



Health Resources and Services Administration

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT (FONSI)

for

**Renovation, Expansion, New Construction and
Improvements to Existing Medical Center Facilities (Nationwide)**

Background

The Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) of the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) provides discretionary grant and cooperative agreement awards to health care services for underserved populations. Beyond the ongoing American Recovery and Reinvestment Act which was the focus of the 2009 HRSA PEA's and includes funding through the Capital Improvement Program – American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (P.L. 111-5), The Facility Investment Program - American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (P.L. 111-5), and the Capital Development program (mirrors FIP), Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (P.L. 111-148), the following programs are the primary funding mechanisms for capital activities to be reviewed under this PEA:

- Section 330 of the Public Health Service Act (42 USCS 254b)
- Health Care and Other Facilities (HCOF)
- Program Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (P.L. 111-148)

Finding

HRSA prepared a Programmatic Environmental Assessment (EA) to evaluate a category of actions to be funded through HRSA grants, encompassing the renovation and rehabilitation of buildings and facilities and limited new construction to support improved services in the nation's health centers to determine whether to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) or Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) for actions falling under the Programmatic EA. This Programmatic EA is incorporated by reference into this FONSI.

With the Programmatic EA in place, the environmental review process required by the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and its associated environmental laws will be streamlined, allowing grantees to submit an Environmental Information and Documentation Form (EID) as part of their application process. This project level environmental review will ensure there are no extraordinary circumstances that exist

that are beyond the issues identified and evaluated within this document. All grant applications will be reviewed to determine if they fall within the scope of this Programmatic EA. If extraordinary circumstances are identified in the EID, a Supplemental Environmental Assessment (SEA) will be required for that action. Extraordinary circumstances encompass the following:

- a. Unique situations presented by specific proposals, such as scientific controversy about the environmental effects of the proposal;
- b. Uncertain effects or effects involving unique or unknown risks;
- c. Unresolved conflicts concerning alternate uses of available resources within the meaning of Section 102(2)(E) of NEPA; or
- d. Where it is reasonable to anticipate a cumulatively significant impact on the environment.

Seven alternatives were analyzed in the Programmatic EA:

- alteration/repair/renovation of interior portions of buildings (There is no threshold on the square foot size of buildings being renovated since the existing footprint will not be changed. These actions may apply to any existing facility, including current medical centers or buildings whose use is being changed to that of a medical center through renovations.),
- the alteration/repair/renovation of exterior portions of buildings (There is no threshold on the square foot size of buildings being renovated since the existing footprint will not be changed. These actions may apply to any existing facility, including current medical centers or buildings whose use is being changed to that of a medical center through renovations.),
- additions to existing buildings and infrastructure improvements,
- new construction of buildings under 8,000 square feet of ground disturbance or temporary buildings of any size (and associated infrastructure improvements,
- placement of temporary buildings of any size on existing pre-disturbed sites,
- infrastructure improvements, and
- the No Action Alternative.

Any changes in zoning must be evaluated to ensure no inconsistencies or conflicts with current zoning or land-use requirements. Greater impacts than normally anticipated for an action would create the need for additional evaluation through a site-specific EA to determine level of significance of that impact.

HRSA has determined that the alternatives assessed in the Programmatic EA would not have significant individual or cumulative adverse effects when combined with past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions. With appropriate mitigation measures as described below, no significant adverse impacts would occur to geology and soils; air quality; water quality; floodplains; wetlands; coastal zone management, biological resources; cultural resources; traffic; solid or hazardous materials and waste; noise; or land use. No significant adverse cumulative impacts would occur.

Mitigation Summary

Potential Impact	Mitigation Measure
Impacts to Geology and Soils	Follow all state, local, and tribal regulations related to soil conservation and runoff (such as implementation of BMPS to reduce erosion during construction).
Impacts to Air Quality	Follow all state, local, and tribal regulations regarding construction and operational emissions. Low VOC materials and energy efficient design.
Impacts to Water Quality	Follow all state, local, and tribal regulations regarding runoff, erosion, and construction management (BMPs) employ Low Impact Development design, focus on landscape solutions.
Impacts to Floodplains	Any building must be built to the local floodplain ordinance.
Impacts to Wetlands	Avoid any disturbance to wetlands or waters of the U.S.
Impacts to Coastal Zone	State and local authorities could implement appropriate BMPs, such as installing silt fences and revegetating bare soils as part of the permitting process. BMPs and LID technologies should be incorporated as part of building design and construction to reduce the impervious surfaces and associated runoff that may occur when facilities increase their footprint.
Impacts to Vegetation and Wildlife	Most medical centers are located in developed areas, so impacts to critical habitat are unlikely. Impacts to any undisturbed natural areas are to be avoided.
Impact on Historic Qualities or setting of site and/or adjacent site	Ensure compliance with Section 106 requirements for any buildings greater than 50 years old, or buildings less than 50 years old where significant events may have taken place i.e. first successful heart transplant or a former President was treated here, etc.). Identify potential for below ground cultural resources prior to ground disturbing activities.
Impacts to Socioeconomics/Environmental Justice	Impacts for the action alternatives are expected to be positive.
Traffic Delays and Congestion During Construction and Operation	Utilize flaggers on busy roads during construction. Carefully stage equipment and construction worker's cars during construction.
Impacts to Solid and Hazardous Materials and Wastes	If hazardous materials are present or likely, ensure appropriate studies are undertaken to identify location, type, and extent of hazard. Based on results of studies, ensure hazardous materials are dealt with in accordance with federal, state, and local requirements.
Increased Noise Generation	Maintain normal daylight hours for construction. Noise restrictions are generally more stringent at night and on weekends. Comply with state, local, and tribal noise regulations.
Impact on Surrounding Land Uses	Ensure compliance with local land use, zoning and comprehensive plans, as well as related permit processes and ordinances.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of the Programmatic EA and adherence to the project conditions set forth in the Programmatic EA, and in accordance with NEPA, the Council on

Environmental Quality regulations for implementing NEPA (44 CFR Parts 1500 through 1508) and the HHS General Administration Manual Part 30 Environmental Protection (February 25, 2000), HRSA has determined that the proposed action will have no significant adverse impact on the quality of the human environment. As a result of this FONSI, an EIS will not be prepared and projects which fall under the Programmatic EA may proceed.

Approved:

Ann E. Piesen
Environmental Officer
Office of Policy and Program Development
Bureau of Primary Health Care

Date

Tonya Bowers
Director
Office of Policy and Program Development
Bureau of Primary Health Care

Date