

DRAFT FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT (FONSI)

**PONCA TRIBE OF NEBRASKA
FRED LEROY HEALTH AND WELLNESS CENTER
5805 SOUTH 86TH CIRCLE
OMAHA, NEBRASKA**

Pursuant to provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA), Title 42 United States Code (U.S.C.) Sections 4321 to 4347d, implemented by the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) Regulations, Title 40, Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) §§1500-1508, and Health and Human Services (HHS) General Administration Manual Part 30 Environmental Protection, the Ponca Tribe of Nebraska assessed the potential environmental consequences associated with the Fred LeRoy Health and Wellness Center, 5805 South 86th Circle, Omaha, Nebraska.

The purpose of the proposed project is to provide additional space for public health and other services to tribal members and, if needed to the surrounding community in times of disaster, and to provide space for community programming for tribal members.

The Ponca Tribe has outgrown their current property and is seeking more space to offer public health and other services to tribal members, with plans to expand services – directly and through partnerships with other agencies/institutions serving the Omaha area. Due to the Tribe’s relationships with and within the City of Omaha and the concentration of its members, the Ponca Tribe would like to remain located in the City of Omaha. Expansion at the planned site would also enhance the emergency and disaster response resources available to the surrounding community through the Tribe’s integration with the Omaha Metropolitan Medical Response System and the local public health emergency response system.

The Ponca Tribe of Nebraska currently operates the Fred LeRoy Health and Wellness Center at 2602 J Street, Omaha, Nebraska. Services at the current location are limited due to the size of the building. The existing facility is in need of major repairs to remain in compliance with applicable codes and healthcare delivery standards, and can no longer support the health care needs of the native population.

The proposed project will expand the services provided both in terms of quantity of services as well as range of services. The proposed facility will provide space for a potential staffing level of 314 full time equivalents and would allow the following services to be offered or expanded: audiology, eye care, primary care, specialty care, diagnostic imaging, and rehabilitation. The area served by the Fred LeRoy Health and Wellness Center has become more developed, with a larger population seeking health care at the Center. The proposed project would allow the Center to provide services to the larger population.

The Environmental Assessment (EA) analyzes the potential environmental consequences of activities associated with the proposed project, and provides environmental protection measures to avoid or reduce adverse environmental impacts.

The EA considers the potential impacts of the Proposed Action Alternative and the No Action Alternative. The EA also considers cumulative environmental impacts with other projects in the Region of Influence.

Alternative A: No Action (Continue Current Operations)

The CEQ regulation, 40 CFR §1502.14(d), requires the inclusion of a No Action Alternative in the NEPA analysis. The Ponca Tribe of Nebraska currently operates the Fred LeRoy Health and Wellness Center at 2602 J Street, Omaha, Nebraska. Services at the current location are limited due to the size of the building. Currently there is a Medical Director, two Family Nursing Practitioners, a Dental Officer, and one Dentist. The pharmacy staff includes a Chief Pharmacist and a Pharmacy Technician. The medical clinic reports a waiting time of 1 – 3 weeks to be seen by a provider, depending on the need for care. The dental clinic has a wait time of 1 – 2 weeks for an existing patient and 5 months for a new patient. There is no space for specialty services, such as x-ray. Patients who need specialty services are referred out to the general community. However, most of the patients of the current facility do not have the resources to procure those specialty services and so go without. In addition, the existing facility is in need of major repairs to remain in compliance with applicable codes and healthcare delivery standards and can no longer support the health care needs of the native population. Under the No Action Alternative, this center would continue to provide services at this location but would not be able to expand its services to tribal and non-tribal members or provide services to much of the general public and would not be able to complete the major repairs or upgrades necessary to provide modern medical services. In addition, the current location does not have childcare services or provide an area for cultural programming.

Alternative B: Implement Proposed Action

The Ponca Tribe of Nebraska has purchased the former InfoGroup Headquarters property located at the terminus of S. 86th Circle in south Omaha and proposes to repurpose the campus for Tribal Services, Health Services, Community Center, Transportation Center, Sweat Lodge and incidental uses. The ±11.23-acre Site is made up of 7 separate parcels, containing a ±156,000 SF office building, a ±16,000 SF office building, and a ±9,000 out building with surrounding parking lots and Site appurtenances. Site Improvements that will be made to support the Ponca Tribe's uses include:

- Repurposing a corporate campus that has been vacant for 6 years
- Interior renovation of the main building to serve as clinics, offices, and childcare facilities
- Interior renovation of the other two buildings to serve as offices and a transportation center for vehicles owned by the Tribe
- Parking Lot reconstruction with the addition of a significant amount of street boulevards, sidewalks, and green space landscaping
- Addition of vehicular connectivity between the 5 easternmost parcels, which will reduce trips on S. 85th Circle, Park Drive, and S. 86th Circle that would otherwise have to drive around to access the adjacent parking lot
- Addition of a parking deck including elevator and stairwell structures to connect the easternmost lower parcels with the main building
- New cultural building with significant landscape screening on the westernmost parcels

- Stormwater Treatment for the disturbed impervious area

The proposed project will provide space to adequately staffed health care delivery programs and will improve access to the basic medical services that are necessary to maintain and promote health status and quality of life for the residents in the service area.

The Ponca Tribe of Nebraska would oversee design and construction of the facility; federal funding is designated for the Project through the Indian Health Services (IHS).

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The Ponca Tribe of Nebraska has concluded that no significant adverse impacts would result to the resources analyzed in this EA as a result of the Proposed Action (Preferred Alternative). No significant adverse cumulative impacts would result from activities associated with the Preferred Alternative when considered with past, present, or reasonably foreseeable future projects.

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT BY THE IHS

Based on my review of the facts and analyses contained in the attached EA, conducted under the provisions of NEPA, CEQ Regulations, and HHS GAM Part 30-50, I conclude that the Preferred Alternative would not have a significant environmental impact, either by itself or cumulatively with other known projects. Accordingly, an Environmental Impact Statement is not required. The signing of this Finding of No Significant Impact completes the environmental impact analysis process.

Rebecca Sullivan
Vice Chairwoman, Ponca Tribe of Nebraska

Date

