

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 avfu872nd 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 has 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 woos 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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