

## **FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT TENNESSEE VALLEY AUTHORITY**

### **KNOXVILLE PARKING GARAGE**

The Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA) proposes to construct and operate a parking garage in downtown Knoxville, Tennessee. The garage would be constructed on a 1.1-acre site a short distance southwest of TVA's Knoxville Office Complex (KOC). The site is presently occupied by the vacant Liberty Building, a surface parking lot, and an open disturbed area where a demolished building once stood. The garage would accommodate 800 to 1,000 parking spaces in a six- or seven-story tall structure. The parking garage would help meet TVA's need for additional parking near its KOC for TVA employees, TVA visitors, and future occupants of TVA's KOC East Tower office space. Most of the East Tower office space is currently unoccupied and the availability of nearby parking has been identified as a factor in TVA's efforts to fill the unoccupied office space. The garage would also help meet the City of Knoxville's need for more weekend, evening, and holiday downtown visitor parking spaces.

TVA and the City of Knoxville have entered into a conditional Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for the proposed parking garage. Under the terms of the MOU, the City would purchase the site and prepare it for construction. Site preparation would include demolition and removal of the Liberty Building, completion of necessary environmental remediation, and completion of necessary utility and infrastructure changes, improvements, and or relocations. At this time, the City has not identified the need for utility relocations. Following the completion of these activities, the City would transfer the site to TVA in fee simple interest. TVA would then fund, design, build, own, and operate the parking garage. Under terms of the MOU, TVA would make parking spaces available to the public during evening, weekends, and holidays in accordance with the City's free nights/weekends parking program. TVA would retain about 100 permanent parking spaces that would not be available to the public as part of the City's parking program. As practicable for TVA in its reasonable discretion, TVA would seek input from and cooperate with the City in developing the design of the parking garage, consistent with the City's Downtown Knoxville Design Guidelines. The garage design would include charging stations for electric vehicles, light-emitting diode lighting, and bicycle lockers. TVA would also consider incorporating alternative energy features in the design.

The proposed action is the subject of an environmental assessment (EA) prepared by TVA. This EA is incorporated by reference. The City of Knoxville was a cooperating agency in the preparation of the EA. The EA addresses two alternatives. Under the No Action Alternative, TVA would not construct and operate the proposed parking garage. The City would not, for the foreseeable future, remove the Liberty Building or otherwise prepare the site for construction of a new building or other facility. The need for additional parking near the KOC would also not be met. Under the Action Alternative, TVA would construct and operate the proposed parking garage as described above, and the City would remove the Liberty Building and prepare the site. The Action Alternative is TVA's preferred alternative.

The site of the proposed garage is in a heavily urbanized area and implementing the Action Alternative would have no effects on biological resources including endangered and threatened species, or on wetlands and floodplains. No water bodies would be directly affected and

standard best management practices would be used to prevent sediment runoff. The project site is underlain by carbonate rock with the potential to develop sinkholes. TVA would take this into account when designing the garage and no impacts to geology or groundwater are anticipated. The proposed garage would be consistent with the site's land use and zoning. The demolition and removal of the Liberty Building would generate solid and hazardous wastes. These wastes would be handled and disposed of in accordance with applicable regulations, and no adverse environmental impacts are anticipated. The primary noise impacts would be during demolition of the Liberty Building and construction of the garage. These activities would be limited to between 7 AM and 6 PM and anticipated noise impacts would be insignificant. The Action Alternative would have a minor beneficial impact to the local economy and would not disproportionately affect minority or low-income populations.

The proposed garage would affect the viewsheds of nearby buildings listed on the National Register of Historic Places. TVA has preliminarily determined that these effects would not be adverse because the viewsheds of the historic buildings have been compromised by the construction of other nearby more modern buildings. TVA will conduct the phased identification and evaluation of these historic buildings and an archaeological survey of the site and complete the required consultation with the Tennessee State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) and other consulting parties before proceeding with the construction of the garage. The overall visual effect of the proposed garage would be beneficial.

Construction of the proposed garage could have a minor impact on traffic in its immediate vicinity due to short-term lane closures and detours. With the exception of the intersection of Western Avenue/Summit Hill Drive at Broadway Street/Henley Street during the evening peak traffic period, all nearby intersections have an adequate level of service. Increased traffic from vehicles parking in the garage is unlikely to further reduce the level of service of nearby intersections. Building demolition, site preparation, and construction activities would cause minor short-term impacts to air quality in the form of fugitive dust, which would be mitigated through the use of appropriate dust suppression methods. The expected local increase in traffic from vehicles using the completed garage would result in a small increase in emissions of air pollutants; these increases would be well below established significance levels.

TVA issued a public notice of the proposed action prior to beginning work on the EA. The comments TVA received were considered during the development of the EA.

### **Mitigation**

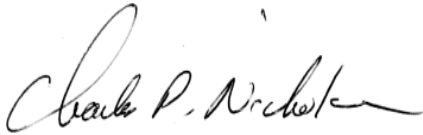
The City of Knoxville and TVA would use appropriate best management practices and comply with applicable regulations and ordinances during the demolition of the Liberty Building, site preparation, and construction of the parking garage.

Following the City's purchase of the property, TVA would conduct a Phase I cultural resources survey before any work occurs that could potentially affect a historic property. If it is determined, in consultation with the SHPO, that historic properties would be adversely affected by the proposed undertaking, TVA and the City would, in consultation, enter into a Memorandum of Agreement with the SHPO pursuant to 36 CFR Section (§) 800.6 to resolve any adverse effects.

### **Conclusion and Findings**

Based on the findings listed above and the analyses in the EA, we conclude that the proposed action of construction and operating the proposed parking garage, as well as the City of

Knoxville's associated action of demolishing the Liberty Building and preparing the site for construction, would not be a major federal action significantly affecting the environment. This conclusion is based upon completion of the consultation process for historic properties. Accordingly, an environmental impact statement is not required.



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Date Signed