PERMITS

The NYPD will be responsible for obtaining all applicable permits for project implementation prior to construction and to adhere to permit conditions. It is expected that the subgrantee and its construction contractor will conduct construction utilizing best management practices to limit noise, dust, and sediment during construction. OSHA standards would be followed during construction to avoid adverse impacts to worker health and safety.

Specifically, the proposed project would not locate new structures or equipment below the base flood elevation of 14 feet, would use the first floor exclusively for storage, and would replace the existing masonry floor with dry flood proof flooring. Furthermore, the facility is functionally dependent upon its location near the water, given its function as a mooring for NYPD harbor patrol and emergency vessels.

The proposed project would not locate new structures or equipment below the base flood elevation of 14 feet, would use the first floor exclusively for storage, and would replace the existing masonry floor with dry flood proof flooring to comply with EO 11988 and the National Flood Insurance Program. Any substantive change to the approved scope of work will require re-evaluation by FEMA for compliance with NEPA and other laws and executive orders. The subgrantee must also adhere to the following conditions during project implementation that were identified in the Finding of No Significant Impact, issued in July 2010, for the Programmatic Environmental Assessment (PEA) for Grant Programs Directorate Projects:

1. Excavated soil and waste materials will be managed and disposed of in accordance with applicable local, state, and federal regulations. If contaminated materials are discovered during construction activities, the work will cease until the appropriate procedures and permits are implemented.
2. The grantee and subgrantee will follow applicable mitigation measures as identified in Section 7 of the Programmatic Environmental Assessment (PEA) for Grant Programs Directorate Project to the maximum extent possible.
3. In the event that unmarked graves, burials, human remains, or archaeological deposits are uncovered, the grantee and subgrantee will immediately halt construction activities in the vicinity of the discovery, secure the site, and take reasonable measures to avoid or minimize harm to the finds. All archaeological findings will inform FEMA immediately and FEMA will consult with the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) and/or Tribal Historic Preservation Office (THPO) or appropriate Tribal official. Construction work cannot resume until FEMA completes consultation and appropriate measures have been taken to ensure that the project is in compliance with the National Historic Preservation Act and other applicable Federal and State regulations.
4. The grantee and subgrantee must meet any project-specific conditions developed and agreed upon between FEMA and with the environmental planning or historic preservation resource and regulatory agencies during consultation and coordination.

The grantee and subgrantee are responsible for obtaining and complying with all required local, State, and Federal permits and approvals.

6.0 PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

In accordance with NEPA, this Environmental Assessment (EA) Report will be released for a 15-day public review and comment period. A hard copy of the EA will be made available for review at the Queens Library located at 41-17 Main Street in Flushing, Queens. The public is invited to submit written comments by email to FEMAR2COMMENT@fema.dhs.gov or by mail to:

Regional Environmental Officer
FEMA Region 2
26 Federal Plaza
13th Floor
New York, NY 10278.

If no substantive comments are received from the public and/or agency reviewers the EA will be adopted as final and a Finding of No Significant Impact will be issued by FEMA. If substantive comments are received, FEMA will evaluate and address comments as part of Final Environmental Assessment documentation. A copy of the EA will be sent to the these parties:

Consistency Review Unit
Office of Communities & Waterfronts
New York Department of State
Suite 1010
One Commerce Place, 99 Washington Avenue
Albany, New York 12231-0001

NYC Department of Planning
Central Office:
22 Reade Street
New York, NY 10007-1216

Mayor's Office of Environmental Coordination
100 Gold Street– 2nd floor
New York, NY 10038

7.0 CONCLUSION

During the construction period, minor short-term impacts to air quality and noise are expected. These impacts will be mitigated utilizing best management practices and proper equipment maintenance. Environmental impacts of construction will also be minimized through adherence to any required building or floodplain permit/authorization conditions.

At this time, it is anticipated that the Proposed Action, Alternative 2, will not have any significant impact upon the human environment. FEMA anticipates that a Finding of No

Significant Impact (FONSI) will be issued upon closure of the public review period. The FONSI will be made available on the FEMA website.

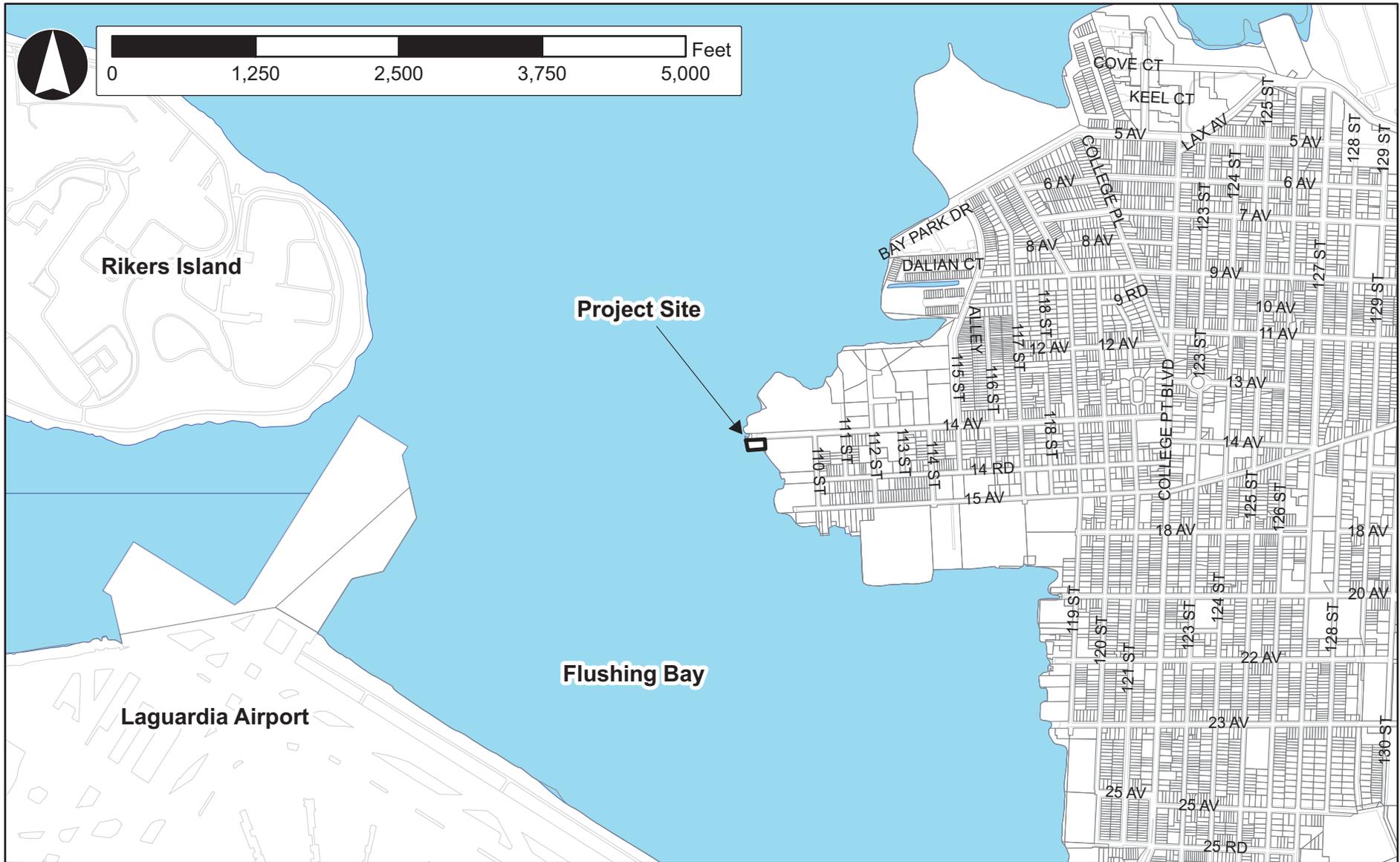
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APPENDIX A

PROJECT LOCATION MAP



Legend

 Project Site

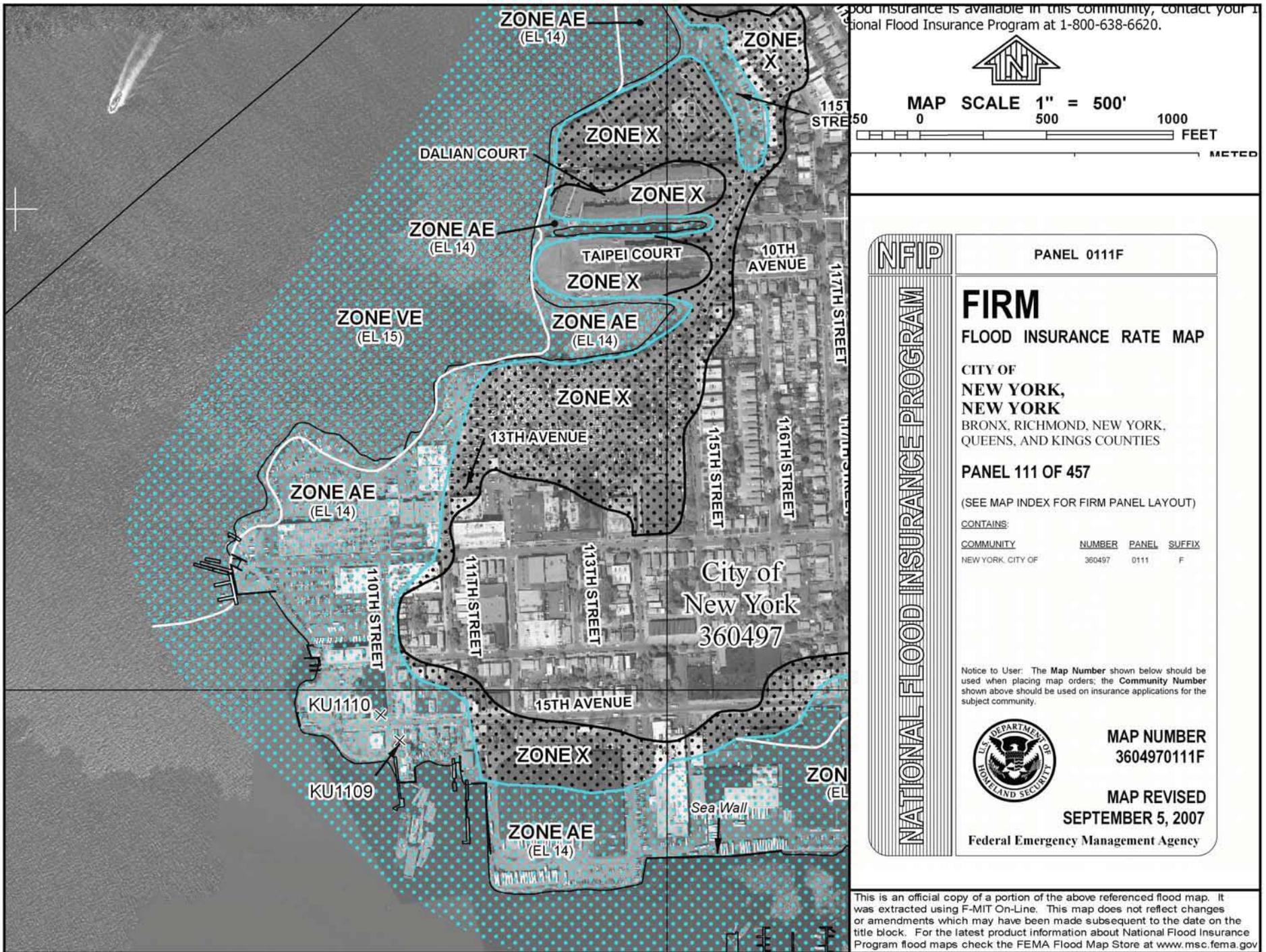
APPENDIX B

AERIAL PHOTO



APPENDIX C

FEMA FLOOD INSURANCE MAP



Harbor George EA

Figure C-1
Flood Insurance Rate Map

APPENDIX D

8 STEP DECISION MAKING PROCESS

APPENDIX D
EO 11988 Eight-Step
Decision Making Process

**Harbor George Renovation
College Point, Queens County, NY
2010-PU-T0-K005 (51) (6089)
Executive Order 11988 – Floodplain Management
Eight-Step Decision Making Process**

Executive Order 11988 (Floodplain Management) requires federal agencies “to avoid to the extent possible the long and short term adverse impacts associated with the occupancy and modification of the floodplain and to avoid direct or indirect support of floodplain development wherever there is a practicable alternative.” FEMA’s implementing regulations are at 44 CFR Part 9, which includes an eight step decision making process for compliance with this part. This eight step process is applied to the proposed Harbor George Renovation project (hereinafter referred to as the Proposed Project). The existing project area is located within the 100-year floodplain of Flushing Bay in College Point, Queens County, New York. The steps in the decision making process are as follows:

Step 1 Determine if the proposed action is located in the Base Floodplain.

The Proposed Project is located within the 100-Year Floodplain and is designated as Zone AE, which is within the Special Flood Hazard Area (SFHA), as illustrated on the National Flood Insurance Program’s Flood Insurance Rate Map (Community-Panel Number 3604970111F). The Base Flood Elevation (BFE) is 14 feet (NGVD 1929).

Step 2 Early public notice (Preliminary Notice)

A public notice concerning the proposed project will be published in a local newspaper. The notice will serve as Step 2 and also as Notice of Availability of the draft National Environmental Policy Act, Environmental Assessment (EA) document, for public review and comment. The EA will be made available for a 15-day public review and comment period.

Step 3 Identify and evaluate alternatives to locating in the base floodplain.

The project purpose and need would not be met with the No Action alternative. The No Action Alternative would not allow the renovation of the existing Harbor George facility which would function as a back-up command center for harbor event, alerts, and emergencies.

There are no practicable alternatives to locating the Harbor George facility outside the SFHA to address floodplain management and EO 11988 compliance. The harbor operations must be located along the waterfront to fulfill the project’s purpose and function in the design capacity. The expanded and renovated existing non-residential facility must be alternatively flood proofed or elevated to at/above the Base Flood Elevation to comply with 44CFRPart9, the National Flood Insurance Program and any local or state requirements for freeboard (additional elevation requirements).

Step 4 Identify impacts of proposed action associated with occupancy or modification of the floodplain.

The Proposed Project will not adversely impact natural habitat values or other functions of the floodplain. The site is already developed. Similarly, the Proposed Project would not promote further development, since the site is already used for marine security purposes. The Proposed Project is not anticipated to induce flooding on any other downstream or upstream facilities or properties. The existing two-story structure will be renovated and expanded by means of a third story. The existing masonry ground level floor will be replaced with a dry flood proof floor. The risk of future damage to this existing facility would be reduced with the installation of the new flood proof floor. The renovated facility would be built to codes and standards, as well as floodplain management requirements; therefore, floodplain occupancy of an existing function would be minimized.

The Proposed Project would invest federal monies into construction of a new facility within the SFHA; and, therefore the facility would be at risk to flood damage.

The Proposed Project benefits the public good through enhanced harbor safety.

Step 5 Design or modify the proposed action to minimize threats to life and property and preserve its natural and beneficial floodplain values.

In order to minimize risk of future floodplain damage to the renovated structure and to comply with EO 11988 and the National Flood Insurance Program, the non-residential facility must be elevated or flood-proofed to at or above the 100-year Base Flood Elevation. The existing BFE is 14 feet. Therefore, based on Appendix G of the New York City Building Code, the Proposed Project must elevate the dry floodproof floor to 16 feet. The New York City Police Department is responsible to obtain a permit/authorization for construction from a local floodplain manager through the building permit or other identified local process for approval. The sub-grantee must submit a completed Elevation Certificate of Flood Proofing Certificate to either the local or the state floodplain manager, when the facility is elevated or flood-proofed.

Step 6 Re-evaluate the proposed action.

The Proposed Project will not aggravate the current flood hazard because the facilities would not impede or redirect flood flows. The Proposed Project will not disrupt floodplain values because it will not change water levels in the floodplain, and will not reduce habitat in the floodplain. Therefore, it is still practicable to construct the Proposed Project within the floodplain. Alternatives consisting of locating the Proposed Project outside the floodplain or taking “no action” are not practicable. The facility must be located at its current location along Flushing Bay. The public good of the Proposed Project’s purpose and function outweighs the risk of floodplain occupancy.

Step 7 Findings and Public Explanation (Final Notification)

After evaluating alternatives, including impacts and minimization opportunities, FEMA and the grantee/sub-grantee determined that the Proposed Project is the most practical alternative. It is our determination that there is no practicable alternative to locating the Proposed Project outside the 100-Year Floodplain because:

1. The facility must be located at its existing location along Flushing Bay.

2. A “no action” plan would not resolve security vulnerabilities.

After Step 2 and the early 15-day public review and comment period, it is anticipated that FEMA will issue a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI). The public will have a second opportunity to comment on the FONSI and proposed action to be located in the floodplain. A second 15-day public review and comment period will be accommodated prior to approval of the grant for obligation. If any substantive comments are received from the public, FEMA will address in a Final Environmental Assessment or other supplemental documentation.

Step 8 Implement the action

The Proposed Project will be constructed in accordance with applicable floodplain development requirements.