

**Early Notice and Public Review of a Proposed
Activity in a Federal Flood Risk Management Standard Designated Floodplain**

To: All interested Agencies, Groups and Individuals

This is to give notice that Orange County (OC) Housing and Community Development (County) has under HUD 24 CFR Part 58 has determined that the following proposed action under the HUD Housing Choice Voucher Program CA094 (Project-Based Vouchers) is located in the Federal Flood Risk Management Standard (FFRMS) floodplain, and the County will be identifying and evaluating practicable alternatives to locating the action within the FFRMS floodplain and the potential impacts on the FFRMS floodplain from the proposed action, as required by Executive Order 11988, as amended by Executive Order 13690, and in accordance with HUD regulations at 24 CFR 55.20 in Subpart C Procedures for Making Determinations on Floodplain Management and Protection of Wetlands.

The proposed project location is at the southeast corner of the intersection of Berry Street and Mercury Lane in the City of Brea, Orange County, California. The proposed Mercury Senior Affordable Apartments Project involves the construction of a new 5-story, approximately 81,445-square-foot affordable housing development for seniors on an approximately 1.01-acre vacant site. The project would consist of a single "L"-shaped building containing 85 residential units, including 68 one-bedroom units and 17 two-bedroom units, one of which would be reserved for an on-site manager. Of the 84 units available for lease, 74 units would be income-restricted to households earning between 30% to 70% of the Area Median Income for Orange County, and 10 one-bedroom units would be designated as Permanent Supportive Housing units for individuals experiencing homelessness. The project would provide 63 parking spaces, including 24 tuck-under spaces and 39 surface spaces, with vehicular access from Mercury Lane at the northeastern corner of the site. The extent of the FFRMS floodplain was determined using the 0.2-percent flood approach (500-year floodplain). The project site and surrounding area are located within the 500-year floodplain but are fully developed with urban infrastructure, including roads, utilities, and commercial and industrial buildings. Approximately 1.01 acres of the 500-year floodplain would be impacted by the project.

The existing natural and beneficial functions and intrinsic values of the floodplain that could be considered potentially affected are limited due to the site's highly urbanized and previously disturbed condition within the 500-year floodplain. The project site is surrounded by paved surfaces, buildings, roadways, and underground utilities, which substantially constrain natural floodplain processes. As a result, the floodplain on and adjacent to the site provides limited floodwater storage and conveyance, with stormwater runoff largely controlled through existing engineered drainage systems rather than natural overbank flooding processes. Although the project site is currently unpaved and the project would introduce new impervious surfaces, the affected area is limited, and implementation of stormwater management features would minimize changes to groundwater recharge and discharge. Erosion control and sediment retention functions are limited due to the previously disturbed condition of on-site soils, and water quality maintenance functions are minimal, as stormwater is managed primarily through municipal infrastructure rather than natural filtration. The site does not support wetlands, riparian vegetation, native habitat, or other ecologically sensitive resources.

Similarly, the intrinsic values of the floodplain at this location are limited. The site does not provide recreational, educational, or scientific value, as it is not accessible to the public for open space use and does not contain natural features of interpretive significance. There are no known historic, cultural, or archaeological resources associated with the floodplain portion of the site, and the area does not function as a scenic or cultural landscape.

Overall, due to the urbanized setting and disturbed condition of the site, the natural and beneficial functions of the floodplain (including floodwater storage and conveyance, groundwater recharge and discharge, erosion control, water quality maintenance, and habitat for flora and fauna), as well as its intrinsic values (such as recreational, educational, scientific, historic, and cultural values), are limited or diminished. The floodplain in this area primarily serves commercial and industrial purposes and does not provide significant ecological or hydrologic functions.

There are three primary purposes for this notice. First, people who may be affected by activities in the FFRMS floodplain 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. Commenters are encouraged to offer alternative sites outside of the FFRMS floodplain, alternative methods to serve the same project purpose, and methods to minimize and mitigate project impacts on the floodplain. Second, an adequate public notice program can be an important public educational tool. The dissemination of information and request for public comments about the FFRMS floodplain 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 will participate in actions taking place in the FFRMS floodplain, it must inform those who may be put at greater or continued risk.

Written comments must be received by the County at the following address on or before April 23, 2026: OC Housing and Community Development, 1501 East St. Andrew Place, Santa Ana, CA 92705 and (714) 480-2876, Attention: Frank Padilla, Community Development Compliance and Environmental Coordinator. A full description of the project may also be reviewed from 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM at the above address. Comments may also be submitted via email at francisco.padillajr@occr.ocgov.com.

Date: April 7, 2026