

Draft Finding of No Significant Impact

Fort Belvoir Elementary School Expansion
U.S. Army Garrison, Fort Belvoir
Directorate of Public Works,
Fort Belvoir, Virginia

Name of Action: Fort Belvoir Elementary School Expansion

Description of Proposed Action and Need: The existing Fort Belvoir Elementary School (FBES) is a public school in the Fairfax County Public School (FCPS) system that is currently over program capacity. An estimated 385 students living on Fort Belvoir currently attend elementary schools within the FCPS system off-Post. On-Post public schools provide services and programs specifically tailored for children of military families that are not typically available at off-Post schools. Additionally, FBES does not meet current Anti-Terrorism Force Protection (ATFP) standards. FCPS proposes to construct a new 92,254 square foot elementary school (FBES II) adjacent to the existing school. FCPS also proposes to renovate the existing FBES so that the facility meets current ATFP standards.

The proposed action involves constructing a new building, parking areas, bus loop, necessary utilities, and stormwater best management practices (BMPs). The bus loop for the existing FBES will be reconfigured to join with the proposed bus loop for FBES II. The new FBES II is proposed to open in September 2016 with a program capacity of 492 students. Renovations to the existing FBES will include installation of structural bollards in front of the building, control of bus and vehicular traffic with automatic gates, and exterior wall reinforcement. Renovations to the existing FBES are scheduled for the summer of 2016.

The Environmental Assessment (EA) evaluated the proposed action alternative. FCPS considered expansions at the four FCPS elementary schools that serve a majority of the students who attend off-Post schools; however, the lack of acreage available at these sites, short timeframes allowed for expansion/renovation of existing schools, and limited funding available to renovate all four schools makes this alternative unsuitable. Location of a new school on a site that was previously disturbed (former Cheney Elementary School) and adjacent to an existing school minimizes new disturbances; therefore, other on-Post options were not considered. A No Action (No Build) alternative was also considered but would not meet the project purpose and need.

Environmental Consequences: The EA, which is attached hereto and incorporated by reference into this Finding of No Significant Impact, examined the potential effects of the proposed action and no action alternatives on the resource areas of land use, traffic, infrastructure and utilities, community facilities and services, socioeconomics, air quality, hazardous materials/hazardous waste, natural resources, and cultural resources. Noise and floodplains were not evaluated as the

proposed project would have either no potential to affect them or the potential impacts would be negligible.

BMPs and adherence to applicable policies/regulations to be implemented for resource protection are included with discussions of each respective resource area in the EA. No mitigation measures for effects on land use, socioeconomics, community facilities and services, air quality, or cultural resources would be required. Air pollutant emissions from the proposed action would not be significant and would be below *de minimis levels* for general conformity. Mitigation measures identified in the environmental assessment for effects to other resources included:

Traffic and Transportation Network: Traffic analysis for 2017 includes conditions for the proposed school and identifies no level of service (LOS) issues attributed to the school. The location of the proposed exit from the school may cause minor localized effects to the Woodlawn Road and Gorgas/Meeres Road intersection during arrival and dismissal times. If final design of the school anticipates localized intersection effects, mitigation measures can include reconfiguration/relocation of planned entrances/exits, restriction of left turns, signalization timing changes, and adding dedicated turn lanes on Meeres Road. No significant impacts to traffic from construction are anticipated.

Infrastructure and Utilities: Fort Belvoir's potable water, sanitary sewer, natural gas, electrical, communications, and solid waste systems are sufficient to handle the additional load added by the new FBES II and FBES renovations. Design of FBES II will need to ensure that redundancy in the potable water system remains and that service to the tenant north of the school is not interrupted. Stormwater BMPs will likely require Low Impact Design (LID) to meet applicable regulations and policies. Potential BMPs include extended detention pond retrofits, bioretention, pervious pavement, bioswales, stepped pool outfalls, cisterns, and a green roof. Designing the proposed school to obtain Collaborative for High Performing Schools (CHPS) certification should encourage the use of such BMPs. Solid waste management during construction will require the contractor to recycle or reuse at least 50% of construction debris.

Hazardous Materials/Hazardous Waste: No existing hazardous waste issues have been identified for the site. Construction of the new school and renovations of FBES will require small quantities of hazardous substances such as fuel, asphalt, etc. The contractor will be required to prepare a site Health and Safety Plan to ensure the safety of construction workers at the construction site and to document procedures if hazardous materials are discovered during construction.

Natural Resources: The use of a previously developed site limits the impacts to natural resources. The contractor will develop a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) and implement erosion and sediment control measures to minimize impacts on the soil and downstream water resources.

Some of the potential options for post-construction stormwater BMPs would involve work within an intermittent stream, which is a water of the U.S. This work will require permits from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and/or the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality. It is expected that any proposed work could be permitted under the Nationwide Permitting program. Fort Belvoir Directorate of Public Works Environmental and Natural Resources Division (DPW ENRD) will be responsible for submitting required permit applications to the regulatory agencies. FCPS would be required to provide compensatory mitigation for any stream impacts greater than 300 linear feet.

Trees will need to be removed in order to construct FBES II and the associated stormwater BMPs. A tree survey has identified onsite trees greater than 4 inches diameter at breast height (dbh). Upon development of the school's final design, FCPS will need to submit a site plan identifying trees that require removal. Compensatory mitigation for tree removal greater than 4 inches dbh will be required per *Fort Belvoir Policy Memorandum #27, Tree Removal and Protection*. Mitigation will involve tree planting at a ratio of 2:1 or out-of-kind mitigation to be approved by DPW ENRD if sufficient area is not available for the required planting.

A habitat survey was conducted for the small whorled pogonia (*Isotria medeoloides*), a federally endangered and state threatened plant. The habitat survey identified potential habitat within the vicinity of the existing stormwater detention pond and along the slopes adjacent to the intermittent stream. No small whorled pogonia populations have been identified on Main Post; however, one population of small whorled pogonia has been located on Fort Belvoir North Area (FBNA). A site survey for small whorled pogonia will be conducted in early June when this species is in flower. If any small whorled pogonia are found within the project area, Fort Belvoir will coordinate with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and require that proposed stormwater BMPs have no adverse effect on the population.

Summary of Environmental Impacts: No impacts are expected to floodplains, noise, wetlands, Chesapeake Bay Resource Protection Areas, or cultural resources. Minimal impacts to land use and plans, traffic, infrastructure and utilities, socioeconomics, air quality, topography, soils, surface water, vegetation, and Partners-In-Flight priority bird species habitat will occur due to the proposed project. Mitigation measures described above would minimize those impacts. No significant cumulative or indirect impacts are anticipated. No significant impacts on human health or the environment would result from the proposed action.

Notice of Availability: The public may review the Environmental Assessment at the Directorate of Public Works, Fort Belvoir, Virginia; Kingstowne Public Library; Lorton Public Library; Sherwood Regional Library; Fort Belvoir Van Noy Library; or on the Installation website at <https://www.belvoir.mil/envirodocs.asp>.

Interested parties may submit written comments for consideration on or before 30 days after publication of newspaper announcements to: Commander; U.S. Army Garrison Fort Belvoir; 9430

Jackson Loop, Suite 100; ATTN: Directorate of Public Works; Fort Belvoir; Virginia 22060-5116 or email comments to imcom.fortbelvoir.dpw.environmental@us.army.mil. For more information, contact Mr. Patrick McLaughlin, Chief of Environmental and Natural Resource Division at 703-806-3193.