



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
National Institute of Standards and Technology
Gaithersburg, Maryland 20899

February 16, 2024

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

From: Mark Liao
NEPA Coordinator

Subject: Categorical Exclusion

Project Title: Utica University Crime Laboratory
Location: Bull Hall, Utica University Main Campus
1600 Burrstone Rd., Utica, NY 13502

The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and associated implementing regulations (40 CFR Parts 1500-1508) require that all major actions by federal agencies be reviewed with respect to the environmental consequences on the human environment. The National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) is providing a congressionally directed funding grant for the Utica University Crime Laboratory project. Consequently, NEPA and the associated implementing regulations apply.

This memorandum summarizes the determination that the Utica University Crime Laboratory project has been found to be categorically excluded from further environmental review under NEPA.

Description of the Action

This project includes the construction of a 1200 square foot Crime Laboratory at Bull Hall on the campus of Utica University. The Crime Laboratory will be constructed by the renovation of 700 square feet existing space on the first floor of Bull Hall along with 500 square feet of new construction under an existing veranda. The project also includes renovation of an 880 square foot area on the second floor of Bull Hall converting a lounge area into classroom/office space. Bull Hall is a state-of-the-art, 23,000 square foot academic building located on the Southeast side of the Utica University Campus, and the principal home of the School of Business and Justice Studies (including Criminal Justice).

This renovation/addition will be built out and equipped as a crime laboratory with an open floor plan space that will support a full-range of crime scene investigation activities. Faculty members will be able to develop and stage crime scenes in a space that can be secured and remain undisturbed for indefinite periods of time. An open floor design will provide room for multiple related or unrelated crime scenes, and/or additional room for teaching or observation. A large open bay-style door will enable faculty to bring in different furniture, small vehicles, and natural or organic materials so that a wide variety of scenes can be set.

The Crime Laboratory will also be used for security and anti-terrorism training. Students will develop security plans, list the needs from cooperating law enforcement agencies, create a contingency plan, perform threat and vulnerability assessments, execute event-based security, crowd screening and control, VIP protection services, and practice crisis management and incident control. As with crime scene investigation scenarios, security and anti-terrorism training will utilize students from other academic programs, including Public Relations and Journalism and Theatre.

This project will be accomplished in accordance with all applicable state and federal environmental and safety regulations. All applicable regulatory permitting will be obtained.

Specific Considerations of this Action and any Extraordinary Circumstances

- Air Emissions, Stormwater, Wastewater, Critical Habitats

For the addition/renovation of the Bull Hall building, no significant impacts to air, water resources or critical habitats are expected.

- Building Staffing/Utilities

Staffing at Bull Hall is not expected to increase significantly. Water consumption and electricity use are not expected to change significantly over current building use.

- Greenhouse Gas Emissions

An increase in greenhouse gas emissions is expected from the heating and cooling required for the additional space constructed in this project; however, these emissions are expected to be minor and will be minimized by implementing energy efficient measure such LED light fixtures, daylight harvesting, and low global warming refrigerants mandated by New York State.

- Flooding Potential and Resilience

This project is not located within a FEMA mapped 100- or 500- year floodplain.

- **Hazardous Materials**

Any hazardous materials (i.e., asbestos, lead based paint, polychlorinated biphenyls) that may be disturbed in the building renovations will be handled and disposed of in accordance with State and Federal regulations.

- **Historic/Cultural Significance**

For the addition/renovation tasks planned, no adverse impacts are expected to any historic or cultural resources at the project site or in the vicinity. The State Historic Preservation Officer has concurred with this finding (Attached).

- **Environmental Justice**

Utica University is located in a census tract that is an underserved community. This project is located on the University's existing property/campus, and is not anticipated to have any disproportional adverse human health or environmental impacts.

Effects of the Action

No significant adverse impacts on the environment are expected from this action.

Categorical Exclusion

The activities associated with this project fall within the criteria of the following Department of Commerce Categorical Exclusion:

A-1 Minor renovations and additions to buildings, roads, airfields, grounds, equipment, and other facilities that do not result in a change in the functional use of the real property (e.g. realigning interior spaces of an existing building, adding a small storage shed to an existing building, retrofitting for energy conservation, or installing a small antenna on an already existing antenna tower that does not cause the total height to exceed 200 feet and where the FCC would not require an environmental assessment or environmental impact statement for the installation). This CE does not apply in instances where the project must be submitted to the National Capital Planning Commission (NCPC) for review and NCPC determines that it does not have an applicable Categorical Exclusion.

This project is considered a minor renovation of a building that does not change functional use of the real property. The project does not require review by the NCPC.

The proposed activity: Utica University Crime Laboratory is categorically excluded from the need for further environmental review under NEPA. Any changes to the above project will require additional NEPA review.

Mark Liao
NIST NEPA Coordinator

Date

R.C. Vaughn
NIST Chief Facilities Management Officer

Date

Attachment A
State Historic Preservation Officer Letter



**New York State
Parks, Recreation and
Historic Preservation**

KATHY HOCHUL
Governor

ERIK KULLESEID
Commissioner

February 16, 2024

Phillip Neuberg
Federal Preservation Officer
National Institute of Standards & Technology
100 Bureau Drive
MS 190
Gaithersburg, MD 20899

Re: National Institute of Standards and Technology/OAHP
Utica University Crime Lab Construction at Bull Hall
1600 Burrstone Rd, City of Utica, Oneida County
24PR01145

Dear Phillip Neuberg:

Thank you for requesting the comments of the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO). We have reviewed the submitted project information in accordance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966. These comments are those of the SHPO and relate only to Historic/Cultural resources.

Based upon this review, the SHPO has no archaeological concerns and no concerns with the proposed construction at Bull Hall, built in 1982. Therefore, it is the opinion of the SHPO that no historic properties, including archaeological and/or historic resources, will be affected by this undertaking.

If you have any questions, I can be reached at nancy.herter@parks.ny.gov.

Sincerely,

Nancy Herter
Director, Technical Preservation Services Bureau