

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

To: All interested Agencies, Groups and Individuals

This is to give notice that Sarasota County Resilient SRQ under 24 CFR Part 58 has conducted an evaluation as required by Executive Order, as amended by Executive Order 13690, and Executive Order 11990, 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 Infrastructure & Public Facilities Program HUD grant B-23-UN-12-0004. The proposed project location is along West Price Boulevard, just southeast of Butler Park and northwest of the West Price Boulevard and Eagle Flight way cross streets in the City of North Port, Sarasota County, Florida and is located in the Federal Flood Risk Management Standard (FFRMS) floodplain and wetland. The proposed project location is along West Price Boulevard, crossing Myakkahatchee Creek, between Butler Park and Eagles Flight Way in the City of North Port, Sarasota County. The extent of the FFRMS floodplain was determined using the freeboard value approach. The Zone AE 100-year floodplain (base flood elevation 16.2-feet) and floodway were determined using FEMA Flood Map Panel 12115C0378F dated November 4, 2016, and riverine, marsh, swamp, bog, and prairie wetlands were identified using the USFWS National Wetlands Inventory Mapper. The proposed project consists of the demolition and reconstruction of the Myakkahatchee Creek Bridge and the removal of the pedestrian bridge that runs parallel to the bridge on the northern side. The new bridge would consist of two lanes of travel, a 2-foot shoulder, and standard width sidewalk in both directions. The new bridge would generally be within the same footprint, but over double the width of the existing bridge, which consists of one travel lane and narrow sidewalk in each direction. Additionally, the bridge would be modernized to contemporary design standards. The current bridge area is about 0.5 acres, while the proposed reconstructed bridge is estimated to cover approximately 1 acre.

Sarasota County Resilient SRQ 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:

### Alternative 1: (Proposed Project) Myakkahatchee Creek Bridge Reconstruction:

As described in the "Bridge Hydraulics Report - Price Boulevard over Myakkahatchee Creek" issued by the City of North Port in September 2024, the City of North Port proposes the replacement of the existing Myakkahatchee Creek Bridge and widening of Price Boulevard from an existing 2-lane undivided arterial to a proposed 4-lane divided roadway. The limits of the project are from just west of the bridge over Myakkahatchee Creek and continuing east a distance of approximately ¼ mile to connect to the existing 4 lane divided section, west of Sumter Boulevard. The typical section construction would occur within the existing right-of-way. The project vertical datum and the datum used for calculations is the North American Vertical Datum of 1988 (NAVD88).

The existing Myakkahatchee Creek bridge, Bridge No. 175014, Price Boulevard over Myakkahatchee Creek would be replaced. The existing bridge has eleven spans of 35'-0" totaling 385'. The superstructure consists of 15" deep prestressed concrete hollow core slab units (Sonovoids) supported on 14" prestressed concrete piles. There is also an existing separate pedestrian bridge on the north side of the Price Boulevard

Bridge which is a sonovoid bridge with spans matching the roadway bridge. Both existing bridges are to be removed.

The proposed bridge is a nine-span flat slab beam (FSB) bridge with cast in place toppings. The bridge would have 7 spans of 43'-5.5" and 2 spans of 43'-6.5" totaling 391'-3.5". The proposed typical section would include a textured raised 19'-6" median with two 11' travel lanes , two 4' shoulders, a 10'-8" raised sidewalk with a 1'-3" vertical face custom barrier in each direction resulting in a total width of 95'-4". The existing profile is being raised approximately 1.5 feet to provide debris drift clearance above the 50 year design storm event.

The bridge crosses the Big Slough Canal and Myakkahatchee Creek. These limits are not navigable or tidal. The bridge is located approximately 2 miles upstream of a weir control structure that discharges to the tidal limits of the Myakkahatchee Creek.

#### Alternative 2: Demolition of Existing Bridge:

Under Alternative 2, the damaged bridge would be demolished. The action would occur within the FFRMS floodplain, regulatory floodway and mapped USFWS wetland. Although this option would not require new construction or ground disturbance, it is not seen as a viable option due to the elimination of an essential roadway for the citizens of North Port to evacuate in the event of a disaster and access places of employment and public facilities such as North Port High School, North Port Aquatics Center, the Morgan Family Community Center and, Butler Park.

#### Alternative 3: Demolish and Rebuild Bridge in a different location:

Under Alternative 3, the bridge would be demolished and rebuilt in a new location either north or south of the current site. This alternative would not eliminate the need for the bridge to cross the FFRMS floodplain, regulatory floodway and USFWS wetlands, it would simply shift the bridge to a new location along Myakkahatchee Creek. This alternative is not seen as feasible due to the cost that would be accrued by the City associated with land acquisition for a new location, demolishing the damaged bridge, and rebuilding an entirely new structure. There is already a bridge that crosses Myakkahatchee Creek approximately 1 mile southwest of the current bridge site. Moving the bridge would also decrease access to the City of North Port public facilities such as North Port High School, North Port Aquatics Center, the Morgan Family Community Center and Butler Park that lie directly west of the bridge for citizens living east of Myakkahatchee Creek.

#### No Action Alternative [24 CFR 58.40(e)]:

Under the No Action Alternative, the bridge would remain in its current damaged state, with erosion and footers undermined by the turbulent water created by Hurricane Ian. Damage would continue to accumulate to the point that the bridge becomes unusable to the community it serves. One of the goals of Resilient SRQ is to assist Sarasota County with unmet recovery needs. The no action alternative would not achieve this purpose due to the bridge's damaged status and the demographics it serves.

Sarasota County Resilient SRQ has reevaluated alternatives to building in the floodplain and wetlands and has determined that it has no practicable alternative to floodplain and wetland development. Environmental files documenting compliance with Executive Order 11988, as amended by Executive Order 13690, and

Executive Order 11990, 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 and wetlands 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 and wetlands 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 would participate in actions taking place in floodplain and wetlands, it must inform those who may be put at greater or continued risk.

Written comments must be received by Resilient SRQ at the following address on or before December 22, 2024: Resilient SRQ, 301 N. Cattlemen Rd. Suite 200 Sarasota, FL 34232 Attention Steve Hyatt, Program Management Division Manager or by phone by calling 311 or 941-315-5187 or TTY: 7-1-1 or 1-800-955-8771 during the hours of 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM. Comments may also be submitted via email at [shyatt@scgov.net](mailto:shyatt@scgov.net).

Date: December 13, 2024