

Draft
Finding of No Significant Impact
for the
Environmental Assessment for
the Proposed 60-Foot Access Easement (TX160)
U.S. Army Reserve, 63d Readiness Division

Introduction

The U.S. Army Reserve (USAR), 63d Readiness Division (63d RD) prepared this environmental assessment (EA) to analyze impacts on the human and natural environments of the Proposed 60-foot Access Easement, TX160 (CEI 2023). The EA complies with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA) (Title 42 of the United States Code § 4321 *et seq.*), the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) *Regulations for Implementing the Procedural Provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act* (Title 40 of the Code of Federal Regulations [CFR] Parts 1500–1508), and the U.S. Army’s *Environmental Analysis of Army Actions* (32 CFR Part 651).

Description of the Proposed Action

The Proposed Action is to construct a roadway and related infrastructure within a 60-foot (ft) x 600 ft easement for access into the City of Robstown Public Works Compound utilizing a 0.9790-acre tract of land (the “Site”). The Site is within the 50.283-acre federally owned parcel (the “Property”) located on the eastern side of Robstown, Nueces County, Texas, and is north of US Highway (US HWY 77) and Texas State Highway (TX HWY) 44 intersection. The Site extends from the USAR entry road northward abutting to the southern boundary of the Public Works Department and is undeveloped. The proposed roadway will connect the City’s Public Works Compound to the USAR entry road that connects to US HWY 77 and TX HWY 44. The proposed roadway will be centered in the 60-ft easement with two 14-ft-wide lanes with a 2% cross slope from the centerline and roadside drainage ditches within the remaining 16-ft easement on each side. Construction activities will include excavation, grading, limestone fill and compaction, hot-mix asphalt pavement, seeding, and miscellaneous items.

Purpose and Need

The purpose of the Proposed Action is to construct a roadway and related infrastructure within a 60-foot easement for access into the City of Robstown Public Works Compound utilizing a 0.9790-acre tract of land, which is within the 50.283-acre federally owned parcel. The proposed roadway will connect the City’s Public Works Compound to the USAR entry road which connects to US HWY 77 and TX HWY 44. The need for the Proposed Action is to provide municipal access to City of Robstown Public Works Department for city personnel. Current access to the compound is the State Department Road located off North Upshaw Boulevard which crosses the Union Pacific Railway. Due to the vicinity of the road in relation to the Union Pacific Railway, the State

Department Road is being shut down. Therefore, personnel will no longer have access to the facilities utilizing the current roadway.

The 63d RD prepared the EA for the Proposed Action to comply with the NEPA requirement for federal actions that could produce environmental effects. NEPA analysis has already been completed for the Proposed Action. The EA documents that NEPA analysis.

Alternatives Considered

In the process of developing the Proposed Action, the City of Robstown considered four alternatives, the Proposed Action, also known as the Preferred Alternative, Alternative 2, Alternative 3, and the No Action Alternative which represent different strategies for the City of Robstown Public Works Compound access road. The primary focus is to provide municipal access to City of Robstown Public Works Department for city personnel. Alternative 2 would construct a roadway and related infrastructure directly off the USAR driveway just before the entrance gate. The roadway would head west and curve or turn to the north connecting to the Public Works lot. This alternative would have fewer development features. Additionally, this alternative would require cutting across an existing detention pond located on the western side of the Army Reserve driveway. Alternative 2 does not satisfy the stated purpose and need as it would not offer unobstructed access to the roadway and would cause traffic flow issues for the Army Reserve facility. Alternative 3 would construct a roadway and related infrastructure from the City's Public Works Compound directly south through the 7.325-acre parcel owned by Emil Stefek Family LLC and connect to Highway 44, or to the same USAR access roadway. This Alternative would require the City to pursue Condemnation of the necessary easement as the current property owners declined any discussions regarding purchase of the property. Therefore, Alternative 3 does not satisfy the stated purpose to construct a roadway providing access to the City's Public Works Compound.

The advantages and disadvantages of the four alternatives were evaluated during the planning process and the Proposed Action was carried forward for detailed analysis in the EA. The EA is attached and incorporated by reference into this Finding of No Significant Impact (FNSI).

The CEQ regulation 40 CFR § 1502.14(c) specifically requires analysis of a No Action Alternative in all NEPA documents. Under the No Action Alternative, the City of Robstown would not implement the actions described in the Proposed Action. The lease of the property and construction of the roadway and related infrastructure would not occur. Under this Alternative, personnel would continue to access the City Public Works facility and parking lot using the State Department Road located off North Upshaw Boulevard. However, due to the vicinity of the road in relation to the Union Pacific Railway, the State Department Road is being shut down. Therefore, personnel would no longer be able to access the facilities utilizing the current roadway. The No Action Alternative does not satisfy the stated purpose and need. However, it is included in the

environmental analysis, as required under NEPA and to provide a baseline for comparison with the Proposed Action.

Potential Environmental Effects

The relevant and existing environmental conditions for resources potentially affected by the Proposed Action were used to describe the affected environment and estimate the potential environmental effects of implementing the Proposed Action and the No Action Alternative. The potential for direct, indirect, and cumulative environmental effects were determined for the resources evaluated.

The Proposed Action would have short-term, temporary and less-than-significant adverse effects on air quality, biological resources, geologic, hazardous materials, health and human safety, hydrological, land use, noise levels, socioeconomic, transportation, and visual. The potential effects would be low intensity and spread over many years (i.e. 5 years for the short-range component and 6–20 years for the long-range component).

Air quality effects are expected due to construction activities and an increase in vehicle emissions during that time. Geologic, topographic and soil effects would result in soil disturbance and compaction during construction of the roadway and related infrastructure. No hazardous materials or wastes are present onsite, as such no effects are to be expected but may be encountered during construction activities. Increased noise and transportation effects are expected during construction activities. All construction activities will be conducted in accordance with federal, state, and local regulations, as well as Army guidelines, and would comply with USAR procedures and Best Management Practices (BMPs). Proper BMPs will be implemented during construction in order to minimize any of these effects on air quality, geological, hazardous materials, noise and transportation and are expected to be confined to the site. Hydrologic and water effects would not result in significant impacts to water resources, but because the property is within the 100-year floodplain proper mitigation measures have already been taken and the roadway will have a 2% slope from the centerline with drainage ditches for stormwater runoff. Biological effects would be less than significant as there are no critical habitats for listed species within the project area. Health and human safety effects are expected to be less than significant. Land use and visual effects would change the land use from undeveloped to a developed and maintained roadway which is consistent with the current zoning and surrounding land uses. Since effects on resources would be less than significant, no mitigation measures would be required.

Implementing the No Action Alternative would result in no additional effects on the resources evaluated. The 63d RD would not implement the actions described in the Proposed Action, and the evaluated resources would remain unchanged compared to existing conditions.

Public Review and Comment

At the outset of the project, the 63d RD notified relevant federal, state, and local agencies and federally and non-federally (state) recognized Native American Tribes through the process of

Interagency and Intergovernmental Coordination for Environmental Planning and provided them 30 days to make known their environmental concerns specific to the Proposed Action.

The 63d RD has made the Draft EA and Draft FNSI available for public review and comment for 30 days, beginning with publication of a Notice of Availability (NOA) in the *Corpus Christi Caller Times* on February 19, 2023. The Draft EA and Draft FNSI are available for the 30-day public review period at the City of Robstown City Hall located at 101 East Main Avenue, Robstown, Texas 78380. The Draft EA and Draft FNSI are also available at www.cityofrobstown.com.

The 63d RD invites interested parties to submit comments on the Draft EA and Draft FNSI by U.S. mail to USAR 63d Readiness Division, ATTN: Mr. Morey U. Moore, Environmental Chief, 230 RT Jones Road, Mountain View, California 94043, or by email to chart@coastalenv.com during the 30-day public comment period. Comments on the Draft EA and Draft FNSI are to be submitted no later than March 21, 2023.

Upon completion of the 30-day public review period, comments received by the 63d RD will be considered and addressed. The letters and comment responses will be provided in Appendix C of the Final EA. Comments will be considered prior to taking final action.

Finding of No Significant Impact

Based on the findings of the EA, no significant impact would result from the Proposed Action. This FNSI was prepared to accompany the EA, which concludes that the preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is not required for this Proposed Action.

FOR THE COMMANDER:

RONALD F. HUGHES
Colonel, USAR
Regional Engineer and Director of Public Works
63d Readiness Division
United States Army Reserve

Date