

November 26, 2024

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

From: Joe Barger
NEPA Coordinator

Subject: Categorical Exclusion
Record of Environmental Consideration

Project Title: Aerospace Innovation and Training Hub

Location: Kansas State University
Salina Aerospace and Technology Campus
2310 Centennial Road
Salina, KS 6701

The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and associated implementing regulations (40 CFR Parts 1500-1508) require that all major actions by federal agencies be reviewed with respect to the environmental consequences on the human environment. The National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) is providing a congressionally directed funding grant for the construction of the Aerospace Innovation and Training Hub at Kansas State University. Consequently, NEPA and the associated implementing regulations apply to this project.

This memorandum provides a Record of Environmental Consideration and summarizes the determination that the Aerospace Innovation and Training Hub at Kansas State University has been found to be categorically excluded from any further environmental review under NEPA.

Description of the Action

The Aerospace Innovation and Training Hub project includes the construction of a single, 62,000 square foot, two-story building and approximately 1,500 square feet of concrete sidewalk. The building will include offices, laboratories, and hangar space.

The Aerospace Innovation and Training Hub will house the Kansas State University (KSU) Applied Aerospace Research Center, the Aviation Maintenance Training Center, and the Advanced Composites Laboratory. The Aerospace Innovation and Training Hub's objective is to provide a collaborative, technically progressive home to key disciplines for the aerospace industry to further education and research in the aerospace sector. The facility will provide space for KSU Salina faculty and research staff working on unmanned aircraft systems, composites, and aviation maintenance. The facility occupancy is estimated at approximately 30 individuals.

The existing KSU Salina Composites Building will be demolished for this project. The Composites Building is a 2100 square foot, one floor, pre-engineered, sheet metal building constructed in 1996.

This project will be accomplished in accordance with all applicable state and federal environmental and safety regulations. All applicable regulatory permitting will be obtained.

Specific Considerations of this Action and any Extraordinary Circumstances

- Existing Site

The proposed site for the Aerospace Innovation and Training Hub is on property owned by KSU near the active commercial airport. The site is currently vacant green space located adjacent to existing KSU buildings and the airport runway apron.

The proposed building will be similar in size and design to the existing adjacent buildings. The proposed building will be 55' high, similar to the three hangars immediately to the west. Its footprint will be approximately 50,000 square feet. The nearby hangars are approximately 30,000 square feet and the adjacent flight center is approximately 41,000 square feet.

- Endangered Species and Critical Habitats

No endangered species or habitats are anticipated in the project area.

- Wetlands, Flooding Potential and Resilience

The site is located outside of FEMA 100- and 500-year flood hazard areas; however, the site is designated as an "area of reduced flood risk due to a levee" and near an area of "0.2% Annual Chance Flood Hazard, Areas of 1% annual chance flood with average depth less than one foot or with drainage areas of less than one square mile."

Significant flood diversion channels run just to the south of the proposed building into a nearby levee system. The flood risk in central Kansas results from excessive rainfall. According to

NOAA, rainfall amounts in central Kansas will decrease 5-10% by 2050 reducing the flood risk.

- Stormwater

As an agency of the State of Kansas, stormwater permitting is not required for this KSU project. However, the project is overseen, monitored by, and regularly inspected by the Kansas Office of Finance and Project Management. Stormwater management will meet state regulations. During construction, silt fences and sediment traps/basins will be implemented, as necessary to control site runoff. Post-construction, erosion control will be done by immediately sodding or hydroseeding the affected area.

- Building Staffing/Utilities

Staffing and student populations are not expected to increase significantly due to the operation of the Aerospace Innovation and Training Hub. Full staffing is estimated at 30 individuals, with many staff moving from nearby locations.

Local roadways have capacity for a temporary increase in traffic during construction and for the ongoing traffic expected for staff and students.

The following utilities have confirmed that there is capacity and availability to service the proposed Aerospace Innovation and Training Hub:

- Water and Wastewater – City of Salina
- Electricity – Evergy, Salina Service Center
- Natural Gas – Kansas Gas Service

- Air Quality/Greenhouse Gas Emissions

Greenhouse Gas emissions are expected to increase due to the energy requirements of the Aerospace Innovation and Training Hub; however, the increase is not expected to be significant.

The proposed facility is replacing several older facilities that are much less energy efficient than the proposed facility. The proposed facility will be designed to meet many LEED standards, but will not be LEED certified.

Specific measures taken to enhance energy conservation and reduce greenhouse gas emissions include:

- Led light fixtures throughout,
- Maximize use of natural light,
- Building-wide cloud-based HVAC monitoring and control systems,

- Solar canopies on the parking lot,
- Geothermal heating and cooling systems, and
- Light colored reflective roof coating

- Hazardous Materials

Hazardous materials will be used and hazardous wastes generated at the Aerospace Innovation and Training Hub. KSU Salina has mature hazardous materials management and hazardous waste disposal programs in place meeting state and federal requirements. The proposed building will have a dust collection system to collect airborne particulates.

Any hazardous materials found during the project demolition (i.e., asbestos, lead based paint, PCBs) will be properly removed and disposed.

- Historic/Cultural Significance

No impacts are expected to historic properties. The Kansas State Historic Preservation Officer indicated that there is “a low potential for construction activities to identify historic or precontact archeological materials.”

- Environmental Justice

Due to the location of this project, no disproportional adverse human health or environmental impacts to overburdened or underserved communities, including minority, Tribal, or low-income populations are expected.

Effects of the Action

No significant adverse impacts on the environment are expected from this action.

Categorical Exclusion

The activities associated with this project fall within the criteria of the following Department of Commerce Categorical Exclusion (CATEX):

A-2, New construction upon or improvement of land where all of the following conditions are met:

- (a) The site is in a developed area and/or a previously disturbed site,
- (b) The structure and proposed use are compatible with applicable Federal, Tribal, State, and local planning and zoning standards and consistent with Federally approved State coastal management programs,
- (c) The proposed use will not substantially increase the number of motor vehicles at the facility or in the area,

- (d) The site and scale of construction or improvement are consistent with those of existing, adjacent, or nearby buildings, and
- (e) The construction or improvement will not result in uses that exceed existing support infrastructure capacities (roads, sewer, water, parking, *etc.*). This CE does not apply where the project must be submitted to the National Capital Planning Commission (NCPC) for review and NCPC determines that it does not have an applicable Categorical Exclusion. DOC is not a major land managing agency in the Federal government. Department activities involving new construction or improvements of land typically involve single buildings and supporting infrastructure in a single locality. Any potential for environmental impacts would be of a small scale and confined to more localized impacts.

The proposed project meets the criteria of CATEX A-2 as follows:

- (a) The proposed site has been disturbed by previous on-site construction and by nearby construction of university buildings.
- (b) Located on the campus of Kansas State University, the project is compatible with applicable Federal, Tribal, State, and local planning and zoning standards.
- (c) Increases in the number of motor vehicles at the facility or in the area are not expected to be significant.
- (d) The proposed new building will not will not result in uses that exceed existing infrastructure capacities. The project does not require review by the NCPC.

The proposed activity: Aerospace Innovation and Training Hub at the Kansas State University Salina Campus is categorically excluded from the need for further environmental review under NEPA. Any changes to the above project will require additional NEPA review.

Joe Barger
NIST NEPA Coordinator

11/26/2024

Date

Robert C. Vaughn
NIST Chief Facilities Management Officer

Date