

Final Notice and Explanation of a Proposed Activity in a 100-year Floodplain

To: All interested Agencies, Groups, and Individuals

This is to give notice that the City of Key West (City) has conducted an evaluation as required by Section 2(a)(4) of Executive Order 11988 (Floodplain Management), in accordance with U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) regulations found at 24 CFR 55, Subpart C, Procedures for Making Determinations on Floodplain Management and Protection of Wetlands. The proposed action is located at 5537 College Road, Key West, Monroe County, Florida.

The City proposes to remove the existing Keys Overnight Temporary Shelter facilities and construct a new permanent structure within the same general area. The new John Jones Navigation Center would be constructed as an elevated structure above parking, and would have updated infrastructure, such as a fire-safety sprinkler system, lighting, site security fencing, dependable climate control, improved plumbing, a compliant mechanical system, energy-efficient operations, accessibility, and reliable electricity. It would continue to provide temporary housing for approximately 150 low-income, homeless people and would not increase the number of employees.

The City of Key West has considered the following alternatives and mitigation measures to be taken to minimize adverse impacts and to restore and preserve natural and beneficial values.

The proposed action must take place in a floodplain. The project site is surrounded by land that is also within the floodplain. The proposed action would provide improved facilities to serve the at-risk population currently being served by the existing facilities, which are also within a floodplain. If the proposed action were located outside of the floodplain, it would be unable to serve the target population.

Three alternatives were considered: the No Action Alternative, construction of an at-grade facility, and construction of a new facility outside the floodplain. Under the No Action Alternative, the new shelter facility would not be constructed, and there would be no impact to the floodplain. Constructing an at-grade facility at the same location as the proposed action would have reduced costs and would be more susceptible to flooding impacts. Constructing a new facility outside of the floodplain would not impact the floodplain, but also would leave the low-income, homeless population currently being served by the existing facilities with no shelter facility. These alternatives are not practicable either because they would not meet the goals of the proposed action or because they do not involve either fewer floodplain impacts or greater benefits to public health when compared to the Proposed Action.

Disturbance of the floodplain by the proposed action would occur during demolition of the old facilities and construction of the new facility. The disturbance would cease once these activities are completed. The floodplain in the project area is not natural, completely developed, and previously disturbed by the existing Key Overnight Temporary Shelter facilities. Because the proposed action also involves actions in the previously developed and disturbed areas, no additional measures to address adverse impacts are proposed. The activities under the proposed action would preserve the existing condition and function of the floodplain. As a result, no mitigation measures are proposed.

The City of Key West has reevaluated the alternatives to building in the floodplain and has determined that it has no practicable alternative. Environmental files that document compliance with steps 3 through 6 of Executive Order

11988 are available for public inspection, review and copying upon request at the times and location delineated in the last paragraph of this notice for receipt of comments.

There are three primary purposes for this notice. First, people who may be affected by activities in floodplains and wetlands and those who have an interest in the protection of the natural environment should be given an opportunity to express their concerns and provide information about these areas. Second, an adequate public notice program can be an important public educational tool. The dissemination of information about floodplains and wetlands can facilitate and enhance Federal efforts to reduce the risks associated with the occupancy and modification of these special areas. Third, as a matter of fairness, when the Federal government determines it will participate in actions taking place in floodplains or wetlands, it must inform those who may be put at greater or continued risk.

Written comments must be received within 8 days of the Notice publication, at the following address: 1300 White Street, Key West, FL 33040, Attention: Teri Johnston, Mayor. A full description of the project may also be reviewed from 8 am to 5 pm at 1300 White Street, Key West, and <https://www.cityofkeywest-fl.gov/>. Comments may also be submitted via email to gary.volenc@cityofkeywest-fl.gov.