



Federal Aviation Administration

Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI)

and

Record of Decision (ROD)

and

**Agency/Public Comment Letters and Responses
to Comments, and Environmental Assessment Errata**

**For the Runway 4 Medium Intensity Approach Lighting System with
Runway Alignment Indicator Lights Replacement Project
LaGuardia Airport, Queens, New York**

June 2023

**DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION**

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT/RECORD OF DECISION

**RUNWAY 4 MEDIUM INTENSITY APPROACH LIGHTING
SYSTEM WITH RUNWAY ALIGNMENT INDICATOR LIGHTS
REPLACEMENT PROJECT LAGUARDIA AIRPORT
QUEENS, NEW YORK**

I. PURPOSE AND NEED FOR THE ACTION

The purpose and need for replacement of the LaGuardia Airport Runway 4 Medium Intensity Approach Lighting System with Runway Alignment Indicator Lights (LGA MALSR) is to provide a new MALSR that meets current Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) equipment and safety standards. The condition and design of the existing towers result in increased maintenance leading to more facility outage time and do not meet the continuing needs of the FAA. Additionally, maintenance access to Station 8+00, located within the median of Grand Central Parkway, currently requires closure of traffic lanes on Grand Central Parkway and accessing the station via a ladder.

II. PROPOSED ACTION

As described in the *Runway 4 Medium Intensity Approach Lighting System with Runway Alignment Indicator Lights Replacement Project, LaGuardia Airport, Queens, New York Draft Environmental Assessment*, dated March 2023 (EA), which is incorporated by reference herein, the Proposed Action involves the replacement of infrastructure as part of the FAA's routine replacement program. Specifically, the Proposed Action will include demolition and replacement of existing light stations, installation of underground conduit within 4,400 feet of new ductbank, and construction of a 110-foot overhead steel maintenance walkway over the eastbound lanes of Grand Central Parkway to provide access to Station 8+00. The Proposed Action is strictly maintenance-related and will not affect the existing functioning of the airport. It will not increase throughput at the airport or permit larger planes to land, nor will it change flight patterns or approach/take-off flight paths. The Proposed Action will maintain safety margins at the airport, particularly in periods of inclement weather, and enhance the personal safety of FAA maintenance technicians.

III. ALTERNATIVES

A. No Action Alternative

Under the No Action Alternative, demolition of the existing LGA MALSR and construction of a new MALSR would not occur and there would be the continuation of current maintenance practices and procedures. The LGA MALSR would not meet current FAA equipment and safety standards. Maintenance activities at the light station at Station 8+00 would continue to require closure of traffic lanes on Grand Central Parkway and access to the station via a ladder with no improvements to worker safety. The operational efficiency of the LGA MALSR would continue to degrade under the No Action Alternative. The No Action Alternative would not meet the FAA's purpose and need.

B. Proposed Action Alternative

The Proposed Action Alternative consists of removal, reconstruction, and renovation of the LGA MALSR, and it meets the FAA's purpose and need as described above. Figure 1-3 of the Draft EA shows the location of the LGA MALSR facilities and the project area within which the Proposed Action would take place.

The Proposed Action consists of the following:

- Demolition of the existing vega-style towers and replacement with tilt-down, fiberglass monopole-style Low-Impact Resistant structures. Variations in height between the existing towers and the monopole structures range from 1.65 feet lower to 2.43 feet higher than the existing tower. The FAA will determine the color of the new fiberglass monopole structures in coordination with the New York City Department of Parks and Recreation (NYC Parks).
- Demolition and replacement of the approach light, foundation, and chain link fences at 11 light stations. The footprint of some stations will increase while others will decrease, resulting in an overall reduction in square footage.
- Removal and replacement of electrical power and light fixtures at the threshold light and at two light stations.
- Construction of a concrete stairway (approximately 3 feet wide by 34 feet long) consisting of 19 steps leading to the north side of Station 6+00, located between Grand Central Parkway and Runway Drive.
- Construction of 4,400 feet of ductbank (i.e., a series of conduits or pipes used to protect wiring that is typically encased in reinforced concrete and buried underground) to install underground conduit on new alignment along the entire MALSR, including connections to the existing MALSR equipment shelter at Runway Drive.
- Construction of a 110-foot overhead steel maintenance walkway over the eastbound lanes of Grand Central Parkway from the roadside to Station 8+00. A vertical clearance of 17 feet – 3/4 inches above the roadway will be provided.

Construction activities will occur during daytime and nighttime hours. Construction activities are anticipated to begin in Spring 2023 and last for approximately 8 months.

IV. AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT

The project area for the Proposed Action is located at the southwestern end of LaGuardia Airport in Queens, New York. It consists of an approximately 3,000-foot-long corridor that includes a 100-foot-wide buffer surrounding the existing LGA MALSR (see Figure 1-3 of the Draft EA). The threshold light (Station 0+00) and the first two light stations (Stations 2+00 and 4+00) are located on airport property, which is owned and operated by the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey (PANYNJ). The next three light stations (Stations 6+00, 8+00, and 10+00) are located within New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT) right-of-way. The remaining nine light stations (Stations 12+00 through 28+00) are located within LaGuardia Landing Lights Park. A portion of the light station at Station 12+00 is also within New York City Department of Transportation (NYC DOT) right-of-way. LaGuardia Landing Lights Park is managed by NYC Parks, while the landing lights are maintained by the FAA.

The project area is located within an urban setting with surrounding land use dominated by transportation, commercial, and residential uses. Airport-related uses, including car rental companies, shipping carriers, and hotels, are present in proximity to LaGuardia Airport and Grand Central Parkway near the north end of the project area. Surrounding land use within the central portion of the project area, in proximity to Astoria Boulevard, includes a mixture of commercial and residential uses. Land use surrounding the southern end of the project area is largely residential and institutional (Our Lady of Fatima Roman Catholic Church and School). A ballfield and a dog park are present south of the project area within LaGuardia Landing Lights Park.

No floodplains, surface waters, Wild and Scenic Rivers, or wetlands are present within the project area. No federal or state-listed threatened or endangered species, or sensitive habitats, are known or expected to be present within the project area. No resources listed or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) occur within the Area of Potential Effect (APE) for the Proposed Action, and no archaeological resources are expected to be present because of previous disturbance within the APE. A portion of the project area is within the Coastal Area Boundary as defined by the State of New York's Coastal Management Program.

V. ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

As described in the Draft EA, the Proposed Action would have no effect on farmlands, wetlands, floodplains, surface waters, Wild and Scenic Rivers, federal or state-listed threatened or endangered species, sensitive habitats, or historic or archaeological resources. On July 14, 2022, the New York State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) concurred with a Finding of No Historic Properties Affected for the Proposed Action.

The proposed improvements would not increase throughput at the airport or permit larger planes to land, nor would it change flight patterns or approach/take-off flight paths. No permanent effects on the health of the environment, including air quality, noise, or climate would occur. During construction, temporary increases in air pollutants and noise levels will be minimized with best management practices in accordance with industry standards. Best management practices for erosion and sediment control, and for storage, handling, and disposal of chemicals during project construction, will avoid or minimize potential impacts to surface waters downgradient of the project area. These temporary effects of the Proposed Action related to air quality, noise, climate, and water quality would be negligible and would not result in disproportionately high impacts to low-income or minority populations or disproportionate health and safety risks to children.

The Proposed Action involves the replacement of the LGA MALSR within the same general location and would not disrupt or divide local communities, nor require property acquisition or the relocation of residences or businesses. The Proposed Action would not involve changes to land use or induce economic growth in the area. Therefore, the Proposed Action would have no effect on economic activity, employment, income, population, housing, or social conditions.

Changes to the visual environment with implementation of the Proposed Action would be negligible and would not affect the visual character of the area. Variations in height between the existing towers and the new monopole structures will be minimal. The design of the MALSR, i.e., the placement and alignment of the light bars, the angle of the light planes, the brightness of the individual lamps and so forth, are dictated by FAA safety design standards. The FAA will determine the color of the new fiberglass monopole structures in

coordination with NYC Parks to avoid potential visual effects on park users and the surrounding community.

The Proposed Action would not require the permanent incorporation or new permanent easement of lands within LaGuardia Landing Lights Park, a significant property afforded protection under Section 4(f) of the U.S. Department of Transportation Act of 1966. The temporary occupancy of LaGuardia Landing Lights Park during construction would have very minimal effects and would therefore qualify as an exception to the requirement for Section 4(f) approval in accordance with 23 CFR 774.13(d). There would be no constructive use of the park given that the Proposed Action would not alter access to the park and the color of the new fiberglass monopole structures will be determined in coordination with NYC Parks. On November 15, 2022, FAA received a letter of concurrence with FAA's determination of "no Section 4(f) use" of LaGuardia Landing Lights Park from NYC Parks.

Replacement of the light station in the median of Grand Central Parkway would require temporary single-lane closures over the course of one day between peak periods. In addition, a full closure of the eastbound lanes and a detour along local roads would be required overnight for one day to erect the overhead steel maintenance walkway. A Maintenance of Traffic (MOT) Plan will be prepared in coordination with local emergency services to maintain access to emergency vehicles and provide appropriate signage, detours, and safety measures during project construction. With implementation of these measures to minimize traffic impacts during construction, no significant adverse effects on public services are anticipated from the Proposed Action.

The Proposed Action would not result in long-term storage, handling, or disposal of hazardous materials within the project area. Any contaminated soils identified prior to or during construction of the proposed improvements will be removed and disposed of in compliance with all applicable federal, state, and local regulations. Therefore, no significant impacts related to hazardous materials, solid waste, and pollution prevention are anticipated for the Proposed Action.

The Proposed Action would require consumption of a very small amount of energy in the form of fuels for construction equipment over a short term during project construction. To the extent practicable, materials removed from the site during demolition of the existing facilities will be recycled and the use of new equipment that is comprised of reclaimed or recycled materials will be considered.

FAA has determined that the Proposed Action would not impact any coastal use or resource. On October 19, 2022, the New York City Department of City Planning, on behalf of the City Coastal Commission, provided its finding to the New York State Department of State (NYSDOS) that the Proposed Action would not substantially hinder the achievement of any New York City Waterfront Revitalization Program policy. On October 20, 2022, NYSDOS provided concurrence with FAA's determination that the Proposed Action would not result in any reasonably foreseeable effects to land and water uses or natural resources of the coastal area.

Potential cumulative impacts identified for the Proposed Action include temporary traffic impacts from construction of the Proposed Action combined with the construction of other planned transportation improvements along and/or adjacent to Grand Central Parkway. Adverse cumulative impacts would be avoided through development of a MOT Plan in coordination with NYC DOT's Office of Construction Mitigation and Coordination to

identify the optimal timing of lane and road closures for the Proposed Action and other adjacent transportation improvements.

VI. PUBLIC AND AGENCY INVOLVEMENT

As part of the environmental review process, the Draft EA was made available for public review and comments. A Notice of Public Availability (NOA) of the Draft EA was published in both *The Daily News* and *El Diario* newspapers for local circulation on Sunday, April 2, 2023 and Monday, April 3, 2023. The Draft EA was available for review by agencies and the public for 30 days. During the public review period, FAA received comment letters from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Delaware Nation Historic Preservation Department. No comment letters were received from the public. The agency comment letters and FAA's responses to the comments are provided in the Attachment, "Agency/Public Comment Letters and Responses to Comments, and Environmental Assessment Errata," dated June 2023.

VII. FINDINGS

After careful and thorough consideration of the facts contained herein, the undersigned finds the proposed Federal action is consistent with existing national environmental policies and objectives as set forth in Section 101(a) of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA) and that it will not significantly affect the quality of the human environment or otherwise include any condition requiring consultation pursuant to Section 102(2)(c) of NEPA.

VIII. DECISION

Based on the summary of effects discussed in the Draft EA dated March 2023 and the Attachment, "Agency/Public Comment Letters and Responses to Comments, and Environmental Assessment Errata," dated June 2023, the FAA has determined that the Federal actions required to implement the Proposed Action would not have a significant effect on the human or natural environment. For this reason, no Environmental Impact Statement is required.

Finally, based upon the administrative review of this project, I certify, as prescribed by 49 U.S.C. 44502(b) that implementation of the Proposed Action is reasonably necessary for use in air commerce.

After careful and thorough consideration of the facts contained herein, the undersigned finds that the proposed Federal action is consistent with existing national environmental policies and objectives as set forth in Section 101 of NEPA and other applicable environmental requirements and will not significantly affect the quality of the human environment or otherwise include any condition requiring consultation pursuant to Section 102(2)(C) of NEPA.

Approved: **TRISHA L JACKSON**
Trisha Jackson
Director, Technical Operations,
Eastern Service Area

Digitally signed by TRISHA L JACKSON
Date: 2023.06.14 12:07:24 -04'00'

Date: _____

RIGHT OF APPEAL

This FONSI/ROD presents the Federal Aviation Administration's final decision and approvals for the actions identified, including those taken under provisions of 49 U.S.C. Subtitle VII, Parts A and B. This decision constitutes a final order of the Administrator subject to review by the Courts of Appeals of the United States in accordance with the provisions of 49 U.S.C. Section 46110.



Federal Aviation Administration

**Agency/Public Comment Letters and Responses
to Comments, and Environmental Assessment Errata**

**For the Runway 4 Medium Intensity Approach Lighting System with
Runway Alignment Indicator Lights Replacement Project
LaGuardia Airport, Queens, New York**

June 2023

**RUNWAY 4 MEDIUM INTENSITY APPROACH LIGHTING SYSTEM WITH
RUNWAY ALIGNMENT INDICATOR LIGHTS REPLACEMENT PROJECT
LAGUARDIA AIRPORT
QUEENS, NEW YORK**

**AGENCY/PUBLIC COMMENT LETTERS AND RESPONSES TO COMMENTS, AND
ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT ERRATA**

June 2023

As part of the environmental review process, a Draft Environmental Assessment (EA) was prepared for the Runway 4 Medium Intensity Approach Lighting System with Runway Alignment Indicator Lights Replacement Project in March 2023 and made available for public review and comment. A Notice of Public Availability (NOA) of the Draft EA was published in both *The Daily News* and *El Diario* newspapers for local circulation on Sunday, April 2, 2023 and Monday, April 3, 2023. The Draft EA was also available for public review at East Elmhurst Public Library, 95-06 Astoria Boulevard, East Elmhurst, NY 11369, during normal business hours. The Draft EA was available for review by agencies and the public for 30 days. During the public review period, FAA received comment letters from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Delaware Nation Historic Preservation Department. No comment letters were received from the public. The agency comment letters and FAA's responses to the comments are provided in **Appendices 1 and 2**, respectively.

The purpose of the errata sheet is to correct errors, omissions, and other adjustments that may be required after the printing of the Draft EA. This errata sheet is being included in the FONSI/ROD documentation to comprise a full and complete record of the environmental analysis for the project. The EA will not be reprinted. Given that the comments received do not warrant modifications to the March 2023 Draft EA, this errata sheet with **no errors, omissions, or other adjustments noted** is provided in lieu of a Final EA in compliance with FAA Order 1050.1F Paragraph 6-2.2i.

APPENDIX 1

Runway 4 Medium Intensity Approach Lighting System with Runway Alignment Indicator Lights Replacement Project

Draft Environmental Assessment Agency Comment Letters



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

REGION 2
290 BROADWAY
NEW YORK, NY 10007-1866

April 27, 2023

Zanda Crawford
EOSH Center Manager
Federal Aviation Administration
1701 Columbia Ave
College Park, GA 30337-2714

RE: Draft Environmental Assessment for Runway 4 at LaGuardia Airport

Dear Ms. Crawford,

In accordance with our responsibilities under Section 309 of the Clean Air Act and the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has reviewed the Draft Environmental Assessment (EA) for the replacement of LaGuardia Airport (LGA) Runway 4 Medium Intensity Approach Lighting System with Runway Alignment Indicator Lights (MALSR)¹.

The Draft EA was developed to address potential environmental impacts from the proposed action to replace the existing LGA MALSR with a new MALSR that meets current Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) equipment and safety standards.

The Draft EA assesses the environmental effects of two alternatives including: (1) No Action, and (2) Proposed Action – removal, reconstruction, and renovation of the LGA MALSR. The Proposed Action will include: demolition of the existing vega-style towers and replacement with tilt-down fiberglass monopole-style Low Impact Resistant structures; demolition and replacement of the approach light, foundation and chain link fences at 11 light stations; removal and replacement of electrical power and light fixtures at a few of the light stations; construction of a concrete stairway leading to north side of station 6+00; construction of a 110-foot overhead steel maintenance walkway over the eastbound lanes of Grand Central Parkway from the roadside to station 8+00; and associated construction activities related to piping, electrical, etc. Construction activities are planned to last approximately eight months.

EPA acknowledges the need for the Proposed Action and supports FAA's approach to work with local city and state agencies to minimize impacts to the community. EPA offers the following thoughts/comments on the draft EA:

Section 3.2.1 – Air Quality & Section 3.2.2 – Climate

- The Draft EA lists that the proposed action may result in a temporary increase in criteria

¹ The Draft EA prepared by Parsons for Federal Aviation Administration and sent to EPA via email on March 31, 2023.

pollutant and greenhouse gas emissions. Also, the ground-disturbing activities during project construction may generate fugitive dust.

- EPA encourages FAA to ensure that the combustion sources used during the construction of the project are compliant with the applicable New Source Performance Standards and appropriate air permitting is done through the local city/state agencies for the combustion sources.
 - In addition, preparation and implementation of a dust control plan should be considered to mitigate the fugitive dust impacts in the local community.

Section 3.2.6 – Noise and Noise-Compatible Land Use

- The Draft EA lists that the proposed action may result in a temporary increase in noise levels during construction at noise sensitive receptor areas near the project area, however the noise impacts would be short term and not significant.
- Since the construction activities are planned to last approximately eight months and plan to occur during daytime and nighttime hours, EPA encourages FAA to consider developing an outreach plan and inform the community about the planned project and potential increase in noise levels.

Thank you for the opportunity to assist FAA with this Draft EA. Should you have questions on our comments noted above or related to this project, please contact Supriya Rao at (732) 321-4461 or rao.supriya@epa.gov.

Sincerely,

Mark Austin

Mark Austin, Team Leader
Environmental Review Team



Delaware Nation
Historic Preservation Department

31064 State Highway 281
Anadarko, OK 73005
Phone (405) 247-2448

May 5, 2023

To Whom It May Concern:

The Delaware Nation Historic Preservation Department received correspondence regarding the following referenced project(s):

Project: FAA DEA for Proposed Replacement of LGA MALSR, LaGuardia Airport, Queens, NY

In accordance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470f), and implementing regulation 36 CFR 800, "Protection of Historic Properties," **Delaware Nation accepts your invitation for consultation on this project.**

Our office is committed to protecting tribal heritage, culture and religion with particular concern for archaeological sites potentially containing burials and associated funerary objects. The Lenape people occupied the area indicated in your letter during and prior to European contact until their eventual removal to our present locations. According to our files, the proposed project should have **no adverse effect** on any known cultural or religious sites of interest to the Delaware Nation.

Please continue with the project as planned keeping in mind should human remains and/or any Native American archaeological resources inadvertently be uncovered, all construction and ground disturbing activities should immediately be halted until the appropriate state agencies, as well as this office, are notified (within 24 hours), and a proper archaeological assessment can be made.

Please note that Delaware Nation, the Delaware Tribe of Indians, and the Stockbridge Munsee Community are the only Federally Recognized Delaware/Lenape entities in the United States and consultation for Lenape homelands must be made with only the designated staff of these three Nations (and/or other federally recognized tribal nations who may have overlapping areas of interest). We appreciate your cooperation in contacting the Delaware Nation Historic Preservation Office to conduct proper Section 106 consultation. Should you have any questions, feel free to contact our offices at 405-247-2448 ext. 1403. TM

Carissa Speck

Carissa Speck
Historic Preservation Director
Delaware Nation
405-247-2448 ext. 1403
cspeck@delawarenation-nsn.gov

APPENDIX 2

Runway 4 Medium Intensity Approach Lighting System with Runway Alignment Indicator Lights Replacement Project

Draft Environmental Assessment Agency Comments and Responses to Comments

AGENCY COMMENT		FAA RESPONSE
<i>United States Environmental Protection Agency</i>		
1	EPA encourages FAA to ensure that the combustion sources used during the construction of the project are compliant with the applicable New Source Performance Standards and appropriate air permitting is done through the local city/state agencies for the combustion sources.	<i>Combustion sources used during construction of the Proposed Action will be compliant with the applicable New Source Performance Standards. Air permits will be obtained through the local city/state agencies as applicable.</i>
2	In addition, preparation and implementation of a dust control plan should be considered to mitigate the fugitive dust impacts in the local community.	<i>Construction specifications for the Proposed Action will include measures for control of fugitive dust.</i>
3	Since the construction activities are planned to last approximately eight months and plan to occur during the daytime and nighttime hours, EPA encourages FAA to consider developing an outreach plan and inform the community about the planned project and potential increase in noise levels.	<i>While construction activities are planned to last approximately eight months, the vast majority will occur during normal working hours and are not expected to be above the typical noise levels currently experienced within the Runway 4 flight path. Nighttime work is limited to the placement of the overhead steel maintenance walkway over the eastbound lanes of Grand Central Parkway. The intent is that the walkway will be constructed off-site (not within the roadway) and only the placement of the structure over Grand Central Parkway will occur at night, thus limiting the impact to traffic and noise levels. FAA made the Draft Environmental Assessment, which detailed the proposed action and associated impacts, available to the public for a 30-day review period. FAA will also work with PANYNJ, NYSDOT, and NYCDOT regarding any public outreach or community involvement as they may require for the proposed work.</i>
<i>Delaware Nation Historic Preservation Department</i>		
1	The Lenape people occupied the area indicated in your letter during and prior to European contact until their eventual removal to our present locations. According to our files, the proposed project should have no adverse effect on any known cultural or religious sites of interest to the Delaware Nation.	<i>Comment noted. Thank you for your response.</i>

AGENCY COMMENT		FAA RESPONSE
2	<p>Please continue with the project as planned keeping in mind should human remains and/or any Native American archaeological resources inadvertently be uncovered, all construction and ground disturbing activities should immediately be halted until the appropriate state agencies, as well as this office, are notified (within 24 hours), and a proper archaeological assessment can be made.</p>	<p><i>Construction specifications for the Proposed Action will include a requirement that if human remains and/or any Native American archaeological resources are inadvertently uncovered, all construction and ground disturbing activities shall be halted until the appropriate state agencies, including the Delaware Nation Historic Preservation Department, are notified (within 24 hours), and a proper archaeological assessment can be made.</i></p>