

**Draft FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT
CHILD DEVELOPMENT CENTER
ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT
Joint Base Andrews-Naval Air Facility, MD**

Lead Agency: Department of the Air Force

Name of Action: New Child Development Center (CDC) at Joint Base Andrews-Naval Air Facility (JBA), MD

Description of Proposed Action: The Proposed Action is to construct and operate an approximately 29,200-square-foot (SF) CDC at the corner of Arkansas Road and California Avenue, adjacent to the existing Honor Guard building. The construction would include a pick-up/drop-off area, reception area, lobby area, multi-purpose rooms, administrative space, an access road, parking, outdoor fenced playground areas, restrooms, storage rooms, kitchen equipment, fire detection and suppression systems, environmental controls, exterior lighting, security systems, landscaping, and all other support. Staff parking for the facility would be located across California Avenue at the site of the former dental clinic parking lot. No additional construction is expected to be needed for staff parking.

The proposed location for the new CDC was previously developed, but there are currently no buildings on site. It is also approximately 1/3 mile from the Jones Building (Building 1500) and the Malcolm Grow Medical Clinic and Surgery Center, which encompass a large portion of JBA's workforce. All major utility services are available in the proposed area, including water, sanitary sewer, natural gas, and electricity. The proposed site would also preserve the area designated for the potential future relocations of Arkansas Road and California Avenue as designated in the JBA Installation Development Plan (IDP).

Building 4575 – the existing CDC #1 on Windsor Road – would remain operational throughout the construction of the new CDC. Once the new CDC is completed and certified for use, childcare functions would be relocated to the new CDC.

The total acreage of limit of disturbance (LOD) for construction of the new CDC would be approximately 5 acres. Facility design would be compatible with applicable Department of Defense (DoD), U.S. Air Force (USAF), and base design standards. Local materials and construction techniques would be used when cost effective. The facility would be designed as permanent construction in accordance with DoD Unified Facilities Code (UFC) 1-200-01, General Building Requirements, and UFC 1-200-02, High Performance and Sustainable Building Requirements.

Alternatives Evaluated: In accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1970, an Environmental Assessment (EA) is being prepared to evaluate the potential environmental, cultural, transportation and socioeconomic impacts associated with the Proposed Action.

NEPA and the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations mandate the consideration of reasonable alternatives for the Proposed Action. “Reasonable alternatives” are those that also could be utilized to meet the purpose of and need for the Proposed Action. Per the requirements of 32 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) §989, the USAF Environmental Impact Analysis Process (EIAP) regulations, selection standards are used to identify alternatives for meeting the purpose of and need for the Proposed Action.

The USAF evaluated several alternative sites, but eliminated all but one potential site because they did not meet the selection standards JBA set for the construction of the new CDC facility, or legal or DoD requirements.

As required, a No Action Alternative was also included in the EA which reflects the status quo and serves as a benchmark against which Federal actions can be evaluated. Under the No Action Alternative, the new CDC would not be constructed and childcare would continue to be provided at CDC #1 in Building 4575. The No Action Alternative would not meet current and projected mission requirements due to the current utility, structural, and public health issues that have plagued the existing facility in recent years (CDC #1 has suffered from sewage backups and kitchen drainage issues; a leaking roof; heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) system failures; and mold and pest management issues). CDC #1 in Building 4575 also has compliance concerns related to Anti-Terrorism/Force Protection (AT/FP) regulations.

Anticipated Impacts: The Proposed Action is expected to result in short-term minor adverse impacts to noise; surface water; and potable water, sanitary sewer, electric, natural gas, and solid waste utilities. It is expected to result in long-term minor adverse impacts to stormwater drainage utilities. It is expected to result in both short- and long-term minor adverse impacts to stormwater runoff; vegetation, wildlife, and wildlife habitat; soils and topography; and transportation. No or negligible impacts are expected to air quality; groundwater, floodplains, coastal zone, and wetlands; threatened or endangered species; hazardous and toxic materials and waste; cultural resources; land use; safety and occupational health; or socioeconomics, environmental justice, and protection of children.

The No Action Alternative would have long-term adverse impacts to utilities and health and safety as a result of the continued deterioration of the existing CDC #1. There would be no impacts to the proposed site along Arkansas Road and California Avenue as a result of the No Action Alternative.

Public Involvement: Per the requirements of Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) and implementing regulations (36 CFR Part 800); Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act (ESA) and implementing regulations; the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA); and Coastal Zone Management Act (CZMA); findings of effect and request for concurrence were transmitted to the Maryland Historic Trust (MHT) and the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS). Because the Proposed Action is located within Maryland’s Coastal Zone, a consistency determination was drafted, and will be sent to the Maryland Coastal Zone Management Program for review. JBA also initiated consultation with the following agencies for the proposed project: Maryland Department of Natural Resources (MDNR), Maryland State Clearinghouse Office of Planning, Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE), Prince George’s County Department

of Planning, National Capital Parks-East, and National Capital Planning Commission (NCPC). JBA did not coordinate with the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) because no marine resources will be impacted from this project.

Concurrence indicating a finding of no effect for the construction of the new CDC was sent by the MHT on 2 June 2020. On 15 May 2020, a report was generated through the Information for Planning and Conservation (IPaC) system, the USFWS online system for searching for species protected under the ESA, which notes that one protected species – the Northern Long-Eared Bat (NLEB) – has the potential to occur on the proposed CDC site. Per USFWS guidance included in the IPaC report, further consideration and consultation for the NLEB only needs to be undertaken when the project includes tree clearing of 15 or more acres. As this Proposed Action does not meet or exceed this threshold of tree clearing, no further consultation is needed for the NLEB at this time.

A Notice of Availability (NOA) was published in the *Maryland Independent* and provided to interested agencies/parties on [date].

Following the NOA, the Draft EA and Draft FNSI were made available for public review for 30 days starting on [date] online on the JBA environmental website, <https://www.jba.af.mil/About-Us/Environmental-Mission/>.

Finding of No Significant Impact: *Anticipated Wording: After a review of the EA, I have determined that the Proposed Action evaluated may be selected for implementation. I have concluded that implementation of the Proposed Action will have no significant impacts to the natural environment, cultural resources or human environment. Based upon the aforementioned, preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement is not required.*

Date: _____

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