

**COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANAS ISLANDS  
NORTHERN MARIANAS HOUSING CORPORATION**

**PUBLIC NOTICE**

This Notice is paid by NMHC with HUD funds

01/06/2022

**Early Notice and Public Review of a Proposed Activity in a 100-Year Floodplain**

This is to give notice that **Northern Marianas Housing Corporation (NMHC)** as determined that the following proposed **Beach Road Improvement Phase III & IV project** under the **Community Development Block Grant – Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR) program grant number B-19-DV-69-0001 and B-19-DV-69-002** is located in the **100-year floodplain**. NMHC will be identifying and evaluating practicable alternatives to locating the action in the **floodplain** and the potential impacts on the **floodplain** from the proposed action, 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 Protection of Wetlands. The proposed project(s) is located **on Route 33, Beach Road, Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas Islands**

The public may view the full description of the project and provide comments by visiting the NMHC website at [www.nmhc.gov.net](http://www.nmhc.gov.net) by clicking on the public notice/announcement tab and selecting the Environmental Review Records or you may visit the NMHC CDBG-DR website at <https://www.cnmicdbgdr.com>.

Written comments must be received by NMHC on or before January 24, 2022. A minimum 15 calendar day comment period will begin the day after the publication and end on the 16th day after the publication. Written comments may also be submitted through the following methods: email at [nmhc@nmhc.gov.mp](mailto:nmhc@nmhc.gov.mp) ; or facsimile to 1-670-234-9021; or hand deliver to the NMHC Central Office located in Garapan, Saipan. Attention CDBG-DR Project Division.

/s/

Ralph DLG. Torres  
Governor, CNMI

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NORTHERN MARIANAS HOUSING CORPORATION

Early Notice and Public Review of a Proposed  
Activity in a 100-Year Floodplain  
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To: All interested State and Federal Agencies, Groups and Individuals.

This is to give notice that **Northern Marianas Housing Corporation (NMHC)** as determined that the following proposed **Beach Road Improvement Phase III & IV project** under the **Community Development Block Grant – Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR) program grant number B-19-DV-69-0001 and B-19-DV-69-002** is located in the **100-year floodplain**. NMHC will be identifying and evaluating practicable alternatives to locating the action in the **floodplain** and the potential impacts on the **floodplain** from the proposed action, 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 Protection of Wetlands. The proposed project(s) is located **on Route 33, Beach Road, Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas Islands**

**Project Activity Description:** Beach road is one of three main arterial roadways connecting north and south of the island. It is also the main road connecting Garapan, a busy tourist and business area to the southern and central parts of Saipan. During the recovery phases of the two previous super typhoons, Soudelor and Yutu, tons of supplies, equipment, personnel and other resources arrived on island by air. Beach road was the main access road connecting the airport and was primarily used to move these resources. The project limit begins just south of Route 31-Beach Rd intersection, Lat. 15.170823°N, long. 145.710655°E and terminates at Beach Rd-Micro Beach Rd intersection, 15.214939°N, Long. 145.720624°. It is located on the island of Saipan.

The scope of work of the proposed action is to conform to the original proposal which is to regrade and resurface. There will be no change in roadway elevation profile between the existing and the proposed. Any backfilling activities will only be replacing existing base course that is structurally deficient. Furthermore, there will be no new drainage structures; only repairs of existing surface drainage appurtenances such as curb/gutter, swales, etc. which will further improve the flow and migration of runoff. These components, working in tandem, will improve road safety and enhance floodplain development by ensuring that no potential standing water is retained and that the rate of runoff discharge to seawater is evenly dispersed. This proposed action is also NFIP compliant.

**Purpose:** Beach Road serves thousands of island residents who reside and work in the area, using the road to access goods and services. Weather, storms, compounded with age, salination effects and traffic fatigue have contributed to the accelerated deterioration of Beach Road. There are numerous settlements along the road which allow water to puddle in the roadway. Rutting and road cracks continue to extend and expand, allowing water to penetrate and destabilize the supporting base course. Like many roads with similar design composition, the level of drivability and road safety is dictated by road conditions. Current conditions of pocket-settlement and upheavals, rutting and cracking, potholes and patch failures have forced motorists to drive into bike/pedestrian lanes to avoid these hazards.

The mitigation proposes to resurface the existing road and remedy these issues. With this improvement, road hazards are greatly reduced. Road profile will also be improved, thus improving drainage while minimizing physical alterations within the floodplain.

**Description:** Beach Rd Phase III-IV is approximately 1700 ft in length with an average width of 45 feet. Eighty-seven percent (1.5 acre or 1480 feet) of the proposed project is in a Special Flood Hazard Area; sixty-seven percent is in a VE zone, twenty percent is AE/AO zones and the remaining thirteen percent is non-SFHA. The National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) provides no requirements on road construction; only on building structures and appurtenances. However, NFIP 60.3(e)(6) states that the community shall "Prohibit the use of fill for structural support of buildings within Zones V1-30, VE and V on the community's FIRM". Clearly, this only applies to buildings (not roads) due to probable structural and catastrophic failure due to erosion.

**Natural and Beneficial Functions:** All road construction involves earthmoving that may result in changes to elevation and landscape. This project ensures that no alterations will be done to reduce flood storage capacity that may create water displacement, resulting in flooding elsewhere. The project site however, is in a coastal VE zone and potential flooding would be from eastward storm-induced velocity wave action. Because this road is perpendicular to wave action (transverse encroachment) and without backwater, it does not pose significant impact to the floodplain. This road also acts as a barrier between homes and people on the east side. Adverse impacts on natural and beneficial floodplain values are minimal. In fact, it may be beneficial in that it diverts runoff to existing discharge outfalls, thus reducing uncontrolled contamination to the lagoon ecosystem and provides safe access to outdoor recreation.

Finally, as this road is in a special flood hazard area, 1.528 acres is the part of the project limits that is in a Special Flood Hazard Area. There is still that one percent change of inundation that will equal or exceed the 10-foot base flood elevation. Fortunately, the road has an average elevation of about 9 feet with a lowest and highest points at 6 and 12 feet respectively. Note that existing road elevations in VE zones are between 10 and 12 feet, greater than associated BFE's. Currently, the existing drainage system is not functioning as intended because it's old and deteriorated. The proposed road and drainage mitigation will bring these structures to work in tandem. One of the environmental benefits to the ecosystem is the evenly balanced dispersion of runoff to the ocean and the surrounding areas.

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. Commenters are encouraged to offer alternative sites outside of the **floodplain**, alternative methods to serve the same project purpose, and methods to minimize and mitigate impacts. 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.

The public may view the full description of the project and provide comments by visiting the NMHC website at [www.nmhc.gov.net](http://www.nmhc.gov.net) by clicking on the public notice/announcement tab and selecting the Environmental Review Records or you may visit the NMHC CDBG-DR website at <https://www.cnmicdbqdr.com>.

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