



March 1, 2010

Dear Interested Party:

Please be advised that the U.S. General Services Administration (GSA) is preparing an Environmental Assessment (EA) for the proposed expansion of the courthouse for the United States District Court for the Southern Division of Maryland located at 6500 Cherrywood Lane, Greenbelt, MD. The EA is being prepared in accordance with Section 102 of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). NEPA requires a Federal agency to provide the public with an opportunity to participate in the process of analyzing Federal actions which could impact the human environment. The purpose of this letter is to notify members of the community and other stakeholders of an opportunity to assist GSA in identifying potential impacts that may occur as a result of the Proposed Action. Your participation in this process is greatly appreciated.

The purpose of the Proposed Action is to expand the capacity of the U.S. Courthouse in Greenbelt, MD, to accommodate additional Federal judges, their staff, and consolidate employees of the U.S. Probation and U.S. Trustees Offices. Consolidation of the U.S. Probation and U.S. Trustees Offices to the Courthouse is needed to improve security, efficiency, and functionality. Facilities and parking at the Courthouse must be sufficient to accommodate the proposed increase of approximately 159 employees and additional visitors. The existing U.S. Courthouse in Greenbelt, MD was built to suit the immediate needs of the Courts in the late 1980s. At the time of site selection, the parcel was specifically chosen because of its capability to accommodate expansion over the next thirty years. The original building was at capacity when completed in 1994 and projections showed that expansion would likely be needed within 10 years. The growth of the Court's workload occurred as anticipated, and expansion of the existing facility is now needed. In the absence of expansion, future judges and support functions would have to occupy leased space in various locations, adding security concerns, delays, and additional costs to the Government and litigants.

Preliminary alternatives to be studied in the EA include expanding the capacity of the U.S. Courthouse in Greenbelt, MD through construction of additional square footage, and a no action alternative. Preliminary resources to be analyzed in the EA include: visual quality, air quality, noise, wetlands, surface and groundwater resources, vegetation, wildlife, traffic/parking, pedestrian/bicycle circulation, economics, and cultural resources.

GSA is accepting comments regarding the scope of the EA for 30 calendar days from the date stamped on this letter. Comments received during the scoping period will be used to develop and refine alternatives and issues to be analyzed in the EA.

Written comments concerning the scope of the EA should be submitted to:

Amanda Murphy  
GSA NCR  
NEPA Specialist  
301 7th Street, SW  
Room 7600  
Washington, DC 20407  
Fax Number: (202) 708-7671  
Email: amanda.murphy@gsa.gov

Upon completion, a Final EA and Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI), if applicable, will be made available to the public for review and comments for a period of 30 days. The Final EA is scheduled for availability in spring 2010. Availability of the Final EA/ FONSI will be advertised in local newspapers. The Final EA will also be made available online at [www.gsa.gov/ncrnepea](http://www.gsa.gov/ncrnepea).

Should you have any questions regarding the Proposed Action, please contact Ms. Amanda Murphy at (202) 205-4668.

Sincerely,



Bart Bush  
Regional Commissioner  
Public Buildings Service