

**FEMA PUBLIC NOTICE OF AVAILABILITY  
DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT**  
for  
**CITY OF CHEROKEE WESCOTT PARK  
CHEROKEE, IOWA  
FEMA-4421-DR-IA**

Interested parties are hereby notified that the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has prepared a draft Environmental Assessment (EA) in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) regulations in order to provide federal funds to the City of Cherokee, through The Iowa Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Management (Iowa HSEMD), to relocate Wescott Park out of the floodplain. Severe storms caused widespread flooding throughout Cherokee County, Iowa, resulting in a Presidentially declared Major Disaster Declaration, FEMA-DR-4421-IA, dated March 23, 2019, as amended. This declaration makes federal disaster assistance available to affected communities and certain nonprofit organizations in accordance with the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act of 1974 (Stafford Act; 42 U.S.C. 5172), as amended.

The City of Cherokee Wescott Park is a community park which runs along the south edge of the Little Sioux River on the east and west sides of Iowa Highway 59, on the south side of the city. The park's recreational facilities are located on the east side of the park, east of Highway 59. Wescott Park is located in a FEMA Zone AE floodway, a Special Flood Hazard Area. Between 2000 and 2020, Wescott Park has experienced 10 separate flooding events and the frequency of flooding of the Little Sioux River is not expected to reduce in the future. Most recently, in the spring of 2019, severe storms brought excessive flooding, scour and facility washout which damaged portions of Wescott Park including recreational facilities, buildings, and parklands. The City of Cherokee proposes to relocate the city's Wescott Park recreational facilities outside of the floodplain to avoid future flood damage during periods of excessive rainfall and flooding.

The Proposed Action is to relocate Wescott Park to a site on the north end of the city at the intersection of Highway 3 and 515<sup>th</sup> Street (GPS: 42.769416, -95.545427) to minimize flood risk to a key recreation asset of the City of Cherokee by removing the park out of the 100-year floodplain. Other requirements for the new park is that it is located close to residential neighborhoods and education facilities, and it must be able to accommodate any additional traffic associated with the proposed recreational facility. The proposed new park site covers 26.8 acres and will contain two baseball/softball fields, storage sheds, soccer fields, parking, sand volleyball courts, and a concession restroom building. One of the baseball/softball fields and the sand volleyball courts will be lighted with LED downcast lighting.

In accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), a draft Environmental Assessment (EA) has been prepared to assess the potential impacts of the proposed action on the environment. The EA will be available for download from FEMA's website at [City of Cherokee, Iowa, Wescott Park Relocation Environmental Assessment](#). A copy of the EA is also available for public viewing at Cherokee City Hall, 416 W Main Street, Cherokee, IA 51012, and Cherokee Public Library, 215 South 2nd Street, Cherokee, IA 51012. All public comments can be sent via email to FEMA Region 7 Deputy Regional Environmental Officer at: [teri.toye@fema.dhs.gov](mailto:teri.toye@fema.dhs.gov).

The public comment period will end 30 days after the date of this publication on the FEMA website listed above. Written comments on the EA can be mailed or e-mailed to the contact below. If no substantive comments are received, the EA will become final and a Finding of No Significant Impact will be signed. Substantive comments will be addressed as appropriate in the final documents. Contact: FEMA Region 7-DR 4421, Attn: Environmental Planning and Historic Preservation, 11224 Holmes Road, Kansas City, MO 64131, or via email at [teri.toye@fema.dhs.gov](mailto:teri.toye@fema.dhs.gov)