

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Rural Development

Sweeny Hospital Replacement: Notice of Availability of an Environmental Assessment

AGENCY: Rural Housing Service, USDA

ACTION: Notice of Availability of an Environmental Assessment

SUMMARY: Notice is hereby given that the Rural Housing Service (RHS), as required by the National Environmental Policy Act, is issuing an environmental assessment (EA) in connection with possible impacts related to a project proposed by Sweeny Hospital District, Sweeny, Brazoria County, Texas. The proposal is for construction of the Sweeny Community Hospital Replacement Facility. Sweeny Hospital District has submitted an application to RHS for funding of the proposal.

Sweeny Hospital District intends to seek financial assistance from RHS for the Sweeny Community Hospital Replacement Facility. The proposed project is described below. The project site is located on the south side of Main Street (Farm-to-Market 524), approximately 0.3 mile east of Pioneer Road, west of Sweeny. If implemented, the proposed project will convert floodplains. In accordance with Executive Order 11988, Floodplain Management and USDA Departmental Regulation 9500-3, Land Use Policy, the purpose of this notice is to inform the public of this proposed conversion or effect and request comments concerning the proposal, alternative sites or actions that would avoid these impacts, and methods that could be used to minimize these impacts.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION: To obtain copies of the EA, or for further information, contact: Terry Czerwien, State Environmental Coordinator, 101 South Main Street, Temple, Texas 76501, at 254-742-9789 or terry.czerwien@tx.usda.gov. The EA is also available for public review at Angleton Area Office, 711 North Velasco, Suite B, Angleton, Texas 77515.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Sweeny Hospital District proposes to construct a replacement hospital at a site located on Main Street (FM 524). It will be a 24-hour critical access hospital and Level IV Trauma center. The hospital complex will be 27 acres in a 29 acre site. The old Sweeny hospital will be demolished after construction of the new hospital.

Berg-Oliver Associates, Inc., an environmental consultant, prepared an environmental assessment for RHS that describes the project, assesses the proposed project's environmental impacts, and summarizes as applicable any mitigation measures used to minimize environmental effects.

RHS has conducted an independent evaluation of the environmental assessment and believes that it accurately assesses the impacts of the proposed project. No significant impacts are expected as a result of the construction of the project.

Questions and comments should be sent to RHS at the address provided. RHS will accept questions and comments on the environmental assessment for 14 days from the date of publication of this notice.

Any final action by RHS related to the proposed project will be subject to, and contingent upon, compliance with all relevant Federal environmental laws and regulations and completion of environmental review procedures as prescribed by 7 CFR Part 1970, Environmental Policies and Procedures.

A general location map of the proposal is shown below.

Dated: **10-4-2018**

