

# **FINAL PUBLIC NOTICE**

University City has applied to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) for funding under its Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) and Flood Mitigation Assistance program (FMA) through the Missouri State Emergency Management Agency (SEMA).

Under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), federal actions must be reviewed and evaluated for feasible alternatives and for social, economic, historic, environmental, legal, and safety considerations. Under Executive Order (EO) 11988 Floodplain Management and EO 11990 Wetlands Protection, FEMA is required to consider alternatives, and to provide a public notice of any proposed actions in or affecting floodplains or wetlands. EO 12898 Environmental Justice also requires FEMA to provide the opportunity for meaningful engagement of persons and communities with environmental justice concerns who are potentially affected by Federal activities.

Funding for the proposed project will be conditional upon compliance with all applicable federal, tribal, state, and local laws, regulations, floodplain standards, permit requirements and conditions.

**Sub-Applicant:** University City

**Project Title:** MO-DR-4665-HMGP-0014; University City HMGP 2023 Flood Buyout  
EMK-2022-FM-001-0001; University City Flood Buy-out 2022

**Location of Proposed Work:** Hafner Court Apartments (*See Figure 1*)

- 8011 Hafner Court, University City, Missouri, 63130 (38.674272, -90.343379)
- 8056 Hafner Court, University City, Missouri, 63130 (38.674376, -90.343460)
- 8061 Hafner Court, University City, Missouri, 63130 (38.674496, -90.344615)
- 8062 Hafner Court, University City, Missouri, 63130 (38.674375, -90.344136)
- 1215 Westover Court, University City, Missouri, 63130 (38.6741473, -90.342695)

## **Special Flood Hazard Area Zone:**

Per Preliminary Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM) community map and panel numbers 29189C0211K and 29189C0212K, both effective 02/04/2015, the project sites are located in a Regulatory Floodway and Zone AE Special Flood Hazard Areas (SFHA) (100-year floodplain) [Figure 1]. There is a potential for the facility to be impacted by future flooding events due to its location within the floodplain. Per the United States Fish and Wildlife Service National Wetlands Inventory, the project site is not located in wetlands.

## **Proposed Work and Purpose:**

University City proposes to fund the acquisition and demolition of five apartment buildings with a history of flood damage within St. Louis County. These properties will be converted into green space, restoring the natural and beneficial values served by floodplains. Due to their location within SFHAs, residents of these apartment units are likely to continue dealing with damage caused by floodwaters. Continued occupancy will likely result in significant risk to the health and

safety of those within the apartments as well as future and repetitive costs for rescues, repairs, and cleanup. FEMA's acquisition and demolition program is a voluntary process however it could still have an impact to the nearby communities due to a reduction of available affordable housing in the area. There is a known benefit from having available greenspace within communities. Once the buildings and structures have been demolished, the properties will be deed restricted to open greenspace in perpetuity.

#### **Project Alternatives:**

**Alternative #1** (No action): The 'no action' alternative would leave the five apartment buildings within the regulatory floodway. The owner of the buildings has reported consistent flood damage and available flood data shows that repetitive damage is extremely likely. Continued habitation of those apartment buildings would risk the lives and safety of all residents both during flood events and from lasting health effects of flood damage like mold exposure.

**Alternative #2** (Structure elevation): The second alternative to the proposed action is to elevate each building above the Base Flood Elevation (BFE) level. This would reduce the impact of floodwaters on the dwellings. Elevating would be very expensive and the construction associated would cause major daily disruptions to the remaining tenants of these buildings. Additionally, remaining in the floodplain still poses a risk to the health and safety of the residents. If the apartment buildings are only elevated, the residents may still need to handle pollutants brought in by the floodwaters, dangers of stagnant waters, economic burdens from future repairs, and may still be trapped during flooding events, necessitating water rescues.

#### **Comment Period:**

Comments are solicited from the public; local, state or federal agencies, and other interested parties in order to consider and evaluate the impacts of the proposed project on the community. Interested parties may submit comments, questions, or request a map of this specific project via email at [teri.toye@fema.dhs.gov](mailto:teri.toye@fema.dhs.gov) or in writing to: Attn: Regional Environmental Officer, Environmental Planning and Historic Preservation Branch, Mitigation Division, FEMA Region 7, 11224 Holmes Road, Kansas City, MO 64131, or via email to the FEMA Region 7 Regional Environmental Officer at Please send comments with the subject line: "2023 University City MO Flood Buyout COMMENT"

All comments are due by no later than 15 days of the posted date of this notice.

#### **POSTED ON:**

October 10, 2024

## National Flood Hazard Layer FIRMette

