

PUBLIC NOTICE

Final Notice and Public Explanation of a Proposed Activity in a 100-Year Floodplain

To: All interested Individuals, Groups, Agencies, Everglades City, Collier County, State of Florida, Tribal, Federal, and Others

This is to give notice that HUD under part 50 has conducted an evaluation as required by Executive Order 11988, in accordance with HUD regulations at 24 CFR 55.20 Subpart C Procedures for Making Determinations on Floodplain Management and Wetlands Protection. The activity is funded under the Bank of Everglades Building Rehabilitation Project under B-239-CP-FL-0389). The proposed project(s) is located 201 West Broadway, Everglades City, Collier County, Florida. The Bank of Everglades Building has a footprint of 1,800 sq. ft. on a less than a one-acre triangular-shaped lot hemmed by asphalt paved streets. Constructed in 1927, this structure is listed individually on the National Register of Historic Places and is scheduled for rehabilitation utilizing HUD Community Development Project Funds. The building will be repurposed as the Everglades Area Visitor Center and Trail Town Headquarters.

HUD has considered the following alternatives and mitigation measures to be taken to minimize adverse impacts and to restore and preserve natural and beneficial values: The first alternative was to rehabilitate the historic Bank of Everglades Building through a collaborative effort that involves skilled architects, engineers, and preservationists that would restore the historic structure's original features and ensure its continued relevance within the community. Flooding would be mitigated through swales, a strengthened foundation, water-resistant materials, and preservation-friendly construction techniques will be employed to safeguard the structure's integrity in the event of flooding.

The second alternative considered was to do no-action. The alternative was not considered as the city would lose the historic structure so vital to the community.

HUD has reevaluated the alternatives to building in the floodplain and has determined that it has no practicable alternative. Environmental files that document compliance with steps 3 through 6 of Executive Order 11988, 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 floodplains 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 floodplains 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 floodplains, it must inform those who may be put at greater or continued risk.

Written comments must be received by the HUD at the following address on or before September 17, 2023, to U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, Office of Environment & Energy – Region IV, Brickell Plaza Federal Building, Miami Field Office, Miami, FL, telephone (305) 520-5018, Attention: John Quade, Field Environmental Officer. A full description of the project may also be reviewed from 10 am to 2 pm at the Everglades Area Visitor Center, 207 West Broadway, Everglades City, Florida, Website: www.save-boe.org. Comments may also be submitted via email at eshp@hotmail.com.

Date: September 7, 2023