

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

To: U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, Louisiana Office of Community Development, and Terrebonne Parish Consolidated Government.

This is to give notice that **Terrebonne Parish Consolidated Government (TPCG)** under 24 CFR Part 58 has conducted an evaluation as required by **Executive Order 11988, as amended by Executive Order 13690**, in accordance with HUD regulations at 24 CFR 55.20 in Subpart C Procedures for Making Determinations on Floodplain Management and Wetlands Protection. The activity is funded under the **Resilient Communities Infrastructure Program (RCIP) project number 55LDRC7707**. The proposed project(s) is located at **7861 Main Street in Houma, Terrebonne Parish**, and is located adjacent to the **Federal Flood Risk Management Standard (FFRMS) floodplain and Bayou Terrebonne - a riverine R5UBH-classified wetland**. The extent of the FFRMS floodplain was determined using a **0.2 percent flood approach**. The proposed activity involves the rehabilitation of an existing **18,346 square foot vacant historic building for the use as a community STEAM Center**. The STEAM Center will offer indoor exhibition space, classrooms, and administrative areas, along with outdoor features such as a performance stage, art installations, and interactive areas connected to the adjacent Bayou Walk. The project will not expand the building footprint. The area also holds educational and cultural value due to its location near Bayou Terrebonne and the Bayou Walk.

**TPCG** 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: **The selected building is a historic structure centrally located on Main Street in downtown Houma and has been identified as a community landmark that supports the Vision 2030 Comprehensive Plan and 2023 Main Street Corridor Master Plan. The location was prioritized due to its proximity to low-to-moderate income neighborhoods, existing Bayou Walk access, and potential to serve as a cultural and economic anchor in the historic district. Alternatives were limited due to the unique combination of cultural, geographic, and revitalization goals tied to this site. The project will occur within the existing footprint and incorporate resilient building codes and mitigation measures outlined in the Terrebonne Parish Hazard Mitigation Plan. FEMA Flood Insurance Rate Maps were adopted by Terrebonne Parish Consolidated Government on August 23, 2023. TPCG participates in the National Flood Insurance program.**

**TPCG** has reevaluated alternatives to building in adjacent to the **floodplain** and has determined that it has no practicable alternatives. Environmental files documenting compliance with **Executive Order 11988, as amended by Executive Order 13690**, 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/wetland 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/wetland 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/wetland, it must inform those who may be put at greater or continued risk.

Written comments must be received by **TPCG** at the following address on or before **August 6, 2025**:  
[terrebonneenvironmental@csrsinc.com](mailto:terrebonneenvironmental@csrsinc.com). A full description of the project may be reviewed below.

**Provide a comprehensive description of the problem this project will address. Including, but not limited to:**

- **What are the expected results?**
- **Is this a new/existing problem?**
- **What was the previous use of the site?**
- **Does the problem affect a historic area?**

*Terrebonne Parish is geographically one of the largest parishes in Louisiana with over 100,000 residents according to 2023 estimates, thousands of bodies of water and waterways, and acres of coastal wetlands. The Parish also boasts a rich culture reflecting influences of French, Native, Cajun, African and Creole history. Houma is the only municipality in the Parish, and it is its largest city serving as the parish seat of the Terrebonne Parish Consolidated Government (TPCG). Several public buildings, including the Houma Courthouse, public green spaces as well as commercial entities occupy the area in central Houma near the Main Street corridor.*

*During Hurricane Ida, high impacts were felt throughout the Parish with extremely dangerous winds reaching up to 125 mph for more than five hours. There were downed trees, loss of power for more than three weeks in many parts, and housing that was uninhabitable. The city of Houma experienced the brunt of the impacts of the storm both physically and economically. The Main Street corridor, home to many historic storefronts, suffered damage in the hurricane and led to many businesses unable to make repairs or return to operation. Post-Ida, Houma is grappling with instances of increased blight and commercial vacancies. Once a bustling commercial center, Main Street now struggles with scattered occupancy.*

*The residential areas near downtown Houma include affordable multi-family housing and low-to-moderate income workforce housing occupied by households often hardest hit by the impact of the economic struggles related to a natural disaster. TPCG is committed to revitalizing this area to create economic opportunities for its residents and support community features to encourage those seeking to return to the Parish.*

*TPCG plans to create an anchor amenity that will draw nearby local residents and visitors alike into the heart of Houma's Main Street. TPCG plans to utilize CDBG-DR recovery funds to support the development of the Terrebonne STEAM Center to celebrate Terrebonne's distinct culture, history and geography, while looking towards the future of technology that is crucial in climate science and coastal restoration. The Center embraces the concept of integrating Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Math (STEAM) in educating youth in the surrounding area and engaging the local community in improvements and sustainable growth for the Parish. It will be a cultural hub that will serve the community, particularly the surrounding low-to-moderate income families within easy access or walking distance.*

*TPCG has identified a historic property on Main Street that has been a landmark for the community, having once housed its central post office. The building is currently vacant and privately owned. The project involves the purchase and complete interior renovation and exterior site upgrade of the property, preserving the red brick façade to maintain its historic appearance. The rehabilitation to the interior includes building out exhibition space, classrooms, and administrative space to support summer camps, after school and weekend programs, as well as exhibitions and public classes during the day. The design for the outdoor space includes a portable stage for cultural programming and smaller music events, and an art and sculpture garden for children's activities. Between the Bayou Terrebonne Walk and the STEAM Engine building will be a native plant garden with educational plaques that teach visitors about the impact of each plant to the local ecology, and how those plants have helped to shape the landscape of their home parish.*

*The slate of events and programming will be coordinated by TPCG and its partners. The plan is for the Center to be managed in partnership with the Bayou Regional Arts Council (BRAC), which is a 501c3 non-profit that supports arts, music, and culture in the region and with Bayou STEM, which is a program under Fletcher Technical Community College that focuses on science education for young people.*

*The economic revitalization vision is for the Center to become a local treasure as well as a destination for the state and region, generating visitors to Houma and the surrounding amenities in the Parish. It is expected to contain exhibitions and educational displays on Cajun Music history, Houma Mardi Gras, as well as environmental displays showing the importance of the parish's marshes, bayous, and coast. Some of those exhibits will be centered on the early navigation of the terrain, how the bayous of Terrebonne determined settlement patterns, and specifically how commerce was transported via the adjacent Bayou Terrebonne. The displays will be designed to be accessible to children and to be interactive.*

*The 2023 Main Street Corridor Master Plan underscores the importance of investing in the Main Street corridor to enhance the visitor experience within this historic district, which is crucial for revitalizing the downtown area. This project will affect this historic district by sparking investment in the Main Street area. In addition, the Center will contribute to the "Activation of Bayou Terrebonne" concept and enhance the development of the Bayou Walk – an existing paved and lighted walking trail running the along the length of the bayou in the historic district, and directly adjacent to the STEAM Engine building. The goal is to incorporate views of Bayou Terrebonne in the building renovation design. The Bayou will add a desired waterfront element, allowing people to enjoy the natural beauty of the historic bayou.*

*Downtown Houma is an area of focus in Vision 2030, Terrebonne Parish's Comprehensive Plan, with objectives to draw more businesses to the historic area and incorporate Bayou Terrebonne into part of visitors experience downtown. The goal, as stated in the Comprehensive Plan and the 2023 Main Street Corridor Master Plan, is to make Houma a safe, desirable, secure, mixed-use destination to attract visitors, workers, and shoppers to experience the diverse venues Downtown Houma will have and to promote the heritage and culture of Houma and Terrebonne Parish.*

*The Center will be strategically located fostering economic revitalization and supporting local businesses investments in resilient building to ensure that Terrebonne Parish can be stronger and recover more resiliently in the face of future challenges.*

## DISASTER RECOVERY ACTIVITY INFORMATION

Does the proposed project have a tie to at least one of the 2020/2021 disasters? Yes ☒ No

Which disaster does the project tie back to? Select all that apply.

Hurricane Laura

Hurricane Ida

☒

Hurricane Delta

May Flood

Explain the project rationale for the tie-back to the disaster(s):

*Hurricane Ida, a Category 4 storm, with winds upwards of 125 mph left approximately 96% of homes and businesses in Terrebonne Parish without water and electricity for weeks. Major large public and private buildings, as well as local storefronts of downtown Houma were hit particularly hard, with windows shattered by the wind, awnings torn off, and extensive roof damage. The impact of the storm on surrounding multi-family affordable rental housing and homeowners was extensive. Many properties were uninhabitable or left vacant after the storm.*

*Terrebonne Parish is committed to supporting investments to spur economic revitalization in the Houma area, particularly in downtown Houma and the historic district. Investing in the rehabilitation of core buildings and providing services and events that draw residents to downtown will support the growth and revitalization of downtown Houma, thereby investing in the parish's future. The STEAM Engine Center is a critical piece to encourage green infrastructure and resilient building in Houma.*

**Per FR-6303-N-01, HUD requires that grantees demonstrate that they have incorporated mitigation measures into CDBG-DR activities as a construction standard to create communities that are more resilient to the impacts of the recurring natural disasters and the impacts of climate change.**

**Describe the resiliency efforts and/or performance metrics applicable to this activity.**

*The STEAM Engine Center will contribute to the community's resilience to storms and mitigate their impact by rehabilitating a vacant building into a stronger, more resilient structure that can withstand future storms. In addition, TPCG will support programming that will create an anchor for promoting the local culture, provide a community space for the surrounding households, and offer free or low cost educational and recreational events for all ages. The performance measure will include the number of improved public facilities/buildings rehabilitated.*

## MITIGATION ACTIVITY INFORMATION

**Per FRN-6368-N-01, HUD defines mitigation activities as those activities that increase resilience to disasters and reduce or eliminate the long-term risk of loss of life, injury, damage to and loss of property, and suffering and hardship, by lessening the impact of future disasters.**

Does the proposed project meet the definition of a mitigation activity? Yes ☒ No

**Describe the mitigation aspects, including performance metrics applicable to this activity.**

*The upgrades planned for this building will be in full alignment with the Terrebonne Parish Hazard Mitigation Plan (TPHMP). The TPHMP provides the enforcement of building codes that ensure future development does not increase hazard losses and creates resiliency in all facilities that support entities, utilities, support services, equipment, and personnel. Action 1.4.1 "Identify vulnerable historic and cultural resources, and opportunities to protect and/or relocate historic assets threatened by sea level rise" is one of the steps the Terrebonne Parish Hazard Mitigation Plan outlines applicable to this project. Another relevant action is 4.1.6: Flood proof public buildings vulnerable to flood damage that cannot be relocated. The performance measure will include the number of improved public facilities/buildings rehabilitated to be stronger with measures to reduce loss from future disasters.*

## Flood Risk Information

Attach the appropriate flood profile and discharge tables, if applicable, from the Flood Insurance Study with the project site and elements / improvements marked. Please see the Flood Insurance Study Attachment Examples ([Appendix 2](#)) for guidance.

**Upload here:**

**Attach the FIRMette from the Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM). FIRMs are typically available from your local floodplain administrator who may be located in the planning, zoning, or engineering office, or the FEMA web page at <https://msc.fema.gov/>. Maps can also be ordered from the Map Service Center at 1-800-358-9616. Clearly mark all construction areas of the project on the map.**

*FIRMETTE\_Downtown STEAM Center.pdf*

Additional Flood Risk Information

Description

Using the Flood Insurance Study or FIRM, indicate the applicable flood zones for the project site. Check all that apply.

VE or V 1-30

B or X (shaded)