National Environmental Policy Act

The National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, commonly referred to as NEPA, is the nation's charter for protection of the environment. NEPA provides for the consideration of environmental issues in federal agency planning and decision-making. NEPA requires federal agencies to prepare an environmental impact statement (EIS) for actions that may significantly affect the quality of the human environment.

National Historic Preservation Act - Sections 106 and 110

Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 requires that Federal agencies take into account the effects of their actions on any district, site, building, structure, or object listed on, or eligible for inclusion in, the National Register of Historic Places. Section 110 requires that Federal agencies, to the maximum extent possible, undertake planning and actions as may be necessary to minimize harm to National Historic Landmarks. GSA has been consulting with the District of Columbia Historic Preservation Office (DCHPO), Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP), and Consulting Parties.

Public Involvement Process

- EIS Public Scoping Meeting: October 8, 2009
- GSA Publish Draft EIS: December 17, 2010
- Public Review of Draft EIS: 45 days
- Public Hearing: January 13, 2011
- GSA Publish Final EIS: TBD
- Public Review of Final EIS: 30 days

Public Hearing Purpose and Procedures

This public hearing provides you with the opportunity to comment on the Draft EIS and the Section 106 historic preservation considerations for the amendment to the DHS Headquarters Consolidation master plan. It also provides a venue for raising issues you believe were not addressed (or were not adequately addressed) in the Draft EIS. It is not intended as a forum to debate the merits of GSA's proposed action.

Procedures:

- If you did not request to speak in advance of the hearing, indicate that you would like to speak on the sign-in sheet. (You will be called in the order in which you signed up.)
- When you come to the front, say and spell your name slowly into the microphone for the record. Speak clearly.
- Comments will be limited to no more than three (3) minutes. For consideration of others, please stay within the appropriate time allowance. GSA will provide a one (1) minute warning to all speakers before the conclusion of their allotted time.

Send Written Comments to:

Ms. Denise Decker, NEPA Lead
c/o Shirley Walker
U.S. General Services Administration
National Capital Region
301 7th St., SW, Room 6628
Washington, DC 20407
denise.decker@gsa.gov

All comments on the Draft EIS are due to GSA by February 2, 2011.

Mail/express comments must be postmarked no later than February 2, 2011. Comments on the Section 106 process will be accepted throughout the consultation process with the DCHPO, ACHP and consulting parties. Note: Due to a subsequent request to extend the comment period, comments on the Draft EIS will now be accepted until March 4, 2011.

For more information about the EIS, please contact Denise Decker, GSA NEPA Lead, at 202-538-5643.

For ongoing information about transportation projects in the area, please contact one of the following co-chairs of the Ward 8 Transportation Task Force:

- Butch Hopkins, Anacostia Economic Development Council: 202-889-5100

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) is a cooperating agency on the Draft EIS. FHWA's action is the approval of the I-295 / Malcolm X Avenue interchange and related transportation improvements. The transportation analysis included in the Draft EIS is a comprehensive study of existing conditions, development of alternatives and impacts of those alternatives. FHWA welcomes and encourages community comment during the Draft EIS process on all transportation analysis. FHWA anticipates adopting GSA's Final EIS and issue a Record of Decision on its NEPA action.
St. Elizabeths is in Southeast Washington, District of Columbia. It is situated in the Congress Heights community and overlooks Joint Base Anacostia-Bolling, consisting of Bolling Air Force Base (AFB) and the Anacostia Naval Station, and the Anacostia River. Major transportation corridors in the vicinity of the St. Elizabeths Campus include Interstate (I)-295, Suitland Parkway, Firth Sterling Avenue, Martin Luther King, Jr. (MLK) Avenue, Alabama Avenue, Malcolm X Avenue, and South Capitol Street (see figure below). The St. Elizabeths East Campus North Parcel is roughly bounded by MLK Avenue to the west, the District of Columbia’s Unified Communications Center (UDC) to the north, the Steadfast Branch ravine to the east, and Maple Square on the East Campus to the south.

The Purpose of the Proposed Action

The proposed action assessed in the Draft EIS is to complete the consolidation of DHS Headquarters offices at St. Elizabeths for a total of 4.5 million gross square feet of secure office and shared-use space plus associated parking and transportation improvements. GSA is proposing to amend the 2008 Master Plan to accommodate up to 750,000 gross square feet of secure office space, plus parking, on the East Campus North Parcel for a new Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) facility by 2014. In addition, GSA is re-evaluating transportation improvements required for the consolidation of the DHS Headquarters at St. Elizabeths.

The Need for the Proposed Action

DHS’ legacy facilities and dispersed locations of its components throughout the National Capital Region (NCR) adversely impact critical communication, coordination, and cooperation across the components that are needed to respond to national disasters or terrorist attacks effectively. A consolidated DHS headquarters will facilitate leadership, policy, program management, and operational coordination needed to facilitate incident management functions and command-and-control capabilities in response to national crises.

Development Alternatives

GSA is considering three development alternatives – East West Bars, Campus Reflection, Atrium – for the FEMA facility on the East Campus North Parcel. Each alternative assumes 750,000 gross square feet of secure office space, plus associated parking. The major differences between the alternatives are the layout, orientation, and height of the buildings.

Transportation Alternatives

GSA is also re-evaluating transportation alternatives to support the DHS development. These include improvements at the following locations:

- I-295/Malcolm X Avenue Interchange – GSA intends to modify the interchange at Malcolm X to allow for a new access road to the West Campus while at the same time improving the operational efficiency and safety at the interchange. Two alternatives are being considered.
- Firth Sterling Avenue/Proposed West Campus Access Road Intersection – GSA intends to construct a new intersection at Firth Sterling Avenue and the Proposed Access Road to the West Campus. There are two alternatives being considered.
- Martin Luther King, Jr. Avenue Improvements – GSA intends to widen MLK Avenue to support the additional traffic expected at the site. There are two widening alternatives under consideration between the East and West Campuses. The same alternative applies south of the campus to Alabama Avenue.

Potential Impacts

In the Draft EIS, GSA has assessed the direct, indirect, and cumulative impacts of development on:

- Cultural resources
- Natural resources
- Social and economic resources
- Air quality
- Noise
- Transportation
- Utilities
- Environmental contamination

Availability of Draft EIS

Copies of the Draft EIS are available for public review at the following District of Columbia locations:

- Anacostia Neighborhood Library, 1800 Good Hope Road, SE at 18th Street, SE
- Francis A. Gregory Library, 2100 30th Place, SE
- Parklands-Turner Community Library, 1547 Alabama Avenue, SE
- Washington Highlands Neighborhood Interim Library, 4037 South Capitol Street, SW
- Advisory Neighborhood Commission 8C, 3125 Martin Luther King, Jr., Avenue, SE
- Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial Library, 901 G Street, NW
- National Capital Planning Commission, 401 9th Street, NW, North Lobby, Suite 500
- UPO/Ralph Waldo “Petey” Greene Community Service Center, 2907 Martin Luther King, Jr., Avenue, SE

It can also be downloaded from the project website:
www.stelizabethsdevelopment.com
Alternative 1: East-West Bars

Alternative 2: Campus Reflection

Alternative 3: Atrium
Proposed I-295/Malcolm X Interchange and West Campus Access Road Alternative 1
Proposed I-295/Malcolm X Interchange and West Campus Access Road Alternative 2
Proposed Firth Sterling Avenue/West Campus Access Road Intersection Alternative 1: “T” Intersection

Proposed Firth Sterling Avenue/West Campus Access Road Intersection Alternative 2: “Through” Intersection
Proposed Martin Luther King, Jr. Avenue Improvements: Alternatives 1 and 2

A. Alternative 1 cross-section at St. Elizabeths Campus

B. Alternative 2 cross-section at St. Elizabeths Campus

C. Alternatives 1 & 2 cross-section at Congress Heights (same for both alternatives)