



Government of the Virgin Islands of the United States
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

Office of the Commissioner

June 21, 2022

Jean-Pierre L. Oriol
Commissioner
Department of Planning and Natural Resources
Charles W. Turnbull Regional Library
4607 Tutu Park Mall St. Thomas, VI 00802

Re: Virgin Islands Department of Human Services Request for Federal Consistency for the Demolition and Reconstruction of the Head Start Charles H. Emmanuel Program Facility, St. Croix - Bipartisan Budget Act of 2018 (Feb. 9, 2018)

Dear Commissioner Oriol,

The Virgin Islands Department of Human Services (VIDHS) respectfully requests approval of a Federal Consistency for the Head Start Program's Construction Project for their new facility at the former Charles H. Emmanuel School site. VIDHS is proposing the complete demolition of the former Charles H. Emmanuel School buildings in preparation for the construction of a new facility. The project is located at No. No. 3 Upper Bethlehem/VICORP Land, St. Croix, St. Croix. The existing buildings suffered major damage during Hurricane Maria in September 2017 and will be demolished and replaced through funding provided by the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2018 (Feb. 9, 2018).

The existing buildings were originally constructed prior major hurricane damage in the late 80's from Hurricane Hugo to more recently, Hurricane Maria in 2017. Since the time of Hurricane Hugo in 1989, the Virgin Islands has adopted, first the Uniform Building Code for structures, and more recently, the International Building Code. Besides the existing poor condition of the buildings on site caused by damages from past hurricanes, their old construction cannot meet the structural requirements of the 2018 International Building Code. Furthermore, the existing structures cannot accommodate the program requirements for a functional facility.

This request for Federal Consistency is for the demolition and construction of a new facility. The demolition of the subject buildings will remove all the existing one- and two-story masonry structures that were catastrophically damaged by Hurricane Maria. The proposed demolition project will impact only previously disturbed areas associated with the removal of the existing buildings and pads including the existing foundations and infrastructure systems. The proposed project is the initial step in expanding the services to be provided by department's Head Start Program on the island of St. Croix. The proposed project will begin as soon as all approvals have been finalized and a construction schedule will be furnished once a contractor is selected.

Attached, please find a Project Summary demonstrating the project's compliance with the U.S. Virgin Islands Coastal Zone Management Program and drawings of the proposed demolition and construction project. Please contact Deputy Commissioner, Miguel Tricoche, at 340-474-2489, or Miguel.Tricoche@dhs.vi.gov if you have any questions or concerns.

Respectfully,

Kimberly Causey-Gomez, MSW
Commissioner

Approved Not Approved

Sign

Date

cc: Anita E. Nibbs, DPNR - Environmental Planner III