

Missile Project Workforce Hub Still Set For Lewistown

Deb Hill Reporter Nov 4, 2023



An artist's rendition from the draft Environmental Impact Statement shows how Sentinel worker housing and communal facilities for up to 3,000 workers might look. During a July 2022 public meeting, an Air Force spokesperson emphasized this drawing is only conceptual; the actual design might look considerably different.

- Image courtesy of U.S. Air Force

Planning continues for the Sentinel Missile project, with work on the weapons system installation in Central Montana now scheduled for early in the next decade.

Impacts in the Lewistown area include removal of the Minuteman missiles, complete renovation of missile silos to hold the new Sentinel missiles, installation of communication towers, development of utility corridors and construction "laydown" areas, and development of a workforce hub site somewhere near Lewistown.

"In accordance with the Environmental Impact Statement produced by the Air Force for the Sentinel project, the plan is to establish a workforce hub near Lewistown," said Casey Staheli, communications manager for Northrop Grumman.

Northrop Grumman (NG) is the company contracted with the U.S. Air Force for the Sentinel project.

"To support the work of renovating missile silos, NG will build workforce hubs to house and support a workforce of up to 3,000 workers at peak occupancy," Casey told the

News-Argus in an email Monday. "They [the workforce hubs] will be 50-60 acres in size with housing, dining facilities, clinics, etc., for the workforce."

Lewistown is not the only community where workforce hubs will be constructed. According to the Air Force Global Strike Command website for the Sentinel project, hubs also are planned for Great Falls, Kimball, Neb., and Minot, North Dakota.

Staheli said no workforce hubs are yet under construction, but planning for their construction continues.

The current timetable puts Kimball, Neb., a community of 2,000 near Interstate 80 in the southwestern corner of Nebraska, ahead of Lewistown for hub construction.

As reported by the Western Nebraska Observer, as of June residents of Kimball were told to expect the workforce hub would begin operations in 2025.

Prior to that, perhaps as early as next year, a "Pioneer Camp" will be developed there. The Pioneer Camp is where contractors for the workforce hub will live.

The Kimball workforce hub will be three-stories of 600-square-foot apartments, housing between 2,500 and 3,000 people at full capacity. The Kimball hub will be built on approximately 60 acres, and will be fenced. In addition to apartments it may also include a small clinic, grocery store, cafeteria, and janitorial/laundry facilities.

Federally contracted workers, many from the Gulf region, will live in the workforce hub in Kimball. Those workers include welders, pipefitters and heavy equipment operators, the Kimball paper reported.

As of Monday, neither Fergus County nor Lewistown City officials had heard where the local workforce hub might be located.