

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS PERTAINING TO THE FEBRUARY 9, 2010 COMMUNITY MEETING

Has the final site for the Emergency Operations Facility been chosen yet?

No. Once the final Program Environmental Impact Report is approved, the Board of Supervisors will determine the final site location after reviewing the information (which includes environmental impacts of alternative sites) in this report and other non-environmental factors (cost, user, schedule impacts, etc.).

Why is the County pursuing a Design/Development team when the environmental review process is not complete yet?

Since the downturn in the economy, construction costs and associated costs for professional fees are at an all time low. This current method allows for the environmental review and the procurement process to occur at the same time and therefore, allows the County to expedite the process and take advantage of low costs.

Why are you asking for a concept sketch and site diagram in the RFC if no site is chosen?

The RFC is primarily a qualification document and offers only a preliminary site for respondents to focus on. The conceptual sketch and site diagram are required to see if the respondent teams understand the complex issues (including neighborhood concerns) regarding the EOF project and have a strong design vision. This requirement tests the respondent's ability to visualize a preliminary concept and diagram that is sensitive to these complex requirements. The RFC allows the Project Committee to screen out teams that don't meet the basic project objectives early in the process.

Once a final site (which may be different than the preferred site) is chosen by the Board of Supervisors and after the Final Environmental Impact Report is approved, an RFP will be released for the Finalists teams to produce detailed design drawings for review.

How was the preferred site selected?

The County has gone through years of extensive site feasibility studies to identify potential future development sites in and around the Landmark Civic Center Campus. Studies include,

- Gensler Architects Report (2001)
- Heller Manus Preliminary Site Analysis (2003)
- Marin County Civic Center Master Design Guidelines (2005)
- Beverly Prior Architects Site Feasibility Study (2006)
- Countywide Plan (2007)
- Site Feasibility Study Update (2009)

The studies primarily focused on user functionality, impacts to surrounding environment/existing uses, site flexibility for design, site free of special hazards,

compatibility with landmark Civic Center and cost & schedule impacts. Based on these studies, a preferred site was recommended. In the environmental review process, the Program Environmental Impact Report will consider the pros and cons of several alternative site locations. From this report along with other non-environmental factors (cost, user, schedule impacts, etc.), the Board of Supervisors will determine the final site location. For a list of the studies, please refer to the Documents/Links page on the project website at www.marineof.org.

Why is it too difficult to renovate the existing Civic Center to comply with the modern building code and Essential Services Building Act?

The Civic Center Building is a National Historic Landmark. While it has been structurally renovated to prevent loss of lives in the building in a major earthquake, it was not retrofitted to remain functioning after a major earthquake. The new EOF is required to meet standards under the California Essential Services Act. Further retrofitting this building would entail the addition of structural members (beams, columns, brace frames, etc.) and technology (power backup units, modern equipment, etc.) that not only take up useable room, but also compromise the historic architectural integrity of the building. Also, the configuration and space constraints of the existing historic building limit the amount of modernization that can occur.

What level of seismic safety will this facility be built to?

The EOF facility shall be built to the California Building Code and Essential Services Building Act requirements. The intent of these requirements is to ensure that “essential services buildings are designed and constructed to minimize fire hazards and to resist, insofar as practical the forces generated by earthquakes, gravity, and winds”. These higher standards will be used because this building will provide essential services to the public after a disaster.

What Richter scale number can this facility survive?

Although the Richter scale is often used generally to measure earthquake intensity, this scale is not used when designing buildings because of the many variables that impact how a facility will perform in an earthquake, such as what the soil conditions are, and the distance from major faults. For example, a building experiencing an 8.5 magnitude earthquake will react differently if the center is a mile away from the epicenter, versus 10 miles away and whether the quake originated deep or at the surface. Furthermore, the direction of seismic waves, whether it comes from the east or the north could result in different forces on the building structure. Soil conditions also impact these waves have on a given building. The modern Building Code uses a variety of other performance-based technical criteria to determine how well a building performs under seismic events, such as ground shaking and soil conditions directly under the proposed facility.