



Draft Environmental Assessment

Replacement of Stanley White Recreation Center

*New Bern, Craven County, North Carolina
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FEMA

List of Acronyms, Chemical Formulas, and Abbreviations

AaB–Alluvial
AADT–Annual Average Daily Traffic AHAP–Archaeological and Historic
AcA – Altavista-Urban land complex, 0 to 2 percent slopes
Ap – Arapahoe fine sandy loam
ARPA – Archaeological Resources Protection Act of 1979
BGPA – Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act
BMP–Best Management Practice CAA–Clean Air Act
BMPs – Best Management Practices
CAA – Clean Air Act
CaB2–Clarion Loam
CAMA – Coastal Area Management Act
CBRA – Coastal Barrier Resources Act
CBRS – Coastal Barrier Resources System
CEQ–Council on Environmental Quality
C.F.R.–Code of Federal Regulations
CO – Carbon Monoxide
CRC – Coastal Resources Commission
CR–County Road dB–Decibels
CWA – Clean Water Act
CZMA – Coastal Zone Management Act
dB – decibels
dB(A) – A-weighted decibels
Df–Dundas Silt Loam
E (species) – Endangered
E&S – erosion and sedimentation
EA–Environmental Assessment
EIS–Environmental Impact Statement
EO – Executive Order
EPA – Environmental Protection Agency
EPA–Environmental Protection Agency
ESA–Endangered Species Act
ETJ – Extra-Territorial Jurisdiction
FEMA – Federal Emergency Management Agency
FIRM – Flood Insurance Rate Map
FONSI–Finding of No Significant Impact
FPPA–Farmland Protection Policy Act
Ga–Glencoe Silty Clay Loam
HaB2–Hayden Loam Moderately Eroded
LcB–Lester Loam
HaB–Hayden Loam
HAP – Hazardous Air Pollutants
HUC – Hydrologic Unit Code
IPaC – Information for Planning and Consultation (USFWS)
LcB2–Lester Loam Moderately Eroded
Ldn–Day-Night Average Sound Level
Lf–Le Sueur-Lester
LiDAR – Light Detection and Ranging
NAAQS – National Ambient Air Quality Standards

NAGPRA – Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act
 NBMPO – New Bern Metropolitan Planning Organization
 NC DEQ–North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality
 NC DNR–North Carolina Department of Natural Resources
 NCDA & CS—North Carolina Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services
 NCDCM – North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality, Division of Coastal Management
 NCDEM – North Carolina Department of Emergency Management
 NCDEQ-DAQ - North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality, Division of Air Quality
 NCDEQ-DWR – North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality, Division of Water Resources
 NCDMS – North Carolina Division of Mitigation Services
 NCDWR – North Carolina Division of Water Resources
 NCHPO – North Carolina State Historic Preservation Office
 NCNHP – North Carolina Natural Heritage Program
 NCWRC – North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission
 NEPA – National Environmental Policy Act
 NHIS–Natural Heritage Information System
 NHPA–National Historic Preservation Act NOI–Notice of Intent
 NESHAP – National Emissions Standards for Hazardous Air Pollutants
 NFIP – National Flood Insurance Program
 NGVD – National Geodetic Vertical Datum
 NHPA – National Historic Preservation Act
 NMFS – National Marine Fisheries Service
 NO₂ – Nitrogen Dioxide
 NO₂–Nitrogen Oxide
 NOAA – National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
 NPDES – National Pollutants Discharge Elimination System
 NPDES–National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System
 NRCS – Natural Resources Conservation Service
 NRCS–Natural Resources Conservation Service NRHP–National Register of Historic Places NWI–National Wetlands Inventory
 NRHP – National Register of Historic Places
 NWI – National Wetland Inventory
 O₃ – Ozone
 O₃–Ozone
 OSHA – Occupational Safety and Health Act
 OSHA–Occupational Safety and Health Administration
 P.L. –Public Law
 Pb – Lead
 Pb–Lead
 PCBs–Polychlorinated Biphenyls
 PE – Proposed Endangered
 PM₁₀ Particulate matter ROW–Right-of-way
 PM_{2.5} and PM₁₀ – Particulate Matter
 PT – Proposed Threatened
 QL2 LiDAR – Quality Level 2, Light Detection and Ranging
 Sb–Land, Hayden-Lester
 Sc – Seabrook-Urban land complex
 SFHA – Special Flood Hazard Area
 SHPO – State Historic Preservation Officer
 SHPO–State Historical Preservation Office SO₂–Sulfur Dioxide
 SO₂ – Sulfur Dioxide

T – Threatened
Ta–Terrace Escarpments
THPO – Tribal Historic Preservation Officer
TuB – Tarboro-Urban land complex, 0 to 6 percent slopes
Ur – Urban land
USACE – United States Army Corps of Engineers
USDA – United States Department of Agriculture
USFWS – United States Fish and Wildlife Service
USGS – United States Geological Survey
VOC – Volatile Organic Compounds
Wb–Webster-Glencoe Silty Clay Loams
Wc–Webster-Le Sueur Silty Clay Loams

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SECTION ONE: BACKGROUND

1.1 Project Authority

The City of New Bern is seeking reimbursement for federal funding from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) in the form of Public Assistance (PA) Program Funding for the construction and relocation of the Stanley White Recreation Center in New Bern, North Carolina. The Public Assistance Program is authorized under the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act, PL 100-707, 42 U.S.C. 5121 *et seq.* and its implementing regulations at 44 C.F.R. §§ 206.200-206.253 and 2 C.F.R. Part 200. The objective of the FEMA PA Grant Program is to provide assistance to State, Tribal, and Local Governments, and certain types of Private Nonprofit (PNP) organizations so that communities can quickly respond to and recover from major disasters or emergencies declared by the President. Through the PA Program, FEMA provides supplemental federal disaster grant assistance for debris removal, emergency protective measures, and the repair, replacement, or restoration of disaster-damaged, publicly owned facilities and the facilities of certain PNP organizations. The PA Program also encourages protection of these damaged facilities from future events by providing assistance for hazard mitigation measures during the recovery process. The FEMA project worksheet number for DR-4393-NC is PW 02418 and Grants Manager project number is 85979.

This Environmental Assessment (EA) is being prepared pursuant to Section 102 of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, as implemented by the regulations promulgated by the President's Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) in 40 CFR Parts 1500-1508. It is also drafted in accordance with *FEMA Directive 108-1* and *FEMA Instruction 108-1-1*. FEMA is required to consider potential environmental impacts before funding or approving actions and projects. The purpose of this EA is to analyze the potential environmental impacts of the proposed Stanley White Recreation Center relocation project. FEMA will use the findings in this EA to determine if an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is required, or if the project can be authorized under a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI).

1.2 Project Location

The Stanley White Recreation Center (the "Facility") was located at 901 Chapman Street, New Bern, North Carolina in an area referenced as the Greater Duffyfield neighborhood (map shown in Appendix A). The City of New Bern (the City) is located within Craven County which is included in the disaster declaration. According to the *2019: American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates Data Profile* released by the United States Census Bureau, New Bern has a population of 29,895. The City is located where the Neuse and the Trent River meet and flow into Pamlico Sound, approximately 112 miles east of Raleigh. All alternatives discussed in this Environmental Assessment are within city limits. A General Location Map is included in Appendix A.

1.3 Purpose and Need

The objective of the FEMA Public Assistance Grant Program are to help state, local, tribal, and territorial governments and certain types of private nonprofit organizations respond to and recover from major disasters or emergencies. After an event like a hurricane, tornado, earthquake or wildfire, communities need help to cover their costs for debris removal, life-saving emergency protective measures, and restoring public infrastructure. The purpose of the federal action presented in this Environmental Assessment is to provide funding for the relocation and construction of a new Facility outside of the floodplain.

According to the United States Geological Survey (USGS), Hurricane Florence, a large and slow-moving Category 1 hurricane made landfall at Wrightsville Beach, North Carolina on September 14, 2018. After landfall, storm movement slowed to about 2 to 3 miles per hour, producing several days of record-breaking rainfall across North and South Carolina. This rainfall, combined with easterly winds from Hurricane Florence, raised water levels along the western coast of the Pamlico Sound and backed up the normal flow of the Neuse River, causing significant shoreline inundation in Craven, Pamlico, and Carteret Counties.

The Stanley White Recreation Center has been a staple in the Greater Duffyfield Community since 1975 when it was built at 901 Chapman Street in New Bern, to replace the Cedar Street Recreation Center (1948-1952), which was originally built for New Bern's African American residents. For almost three quarters of a century there has been a recreation center within a 1-mile radius available to the Greater Duffyfield community. Although, the facility names have changed, the purpose of the Recreation Center remains the same. A resource for the community that provides recreational and community service needs for the Greater Duffyfield neighborhood and surrounding areas. For over 40 years, the Stanley White Recreation Center has provided after school programs for youth; daily health, wellness and fitness activities; youth summer camps; youth, and adult athletics; a fitness resource to combat community health disparities; space for family and community gatherings for unity; and supported numerous community service projects such as American Red Cross blood drives, Habitat for Humanity activities, 4-H, and scouting activities, and the annual Duffest.

The existing location of the damaged facility, 901 Chapman Street, is within the 100-year floodplain; therefore, reconstruction on the original site would not alleviate risk from future flooding events. As a result, the City seeks a permanent facility outside of the special flood hazard area and within close proximity of Henderson Park. The existing facility has already been demolished.

1.4 Existing (Previous) Facility

The City is a full-service municipality that includes parks and recreation services. The City manages twenty-five (25) parks, five (5) cemeteries, several special use facilities, provides youth and adult athletics, a variety of programs and year-round special events. The City owned and managed a recreation and community services facility, the Stanley White Recreation Center, which served the Greater Duffyfield Neighborhood, and general community.

The Stanley White Recreation Center was a one-story masonry building erected upon a shallow foundation system with concrete slab on grade of approximately 18,057 square feet. Exterior walls were brick veneer with concrete masonry unit backup. Roofing was a low sloped, built up system. The main entry had a barrel shaped canopy with standing seam metal roofing. Interior work consisted of load bearing masonry partition walls and interior finishes typical of commercial building types. Plumbing

distribution supported typical commercial toilet and locker room facilities. Utility services originated from the Chapman Street right of way via water, sewer and natural gas infrastructure.

SECTION TWO: ALTERNATIVE ANALYSIS

NEPA requires the identification and evaluation of reasonable project alternatives, including impacts to the natural and human environment as part of the planning process. This EA addresses two alternatives, the No Action Alternative, and the Proposed Action Alternative. Prior to evaluating all feasible alternatives, the City considered three alternative locations.

2.1 Alternative 1 – No Action

Under the No Action Alternative, the Stanley White Recreation Center would not be rebuilt. The Greater Duffyfield, New Bern community would be without a facility to continue neighborhood-based programs for the youth and seniors. Even though the original structure has been removed, this EA No Action Alternative evaluates the structure remaining within a special flood hazard area.

The No Action Alternative will not support the community's need for a reliable emergency shelter near the Greater Duffyfield neighborhood, outside the floodplain. The closest emergency shelter is Ben D. Quinn Elementary School, 4275 Martin Luther King Blvd, 4.9-miles southwest of the former location of the Stanley White Recreation Center. An emergency shelter would not be allowed in a floodplain therefore not accessible in the event of flooding.

Following the event, the facility was determined by the City of New Bern Chief Building Inspection/Floodplain Manager, to be substantially damaged (the cost of restoring the structure to its before damaged condition would equal or exceed 50% of the market value of the structure). The Board of Alderman determined that rebuilding the original structure in the floodplain would not be feasible due to costs of meeting current floodplain standards compared to reconstructing the facility outside the floodplain. As a result, the original structure was demolished in January 2021 (Section 2.3). Even though the original structure has been removed, this EA No Action Alternative evaluates the structure remaining in the floodplain.

2.2 Alternative 2 – Relocation (Proposed Action)

The Stanley White Recreation center is located in New Bern's Greater Five Point area which is a collection of neighborhoods including Greater Duffyfield, Dryborough, Walt Bellamy, Trent Court, and Craven Terrace which are clustered around the Five Points commercial area. It is home to over 3,300 residents, the majority of which are African Americans. The neighborhood covers 462 acres, of which 50% of the land area is within a 100-year or 500-year floodplain and susceptible to flooding¹. The original facility was located in the Greater Duffyfield neighborhood. The Proposed Action will reconstruct the facility at a new location within the Greater Duffyfield neighborhood.

General coordinates for the proposed site are 35.11271 latitude, -77.05396 longitude, approximately 670-feet or 0.15-miles southwest of the former recreation center location and is within the city limits of New Bern. The Proposed Site plan is shown in Appendix A. The total site is approximately 3.4-acres. A street map depicting the proposed property and Property Boundary Map with Limits of Disturbance are also represented in Appendix A.

¹ *Greater Five Points Transformation Plan FEBRUARY 22, 2016*

The previous facility (Floor Plan shown in Appendix A) was a conventional load bearing masonry building erected upon a shallow foundation system with concrete slab on grade of approximately 18,057-square feet. The Proposed Action will be a two-story structure of approximately 36,074-square feet and a footprint of approximately 26,000-square feet with 128 parking spaces.

This Proposed Action is sufficient to support the uses in the previous facility and allow for additional uses and services requested by neighborhood residents during the Public Engagement Sessions (Appendix E).

In response to community requests, the new facility will include activities associated with the following themes: Safety, Connection, Opportunity, Gender Equity, Personal Significance, Equitable Mobility, Environmental Justice, Civil Rights/Engagement/Integration, Neighborhood Identity, context sensitive Site Design. Specific activities and programs for the rebuilt Stanley White Recreation Center will include Health/Fitness/Sports/Hobbies – Boxing, Basketball Courts, Fitness Center, Billboards & Card Game Room, Arts & Crafts, Performance Stage; Learning Center with Broadband Access – Virtual Schooling Space for Children, GED Programs, Tutoring, Adult Education Classes; Community Engagement - Polling Place, Emergency Shelter with Generator, Meeting Rooms with potential to transition to event space, Community Pantry/Kitchen).

The new first floor community spaces will include additional storage spaces, four public restrooms, a café near the lobby, media lab/e-sports space, computer room, game room, multipurpose meeting rooms, a community kitchen, two basketball/athletic courts. First floor support space will include men and women locker rooms, general storage, and office utility space. The second floor will include a walking track, weightlifting / cardio room, group exercise studio and men and women locker rooms.

Most of the Greater Duffyfield neighborhood is in a floodplain and the closest emergency shelter is approximately 5-miles away. The Proposed Action will provide a neighborhood shelter where residents can shelter during storms, within 15-minutes walking distance to Greater Duffyfield homes.

The Proposed Action would support neighborhood and community needs for sustainable recreation (*City of New Bern Comprehensive Recreation Plan 1983*²). If the facility were reconstructed in the floodplain, it would be subject to the service disruptions from future flood events and could not be used as a shelter.

This Proposed Action location is the closest available tract within the Greater Duffyfield neighborhood and remains at a walkable distance of the Duffyfield neighborhood and Henderson Park. Its location outside of the floodplain reduces the potential for the site to be damaged further or to become incapacitated during natural emergencies.

Finally, the Proposed Action meets and exceeds the Goals of the *Greater Five Points Transformation Plan* (Appendix E). The Greater Five Points neighborhood (of which Greater Duffyfield is a part) is considered important to the future of New Bern and to the residents who call it home. It has a rich African-American heritage pre-dating the Civil War and today is struggling to return to the thriving community it once was. The investment efforts over the last 15-years (detailed in the Five Points Plan) are beginning to show positive results. A primary goal of the plan is to Empower the Community. The Proposed Action will improve the existing physical and social assets in the community by providing expanded “neighborhood based” programs and services.

² *Mission: to enhance the quality of life for all citizens through the development of sustainable facilities, parks, programs, and services that promote a lifestyle of cultural arts, physical activity, and wellness for all; and Vision: to become an innovative, inclusive provider of recreation services that create community through people, parks, and programs.*

2.3 Alternatives Considered and Dismissed

After the declared event, the City began exploring options to repair the recreation center. The facility was determined, on January 30, 2019, by the City of New Bern Chief Building Inspection/Floodplain Manager, to be substantially damaged³ meaning the cost of restoring the structure to its before damaged condition would equal or exceed 50% of the market value of the structure before the damage occurred. To bring the facility into compliance with the New Bern's Code of Ordinances (*Article XVI. Flood Damage Prevention*) would require elevating the facility 8-feet above the base flood elevation⁴ plus 2-feet. The total repair estimate of \$8,619,199, exceeds the cost to replace the facility by \$612,550. As a result, the City deemed it not economically, not technically feasible, nor safe to attempt to compartmentalize, segment, and elevate the facility, as a result, the original structure was demolished in January 2021.

At the Board of Alderman's May 12, 2020 meeting, during the City Manager budget that included FEMA reimbursements (\$5,629,986.75), insurance reimbursements (\$500,000) and State Funds (\$1,876,662.30) totaling \$8,006,649 for the reconstruction of Stanley White Recreation Center. The City moved forward with issuing a Request for Qualification for the design stage, constructing the facility on the same footprint with the same design and configuration of the existing building. In order to engage the Greater Duffyfield neighborhood, the Board of Alderman adopted a resolution establishing the Stanley White Recreation Advisory Committee for the purpose of providing input and advising the Board of Alderman during the project development process.

As noted above, the Board of Alderman determined that it was not practicable to rebuild the facility at 901 Chapman Street Replacement as costs were estimated at \$443 per square foot, compared to \$250 per square foot for the Proposed Action. As a condition of receiving FEMA funds, if the facility were reconstructed in the floodplain, the City would be required to obtain and maintain \$8 million in flood insurance, equal to cost of replacing the facility. The resulting annual premiums which are estimated at \$59,548 (SIA Group, Appendix F) are considered an economic burden as the cost will exceed the current annual Parks and Recreation General Fund budget for current programs, requiring the Board of Alderman to have to make a decision between flood insurance and recreation programs. Reconstruction of the facility in the floodplain would not mitigate future loss of use of the facility nor damage from future flood events.

Two additional sites were considered as potential locations for the construction of the new recreation facility. One property is the George Street Park located at 807 George Street. This site is a 2.06-acre City-owned parcel located approximately 0.5 miles east-northeast from 901 Chapman Street. This property was dismissed because the size would not accommodate the proposed building and parking, the site is protected by the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) 6(f) boundary (Property Lines of the Henderson Park Property – Appendix A), which protects the existing park amenities in perpetuity and the site is partially within Flood Zone AE, thereby replicating the potential risk for structural damage and service disruption resulting from future flooding events.

Two Broad Street Properties were considered. A parcel (Old Days Inn) at 925 Broad Street, which is a

³ Substantial damage applies to a structure in a Special Flood Hazard Area (SFHA) – or a 1-percent-annual-chance floodplain – for which the total cost of repairs is 50 percent or more of the structure's market value before the disaster occurred, regardless of the cause of damage.

⁴ Base flood elevation (BFE) means a determination of the water surface elevations of the base flood as published in the flood insurance study. When the BFE has not been provided in a "special flood hazard area," it may be obtained from engineering studies available from a federal, state, or other source using FEMA approved engineering methodologies. This elevation, when combined with the "freeboard," establishes the "regulatory flood protection elevation." (New Bern Code of Ordinances, Section 15-270)

2.29-acre parcel located approximately 0.5 miles southeast from 901 Chapman Street. Additional land would have been required to accommodate building and parking and the site is partially within Flood Zone AE, thereby replicating the potential risk for structural damage and service disruption resulting from future flooding events. The Dayspring Ministries Property located at 1219 Broad Street (3.65 acres) was also considered. The City approached the owner, but they did not respond with any interest in selling the property. Both Broad Street properties were ultimately dismissed. In addition to the issues listed above, both are outside the Greater Duffyfield neighborhood and would not preserve the partnership and connection between Henderson Park, the facility, and the neighborhood, expressed by residents during the Community Engagement sessions. Both properties had safety issues associated with accessibility as they would have required children to cross Broad Street, a busy four-lane east-west thoroughfare.

By comparison, the Proposed Action parcel at the northwest intersection of Neuse Boulevard/Broad Street Third Avenue is located only 670-feet southwest of the original site of the Stanley White Recreation Center, is outside the floodplain, is substantially closer to Henderson Park and is owned by the City.

SECTION THREE: AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT AND CONSEQUENCES

Preliminary Screening of Assessment Categories

3.1 Physical Environment

3.1.1 Geology, Seismicity and Soils

The City of New Bern is located entirely within the Coastal Plain physiographic province of North Carolina, with portions located in both the Carolina Flatwoods and the Mid-Atlantic Floodplains and Low Terraces Level IV Ecoregions (per United States Environmental Protection Agency [EPA] Region 4 mapping). Both the current and proposed Project Locations are within the Mid-Atlantic Floodplains and Low Terraces Level IV Ecoregion (maps shown in Appendix A).

Based on United States Geological Survey (USGS) and North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality (NCDEQ) – Division of Energy, Mineral, and Land Resources (DEMLR) mapping, New Bern is within both the Yorktown and Duplin, Undivided and the River Bend Geological Formations (Appendix A). The Yorktown Formation is primarily comprised of fossiliferous clay with varying amounts of fine-grained sand and shell material commonly concentrated in lenses, mainly in areas north of the Neuse River. The Duplin Formation is comprised of shelly, medium- to coarse-grained sand, sandy marl, and limestone, mainly in areas south of the Neuse River. The Riverbend Formation is comprised of limestone, calcarenite, overlain by and intercalated with indurated, sandy, molluscan-mold limestone.

The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Web Soil Survey (Appendix A) was consulted for detailed soil information for the project vicinity. Soil types present in the project vicinity are listed below:

- **Altavista-Urban land complex, 0 to 2 percent slopes (AcA)** – The Altavista series consists of moderately well drained soils that formed in moderately fine textured sediment and have a parent material of old loamy alluvium derived from igneous and metamorphic rock. These soils are on stream terraces. Slope ranges from 0 to 2 percent. This soil is not prime farmland.
- **Arapahoe fine sandy loam (Ap)** – The Arapahoe series consists of very poorly drained soils that formed in moderately coarse textured sediment derived from a parent material of sandy and loamy fluviomarine deposits. These soils are on stream terraces. Slope ranges from 0 to 2 percent. This soil is prime farmland, if drained.
- **Seabrook-Urban land complex (Sc)** - The Seabrook series consists of moderately well drained loamy to loamy sand soils that are comprised of a parent material of sandy marine and fluvial sediments. These soils area typically on depressions on stream terraces and depressions on marine terraces. Slope ranges from 0 to 2 percent. This soil is not prime farmland.
- **Tarboro-Urban land complex, 0 to 6 percent slopes (TuB)** – The Tarboro series consists of somewhat excessively drained soils that are comprised of sand to gravelly sand soils derived from a parent material of sandy fluviomarine deposits and/or alluvium. These soils are located on ridges and stream terraces. Slope ranges from 0 to 6 percent. This soil is not prime farmland.
- **Urban land (Ur)** – Urban land consists of nearly level to moderately steep areas where the soils have been altered or obscured by urban works and structures. Buildings and pavement typically cover more than 85 percent of the surface. This soil is not prime farmland.

The Farmland Protection Policy Act (FPPA) (P.L. 97-98, Sec. 1539-1549; 7 U.S.C. 4201, et seq.) was enacted in 1981 (P.L. 98-98) to minimize the unnecessary conversion of prime and important farmland to non-agricultural uses as a result of Federal actions. The FPPA assures that to the extent possible Federal programs are administered to be compatible with State, local units of government, and private programs and policies to protect farmland. Prime and important farmland includes all land that is defined as prime, unique, or farmlands of statewide or local importance. Prime farmland is characterized as land with the best physical and chemical characteristics for the production of food, feed, forage, fiber, and oilseed crops. This land is either used for food

or fiber crops or is available for those crops, but is not urban, built-up land, or water areas. Unique farmland is land other than prime farmland that is used to produce specific high-value food and fiber crops, such as citrus, tree nuts, olives, cranberries, and other fruits and vegetables. The NRCS is responsible for protecting significant agricultural lands from irreversible conversions that result in the loss of an essential food or environmental source. Projects are subject to FPPA requirements if they may irreversibly convert farmland (directly or indirectly) to nonagricultural use and are implemented or assisted by a Federal agency. However, the FPPA excludes land already developed or irreversibly converted and/or land within US Census mapped urban areas

Seismic activity in the Coastal Plain within and surrounding New Bern is low since the area is not overly tectonically active (USGS Seismic Hazards Map). Micro- (0.0 – 2.9) and minor (3.0 – 3.9) earthquakes have occurred in proximity to New Bern; however, there have only been three recorded earthquakes nearby since 1882 (Appendix A). The closest seismic hazards are the historic Charleston liquefaction features, which terminate south of Wilmington. New Bern is not in an identified Seismic Zone per the North Carolina Geological Survey Geologic Hazards Map. Therefore, seismic concerns for both alternatives are low and will not be discussed further in this evaluation.

The Project Geotechnical Report is in Appendix F.

Alternative 1 – No Action

Under the No Action Alternative there would be no impacts to soils or geological features and no potential impacts on local seismicity-related processes. Normal geomorphological erosional processes would occur on a long-term basis under this scenario.

Alternative 2 – Proposed Action

The Proposed Action alternative also lies within the jurisdictional boundary of the City of New Bern and has been extensively altered and is currently comprised of a vacant urban lot and existing buildings. The elevation of the Proposed Action Alternative is approximately 10 to 14 feet NGVD. Local topography indicates that drainage in this area is accomplished by infiltration and surface/stormwater runoff towards potential tributaries of Jack Smith Creek, which is a tributary of the Neuse River, north of the Alternative 2 site. Per the NRCS Web Soil Survey (Appendix A), soils located at the proposed site are comprised of the AcA and Ur soil series (described above). Geologically, the proposed location is within the Riverbend Formation.

Due the previous alterations, there is an absence of prime or unique farmland present and no impacts to these resources will occur as a result of this alternative; therefore, no coordination with USDA or the completion of USDA Form 100-6 is required.

Since the site is relatively flat, no large valleys will require excessive amounts of off-site fill material. However, some amount of fill, yet to be determined, will be required during pre-construction. All excavation below grade should be completed in compliance with Occupational Safety and Health Act (OSHA) requirements related to shoring, sloping, or benching during construction. All organic materials including trees, vegetation, and any other unsuitable materials would be removed if encountered during fill placement activities. Any other unsuitable materials, such as rock and soil, that is not appropriate for the lift thickness, would also be removed.

Area soils would be moderately disturbed during short-term construction and site grading activities. Soil loss may occur directly from construction activities or indirectly via high wind or rain events. To reduce soil erosion, appropriate Best Management Practices (BMPs) would be required at the construction location and would be identified through the North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality permitting process. BMPs may include an erosion and sedimentation (E&S) control plan utilizing silt fences, aeration and re-vegetation of disturbed soils, and maintenance of site soil stockpiles during construction to prevent soils from eroding and dispersing off-site. Erosion control fiber mesh would be utilized for disturbed and seeded lawn impact areas. These BMPs would occur during the entire life of the project. All short-term soil storage would not occur within floodplain areas.

Moderate long-term impacts associated with drainage at the site are anticipated due to the increase in impervious surfaces which would diminish natural soil infiltration. Stormwater drainage at the proposed site would be accomplished via storm drain systems that would reroute water offsite and downstream towards potential tributaries of Jack Smith Creek. A stormwater and erosion control plan will be developed as part of the site design that will address both construction stage and long-term stormwater discharge from the site; the project will be covered under the City's National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit. This plan will require approval by the City before construction begins. Excavation depths at the site would vary according to the area of grading and construction. Performance of soils, rock staging, placement, and compaction activities would be pursuant to geotechnical recommendations made prior to the construction of the site. Minimal long-term impacts to soils would be anticipated due to the disruption related to construction and displacement of soil associated with grading of the site. No long-term geological or local seismicity-related processes or features would be anticipated. Short-term soil impacts as part of already-completed demolition activities of the original recreation center have occurred. These impacts resulted from activities such as compaction due to construction equipment and removal of topsoil when the building debris was removed from the site. No soil removed from the site will be stored in floodplain areas. Soil from the site, if removed, will be transported to either an approved upland disposal site (e.g., landfill or quarry) or repurposed by the contractor on another construction project. If contaminated soil is encountered, it will be disposed of appropriately per EPA Land Disposal Restriction (LDR) guidelines.

3.1.2 Water Resources and Water Quality

The Clean Water Act (CWA), as amended in 1977, established the basic framework for regulating discharges of pollutants into waters of the United States. In addition, Executive Order (EO) 11990 (Protection of Wetlands) requires Federal agencies to avoid, to the extent possible, adverse impacts to wetlands. Section 404 of the CWA establishes a program to regulate the discharge of dredged or fill material into waters of the United States, including wetlands. Under Section 401 of the CWA, a Federal agency may not issue a permit or license to conduct any activity that may result in any discharge into waters of the United States unless a Section 401 water quality certification is issued, verifying compliance with State or delegated tribe water quality requirements, or certification is waived. States and authorized tribes where the discharge would originate are generally responsible for issuing water quality certifications under Section 401 of the CWA. Permitting/compliance or conditions under both Section 404 and 401 would be required if any impact to jurisdictional waters of the United States (temporary or permanent) occur as part of a project.

Both Alternatives are within the Neuse River Basin (United States Geological Survey [USGS] Hydrologic Unit Code [HUC] 03020204; Appendix A). Features located in this river basin are potentially subject to the Neuse River Riparian Buffer Rules, administered and enforced by the NCDEQ – Division of Water Resources (DWR). These riparian buffer rules would require a 50-foot buffer on any perennial or intermittent stream feature that is mapped on either the USGS topographic mapping or NRCS soil survey mapping, unless NCDWR decides that the feature does not require buffers. No potential stream features are present within 50 feet of either the current or proposed location.

The City of New Bern draws water from both the Castle Hayne Aquifer and the Black Creek Aquifer. Water drawn from the Castle Hayne Aquifer is directed to the City of New Bern Water Treatment Plant for use as potable water. The Black Creek Aquifer is drawn via five production wells located near Cove City; water from these wells is also treated and placed into the water distribution system. All drinking water within the project vicinity is acquired through the municipal water system.

Alternative 1 – No Action

Due to the lack of streams within proximity of the existing location, under the No Action Alternative, no short- or long-term impacts to water resources.

Alternative 2 – Proposed Action

The proposed new location of the Stanley White Recreation Center is within an anthropogenic landscape, predominantly urban, with scattered remnant forested areas and municipal parks. The proposed site is a relatively flat, low elevation parcel, ranging between 10 and 14 feet NGVD units. This data was corroborated with both

USGS topographic mapping (1:24000 scale) and North Carolina Department of Emergency Management (NCDEM) Quality Level 2 (QL 2) Light Detection and Ranging (LiDAR) data. General topography within the project vicinity grades to the north, with water flowing toward tributaries and channels of Jack Smith Creek (DWR Classification C;Sw,NSW; Index No. 27-100) via the City's surface and piped stormwater system, then into Jack Smith Creek, which itself flows into the Neuse River shortly downstream. Jack Smith Creek is approximately 0.9 miles downslope of the site.

Based on USGS Topographic mapping, NCDEM QL2 LiDAR, the USGS Soil Survey for Craven County (1989), and the North Carolina DWR Classifications Map, no potential streams or other surface waters are present on the proposed new location parcel. The closest potential feature that shows up on any mapping is a man-made/-modified channel/canal of unknown jurisdiction flowing south to north between Gaston Boulevard and Fort Totten Drive. This feature is at least 240 feet to the west of the proposed new location, well beyond the 50-foot riparian buffer of the feature if it were deemed jurisdictional. Additionally, no CWA Section 303(d) impaired waters are listed within 1.0 mile downstream of the proposed location.

Based on the lack of potential jurisdictional resources identified through remote sensing review, an on-site review was not required.

Due to the lack of potential jurisdictional resources, neither CWA Section 404 nor Section 401 environmental permitting are anticipated. However, if resources were later identified and environmental permitting were required, it is likely that the project would require a Section 404 Nationwide Permit from the United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) and a corresponding Water Quality Certification from DWR. Additionally, compensatory mitigation is not anticipated; however, if required, compensatory mitigation would be pursued from either the North Carolina Division of Mitigation Services (NCDMS) or an approved mitigation bank.

Due to the lack of potential resources or jurisdictional impacts, it is anticipated that this project will have no short- or long-term negative impacts to surface waters during or after construction at the proposed location. Additionally, no impacts occurred during the already-completed demolition of the condemned center at the original location.

The project will follow State and local stormwater and erosion control requirements and will be covered under the City of New Bern's NPDES permit. Appropriate stormwater management Best Management Practices (BMPs), such as site monitoring, temporary silt fencing, and staging of construction equipment in already-developed areas, will be employed to prevent sediment intrusion into the adjacent stormwater system, eliminating the potential that the project could potentially impact jurisdictional waters. These BMPs would occur during the entire life of the project. If project activities include stockpiling of soil or fill on-site, the contractor will cover these soils to help prevent fugitive dust from entering stormwater pathways. Following construction, any bare soils will be vegetated to prevent future soil erosion and stormwater contamination. Stormwater drainage at the proposed site will be accomplished via storm drain systems that would reroute water offsite and downslope towards the existing municipal stormwater system.

3.1.3 Floodplain Management (Executive Order 11988)

Executive Order (EO) 11988 requires the federal agency, to avoid, minimize or mitigate the long- and short-term adverse impacts associated with the occupancy and modification of the floodplain. The Agency shall take action to:

- (1) Avoid long- and short-term adverse impacts associated with the occupancy and modification of floodplains and the destruction and modification of wetlands.
- (2) Avoid direct and indirect support of floodplain development and new construction in wetlands wherever there is a practicable alternative (44 CFR 9.2 (b)."

Specifically, EO 11988, states that each federal agency shall take action to reduce the risk of flood loss, to minimize the impact of floods on human safety, health and welfare, and to restore and preserve the natural and

beneficial values served by floodplains in carrying out its responsibilities for (1) acquiring, managing, and disposing of Federal lands, and facilities; (2) providing Federally undertaken, financed, or assisted construction and improvements; and (3) conducting Federal activities and programs affecting land use, including but not limited to water and related land resources planning, regulating, and licensing activities. Each agency has a responsibility to evaluate the potential effects of any actions it may take in a floodplain; to ensure that its planning programs and budget request reflect consideration of flood hazards and floodplain management; and to prescribe procedures to implement the policies and requirements of the Order.

Agencies must determine whether a feasible practicable alternative exists outside of the floodplain and, if so, choose that alternative. *Practicable* means capable of being done within existing constraints. The test of what is practicable depends upon the situation and includes consideration of all pertinent factors, such as environment, cost and technology. If an agency has determined to, or proposes to, conduct, support, or allow an action to be located in a floodplain since no other alternative, including no action, is practicable, the agency shall consider alternatives to avoid adverse effects and incompatible development in the floodplains. If the head of the agency finds that the only practicable alternative consistent with the law and with the policy set forth in EO 11988 requires siting in a floodplain, the agency shall, prior to taking action, design or modify its action in order to minimize potential harm to or within the floodplain and prepare and circulate a notice containing an explanation of why the action is proposed to be located in the floodplain.

Before taking an action, each agency shall determine whether the Proposed Action will occur in a floodplain. This determination shall be made according to Flood Insurance Rate Map [FIRM] panels from the FEMA map service center. FEMA's regulations for complying with EO 11988 are promulgated in 44 CFR Part 9; FEMA uses FIRMs to identify flood risks. FIRMs for all alternative sites are attached in Appendix G. Both the existing location and the proposed new location are located on FEMA FIRM Panel No. 3720558000K in the City of New Bern ([link](#); effective date: June 19, 2020). The existing location is within Zone AE (100-year floodplain), which is considered a Special Flood Hazard Area. The proposed new location is not within the 100-year floodplain as indicated in the FIRM panel. The proposed new location is located in both an unshaded Zone X and a shaded Zone X, with a majority of the parcel in an Area of Minimal Flood Hazard (unshaded) and a minority in an Area of 0.2 % Chance of Flood Hazard (shaded; 500-year floodplain). The new facility will be located completely outside of shaded X (500 year floodplain).

Alternative 1 – No Action

There would be no short- or long-term impacts under the No Action, the structure would not be rebuilt restoring the natural and beneficial effects of the floodplain.

Alternative 2 – Proposed Action

The City has proposed to construct the facility at a new location outside of the AE Zone floodplain, within approximately 670-feet of Henderson Park from the current location. Relocation of the recreation center would increase the useful life of the facility and minimize the impacts of flooding on human health and safety. Additionally, demolition of the old site would promote open space use, restoring the natural and beneficial values served by floodplains, as well as avoiding the long-term impacts associated with occupancy within floodplains. In complying with Executive Order 11988, FEMA is required to assess federal actions through an Eight-Step decision making process which evaluates alternatives, addresses minimization and mitigation measures and requires public notice of the final agency decision. The eight-step analysis for Floodplains completed by FEMA to support this decision is attached in Appendix B.

The proposed new location of the recreation facility is located outside of the 100-year regulated floodplain, there will be no short- or long-term negative effects on the floodplain at this new location as a result of this Alternative. Additionally, there were no negative short-or long-term negative effects related to the already-completed demolition of the former recreation center at the original location. The demolition of the old Stanley White Recreation Center would have a beneficial effect on floodplains as it restored the natural and beneficial values of the floodplain by restoring the site to open space.

3.1.4 Air Quality

The Clean Air Act (CAA) requires EPA to set National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) for pollutants considered harmful to public health and the environment; the Clean Air Act established two types of national air quality standards; primary standards set limits to protect public health, including the health of “sensitive” populations such as asthmatics, children, and the elderly; secondary standards set limits to protect public welfare, including protection against decreased visibility, damage to animals, crops, vegetation and buildings; current criteria pollutants are: Carbon Monoxide (CO), Nitrogen Dioxide (NO₂), Ozone (O₃), Lead (Pb), Particulate Matter (PM_{2.5}, PM₁₀), and Sulfur Dioxide (SO₂). NCDEQ – Division of Air Quality (DAQ) enforces and monitors air quality standards in the State of North Carolina, including meteorology and Hazardous Air Pollutants (HAPs). According to the EPA and NCDEQ – DAQ, Craven County, where the City of New Bern is located, is designated as meeting Attainment criteria for O₃, PM_{2.5}, PM₁₀, and CO, meaning that it meets National Ambient Air Quality Standards. For SO₂, designation has been deferred for the entire State by the EPA until a later date.

Alternative 1 – No Action

Under the No Action Alternative, no short- or long-term impacts to air quality would result from the recreation center remaining at its existing location.

Alternative 2 – Proposed Action

Under the Proposed Action Alternative, minor, short-term impacts to air quality would occur during construction activities. Short-term impacts include fugitive dust, exhaust from construction equipment, and localized particulate related to the fabricating/cutting of construction materials. To reduce impacts, construction contractors would be required to wet down construction areas and/or cover on-site stockpiles as needed to mitigate fugitive dust; use appropriate exhaust devices on construction equipment no less effective than what was included when the equipment was built; use appropriate fumigation/particulate capture devices such as vacuum systems, filters, and hoods when fabricating/cutting construction materials. Emissions from fuel-burning engines (e.g., heavy machinery and earthmoving machinery) could also temporarily increase the levels of some of the criteria pollutants, such as CO, NO₂, O₃, PM₁₀, and noncriteria pollutants such as Volatile Organic Compounds (VOCs). To mitigate these emissions, BMPs such as management of run times and maintenance for fuel burning equipment would be considered. Heavy machinery and equipment to be used for the Proposed Action will also meet Federal clean air standards. Due to the size of the construction site, anticipated grading impact, and availability of debris recycling or disposal facilities, air quality permitting through NCDWR-DAQ is not anticipated. Short-term impacts to local air quality during construction are anticipated to be minor. Long-term impacts to local air quality near the new recreation center site, including from increased traffic and utility usage, would be negligible.

Implementation of the Proposed Action would also likely result in the demolition of existing buildings at the new location. Minor short-term impacts to air quality related to fugitive dust and construction equipment emissions would occur as a result of the demolition. No long-term effects to air quality at the existing location are anticipated in relation to the Proposed Action. Short-term impacts to air quality related to the already-completed demolition of the former recreation did occur in the form of fugitive dust/particulate related to the demolition and equipment emissions.

There are not short- or long-term impacts to Air Quality associated with the Proposed Action’s demolition of the existing structure. A Design and Air Monitoring Plan was developed for removal of asbestos floor tiles (Section 3.3).

3.1.6 Coastal Zone Management

The Coastal Zone Management Act (CZMA) was passed by Congress in 1972 to encourage coastal states such as North Carolina to maintain healthy coasts through management, protection, and promotion of fragile coastal

resources. The CZMA requires that Federal actions that are reasonably likely to affect any land or water use or natural resource of the coastal zone be consistent with enforceable policies of a State's federally approved coastal management program. Therefore, the North Carolina General Assembly (NCGA) subsequently passed a corresponding separate State law, the Coastal Area Management Act (CAMA; 1973, c. 1284, s. 1; 1975, c. 452, s. 5; 1981, c. 932, s. 2.1.) in 1974 to fulfill the CZMA's requirement for a cooperative State-local program.

CAMA established the Coastal Resources Commission (CRC), created a program for regulating development, and requires local land use planning in 20 coastal counties of the State. The CRC designated "Areas of Environmental Concern" within these 20 coastal counties and established rules for managing development within these sensitive areas. An "Area of Environmental Concern," or AEC, is defined as "an area of natural importance that could be easily destroyed by erosion or flooding; or it may have environmental, social, economic or aesthetic values that make it valuable to our State." Four categories of AECs have been designated: the Estuarine and Ocean System, the Ocean Hazard System, the Public Water Supplies, and Natural and Cultural Resource Areas. If a project within a CAMA county does not require a CAMA permit, it may still be subject to consistency review if a Federal Permit or License is required. Consistency review is conducted by the NCDRC and subjects projects to compliance with CAMA, North Carolina's Dredge and Fill Law, Chapter 7 of Title 15A of NC's Administrative Code, all regulations passed by CRC, and any applicable State and local plan use laws and regulations.

According to the City of New Bern municipal permitting rules, a CAMA Permit is required if a development is located in an AEC or within the 75-foot Estuarine Shoreline AEC. No CAMA AECs are present for either Alternative.

Alternative 1 – No Action

Under the No Action Alternative, no construction activity would occur, and no CAMA AECs are present at the current site. Therefore, no impacts to coastal zone management resources would result from this alternative.

Alternative 2 – Proposed Action

The Proposed Action site is located within one of the 20 CAMA counties as designated by the NCDRC. However, the site is not located within an AEC. Therefore, no short- or long-term impacts to coastal zone management resources will occur as a result of this alternative and no CAMA permits will be required. FEMA consulted with the NCDRC for Federal Consistency review on June 10, 2021; response attached, and the project was determined consistent with the CZMA.(Appendix C).

3.1.7 Coastal Barrier Resources

The Coastal Barrier Resources System (CBRS) was established by the Coastal Barrier Resources Act (CBRA) of 1982. The act protects coastal areas such as ocean-front land that serve as important buffer between coastal storms and inland areas from serious flood damage by restricting new Federal financial assistance within these areas. The CBRA prohibits Federal funding for building and development in undeveloped portions of designated coastal barriers (exceptions include sand fencing and other minor actions). These areas are mapped and designated as CBRS units (also called Coastal Barrier Resources Area zones). The act also seeks to protect the habitat of aquatic plants and animals within the system.

Alternative 1 – No Action

Under the No Action Alternative, no short- or long-term impacts to coastal barrier resources will occur since the existing location is not located within a CBRS unit.

Alternative 2 – Proposed Action

Neither the Proposed Action site nor the demolition site (previous facility location) are within a CBRS unit therefore no short- or long-term impacts to coastal barrier resources will occur.

Biological Environment

3.2.1 Terrestrial and Aquatic Environment

Per the North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commissions (NCWRC), there are at least 1,099 species of wild animals in the State. This includes, 121 species of mammals, 234 species of fish, 475 species of birds, 91 species of amphibians, 71 species of reptiles, 47 species of freshwater crustaceans, and 60 species of freshwater mussels. Based on the urbanized nature of the site, the availability of habitat is limited for wild animals. However, opportunistic species that have acclimated to living in human environments are likely present. Species that may be present include rabbit species (*Sylvilagus* spp.), common racoon (*Procyon lotor*), Virginia opossum (*Didelphis virginiana*), Eastern gray squirrel (*Sciurus carolinensis*), white-tailed deer (*Odocoileus virginianus*), American crow (*Corvus brachyrhynchos*), fish crow (*Corvus ossifragus*), and several passerine bird species. Additional transient species may also be observed in the area.

Alternative 1 – No Action

The previous location of the Stanley White Recreation Center was developed, consisting of impervious surfaces, and maintained turf and other vegetation. No aquatic environments are present. Under the No Action Alternative, there would be no impacts to aquatic habitats or natural terrestrial habitats.

Alternative 2 – Proposed Action

A comprehensive in-field review of potential terrestrial and aquatic habitats has not yet occurred. However, due to the availability of high-quality orthoimagery and Google aerial maps, a thorough remote sensing review of the site was possible.

The Alternative 2 site is located within an urbanized landscape, with minimal natural habitat present within the vicinity of the parcel. Those areas that contain non-maintained vegetation have been previously altered by human activities. Most of the Proposed Action Alternative site is either mowed, maintained turf, or contains existing buildings. There is a thin strip of unmanaged vegetation on the eastern and northern sides of the property. The vegetation appears to be a mix of young trees, shrubs, and herbaceous vegetation that has been altered in the past. No aquatic habitat is present at the Proposed Action Alternative site.

Construction activities would predominantly take place in maintained/disturbed areas. However, some activities may extend into the wooded margin on the eastern and northern sides of the parcel. If possible, the applicant will attempt to minimize encroachment into this area. Even if the entire wooded area were impacted, the amount would be minimal, as the wooded area is only 0.31 acres in size. Additionally, it is within a heavily urbanized area, which has limited habitat value for animal species.

However, the potential for urban-tolerant animal species within the parcel, especially within the wooded margin, is still present. Therefore, the proposed alternative has at least minor potential to result in some short-term impacts to wildlife and their habitat. Impacts to terrestrial species resulting from the Proposed Action Alternative are expected to be minor, on the scale of the community. Mobile species such as birds and mammals, will likely self-relocate to nearby areas not affected by construction. Slow-moving/slow-reacting species, such as non-flying insects, turtles, and subterranean species, could be affected by construction, if they are present within the construction footprint. However, since the site is located within an urban environment and most of the site is cleared, the likelihood of significant loss of these groups of taxa is very low. Loss of aquatic habitat would not occur as part of this alternative since no waters are present at the site. No short- or long-term effects will occur as a result of the already-completed demolition of the original recreation center; the site was surrounded by maintained/disturbed land.

No short- or long-term impacts to Terrestrial or Aquatic Species would be associated with the demolition of the former facility.

3.2.2 Wetlands (Executive Order 11990)

Executive Order (EO) 11990, Protection of Wetlands, requires Federal agencies to take action to minimize the loss of wetlands. Wetlands are defined by the EPA and USACE as areas that are inundated or saturated by surface or ground water at a frequency and duration sufficient to support, and that under normal circumstances do support, a prevalence of vegetation typically adapted for life in saturated soil conditions. Wetlands generally include swamps, marshes, bogs, and similar areas. Undisturbed areas must meet a minimum set of hydrological,

vegetation, and soil criteria to be considered a wetland. USACE will verify the presence or potential presence or wetlands, tributaries, and surface waters for a project to determine what features are regulated under Section 404 of the CWA (i.e., jurisdictional). In some circumstances, including in North Carolina, USACE may consider a potential wetland feature non-jurisdictional at the Federal level; however, State law still may require some level of regulation for the feature (i.e., isolated or excluded wetlands).

The NEPA compliance process requires Federal agencies to consider direct and indirect impacts to wetlands, which may result from federally funded actions. Additionally, Federal Section 404 permitting via USACE, and its corresponding State Section 401 permitting from NCDWR, may be required if impacts (temporary or permanent) to wetlands or other jurisdictional resources occur as part of a federally funded (or otherwise funded) project.

Alternative 1 – No Action

There are no wetlands present at the existing recreation center location based on remote sensing review. Additionally, the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) National Wetland Inventory (NWI) mapper identified no wetland features within the Alternative 1 boundary. Therefore, no impacts to wetlands would occur as part of the No Action Alternative.

Alternative 2 – Proposed Action

Based on remote sensing review, no potential jurisdictional wetlands are present at the Proposed Action site. Additionally, the USFWS NWI identified no wetland features within the Alternative 2 boundary. There were also no wetland-related impacts associated with the already-completed demolition of the former recreation center at the original location. Therefore, no impacts to wetlands are anticipated as part of this alternative, no Section 404/401 permitting will be required, and compliance with EO 11990 has been met.

No short- or long-term impacts to wetlands would be associated with the demolition of the former facility.

3.2.3 Threatened and Endangered Species

In accordance with Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act (ESA) of 1973, the project area was evaluated for the potential occurrences of federally listed threatened and endangered species and critical habitat. The purpose of the ESA is to protect and recover imperiled species and the ecosystems upon which they depend. It is administered by the USFWS and the Commerce Department's National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS). USFWS has primary responsibility for terrestrial and freshwater organisms, while the responsibilities of NMFS are mainly marine wildlife such as whales and anadromous fish such as salmon.

Under the ESA, species may be listed as either endangered or threatened. "Endangered" means a species is in danger of extinction throughout all or a significant portion of its range. "Threatened" means a species is likely to become endangered within the foreseeable future. Species proposed for listing as either Endangered or Threatened are ensured the same protections as those that are officially listed. All species of plants and animals, except pest insects, are eligible for listing as endangered or threatened. For the purposes of the ESA, Congress defined species to include subspecies, varieties, and, for vertebrates, distinct population segments. Critical habitat is defined as specific areas that contain the physical or biological features essential to a species' conservation. The ESA requires USFWS to designate critical habitat when it is both "prudent and determinable." Critical habitat is a tool that supports the continued conservation of imperiled species by guiding cooperation within the Federal government. The ESA requires any Federal agency that funds, authorizes or carries out an action to ensure that their action is not likely to jeopardize the continued existence of any endangered or threatened species (including plant species) or result in the destruction or adverse modification of designated critical habitats.

As of October 8, 2020, the USFWS lists ten federally protected species, under the Endangered Species Act (ESA), for Craven County. These species include American alligator, Eastern black rail, green sea turtle, leatherback sea turtle, northern long-eared bat, red-cockaded woodpecker, red knot, West Indian manatee, rough-leaved loosestrife, and sensitive joint-vetch. Two additional species, Carolina madtom and Neuse River waterdog, are listed by USFWS as Proposed for Listing and one, bald eagle, is listed under the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act. Additionally, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) – National

Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) also lists Atlantic sturgeon and shortnose sturgeon as potentially occurring in the Neuse River Basin in Craven County (Table 1).

For any species where potential habitat is present within a project study area, in-field surveys are required to determine the presence or absence of that species. These surveys need to be completed during a species' optimal survey window, if such a window is designated. If no habitat is present, then a No Effect determination can be made for the species. If habitat is present, but the species is not present (or appropriate habitat in proximity of the project is absent), a Biological Conclusion of either No Effect or May Affect, Not Likely to Adversely Affect (MANLAA) can be rendered for a species. These designations will depend on the species being evaluated and the proximity of known occurrences. If a species is present within a project footprint, depending on the potential for impacting the species, a Biological Conclusion of either MANLAA or Likely to Adversely Affect may be rendered for a species. MANLAA designations typically require informal consultation with USFWS; Likely to Adversely Affect designations typically require formal consultation (or a programmatic agreement) with USFWS in the form of a written Biological Assessment by the owner of the property/action and a Biological Opinion response by the USFWS with conditions and commitments related to the protection of the potentially impacted species.

An Official Species List from the USFWS Information for Planning and Conservation (IPaC) website, dated March 31, 2021, identified the following ten species as potentially having ranges that overlap with either project alternative: American alligator, Eastern black rail, green sea turtle, leatherback sea turtle, northern long-eared bat, red-cockaded woodpecker, red knot, West Indian manatee, rough-leaved loosestrife, and sensitive joint-vetch (Appendix C). Per IPaC guidance, species that are under USFWS jurisdiction that do not have overlapping ranges are considered to not have habitat present and, therefore, have a No Effect designation applied to them. For this project, this includes Carolina madtom and Neuse River waterdog. The remaining species (including bald eagle, Atlantic sturgeon, and shortnose sturgeon, since they are not addressed by IPaC) will require assessment for each project alternative.

Alternative 1 – No Action

Under the No Action Alternative, no short- or long-term impacts to listed species, their habitats, or designated critical habitat would occur since no habitat is present for any listed species at the site.

Alternative 2 – Proposed Action

No designated critical habitat is present within the Alternative 2 site. All IPaC-listed species, were immediately removed from consideration of potential effects due to lack of habitat based on remote sensing review and the fact that the proposed site is highly urbanized and contains low quality terrestrial habitat. The site also lacks any potential freshwater or saltwater resources; therefore, no habitat for any aquatic species (including Atlantic and shortnose sturgeon, which are non-IPaC listed species) is present at the site. Suitable foraging habitat for bald eagle is present within 1.13 miles of project; however, no foraging or nesting habitat is present within the Alternative 2 site. A review of the North Carolina Natural Heritage Program (NCNHP) database (Appendix C), identified Atlantic sturgeon, shortnose sturgeon, and West Indian manatee occurrences within 1.0 mile of the Proposed Action site. However, no water resources are present at the proposed site.

For northern long-eared bat, Craven County is not listed as a potential county for the species by the USFWS Raleigh Office. Additionally, Alternative 2 is not within a red highlighted Hydrologic Unit Code (HUC) for the species. The project will have No Effect on the species.

Since no habitat is present within either the Alternative 1 or 2 project footprints for any listed species, in a memorandum to file dated September 11, 2020, FEMA determined that all species had an Effect Determination of No Effect (Appendix C).

Table 1 presents the habitat designation and Biological Conclusion for Alternative 2 for each species listed in Craven County. It is anticipated that the Proposed Action Alternative will have no short- or long-term impacts to any listed species since no habitat is present.

No short- or long-term impacts to Threatened and Endangered species would be associated with the demolition of the former facility.

Table 3.2.3. ESA federally protected species listed for Craven County (continued)

Scientific Name	Common Name	Federal Status	Habitat Present Alternative 2	Biological Conclusion Alternative 2
<i>Haliaeetus leucocephalus</i>	Bald eagle	BGPA	No	No Effect
<i>Alligator mississippiensis</i>	American alligator	T(S/A)	No	Not Required
<i>Acipenser oxyrinchus oxyrinchus</i>	Atlantic sturgeon	E	No	No Effect
<i>Laterallus jamaicensis</i>	Black Rail	T	No	No Effect
<i>Noturus furiosus</i>	Carolina madtom	PE	No	No Effect
<i>Acipenser brevirostrum</i>	Shortnose sturgeon	E	No	No Effect
<i>Chelonia mydas</i>	Green sea turtle	T	No	No Effect
<i>Dermochelys coriacea</i>	Leatherback sea turtle	E	No	No Effect
<i>Necturus lewisii</i>	Neuse River waterdog	PT	No (Not listed per IPaC)	No Effect
<i>Myotis septentrionalis</i>	Northern long-eared bat	T	No	No Effect
<i>Picoides borealis</i>	Red-cockaded woodpecker	E	No	No Effect
<i>Calidris canutus rufa</i>	Rufa Red knot	T	No	No Effect
<i>Trichechus manatus</i>	West Indian manatee	E	No	No Effect
<i>Lysimachia asperulaefolia</i>	Rough-leaved loosestrife	E	No	No Effect
<i>Aeschynomene virginica</i>	Sensitive joint vetch	T	No	No Effect

BGPA – Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act; E – Endangered; PE – Proposed Endangered; PT – Proposed Threatened; T- Threatened; T(S/A) – Threatened due to similarity of appearance

3.3 Hazardous Materials

Two of the main Federal laws that address hazardous and toxic materials issues are the Comprehensive Environmental Response Compensation and Liability Act of 1980 (CERCLA; 42 U.S.C. §9601 et seq.) and the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act of 1976 (RCRA; 42 U.S.C. §6901 et seq.). CERCLA, commonly known as Superfund, has the major objectives to identify hazardous and toxic material sites, determine liability, and oversee the cleanup. The financial liability aspects of these sites or sites in proximity should be of greater concern to Sub-applicants in buyout projects because they will hold title to acquired property and will therefore share in any liability. For this reason, FEMA will not fund the acquisition of contaminated property (with the exception of residential or commercial properties containing normal quantities of lead or asbestos, home septic systems, home heating oil tanks, and normally occurring quantities of household hazardous materials). The RCRA addresses the handling, disposal and recycling of debris and solid waste, including hazardous materials. The requirements of RCRA are implemented at the State and local levels and are often included as conditions or best management practices in permits required at those levels. Besides disposal and recycling of waste materials, RCRA is also concerned with the transportation, treatment, and storage of hazardous waste. In addition to health and safety issues, RCRA is closely tied to some of the objectives of the CWA and Clean Air Act, relating to potential effects on water and air quality.

A hazardous materials database search, reviewing GIS datasets of existing and former underground storage tanks, superfund sites, landfills, brownfields, and other hazardous material storage or use facilities, was completed within the project vicinity and at both Alternative sites. This included review of EPA brownfield data and the EPA EnviroMapper for Envirofacts website ([link](#)).

Due to the urban nature of the City of New Bern, several underground storage tank (UST) sites are located within vicinity of both alternative sites. Based on a review of active and historic UST permits, there are over 50 sites located within 1.0 mile of both alternative sites. However, there are no historic or active permits at either Alternative site. There are also no EPA-designated Superfund sites within or within proximity to either site or within the City of New Bern.

There is one listed hazardous waste site within 1.0 mile of both Alternative sites (Carriage House Cleaners, 422 Pollock St, Suite 100). There are no hazardous waste sites listed at either Alternative site. Two sites in proximity to, but no within, both alternatives are listed in the EPA's brownfield assessment database. Dayspring Ministries (1219 Broad Street) had a Phase II Environmental Assessment completed in 2012. The parcel was previously used as a gas station, car dealership, and a salvage yard in the past and showed evidence of groundwater and soil contamination. Cowell's Cleaners (914 Broad Street) also had a Phase II Environmental Assessment completed in 2012. This parcel has a history of use as both a gas station and dry cleaner. The assessment revealed the presence of two underground storage tanks (UST); however, no evidence of petroleum release was identified. No evidence of groundwater or soil contamination related to the site were observed. Site reports show no record of site cleanup at either site.

Per the EPA's Landfill Methane Outreach Program (LMOP) database, two active landfills are located adjacent to each other in New Bern, the Craven County Landfill, and the Tuscarora Long-Term Regional Landfill (7400 Old US 70 Highway); neither are in close proximity to either Alternative. A review of the NCDEQ Pre-Regulatory Landfill Database identified one site, the New Bern Sanitary Dump (US Highway 70 and Pembroke Road) within New Bern city limits (which is either in or adjacent to Lawson Creek Park); however, this site is also not in close proximity of either Alternative.

There is one plastics reclamation facility within 1.0 mile of the Alternative 2 site (New Bern Sanitary Dump, US Highway 70 and Pembroke Road); there are none within proximity of Alternative 1 site. During construction of the new recreation center, hazardous materials would be stored in a locked, covered, facility wherever possible. Recyclable materials would be hauled off-site for recycling and construction waste would be disposed of at a permitted landfill facility.

Alternative 1 – No Action

Under the No Action Alternative, no short- or long-term impacts from hazardous materials will occur.

Alternative 2 – Proposed Action

Under the Proposed Action Alternative, no short- or long-term impacts from hazardous materials are anticipated because no recognized environmental concerns were listed or found in the above-referenced database search that would impact the proposed site. Although subsurface hazardous materials are not anticipated to be present, excavation activities could expose or otherwise affect subsurface hazardous wastes or materials; any hazardous materials discovered, generated, or used during implementation of the proposed project shall be disposed of and handled by the project applicant in accordance with applicable local, State, and Federal regulations. During all activities, appropriate measures to remove, prevent, contain, minimize, and control spills of any potentially hazardous materials will be employed.

Any Federal, State, or local federal requirements for removal and handling of lead-based paint and asbestos will be followed, if either is identified during the demolition of the existing buildings on site.

Although not listed in either Federal or State databases, the original location of the Stanley White Recreation Center on Chapman Street has been locally noted as a former landfill site. However, there is no documentation at

the City level to confirm this. Although not documented, if the former property was used as a landfill, there is still potential for hazardous materials, such as lead, petroleum, or other chemicals to be present within the soil at the site, which could potentially lead to exposure if disturbed by construction demolition. Appropriate environmental assessments of the site may be required if any future site work is performed that could disturb the soil or groundwater.

There are no short- or long-term impacts related to hazardous materials as a result of the demolition of the recreation center. Enviro Assessments East, Inc. (EAE, Inc.) completed an Asbestos Survey of the Stanley White Recreation Center located at 901 Chapman Street in New Bern, NC on July 20th, 2020 by a North Carolina Licensed inspector of Asbestos⁵. The inspection was conducted in general accordance with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency requirements and in general accordance with the North Carolina Health Hazards Control Unit. This inspection was performed in preparation for the demolition of the recreation center located on site. According to the laboratory report, 5 of the 68 samples were found to contain asbestos which required that the materials be properly abated prior to disturbance by renovation activities or demolition.

On September 10 and 11, 2020 approximately 6000-square feet of asbestos containing floor tiles and the associated mastic were abated from the gymnasium, in accordance with a Design and Air Monitoring Plan. Floor tiles were abated by mechanical chipping, and mastic was removed with a chemical solvent. Abated materials were bagged in double six mil. poly bags for disposal. Air sampling was performed on the project in accordance with the NIOSH 7400 method for phase contrast microscopy (PCM). Ambient air samples were collected from areas adjacent to the work area during first day of gross removal operations. Results from analysis of the ambient samples established that the asbestos fiber was properly controlled. When abatement was complete, it was determined from visual inspection that the floor tiles and mastic were properly abated from the concrete floor surface. Five clearance air samples were then collected inside the containment. Results from analysis of all air samples were found to be cleaner than the North Carolina and EPA clean air standard of 0.010 f/cc. Individual sample results, and sampling locations, were documented on the field data sheets (Appendix F)⁶.

The bagged asbestos containing floor tiles were disposed of at the C&D Landfill (Greenville, NC).

3.4 Socioeconomics

3.4.1 Zoning and Land Use

Both project alternatives are located within the City of New Bern, Craven County. The City has zoning regulations in effect within the City and its Extra-Territorial Jurisdiction (ETJ) areas. The parcels for both alternatives are within the planning jurisdiction of City of New Bern Department of Development Services as well as the New Bern Metropolitan Planning Organization (NBMPO). Zoning within the City is enforced by the City of New Bern Department of Development Services and the 10-member New Bern Planning and Zoning Board.

The threshold level for a significant impact to land use is defined as the disruption or displacement of an existing or planned land use without providing a suitable means to replace or relocate the affected land use.

Alternative 1 – No Action:

Under the No Action Alternative, no increased short- or long-term land use or zoning changes would be required the site would return to open space.

Alternative 2 – Proposed Action

⁵ Inspection Report 901 Chapman Street – Stanley White Recreation Center New Bern, NC 28560

⁶ ASBESTOS AIR MONITORING REPORT for STANLEY WHITE RECREATION FACILITY 901 CHAPMAN STREET NEW BERN, NORTH CAROLINA

The site for the Proposed Action Alternative consists of Craven County Parcel 8-012-119 at the north west intersection of Third Avenue and Broad Street within the City of New Bern. The site is located within a developed portion of New Bern, near the Greater Five Points transportation corridor intersection, and west of historic downtown New Bern. As a currently vacant lot, surrounding land uses primarily include residential use to the north, west, and east and commercial use to the south with intermittent community resources such as day cares and churches.

The existing land classification code for the parcel is R-6. Zoning code R-6 is a residential district category designed to accommodate single-, two-, and multi-family dwellings. Indoor athletic and exercise facilities are not currently included as a permitted or special use on an R-6 zoned parcel. As such, a zoning change would be required for this project. However, this change would not be considered inconsistent with desired planning goals. The City of New Bern's Urban Design Plan (2000) notes this site as having redevelopment potential within their existing land use designations and as "Property areas: Major Action Needed" within the plan's redevelopment concept. Additionally, Craven County GIS data identifies the property as sustainable for commercial development. The project will also provide continued, long-term benefit to the surrounding land uses by extending the useful life of a recreational resource important to the surrounding community and City as a whole.

According to the municipal permitting policy and potentially applicable to this development, "If a development project will modify an existing structure or increase its size, or a new development is proposed the following permits may be required:

- Zoning Permit – Site plans, description of work to accompany a zoning permit application.
- Special and/or Conditional Use Permits – For any development designated as a Special and Conditional Use in the respective municipalities' Zoning Ordinance. These applications are reviewed and approved by the appropriate appointed and elected boards.
- Building Permit for all non-exempt construction activities

The demolition of the former recreation center off of Chapman Street does not itself result in any short- or long-term changes to land use. However, the area where the old recreation center was located must remain open space in perpetuity due to FEMA regulations (if FEMA funding is used for this project) and because a portion of the land was acquired through Land and Water Conservation Fund and Parks and Recreation Trust Fund grants.

3.4.2 Visual Resources

The proposed Facility would be located at the north west intersection of Third Avenue and Broad Street. To the south, the Neuse Boulevard/Broad Street corridor is an urban commercial roadway with sidewalks on both sides of the road. Near to proposed site there the New Bern Fire Department Main Office and Station and commercial businesses. The corridor is not currently visible from the site due to the presence of three structures. The action alternative would demolish the three structures, providing direct visual access to the corridor. West of the site there is a commercial business and a day care center. Indigo Ridge Senior Apartments are located north of the site. East of the site along Third Avenue there are eight residential units with direct visual access to the site.

Due to a mix of land uses (commercial, industrial, multifamily and single family residential) overall character of the visual environment is considered fragmented and disjointed, lacking character, intactness and wholeness.

Alternative 1 – No Action:

Under the No Action Alternative no short-term impacts are anticipated. Long-term, visual impacts would be negative if the facility were to remain vacant as it would be a blighting influence on the neighborhood.

Alternative 2 – Proposed Action

Under the Proposed Action Alternative, construction and developmental visual impacts would be temporary and limited to the duration of construction activities.

The Proposed Action Alternative should result in a noticeable positive long-term change in the physical characteristics of the existing environment. By establishing a visually sensitive landscape with scenic integrity, long term impacts would be positive as there is an opportunity to provide green space and improve the visual environment for motorist, business owners, residential and bike/ped interests.

As shown on the concept site plan, to the south, a vegetative buffer is planned, screening the site from the Neuse Boulevard/Broad Street Corridor (Appendix A). The vegetative buffer would improve the scenic integrity of a busy commercial corridor for motorist and pedestrians by creating a natural landscape element during commercial and industrial concerns. To the west a mixture of vegetative buffers and zero lot line set back for the Facility is proposed, which would soften and improve the existing Gaston Boulevard views for patrons of the daycare, motorist, pedestrians and commercial establishment. To the north, the views of Indigo Ridge Senior apartments residents would benefit from a combination of vegetative buffering and water elements (detention ponds). To the east, the residential units along Third Avenue would have the opportunity for the greatest benefit. The propose site plan would provide greenspace (via vegetative buffer) along the property line, softening the current views of Third Avenue and an open field. Implementation of the buffer along with potential Third Avenue improvements (roundabouts, cross walks, curb extensions) would add to the visual quality and overall quality of life of Third Avenue residents.

The demolition of the former recreation center would result in long-term positive changes to the visual environment. Per FEMA regulation, if FEMA funding is used for this project, the area where the old recreation center was located must remain open space in perpetuity. As a result absence of the facility would provide opportunities for increased open space associated with Henderson Park.

3.4.3 Noise

Noise is generally defined as undesirable sound and is federally regulated by the Noise Control Act of 1972 (NCA). The threshold level for a significant noise impact is defined as a permanent increase in noise or prolonged periods of nighttime noise in noise-sensitive areas. Although the NCA gives the EPA the authority to prepare guidelines for acceptable ambient noise levels, it only charges those federal agencies that operate noise-producing facilities or equipment to implement noise standards. Sound levels are measured in decibels (dB). The EPA's guidelines, and those of many Federal agencies, state that outdoor sound levels in excess of 55 DB are "normally unacceptable" for noise-sensitive land uses such as residences, schools, and hospitals. A-weighted sound measurements emphasize the frequency range of human hearing and are expressed in terms of A-weighted decibels (dB[A]).

Primary responsibility for control of noise though rests with State and local governments. Within the City of New Bern Code of Ordinances, Chapter 26 – Environment, Article III pertains to noise regulations within city limits. The project site is currently zoned R-6 and classified as a residential zone. As such, the parcel is subject to a dB(A) limit of 60 from 7:00am to 10:00pm and a dB(A) limit of 55 from 10:00pm to 7:00pm. Parcels within commercial zones are subject to a dB(A) limit of 70 from 7:00am to 10:00pm (7:00pm to 11:00pm on weekends) and a dB(A) limit of 55 from 10:00pm to 7:00am (11:00pm to 7:00am on weekends). A standing exception to the above sound level allowances however, includes "Noise sources associated with or created by construction, repair, remodeling, demolition, grading, or maintenance of any real property, provided such activities do not take place between the hours of 9:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m. on weekdays or weekends. Such activities associated with a municipal construction project may take place between the hours of 9:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m. on weekdays and Saturday, or at any time on Sunday, if such work is required to protect the public's health and safety, or if the Board of Aldermen determines that performing such activities during the restricted hours is in the public interest."

Alternative 1 – No Action

Under the No Action Alternative, no increased short- or long-term noise impacts are anticipated.

Alternative 2 – Proposed Action

Under the Proposed Action Alternative, construction and developmental noise impacts would be temporary and

limited to the duration of construction activities. To reduce the impacts of noise generated, construction activities would be restricted to normal business hours in accordance with the City of New Bern's noise ordinance. Equipment and machinery utilized at the site would be required to meet all State and Federal noise regulations and all have sound control devices no less effective than those provided on the original equipment (i.e., mufflers or other noise abatement devices that come standard with the equipment from the factory). No equipment shall have un-muffled exhaust. Potentially sensitive noise receptors within the vicinity of the project include residential properties to the north, east and west, the Right Place Child Care Center located at 805 Gaston Blvd adjacent to the project site to the west, and the Indigo Ridge Senior Apartments located at 731 3rd Avenue adjacent to the project site to the north.

Moderate, short-term increases in noise levels would be anticipated to occur during construction activities. Long term, the noise level at the site is anticipated to be slightly higher due to the operation of the new recreation center (e.g., when children are outdoors, or heating or cooling systems are operating). Long term noise levels along the roads used to access this site may increase slightly due to redirect/relocated traffic; however, the increase should be limited to acceptable noise allowance hours and minor impacts to noise levels in the surrounding area are anticipated. The construction of noise barriers is not anticipated.

The demolition of the former recreation center would result in minor short-term noise impacts associated with demolition activities. The demolition would be conducted in accordance with the City of New Bern Noise Ordinance requirements (see description above).

3.4.5 Public Services and Utilities

Utilities (electric, telephone, water, sanitary sewer, and storm sewer) are available to the site. These utilities are provided by the City. A limited amount of trenching and installation of underground lines and connections to the utilities will be required. The Proposed Action may place additional, limited demand on utilities in the area; however, the utility infrastructure will accommodate the planned future residential, commercial, and industrial expansion of the area.

Alternative 1 – No Action

Under the No Action Alternative there would be no increased short- or long-term Public Service and Utility impacts

Alternative 2 – Proposed Action

Short-term impacts to public services and utilities will be minor and temporary in nature due to the existing utility infrastructure on and in the vicinity of the proposed site. For emergency services, if needs arise during construction, there are multiple access points for neighborhood residents and business. No Long-term impacts are anticipated as part of this project.

The demolition of the former recreation center would result in no short- or long-term impacts.

3.4.6 Traffic and Circulation

The Facility is proposed to be located at the northeast intersection of Neuse Boulevard/Broad Street, a major New Bern east west arterial. The intersection is signalized. The most recent (2019) North Carolina Department of Transportation annual average daily traffic west of the intersection is 18,900 vehicles, east of the intersection is 8,900 Vehicles. The Proposed Action would construct an approximately 36,000 square feet recreation facility resulting in an additional 80 vehicles per day (ITE Trip Generation Manual 10th Edition). The proposed site plan provides for vehicle access onto Third Avenue as well as a connection to an easement on the northside of the property, which also connects to Third Avenue. The highway network in vicinity of the proposed project is adequate to handle the expected traffic load.

Construction activities could produce temporary impacts to the transportation system that include an increase in

noise, fugitive dust, vibration, congestion, and truck traffic along Neuse Boulevard/Broad Street. Such impact is anticipated to be minimal, short in duration and should not impact the Greater Duffyfield neighborhood as equipment and material would utilize Neuse Boulevard/Broad Street to access the site.

The Proposed Action should not affect public transportation as the closest bus stops are west of the site at the Broad Street, Fort Totten Drive intersection and east of the site at Miller Street (Craven Terrace).

Alternative 1 – No Action

Under the No Action Alternative there would be no increased short- or long-term Traffic and Circulation impacts.

Alternative 2 – Proposed Action

The construction and operation of a new Facility is not expected to negatively impact the transportation system. The City will mitigate potential construction related impacts by developing a public information plan to inform residents of key construction milestones that may negatively impact neighborhood activities. Key milestones include initial construction activities, staging, clearing and grubbing and any activities that would produce noise, vibration and fugitive dust. The City will require the contractor to abide by the City's Noise Ordinance for construction and require the contractor to access the site via Gaston Boulevard. Relocating the site closer to Neuse Boulevard/Broad Street will provide a benefit by reducing vehicle traffic in the Duffyfield neighborhood.

The demolition of the former recreation center would result in minor short-term traffic impacts associated with demolition activities.

3.4.7 Environmental Justice (Executive Order 12898)

EO 12898 (Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations) mandates that Federal agencies identify and address, as appropriate, disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects of their programs, policies, and activities on minority and low-income populations. Socioeconomic and demographic data for the project area were analyzed to determine if a disproportionate number of minority or low-income persons have the potential to be adversely affected by the proposed project.

Current census estimates indicate the population of Census Tract 9608 is 30.7 percent white, 64.1 percent African American, 0 percent Native American, 0 percent Asian, and 4.9 percent from two or more races. Hispanic or Latino of any race are 7 percent of the population. The median income for a household in this census tract is \$26,852 and the median income for a family is \$29,358. About 38.6 percent of the population in the Duffyfield neighborhood are below the poverty line.

By comparison, current census estimates indicate the population of the City of New Bern, North Carolina at large is 58.9 percent white, 30.4 percent African American, 0.4 percent Native American, 5.9 percent Asian, and 1.5 percent from two or more races. Hispanic or Latino of any race was 8 percent of the population. The median income for a household in the city was \$43,204 and the median income for a family was \$57,547. About 18.7 percent of the population are below the poverty line.

Alternative 1 – No Action

Under the No Action Alternative, the facility will remain vacant. Citizens would continue to have to travel to the West New Bern Community Center outside of the Duffyfield neighborhood to meet their recreational need.

The No Action Alternative will negatively impact neighborhood cohesiveness as the vacant structure would become a blighting influence on the neighborhood and would conflict with the neighborhood improvement Goals of the Greater Five Points Transformation Plan (Appendix E).

Alternative 2 – Relocation to Multiparcel Tract (Proposed Action)

Under the Proposed Action alternative, construction of a new facility would occur. Citizens would not have to

continue to have to travel to the West New Bern Community Center outside of the neighborhood to meet their recreational needs. Instead, residents will be able to meet their recreational needs at the new facility. The primary purpose of the new facility will be to offer the community programs which were offered at the demolished Stanley White Recreation Center at 901 Chapman Street before its closure. Such services will include access to physical activity resources and amenities including indoor basketball courts, fitness classes, and weightlifting equipment; community gathering spaces; and, after-school programs that support the community need for affordable childcare.⁷ Afterschool programs benefit the community by providing support for working parents. They also help participants to improve their social skills, work habits, grades, and school day attendance; to explore career paths; and, to gain workforce skills. The Proposed Action will provide Duffyfield youth aged 13 to 17, who have aged out of the early childcare system, access to programs to help propel them towards rewarding futures and economic mobility. The new facility also provides a safe afterschool space where youth can be under adult supervision while parents or guardians work. The new facility will include a history wall lined with photos and memorabilia which will introduce younger generations and new residents to the legacy of Mr. Stanley White; and, provide a location where events and traditions of volunteerism developed at the now demolished facility can continue. Provision of services, access to amenities, and aesthetic design will work to mitigate the sense of loss which followed demolition of the old facility.

Since it is faster for Duffyfield residents to walk or bike to Gaston Boulevard than to take either the yellow or red bus route, the proposed alternative will also likely eliminate the need to pay bus fare. This is significant because in Census Tract 9608, most households rent (60.7 percent) and most renters (52.3 percent) are cost-burdened, meaning they spend more than 30 percent of their household income on housing costs. In low-income households, perceived unnecessary expenses, such as bus fare to a recreation center, can present an undue burden. Individuals may decide that the same money could be better spent on more essential household goods, such as food, and forgo travel to the recreation center altogether. According to the Centers for Disease Control, reduced participation in recreation activities increases the likelihood of negative health and financial consequences such as obesity. In 2008, medical costs for people who have obesity was \$1,429 higher than those of normal weight⁸. The Proposed Action would eliminate the need for unnecessary transportation fees thereby improving the long-term health and financial outcomes of most households in Duffyfield.

The Proposed Action will also support the community's need for a reliable emergency shelter near the Duffyfield neighborhood. The demolished facility could not be used as an emergency shelter because it was in a floodplain therefore not accessible in the event of flooding. The new facility is outside of the floodplain so can be used as an emergency shelter because its accessibility would be unlikely to be affected during future storm events. Currently the closest emergency shelter is Ben D. Quinn Elementary School at 4275 Martin Luther King Blvd. It is located 4.6 miles from Gaston Boulevard (i.e., the western limit of the Duffyfield and closest point to shelter). Travel time to this shelter from Gaston Boulevard is 11-minutes by car via Dr. M.L.K. Jr Boulevard; 28-minutes on bike via Trent Boulevard; and, one hour and 33-minutes on foot via Clarendon Boulevard / Dr. M.L.K Jr Boulevard. The nearest CART bus stop is Target located at 3410 Dr. M.L.K. Jr. Boulevard. Bus route users dropped off at Target would need to walk at least 44-minutes or 2.2-miles west along Dr. M.L.K Jr Boulevard to reach the current shelter, in addition to the time cost incurred from riding the circuitous route taken by both the red and yellow service lines to reach Target. Use of the new facility as an emergency shelter would cut down on these travel times. The new facility would be located 0.6-miles or a 13-minute walk from Queen Street, 0.8-miles or a 16-minute walk from Rose Street, and 1.1-mile or a 22-minute walk from the J.T. Barber Elementary School, which mark the community's perimeter.

Environmental Justice recognizes that low-income and minority communities across the nation suffer from disparities in access to resources for parks and healthy living. This is part of a continuing legacy of residential segregation resulting in part from racially restrictive housing covenants, discriminatory lending and housing policies, and structural inequalities in wealth and income. The Proposed Action would combat these disparities,

⁷ In 2014, public outreach conducted as part of the Greater Five Points Transformation Plan found that 10% of Duffyfield residents were unemployed. The top barriers to unemployment cited by residents at the time included a lack of necessary of job skills and education (66 percent); transportation issues (32 percent); and, childcare needs (14 percent).

⁸ [Adult Obesity Facts | Overweight & Obesity | CDC](#)

by providing a central hub where residents can partake in sports and nutrition classes that will keep them physically fit, build social bonds key to mental well-being, and receive job training to help build wealth.

The Proposed Action would positively impact neighborhood cohesiveness and support Environmental Justice aims. Removal of the vacant structure would support neighborhood improvement Goals of the Greater Five Points Transformation Plan (Appendix E).

3.4.8 Safety and Security

Public Health and Safety

Neighborhood safety and security services are provided by the City of New Bern Police Department, with offices located east of the neighborhood on Queen Street, the New Bern Fire Department, primary headquarters located south of the neighborhood on Neuse Boulevard, and healthcare access and emergency services are located at the Carolina East Medical Center, west of the neighborhood and also on Neuse Boulevard. floodplain. The closest emergency shelter is Ben D. Quinn Elementary School, 4275 Martin Luther King Blvd, 4.9-miles southwest of the former location of the Stanley White Recreation Center.

Alternative 1 – No Action

The absence of the facility may have moderate short-term impacts to the neighborhood for police and healthcare provisions. The lack of options for after school care could lead to issues with youth aged 13 to 17 who have aged out of the early childcare system. There is no known community programming serving this group at the present time other than the West Bern Recreation Center. Failure to provide a replacement facility at an easily accessible location within Duffyfield would place this group at risk due to criminal activities known within the neighborhood and to New Bern Police. Absence of the facility may negatively impact seniors by reducing options for healthcare with the neighborhood. The No Action Alternative would not provide an emergency shelter in the neighborhood.

Moderate and Long-Term, the No Action Alternative may negatively impact neighborhood cohesiveness as the vacant structure would become a blighting influence. Vacant lots and buildings potentially offer refuge to criminal and other illegal activity and very visibly symbolize that a neighborhood has deteriorated, that no one is in control, and that violent or criminal behavior is welcome to proceed with little if any supervision.⁹

Alternative 2 – Proposed Action

The Proposed Action, new structure outside the floodplain, will provide the opportunity to reduce crime and increase options for health care by providing additional services and programs for at-risk youth and the elderly and provide a neighborhood-based emergency shelter.

The Proposed Action, removal of the vacant structure, would positively impact neighborhood cohesiveness, support Safety and Security aims and would support neighborhood improvement Goals of the Greater Five Points Transformation Plan (Appendix E).

3.5 Historic and Cultural Resources

In addition to review under NEPA, consideration of effects to historic properties is mandated under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) of 1966, as amended, and implemented by 36 CFR Part 800. The Act created a clearly defined federal process for historic preservation in the United States, established Federal-State and Federal-tribal partnerships, established the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) and National Historic Landmarks (NHL) programs, mandates the selection of qualified State Historic Preservation Officers (SHPO), established the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, and established the role of Certified

⁹ https://repository.upenn.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1004&context=cml_papers

Local Governments within the States. The act also charged Federal agencies with responsible stewardship, whereby historic structures that would be affected by federal projects—or by work that was federally funded—now have to be documented to standards issued by the Secretary of the Interior.

As authorized under the NHPA, the NRHP (36 CFR 60.4) is the United States' official list of cultural resources worthy of preservation. The National Register is part of a national program to coordinate and support public and private efforts to identify, evaluate, and protect our historic and archeological resources. Properties listed in the Register include districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects that are significant in American history, architecture, archeology, engineering, and culture. Significant historic resources that may be affected by a Proposed Action have to be identified as part of a project's planning process. Historic resources are defined under the NHPA as buildings, structures, objects, sites, or districts included or eligible for listing in or eligible for listing in the NRHP.

As defined in 36 CFR Part 800.16(d), the Area of Potential Effect (APE) for a project, "is the geographic area or areas within which an undertaking may directly or indirectly cause changes in the character or use of historic properties, if such properties exist." In addition to identifying historic properties that may exist in the proposed project's APE, FEMA must also determine, in consultation with the appropriate State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO)/Tribal Historic Preservation Officer (THPO), what effect, if any, the action will have on historic properties. Moreover, if the project would have an adverse effect on these properties, FEMA must consult with SHPO/THPO on ways to avoid, minimize, or mitigate the adverse effect.

In addition to the NHPA, the Archaeological and Historic Preservation Act of 1974 (AHAP) provides for the survey, recovery, and preservation of significant scientific, prehistoric, archaeological, or paleontological data when such data may be destroyed or irreparably lost due to a federal, federally licensed, or federally funded project. The Archaeological Resources Protection Act of 1979 (ARPA) affords protection of archeological resources on public lands and Indian lands.

With regard to Native American and Tribal resources, the American Indian Religious Freedom Act of 1978 (AIRFA) offers protection and preservation of American Indian sites, possessions, and ceremonial and traditional rites. The Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA) was enacted on November 16, 1990, to address the rights of lineal descendants, Indian tribes, and Native Hawaiian organizations to Native American cultural items, including human remains, funerary objects, sacred objects, and objects of cultural patrimony. The Act assigned implementation responsibilities to the Secretary of the Interior.

All the above applicable regulations have been reviewed as part of the document preparation process and are addressed below. Additionally, FEMA initiated a Section 106 Consultation to the North Carolina State Historic Preservation Office (NCSHPO) dated February 7, 2020). Additionally, FEMA Section 106 Notifications were sent to the Catawba Indian Nation, Seminole Nation of Oklahoma, Shawnee Tribe, and Tuscarora Nation notifying them of the determination that No Historic Properties will be affected by this undertaking (Appendix C).

In regard to the former Stanley White Recreation Center, FEMA determined that the Area of Potential Effect (APE) for the project was limited to the areas within which all construction and ground disturbing activity would be confined and the viewshed of the site. No potential for indirect effects outside of the viewshed of the proposed project exist. The FEMA consultation concluded that no properties listed in or considered eligible for listing in the National Register were located within the APE of this project, including the former Stanley White Recreation Center (which is less than 50 years old and had extensive renovations in 2009). Therefore, a finding of No Historic Properties affected for this undertaking was rendered in accordance with 36 CFR 800.4(d)(1).

Per conditions outlined in the Section 106 Consultation, if human remains or intact archaeological deposits are uncovered, work in the vicinity of the discovery will stop immediately and all reasonable measures to avoid or minimize harm to the finds will be taken. The applicant will ensure that archaeological discoveries are secured in place, that access to the sensitive area is restricted, and that all reasonable measures are taken to avoid further disturbance of the discoveries. The applicant's contractor will provide immediate notice of such discoveries to the

applicant. The applicant shall contact the North Carolina State Archaeologist and FEMA within 24 hours of the discovery. Work in the vicinity of the discovery may not resume until FEMA has completed consultation with SHPO, Tribes, and other consulting parties, as necessary. In the event that unmarked human remains are encountered during permitted activities; all work shall stop immediately, and the proper authorities notified in accordance with North Carolina Statutes, Section 70-29. FEMA is completing a consultation for the project and will determine if there is a need for monitoring the excavation activity associated with construction.

Stanley White, a New Bern native, is an important figure in the history of the City. Following his graduation from Hampton Institute and serving in the US Army, he returned to New Bern and served as Athletic Director at the Cedar Street Recreation Center. He invested time and energy in growing and providing direction to children and adults in the community. He was widely respected for his mentoring and providing positive direction for youth through sports. He died tragically in 1971 at the age of 42. Prior to his death, he expressed his vision and dream for a new recreation center, which would expand the opportunities for his good works in the community. To honor Mr. White, the City named a new recreation center (Stanley White Recreation Center) in his honor on August 1, 1976. Although the Stanley White Recreation Center is considered a part of the historic fabric of the Greater Duffyfield neighborhood, the center is not listed on the National Register of Historic Places, either at the local, state or federal level per the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966. The structure has since been demolished and as it no longer retains integrity is no longer eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. To honor Stanley White, the City named the previous recreation center in his honor on August 1, 1976. Residents have requested that honor and recognition be continued in the new facility.

Alternative 1 – No Action

Under the No Action Alternative, there will be no effect to any historical or cultural resources.

Alternative 2 – Proposed Action

FEMA initiated Section 106 Consultation for the Alternative 2 location to NCSHPO (dated March 13, 2021; Appendix C). FEMA determined that the APE for the Alternative 2 location is limited to the areas within which all construction and ground disturbing activity would be confined and the viewshed of the proposed project. No potential for indirect effects outside of the viewshed of the proposed project exist.

Two (2) buildings proposed for demolition at the site were identified to be older than 50 years old. These buildings are not eligible for listing, or listed on, the NRHP. 602 Gaston Blvd. is an average one-story, 1,476 feet single-family residence with brick veneer over wood frame exterior walls, gable roof with shingles, the interior has drywalls and plaster finish with wooden floors. This residential construction is typically found through North Carolina. 1312 Broad St. is a two-story, 2,898 square feet property formerly use as a retail store. It has vinyl exterior walls, a wood truss system for the roof structure covered in slates, the interior has plaster walls and ceiling, with wooden floors.

The new site for the reconstruction of the Stanley White Recreation Center is surrounded by properties potentially eligible for listing, or listed on, the NRHP. The site is surrounded by several residential properties along 3rd Ave., many of these having been surveyed. The site is one block apart from the Craven Terrance (CV2561) to the east and Degraffenried Park Historic District (CV2306) to the southwest. Based on the results of our historic property identification efforts, no properties listed in or considered eligible for listing in the National Register were located within the APE of this undertaking. Therefore, there is a finding of no historic properties affected for this undertaking in accordance with 36 CFR 800.4(d)(1). All the buildings to be demolished or relocated do not currently possess a level of significance to be eligible for listing in the NRHP under Criteria A, B, C and D. These buildings are not associated with events or a person historically significant and are residential and commercial constructions typically found throughout North Carolina. FEMA received concurrence with the determination of effects from the NCSHPO office on April 1, 2021. THPO 106 Notification Letters for the Catawba Indian Nation, Seminole Nation of Oklahoma, Shawnee Tribe, Tuscarora Nation, were sent on March 15, 2021. The 30-day allotted notification period has expired, concurrence is assumed.

Although located within the APE of this project, the former Stanley White Recreation Center (which is less than

50 years old and had extensive renovations in 2009) is not considered a Historic Property therefore there are not short- or long-term- historic impacts with demolition of the structure.

3.6 Comparison of Alternatives

Table 3.6 Summary of Environmental Impacts

Affected Environment	No Action Impacts	Proposed Action Impacts	Mitigation
Soils and Geology	No impact and no FPPA compliance requirements.	Moderate short-term impacts from construction and grading. Moderate long-term impacts due to increase in impervious surface /drainage. No impacts to geology or seismicity. No FPPA compliance requirements.	Use of BMPs during construction to minimize impact. Development of an erosion and sedimentation control plan. No FPPA compliance requirements.
Water Resources and Water Quality	No Impact.	Negligible to no short- or long-term impacts due to lack of mapped resources. No environmental permitting anticipated.	Use of BMPs during construction to minimize impact. Development of an erosion and sedimentation control plan. Ensure appropriate permits are acquired, if necessary, and guidelines are followed to minimize stormwater impacts.
Floodplain Management	No Impacts,.	No impact. A majority of the site is outside of the 500-year floodplain. No areas are within the 100-year floodplain..	No soils or staging to occur within floodplain areas.
Air Quality	No Impact.	Minor short-term impacts from construction /equipment uses. Negligible long-term impacts. No permitting anticipated.	Use of BMPs to mitigate for construction emissions and fugitive dust.
Coastal Zone Management	No Impact.	No Impact. No Areas of Environmental	N/A

Affected Environment	No Action Impacts	Proposed Action Impacts	Mitigation
		Concern and no permit anticipated.	
Coastal Barrier Resources	No Impact.	No Impact. No Coastal Barrier Resources and no permit anticipated	N/A
Terrestrial and Aquatic Environment	No Impact.	Minimal short-term impacts, negligible long-term impacts to terrestrial environment. No aquatic environment present.	N/A
Wetlands	No Impact.	No Impact. No wetlands present.	N/A
Threatened and Endangered Species	No Impact.	No Impact. No habitat present for any listed species.	N/A
Hazardous Materials	No Impact.	No Impact. Nothing listed at proposed site.	Any hazardous materials discovered, generated, or used during implementation of the proposed project shall be disposed of and handled in accordance with applicable regulations. Any permits, if required, will be obtained prior to action.
Zoning and Land Use	No Impact.	Zoning change required; however, consistent with planning goals of City. Potential long-term benefit to surrounding land use as an important recreational resource.	Acquire appropriate zoning change required for development.
Visual Resources	No Impact.	Short term construction impacts	Follow City Planning and Zoning design standards.

Affected Environment	No Action Impacts	Proposed Action Impacts	Mitigation
		Possible long-term benefits include noticeable positive long-term change in the physical characteristics of the existing environment.	Engage the community in review of final site plan. Appoint a neighborhood oversight team for community input and issue resolution.
Noise	No Impact.	Moderate short-term impacts due to construction activities. Minor long-term impacts due to increase in traffic and operation of recreation center.	Will follow City of New Bern's noise ordinance regulations for construction. Increase in noise levels long-term will only occur during acceptable noise allowance hours and will be minor in daily impact. Appoint a neighborhood oversight team for community input and issue resolution.
Public Service and Utilities	No Impact	Short-term construction impacts to public utilities will be minor and temporary. No anticipated impact to emergency service during construction.	Develop a public information plan to inform residents of key construction milestones.
Traffic and Circulation	No Impact	Minor short-term construction impacts. Minor short-term construction impacts. Potential benefit, relocating the site closer to Neuse Boulevard/Broad Street will reduce vehicle traffic in the Duffyfield neighborhood.	Limit construction access to the site to Gaston Boulevard. Develop a public information plan to inform residents of key construction milestones. Appoint a neighborhood construction oversight team for community input and issue resolution.

Affected Environment	No Action Impacts	Proposed Action Impacts	Mitigation
Environmental Justice	Short and Long-term Negative impacts due to absence of neighborhood-based childcare, emergency shelter, senior services, and after school programming, negatively impact neighborhood cohesiveness (See Safety and Security below)	<p>Minor short-term construction impacts.</p> <p>Positive long-term impacts: facility would meet current and emerging neighborhood needs and provide an emergency shelter in the community.</p> <p>Removal of the vacant structure would positively impact neighborhood cohesiveness and support Environmental Justice aims.</p>	See Visual, Noise and Traffic Circulation Mitigation Recommendations.
Safety and Security	Moderate and Long-Term, the No Action Alternative may negatively impact neighborhood cohesiveness as the vacant structure would become a blighting influence. Vacant lots and buildings potentially offer refuge to criminal and other illegal activity and very visibly symbolize that a	Minor short-term impacts: Removal of the vacant structure, would positively impact neighborhood cohesiveness and support Safety and Security aims. would support neighborhood improvement Goals of the Greater Five Points Transformation Plan	

Affected Environment	No Action Impacts	Proposed Action Impacts	Mitigation
	neighborhood has deteriorated, that no one is in control, and that violent or criminal behavior is welcome to proceed with little if any supervision.		
Historic Structures	No Impact	No NRHP eligible structures. NCSHPO, in a letter dated April 1, 2021, stated that no known historic resources will be affected by this project and have no comment.	N/A
Archaeological Resources	No Impact	No known archaeological resources. However, if excavation unearths potential human remains or artifacts, construction will stop, and the State Archaeologist and FEMA will be notified	N/A
Tribal and Religious Sites	No Impact	No Impact	N/A

SECTION FOUR: CUMULATIVE IMPACTS

Cumulative impacts represent the impact on either the natural or human environment, which results from the short- and long-term interaction, effects or impacts of the action by looking at the past, present and reasonably foreseeable future actions.

The proposed project would occur on a project site in an area that is currently zoned as residential and commercial, with surrounding land uses including a mix of commercial, industrial, multifamily and single family residential. The Proposed Action would relocate the facility from 901 Chapman Street, currently located in a floodplain, to outside of the floodplain but within approximately 670-feet of the original site, still within the greater Duffyfield neighborhood. This project would result in the development of approximately 3.4-acres, a portion of which is currently occupied by three structures that will be demolished or relocated as a part of this project. The Stanley White Recreation Center has been a staple in the Duffyfield Community since 1975, originally built for New Bern's African American residents. For almost three quarters of a century there has been a recreation center within a 1-mile radius available to the Duffyfield community. Relocation of the facility to the proposed site would continue past and present actions by the City to provide recreation and community services to Duffyfield and surrounding communities within walking or biking distance for those without access to transportation.

The City of New Bern is currently engaged in numerous flood recovery activities, including plans by the City Public Works Department to leverage FEMA funding for flood mitigation and wetland restoration by integrating green stormwater infrastructure and recreational opportunities in the Duffyfield drainage basin. These activities are being undertaken as a part of the necessary recovery efforts following the September 2018 Hurricane Florence declared disaster event, with a focus on reducing future risk by removing or mitigating properties in the floodplain and improving the stormwater infrastructure. The project would support the City's long-term efforts of flood mitigation by removing the facility from the floodplain, thereby providing a sustainable resource for the neighborhood and community.

Reasonably foreseeable future actions in the area include continued investments and programs by the City. In February 2020 the Board of Alderman adopted a comprehensive Redevelopment Plan for Greater Five Points/Greater Duffyfield neighborhood. The goal of the plan is to rebuild and rehabilitate the boundaries outlined in the Choice Neighborhood Initiative¹⁰, which covers 1,899 parcels located within 474 acres of land in the Greater Five Points and Duffyfield areas, including Dryborough, Trent Court, and Craven Terrace. The Redevelopment Plan was designed to reverse the overall decline of the neighborhoods within the boundary area and create a functional transportation network to support economic growth and public welfare. Among the Redevelopment Plan's goals are the elimination of existing blight, mitigation of the impact of localized flooding, the increased enforcement of building and nuisance codes, and utilization of city-owned property to create new development opportunities. Transforming Greater Five Points & Duffyfield communities to their full potential will take several decades and will be implemented incrementally as funding allows. The Redevelopment Plan has a planning horizon of 20 years, the Proposed Timeline and Activities are shown in Appendix E.

The Greater Five Points Plan investment efforts over the last 15-years (detailed in the Five Points Plan) are beginning to show positive results. A primary goal of the plan is to Empower the Community. The Proposed Action will improve the existing physical and social assets in the community by providing expanded "neighborhood based" programs and services.

¹⁰ Choice Neighborhood Initiative Planning HUD launched the Choice Neighborhood Initiative (CN) program in 2010 to help local leaders transform struggling neighborhoods of concentrated poverty into sustainable, mixed-income communities of choice. New Bern is was one of 9 planning grant recipients nationwide for 2013.

Additional future land use changes may occur within the project area due to private development, or currently unplanned flood mitigation projects that convert developed land to open space.

Past, present, and future actions are not expected to result in increased long-term development or population growth as the goal is to restore pre-storm event recreation and community services to the Duffyfield neighborhood.

This assessment concludes that the short and long-term impacts of the Proposed Action would consist of minor to negligible impacts to geology and soils, water resources, biological resources, floodplains, air quality, historic and cultural resources, socio economic resources, and safety. The Proposed Action is consistent with reasonably foreseeable future action within this area and therefore no adverse cumulative impacts are anticipated.

SECTION FIVE: PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Coordination with FEMA and public involvement is ongoing and conducted throughout the NEPA EA process. Public involvement included seven (to date) public meetings of the Stanley White Recreation Center Advisory Committee, established by Resolution at the Board of Alderman's May 26, 2020 meeting, authorized by a resolution (Appendix E) adopted by the New Bern Board of Aldermen, to provide oversight of the public engagement process, recommend recreation center services and programming for the new facility, serve as a liaison to the community and provide a final recommendation on the Stanley White Recreation Center project to the Board of Alderman. There were three public engagement sessions and one townhall style meeting with the surrounding community hosted by the New Bern Parks and Recreation Department and CPL consultants; and, four separate focus group discussions with community leaders, non-profits, city staff, and New Bern youth that offered the community a chance to participate in the public involvement process

The NEPA process requires that Federal agencies provide opportunities for public involvement and comments. The publication of this draft EA will kick off a 30-day public comment period, offering an additional informal opportunity for public involvement. The 30-day comment period will begin from the date of posting on the FEMA website and advertisement in the New Bern Sun Journal newspaper. Once finalized, the Draft EA document will be made available at the following public locations, City Hall at 300 Pollock St, New Bern, NC 28560, New Bern-Craven County Public Library at 400 Johnson St, New Bern, NC, the Omega Center at 800 Cedar St, New Bern, NC 28560, the West New Bern Recreation Center and the Craven County Courthouse at 302 Broad St, New Bern, NC 28560. The Draft EA will also be posted on the City Parks and Recreation Department website (https://www.newbernnc.gov/departments/parks_and_recreation.php) and posted online at the FEMA website ([Region 4 - Environmental Documents and Public Notices | FEMA.gov](#)). Written comments can be submitted by email to (FEMA-R4EHP@fema.dhs.gov) or by mail, addressed to FEMA Region IV, Disaster 4393, 3003 Chamblee Tucker Road, Atlanta, GA 30341, ATTENTION: attn DR 4393 PW 2418 NEPA Comments. If no substantive comments are received, the Draft EA will become final and this initial public notice will also serve as the final Public Notice. Substantive comments will be addressed as appropriate in the final document.

A Response to Comments Document will be generated and included into the updated report, as necessary. The Response to Comments Document will be incorporated as Appendix E, if necessary. This section documents public participation and outreach opportunities along with print, broadcast and social media coverage, listed as follows: Board of Alderman Meetings, Stanley White Rec Center Advisory Committee Meetings, Online Surveys, Community Engagement Meetings, Small Group Meetings, Print Media coverage, Broadcast Media coverage, Social Media documentation, Public engagement documentation for the meetings detailed in this Section, including agenda, handouts, summary and comments will be attached in Appendix E and posted on the City's Stanley White Recreation Center Project website: [Stanley White Recreation Center WEBSITE](#)

TIMELINE OF EVENTS

Board of Alderman Meeting Summaries

This section provides a summary of relevant Board of Alderman minutes regarding the Stanley White Recreation Center. A full detailed summary of each meeting is provided in Appendix E.

After the September 14, 2018 Hurricane Florence event the Board of Alderman began regular discussions, staff briefings of the Stanley White Recreation Center. Between September 25, 2018 and February 9, 2020, the facility was discussed at approximately 37 Board meetings. Topics ranged from the initial damage report, hearing citizen comments and concerns and ultimately finalizing strategies and decisions to rebuild the facility.

Stanley White Recreation Center Advisory Committee Summaries

The Stanley White Recreation Center Advisory Committee held seven in-person and/or virtual meetings between August 18, 2020 and January 19, 2021. The Committee monitored community engagement and outreach, provided feedback to the City and Consultant Team. FEMA representatives participated in all meetings via Teams. Meeting agendas, handouts and complete summaries are provided in Appendix E.

Public Meeting Summaries

This Section includes a general summary of the Stanley White Recreation Center Advisory Committee's Public Engagement Sessions. FEMA representatives participated in all meetings via Teams. Meeting agendas, handouts and complete summaries are provided in Appendix E. Three Public Engagement Sessions were held on August 31, 2020, October 22, 2020 and December 7, 2020. All sessions were conducted in-person as well as virtually (either Teams or Zoom). Stanley White Recreation Center Public Engagement Session #1 at the Omega Center, 800 Cedar Street, New Bern, NC.

Approximately 91 people completed the sign in sheet for the drop-in style meeting. The City provided a looped project PowerPoint presentation and boards showing the project engagement and design schedule. On October 22, 2020, the City conducted Stanley White Recreation Center Public Engagement Session #2 at the Omega Center, 800 Cedar Street, New Bern, NC. The City's consultant CPL provided a presentation regarding the process, findings from the August 31 meeting and next steps on FEMA provide an overview of the EA process including federal guidelines and review schedule. On December 7, 2020, the City conducted a Town Hall Style Public Engagement Session at the Omega Center, 800 Cedar Street, New Bern, NC. The City's consultant CPL provided a presentation of the process to date and next steps and engaged in a Q&A discussion with citizens. Primary concerns focused on process, communication, and past/present neighborhood flooding concerns.

Focus Group Summaries

This Section includes a general summary of the Stanley White Recreation Center Advisory Committee's Focus Group Sessions. FEMA representatives participated in all meetings via Teams. Meeting agendas, handouts and complete summaries are provided in Appendix E. Four Focus Group Sessions were held On September 29, 2020 (Non-Profit), October 1, 2020 (City Staff), October 7, 2020 (Community Youth) and October 12, 2020 (Community Leaders). All sessions were conducted virtually via Teams.

Print Media Summaries

Print media resources provided extensive coverage of the Stanley White Recreation Center Project. Links to articles from The Sun Journal, New Bern Post, Gaston Gazette, Compass, New Bern Now are summarized in Appendix E.

Broadcast Journalism Summaries

Broadcast media resources provided extensive coverage of the Stanley White Recreation Center Project. Links to broadcast from WNCT, WCTI, WITN are summarized in Appendix E.

City of New Bern Parks and Recreation Social Media Summaries

City of New Bern Parks and recreation Summary and Screen Captures are in Appendix E.

City of New Bern, NC Government Social Media Summaries

City of New Bern, NC Government Social Media Summaries and Screen Captures in Appendix E

SECTION SIX: MITIGATION MEASURES AND PERMITS

- The City of New Bern (the City) is responsible for obtaining and complying with all required local, State and Federal laws, permits and approvals.
- Construction Best Management Practices (BMPs) will be utilized and maintained throughout construction to control soil erosion and sediment, reduce spills and pollution, and provide habitat protection. BMPs will be determined during the design phase and implemented by the construction company. Environmental compliance during construction will be required to ensure that all BMP devices are constructed and working properly during the life of the project. Erosion controls will be in place prior to any ground disturbing activity.
- No environmental permitting is anticipated for this project. However, if permits are required, all work must be performed in accordance with any approved permit requirements and conditions. Changes to project design that alter permitted actions may require re-engagement with regulatory agencies to determine if revisions/modifications to issued permits are required.
- No compensatory mitigation is anticipated for this project due to lack of anticipated impacts associated with the preferred alternative. In the event that this changes, compensatory mitigation would be pursued through either the North Carolina Division of Mitigation Services (NCDMS) or an approved mitigation bank.
- The project will follow State and local stormwater and erosion control requirements and will be covered under the City's State National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit, which follows federal guidelines and regulations.
- Site soils will be covered and/or wetted during construction to minimize fugitive dust.
- Heavy machinery and equipment to be used for the Proposed Action will meet any applicable federal, state, or municipal clean air standards.
- Any hazardous materials discovered, generated, or used during construction must be disposed of and handled in accordance with applicable local, State, and Federal regulations. During all activities, appropriate measures to remove, prevent, contain, minimize, and control spills of any potentially hazardous materials will be employed.
- Construction activities will be conducted during the daytime hours (7:00am – 9:00pm on weekdays and weekends, as defined by City of New Bern Ordinances Section 26-71 [5],) to reduce adverse noise impacts.
- All equipment shall comply with pertinent equipment noise standards of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, State of North Carolina, and/or City of New Bern. For example, federal noise standards include the provision that all equipment used shall have sound control devices (e.g., mufflers, intake silencers, engine enclosures) no less effective than those provided on the original equipment; no equipment shall have un-muffled exhaust.
- If human remains or intact archaeological deposits are uncovered, work in the vicinity of the discovery will stop immediately and all reasonable measures to avoid or minimize harm to the finds will be taken. The applicant will ensure that archaeological discoveries are secured in place, that access to the sensitive area is restricted, and that all reasonable measures are taken to avoid further disturbance of the discoveries. The applicant's contractor will provide immediate notice of such discoveries to the applicant. The applicant shall contact the *North Carolina State Archaeologist* and FEMA within 24 hours of the discovery. Work in the vicinity of the discovery may not resume until FEMA has completed consultation with SHPO, Tribes, and other consulting parties as necessary. In the event that unmarked

human remains are encountered during permitted activities; all work shall stop immediately, and the proper authorities notified in accordance with *North Carolina Statutes, Section 70-29 (2019)*.

- Prior to construction, the City must identify the source and location of fill material and provide this information to NC-SHPO and FEMA. If the borrow pit is privately owned, or is located on previously undisturbed land, or if the fill is obtained by the horizontal expansion of a pre-existing borrow pit, FEMA consultation with the State Historic Preservation Officer will be required. Failure to comply with this condition may jeopardize FEMA funding; verification of compliance will be required at project closeout.
- Any changes to the approved scope of work will require submission to, and evaluation and approval by, the State and FEMA, prior to initiation of any work, for compliance with Section 106.

SECTION SEVEN: CONSULTATIONS AND REFERENCES

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