

## **Final Notice and Public Explanation of a Proposed Activity in a Federal Flood Risk Management Standard Designated Floodplain or Wetland**

To: All interested Agencies including U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, FEMA, Texas Division of Emergency Management, Groups and Individuals

This is to give notice that the Responsible Entity under 24 CFR Part 58, City of Houston, Housing & Community Development Department (HCD) has determined that the following proposed action under the Community Project Fund (CPF) Grant and the Community Development Block Grant Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR) Program, HUD Grant Numbers B-24-CP-TX-2136 (CPF) and B-16-MH-48-0001 (CDBG-DR) is located in the Federal Flood Risk Management Standard (FFRMS) floodplain, and HCD has conducted an evaluation as required by Executive Order(s) 11988, as amended by Executive Order 13690, and/or Executive Order 11990, in accordance with HUD regulations at 24 CFR 55.20 in Subpart C Procedures for Making Determinations on Floodplain Management and Wetlands Protection. The name of the project is the Edgewood Park Improvements Project, and it is a larger initiative made up of two (2) separate projects that benefit Edgewood Park, a detention basin and a new recreation center. The basin includes the federal funding, and the center is completely non-federal, but both activities are being assessed together to ensure compliance with the project aggregation requirements at 24 CFR 58.32, since they both benefit Edgewood Park and the surrounding community.

The proposed project location is in Houston's Edgewood Park, at the street address 5803 Belfort Avenue, Houston, Harris County, Texas 77033, at and around the northeast corner of Southbank and Belfort. The extent of the FFRMS floodplain was determined using a 0.2 percent flood approach. There are no pending or preliminary maps associated with the subject property. FEMA Flood Panel No FM48201C0890M, effective date 5/2/2019. Climate Informed Science Approach (CISA) data is not available since the Federal Flood Standard Support Tool (FFSST) is no longer available as of May 7, 2025. The total footprint of the site in which work will be performed is approximately eleven (11) acres, of which the vast majority, or 10.843 acres (2,682,503 sq. ft.) is in the FFRMS (100-year) floodplain. No part of the park is in the 500-year floodplain or the floodway. There is no Coastal High Hazard Area (V Zone), or Limit of Moderate Wave Action present. The project is not a critical action. There is no residential space associated with this project. By preventing flooding and potential erosion associated with storm events, this project is expected to benefit existing natural and beneficial functions (e.g. floodwater storage and conveyance, groundwater discharge or recharge, erosion control, water quality maintenance, also vegetation in the area) and provide for significantly enhanced flood control and mitigation for the surrounding community, which includes Houston's South Park neighborhood. While the recreation center does entail the expansion of square footage that occupies the floodplain when measured in terms of square feet (existing 6,000 square foot center replaced by larger, 12,500 square foot center), this will be easily offset by the detention basin and compliance with the requirements of Chapter 19 of the City of Houston Code of Ordinances, plus the center will be elevated two (2) feet above the 500-year floodplain so it will be protected. Furthermore, this center is designed to restore the conditions of the center to something more closely resembling conditions prior to Hurricane Ike in 2008, when the original center sustained heavy damages and losses, so much of the expansion will in fact act as a restoration. The project is expected to preserve, protect, and enhance natural features including green space and water resources.

While the National Wetland Inventory (NWI) map does not identify any wetland on the subject property, there is an old detention pond located in the far southeast corner of the subject property that contains vegetation that appears to be potentially consistent with wetlands vegetation. The pond is an estimated 5,934 square feet (0.136 acres). Both respective City agencies responsible for each project, the detention basin and the community recreation center, have confirmed that the pond will be neither disturbed nor affected by the work being performed. If there are any changes in site plans where the pond has the potential to be affected, the pond will need to be tested by a qualified wetland biologist to confirm if wetlands are present or not, and if there are, plans would need to be changed so that they do not affect any wetlands if at all possible, and if not, the environmental review would need to be revised to factor in proper wetlands mitigation.

The first of the two (2) Edgewood Park Improvement projects entails the development of a detention basin by the City of Houston Public Works Department (HPW), and the second project is the development of a new community recreation center.

DR15 6A Edgewood Park Detention Basin (Multi-Use Detention Basin (and Associated Park Improvements)): The scope of the project includes designing a multi-use detention basin in Edgewood Park and constructing park facilities such as bioswales, walking trails, benches, and pedestrian lighting. The improvements will be in the northern half of the park. The design includes a detention basin, new trails, a football field and landscaping, along with a basketball court and pavilion. The proposed basin is expected to cover approximately 3.5 acres, at an average depth of 2-3 feet, for a volume estimated at 304,920 cubic feet. Basin Budget Estimate: Total DR15 HUD Funded: \$3,425,470.00. CPF (HUD/Federal): - \$850,000.00. Total HUD Funding Estimated: \$4,275,470.00. CIP (Non-Federal): Grant #4042 - \$336,274.00. Grand Total: Detention Pond Construction and Design: \$4,611,744.00

Recreation Center (and Associated Park Improvements): The gym portion of the current Community Center was demolished after Hurricane Ike. The community room and restrooms continue to stay in operation and planning for a new community Recreation Center has been ongoing since that time. The new 12,500 square foot Edgewood Park Recreation Center is planned to be a gathering location for community residents of all ages. The center is designed to replace the original center that sustained heavy losses during and after Hurricane Ike in 2008, including the loss of the gymnasium. The existing center is only approximately 6,000 square feet, and while the new center will be over twice that size, it will comply with federal requirements at 24 CFR 55 and Chapter 19 local requirements by being elevated two (2) above the floodplain, and by any floodplain space displaced being offset by the detention basin. The finish floor of the building will be two (2) feet above the FFRMS (500-year) floodplain. There is an elevation certificate in place for the proposed recreation center renovation, and a final one will be issued as required before construction. Recreation Center Budget Estimate - \$8,734,000.00 total (\$8,590,000 construction, \$144,000.00 civic art and other; \$722,150.00 professional service contract, \$12,638.00 civic art contribution; \$110,000.00 pre-construction service, grand total \$9,578,788.00) - No federal funding for center.

Grand total for both projects is estimated at \$14,190,532.00.

The City of Houston has considered the following alternatives and mitigation measures to minimize adverse impacts and to restore and preserve natural and beneficial functions and intrinsic values of the existing floodplain/wetland: this particular site was selected due to the park-specific nature of the proposed project, which could not be replicated in another location, lack of comparable sites in the area (whether parks or unused vacant land), and the fact that successful proper mitigation at the site to accommodate both the new expanded recreation center and the detention basin has been determined feasible. Alternatives to building on the site are as follows:

**(1) Select another site for developing the detention basin and community recreation center (unused vacant land).** Unused vacant land was not selected due to lack of availability of suitable land in the area to be serviced, and more importantly, the need to service a particular park, Edgewood Park in Houston's South Park neighborhood in southeast Houston; **(2) Select another site for developing the detention basin and recreation center (alternate park).** The potential option to select another park to develop the detention basin and community center was rejected since other parks in the Houston area, including E.P. Hill Park, are already being considered for flood detention, and other area park community centers did not experience the same conditions that the Edgewood Community Center did in 2008 due to major damages from Hurricane Ike – serving Edgewood Park in particular is a critical need for Houston's South Park community that has been determined necessary; **(3) Relocate community (recreation) center to site outside of the floodplain.** Almost the entirety of Edgewood Park is in the floodplain, and relocating it would mean moving it to a site outside Edgewood Park, a practical impossibility; **(4) Perform only work on the detention basin (no community rec center redevelopment/expansion).** Failure to redevelop and expand the existing community center at Edgewood Park would deny the community an opportunity to experience the restoration of the center to conditions more closely resembling the center prior to 2008, when it sustained major damages and losses during

Hurricane Ike; **(5). Perform work on the new community rec center and the detention basin along completely separate timelines.** While this option would ultimately serve the community with both the flood mitigation provided by the basin, and expanded recreational opportunities provided by the center, this option would needlessly delay one of these key park improvements, most likely the center because developing the center before the basin is unlikely to be a viable option due to lack of flood mitigation prior to detention development; **(6) Build detention pond to cover smaller, deeper area.** This alternative was rejected due to practical safety and esthetic considerations and since there is sufficient room to provide flood detention space across a relatively wide area; **(7) Build without consideration of the floodplain per 24 CFR 55.** This would render the entire project, both basin and center, ineligible for HUD federal funding, and make it impossible to complete the project as intended, also failing to consider the floodplain sufficiently would in turn fail to provide adequate flood prevention and protection to the park, the neighborhood and the new recreation center. **(8). No Action Alternative.** Undertake no project at all. Failing to undertake any project would be contrary to HUD's mission of service through community development, and would also leave the South Park neighborhood and surrounding areas deprived of needed flood protection and the benefits of the new, restored recreation space.

With all alternatives considered, the option was chosen to continue the project as designed with the following mitigation measures to be taken to minimize adverse impacts and to restore and preserve natural and beneficial functions and intrinsic values of the existing floodplain: **(1) Elevation.** The building is to be elevated 2 feet above the base flood elevation (BFE) of 40.80 feet. The building's finish floor elevation and all exits and entrances are to be set at 42.80 feet. **(2) Floodplain mitigation design.** The additional square footage in the floodplain occupied by built space (estimated increase of at least 6,500 square feet (0.15 acres) due to the 6,000 square foot center's replacement with the new rec center's 12,500 square feet) is expected to be easily offset by the presence of the estimated 304,920 cubic foot detention basin (estimated 152,460 sq. ft. or 3.5 acres with average 2-3 ft depth) plus effective drainage measures in the design plans along with the requirements of Chapter 19 to build improvements using materials that minimize and resist flood damage and permit requirements requiring development to be undertaken in a manner designed to minimize surface runoff, erosion, and sedimentation, **(3) Protecting lives and property.** Per Sec. 19-16 of Chapter 19, permits also require building in a manner that safeguards life, limb, property, and public welfare, plus per the City of Houston's Floodplain Management Office, the City addresses *Emergency Preparedness and Flood Monitoring* as follows: City facilities are equipped with flood warning systems to receive real-time flood alerts. Additionally, the City participates in the *Flood Early Warning System (FEWS)* and provides evacuation plans to ensure swift action if a flood event occurs; **(4) Protection of natural features.** Project design features include measures to provide and enhance adequate drainage, erosion, soil and vegetation quality, and preservation and enhancement of green features and space, and **(5) Adherence to federal and local floodplain guidelines.** The project will adhere to all HUD and City of Houston floodplain guidelines (Chapter 19), defaulting to the most conservative option when appropriate.

The detention basin is designed to protect public safety and reduce flood risk by temporarily holding water during rainstorms, and to allow it to drain in directions away from the park and surrounding neighborhood development, so that lives and property receive enhanced protection during storm events.

The recreational center is self-insured by the City of Houston, and insurance meets HUD and City requirements.

There are no preliminary or pending flood maps on the subject property, nor Letters of Map Amendments or Revisions (LOMAs/LOMRs).

The City of Houston has reevaluated alternatives to building in the floodplain and has determined that it has no practicable alternative to floodplain development. Environmental files documenting compliance with Executive Order 11988, as amended by Executive Order 13690, and Executive Order 11990, are available for public inspection, review and copying upon request at the times and location delineated in the last paragraph of this notice for receipt of comments.

There are three primary purposes for this notice. First, people who may be affected by activities in floodplain and those who have an interest in the protection of the natural environment should be given an opportunity to express their concerns and provide information about these areas. Second, an adequate public notice program can be an important public educational tool. The dissemination of information and request for public comment about floodplain can facilitate and enhance Federal efforts to reduce the risks and impacts associated with the occupancy and modification of these special areas. Third, as a matter of fairness, when the Federal government determines it will participate in actions taking place in floodplain, it must inform those who may be put at greater or continued risk.

This notice is running concurrently with the Finding of No Significant Impact/Notice of Intent for Request for Release of Funds (FONSI/NOIRROF). Written comments must be received by HCD at the following address on or before December 10, 2025. City of Houston, Housing & Community Development Department, 2100 Travis Street, 9th Floor, Houston, Texas, 77002, Attention: Matthew Jenkins, Environmental Investigator V. A full description of the project may also be reviewed from 8:00 AM -5:00PM CT at the above address or upon request to [hcdenvironmental@houston.tx.gov](mailto:hcdenvironmental@houston.tx.gov). Comments may also be submitted via email to the aforementioned address, or left at (832) 394 6319. HCD reserves the right to request verbal messages be followed up in writing if possible. This notice along with the FONSI notice are published on the HCD website at <https://houston.tx.gov/housing/public-notice.html> as of November 25, 2025.

**Date:** November 25, 2025