

Early Notice of Availability
Federal Emergency Management Agency
Notice of Intent of FEMA to Adopt Environmental Assessment for HUD-Assisted Project
Proposed 53-Acre Site for Relocated Infrastructure
Princeville, Edgecombe County, NC

Notification is hereby given to the public of the intent of the Department of Homeland Security-Federal Emergency Management Agency (DHS-FEMA) to provide Federal financial assistance to the Town of Princeville, North Carolina as Subapplicant for a 53-acre site to be redeveloped for new infrastructure for later residential, commercial, and municipal use. Funds have previously been allocated for this project through the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Community Development Block Grant – Mitigation (CDMG-MIT); Princeville has since applied for the Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC) grant program funding from DHS-FEMA to supplement overall construction costs. The purpose of the BRIC grant program is to proactively invest in hazard mitigation projects, reducing risks that communities face from disasters and natural hazards.

The Proposed Action is to construct water, sewer, electrical, stormwater, and road infrastructure on a vacant 53-acre site which will later support the development of critical town facilities (police and fire stations, public works facility, and Town Hall Annex), offices and commercial buildings, single- and multi-family housing, and open green space. Minor work within existing right-of-way on S. Main Street (U.S. Highway 64 Alternate East) and South Shiloh Farm Road resulting in new paint striping, replacement of guardrails, new signage, water meter and drainage ditch alignments, and sewer line replacement to facilitate the connections between existing and new service lines on the 53-acre property.

The Proposed Action would take place outside of the mapped 1.0% annual chance (or 100-year) floodplain and would not directly or indirectly impact any wetlands. The Proposed Action meets the BRIC grant program goals to invest in hazard mitigation and resiliency measures that protect property and human lives from future natural hazards. Potential impacts to the human and natural environment will be minimized through the application of best management practices and adherence to all applicable local, state, and federal laws, regulations, and ordinances.

In accordance with FEMA's implementation for NEPA compliance under FEMA Instruction 108-1-1, FEMA is required, during decision making, to fully evaluate and consider the environmental consequences of major direct or indirect (funding) federal actions. In accordance with FEMA Instruction 108-1-1 and the principles of Unified Federal Review (UFR), FEMA is working with North Carolina Department of Public Safety (NCDPS) and Princeville to recirculate and adopt the Environmental Assessment for the project that was prepared by HUD in January 2024. This document can be found here: <https://www.rebuild.nc.gov/about/plans-policies-reports/environmental-reviews#public-notice-infrastructure-recovery-program>

The Endangered Species Act (ESA) requires federal agencies to consult with the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) for effects to federally listed threatened and endangered species. On February 5, 2024, FEMA notified and

requested comments from USFWS of FEMA's intent to utilize previous consultation initiated and finalized between HUD and the USFWS. Previous HUD initiated consultation determined that the proposed work to *not likely to adversely affect* federally listed species. FEMA's determination agreed with HUD including the use of best management practices to further minimize or avoid impacts to listed species. Consultation with NMFS was not necessary as there are no species under NMFS' jurisdiction that would be impacted by the proposed project. FEMA will follow up in a forthcoming notice of availability to inform you of the outcome of FEMA's coordination with USFWS.

The National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) requires federal agencies to consider the effects of their undertakings on historic properties. FEMA will be consulting consulted with the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) and four federally recognized tribes with vested interest in Edgecombe County, North Carolina. FEMA will follow up in a forthcoming notice of availability to inform you of the outcome of FEMA consultation with these consulting parties.

Presidential Executive Orders 11988 and 11990 require that all federal actions in or affecting the floodplain or wetlands be reviewed for opportunities to relocate and evaluated for social, economic, historical, environmental, legal, and safety considerations. The project location is located outside a special flood hazard area, per Edgecombe County Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM) panel #3720474600J, dated November 3, 2004. Wetlands within the project area include an approximately 0.75-acre U.S. Army Corps of Engineers verified, delineated freshwater forested or shrub wetland. HUD completed an 8-step decision making process as part of the NEPA EA and is available upon request for review. FEMA reviewed and agreed with HUD's 8-step decision making review that the proposed construction will not encroach into the delineated wetlands.

President Biden issued new Executive Orders 13985 and 14008 in January 2021 to further address the need to achieve environmental justice and equity across the federal government. The issuance of the new executive orders more than 20 years after Executive Order 12898 was signed indicates the administration's directive to federal agencies to renew their energy, effort, resources, and attention to environmental justice. FEMA is working with applicants/subapplicants to identify communities with Environmental Justice concerns and provide an avenue for local groups and non-profits with an Environmental Justice mission to self-identify so that FEMA Programs can start to work with them on specific projects from the beginning of the application process.

This will serve as one of two public notices regarding the above-described action funded by the FEMA BRIC grant program. A second notice detailing the conclusion of the Endangered Species Act and National Historic Preservation Act reviews will be provided to the public including any clarification on scope and other requested information based on comments received during the early notice comment period. Interested persons may obtain information about these actions by emailing FEMA-R4EHP@fema.dhs.gov. Comments should be sent in writing with the subject line **"FEMA BRIC Princeville Project"** at the above address within 15 days of the date of this notice.

Date of Notice: 2/23/2024