

Public Comment

To be completed after public review and comment

Health Resources and Services Administration

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT (FONSI)

for

**Mount Desert Island
Hospital**

**10 Wayman Lane,
Bar Harbor, ME**

Grant Number: CE1HS54201

CEQ Unique ID #: EAXX-009-15-OFA-1731670380

BACKGROUND

The Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) of the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) provides funding through the FY 2024 Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2024 (P.L. 118-47) for congressionally directed spending projects that relate to the construction and renovation (including equipment) of health care and other facilities. This selected activity will be supported through funding awarded by HRSA.

SELECTED ACTION

The applicant proposes to use the HRSA funding to renovate and expand the Mount Desert Island Hospital (MDIH) campus. The project includes the expansion of the Emergency Department, upgrades to Surgical Services, new main entrances, and infrastructure improvements. It will enhance patient care, increase climate resilience, and ensure access to modern healthcare services for the MDI region and beyond. Proposed site work will provide additional parking for patients and staff as well as green space. A new curb cut along Main Street is proposed to support the new Main Entrance addition on the Hospital's West side. The new ambulance entrance will be relocated to the easterly façade of the existing building. Access to the Hospital's main entrance and ambulance entrance shall be maintained throughout the project through coordination between the Hospital and contractor.

The grant Recipient submitted an Environmental Assessment (EA) that documents impacts of the selected action. This EA is incorporated by reference into this FONSI.

RATIONALE FOR THE DECISION

MDIH's Emergency Department (ED) regularly operate above capacity and has not undergone a major renovation in more than 20 years. This project is designed to meet the urgent and immediate need to modernize critical facilities, increasing access to equitable healthcare for our service area and constructing climate-resilient infrastructure capable of withstanding severe weather events. This project will ensure that MDIH continues to meet the growing healthcare needs of Bar Harbor and surrounding areas, supporting its role as the sole healthcare provider on Mount Desert Island.

The ED is a critical safety net for the Island community and beyond, providing care 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year. Scaled for 4,000 to 5,000 visits per year, the ED commonly sees 2,000 to 3,000 above that, spiking during the tourist season from May through November.

During the global COVID-19 pandemic, certain deficiencies in MDIH's ED became evident: a lack of flexible space, no distinct hot and cold zones, the inability to deploy a negative-pressure space, and the lack of specialized rooms for patients experiencing mental health crises. The need for bifurcating respiratory illnesses from other emergency patients as well as surgical patients became a strong driver for this project. The renovated ED space will ensure air exchange, isolation, and safety for staff members and patients.

The Master Campus Expansion Project is designed to accelerate MDIH's commitment to environmental sustainability and climate resiliency, striving for optimal carbon neutrality in buildings and practices, and respecting the natural surroundings of Mount Desert Island and the nearby Acadia National Park. The project will also advance equity for patients and families of all abilities, by significantly improving campus access and visibility with a new front entrance that directly faces Bar Harbor's Main Street. This realignment will improve patient flow and centralize entry to medical suites and key services such as Laboratory, Pharmacy, and Medical Imaging.

PUBLIC COMMENT

As required by HRSA, MDIH made the DRAFT EA available to the public for review and comment. This was done through a variety of recommended best practices for notifying interested and affected stakeholders including the following:

- On March 5, 2025, MDIH established a designated email account to receive public comments on the draft EA (EAPublicComment@mdihospital.org) and posted the draft EA on MDIH's website at the following URL: www.mdihospital.org/EAPublicComment
- MDIH simultaneously posted to its social media accounts (LinkedIn and Facebook) that the draft EA report was available for public review and comment.
- On March 5, 2025, MDIH posted a flier at three separate public libraries that included information as to where the draft EA could be accessed on MDIH's website including the special email account set up to receive comments from the public. The libraries selected are

those geographically closest to the subject site: the Jesup Memorial Library, 34 Mt Desert St, Bar Harbor, ME 04609, the Southwest Harbor Public Library, 338 Main St, Southwest Harbor, ME 04679, and the Northeast Harbor Library, 1 Joy Rd, Northeast Harbor, ME 04662.

- On March 5, 2025, Mount Desert Island Hospital submitted for publication in the Mount Desert Islander newspaper a public notice request stating the availability of the draft EA report on MDIH's website and listed the designated email address to receive comment.
- On March 5, 2025, Mount Desert Island Hospital emailed a press release to local media outlets stating the availability of the draft EA report on MDIH's website.

The public comment period ended on April 5, 2025. No public comments were received, and therefore, the EA was finalized without change.

AGENCY CONSULTATION

MDIH requested an NHPA Section 106 Consultation with and confirmation of "no effect" on cultural resources from the Maine State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) on the project property. The SHPO responded on January 29, 2025, concurring that the Project would have "no effect" on cultural resources. Copies of the SHPO correspondence are included in the supporting EA, Appendix A.

On December 10, 2024, MDIH sent a consultation letter to the Tribal Historic Preservation Officer (THPO) of the four tribal entities identified through site research from the Maine Historic Preservation Database. The letter contained a description and location of the project and requested confirmation from the THPO of "no effect" on known historic properties or resources. At the time of this submittal, one response confirming "no effect" has been received, and the remaining three tribes have not responded. Copy of tribal correspondence is contained in Appendix A.

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

Based on the evaluation of environmental impacts detailed in the EA, a Finding of No Significant Impact is warranted for the MDIH Master Campus Expansion Project. The Selected Action introduces no substantial long-term changes to the existing environmental baseline. The scope of the project is confined to previously developed areas, and the project will modernize facilities with updated ventilation and infection control systems, aligning with safety and environmental standards, ensuring long-term public health benefits while minimizing short-term construction risks. As a result of this specific project context, it is concluded that all impacts to environmental resources are de minimis. The Selected Action maintains the status quo without introducing new or additional environmental stressors.

MITIGATIONS [OR CONSTRUCTION BMPS]

Temporary impacts on stormwater systems are expected during construction, these will be managed through erosion controls and stormwater management plans. Long-term improvements will enhance water runoff handling and reduce environmental risks. A Stormwater Management Law / Maine Construction General Permit will be filed with the Maine Department of

Environmental Protection. The proposed work qualifies as Redevelopment under the Chapter 500 Stormwater Management Rules.

A Phase I ESA completed for the project recommended a Phase II follow up to evaluate potential soils risks from two USTs that were removed in 1991. Historic documentation of site assessments prior to removal were not available at time of survey. No soils risks from this historic removal have been identified in current soils and geotechnical assessments, see EA Appendix B. A Phase II ESA will be conducted to ensure compliance.

CONCLUSION

HRSA hereby adopts the EA prepared by the applicant for the selected action described above. After reviewing the assessment and the supporting materials provided by the award recipient, HRSA finds that the assessment properly documents the proposal's status of compliance with the environmental laws and requirements listed therein.

In accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act, the Council on Environmental Quality regulations for implementing NEPA (40 CFR Parts 1500 through 1508) and the HHS General Administration Manual Part 30 Environmental Protection (February 25, 2000), HRSA has determined that, with the mitigation measures described above, the selected action will have no significant adverse impact on the quality of the human environment. As a result of this FONSI, an Environmental Impact Statement will not be prepared.

Approvals:

Commander Ali Danner, MPH	Date
DHHS-U.S. Public Health Service	
Health Resources and Services Administration	
Office of Federal Assistance & Acquisition Management	