

County Bank & Trust, Bardstown, Kentucky.

Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System, January 3, 1997.

Jennifer J. Johnson,

Deputy Secretary of the Board.

[FR Doc. 97-478 Filed 1-8-97; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 6210-01-F

Sunshine Act Meeting

AGENCY HOLDING THE MEETING: Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System Federal Register Citation of Previous Announcement: 62 FR 408, January 3, 1997.

PREVIOUSLY ANNOUNCED TIME AND DATE OF THE MEETING: 10:00 a.m., Wednesday, January 8, 1997.

CHANGES IN THE MEETING: Change in the time of the open meeting to 11:00 a.m., Wednesday, January 8, 1997.

CONTACT PERSON FOR MORE INFORMATION: Mr. Joseph R. Coyne, Assistant to the Board; (202) 452-3204.

Dated: January 6, 1997.

William W. Wiles,

Secretary of the Board.

[FR Doc. 97-647 Filed 1-7-97; 2:44 pm]

BILLING CODE 6210-01-P

GENERAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION

Public Buildings Service; Record of Decision; Proposed Expansion Pacific Highway Port of Entry, Blaine, Whatcom County, Washington

I. Introduction

The United States General Services Administration (GSA) announces its decision, in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and the regulations issued by the Council on Environmental Quality, to expand to existing Pacific Highway Port of Entry (POE) in Blaine, Whatcom County, Washington. This Record of Decision (ROD) documents my decision regarding this proposal.

The existing facility is located on the west side of State Route 543 in Blaine, and serves as a major Port of Entry between the United States and the province of British Columbia, Canada. This ROD describes the alternatives considered and the rationale for selecting the environmentally preferred alternative.

The principal function of the proposed facility will be to accommodate the expansion requirements of the U.S. Customs Service, the Immigration and

Naturalization Service, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Animal and Health Inspection Service, Food and Drug Administration, Food and Safety Inspection Service, U.S. General Services Administration/Public Buildings Service, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The proposed expansion would replace the present facility, which is overcrowded and functionally obsolete.

II. Decision

Based upon review of the written materials associated with the environmental process, including the transcripts of the Scoping and Public Hearings and the comments received from those who reviewed the Draft, Final, and Supplemental Environmental Impact Statements, I have decided to proceed with the expansion of the POE. The site will expand from approximately 7 acres to 16 acres, part of which is already owned by the U.S. Government (approximately 9 acres would be acquired prior to construction). This ROD is in keeping with the statutory mission of General Services Administration to design, build, or lease, appraise, repair, operate, protect, and maintain federal properties. My decision is based upon the following factors:

The Pacific Highway POE is the largest commercial truck crossing port in Washington state, and is the U.S. Customs headquarters for Western Whatcom County, Washington and ports. Serving a major arterial highway, the POE also processes a significant amount of auto traffic as well as a majority of the state's bus traffic. Inspection agencies at the POE are responsible for monitoring vehicular and pedestrian traffic entering the U.S. This entails the use of surveillance equipment, inspection and detainment facilities for vehicles and cargo, and detention facilities for people.

The present facility in Blaine can no longer efficiently nor effectively accommodate the volume of traffic encountered at this location, which has increased steadily in recent years. From 1978 to 1992, auto crossings have increased approximately 172 percent and truck crossings have increased approximately 252 percent. Between 1986 and 1991, the POE processed more than 6.7 million cars, trucks and buses. The flow of all traffic north and south bound has been severely affected. Furthermore, it is anticipated the growth in border traffic volume would continue, resulting from the 1989 Free Trade Agreement and the North America Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), between the U.S. and Canada.

Because of the POE's location on a major north-south trucking route, traffic volumes that are processed directly reflect the level of trade between the two countries. Therefore, the continued increase in trade is anticipated to result in a concomitant increase in border traffic especially truck traffic, in the near future. In FY 1994, truck traffic increased 10.4 percent according to U.S. Customs. The inability of the POE to process current traffic volumes is not only related to the lack of capacity of individual processing units, but also because of an outdated site layout and inadequate site size, both of which are inadequate to ensure a safe and expedient flow of traffic.

In addition to the increase in traffic volume, the nature of transportation has changed a substantial degree during the past 20 years since the facility was constructed. New transportation technology that requires specific dimensions and handling systems, as well as automated cargo processing systems have rendered the existing facilities obsolete. The present 20-year facility is inadequately equipped to handle increasingly large loads of cargo and livestock at one time both in terms of space and processing equipment. Finally, structural and utility constraints of existing buildings do not allow for full utilization of modern office technology.

III. Alternatives Considered

The GSA has examined a range of alternatives that could feasibly attain the objectives of the proposed project. These alternatives are described in the Final EIS and Final Supplemental EIS and are summarized as follows:

A. Site Configuration

As reflected in the Draft and Final Environmental Impact Statements and the Draft and Final Supplemental Environmental Impact Statements, the GSA has conducted an intensive effort over a two-year period to study the best way to expand the POE facility. Because of the unique requirements of POE's, alternative sites on State route 543 have not been considered. POE's must, by law, be located at treaty designated locations set by the International Boundary Commission. Federal inspection facilities are by policy, situated at these points in order to perform their legal mission requirements. Therefore, expansion of the existing site was considered the only feasible alternative. A number of potential site configurations were investigated, two of which were deemed more desirable for expansion of the POE: Alternative 3B and Alternative 5.

B. Take No Action

This alternative assumes the existing facility would be maintained in its current condition. Existing processing capacities would become increasingly more inadequate as the volume of border traffic, particularly trucks, continues to increase. Increased traffic and processing delays would result in queuing conditions at the POE and possible also on State Route 543 north of the POE and into Canada. The absence of adequate facilities at Pacific Highway and associated delays may ultimately force truck traffic to utilize smaller border crossings not located along a major state highway. The inefficiencies and disadvantages associated with inadequate facilities would be worsened if the Take No Action Alternative were selected.

IV. Environmentally Preferred Alternative

As required by the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), a lead agency must identify its preferred alternative. The environmentally preferred alternative is the alternative which best promotes the national environmental policies incorporated in NEPA. In general, this would be the alternative resulting in the least damage to the human environment and which best protects natural and cultural resources.

While Design Alternative 3B and 5 are similar, Design Alternative 5, is identified as GSA's environmentally preferred alternative. Design Alternative 5 would impact the least amount of wetlands by shifting the development focus on the western side of the site farther south than Design Alternative 3B. Design Alternative 5 would also include additional northbound truck parking to the east of State Route 543 for use by our client agencies.

V. Environmental Impacts and Mitigation Measures

In terms of environmental harm, this alternative would have only minor impacts to: topography; soils; hydrology; visual resources; fiscal considerations; land use and zoning; transportation; and noise. However, moderate impacts would occur to biological resources (wetlands). No significant impacts were identified.

All practicable means to alleviate, minimize and/or compensate environmental harm will be considered in the development of the project. Although several mitigation measures were recommended in the Draft EIS, only those that can be implemented under the authority of GSA were

adopted. For example, additional land is to be purchased to minimize the loss of wetlands. GSA shall monitor the implementation of those adopted mitigation measures necessary to assure measures specified in the Draft and the Record of Decision are carried out.

VI. Conclusion

Environmental and other relevant concerns presented by interested agencies and private citizens have been addressed sufficiently in the Final Environmental Impact Statement and Final Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement and are hereby acknowledged and incorporated into this ROD by reference. The General Services Administration believes there are no outstanding environmental issues to be resolved with respect to the proposed project and which are within the mission capabilities of this agency.

After consulting with the GSA staff, reviewing both the Final EIS and the Final Supplemental EIS and all of its related materials, it is my decision the GSA will proceed with Design Alternative 5 as the environmentally preferred alternative for the expansion of the Pacific Highway Port of Entry in Blaine, Whatcom County, Washington.

Dated: December 23, 1996.

L. Jay Pearson,

Regional Administrator.

[FR Doc. 97-525 Filed 1-8-97; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 6820-23-M

Office of Acquisition Policy; Change in Solicitation Procedures Under the Small Business Competitiveness Demonstration Program

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: Title VII of the Business Opportunity Development Reform Act of 1988 (Public Law 100-656) established the Small Business Competitiveness Demonstration Program and designated nine (9) agencies, including GSA, to conduct the program over a four (4) year period from January 1, 1989 to December 31, 1992. The Small Business Opportunity Enhancement Act of 1992 (Public Law 102-366) extended the demonstration program until September 1996 and made certain changes in the procedures for operation of the demonstration program. The program has been extended for an additional one-year period by the Omnibus Consolidated Appropriations Act (Public Law 104-208). The law designated four (4) industry groups for testing whether the competitive capabilities of the specified industry groups will enable them to

successfully compete on an unrestricted basis. The four (4) industry groups are: construction (except dredging); architectural and engineering (A&E) services (including surveying and mapping); refuse systems and related services (limited to trash/garbage collection); and non-nuclear ship repair. Under the program, when a participating agency misses its small business participation goal, restricted competition is reinstituted only for those contracting activities that failed to attain the goal. The small business goal is 40 percent of the total contract dollars awarded for construction, trash/garbage collection services, and non-nuclear ship repair and 35 percent of the total contract dollars awarded for architect-engineer services. This notice announces modifications to GSA's solicitation practices under the demonstration program based on a review of the agency's performance during the period from October 1, 1995 to September 30, 1996. Modifications to solicitation practices are outlined in the Supplementary Information section below and apply to solicitations issued on or after January 1, 1997.

EFFECTIVE DATE: January 1, 1997.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Tom Wisnowski, Office of GSA Acquisition Policy, (202) 501-1224.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Procurements of construction or trash/garbage collection with an estimated value of \$25,000 or less will be reserved for emerging small business concerns in accordance with the procedures outlined in the interim policy directive issued by the Office of Federal Procedure Policy (58 FR 13513, March 11, 1993).

Procurements of construction or trash/garbage collection with an estimated value that exceeds \$25,000 by GSA contracting activities will be made in accordance with the following procedures:

Construction Services in Groups 15, 16, and 17

Procurements for all construction services (except solicitations issued by GSA contracting activities in Regions 2, 7, and 8 in SIC Group 15, the National Capital Region in individual SIC code 1794, and Regions 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, and 9 in individual SIC code 1796) shall be conducted on an unrestricted basis.

Procurements for construction services in SIC Group 15 issued by GSA contracting activities in Regions 2, 7, and 8, and individual SIC code 1794 in the National Capital Region, and in individual SIC code 1796 in Regions 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, and 9, shall be set aside for