

Summary

The General Services Administration (GSA) has prepared a Final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) analyzing the potential impacts from the proposed alternatives to address how to accommodate tenants of the Chet Holifield Federal Building (CHFB). The CHFB is owned by GSA and is home to various federal agency tenants, with the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) serving as the largest tenant.

Project Background

The CHFB is located in Laguna Niguel, California, between Los Angeles and San Diego. The building is approximately 1 million square feet in size and is located on an 86.5-acre parcel. An associated 5.5-acre parcel containing a central utility plant for the building is located north of Avila Road. The 92 acres of property is located in a high value real estate suburban area comprised of retail and residential zones and is primarily used for federal office space. The building was originally built in 1970 by the Aerospace and Systems Group of North American Rockwell Corporation. It was never occupied and was transferred to the federal government for use by federal agencies in March of 1974. There are currently approximately 3,000 employees working in the building. The CHFB has been determined eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP).

Proposed Alternatives

The Final EIS considers two **“action” alternatives** and one **“no action” alternative**. The two **“action” alternatives** are described as follows:

- Alternative 1 would involve construction of a new federal office building within the 86.5-acre parcel, directly adjacent to the existing CHFB for the USCIS and relocating all other tenants into lease space primarily within the Orange County market. The existing building and the remainder of the property not retained for construction of the USCIS building would be reported as excess in accordance with federal policy and disposed.
- Alternative 2 would involve relocation of all tenants primarily within Orange County similar to as under Alternative 1, but to also include a new location for the USCIS outside of the existing CHFB property. The existing CHFB and surrounding government property would be reported as excess in accordance with federal policy and disposed. Alternative 2 has been identified as the **“Preferred Alternative”** in the Final EIS.

The **“no action” alternative** assumes that tenants would remain within the existing CHFB and no new construction or relocation would occur. Minor repairs would occur as needed and maintenance and operation of the existing facilities would continue.

Future development of the CHFB site is not part of GSA’s Proposed Action, nor would it be within the control of GSA. If the property remains in federal ownership following disposal out of GSA ownership, the appropriate level of analysis under the National Environmental Policy Act may be required by a future federal proponent. If the property is transferred out of federal ownership, the City of Laguna Niguel may require the new owner to complete the appropriate level of documentation under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), and obtain certain land use approvals for any proposed development or reuse. Under either scenario, the public may have additional opportunities to provide public comment on future use of the site, once development plans have been proposed. Development of the site and compliance with all federal, state, and local laws and regulations would be the responsibility of the future landowner, not GSA. GSA’s planning with respect to compliance with historic preservation requirements, and how that may affect future development at the site, is being handled through the Section 106 process.





Figure 1. Proposed Project Location and Alternative 1

National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) Process

We are currently in the Final EIS phase of the NEPA Process. Scoping comments were previously solicited during the Scoping Process, and comments on the Draft EIS were solicited during public review of the Draft EIS. These comments have been addressed in the Final EIS. Public comments on the Final EIS are encouraged. Following the end of the public comment period, GSA will consider comments received, and will either prepare and sign a Record of Decision (ROD), which would provide project approval; undertake additional studies; or abandon the project.



Public Comments

Public comments on the Final EIS may be submitted by email or mail and must be received by close of the 30-day comment period.

- By email, send to osmahn.kadri@gsa.gov. Please reference the CHFB EIS in the subject line.
- By mail, send to:

Potomac-Hudson Engineering, Inc.
 ATTN: CHFB Final EIS
 77 Upper Rock Circle Suite 302
 Rockville, MD 20850

For further information, please contact Osmahn Kadri, NEPA Project Manager, General Services Administration at (415) 522-3617.