




U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT  
WASHINGTON, DC 20410-5000

OFFICE OF PUBLIC AND INDIAN HOUSING

JAN 31 2020

**MEMORANDUM FOR:** R. Hunter Kurtz, Assistant Secretary  
for Public and Indian Housing, P

**FROM:** Robert Mulderig, Deputy Assistant Secretary  
Office of Public Housing Investments, PI 

**SUBJECT:** Environmental Assessment and Finding of No Significant Impact  
Under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) for the  
FY 2020 Choice Neighborhoods Planning Grant NOFA  
(FR-6400-N-38)

It is the finding of this Office that the subject Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) does not constitute a major Federal action having an individually or cumulatively significant effect on the physical/human environment and, therefore, does not require the preparation of an environmental impact statement.

The purpose of this NOFA is to announce the availability of FY 2020 funds and to provide program information and application instructions for the Choice Neighborhoods Planning Grant program.

The Choice Neighborhoods Program is designed to address struggling neighborhoods with distressed public housing and/or HUD-assisted housing through a comprehensive approach to neighborhood transformation. Planning Grants enable a community to undertake a comprehensive planning process and implement limited neighborhood improvements, such as beautification projects, façade improvement programs, and fresh food initiatives. Eligible applicants are public housing authorities, local governments, tribal entities, and nonprofit organizations.

The authority for the Choice Neighborhoods Program is Section 24 of the United States Housing Act of 1937 (42 U.S.C. 1437v), as amended by provisions of the FY 2020 HUD appropriations act.

The NOFA provides for environmental review of Choice Neighborhoods Planning Grant projects and activities by the state or unit of general local government (Responsible Entity) under 24 CFR Part 58 for all grantees, unless HUD determines to perform the environmental review under 24 CFR Part 50 in a particular case. Under this NOFA and applicable law, an applicant is prohibited from undertaking any actions that are choice-limiting or could have environmentally adverse effects, including demolishing, acquiring, rehabilitating, converting, leasing, repairing, or constructing property proposed to be assisted under this NOFA or committing or expending HUD or non-HUD funds for such activities, until HUD has approved a Responsible Entity's Request for Release of Funds/Certification after an environmental review has been completed in accordance with 24 CFR Part 58 or HUD has completed an environmental review and given

approval for the action under 24 CFR Part 50. The environmental review may result in requirements for mitigation or remedial measures, or a change in the project site.

This Office finds that issuance of this NOFA will not have a significant effect on the human environment because prior to any grantee's commitment of funds for any activities that would have an environmental impact or limit the choice of reasonable alternatives, an environmental review of these activities under the NEPA and related laws and authorities will be done. Thus, the environmental effects of activities assisted under this NOFA will be taken into account at the appropriate time, and environmental impacts will be assessed in the local setting in which they will occur.

Concurrences:

Susanne Sotirchos  
PIH Environmental Clearance Officer  
Office of Public Housing Investments

Date: 1/22/2020 Sign: Susanne A. Sotirchos

Danielle Schopp  
Environmental Clearance Officer  
Office of Community Planning  
and Development

Date: 1/31/2020 Sign: Danielle Schopp

Christopher H. Hartenau  
Environmental Clearance Officer  
Office of General Counsel

Date: 1/30/2020 Sign: Christopher H. Hartenau

Approval:

R. Hunter Kurtz  
Assistant Secretary  
for Public and Indian Housing

Date: 2/6/20 Sign: [Signature]