

FINAL

NATIONAL AERONAUTICS AND SPACE ADMINISTRATION

National Environmental Policy Act; Marshall Exchange Retail Development Property Lease at George C. Marshall Space Flight Center

AGENCY: National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA)

ACTION: Finding of No Significant Impact

SUMMARY: Pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA), as amended (42 United States Code [U.S.C.] 4321 et seq.), the Council on Environmental Quality Regulations for Implementing the Procedural Provisions of NEPA (40 *Code of Federal Regulations* [CFR] Parts 1500 through 1508), and NASA's regulations (14 CFR Part 1216, Subpart 1216.3), and based on the analyses in the Environmental Assessment (EA), the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) has made a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) with respect to the Proposed Action. The action involves the leasing and retail development of property at NASA's George C. Marshall Space Flight Center (MSFC).

DATE: February 2012

ADDRESSES: A 30-day public review was held from December 18, 2011 through January 16, 2012 to solicit public comments on the draft EA. The draft EA was also coordinated with federal, state, and local entities through letter correspondence. All comments received on the draft EA are addressed in the final EA.

To receive a copy of the final EA, contact AS10/Mr. Edward H. Kiessling, Manager, Environmental Engineering and Occupational Health Office, NASA Marshall Space Flight Center, AL 35812, phone: (256) 544-7421, e-mail: Edward.h.kiessling@nasa.gov.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION, CONTACT:

General

CS30/Ms. Sharon Cobb
Manager, External Relations Office
NASA Marshall Space Flight Center
AL 35812
phone: (256) 544-7791
e-mail: Sharon.Cobb@nasa.gov

Technical

AS10/Mr. Michael Reynolds
Environmental Engineering
and Occupational Health Office
NASA Marshall Space Flight Center
AL 35812
phone: (256) 544-9606
e-mail: Michael.L.Reynolds@nasa.gov

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION:

The Proposed Action involves the leasing of a 25.68-acre parcel located on MSFC by the Marshall Exchange to a private developer. The leasing and privately-funded retail development of the property is intended to provide food and other convenience services for the workforce of MSFC and surrounding Redstone Arsenal, and to generate revenue for the Marshall Exchange, which has the mission of providing morale, welfare, and recreational activities and events for the well being of MSFC employees.

The private developer would be fully responsible for the retail development of the property. The developer would plan and design the development in accordance with guidelines prepared by MSFC. At

this time, the planning/design guidelines for the development, including the types of retail services permitted to be constructed and operated, are preliminary and are subject to be modified. A private developer has not been selected and no planning/design of the retail development has been initiated to date. Given that no information on the actual planning/design of the development is yet available, the EA that has been prepared for the action assesses potential future development conditions and associated potential environmental impacts based on preliminary information that is subject to change. The actual development conditions and associated potential environmental impacts may differ significantly from those analyzed by the EA. Separate NEPA analysis and documentation will be required to provide a comprehensive and accurate assessment of the potential environmental impacts of the Proposed Action when information on the actual development planning and design is available. Based on the preliminary information, the proposed development of the property would potentially include full service restaurants, fast food restaurants, a gas station, a car wash, a credit union/bank, and retail stores such as dry cleaners, printing/photo shops, gift shops, and a shipping store (UPS/FedEx). One access road that connects the property to Martin Road is expected to be constructed; additional access roads that connect the property to one or more of other adjacent roads may also be constructed. The developer would be responsible for coordinating the property's access connection to Martin Road with the City of Huntsville, which is currently designing the widening of Martin Road. At this time, one new traffic light is proposed at the intersection of Gemini Road and Martin Road to facilitate access to the property; additional traffic lights may also be added. At this time, the portion of Fowler Road that runs through the northeastern part of the property is expected to be removed by the developer. All buildings are currently planned to be one story and to have a vapor barrier due to the contaminated groundwater beneath the property. It is currently expected that the maximum total coverage of buildings on the property would be restricted to 40 percent of the property area and the maximum total coverage of buildings plus other pavement would be restricted to 80 percent of the property area.

The leasing of other parcels of property at MSFC and development of the subject property by the Marshall Exchange itself were given consideration by NASA as potential alternatives to the Proposed Action. Two other parcels of property at MSFC were considered as potential alternative sites for leasing by the Marshall Exchange. These parcels were determined to not be reasonable alternative sites for the proposed retail development based on their land-use designations and locations and, therefore, were not carried forward for detailed analysis in the EA. The amount of initial funding that would have to be invested and the length of time that would be required to generate revenue that could be used for the benefit of MSFC employees under the self development alternative would be financially impracticable for the Marshall Exchange, and would negatively impact the Exchange's ability to execute its functions. For these reasons, development of the subject property by the Marshall Exchange itself was determined to not be a reasonable alternative and was not carried forward for detailed analysis in the EA. Under the No-Action Alternative, the subject property would not be leased or developed.

Based on the findings of the EA, the Proposed Action is preliminarily expected to have no impact on floodplains, wetlands, listed/sensitive species, cultural resources, housing, schools, recreation, rail transportation, water transportation, or aviation. The Proposed Action is preliminarily expected to have negligible, minor, or moderate impacts on air quality, noise levels, topography, soils, geology, groundwater, land use, surface water, vegetation, wildlife, socioeconomics, public and occupational health/safety, utilities, solid waste, traffic flow, and hazardous materials/wastes; the impacts on these resources are preliminarily expected to not be significant. The Proposed Action is preliminarily expected to not have disproportionately high or adverse human health or environmental effects on minority or low-income populations, and is preliminarily expected to not result in environmental health or safety risks to children. No adverse cumulative impacts are preliminarily expected to occur when the Proposed Action is combined with past, present, or reasonably foreseeable actions. When information on the actual

development planning and design is available, assessment of the Proposed Action's potential impact on the resources analyzed by the EA may differ from the above preliminary assessments.

The private developer is expected to be responsible for all Alabama Department of Environmental Management (ADEM) air permitting and coordination required for sources of air emissions that are operated on the subject property. The private developer would be required to implement appropriate best management practices and erosion/sedimentation controls during the construction period to minimize potential indirect impacts to soils and surface waters outside the property. Development on the subject property would be required to be designed in compliance with the stormwater runoff requirements of Section 438 of the Energy Independence and Security Act (EISA) of 2007. The stormwater drainage system for the retail development would be required to meet all NASA, ADEM, and EISA Section 438 design requirements pertaining to stormwater retention, attenuation, and treatment. The maximum amount of each vegetative community that would be removed under the Proposed Action is expected to be approximately 13.9 acres of pine plantation, 1.5 acres of deciduous forest, 1.3 acres of pine forest, and 1.2 acres of fallow field. The removal of 13.9 acres of pine plantation and relatively small amounts of the other vegetation/habitat types that exist on the property under a maximum impact scenario would not be a significant impact on vegetation or wildlife habitat. The private developer would be required to plan and design the development in coordination with Redstone Arsenal, MSFC, and the City of Huntsville to minimize the potential for traffic flow impacts. The subject property is underlain by a chlorinated solvent plume. This plume is not a Source Area; therefore, remediation of the plume is not expected to be required or conducted prior to property development per MSFC's current groundwater remediation strategy, which allows natural attenuation of groundwater plumes outside Source Areas. Prior to developing the property, the private developer would have to fulfill all the requirements of MSFC's CERCLA Site Access Control program, which includes completion and approval of a CERCLA Site Access Form/Checklist, among other requirements. It is expected that the private developer would be required to install vapor barriers in all buildings that are constructed on the property to prevent intrusion of chlorinated volatile organic compounds into the buildings. In the event that groundwater discharges to the surface or requires handling during construction, e.g., if dewatering is performed, the developer would be required to appropriately manage the groundwater in coordination with the MSFC Environmental Engineering and Occupational Health Office, ADEM, and U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, and in accordance with the guidelines contained within the *Final Land Use Controls Remedial Design Project for Operable Unit 3: Groundwater*.

After careful review of the EA, NASA has preliminarily determined that the Proposed Action (Preferred Alternative) would not generate significant controversy or have a significant impact on the quality of the human or natural environment. This analysis fulfills the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act and Council on Environmental Quality regulations. An Environmental Impact Statement will not be prepared, and NASA is issuing this Finding of No Significant Impact.

Robert M. Lightfoot
Director
George C. Marshall Space Flight Center
National Aeronautics and Space Administration

Date Issued: February 2012