

September 4, 2024

Deputy Director Frank Lands  
National Park Service  
1849 C Street NW  
Washington DC 20240

Dear Deputy Director Lands,

This is a formal request by the City of New York to extend the lease of Floyd Bennett Field for an additional year. Floyd Bennett Field is currently being used to provide emergency shelter to newly arrived migrants and we are seeking a renewal with minimal changes to the lease or the memorandum of agreement to avoid disruptions to operations.


The City continues to grapple with this national humanitarian crisis caused by the rapid arrival of more than 214,600 migrants in the last two years. On October 2022 and on October 2023 respectively, both the City and the State of New York declared emergencies and both emergency executive orders remain in effect.

The number of migrants under the care of the City was 61,400 in September 2023, of which 46,830 were families with children, and has increased to 64,300 in July 2024, of which 50,060 are families with children. On November 12, 2023, the City began to operate portions of Floyd Bennett Field to provide temporary shelter to migrants and the shelter has been operating at maximum capacity since. The vacancy rate in emergency shelters for families with children under the care of the City does not exceed 1% currently.

The City has worked hard to reduce the census of migrants in care by investing in case management, implementing time limits for shelter, setting up an Asylum Application Help Center which has filed more than 70,000 federal applications, and connecting migrants to workforce centers. However, the City continues to receive 800 to 4,000 asylum seekers per week requesting emergency shelter and the city continues to need to shelter them.

Therefore, the City respectfully requests that a 1-year extension be granted to the lease of Floyd Bennett Field.

Best regards,

  
Molly Schaeffer  
Director, Mayor's Office of Asylum Seeker Operations  
City of New York