



U.S. ARMY



US Army Corps  
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New England District

# PUBLIC NOTICE

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Levee Safety Program

Date: July 27, 2023

Comment Period Closes: August 10, 2023

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## 15 DAY PUBLIC NOTICE AND NOTICE OF AVAILABILITY OF A FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

### ALTERATION OF A U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS CIVIL WORKS PROJECT PURSUANT TO 33 USC 408: CHICOPEE FALLS LEVEE LOCATED IN CHICOPEE, MASSACHUSETTS

Interested parties are hereby notified that the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, New England District (USACE) is evaluating plans under 33 U.S.C. 408 (Section 408) to allow the city of Chicopee to place acceptable fill material along the landside of the Chicopee River Left Bank - Chicopee Falls, MA levee system for the purpose of filling low-lying areas east of the levee embankment. The levee system is operated and maintained by the city of Chicopee. It begins at the Deady Memorial Bridge (Rt. 141) and extends downstream for approximately 5,000 feet along the east bank of the Chicopee River. The levee system consists of about 3,600 feet of earthen levee embankment, about 1,400 feet of concrete floodwall, and two pumping stations, which reduces flood risk for properties west of the levee, generally along Main Street and Grove Street in Chicopee.

The city is proposing to place acceptable fill material at the former Uniroyal property, at 154 Grove Street, Chicopee, MA and a portion of the former Facemate property, at 75 West Main Street, to facilitate future construction and redevelopment consistent with local planning efforts and municipal zoning. As part of the project, the city plans to demolish a levee system pumping station (Oak Street Pumping Station) and decommission the associated discharge conduit and to decommission a former manufacturing water intake conduit. All proposed work will be performed on the landside of the levee. Decommissioning of the water intake and discharge conduits will be limited to sealing at the landside toe of the levee.

This Notice is being issued pursuant to 33 U.S.C. 408, USACE Engineering Circular (EC) 1165-2-220, and Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations (40 Code of Federal Regulations [CFR] 1500-1508) for implementing the procedural provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) (42 U.S.C. 4321 et. seq.,) Executive Order 11988 – Floodplain Management, and the USACE Procedures for Implementing NEPA (33 CFR 230). Section 408 allows USACE to grant permission for the alteration, occupation, or use of a USACE civil works project if it is determined that the activity will not be injurious to the public interest and will not impair the usefulness of the Federal project. A decision on a Section 408 request is a Federal action, and therefore subject to NEPA and other environmental compliance requirements.

The Chicopee River Left Bank - Chicopee Falls, MA levee system was constructed by USACE in 1939 and completed in 1941. The existing topography and mitigated contamination at the Uniroyal and former Facemate properties present redevelopment challenges and the city of Chicopee proposes to raise the elevation by eight feet to provide opportunities for redevelopment. The Uniroyal property includes five parcels with an area of approximately 22 acres and was formerly used for industrial purposes, including a lumber yard, timer manufacturing plant, printing shops, and was part of the former Fish Rubber Company Complex. The former Facemate property is approximately 4 acres and is associated with former industrial uses as well, including the production of cotton cloth. Remediation activities at both sites have resulted in the generation of demolition wastes and other materials that have been both disposed off-site and capped with backfill materials in accordance with relevant regulations. The proposed action of raising the elevation involves placing approximately 3,555 cubic yards of fill material along the levee within both properties (Uniroyal: 7.25 acres; and Facemate: 1.3 acres) from various sources, including natural, uncontaminated soils; contaminated soils that do not exceed reportable criteria (according to 310 CMR 40.0032(3)); soils/sediments that are not remediation waste (according to 310 CMR 40.0006); dredged sediments with no free-draining liquids; uncoated and process asphalt, brick, and concrete from onsite; and street sweeping tailings from the city of Chicopee.

Stormwater best management practices (BMPs) will be used both during construction and in the long-term due to the alteration of runoff patterns from the filling and grading. Construction BMPs will include basin and swale conveyances to move stormwater away from the levee. A network of linear basins interconnected by perforated high-density polyethylene pipe to convey stormwater into a drainage structure that will discharge to an existing outfall will be employed as a long-term stormwater BMP. In addition to the filling and grading of the properties, the proposed action includes the demolition of the Oak Street Pumping Station, and decommissioning of the intake and discharge conduits by sealing on the landside of the levee.

USACE has made a determination that the placement of acceptable fill material along the levee at the former Uniroyal and Facemate properties, the demolition of the pumping station, and the decommissioning of the intake and discharge conduits by sealing on the landside of the levee, will not adversely affect environmental resources on the affected area of the Chicopee Falls levee and will not have a significant impact on the human environment. The public is invited to provide comment. To request more information contact: Kevin DiRocco, Levee Safety Program Manager, New England District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, 696 Virginia Road, Concord, MA 01742, (978) 318-8396, Kevin.J.DiRocco@usace.army.mil. The comment period will end on August 10, 2023. Letters should be postmarked by this date.