



**U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development**

Public and Indian Housing

Choice Neighborhoods Planning Grants Program

FR-5900-N-14

*Nani A. Coloretti*

Nani A. Coloretti  
Deputy Secretary

*11/13/15*

Date

*Lourdes*

Lourdes Castro Ramirez  
Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for the Office of Public and Indian Housing

*11/13/15*

Date

Choice Neighborhoods Planning Grants Program

FR-5900-N-14

TABLE OF CONTENTS

- I. [Funding Opportunity Description.](#)
- II. [Award Information.](#)
- III. [Eligibility Information.](#)
  - A. Eligible Applicants.
  - B. Cost Sharing or Matching.
  - C. Other.
- IV. [Application and Submission Information.](#)
  - A. Obtaining an Application Package.
  - B. Content and Form of Application Submission.
  - C. DUNS Number and SAM Registration.
  - D. Application Submission Dates and Times.
  - E. Intergovernmental Review.
  - F. Funding Restrictions.
  - G. Other Submission Requirements.
- V. [Application Review Information.](#)
  - A. Criteria.
  - B. Review and Selection Process.
  - C. Anticipated Announcement and Award Dates.
- VI. [Award Administration Information.](#)
  - A. Award Notices.
  - B. Administrative, National and Departmental Policy Requirements.
  - C. Reporting.
- VII. [Agency Contact\(s\).](#)
- VIII. [Other Information.](#)
- IX. [Appendix.](#)

## U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development

**Program Office:** Public and Indian Housing  
**Funding Opportunity Title:** Choice Neighborhoods Planning Grants Program  
**Announcement Type:** Initial  
**Funding Opportunity Number:** FR-5900-N-14  
**Primary CFDA Number:** 14.892  
**Due Date for Applications:** 02/09/2016

### SUMMARY:

Today's publication provides information and instructions for the FY2015/2016 Choice Neighborhoods Planning Grants program. This Notice is comprised of both Notice of HUD's Fiscal Year 2015 and 2016 Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) Policy Requirements and General Section (General Section) to HUD's FY2015 NOFAs for Discretionary Programs, published on October 10, 2014, and this program section of the NOFA. With this publication, HUD is introducing Planning and Action Grants, a new type of planning grant award, in addition to the two-year Planning Grants.

1. Planning Grants are two-year grants that assist communities with severely distressed public or HUD-assisted housing in developing a successful neighborhood transformation plan and building the support necessary for that plan to be successfully implemented.

2. Planning and Action Grants are three-year planning grants that demonstrate a commitment to "doing while planning." Experience shows that tangible, early actions help communities build momentum for further planning and the eventual transition from planning to implementation of that plan. These actions improve neighborhood confidence, which in turn sustains the community's energy, attracts more engagement and resources, and helps convince skeptical stakeholders that positive change is possible. Under these grants, the planning process activities would take place during the first 24 months of the grant period. The planning process will identify Action Activities that will be carried out during the latter portion of the grant period. Action Activities, as defined in section I.A.3.f, are physical improvement, community development, and economic development projects that enhance and accelerate the transformation of the neighborhood. Activities are limited to: reclaiming and recycling vacant property; beautification, placemaking, and community arts projects; homeowner and business façade improvement programs; neighborhood broadband/Wi-Fi; and gap financing for economic development projects. Action Activities must build upon the planning for the target housing and neighborhood.

HUD is making available approximately \$10 million in assistance through the FY2015/FY2016 Choice Neighborhoods program for Planning Grants and Planning and Action Grants. Under this publication, eligible applicants will apply for Planning and Action Grants. The top scoring applicants will be awarded Planning and Action Grants, and the next set of highest scoring applicants will be awarded Planning Grants, based on funding availability.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Please direct questions regarding the specific program requirements of this Program Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) to the agency contact identified in Section VII. Please direct questions regarding the FY 2015 General Section to the Office of Strategic Planning and Management, Grants Management Division, at (202) 708-0667 (this is not a toll-free number). Persons with hearing or speech impairments may access these numbers via TTY by calling the Federal Relay Service at 1-800-877-8339.

## Additional Overview Information

1. Incorporation of the General Section. HUD publishes a General Section each fiscal year that contains mandatory requirements for all applicants to HUD's various competitive grant programs, including this NOFA. Applications must meet all of the requirements of the General Section in addition to the requirements of this NOFA to be considered and potentially receive funding. The full title of the General Section is the General Section to the Fiscal Year 2015 NOFAs for Discretionary Programs. Copies are available at [Grants.gov](http://Grants.gov) or HUD's [Funds Available](http://Funds Available) page, [http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/program\\_offices/administration/grants/fundsavail](http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/program_offices/administration/grants/fundsavail).

2. OMB Approval Number(s):

2577-0269

## I. Funding Opportunity Description.

### A. Program Description.

#### 1. Purpose.

**Choice Neighborhoods Summary:** Choice Neighborhoods is HUD's signature place-based initiative in support of the President's goal to build Ladders of Opportunity to the middle class. This vision builds on the work that has been done by the Neighborhood Revitalization Initiative (NRI), an interagency partnership between HUD and the Departments of Education, Health and Human Services, Justice, and the Treasury, since 2009. Through a variety of interventions, the Ladders of Opportunity initiative is helping community partners rebuild neighborhoods, expand early learning opportunities, create pathways to jobs, and strengthen families. This federal partnership supports locally driven solutions for transforming distressed neighborhoods using place-based strategies to address the interconnected challenges of poor quality housing, inadequate schools, poor health, high crime, and lack of capital.

Choice Neighborhoods is designed to address struggling neighborhoods with distressed public housing and/or HUD-assisted housing through a comprehensive approach to neighborhood transformation. Local leaders, residents, and stakeholders, such as public housing authorities, cities, schools, police, business owners, nonprofits, and private developers, come together to create a plan that transforms distressed HUD housing and addresses the challenges in the surrounding neighborhood. The program helps communities transform neighborhoods by revitalizing severely distressed public and/or assisted housing and investing and leveraging investments in well-functioning services, high quality public schools and education programs, high quality early learning programs and services, crime prevention strategies, public assets, public transportation, and improved access to jobs. Choice Neighborhoods ensures that current public and assisted housing residents will be able to benefit from this transformation, by preserving affordable housing or providing residents with the choice to move to affordable and accessible housing in another existing neighborhood of opportunity. Choice Neighborhoods is focused on three core goals:

1. **Housing:** Replace distressed public and assisted housing with high-quality mixed-income housing that is well-managed and responsive to the needs of the surrounding neighborhood;
2. **People:** Improve educational outcomes and intergenerational mobility for youth and supports delivered directly to youth and their families; and
3. **Neighborhood:** Create the conditions necessary for public and private reinvestment in distressed neighborhoods to offer the kinds of amenities and assets, including safety, good schools, and commercial activity, that are important to families' choices about their community.

To achieve these core goals, successful applicants must develop and implement a comprehensive neighborhood revitalization strategy, or "Transformation Plan." This Transformation Plan will become the guiding document for the revitalization of the public and/or assisted housing units, while simultaneously directing the transformation of the surrounding neighborhood and positive outcomes for families.

Experience shows that to successfully develop and implement the Transformation Plan, broad civic engagement will be needed. Successful applicants will need to work with public and private agencies, organizations (including philanthropic and civic organizations), and individuals to gather and leverage the financial and human capital resources needed to support the sustainability of the plan. These efforts should build community support for and involvement in the development and implementation of the plan.

Experience also shows that tangible, early actions help communities build momentum for change and transition from planning to implementation of that plan. These actions improve neighborhood confidence. The action, in turn, sustains the community's energy, attracts more engagement, and helps convince skeptical stakeholders that positive change is possible.

HUD is working with other Federal agencies to align programs so that place-based solutions can be more readily implemented. This interagency collaboration will assist Choice Neighborhoods applicants in identifying strategies for building upon and leveraging high-quality housing, academic, family, and community programs and anticipated investments in neighborhood revitalization efforts funded by other Federal agencies. Examples of these efforts include the Department of Justice's Byrne Criminal Justice Innovation program, the Department of Education's Promise Neighborhoods program, the Department of Health and Human Services' Community Health Center program, and the Building Neighborhood Capacity Program. HUD is also a core member of the Partnership for Sustainable Communities with the Department of Transportation and the Environmental Protection Agency, which supports communities that provide affordable housing, robust transportation choices, and greater economic competitiveness, by helping them to align federal investments in housing, transportation, economic development, infrastructure, and the environment. HUD's Office of Recapitalization has also committed to providing flexibility for Choice Neighborhoods grantees that are concurrently seeking conversion under the Rental Assistance Demonstration and continues to explore ways to ensure these programs work together for communities. Choice Neighborhoods, likewise, can complement local capacity building efforts that are facilitated by the Promise Zones or Strong Cities, Strong Communities initiatives. Through these programs, the Departments intend to create incentives for communities to focus on the same geographic area and apply for funding from more than one source. By focusing resources in targeted places, and by drawing on the compounding effect of well-coordinated actions, HUD believes Choice Neighborhoods will support local organizations building neighborhoods of opportunity.

**Objectives and Metrics to Measure Long Term Success:** Each Choice Neighborhoods grantee is expected to develop metrics based on the objectives listed below in order to measure performance. Applicants awarded Planning and Action Grants and Planning Grants are encouraged to develop neighborhood revitalization plans with these objectives in mind:

**1. Housing Objectives:** Housing transformed with the assistance of Choice Neighborhoods should be:

- a. **Energy Efficient, Sustainable, Accessible, Healthy, and Free from Discrimination.** Housing that is well-designed, embraces not only the requirements of accessible design but also concepts of visitability and universal design, has low per unit energy consumption and healthy indoor air quality, is built to be resistant to local disaster risk, has affordable broadband Internet access, and is free from discrimination.
- b. **Mixed-Income.** Housing affordable to families and individuals with a broad range of incomes including low-income, moderate-income, and market rate or unrestricted.
- c. **Well-Managed and Financially Viable.** Developments that have budgeted appropriately for the rental income that can be generated from the project and meet or exceed industry standards for quality management and maintenance of the property.

**2. People Objectives:** People that live in the neighborhood, with a primary focus on residents of the housing targeted for revitalization, benefit from:

- a. **Effective Education.** A high level of resident access to high quality early learning programs and

services so children enter kindergarten ready to learn; significant improvement in the quality of schools nearest to the target development that prepare students to graduate from high school college- and career-ready; and significant growth in existing individual resident educational outcomes over time relative to the state average.

**b. Employment Opportunities.** The income of neighborhood residents and residents of the target housing development, particularly wage income for non-elderly/non-disabled adult residents, increases over time.

**c. Quality Health Care.** Health for residents over time is as good as or better than that of other households with similar economic and demographic conditions.

**d. Housing Location, Quality, and Affordability.** Residents who, by their own choice, do not return to the development have housing and neighborhood opportunities as good as or better than the opportunities available to those who occupy the redeveloped site.

**3. Neighborhood Objectives:** Through investments catalyzed with Choice Neighborhoods, the neighborhood enjoys improved:

**a. Private and Public Investment in the Neighborhood.** The neighboring housing has a very low vacancy/abandonment rate, the housing inventory is of high quality, and the neighborhood is mixed income and maintains a mixture of incomes over time.

**b. Amenities.** The distance traveled from the neighborhood to basic services is equal to or less than the distance traveled from the median neighborhood in the metropolitan area. Those basic services include grocery stores, banks, health clinics and doctors' offices, dentist offices, and high quality early learning programs and services.

**c. Effective Public Schools:** Public schools in the target neighborhood are safe and welcoming places for children and their families. In addition, schools have test scores that are as good as or better than the state average or are implementing school reforms that raise student achievement over time and graduate students from high school prepared for college and a career.

**d. Safety:** Residents are living in a safer environment as evidenced by the revitalized neighborhood having dramatically lower crime rates than the neighborhood had prior to redevelopment and maintaining a lower crime rate over time.

## **2. Changes from Previous NOFA.**

**Action Activities** – This NOFA introduces Action Activities that demonstrate a commitment to “doing while planning.” Experience shows that tangible, early actions help communities build momentum for further planning and transition from planning to implementation of that plan. These actions improve neighborhood confidence, which in turn sustains the community’s energy, attracts more engagement and resources, and helps convince skeptical stakeholders that positive change is possible. A few new rating factors have been included related to Action Activities.

**Soundness of Approach** – This NOFA incorporates rating factors for the proposed planning process in the Soundness of Approach section. This is a clearer structure than the previous NOFA, which included a Plan section.

**Capacity** – This NOFA evaluates only the Applicant and Co-Applicant for the Capacity rating factors on Capacity to Lead the Planning Process and Resident and Community Engagement. Previously, the capacity of Planning Coordinators could be rated for these criteria. A new factor captures the capacity of additional planning partners.

### 3. Definitions.

- a. Eligibility Requirements – Eligibility requirements are those requirements that must be met for an application to be eligible for funding. Deficiencies in meeting an eligibility requirement may be categorized as either curable or non-curable.
- b. Threshold Requirement – Threshold requirements are a category of eligibility requirements. A threshold requirement is a requirement that must be met in order for an application to be reviewed. Threshold requirements are not curable.  
Threshold requirements are listed in Section III.C.2. of both the 2015 General Section and in this Program NOFA.  
Applicants must ensure their application package addresses all threshold requirements. Please check your application carefully!
- c. Deficiency – Deficiencies are not the same as errors. Errors are never curable except as permitted under Section IV.C.2. Deficiencies are items of missing or omitted information within a submitted application. Deficiencies typically involve missing documents, information on a form, or some other type of unsatisfied information requirement (e.g., an unsigned form, unchecked box, etc.). Depending on specific criteria, deficiencies may be either curable or non-curable.
- d. Curable Deficiency – A curable deficiency is a specific type of deficiency that applicants may correct with timely action. To be curable the deficiency must:
- Not be a threshold requirement;
  - Not influence how an applicant is ranked or scored versus other applicants; and
  - Be remedied within the time frame specified in the notice of deficiency.
- e. Non-Curable Deficiency – An applicant cannot correct a non-curable deficiency after the submission deadline. Non-curable deficiencies are deficiencies that if corrected would change an applicant’s score or rank versus other applicants. Non-curable deficiencies may result in an application being marked ineligible, or otherwise adversely affect an application’s score and final determination.

**f. Program Definitions.** For purposes of the Choice Neighborhoods program, the following definitions of key terms apply. As needed, other definitions relevant to specific thresholds, requirements, and rating factors will be provided in those sections of the NOFA.

**1. Action Activities.** The term “Action Activities” refers to a portion of Planning and Action Grant funds (see “Use of Grant Funds” in section III.C.8) that must be used toward limited, physical neighborhood improvements during the three-year Planning and Action Grant period (or during an 18-month period for FY 2010 - 2014 Planning Grantees who receive Action Activities funding only). Action Activity funds are flexible funds that must be responsive to the neighborhoods’ needs. They must be used for physical, community, or economic development projects that enhance and accelerate the transformation of the neighborhood. The projects funded may also build community capacity and social cohesion through the way in which the projects are designed, led, and implemented. Action Activities funds are for physical improvements, and must not be used for non-physical uses, such as supportive services, staffing, and marketing. These funds must also not be used for basic infrastructure or as a substitute for basic municipal services. Additionally, funds must not be used for redevelopment of the public or HUD-assisted housing targeted in this application, including acquisition, relocation, demolition and remediation, rehabilitation, or construction of the targeted housing. These funds should be used for innovative solutions to neighborhood challenges and must be used for projects that can be completed within the three-year time frame for Planning and Action Grants (or an 18 month time frame for FY 2010 - 2014 Planning Grantees who receive Action Activities funding only). Uses of funds are limited to:

- a. Reclaiming and recycling vacant property into community gardens, pocket parks, farmers markets, or land banking (with maintenance);
- b. Beautification, placemaking, and community arts projects, such as creative signage to enhance neighborhood branding, murals and sculptures, specialty streetscaping, or garden tool loan

programs;

- c. Homeowner and business façade improvement programs;
- d. Neighborhood broadband/Wi-Fi;
- e. Fresh food initiatives, such as farmers markets and mobile fresh food vendors; and
- f. Gap financing for economic development projects.

If during the planning process, another use is identified, HUD has the discretion to consider whether that use is allowable based on the justification in accordance with the criteria listed in the opening paragraph of this definition.

**2. Affordable Housing.** The term “affordable housing” includes, in the context of a Choice Neighborhoods Transformation Plan, housing for which the owner or purchaser of the project has recorded a HUD-approved affordability use restriction for households earning up to 120 percent of Area Median Income (AMI) for no fewer than 20 years. Such housing is not considered replacement housing for the purposes of the one-for-one replacement requirement. The affordability restrictions shall be contained in a legally enforceable document recorded in the appropriate recorder’s office or registry of deeds and consistent with the long-term viability of the project as rental or homeownership housing.

**3. Anchor Institutions.** Anchor institutions are place-based entities that have regional significance and are permanently rooted, economic drivers in specific locales generating jobs, creating local business opportunities, and contributing in significant ways to the development of human, social, and cultural capital. They include universities, hospitals, sports facilities, performing arts and other major cultural facilities (such as museums and central libraries), and large corporations.

**4. Assisted Housing.** In this NOFA, the term “assisted housing” (used interchangeably with “HUD-assisted housing”) means housing assisted under sections 8 or 9 of the United States Housing Act of 1937 (42 U.S.C. 1437f and 42 U.S.C. 1437g) (excluding tenant-based vouchers and where fewer than 50 percent of the units in a housing development receive project-based voucher assistance), section 221(d)(3) or section 236 of the National Housing Act (12 U.S.C. 1715 and 12 U.S.C. 1715z-1), section 202 of Housing Act of 1959 (12 U.S.C. 1701q), section 811 of the National Affordable Housing Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 8013), and the Native American Housing Assistance and Self-Determination Act of 1996, 25 U.S.C. § 4101, et seq (Indian Housing). In the case of Indian Housing, this includes only single family and duplex rental housing that is clustered in a development and/or multifamily rental housing projects in which at least 50 percent of the units are assisted.

**5. Co-Applicant.** Co-Applicant means any entity with which the Lead Applicant chooses to apply for funding under this NOFA. A Co-Applicant must also be an Eligible Applicant. The Co-Applicant will also sign the Planning Grant Agreement or Planning and Action Grant Agreement and be responsible for implementing the activities identified in the Transformation Plan, but will not directly receive access to funding through HUD’s Line of Credit Control System (LOCCS). A Co-Applicant is not required.

**6. Commitment to enter into a Housing Assistance Payments Contract (CHAP).** Document provided to the PHA or owner for projects that have been selected during the Rental Assistance Demonstration (RAD) competition under the first component of the Demonstration that describes the terms under which HUD will enter into a HAP contract with the project owner.

**7. Early Action Activities.** The term “Early Action Activities” refers to up to \$100,000 of Planning Grant funds and Planning and Action Grant funds (see “Eligible Activities” in section III.C.5.b) that may be used toward limited, physical neighborhood improvements during the first two years of the grant period. Early Action Activities are similar to Action Activities, but must be used during the first two-years and must support the planning process through engaging the community, building capacity, fostering social cohesion, or otherwise reinforcing the planning process. Like Action Activities, they must also be responsive to the neighborhoods’ needs and must be used for physical, community, or



economic development projects that enhance and accelerate the transformation of the neighborhood. Early Action Activities funds are for physical improvements, and must not be used for non-physical uses, such as supportive services, staffing, and marketing. These funds must also not be used for basic infrastructure or as a substitute for basic municipal services. Additionally, funds must not be used for redevelopment of the public or HUD-assisted housing targeted in this application, including acquisition, relocation, demolition and remediation, rehabilitation, or construction of the targeted housing. These funds should be used for innovative solutions to neighborhood challenges and must be used for projects that can be completed within the first two years. Uses of funds are limited to:

- a. Reclaiming and recycling vacant property into community gardens, pocket parks, farmers markets, or land banking (with maintenance);
- b. Beautification, placemaking, and community arts projects, such as creative signage to enhance neighborhood branding, murals and sculptures, specialty streetscaping, or garden tool loan programs;
- c. Homeowner and business façade improvement programs;
- d. Neighborhood broadband/Wi-Fi;
- e. Fresh food initiatives, such as farmers markets and mobile fresh food vendors; and
- f. Gap financing for economic development projects.

**8. Families.** The term “families” has the meaning provided in section 3(B)(3) of the United States Housing Act of 1937 (42 U.S.C. 1437a). In the case of tribal entities, the term "family" has the meaning provided in section 4103 (6) of the Native American Housing Assistance and Self-Determination Act of 1996, 25 U.S.C.

**9. Lead Applicant.** Lead Applicant means the primary entity responsible for implementing the activities identified in the application. The Lead Applicant must meet the qualifications of an Eligible Applicant. The Lead Applicant will sign the Grant Agreement and is the sole entity that will have access to HUD’s Line of Credit Control System (LOCCS) in order to drawdown Choice Neighborhoods funding.

**10. Livability Principles.** Livability principles are principles jointly adopted by HUD, EPA and DOT to support federal neighborhood and community development initiatives. The Livability Principles are as follows: provide more transportation choices; promote equitable, affordable housing; enhance economic competitiveness; support existing communities; coordinate and leverage federal policies and investment; and value communities and neighborhoods. For further information, see [www.hud.gov/sustainability](http://www.hud.gov/sustainability).

**11. Local Government.** The term “local government” shall have the same meaning as “unit of general local government” in section 102(a)(1) of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974 (42 U.S.C. 5302): The term “**unit of general local government**” means any city, county, town, township, parish, village, or other general purpose political subdivision of a State; Guam, the Northern Mariana Islands, the Virgin Islands, and American Samoa, or a general purpose political subdivision thereof; a combination of such political subdivisions that, except as provided in section 5306(d)(4) of this title, is recognized by the Secretary; the District of Columbia; and the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands. Such term also includes a State or a local public body or agency (as defined in section 4512 of this title), community association, or other entity, which is approved by the Secretary for the purpose of providing public facilities or services to a new community as part of a program meeting the eligibility standards of section 4513 of this title or title IV of the Housing and Urban Development Act of 1968.

**12. Long-Term Viability.** The term “long-term viability” refers to a community that has in place all five Neighborhood Assets sufficient to provide for resident well-being and community quality of life.

**13. Low-performing School.** The term low-performing school means, “schools receiving assistance

through Title I that are in corrective action or restructuring in the State, as determined under section 1116 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), and the secondary schools (both middle and high schools) in the State that are equally as low-achieving as these Title I schools and are eligible for, but do not receive, Title I funds.”

**14. Neighborhood.** The neighborhood is the geographic area within which the activities of the Transformation Plan shall focus. HUD understands that neighborhood boundaries are not fixed like municipal or county boundaries. The Department also recognizes that neighborhoods do not necessarily follow statistical boundaries, such as Census Tracts. For Choice Neighborhoods, HUD will rely on applicants to identify boundaries for the target neighborhood that are generally accepted as a neighborhood. In many communities, those typical neighborhood boundaries are delineated by major streets or physical topography. The neighborhood must be larger than just the footprint of the distressed public or HUD-assisted housing targeted in the application, but cannot encompass more than one municipal jurisdiction and is typically an area less than two miles wide.

**15. Neighborhood Assets.** Neighborhood assets means:

- a. Developmental assets that allow residents to attain the skills needed to be successful in all aspects of daily life (e.g., educational institutions, early learning centers, and health resources);
- b. Commercial assets that are associated with production, employment, transactions, and sales (e.g., labor force and retail establishments);
- c. Recreational assets that create value in a neighborhood beyond work and education (e.g., parks, open space, community gardens, athletics and arts organizations);
- d. Physical assets that are associated with the built environment and physical infrastructure (e.g., housing, commercial buildings, and roads); and
- e. Social assets that establish well-functioning social interactions (e.g., public safety and community engagement).

**16. Nonprofit Organization.** Nonprofits eligible to be an applicant under this NOFA are entities that are classified as such in accordance with section 501(c) of the Internal Revenue Code or have been designated as such by their state government. A nonprofit organization can be organized for the following purposes: charitable, religious, educational, scientific, or other similar purposes in the public interest. To obtain tax-exempt status, qualified organizations must file an application with the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) and receive designation as such by the IRS. For more information, go to [www.irs.gov](http://www.irs.gov). Entities that are in the process of applying for tax-exempt status, but have not yet received nonprofit designation from the IRS by the application deadline date, will not be considered an eligible applicant. All nonprofit applicants must submit either their IRS determination letter to prove their 501(c) status or the letter from the state government to prove their nonprofit status.

**17. Part I Violent Crimes.** Part I violent crimes shall have the same meaning used by the United States Department of Justice Bureau of Justice Statistics and the Uniform Crime Report. Aggravated assault, rape, murder, and robbery are classified as Part I violent crimes.

**18. Persistently lowest-achieving school.** The term persistently lowest-achieving school means, as determined by the State:

- a. Any school receiving assistance through Title I that is in improvement, corrective action, or restructuring and that –
  - (1) Is among the lowest-achieving five percent of Title I schools in improvement, corrective action, or restructuring or the lowest-achieving five Title I schools in improvement, corrective action, or restructuring in the State, whichever number of schools is greater; or
  - (2) Is a high school that has had a graduation rate that is less than 60 percent over a number of years; and
- b. Any secondary school that is eligible for, but does not receive, Title I funds that –

- (1) Is among the lowest-achieving five percent of secondary schools or the lowest-achieving five secondary schools in the State that are eligible for, but do not receive, Title I funds, whichever number of schools is greater; or
- (2) Is a high school that has had a graduation rate that is less than 60 percent over a number of years.

**19. Physical Needs Assessment.** A Physical Needs Assessment (PNA) should be prepared by an independent registered engineer or architect that conducts a physical inspection of at least 10 percent of the dwelling units and 50 percent of the non-dwelling space. Generally, it identifies all of the work needed to bring the housing project up to the applicable modernization and energy conservation standards. Typically, a PNA takes into account the life cycle replacement costs of all building systems for a period of 20 years, however, for purposes of the rating factors in this NOFA, HUD will only consider the costs of the current rehabilitation needs.

**20. Planning Coordinator.** A Planning Coordinator is a person or entity separate from the Lead Applicant or Co-Applicant selected to help the grantee coordinate the planning process. The Planning Coordinator should have significant experience in leading comprehensive neighborhood planning processes that lead to implementation activities and improved outcomes as well as building the capacity of local entities. Examples of Planning Coordinators could include but are not limited to community-based organizations, redevelopment authorities, and private or non-profit planning firms. The Planning Coordinator is not only a local partner/stakeholder, but also a single person/entity selected to assist the grantee in carrying out the grant activities and in increasing grantee capacity to carry out the grant activities. Having a Planning Coordinator is optional.

**21. Public Housing Agency.** The term “public housing agency” has the meaning provided in section 3(b)(6) of the United States Housing Act of 1937 (42 U.S.C. 1437a).

**22. Public Housing.** The term “public housing” refers to housing funded under an Annual Contributions Contract and in accordance with section 9 of the US Housing Act of 1937. A public housing project is a group of housing units that has a single Project Number assigned by the Director of Public Housing of a HUD Field Office and has, or had (in the case of previously demolished units) housing units under an Annual Contributions Contract. If a PHA had two distinct projects, with different project numbers, under its original ACC, and those projects were combined into a single project number in the Inventory Management System (IMS)/Public Housing Information Center (PIC) for the purposes of implementing HUD’s project-based budgeting requirements using Asset Management Project (AMP) numbers, the applicant may use the original project number to identify the public housing project targeted by the application. Applicants must be clear throughout their application as to the project they are targeting.

**23. RAD Conversion Commitment (RCC).** Contract executed by HUD and the PHA or owner, following HUD approval of the submitted Financing Plan, that describes the terms and conditions of the conversion.

**24. Replacement Housing.** Replacement housing is rental housing that will replace demolished, disposed of, or otherwise reduced public or assisted housing. It includes housing assisted under section 8 and 9 of the United States Housing Act of 1937 (42 U.S.C. 1437f and 42 U.S.C. 1437g), section 202 of Housing Act of 1959 (12 U.S.C. 1701q), and section 811 of the National Affordable Housing Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 8013). With regard to section 8 housing, project-based vouchers (section 8o(13) of the US Housing Act of 1937) and Project-Based Rental Assistance as provided in a RAD conversion are included in this definition, but tenant-based vouchers are excluded except as permitted by HUD. To satisfy the one-for-one replacement requirement through acquisition, the replacement unit must not have been receiving assistance prior to submitting the application under the sections listed above in this paragraph. For example, you cannot acquire a Section 202 funded property that is near the public or assisted housing site targeted in the application for the purposes of deeming that replacement housing.

## 25. Severely Distressed Housing.

a. In accordance with Section 24(j)(2) of the 1937 Act, the term means a public and/or assisted housing project (or building in a project) that:

- (1) Requires major redesign, reconstruction, redevelopment, or partial or total demolition to correct serious deficiencies in the original design (including inappropriately high population density), deferred maintenance, physical deterioration or obsolescence of major systems, and other deficiencies in the physical plan of the project;
- (2) Is a significant contributing factor to the physical decline of, and disinvestment by public and private entities in, the surrounding neighborhood;
- (3) (a) Is occupied predominantly by families who are very low-income families with children, have unemployed members, and are dependent on various forms of public assistance; (b) has high rates of vandalism and criminal activity (including drug-related criminal activity) in comparison to other housing in the area; or (c) is lacking in sufficient appropriate transportation, supportive services, economic opportunity, schools, civic and religious institutions, and public services, resulting in severe social distress in the project;
- (4) Cannot be revitalized through assistance under other programs, such as the Capital Fund and Operating Fund programs for public housing under the 1937 Act, or the programs under sections 9 or 14 of the 1937 Act (as in effect before the effective date under section 503(a) of the Quality Housing and Work Responsibility Act of 1998 (Pub. L. 105-276, approved October 21, 1998)), because of cost constraints and inadequacy of available amounts; and
- (5) In the case of an individual building that currently forms a portion of the public and/or assisted housing project targeted by the application to this NOFA: (a) Is sufficiently separable from the remainder of the project of which the building is part, such that the revitalization of the building is feasible; or (b) Was part of the targeted public and/or assisted housing project that has been legally vacated or demolished, but for which HUD has not yet provided replacement housing assistance (other than tenant-based assistance). “Replacement housing assistance” is defined as funds that have been furnished by HUD to perform major rehabilitation on, or reconstruction of, the public and/or assisted housing units that have been legally vacated or demolished.

b. A severely distressed project that has been legally vacated or demolished (but for which HUD has not yet provided replacement housing assistance, other than tenant-based assistance) must have met the definition of physical distress not later than the day the demolition application approval letter was dated by HUD, or in the case of Indian Housing, not later than the day the tribal entity signed the written notification of demolition provided to HUD in accordance with 24 CFR1000.134.

**26. Supportive Services.** The term “supportive services” includes all activities that will promote upward mobility, self-sufficiency, or improved quality of life, including such activities as literacy training, activities that promote early learning and the continuum of educational supports, remedial and continuing education, job training, financial literacy instruction, day care, youth services, aging-in-place, public transportation, physical and mental health services, economic development activities, and other programs for which the community demonstrates need.

**27. Transformation Plan.** The Transformation Plan is a comprehensive neighborhood revitalization strategy proposed which, when implemented, will achieve the three core goals of Choice Neighborhoods (Housing, People, Neighborhood).

**28. Tribal Entities.** Tribal entities include Indian tribes and Tribally Designated Housing Entities, as defined in sections 4(13) and 4(22), respectively, of the Native American Housing and Self-Determination Act of 1996.

## **B. Authority.**

1. The funding authority for Choice Neighborhoods grants under this NOFA is provided by the Consolidated and Further Continuing Appropriations Act, 2015 (Public Law 113-235, approved December 16, 2014) (FY2015 Appropriations Act).
2. The program authority for the Choice Neighborhoods Initiative is Section 24 of the United States Housing Act of 1937 (42 U.S.C. 1437v) (1937 Act), as amended by the FY2015 Appropriations Act.

## **II. Award Information.**

### **A. Available Funds.**

HUD is making available through this NOFA **\$10,000,000** for Choice Neighborhoods Planning Grants Program.

Additional funds may become available for award under this NOFA as a result of HUD's efforts to recapture unused funds, use carryover funds, or because of the availability of additional appropriated funds. Use of these funds will be subject to statutory constraints. All awards are subject to the applicable funding restrictions described in the General Section and to those contained in this NOFA.

This NOFA announces the availability of approximately \$10 million in funds for Choice Neighborhoods grants. HUD anticipates awarding approximately 4 Planning and Action Grants not to exceed \$2 million each, and approximately 4 Planning Grants not to exceed \$500,000 each. If funds are appropriated by Congress, HUD may, at its discretion, use additional FY2016 Choice Neighborhoods funding to make additional awards under this NOFA.

### **B. Number of Awards.**

HUD expects to make approximately 8 awards from the funds available under this NOFA.

HUD anticipates awarding approximately 4 Planning and Action Grants and approximately 4 Planning Grants.

### **C. Minimum/Maximum Award Information.**

Under this publication, eligible applicants will apply for Planning and Action Grants. The top scoring applicants will be awarded Planning and Action Grants, and the next set of highest scoring applicants will be awarded Planning Grants, based on funding availability. Planning and Action Grant awards may be up to \$2 million. Planning Grants awards may be up to \$500,000.

Because this is the first time that Action Activities funds are offered, eligible applicants may also include FY 2010 - 2014 Planning Grantees. FY 2010 - 2014 Planning Grantees who meet eligibility requirements may apply for the Action Activities portion only of the Planning and Action Grant (up to \$1.5 million), so long as a Choice Neighborhoods Implementation Grant has not been awarded for the housing or neighborhood targeted in this application.

Estimated Total Funding:	\$10,000,000
Minimum Award Amount:	\$0 Per Budget Period
Maximum Award Amount:	\$2,000,000 Per Budget Period

Maximum Award Amount: \$2,000,000 Per Budget Period

#### **D. Period of Performance.**

Estimated Project Start Date: 06/27/2016

Estimated Project End Date: 06/27/2016

Length of Project Period: Other

Grantees must proceed in a timely manner, as indicated by the timeframes established in this NOFA and Grant Agreement. The term of the Planning and Action Grant is three years from the date of Grant Agreement execution (or 18 months for FY 2010 - 2014 Planning Grantees who receive Action Activities funding only). The term of a Planning Grant is two years from the date of Grant Agreement execution. HUD anticipates announcing awards under this NOFA approximately 5 months after the application due date.

#### **E. Type of Funding Instrument.**

Funding Instrument Type: Grant

Grant

#### **F. Supplementation.**

Not Applicable

### **III. Eligibility Information.**

#### **A. Eligible Applicants.**

Eligible applicants under the NOFA include:

Others (see text field entitled "Additional Information on Eligibility" for clarification)

Additional Information on Eligibility:

Eligible applicants are Public Housing Authorities (PHAs), local governments, tribal entities, and nonprofits. See the Statutory and Regulatory Requirements in section III.C.1 for additional details and the definitions in section I.A.3.f for definitions of related terms.

HUD does not award grants to individuals. HUD will also not evaluate applications from ineligible applicants.

All applicants must have an active Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number (<http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform>) and have an active registration in the System for Award Management (SAM) ([www.sam.gov](http://www.sam.gov)) before submitting an application. Getting a DUNS number and completing SAM registration can take up to four weeks; therefore applicants should start this process or check their status early.

See also Section IV.B below for necessary content and form of the application.

#### **B. Cost Sharing or Matching.**

This Program requires an applicant to leverage resources through cost sharing or matching as described below.

Generally, federal sources are not allowed to be used as cost share or match unless otherwise permitted by a program's authorizing statute.

HUD is required by section 24(c)(1)(A) of the 1937 Act (42 U.S.C. 1437v(c)(1)(A)) to include the requirement for matching funds for all grants made under section 24, which includes Choice Neighborhoods. By the end of the grant term, you are required to have matching funds in the amount of five percent of the grant amount in cash or in-kind donations. You **may NOT** include amounts from HOPE VI program funding, including HOPE VI Revitalization, HOPE VI Demolition, HOPE VI Neighborhood Networks, HOPE VI Main Street grants, Choice Neighborhoods Implementation, or Choice Neighborhoods Planning Grants. Refer to section VI.B.8 of the General Section for OMB Requirements that are applicable for matching requirements. This is considered an Additional Requirements to be Rated requirement under section III.C.4 and is included in the Choice Neighborhoods Application Certifications form.

Grantees will be required to show evidence that matching resources were actually received and used for their intended purposes through quarterly reports as the project proceeds. Sources of matching funds may be substituted after grant award, as long as the dollar requirement is met.

Grantees must pursue and enforce any commitment (including commitments for services) obtained from any public or private entity for any contribution or commitment to the project or surrounding area that was part of the match amount.

### **C. Other.**

All applicants must also refer to Section III of the General Section for information on HUD-wide eligibility requirements. These requirements may determine whether your application is reviewed or make your application ineligible for funding.

Program specific eligibility criteria for this competition includes:

#### **1. Statutory and Regulatory Requirements.**

All Lead Applicants and Co-Applicants and applications must meet all the statutory and regulatory requirements stated under this section in order to be rated and ranked. Applicants must demonstrate compliance with these requirements through the information provided in their application, unless instructed otherwise in this NOFA. HUD will screen for technical (not substantive) deficiencies and administer a cure period as described in section V.B.2.b. Applicants must review and follow documentation requirements provided in this section and the instructions on application organization, content and submission provided in section IV.B. Required forms, certifications and assurances must be included in the Choice Neighborhoods application and will be available at <http://www.grants.gov>.

a) **Eligible Applicants.** Eligible applicants are PHAs, local governments, tribal entities, and nonprofits. You must identify which type of applicant you and your Co-Applicant (if any) are on the Key Eligibility Data form included in the attachments section of your application. Additionally, the following criteria must be met, as relevant, in order to comply with this requirement:

(1) **Troubled status for PHAs.** This applies to PHA applicants. If the PHA was designated as troubled by HUD pursuant to section 6(j)(2) of the 1937 Act on the most recently released Operational Troubled List, HUD will use documents and information available to it to determine whether you qualify as an eligible applicant. However, PHAs designated as troubled are strongly encouraged to consider partnering with another entity (such as a local government or a nonprofit) to serve as the lead applicant for purposes of the Choice Neighborhoods grant. In accordance with section 24(j) of the 1937 Act, a troubled PHA may still be eligible to apply if it:

(a) Is designated as troubled principally for reasons that will not affect its capacity to carry out a revitalization program;

(b) Is making substantial progress toward eliminating the deficiencies of the agency that resulted

in its troubled status;

(c) Has not been found to be in noncompliance with fair housing or other civil rights requirements; or

(d) Is otherwise determined by HUD to be capable of carrying out a revitalization program.

(2) **Certification for Multifamily Assisted Property Owners.** If the Lead Applicant or Co-Applicant is the owner of the assisted property that is the subject of the Choice Neighborhoods application, you are required to complete a Previous Participation Review for Prospective Multifamily Housing Programs Participants. Currently the process is done through submission of form HUD-2530, Previous Participation Certification. If the property listed has defaulted on a mortgage loan or has less than satisfactory review ratings (physical inspections, management and financial reviews), HUD will use documents and information available to it to determine whether you qualify as an eligible applicant. Approvals of entities that have defaulted or received unsatisfactory review rating will be subjected to HUD's Previous Participation clearance review process. Applicants may still be eligible to apply for Choice Neighborhoods funding if HUD deems the applicant to be making substantial progress in addressing the deficiencies related to such default or review rating. However, multifamily assisted property owners with defaults or less than satisfactory review ratings are strongly encouraged to consider partnering with another entity (such as a local government or a nonprofit) to serve as the Lead Applicant for purposes of the Choice Neighborhoods grant.

(3) **Nonprofit Applicants.** For a nonprofit to demonstrate eligibility as a Lead Applicant or Co-Applicant, either an Internal Revenue Service determination letter indicating the organization's 501(c) status or the letter from the state government designating the organization's nonprofit status must be submitted in the attachments.

(4) **Co-Applicants.** To demonstrate a Co-Applicant partnership, a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) or Letter of Agreement must be provided, signed by the executive of each entity. The MOU or Letter of Agreement must demonstrate a commitment to work collaboratively throughout the entirety of the grant to develop a Transformation Plan and identify which party will serve as the Lead Applicant.

(5) **Applicants that are not the owner of the target housing project.** If the owner of the target housing project is not the Lead Applicant or Co-Applicant for this grant, a letter from the owner indicating its support for your organization to submit this grant application and work collaboratively throughout the planning process must be included in this application.

b) **Eligible Target Housing.** Each application must focus on the revitalization of at least one severely distressed public and/or HUD-assisted housing project. The definition of "severely distressed housing" from section 24(j)(2) of the 1937 Act is included in section I.A.3.f along with definitions of "public housing" and "assisted housing." You must demonstrate in your application that the targeted housing is eligible under this NOFA (i.e., public and/or HUD-assisted housing) and meets the definition of severely distressed. If the targeted project(s) is/are not eligible housing and is/are not severely distressed, your application will not be considered for funding. You must identify the housing project(s) you are targeting on the Key Eligibility Data form included in the attachments section of your application. You must also use the severe distress certification form provided and include it in the attachments section of your application. The certification must be signed by an engineer or architect licensed by a state licensing board. The license does not need to have been issued in the same state as the severely distressed project. The engineer or architect must include his or her license number and state of registration on the certification. The engineer or architect may not be an employee of the Lead Applicant, Co-Applicant (if any), Planning Coordinator (if any), the project's owner, the public housing authority (if applicable), or a unit of local government in which the housing is located. If this application targets more than one public and/or assisted housing project, each project must meet this definition and be listed on the severe distress certification form. For Indian Housing that has been demolished, the



engineer or architect may check “B” on the certification of the severe physical distress form if: the development has been legally demolished; HUD has not yet provided replacement housing assistance, other than tenant-based assistance, for the demolished units; and the development satisfied the definition of severe physical distress (as defined on the certification form) as of the day the tribal entity signed the written notification of demolition provided to HUD in accordance with 24 CFR1000.134.

**c) Eligible Neighborhoods.**

(1) You must demonstrate in your application that the targeted neighborhood meets the following criteria:

- i. at least 20 percent of the households estimated to be in poverty or have extremely low incomes and
- ii. that are experiencing distress related to at least one of the following:
  1. high crime; defined as where either the Part I violent crime rate (measured as Part I violent crimes per 1000 persons) over the three years (2012-2014) is at least 1.5 times the per capita Part I violent crime rate (measured as Part I violent crimes per 1000 persons) of the city or, where no city data are available, county/parish in which the neighborhood is located over the same time frame; or the rate is greater than 18 crimes per 1000 persons; OR
  2. high vacancy or substandard homes; defined as where either the most current rate within the last year of long-term vacant homes or of substandard homes is at least 1.5 times higher than that of the county/parish; or the rate is greater than 4 percent; OR
  3. inadequate schools; defined as where either a low-performing public school or a persistently lowest-achieving public school is in the neighborhood or at least 20 percent of the children from the target public and/or HUD-assisted housing attend such a school.

(2) The definition of “neighborhood” from section I.A.3.f applies. Note: HUD reserves the right to ask applicants to provide evidence that the target neighborhood boundary is generally accepted. Such evidence might include planning, community development, or zoning maps which have been adopted by a public jurisdiction.

(3) For the purposes of establishing neighborhood eligibility and to assign points for certain rating factors, HUD has created a mapping tool that will overlay the locally defined neighborhood boundaries with data associated with that area and estimate the rates of certain indicators in that neighborhood using a proportional allocation methodology. HUD will calculate the poverty rate, extremely low-income rate, and residential vacancy rate for the target area as well as other measures of distress. For example, if census tracts are the smallest statistical boundary for the available data and the locally defined neighborhood is partially within two different census tracts, the poverty rate will be calculated based on the portion of the neighborhood housing units located in each tract. In this example, 80 percent of the housing units in the locally defined neighborhood are in a tract with a poverty rate of 40 percent and 20 percent of the units are in a tract with a poverty rate of 10 percent. The “neighborhood poverty rate” would be calculated as:  $(80\% \times 40\%) + (20\% \times 10\%) = 34\%$ . You must draw the boundaries of the target neighborhood using the mapping tool posted on the FY2015 NOFA and Funding Information page at [www.hud.gov/cn](http://www.hud.gov/cn) and provide a pdf copy of your eligible neighborhood, as produced and emailed to the user by the mapping tool, in the attachments section of your application. HUD will not accept additional documentation and will make the final determination on compliance with the requirement. The neighborhood map drawn using the mapping tool must show the same boundaries reflected in the annotated neighborhood map provided in Attachment 22.

(4) If you are relying on data on crime, substandard housing, or inadequate schools in order to

demonstrate compliance with the Eligible Neighborhoods criteria, you must provide it in the attachments section of your application as instructed in section IV.B. Crime data must be for the precinct/Police Service Area (PSA) in which the target housing is located (data requirements are described in the rating factor in section V.A.1.e(3)). Substandard housing data must be for the neighborhood and the city or county/parish as a whole. Information provided on rates of substandard housing must be data published by a local jurisdiction or unrelated third party and be based on code enforcement data, such as from the housing office of the applicable city or county/parish, or data on the percentage of occupied housing units lacking complete plumbing facilities, such as the most recent data from the American Community Survey (ACS) for your neighborhood. For occupied housing units lacking plumbing facilities, ACS data must be from 2009 – 2012 or later, and ACS data from Census tracts that cover the majority of the neighborhood can be used to approximate neighborhood-level data (please indicate tracts). Supporting documentation related to inadequate schools may be either a letter from the entity or published data. If providing the latter, the source must be identifiable.

(5) HUD recognizes that some of the communities that meet the neighborhood eligibility criteria may also be impacted areas and/or areas of minority concentration. Since a goal of this program is to transform distressed neighborhoods into neighborhoods of choice, these neighborhoods are still eligible for funding under this NOFA.

## **2. Threshold Requirements.**

Only applications that meet all threshold requirements established in the General Section and Program NOFA will be evaluated. In addition to the threshold criteria outlined in the General Section, including the Resolution of Outstanding Civil Rights Matters (prior to application deadline), the following threshold requirements must be met:

No additional Threshold Requirements must be met. Please see section III.C.4 for Additional Requirements to be Rated.

## **3. Compliance with Nondiscrimination and Related Requirements.**

Compliance with Nondiscrimination and Related Requirements. Section III.C.3 of the General Section is incorporated into this NOFA.

## **4. Other Requirements.**

This program has eligibility criteria for beneficiaries.

**Additional Requirements to be Rated.** All Lead Applicants and Co-Applicants and applications must meet all the additional requirements stated under this “Additional Requirements to be Rated” section in order to be rated and ranked. Applicants must demonstrate compliance with these additional requirements through the information provided in their application, unless instructed otherwise in this NOFA. HUD will screen for technical (not substantive) deficiencies and administer a cure period as described in section V.B.2.b. Applicants must review and follow documentation requirements provided in this “Additional Requirements to be Rated” section and the instructions on application organization, content and submission provided in section IV.B. Required forms, certifications and assurances must be included in the Choice Neighborhoods application and will be available at <http://www.grants.gov>.

**a. Standard Forms.** The last part of your application will be comprised of standard forms common to many HUD programs. For the Choice Neighborhoods application, the required standard forms are: Application for Federal Assistance (SF-424), Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (SF-LLL), Applicant/Recipient Disclosure/Update Report (HUD-2880); and Third Party Documentation Transmittal (HUD-96011).

**b. Choice Neighborhoods Applicant Certifications.** You must include in your application a certification from the Lead Applicant and Co-Applicant (if any) (and the Chairman of the PHA Board of Commissioners if the Lead Applicant or Co-Applicant is a PHA) to the requirements listed in the Choice Neighborhoods Applicant Certifications. You must include this certification in your attachments. By providing this certification, you also attest that you will meet the Match Requirement from III.B of this NOFA.

**c. Number of Applications and Public and/or Assisted Housing Projects.**

(1) A Planning Coordinator may participate in a maximum of two applications under this NOFA. If this entity participates in more than two applications, all applications in which they are a participant will be deemed ineligible.

(2) You may only submit one application per locality. There is no limit to the number of public and/or assisted housing projects per application, so long as all are within the boundaries of the neighborhood.

(3) If HUD receives electronically multiple versions of an application, HUD will review the last version of the application **received** by Grants.gov that meets the timely receipt requirements. All other applications (i.e., prior versions) will not be considered eligible. If applicants find, after submitting an application, that they want to amend or adjust their application and it is prior to the deadline date, applicants should be aware that they **must resubmit the entire application**, including all fax transmissions previously sent, to ensure that HUD gets a complete application.

**d. Relation to prior HOPE VI Revitalization Grants.** Public housing projects previously funded through a HOPE VI Revitalization grant may not be the target public housing project of a Choice Neighborhoods grant application. However, they may be located within the Transformation Plan neighborhood.

**e. Relation to American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) Capital Fund Recovery Competition (CFRC) Grants.** Public housing projects previously funded through an ARRA CFRC grant under Category 2 (Public Housing Transformation), Category 3 (Gap Financing for Projects that are Stalled Due to Financing Issues), or Category 4 Option 1 (Creation of Energy Efficient, Green Communities, Substantial Rehabilitation or New Construction) may not be the target public housing project of a Choice Neighborhoods grant application. However, such projects may be located within the Transformation Plan neighborhood.

**f. Relation to prior Choice Neighborhoods Grants.** Public and/or assisted housing projects and the neighborhoods in which they are located previously funded through a Choice Neighborhoods Implementation Grant may not be the target housing and neighborhood of a Choice Neighborhoods application under this NOFA.

For applications that target the same neighborhood and public and/or assisted housing project(s) previously funded through a FY 2010 - 2014 Choice Neighborhoods Planning Grant, the applicant may only request funding for Action Activities (not planning process activities) in an amount not to exceed \$1.5 million. The term “FY 2010 – 2014 Planning Grantees” as used in this NOFA refers to those Grants, regardless of whether the applicant was the recipient of the Planning Grant.

**g. Relation to Rental Assistance Demonstration (RAD) Applicants.** PHAs that have applied for RAD, received a Commitment to enter into a Housing Assistance Payments Contract (CHAP, as defined in section I.A.3.f), a Portfolio award that covers the property proposed or a Multiphase award that covers the property proposed, and are planning on demolition and new construction or major rehabilitation or reconstruction may apply for a Choice Neighborhoods Planning and Action Grant provided they have not yet received a RAD Conversion Commitment (RCC, as defined in section I.A.3.f) at the time of the application deadline for this NOFA. The Office of Recapitalization will offer flexibility with regard to the RAD milestones so that PHAs and their partners may take advantage of the Planning and Action Grants. Note, PHAs that are considering applying for RAD for demolition and

new construction or major rehabilitation or reconstruction are encouraged to apply for a Choice Neighborhoods Planning and Action Grant.

**h. Resident Involvement.** In accordance with section 24(e)(2)(D) of the 1937 Act, applicants must involve affected residents at the beginning and during the planning process for the transformation program, prior to the submission of an application. You are required to involve the affected public and/or assisted housing residents in the planning process and implementation of your Transformation Plan. This involvement must be continuous from the beginning of the planning process through the implementation and management of the grant, if awarded. As of the application deadline date, you must have conducted at least one meeting with residents of the targeted public and/or assisted housing. **That meeting must occur after publication of this NOFA** and cover the planning process anticipated to be funded by a Choice Neighborhoods Planning and Action Grant. Please refer to section I.A.2 of the General Section for additional information related to public participation in planning. You must demonstrate compliance with this requirement by using the Resident Involvement Certification form (HUD-53151) and include the form in the attachments section of your application. The certification form must include name of the target public and/or assisted housing site, the date of the resident meeting, and be signed and dated by the Lead Applicant Executive Officer.

**i. Other Requirements from the FY2015 General Section.** Section III.C.4 of the General Section is hereby incorporated into this NOFA. These requirements may, where applicable, determine whether your application is reviewed or make your application ineligible for funding.

**5. Choice Neighborhoods Program Activities.** Program activities include tasks necessary to develop a Transformation Plan that includes strategies to achieve the objectives identified in the NOFA, align investments with this plan, and develop the relevant planning and evaluation capacity of the applicant and its partners.

**a. Required Activities.**

(1) Successful FY 2010-2014 Planning Grantee applicants, who may only apply for Action Activities funding, must:

(a) Propose Action Activities, as defined in I.A.3.f, within six months of the grant award date and implement approved Action Activities before the end of the grant term. See section III.C.8 for more details.

(2) Successful applicants other than FY 2010-2014 Planning Grantees must:

(a) Conduct a household-level needs assessment of the public and/or assisted housing residents in the target development(s) to better design solutions for the children and families of HUD housing within the first 12 months of the Planning Grant/Planning and Action Grant. In addition, evaluate existing administrative data (such as the census [including the American Community Survey (ACS)], police reports, healthcare agencies/providers, school reports, research surveys, etc.) to determine whether an assessment of households is required at the neighborhood level.

(b) Devise a relocation strategy for residents that need to be relocated during the rehabilitation or reconstruction of the public and/or assisted housing.

(c) If not already completed, you must have a market assessment conducted of your neighborhood by an independent, third party professional of the target neighborhood during the grant period. The conclusions drawn from this study must inform the development of the Transformation Plan.

(d) If not already identified, you must select the master developer/housing developer that will implement the housing component of the Transformation Plan before the end of the grant term.

- (e) Complete a Phase I environmental assessment at the redevelopment site to determine the potential and extent of any needed environmental remediation, in order for a grantee to determine a feasible timeline and budget for the realization of redevelopment efforts.
- (f) If the redevelopment plan includes the rehabilitation or demolition of any buildings 45 years of age or older, the grantee must contact the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) to determine the potential for negative effects of demolition on historic properties.
- (g) If awarded more than \$500,000, the grantee must propose Action Activities, as defined in I.A.3.f, within 18 months of the grant award date and implement approved Action Activities before the end of the grant term. See section III.C.8 for more details.

**b. Other Eligible Activities.** All grantees, except for successful FY 2010 – 2014 Planning Grantee applicants, may use funding under this NOFA for the following activities, which should be included as appropriate to the local context and based on the current status of the local planning process. Please note that successful FY 2010 – 2014 Planning Grantee applicants must not use funding under this NOFA for any of the following activities, since they may only be funded for Action Activities.

(1) Conduct comprehensive needs assessments to inform the development of the Transformation Plan. The needs assessments should include:

- (a) Current patterns of disinvestment within the neighborhood, including vacant/abandoned homes and businesses, the quality of the existing housing stock, foreclosures, and current home values and rents. Discuss other subsidized housing (for example, Housing Choice Vouchers, LIHTC units, PBRA, local affordable housing units) in the neighborhood that are not part of the target public and/or assisted housing project(s), the current mix of incomes, and any long-term economic drivers for continued disinvestment that may be expected to continue, absent a publicly funded intervention;
- (b) The neighborhood's access to key assets, such as quality grocery stores, banks, health clinics and doctors' offices, local schools, child care facilities, parks and recreational facilities, and public transit. Identify key neighborhood anchor institutions, such as major employers, universities, or hospitals that can reliably be expected to continue to provide significant economic activity;
- (c) Relevant developmental and social assets in the target neighborhood as these assets relate to opportunities for resident education, employment, health, mobility and safety; and
- (d) Challenges and gaps in neighborhood services and assets.

(2) Undertake a comprehensive and integrated planning process that addresses the challenges and gaps in services and assets identified through the needs assessments and leads to a plan for implementation that has broad community support, in the areas of:

- (a) Housing. Adopt effective strategies to achieve the Housing goal. Such activities include but are not limited to: studies of the different options for revitalization, including the feasibility, costs and neighborhood impact of such options; assessment of the need for affordable housing; site planning and conceptual architectural design work that includes accessible design in accordance with applicable accessibility requirements, including but not limited to section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (24 CFR Part 8), the Fair Housing Act (24 CFR Part 100) and the Americans with Disabilities Act; designing a suitable replacement housing plan, in situations where partial or total demolition is considered; designing a suitable mobility strategy and relocation assistance; conducting environmental or geotechnical studies to assess the suitability of a site for developmental activities; and developing a viable financing plan to implement the Housing component of the plan. The plan should consider a range of viable financing plans which is not dependent on a Choice Neighborhoods Implementation Grant in particular.

(b) People. Adopt effective strategies to achieve the People goal. Such activities include but are not limited to:

- i. Planning for supportive services, particularly education, economic development, job training, self-sufficiency, fair housing counseling and asset building activities for neighborhood and target housing families that help youth improve educational outcomes and increase intergenerational economic mobility;
- ii. Planning for improving access to high quality education programs and improved academic and developmental outcomes for children living in the target housing and in the neighborhood along the continuum of cradle-through-college-to-career solutions, including:

(a) High quality early learning programs and services that are comprehensive, inclusive, evidence-based and that result in significantly improved outcomes in physical well-being and motor development, social-emotional development, language and literacy development, and cognition and general knowledge, including early numeracy for children.

(b) High quality education programs, which may include: (A) evidence-based programs that increase learning time which may include high quality after-school, summer school, and other expanded learning-time programs designed to improve student outcomes and (B) evidence-based programs that prepare students for college and career success.

(c) Ensuring access to existing high-quality schools or undertaking school improvements, which may include (A) significant improvements to the programs, policies and personnel of an elementary, middle/junior high and/or high school that are linked to improved academic outcomes or (B) establishing a new high-quality school.

- iii. Partnering with the necessary agencies and organizations and developing a viable financing plan to implement the People component of the plan.

(c) Neighborhood. Adopt effective strategies to achieve the Neighborhood goal. Such activities include but are not limited to: planning for neighborhood-level improvements across the range of Neighborhood Assets; aligning with existing planning processes and activities in the local jurisdiction and/or metropolitan area or county/parish; planning for neighborhood economic development activities; and partnering with the necessary agencies and organizations and developing a viable financing plan to implement the Neighborhood component of the plan.

(3) Conduct technical planning studies concerning local development issues, priorities, or suggested appropriate approaches in the context of the local housing market relative to other alternatives. This could include new approaches to housing, economic development, capital improvement programming or community relations. However, any such studies should directly further the integration of strategies to develop a comprehensive neighborhood-level Transformation Plan.

(4) Work with public and private agencies, organizations (including philanthropic organizations) and individuals to: develop the Transformation Plan which includes a governance strategy that will provide long-term accountability and secure commitments to collaborate long-term to ensure it will be implemented successfully; gather and leverage resources needed to support the financial sustainability of the Transformation Plan; identify strategies for building upon and leveraging existing neighborhood efforts and anticipated Federal, state, regional and local investments; and strengthen management and decision-making capacities of participating organizations.

(5) Ensure meaningful resident, community, and stakeholder participation throughout the development of the Transformation Plan, including but not limited to public hearings, meetings, websites, forums, charrettes, and other communication that will provide all aspects of the policy

and development plans and alternative options to neighborhood residents, local business owners and employees, and civic and community organization representatives in sufficient time for them to review, react, and make informed decisions on how proposed plans and policies will impact their daily lives. Activities should prioritize ways to engage communities traditionally marginalized from planning processes, such as low-income individuals and families, limited English speakers, persons with disabilities, and the elderly. For assistance in ensuring meaningful access for persons with limited English proficiency, grantees should consult HUD's Final Guidance to Federal Financial Assistance Recipients Regarding Title VI Prohibition Against National Origin Discrimination Affecting Limited English Proficient Persons (HUD's LEP Guidance) published in the Federal Register on January 22, 2007 (72 Fed. Reg. 2732). Additional information is also available at [www.hud.gov/fheo/promotingfh/lep.cfm](http://www.hud.gov/fheo/promotingfh/lep.cfm). Pursuant to section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act, recipients must employ accessible means of technology to ensure that persons with disabilities can access information on the planning process, plans, and other information.

(6) Plan for the collection and strategic use of relevant data to track future community impacts once the Transformation Plan is implemented by employing statistical and qualitative analysis of specific metrics developed in partnership with the appropriate local, state, regional, and federal agencies/organizations. Such planning should focus on integrating data systems across agencies and/or negotiating data sharing agreements so that these data can be used for intervention targeting and improvement.

(7) Identify and secure the involvement of effective practices and actors based on the best available evidence. Such activities may include conducting site visits, research, or participating in a community of practice, which is a group of grantees that agrees to interact regularly to solve a persistent problem or improve practice in an area that is important to them and the success of their project, enabling grantees to meet, discuss and collaborate with each other regarding grantee projects.

(8) Early Action Activities, as defined in section I.A.3.f of this NOFA. No more than \$100,000 of Planning Grants and Planning and Action Grants may be used for Early Action Activities. Specific Early Action Activities may be proposed in the application, as part of the submitted budget, or during the grant period, as a budget revision. These funds should be used for innovative solutions to neighborhood challenges and must be used for projects that can be completed within the first two years.

**c. Ineligible Activities.** Ineligible activities for all grantees include:

(1) Supportive services; and

(2) Redevelopment of the public or HUD-assisted housing targeted in this application, including acquisition, relocation, demolition and remediation, rehabilitation, or construction of the targeted housing.

**6. Choice Neighborhoods Program Requirements.** For all successful applicants (except for FY 2010 – 2014 Planning Grantee applicants who may only be funded for Action Activities) this section contains Choice Neighborhoods program requirements, administrative and national policy requirements, and other program priorities that Planning Grantees and Planning and Action Grantees must consider as they develop their Transformation Plans. Successful applicants MUST review this section and ensure they comply with the requirements, as relevant.

**a. Housing Choice Opportunities for Returning Tenants.** An approved Transformation Plan shall demonstrate that each tenant who wishes to return to the on-site or off-site replacement housing may return if the tenant was lease-compliant at the time of relocation and continued to remain lease-compliant during the relocation period. A returning tenant shall be provided a preference for

occupancy of on-site or off-site replacement units before such units are made available to any other eligible households, or the tenant may choose to retain tenant-based voucher assistance provided under section 8(o) of the United States Housing Act of 1937 for relocation from the properties revitalized under this NOFA. This preference remains available until the initial lease-up of the new units.

**b. One-for-One Replacement of Public and/or Assisted Housing Units.** The Transformation Plan created through a Planning Grant or Planning and Action Grant should provide for the one-for-one replacement of all public and/or assisted dwelling as described below:

(1) Public Housing Replacement Housing. For all public housing dwelling units still physically standing as of the application due date which will be demolished or disposed, the Transformation Plan must provide at least for replacement of the same number of bedrooms. The number of dwelling units replaced may be greater or fewer than those still physically standing, so the overall unit mix meets the needs of the existing residents, takes into account needs of the residents on the waiting list, and is aligned with the results of a recent housing market study. For example, if the development has experienced high vacancy rates for efficiency and one-bedroom units and the PHA waiting list and market study indicate there is no expectation of demand in the future, but there is a need for three-bedroom units, three one-bedroom and/or efficiency units may be combined to create a three-bedroom unit. Larger bedroom units (i.e. four or more bedrooms) may only be converted to create additional smaller-bedroom units if 1) the PHA is currently under its Faircloth limit (i.e. Section 9(g)(3) of the United States Housing Act of 1937, as amended) and 2) there are no existing households or waiting-list households requiring larger-bedroom units, and the market study indicates there will not be future demand.

(2) Assisted Housing Replacement Housing. For all Assisted Housing units still physically standing as of the application due date which are to be demolished or disposed, the Transformation Plan must provide for one-for-one replacement in accordance with all HUD policies, procedures and requirements for project-based section 8 Housing Assistance Payments (“HAP”) contract.

(3) Location.

(a) Replacement housing units shall be developed:

i. On-site (i.e., on the target housing site and/or in the target neighborhood being revitalized); and/or

ii. Off-site (i.e., outside of the target neighborhood but within the metropolitan area up to 25 miles from the target project site) as necessary to:

a. overcome the effects of impediments to fair housing choice consistent with actions identified in an applicable Analysis of Impediments to fair housing choice (AI) (24 CFR 91.225 or 91.325); address other affirmatively furthering fair housing objectives as described in the grant application; or comply with a voluntary agreement, settlement, or order to resolve a finding or charge of violating a nondiscrimination or equal opportunity requirement;

b. deconcentrate poverty; or

c. redevelop onsite with appropriate densities.

(b) Replacement housing outside the target neighborhood (i.e., off-site) must:

i. offer access to economic opportunities and public transportation and be accessible to social, recreational, educational, commercial, health facilities and services, and other municipal services and facilities that are comparable to those that will be provided in the target neighborhood; and

ii. be located neither in areas of minority concentration nor in areas with a poverty rate



above 40 percent. A neighborhood of minority concentration is a Census tract or other defined geographic area in which the percentage of residents who are racial or ethnic minorities is at least 20 percentage points higher than the percentage of minority residents in the Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) (or jurisdiction not in a MSA) as a whole. In MSAs (or jurisdictions not in MSAs) in which the majority of residents are racial or ethnic minorities, HUD will consider and rely on all relevant information to determine whether the neighborhood proposed for replacement housing will lead to the creation of more inclusive and integrated housing in opportunity-rich neighborhoods.

(4) Types of Units. Please refer to the definition of Replacement Housing in section I.A.3.f of this NOFA. Planning Grantees/Planning and Action Grantees targeting public housing projects are encouraged to plan to utilize Section 8 project-based rental assistance or Section 8 project-based vouchers, such as through a RAD conversion, in order to meet the one-for-one replacement requirement.

(5) Tenant-based Vouchers as Replacement Housing. Up to half of the public housing and/or assisted housing dwelling units that are demolished or disposed of under the Transformation Plan may be replaced with tenant-based vouchers in housing markets where there is an adequate supply of affordable rental housing in areas of low poverty. Please note that this exception does not supersede an entity's obligation to comply with other one-for-one replacement requirements associated with other funding sources (e.g., section 104(d) of the Housing and Community Development Act).

(a) To be eligible for this exception to the hard-unit one-for-one replacement criteria, the area of the Choice Neighborhoods development must meet all three of the following criteria:

- i. Be located in a county/parish with a currently and historically soft rental housing market for low-income renters.
- ii. Be located in a Core Based Statistical Area (CBSA) or non-CBSA County/Parish where vouchers currently in use are primarily in lower poverty neighborhoods.
- iii. High voucher success rate. The applicant will be required to provide data to HUD that show that the agency that would administer the replacement vouchers has a high success rate.

(b) HUD will approve this exception in conjunction with submission a Choice Neighborhoods Implementation Grant application.

**c. Sustainable Development.** You must incorporate sustainable development practices in your Transformation Plan. Your Plan must address key Livability Principles adopted by HUD and its federal partners, including but not limited to supporting compact development and proximity to and increased availability of transportation choices, amenities, services and employment opportunities. You must include key stakeholders, agencies and experts in addressing these principles during your planning process, and identify how you plan to apply the Livability Principles to your project, and how you will measure their outcomes. Your plan should also maximize energy efficiency techniques and practices and improve the health of residents by adopting green building practices or standards to the extent feasible and affordable, including but not limited to incorporating renewable energy systems. These energy efficiency techniques and practices should include planning for proper ventilation, as indoor air quality and/or moisture build up can be impacted with the reduction of indoor/outdoor air exchange.

**d. Energy Efficiency and Green Building Standards.** As indicated in HUD's FY 2014-2018 Strategic Plan and the General Section, one of HUD's strategic goals is to increase the health and safety of homes and embed comprehensive energy efficiency and healthy housing criteria across HUD programs. Recognizing the fundamental role that HUD's investments play in defining the physical form of communities and quality of life for residents, Planning Grant and Planning and Action Grant recipients

must become eligible to secure Stage 1 Conditional Approval of all or a portion of the neighborhood targeted in their Transformation Plan for LEED for Neighborhood Development from the United States Green Building Council.

**e. Non-Fungibility for Moving To Work (MTW) PHAs.** Funds awarded under this NOFA are not fungible under MTW agreements and must be accounted for separately, in accordance with the Choice Neighborhoods Planning Grant Agreement and Planning and Action Grant Agreement, OMB Administrative Requirements and Cost Principles set forth in 2 CFR 200, and generally accepted accounting principles (GAAP).

**f. Design.** HUD is seeking excellence in design. You must carefully select your architects and planners, and enlist local affiliates of national architectural and planning organizations such as the American Institute of Architects, the American Society of Landscape Architects, the American Planning Association, the Congress for the New Urbanism, and the department of architecture at a local college or university to assist you in assessing qualifications of design professionals or in participating on a selection panel that results in the procurement of excellent design services. You should select a design team that is committed to a process in which all residents, including young people and seniors, the broader community, and other stakeholders participate in designing the new community. Your proposed site plan, new units, and other buildings must be designed to be compatible with and enrich the surrounding neighborhood. Local architecture and design elements and amenities should be incorporated into the new or rehabilitated homes so that the revitalized sites and structures will blend into the broader community and appeal to the market segments for which they are intended. Housing, community facilities, and economic development space must be well integrated. You must select members of your team who have the ability to meet these requirements.

**7. Environmental Requirements.** Successful applicants MUST review this section and ensure they comply with the requirements, as relevant.

**a. Applicable Environmental Requirements.** All Choice Neighborhoods grantees must comply with applicable environmental requirements. In accordance with the FY2015 Appropriations Act provision, environmental reviews must be performed by the State or unit of general local government (Responsible Entity) under 24 CFR part 58, regardless of whether the grantee is a PHA. These regulations implement the policies of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and other environmental requirements. The Responsible Entity must make a determination whether each activity assisted under this NOFA is exempt or categorically excluded from NEPA and other environmental review requirements or requires further environmental review. While many planning activities assisted under the NOFA are exempt or categorically excluded from NEPA and other environmental review requirements, other activities, including many Action Activities, will require environmental review prior to implementation. When such an activity is proposed, no Choice Neighborhoods grant funds for that activity will be released until the environmental review is complete and the Responsible Entity has submitted a Request for Release of Funds to HUD. Note that the environmental review process also includes other Federal laws and authorities, such as the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, which also apply to Choice Neighborhoods activities, even those which may be categorically excluded from NEPA review.

**b. Responsibility.** If the grantee objects to the responsible entity conducting the environmental review, on the basis of performance, timing, or compatibility of objectives, HUD will review the facts and determine who will perform the environmental review. At any time, HUD may reject the use of a responsible entity to conduct the environmental review in a particular case on the basis of performance, timing, or compatibility of objectives, or in accordance with 24 CFR 58.77(d)(1). If a responsible entity objects to performing an environmental review, or if HUD determines that the responsible entity should not perform the environmental review, HUD may designate another responsible entity to conduct the review or may itself conduct the environmental review in accordance with the provisions of 24 CFR

part 50.

**c. Limitations on activities pending clearance.** Unless an action is exempt or is categorically excluded and is not subject to other applicable environmental requirements, you, and any participant in the development process, may not undertake any actions with respect to the project that are choice-limiting or could have environmentally adverse effects, including demolishing, acquiring, rehabilitating, converting, leasing, repairing, or constructing property (i.e. “physical activities”) proposed to be assisted under this NOFA, and you, and any participant in the development process, may not commit or expend HUD or local funds for these activities, until (i) HUD has approved a Request for Release of Funds following a responsible entity’s environmental review under 24 CFR part 58, or (ii) HUD has completed an environmental review and given approval for the action under 24 CFR part 50. In addition, you must carry out any mitigating/remedial measures required by the responsible entity (or HUD), or select an alternate eligible property or site, if permitted by HUD

**d. Supporting Documentation.** You must provide any reports and documentation that are needed to perform the environmental review to the responsible entity (or HUD, where applicable). Where HUD is conducting the environmental review, applicants should follow the documentation guidance as discussed in Chapter 9 of the MAP Guide. Guidance on environmental review is available on HUD’s environmental website: <https://www.hudexchange.info/environmental-review/>.

## 8. Use of Grant Funds

a. For FY 2010 – 2014 Planning Grantee applicants: All funds awarded (up to \$1.5 million) must be used for Action Activities, as defined in section I.A.3.f of this NOFA. Planning and Action Grant applicants are not expected to identify nor are they encouraged to identify specific Action Activities within the application. Rather, these funds will be withheld (i.e., obligated to the grantee, but not released). Within six months of the grant award, these awardees must propose a plan, which must be approved by HUD, that identifies the Action Activities for which these funds will be used. If any Action Activities are subject to environmental review, an environmental review must be completed before the plan is approved (see section III.C.7). HUD will release these funds once a proposed plan is approved. FY 2010 – 2014 Planning Grantees should note that Action Activities funding cannot be used to fund the planning and proposal process for Action Activities.

b. For all other applicants: If awarded a Planning and Action Grant, any Choice Neighborhoods funds over \$500,000 (up to \$1.5 million) must be used for Action Activities, as defined in section I.A.3.f of this NOFA. Planning and Action Grant applicants are not expected to identify nor are they encouraged to identify specific Action Activities within the application. Rather, these funds will be withheld (i.e., obligated to the grantee, but not released) and the Action Activities identified through the community planning process. Within the first 18 months of the grant, Planning and Action Grantees must propose a plan, which must be approved by HUD, that identifies the Action Activities for which these funds will be used. If any Action Activities are subject to environmental review, an environmental review must be completed before the plan is approved (see section III.C.7). HUD will release these funds once a proposed plan is approved.

## 9. Ineligible Use of Grant Funds

a. You may not use Choice Neighborhoods grant funds to pay for any activities carried out on or before the date of the letter announcing the award of the Choice Neighborhoods grant.

b. You may not use Choice Neighborhoods funds for the cost of Choice Neighborhoods grant application preparation.

c. No more than the amount specified in the Use of Grant Funds section III.C.8 can be used for Action

Activities.

d. You may not use Choice Neighborhoods grant funds for any Ineligible Activities.

## IV. Application and Submission Information.

### A. Obtaining an Application Package.

An electronic copy of the Application Package and Application Instructions for this NOFA can be downloaded from [Grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov) at <http://www.grants.gov/applicants/apply-for-grants.html>. Unless an applicant received a waiver for good cause, applications must be submitted electronically via Grants.gov except Continuum of Care applications. The Continuum of Care application is submitted through HUD's e-snaps system.

An applicant demonstrating good cause may request a waiver from the requirement for electronic submission. Applicants that cannot submit their applications electronically and must seek a waiver of the electronic grant submission requirements must submit a waiver request so that the request is received at least 15 days before the application deadline. If HUD waives the requirement, your paper application must be received by HUD before the deadline of this NOFA. To request a waiver and receive a paper copy of the application materials, you should contact:

Email: [ChoiceNeighborhoods@hud.gov](mailto:ChoiceNeighborhoods@hud.gov)

### B. Content and Form of Application Submission.

To ensure that the correct Application Package and Application Instructions are used, applicants must verify that the CFDA number and CFDA Description on the first page of the Application Package downloaded from Grants.gov, as well as the Opportunity Title, and the Funding Opportunity Number match the Program and NOFA to which they are applying. Applications will only be considered for the competition indicated in boxes 11, 12, and 13 on the SF-424 submitted in the application.

#### 1. Content

Forms for your package include the forms outlined below:

Additionally, your complete application must include the following narratives and non-form attachments:

- a. See IV.B.2 for forms and further instructions.
- b. The following sections from IV.B of the General Section are hereby incorporated, as indicated by their title.

#### (1) Electronic Grant Application Forms and Instructions.

#### (2) Technical Assistance Resources.

**(a) Grants.gov Customer Support.** Grants.gov provides customer support information on its website at: <http://www.grants.gov/contactus/contactus.jsp>. Applicants having difficulty accessing the application and instructions or having technical problems can receive customer support from Grants.gov by calling (800) 518-GRANTS (this is a toll-free number) or by sending an email to [support@grants.gov](mailto:support@grants.gov). The customer support center is open 24 hours a day, seven days per week, except federal holidays.

#### **(b) The Department's website:**

(1) Choice Neighborhoods' website. Responses to frequently asked questions will be posted on the Choice Neighborhoods website at [www.hud.gov/cn/](http://www.hud.gov/cn/). Additional information about the program is also available here.

(2) The Department's Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) Page. The Department's FOIA website page at [http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/Program\\_offices/administration/foia/highscore](http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/Program_offices/administration/foia/highscore) summarizes the highest scoring applications from previous grant competitions

**(3) Waiver of Electronic Submission Requirements.** Refer to the General Section for additional guidance. Applicants requesting a waiver should submit their waiver requests via e-mail to [ChoiceNeighborhoods@hud.gov](mailto:ChoiceNeighborhoods@hud.gov). The subject line must contain the name of the applicant and 'Request for Waiver to Electronic Application for Choice Neighborhoods'.

**(4) Registering with Grants.gov.** In order to submit applications electronically through Grants.gov, applicants must register with Grants.gov to provide and obtain certain identifying information. Registration for Grants.gov is a multi-step process. The registration process can take approximately 2 to 4 weeks or longer to complete if there are data issues to be resolved. Applicants that do not have a valid registration will not be able to submit an application through Grants.gov. Complete registration instructions and guidance are provided on the Grants.gov website.

## 2. Format and Form

Narratives and other attachments to your application must follow the following format guidelines:

### Program-Specific Format Requirements

#### a. Application Layout.

- (1) The first part of your application will be comprised of narrative exhibits. Your narratives will respond to requirements, rating factors, and other criteria in the NOFA, as indicated below.
- (2) The second part of your application will be comprised of attachments. These documents will also respond to the rating factors in the NOFA, as well as threshold and mandatory documentation requirements. They will include documents such as maps, photographs, application data forms, and various certifications.
- (3) Double-space your narrative exhibit pages. Single-spaced pages will be counted as two pages;
- (4) Use 8½ x 11-inch paper.
- (5) All margins should be one inch. If any margin is smaller than ½ inch, the page will be counted as two pages;
- (6) Use 12-point, Times New Roman font;
- (7) Any pages marked as sub-pages (e.g., with numbers and letters such as 25A, 25B, 25C), will be treated as separate pages;
- (8) If a section is not applicable, indicate "N/A" so that there is a clear indication to HUD (do not just leave the section blank);
- (9) Mark each Exhibit and Attachment with the appropriate tab/title page, as listed below. No material on the tab/title page will be considered for review purposes;
- (10) No more than one page of text may be placed on one sheet of paper; i.e., you may not shrink pages to get two or more on a page. Shrunken pages, or pages where a minimized/reduced font are used, will be counted as multiple pages;
- (11) Do not format your narrative exhibits in columns. Pages with text in columns will be counted as two pages;
- (12) Any tables included in the narrative exhibits of the application must also be double spaced or they will be counted twice.

(13) All pages should be numbered. HUD recommends that applicants consecutively number the pages of the Attachments section to ensure proper assembly of their application if printed.

**b. Application Page Count.** These criteria apply to all applicants.

(1) Each Choice Neighborhoods application must contain no more than 75 pages. Any pages beyond this limit will not be reviewed. HUD will not consider the information on any excess pages, which may result in a lower score or failure of a threshold.

(2) Exceptions to page limits. The documents listed below constitute the only exceptions and are not counted in the page limit listed above. Extraneous information not related to the content of these attachments will be counted toward the page limit.

(a) Additional pages submitted at the request of HUD in response to a technical deficiency.

(b) Table of Contents

(c) Eligible Applicants documentation (Attachment 2)

(d) Documentation for Planning Coordinator (Attachment 3)

(e) The pdf generated from the mapping tool that you received via email (Attachment 5)

(f) Partnerships (Attachment 13)

(g) Documentation to support consistency with other planning documents (Attachment 17)

(h) Leverage documentation (Attachment 20)

(i) Application Certifications and Standard forms (Attachments 25-29).

(j) Blank/extra pages generated as part of standard forms.

(k) Tabs/title pages that are blank or display a title/header/ “n/a” indication.

**c. Choice Neighborhoods-Specific Electronic Submission Requirements:** Format and Title Instructions in Addition to Those in the FY2015 General Section.

(1) Exhibits and Exhibit Title Pages. Exhibits are as listed in IV.B.2.e of this NOFA. Each Exhibit should be contained in its own separate file in the application. Each file should contain one title page. Do NOT create title pages separately from the document it goes with. HUD will use title pages as tabs when it downloads and prints the application. Provided the information on the title page is limited to the list in this section, the title pages will not be counted. Each title page should only contain, in the following order:

(a) The name of the Exhibit, as described below in IV.B.2.e of this NOFA, e.g., “ExhibitAExecSummary” **WARNING:** Applications that contain file names which are longer than 50 characters (HUD recommends using file names with 32 characters or less), or contain spaces or special characters, will result in the file being detected as a virus by the Grants.gov system and the application will be rejected with a “VirusDetect” message.

(b) The name of the applicant; and

(c) The name of the file that contains the Exhibit.

(2) Attachments and Attachment Title Pages. Attachments are as listed below in IV.B.2.e of this NOFA. Each Attachment should be contained in its own separate file in the application. Each Attachment that is not a HUD form should contain one title page. HUD will use title pages as tabs if it downloads and prints the application. Provided the information on the title page is limited to the list in this section, the title pages will not be counted. HUD forms do not require title pages. Each title page should only contain:

(a) The name of the Attachment, as described below in IV.B.2.e of this NOFA, e.g.,

“Att4SevereDistressCert.” **WARNING:** Applications that contain file names which are longer than 50 characters (HUD recommends using file names with 32 characters or less), or contain spaces or special characters, will result in the file being detected as a virus by the Grants.gov system and the application will be rejected with a “VirusDetect” message.

(b) The name of the applicant; and

(c) The name of the file that contains the Attachment.

**d. Documentation Requirements.** Documentation requirements are provided throughout the “Threshold Requirements” section (III.C.2), the “Statutory and Regulatory Requirements” section (III.C.1), the “Additional Requirements to be Rated” section (III.C.4), the “Rating Factors” section (V.A.1), the NOFA Priorities section (V.A.2), and the Bonus Points section (V.A.3) of this NOFA, as relevant. Applicants must carefully review and follow documentation requirements.

**e. Instructions on Application Organization and Content.** The following provides instructions on the organization and content of your application. It lists the narrative exhibits and attachments, and instructions for each, that are required as part of the application. All narrative exhibits, attachments, and forms are required to be submitted in your application unless otherwise indicated. Non-submission of any of the items below may lower your rating score or make you ineligible for award under this NOFA. Review the threshold requirements in III.C.2, the Statutory and Regulatory Requirements in III.C.1, the Additional Requirements to be Rated in III.C.4, the Rating Factors of V.A.1, the NOFA Priorities section of V.A.2, and the Bonus Points section of V.A.3 for the criteria and to ascertain the effects of non-submission. **Please be advised that not providing information clearly and consistently, and/or not providing exhibits and attachments in accordance with the instructions and documentation requirements in this NOFA, may negatively impact HUD’s ability to determine if your application meets threshold requirements, Statutory and Regulatory Requirements, or Additional Requirements to be Rated or to score your application. This could result in your application not being able to be scored and ranked (see section V.B) or a lower score. Please also only submit documents that are required to respond to a threshold requirement, Statutory and Regulatory Requirement, Additional Requirement to be Rated, and/or rating factor.** HUD forms required by this NOFA will be made available at [http://www.grants.gov/applicants/apply\\_for\\_grants.jsp](http://www.grants.gov/applicants/apply_for_grants.jsp). The list of narrative exhibits and attachments, and instructions for each, are as follows:

(1) **Table of Contents.** Use form provided (form HUD-53150).

(2) **Narrative Exhibits.** The narrative exhibits required in your applications are as follows:

(a) **Exhibit A – Executive Summary.** Please explain the target neighborhood’s and target housing’s challenges and need for this grant, the Neighborhood Assets on which you plan to build, and what you plan to use this grant to achieve. Include a profile of the neighborhood demographics in comparison to the city (or county/parish for applications from non-metropolitan areas). Describe your vision for the neighborhood and identify key partner organizations with which you will be working. Include preliminary observations on its market potential. Describe the basis of how the neighborhood boundaries were established. (Note: HUD reserves the right to ask applicants to provide evidence during the review process that the target neighborhood boundary is generally accepted.) (suggested 3 pages maximum)

(b) **Exhibit B – Requirements.** Review and provide a narrative response to the Statutory and Regulatory Requirements, as applicable, in III.C.1 and the Additional Requirements to be Rated, as applicable, in Section III.C.4. (suggested 1 page maximum)

(c) **Exhibit C – Capacity.** Review and provide a narrative response to V.A.1. (suggested 6 pages maximum)

(d) **Exhibit D – Need.** Review and provide a narrative response to V.A.1. (suggested 2 pages maximum)

(e) **Exhibit E – Soundness of Approach.** Review and provide a narrative response to V.A.1. (suggested 17 pages maximum)

(f) **Exhibit F – Likelihood of Implementation.** Review and provide a narrative response to V.A.1. (suggested 4 pages maximum)

(g) **Exhibit G – NOFA Priorities.** Review and provide a narrative response to V.A.2. (suggested 1 page maximum)

(3) **Attachments.** The attachments required in your applications, unless otherwise noted, are listed below. For forms noted below, applicants will continue to use the Planning Grant forms posted on grants.gov; any reference to “Planning Grant” on these forms should be considered to mean “Planning and Action Grant.”

(a) Attachment 1. **Key Eligibility Data Form.** Complete the form provided (form HUD 53152). Provide backup documentation, as applicable, in the appropriate attachment identified below.

(b) Attachment 2. **Eligible Applicants Documentation**

i. MOU or Letter of Agreement for Co-Applicants, if applicable. Review and respond to the requirement in III.C.1.a(4) by providing the MOU or Letter of Agreement required by that section.

ii. Nonprofits, if applicable. Review and respond to the requirement in III.C.1.a(3) by providing the documentation required by that section.

iii. Certification for Multifamily Assisted Property Owners, if applicable. If the Lead Applicant is the owner of the assisted property that is the subject of the Choice Neighborhoods activity grant, the applicant is required to submit the Previous Participation Certification (form HUD-2530).

iv. Letter from housing project owner, if applicable. Review and respond to the requirement in III.C.1.a(5) by providing the MOU and/or letter required by that section.

(c) Attachment 3. **Documentation for Planning Coordinator** (if applicable). Review and respond to the rating factors in V.A.1.c by providing the documentation required.

(d) Attachment 4. **Eligible Target Housing Documentation – Severe Distress of Targeted Project Certification.** Review and respond to the requirement in III.C.1.d by completing the form provided (form HUD-53232).

(e) Attachment 5. **Eligible Neighborhoods Documentation – Eligible Neighborhoods Data.** Review and respond to the requirement in III.C.1.c by providing the pdf received via email that contains data generated from the mapping tool provided on www.hud.gov/cn.

(f) Attachment 6. **Eligible Neighborhoods Documentation- Inadequate School Documentation,** as applicable. If you are demonstrating compliance with the Eligible Neighborhoods requirement in III.C.1.c through the inadequate school criterion, provide the school form (form HUD-53153) and supporting documentation from the local school district or state education agency.

(g) Attachment 7. **Resident Involvement Certification.** Review and respond to the requirement in III.C.4.f by providing the certification form provided (form HUD-53151).

(h) Attachment 8. **Need- Rehabilitation Cost Estimate from Physical Needs Assessment (PNA).** Review and respond to the rating factor in V.A.1.d(1) by providing the documentation identified in that section.

(i) Attachment 9. **Need- Structural Deficiencies Documentation.** Review and respond to the



rating factor in V.A.1.d(2) by providing the documentation identified in that section, as relevant. Include photographs as part of the documentation.

(j) Attachment 10. **Need- Design Deficiencies Documentation.** Review and respond to the rating factor in V.A.1.d(3) by providing the documentation identified in that section, as relevant. Include photographs as part of the documentation.

(k) Attachment 11. **Need – Substandard Housing Documentation.** If applicable, review and respond to the rating factor in V.A.1.e(2)(ii) by providing the documentation identified in that section. This documentation may also be used by HUD in order to assess compliance with the Eligible Neighborhood requirement in section III.C.1.c.

(l) Attachment 12. **Need - Part I Violent Crimes Documentation.** Review and respond to the rating factor in V.A.1.e(3) by providing the documentation identified in that section. This documentation may also be used by HUD in order to assess compliance with the Eligible Neighborhood requirement in section III.C.1.c. Tribal entities can choose to mark this section as “N/A” for Not Applicable.

(m) Attachment 13. **Evidence of Partnerships.** Review and respond to the rating factor in V.A.1.m by providing the documentation required under that section. Applicants may also include partner letters responding to V.A.1.c in this attachment, if applicable, by providing the documentation required under that section.

(n) Attachment 14. **Staffing Plan.** Review and respond to the rating factor in V.A.1.p.

(o) Attachment 15. **Planning Schedule.** Review and respond to the rating factor in V.A.1.q.

(p) Attachment 16. **Budget.** Review and respond to the rating factor in V.A.1.r.

(q) Attachment 17. **Documentation to Support Consistency with Other Planning Documents.** Review and respond to the rating factor in V.A.1.s by providing the documentation required under that section.

(r) Attachment 18. **Alignment with Existing Efforts.** Review and respond to the rating factor in V.A.1.t by providing the documentation required under that section.

(s) Attachment 19. **Evidence of Local Government Support.** Review and respond to the rating factor in V.A.1.v by providing the documentation required under that section.

(t) Attachment 20. **Leverage documentation.** Review and respond to the rating factor in V.A.1.x Include the cover sheet provided (form HUD-53154).

(u) Attachment 21. **Bonus Points**, if applicable. Review and respond to the rating factor in V.A.3 by providing a completed form HUD-2995 and/or HUD-50153 as instructed in section V.A.1.a of the General Section.

(v) Attachment 22. **City and Neighborhood Maps.** Provide city and neighborhood maps to-scale that clearly identify and label the items below in the context of existing city streets, the central business district, other key city and neighborhood sites, and census tracts. Because the City and Neighborhood Maps provide essential context for HUD reviewers, it is essential that applicants provide a map that is readable, at a reasonable scale, and clearly labels the target public and/or HUD-assisted housing project(s) and eligible neighborhood and other useful information to place the project in the context of the city, county/parish, or municipality, neighborhood assets, and other revitalization activity underway or planned. The neighborhood map must show the same boundaries used to draw the neighborhood through the mapping tool that generated the eligible neighborhoods data required in Attachment 5.

(w) Attachment 23. **Current Site Plan.** Provide a Current Site Plan that shows and clearly labels the target housing site’s various buildings. Demolished buildings should be shown and

labeled as such. Label all uses and buildings that adjoin the existing development.

(x) Attachment 24. **Photographs of the Target Housing and Neighborhood.** Submit photographs of the targeted severely distressed housing and neighborhood that illustrate the extent of distress as well as reflect the existing assets.

(y) Attachment 25. **Choice Neighborhoods Application Certifications.** Review and respond to the requirement in III.C.4.b by completing the form provided (form HUD 53156).

(z) **Standard Forms.** Respond to the requirement in III.C.4.a by completing and providing the forms listed in (i)-(iv) below. The Lead Applicant must be the signatory for these forms.

i. Attachment 26. **Application for Federal Assistance (SF-424).** Applicants must include the nine digit zip code (zip code plus four digits) associated with the applicant address in box 8d of the SF-424. The DUNS number used must have an active registration in SAM.

ii. Attachment 27. **Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (SF-LLL).** If this form does not apply, indicate that (e.g., writing “N/A”) on the form and submit it with your application.

iii. Attachment 28. **Applicant/Recipient Disclosure/Update Report (form HUD-2880)** (“HUD Applicant Recipient Disclosure Report”);

iv. Attachment 29. **Third Party Documentation Facsimile Transmittal (Facsimile Transmittal Form on Grants.gov, form HUD-96011),** if applicable.

### C. DUNS Number and SAM Registration.

Please refer directly to Section IV.C of the General Section, available at [Grants.gov](http://Grants.gov) or HUD's [Funds Available](http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/program_offices/administration/grants/fundsavail) page, [http:// portal.hud.gov /hudportal /HUD?src= /program offices /administration /grants /fundsavail](http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/program_offices/administration/grants/fundsavail).

### D. Application Submission Dates and Times.

The application deadline is 11:59:59 p.m. Eastern time on **02/09/2016**. Applications must be received no later than the deadline.

Submit your application to Grants.gov unless a waiver has been issued allowing you to submit your application in paper form or you are applying for the Continuum of Care program. The Continuum of Care application is submitted through HUD's e-snaps system. Instructions for submitting your application to Grants.gov are contained within the Application Package you downloaded from Grants.gov. Instructions for submitting your paper application will be contained in the waiver of electronic submission.

Your application must be **both received and validated** by Grants.gov. Your application is “received” when Grant.gov provides you a confirmation of receipt and an application tracking number. **If you do not see this confirmation and tracking number, your application has not been received.**

After your application has been received, your application still must be validated by Grants.gov. During this process, your application may be “validated” or “rejected with errors.” To know whether your application was rejected with errors and the reason(s) why, you must log into Grants.gov, select “Applicants” from the top navigation, and select “Track my application” from the drop-down list. If the status is “rejected with errors,” you have the option to correct the error(s) and resubmit your application before the Grace Period ends. **If your application was “rejected with errors” and you do not correct these errors, HUD will not review your application.** If your status is “validated” your application will be forwarded to HUD by Grants.gov.

#### 1. Resubmitting an Application.

Before the submission deadline, applicants who choose to amend an application that has been validated by

Grants.gov have several options:

- (1) an applicant may email the new or revised supporting materials to [ApplicationSupport@hud.gov](mailto:ApplicationSupport@hud.gov); or
- (2) an applicant may fax the additional supporting documents using the form HUD-96011.
- (3) an applicant may resubmit an entire, revised application via Grants.gov containing the new or changed material;

Whichever option is used, all materials must be received by the applicable deadline.

When submitting additional supporting documentation via email, the applicant must enter "Supporting Documentation" plus the Grants.gov application tracking number in the subject line of the email. (e.g., Subject: Supporting Documentation - GRANT12345678). If this information is not included, HUD will not be able to match the response to the application under review and the application may therefore be rejected due to the deficiency.

When submitting additional supporting documentation by fax, the applicant must enter the document name in the box labeled "Name of Document Submitting" in form HUD96011. When submitting a fax, applicants must follow the fax requirements found elsewhere in this notice. If the fax transmittal form from the last application submitted is not the cover page to the applicant's response HUD will not be able to match the response to the application under review and the application may therefore be rejected due to the deficiency. When resubmitting an application that was previously validated by Grants.gov, all documents faxed in support of the original submission must be either attached to the Grants.gov resubmission or faxed again using the form HUD-96011. If faxing, you must fax the materials, including materials faxed by a third party, after the resubmitted application has been validated by Grants.gov. All faxed materials must be received by the applicable deadline.

## **2. Grace Period for Grant.gov Submissions.**

If an application is received by Grants.gov before the deadline, but is rejected with errors, applicants have a grace period of 24 hours beyond the application deadline to submit a corrected application that is received and validated by Grants.gov. Any application submitted during the grace period that does not meet the criteria above will not be considered for funding. There is no grace period for paper applications. See the General Section for more information about the grace period.

## **3. Late Applications.**

An application received after the Program NOFA deadline date that does not meet the requirements of the grace period policy will be marked late, and will not be considered for funding.

## **E. Intergovernmental Review.**

This program is not subject to Executive Order 12372, Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs.

## **F. Funding Restrictions.**

### **1. Statutory Time Limits.**

**a. Required Obligation Date.** Funds appropriated for the Choice Neighborhoods program for FY2015 must be obligated by HUD on or before September 30, 2017. Any funds that are not obligated by that date will be recaptured by the Treasury, and thereafter will not be available for obligation for any purpose.

**b. Required Expenditure Date.** In accordance with 31 U.S.C. § 1552, all FY2015 Choice Neighborhoods funds must be expended by September 30, 2022. Any funds that are not expended by that date will be cancelled and recaptured by the Treasury, and thereafter will not be available for obligation or expenditure for any purpose. HUD reserves the right to require an earlier expenditure deadline under a Planning Grant Agreement and Planning and Action Grant Agreement.

### **2. Grant Sizing.**

a. For FY 2010 – 2014 Planning Grantee applicants, awards must not exceed \$1.5 million and can only

be used for Action Activities.

b. For all other applicants, the maximum grant award will be \$2 million for Planning and Action Grants and \$500,000 for Planning Grants:

(1) Up to \$100,000 of Planning Grants and Planning and Action Grants may be used toward Early Action Activities to enhance the planning process, as detailed in the Eligible Activities in section III.C.5.b.

(2) For Planning and Action Grantees, any Choice Neighborhoods funds over \$500,000 (up to \$1.5 million) must be used for Action Activities, as detailed in section III.C.8.

### **3. Cost Control Standards.**

a. Your cost estimates must represent an economically viable preliminary plan for designing, planning, and carrying out your proposed activities, in accordance with local costs of labor, materials, and services.

b. Your projected soft costs must be reasonable and comparable to industry standards and in accordance with the applicable policy, statute and/or regulations.

**4. Budget Deductions.** HUD may delete any unallowable items from your budget and may reduce your grant amount accordingly. HUD will not fund any portion of an application that: (a) is not eligible for funding under specific HUD program statutory or regulatory requirements; (b) does not meet the requirements of this notice; or (c) is duplicative of other funded programs or activities from prior year awards or other selected applicants. Only the eligible portions of an application (excluding duplicative portions) may be funded.

**5. Grant Reduction or Recapture.** If you are selected for funding, and if you propose to make significant changes to your transformation plan, compared to what was presented in this application, HUD reserves the right to amend the award and reduce the amount or recapture the grant. Further, if, as a Planning and Action Grantee, you fail to propose an approvable plan for Action Activities, HUD may amend the award and reduce the amount or recapture an amount of the grant.

**6. Withdrawal of Grant Amounts.** In accordance with section 24(i) of the 1937 Act, if a grantee does not proceed within a reasonable timeframe, HUD reserves the right to withdraw any funds the grantee has not obligated under its award. HUD may redistribute any withdrawn amounts to one or more other applicants eligible for Choice Neighborhoods assistance or to one or more other entities capable of proceeding expeditiously in the same locality in carrying out the Choice Neighborhoods plan of the original grantee.

**7. Ineligible Activities.** See section III.C.5.c regarding ineligible uses of program funds.

## **G. Other Submission Requirements.**

### **1. Lead Based Paint Requirements.**

When providing housing assistance funding for purchase, lease, support services, operation, or work that may disturb painted surfaces, of pre-1978 housing, you must comply with the lead-based paint evaluation and hazard reduction requirements of HUD's lead-based paint rules (Lead Disclosure; and Lead Safe Housing (24 CFR part 35)), and EPA's lead-based paint rules (e.g., Repair, Renovation and Painting; Pre-Renovation Education; and Lead Training and Certification (40 CFR part 745)).

## **V. Application Review Information.**

## A. Review Criteria.

### 1. Rating Factors.

Applications must respond to the rating factor criteria of the NOFA as the basis to be rated and ranked. Applicants must review and follow any documentation requirements provided in this Rating Factor Section and the instructions on application organization, content and submission provided in IV.B. Specific instructions are noted for FY 2010 – 2014 Planning Grantees where applicable throughout this section.

Further, in accordance with Section V.B.2 of the FY2015 General Section, the Department may elect to deduct points from rating factors based on past performance. For purposes of this NOFA, past performance will be considered for all applicants in the capacity rating subfactors, and for FY 2010 – 2014 Planning Grantees in the Soundness of Approach subfactors that include past accomplishments. If the Lead Applicant, Co-Applicant, or Principal Team Members are recipients or principal partners of past HOPE VI, Choice Neighborhoods Planning or Implementation Grants, or RAD application deliverables and milestones, HUD may consider the following when evaluating past performance:

- a. The timely submission and quality of deliverables provided to the Department, such as Transformation Plans, quarterly data reports, budgets and schedules;
- b. Ability to account for funds appropriately;
- c. The timely use of funds received from the Department;
- d. The extent to which program and Transformation Plan requirements were met and resulted in a successful planning process, including but not limited to the needs assessment, resident engagement, community engagement, the development of the Transformation Plan (encompassing a visioning and decision-making process), working with partners, and doing while planning;
- e. Meeting performance targets, key deadlines, or other performance evaluation tools approved as part of a grant agreement;
- f. Receipt of promised matching and or leveraged funds; and
- g. The number of persons served or targeted for assistance.

<b>Choice Neighborhoods Planning Grants Competition</b>		
<b>Rating Review Score Summary</b>		
<b>Rating Category</b>	<b>Rating Factor</b>	<b>Points</b>
<b>Capacity</b>		
	Capacity to lead the planning process	8
	Resident and community engagement	4
	Capacity of the planning partners	4
<i>subtotal</i>		<b>16</b>
<b>Need</b>		
	<i>Unit Distress</i>	
	Current rehabilitation costs	3

	Structural deficiencies	4
	Design deficiencies	4
	<i>Neighborhood Distress</i>	
	Poverty/ELI (Neighborhood poverty)	4
	Long-term vacancy or substandard homes	2
	Part I violent crime	4
	<i>Need for affordable housing</i>	
	Need for affordable housing in the community	1
<b>subtotal</b>		<b>22</b>
<b>Soundness of Approach</b>		
	Neighborhood selection	4
	Resident engagement	4
	Community engagement	4
	Needs assessment	4
	Visioning & decision-making	4
	Partnerships	4
	Doing while planning	4
	Action Activities process	5
	Staffing plan	2
	Planning Schedule	2
	Budget	2
	Consistency with Consolidated Plan and PHA/MTW Plan	1
	Consistency with Regional Sustainability Plan	1
<b>subtotal</b>		<b>41</b>
<b>Likelihood of Implementation</b>		
	Alignment with existing efforts	5
	Creating lasting momentum	5
	Local government support	3

<i>subtotal</i>		<b>13</b>
<b>Leverage</b>		
	Leverage	6
<i>subtotal</i>		<b>6</b>
<b>NOFA Priorities</b>		
	Participative planning and implementation (policy priority)	1
	Renewable energy (policy priority)	1
<i>subtotal</i>		<b>2</b>
<b>Bonus Points</b>		
	Preferred Sustainable Communities Status	2
	Promise Zones	
<i>subtotal</i>		<b>2</b>
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>102</b>

#### RATING FACTOR - CAPACITY

Maximum Points: 16

a. **Capacity to Lead the Planning Process – 8 points.** This rating factor evaluates the organizational capacity, based on **past** experience of you **and** your Co-Applicant (if applicable), to effectively lead and coordinate a comprehensive neighborhood planning process and undertake Action Activities (defined in section I.A.3.f). What is your and your Co-Applicant’s experience with comprehensive neighborhood planning? What were the results of the neighborhood planning process(es), including action activities? What is your and your Co-Applicant’s experience leading a visioning process with residents and stakeholders? HUD will evaluate the extent to which the application demonstrates that you and your Co-Applicant effectively led and coordinated the development of a comprehensive neighborhood revitalization plan in partnership with other participating parties (including governmental agencies and key community stakeholders, such as businesses and civic organization representatives, and especially residents). How did you and your Co-Applicant effectively hold these parties accountable throughout the planning process and into the action phases? To demonstrate this past experience, you must provide specific examples that detail your and your Co-Applicant’s extensive and successful experience in the past six years undertaking planning and action activities that support each of the three core goals of Housing, People, and Neighborhood. FY 2010 – 2014 Planning Grantees **may** include what they have already accomplished during their Choice Neighborhoods Planning Grant process.

b. **Resident and Community Engagement – 4 points.** This rating subfactor evaluates the extent to which the application demonstrates that past planning process(es) that you or your Co-Applicant led effectively involved and was substantially informed by the community, including residents, faith-based institutions, local business owners, and other community organizations. FY 2010 – 2014 Planning Grantees **may** describe what they have already accomplished in regards to this rating factor during their Choice Neighborhoods Planning Grant.

c. **Capacity of the Planning Partners – 4 points.** A successful, comprehensive planning process depends on the capacity of many partners. What partners have you identified to bring additional capacity

to the planning process and/or fill any gaps in your or your Co-Applicant’s experience in the planning process? FY 2010 – 2014 Planning Grantees **may** include what they have already accomplished during their Choice Neighborhoods Planning Grant. This rating factor will evaluate one or more partners’ relevant capacity and how it will supplement your or your Co-Applicant’s capacity to undertake a comprehensive planning process. Please clearly identify the partners you wish to be evaluated under this factor. To be considered under this rating factor, all partners, except a Planning Coordinator, must have signed letters or documents in the attachments indicating that they plan to participate in the planning process (or have participated in the planning process in the case of FY 2010 – 2014 Planning Grantees).

If you intend to procure a Planning Coordinator (defined in section I.A.3.f) (or have procured a Planning Coordinator in the case of FY 2010 – 2014 Planning Grantees), the Planning Coordinator’s capacity will only be evaluated for this rating factor if you include documentation in your attachments that demonstrates that either a binding contractual agreement is in place or that you have provided a selection letter to the Planning Coordinator and will enter into a binding contractual agreement. If the contract between you and the Planning Coordinator has been executed, submit a copy of the contract. If you have not executed the contract, submit a copy of the selection letter from you to the Planning Coordinator. The agreement must be between the Lead Applicant and the Planning Coordinator. The documentation must identify duties/tasks for which the Planning Coordinator will be responsible related to this grant and make clear that the agreement will last for the term of the grant. You must include the documentation in your attachments.

**RATING FACTOR - NEED**

**Maximum Points: 22**

**d. Severe Physical Distress of Public and/or Assisted Housing – 11 points.** HUD will evaluate the extent of the severe physical distress of the public and/or assisted housing project(s) that are proposed for redevelopment as part of the Choice Neighborhoods grant. You will receive points for the following subfactors, as indicated.

(1) **Current Rehabilitation Costs.** You may receive up to **3** points based on the estimated cost to rehabilitate the units as determined by a Physical Needs Assessment (PNA, as defined in section I.A.3.f) that has been conducted within the last three years for the target public and/or assisted housing project(s). You must provide a copy of the applicable excerpt from the PNA report, which is dated and identifies the author, showing the total estimated current rehabilitation costs for all units (these are immediate costs, not a multi-year lifecycle projection). The copy or your narrative must clearly label this number as the total estimated current rehabilitation costs for all units. If the PNA was completed more than one year prior to the publication date of this NOFA, you must also include an update by the project’s owner indicating which improvements identified in the PNA have been completed. If this application is for more than one public and/or assisted housing project, a PNA excerpt must be submitted for each site. HUD will then calculate the per unit cost as a percentage of the applicable Total Development Cost limit (TDC Limit), as defined at 24 CFR 941.306, in effect at the time this NOFA is published (currently posted on May 8, 2015 in accordance with PIH Notice 2011-38), for a two-bedroom walkup unit. If this application is for more than one public and/or assisted housing project, HUD will calculate a weighted average of the rehab costs relative to the applicable TDC limit in order to award points. If the targeted units are public housing and HUD has already approved a Section 18 demolition of the targeted units you will receive full points if you submit a copy of HUD’s letter approving the demolition. If the targeted units are Indian Housing that have been demolished, you will receive full points if you submit a copy of the written notification of demolition provided to HUD in accordance with 24 CFR 1000.134. Points will be awarded based on the following table:

Estimated Rehabilitation Needs as Percent of TDC Limit	Points Awarded
At least 55.00 percent	3



Between 45.00 and 54.99 percent	2
Between 35.00 and 44.99 percent	1
Less than 35.00 percent	0

**(2) Structural Deficiencies.** You may receive up to **4** points if your application demonstrates significant deficiencies in the structural elements, building systems, and on-site infrastructure of the targeted public and/or assisted housing units such that significant rehabilitation or demolition is required. Examples of structural elements include roofs, foundations, and structural walls. Building systems include electrical, plumbing, heating and cooling, and mechanical systems. On-site infrastructure includes site work, sewer and storm drain laterals, or other on-site utilities. If the targeted units are public housing and HUD has already approved demolition of the targeted units you will receive full points if you submit a copy of HUD’s letter approving the demolition. If the targeted units are Indian Housing that have been demolished, you will receive full points if you submit a copy of the written notification of demolition provided to HUD in accordance with 24 CFR1000.134. If this application is for more than one public and/or assisted housing project, descriptions must be submitted for each site and HUD will consider documentation provided for all properties.

Provide a letter in your attachments signed by a registered engineer or architect and including a narrative description. It may be supplemented by physical inspection reports or pictures. (The Certification of Severe Physical Distress submitted to satisfy the Eligible Target Housing requirement is not sufficient to earn points for this rating factor, though it may be signed by the same person that signs the letter required for this rating factor). The letter must be based on a recent physical inspection and dated no more than 18 months prior to the publication of this NOFA.

Fewer points may be awarded for descriptions that are inadequate and/or demonstrate less severe distress. Zero points will be awarded if the documentation in your attachments is not in the format required (e.g., not a letter signed by a registered architect or engineer), does not demonstrate severe distress, the deficiencies are cosmetic or require routine repair/maintenance, or does not provide adequate information to make HUD’s rating of this factor possible.

**(3) Design Deficiencies.** You may receive up to **4** points if your application demonstrates that there are fundamental design deficiencies, of a type and character that require substantial rehabilitation or reconstruction to fully address, related to: (a) substantially inappropriate building design or site layout and street connectivity when compared to the surrounding neighborhood which may include inappropriate density; (b) inadequate room size and/or unit configurations to meet the needs of existing residents; (c) lack of defensible space related to building layout and orientation; (d) disproportionately high and adverse environmental health effects associated with ongoing residency; (e) inaccessibility for persons with disabilities with regard to individual units (i.e., less than 5 percent of units are accessible), entranceways, and common areas; and (f) significant utility expenses (at least 30 percent higher than similar properties) caused by energy conservation deficiencies that may be documented by an energy audit. You may demonstrate this in your application through narrative description, additional physical inspection information, letters from relevant oversight agencies, and/or pictures in the attachments section. If this application is for more than one public and/or assisted housing project, descriptions should be submitted for each site and HUD will consider documentation provided for all properties.

(a) You will receive **4** points if your application demonstrates fundamental design deficiencies, of a type and character that require substantial rehabilitation or reconstruction to fully address, in 3 or more of these deficiencies.

(b) Fewer points will be awarded for applications that address fewer than 3 items, demonstrate

less severe distress, and/or for responses that are inadequate.

(c) You will receive **0** points if your application does not address any of these items, does not demonstrate distress, or does not address this subfactor to an extent that makes HUD’s rating of this subfactor possible.

e. **Severe Distress of the Targeted Neighborhood – 10 points.** Choice Neighborhoods is intended to be a tool to help communities turn around the most distressed neighborhoods. HUD will evaluate the level of this neighborhood-wide distress by examining several factors: poverty, crime rates and vacancy rates. You will receive points by addressing the following separate factors, as indicated.

(1) Neighborhood Poverty. You may receive up to **4** points based on the concentration of households in poverty or with extremely low incomes (whichever is greater) residing within the target neighborhood. HUD will use the same data from the mapping tool as used for the Eligible Neighborhood requirement to assign points for this factor.

Concentration of Households in Poverty or with Extremely Low Incomes	Points Awarded
40.00 percent and above	4
Between 35.00 and 39.99 percent	3
Between 30.00 and 34.99 percent	2
Between 25.00 and 29.99 percent	1
24.99 percent and below	0

(2) Long-term Vacancy or Substandard Homes. You may receive up to **2** points based on the current rate of long-term vacant properties or substandard homes within the target neighborhood. Applicants decide which to submit. If applicants submit documentation for both, the higher scoring item will be considered.

i. You will earn points for the higher of either the rate of vacant housing or the ratio of vacant housing in the neighborhood to the county/parish in accordance with the table below. HUD will use data from the mapping tool to determine the vacancy rate for this scoring criteria and the Eligible Neighborhood requirement.

Current Long-term Vacancy Rate in the Target Neighborhood	Current Long-Term Vacancy Rate in the Target Neighborhood is X times the County/Parish	Points Awarded
14.00 percent and above	More than 4.00	2
Between 7.00 and 13.99 percent	Between 2.00 and 3.99	1
Less than 7.00 percent	Less than 2.00	0

ii. You will earn 2 points for documentation showing that 8.00 percent of homes are substandard . You will earn 1 point for documentation showing that 4.00 to 7.99 percent of homes are substandard. Data must be published by a local jurisdiction or unrelated third party and be based on either code enforcement data, such as from the housing office of the applicable city or county/parish, or data on the percentage of occupied housing units lacking complete plumbing facilities, such as the most recent data from the American Community Survey (ACS) for your neighborhood. In your attachments you must include either a letter of certification from a local

agency or a copy/print out of published data. If providing the latter, the source must be identifiable. For occupied housing units lacking plumbing facilities, ACS data must be from 2009 – 2012 or later, and ACS data from Census tracts that cover the majority of the neighborhood can be used to approximate neighborhood-level data (please indicate tracts).

(3) Part I Violent Crime. You may receive up to 4 points based on the rate of Part I violent crimes for the precinct/PSA in which the target housing is located for the three years 2012-2014 (measured as Part I violent crimes per 1,000 persons). You must submit data for each of the three years, and preferably break out the number of incidences for each of the four classifications of Part I violent crimes, in your attachments as a letter of certification from the local law enforcement agency or by providing a copy/print out of published local law enforcement data. If providing the latter, the source must be identifiable. You will earn points for the higher of the 3-year average for either the rate compared to the city/county/parish or the rate in accordance with the applicable table below. This rating factor does not apply to applicants who are tribal entities. Tribal entities will automatically be awarded full points and do not need to submit the crime documentation listed above.

Part I Violent Crime Rate- crimes per 1000 residents in precinct/PSA of Target Housing	Part I Violent Crime Rate of precinct/PSA is X times the City/County/Parish*	Points Awarded
26.50 or more	2.50 or more	4
Between 24.00 and 26.49	Between 2.25 and 2.49	3
Between 21.50 and 23.99	Between 2.00 and 2.24	2
Between 19.00 and 21.49	Between 1.75 and 1.99	1
18.99 or less	Less than 1.75	0

\*In non-metropolitan areas, if the Precinct/PSA is coterminous with the County/Parish, the applicant may compare its Part I violent crime rate to that of the state.

You will also receive 0 points if the data are not for the time-period specified (calendar years 2012-2014), in the format required (i.e. shows each of the three years individually, indicates the number of incidents per 1,000 residents), or otherwise inadequate to make HUD’s rating of this factor possible.

f. **Need for Affordable Housing in the Community – 1 point.** You will receive 1 point if the Choice Neighborhoods project is in a county/parish where the shortage of housing affordable to very low-income (VLI) renter households (0 to 50 percent AMI) is greater than the national rate using the most currently available Census Data. HUD will use data included in the mapping tool for this rating factor. The shortage rate is calculated as the number of VLI renter households divided by the number of rental units affordable and available to VLI households, where affordable and available equals units that: (1) have rents not exceeding 30 percent of 50 percent of AMI; and (2) are vacant or occupied by a VLI renter household.

**RATING FACTOR - SOUNDNESS OF APPROACH**

**Maximum Points: 41**

g. This factor addresses the quality and feasibility of your proposed work plan and evaluates how well you have developed a sound and achievable strategy for leading a collaborative planning process that will develop a comprehensive Transformation Plan aligned with the three core goals of Choice Neighborhoods – Housing, People, and Neighborhood.

h. **Neighborhood Selection – 4 points.** There are often many communities in a metro or non-metro area

that meet the Choice Neighborhoods criteria for housing need, poverty and crime. Sometimes community assets and capacity upon which a planning process can build are also taken into account when selecting a neighborhood. Up to 4 points will be awarded based on the extent to which the application demonstrates how and why the target neighborhood was selected as the subject of this application. What is the current image of the neighborhood? What is positive and negative about that image? What defining neighborhood characteristics (both needs and assets) led to its selection? What are the community assets that your planning approach will build on (or, in the case of FY 2010 – 2014 Planning Grantees, has built on)?

i. **Resident Engagement – 4 points.** Up to 4 points will be awarded based on the extent to which the application demonstrates how public and/or HUD-assisted housing residents of the target housing will be meaningfully engaged in the planning process and the Action Activities process (see subfactor o). If a group of residents from the targeted public or HUD-assisted housing asked you to explain how residents can substantially inform the Transformation Plan, what would your response be? How will you conduct continuing outreach to target housing residents and encourage a broad range of target housing residents to engage in the planning process? How will you build capacity among target housing residents to substantially inform the planning process? For this rating subfactor, FY 2010 – 2014 Planning Grantees **must** describe what they have already accomplished during their Choice Neighborhoods Planning Grant as well as what is planned for the remainder of their Planning Grant period if applicable and for the Action Activities process.

j. **Community Engagement – 4 points.** Up to 4 points will be awarded based on the extent to which the application demonstrates how other neighborhood residents and community-based partners, including community organizations, faith-based institutions and local business owners, will be meaningfully engaged in the planning process and the Action Activities process (see subfactor o). How will neighborhood residents and community-based partners substantially inform the Transformation Plan? How will you conduct continuing outreach to these populations to engage them throughout the planning process? How will you arbitrate different opinions among various community partners? For this rating subfactor, FY 2010 – 2014 Planning Grantees **must** describe what they have already accomplished during their Choice Neighborhoods Planning Grant as well as what is planned for the remainder of their Planning Grant period if applicable and for the Action Activities process.

k. **Needs Assessment – 4 points.** Up to 4 points will be awarded based on the soundness of your approach to collecting a rich set of information that will substantially inform the Transformation Plan. How will you collect quantitative (number-based) and qualitative information on neighborhood needs and assets? How will you conduct your household-level needs assessment? How will you ensure a high rate of response for the household-level needs assessment? From which other partners and sources will you collect other needs assessment data and how will you do this? In what other ways will you capture open-ended information from residents and stakeholders throughout the planning process? For this rating subfactor, FY 2010 – 2014 Planning Grantees **must** describe what they have already accomplished during their Choice Neighborhoods Planning Grant as well as what is planned for the remainder of their Planning Grant period if applicable.

l. **Visioning and Decision-Making – 4 points.** Up to 4 points will be awarded based on how will you facilitate visioning and decision-making within the planning process. How will you create a shared vision for the neighborhood, in partnership with residents and stakeholders? How will you ensure that the vision is specific to the strengths and challenges of the neighborhood? How will shared target outcomes be selected? How will you prioritize among multiple, differing strategies that may arise from the planning process to form the basis of your cohesive Transformation Plan? For this rating subfactor, FY 2010 – 2014 Planning Grantees **must** describe what they have already accomplished during their Choice Neighborhoods Planning Grant as well as what is planned for the remainder of their Planning Grant period if applicable.

m. **Partnerships – 4 points.** Up to 4 points will be awarded based on the extent to which the application demonstrates your partners, their roles, and how you plan to work with them during the planning process

(including the Action Activities process as described in subfactor o). Who are the partners that you have engaged and with whom you plan to work, including partners in the areas of housing, neighborhood, public safety, education, employment, and health? What will their roles be in the planning process and how will they substantially contribute to the Transformation Plan? With what partners have you not yet engaged but plan to, and what is your strategy for building these additional partnerships? In your attachments, please include unique, individual letters (not form letters) from your partners that indicate their support of the proposed planning process and describe their role in it (such as contribution of resources and expertise related to specific tasks, etc.). In its evaluation, HUD will consider the breadth, quality, and depth of partnerships in relation to the proposed planning process and neighborhood needs. For this rating subfactor, FY 2010 – 2014 Planning Grantees **must** describe what they have already accomplished during their Choice Neighborhoods Planning Grant as well as what is planned for the remainder of their Planning Grant period if applicable and for the Action Activities process.

**n. Doing While Planning – 4 points.** Tangible early actions that can get people energized, mobilized and organized are an important part of the planning process. These early actions can help increase confidence in the neighborhood, respond to community concerns in real time, and help convince skeptical stakeholders that positive change is possible. To demonstrate your commitment to “doing while planning,” please describe a project or projects in the neighborhood that will engage the community, enhance the neighborhood, and that residents, community members, and/or local stakeholders will implement during the planning process (the first 24 months). This project can be funded using Choice Neighborhoods Early Action Activities funds (i.e., up to \$100,000 as referenced in Section III.C.5.b.8) and/or leveraged commitments. The following projects will not be considered under this rating subfactor: supportive services, marketing, basic infrastructure, basic municipal services, or the demolition, relocation, construction, or rehabilitation of the target housing. Up to 4 points will be awarded based on the project you propose, its responsiveness to community needs, and its ability to foster community engagement. For this rating subfactor, FY 2010 – 2014 Planning Grantees **must** describe what they have already accomplished during their Choice Neighborhoods Planning Grant as well as what is planned for the remainder of their Planning Grant period if applicable.

**o. Action Activities Process – 5 points.** If awarded a Planning and Action Grant, you may receive up to \$1.5 million to use toward Action Activities (defined in section I.A.3.f) that will be proposed within 18 months of the grant award date (or 6 months, if you are an FY 2010 – FY 2014 Planning Grantee). These activities should evolve from the planning process. Up to 5 points will be awarded based on your plan for how you will select Action Activities. What process will you use for identifying Action Activities closely aligned with community priorities? How will you, your partners, and the community prioritize Action Activities? What criteria or guidelines will you use to evaluate potential projects? How will you ensure the funds are used strategically and have an impact on the neighborhood? FY 2010 – 2014 Planning Grantees should note that Action Activities funding cannot be used to fund the planning and proposal process for Action Activities.

**p. Staffing Plan - 2 points.** You may receive up to 2 points for providing a detailed and feasible staffing plan for completing all of your proposed planning activities. The Staffing Plan should include an organizational chart that identifies the various organizations participating in the planning effort and shows their relationship to each other in the governance structure (e.g., decision makers, advisors, stakeholders, working groups). The Staffing Plan should identify the principal staff positions (individuals’ names are not required) and the percentage of their time that will be dedicated to the planning process. Please provide a description of your staffing plan in the narrative exhibits and the organizational chart in your attachments. FY 2010 – 2014 Planning Grantees should respond to this rating subfactor by providing a staffing plan of the Action Activities process with the details described above. FY 2010 – 2014 Planning Grantees should note that Action Activities funding cannot be used to fund the planning and proposal process for Action Activities.

**q. Planning Schedule - 2 points.**

(1) All applicants, except FY 2010 – 2014 Planning Grantees, may receive up to **2** points for providing a detailed and feasible schedule for completing all of your proposed planning activities within the first 24 months of the effective date of the Grant Agreement. The schedule should identify each significant activity and milestone required for completing the planning process (including the activities listed in section III.C.5.a) and should list the planned start and completion dates of all tasks. You must also provide a description of the main scheduled activities and an explanation for why you chose this approach to the planning process in the narrative exhibit. Please note that this rating factor only evaluates the first 24 months of the grant, which encompasses the planning process. Please provide a description of your planning schedule in the narrative exhibits and the planning schedule in your attachments.

(2) FY 2010 – 2014 Planning Grantees may receive up to receive up to 2 points for providing their most recent HUD-approved Planning Grant schedule, and describing in the narrative how the Action Activities process builds off of or will be integrated into this schedule. Please also identify the milestones and the timeline associated with identifying and proposing Action Activities within six months after the grant award date. Points will be awarded based on the soundness of the Action Activities process timeline and how well it complements or builds off of the HUD-approved Planning Grant schedule. If a FY 2014 Planning Grantee is in the process of revising their HUD approved Planning Grant schedule, they may submit the most recent HUD-approved Planning Grant schedule with the proposed revisions.

**r. Budget - 2 points.**

(1) All applicants, except FY 2010 – 2014 Planning Grantees, may receive up to **2** points for providing a budget for the planning activities related to the grant (including required activities listed in section III.C.5.a) that shows projected sources and thoroughly estimates all applicable costs in a clear and coherent format. Your budget will also be evaluated based on the extent to which projected sources are sufficient for the scope of the proposed planning process. In your attachments, provide a detailed Sources and Uses statement that reflects all funding, including supporting commitments. The proposed uses for the Choice Neighborhoods funds must be identified in a separate column from other funds. You may provide additional description of your budget in the narrative exhibits as needed to provide further detail on costs and/or restrictions associated with other sources. Applicants must designate any requested Choice Neighborhoods funds over \$500,000 as a single line item labeled, “Action Activities TBD.” These funds will be withheld and the Action Activities will be identified out of the community planning process, as described in Section III.C.8.

(2) FY 2010 – 2014 Planning Grantees may receive up to 2 points for providing the most recent version of the HUD approved Planning Grant budget, including Part II and Part III of the Form HUD-53421. Your budget will be evaluated based on the soundness and effectiveness of how the funds are allocated to the planning activities. Please provide a narrative justifying why Planning Grant funds were budgeted in this way and what those expenditures accomplished or are accomplishing. If a FY 2014 Planning Grantee is in the process of revising their HUD approved Planning Grant budget, they may submit the most recent HUD-approved Planning Grant budget with the proposed revisions.

**s. Consistency with Other Planning Documents - 2 points.** These rating factors evaluate whether each applicant can provide evidence of consistency with other planning documents.

(1) Consolidated Plan and PHA/MTW Plan. You will receive **1** point if the proposed Transformation Plan is consistent with the Consolidated Plan for the jurisdiction in which the target neighborhood is located and PHA Plan or MTW Plan, as applicable. All applications must include the Certification of Consistency with the Consolidated Plan (form HUD-2991) in your attachments. If there is a public housing site targeted in the application, then you must also provide a copy of the relevant section from the PHA/MTW Plan in your attachments. The PHA/MTW Plan must

specifically identify the intent to plan for the transformation of the target public housing project and its neighborhood. Zero points will be awarded if the required documentation is not provided. This rating factor does not apply to applicants who are tribal entities. Tribal entities will automatically be awarded 1 point and do not need to submit the documentation listed above.

(2) **Regional Sustainability Plan.** You will receive **1** point if the proposed Transformation Plan is consistent with a regional sustainability plan, which has been adopted by a consortium of local jurisdictions and which includes the target neighborhood of the Choice Neighborhoods application. You must provide a copy of the relevant section from the regional sustainability plan or letter from the appropriate regional planning official in your attachments. Zero points will be awarded if the required documentation is not provided.

## RATING FACTOR - LIKELIHOOD OF IMPLEMENTATION

Maximum Points: 13

These rating factors evaluate the extent to which each applicant demonstrates that the planning process proposed in this application will create sustainable momentum that persists through implementation.

t. **Alignment with Existing Efforts – 5 points.** You may receive 5 points if the target housing and the surrounding neighborhood are located in an officially designated investment priority area (e.g., redevelopment area, Tax Increment Finance district, CDBG Revitalization Strategy Area, etc.). For tribal entities, you may receive 5 points if you have secured an Indian Community Development Block Grant for a project in your neighborhood and that project is currently underway. You must provide a copy of the relevant section from an official plan or a letter from the appropriate official in your attachments in order to demonstrate that you meet the criteria under this rating factor. Zero points will be awarded if the required documentation is not provided.

u. **Creating Lasting Momentum - 5 points.** You may receive up to **5** points by demonstrating specific evidence that your Transformation Plan is likely to be implemented, even without a Choice Neighborhoods Implementation Grant award in the future. Explain the factors in the neighborhood that ensure momentum will continue past the term of this grant and make implementation likely.

(1) Applicants will receive 5 points if a Rental Assistance Demonstration (RAD) Commitment to enter into a Housing Assistance Payments Contract (CHAP) has been secured for all of the housing targeted in this application, as of the submission date of the application. Applicants must state in their narrative that they meet this requirement and HUD will consult its records to confirm. Applicants do not need to submit additional documentation.

(2) If a RAD CHAP has not been secured for the target housing, then applicants may receive up to 3 points by demonstrating other evidence that makes implementation likely. Possible examples of evidence include the likelihood of having a significant amount of funding for implementing the plan secured, or highly likely to be shortly committed. Other examples include conformance with local or regional plans that indicate this neighborhood is intended to be subject for redevelopment and ongoing public investment, investment from an Anchor Institution in your neighborhood that is also located in/near your neighborhood, and/or the presence of clear market interest and private sector investment already existing within your neighborhood.

(3) Fewer points will be awarded for providing less evidence that demonstrates the plan will likely be implemented.

v. **Local Government Support - 3 points.** You will receive **3** points if your application contains a letter signed by the chief executive officer or highest ranking Housing/Community Development/Planning official of your local government indicating support for this planning process. For tribal entities, you will receive 3 points if your application contains a tribal resolution or its equivalent indicating support for this planning process. You must include documentation in your attachments. If the local government is Lead Applicant or Co-Applicant, the application will automatically receive 3 points.

HUD views leveraged commitments as an indicator of support in the community for this comprehensive neighborhood planning effort. These additional resources will also increase the effectiveness of the proposed grant activities. These rating factors evaluate the extent to which you demonstrate that you have secured financial and/or supporting commitments from other sources to implement the activities proposed in this application, in accordance with the criteria below.

w. **Program Requirements that Apply to Leverage.** You must follow these requirements in compiling and documenting leverage for purposes of the NOFA. Otherwise, it may not be possible for HUD to count the commitment at the level claimed. These general requirements apply to all leverage resource commitments.

- (1) Firmly Committed. Resources must be firmly committed as of the application deadline date. “Firmly committed” means that the amount of the resource and its dedication to Choice Neighborhoods Planning and Action Activities is explicit. Endorsements or general letters of support from organizations or vendors alone will not count as resources and should not be included in the application.
- (2) Content. Leverage documents must represent valid and accurate commitments of future support. They must detail the dollar amount and any terms of the commitment. They must also indicate that the funding is available to you for the activities directly related to developing the Transformation Plan and Early Action Activities or for undefined Action Activities to be determined by the planning process.
  - (a) **HUD will not accept letters committing funding for supportive services, housing construction, or target housing rehabilitation, demolition, or relocation. Specific infrastructure and other implementation-related activities will only be accepted if they are related to the Early Action Activities.**
  - (b) **Because Action Activities must be identified through a community planning process and then must be approved by HUD, HUD will only count cash leverage for undefined Action Activities. Letters must state that the committed funds will be set aside for Action Activities that will be defined through a community planning process and approved by HUD.**
  - (c) **FY 2010 – 2014 Planning Grantees may only submit leverage associated with the Action Activities process and cash leverage for undefined Action Activities. FY 2010 – 2014 Planning Grantees must not submit leverage that has been committed to their original Planning Grant’s planning process. All other applicants can submit leverage for both the planning process and undefined Action Activities.**
  - (d) If a commitment document is for more than one resource/amount, they should be indicated individually in the document rather than in one lump sum.
  - (e) An example of a valid and accurate commitment: “X Agency commits to providing \$100,000 in funds for a geotechnical study to support the FY2015 Choice Neighborhoods Planning activities [or Action Activities] for ABC housing development.”
- (3) Signature. Resource commitments must be written and signed by a person authorized to make the commitment and dated. For example, the PHA’s Executive Director cannot commit the funds of another agency, organization or government body (unless you can demonstrate otherwise in the application).
- (4) Letterhead. Commitment letters must be on letterhead or they will not be accepted.
- (5) If the commitment document is not included in the application and submitted before the NOFA deadline date, it will not be considered.



(6) Staff time and benefits of the Lead Applicant and/or Co-Applicant (if any) are not an eligible leverage resource.

(7) Sources of Leverage. Funding may come from a variety of sources, including any of the following:

- (a) Public, private, and nonprofit entities;
- (b) State and local housing finance agencies;
- (c) Local governments;
- (d) Tribal entities;
- (e) Foundations;
- (f) Government Sponsored Enterprises such as the Federal Home Loan Bank, Fannie Mae, and Freddie Mac;
- (g) HUD and other federal agencies, provided the statutory language of the funding source allows the funds to be used for these purposes. Public Housing funds and other funding provided under the U.S. Housing Act of 1937, as amended may be not used as match or leverage. In the case of HUD’s Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds, the work activity must be included in the CDBG recipient’s annual action plan. Such plans may be amended to include the Choice Neighborhoods funded activity(ies);
- (h) Financial institutions, banks, or insurers;
- (i) Tribal organizations eligible under Title I of the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act; and
- (j) Other private funders.

(8) Supporting Commitments. A supporting commitment is financial commitment that your partners have available for their use to carry out activities that directly support the proposed planning process. Examples of a supporting commitment include a university professor who received grant funding in the amount of X dollars to conduct a healthy environment study for the target neighborhood or a city that commits its own funding in the amount of X dollars to conduct a traffic redesign study for an intersection or corridor in the target neighborhood. This type of commitment does not include in-kind contributions, such as professional staff time or office and meeting space from your partners.

(9) Match. Funds used to meet the five percent match requirement (see section III.B) may be counted toward leverage for the purposes of this rating factor.

x. **Rating - 6 points.** You will receive up to 6 points as described below based on the amount of leveraged commitments relative to the amount of grant funds requested. In calculating the ratio, HUD will only include supporting commitments in an amount up to 1.5 times the amount of cash leverage that has been firmly committed. For example, if \$200,000 of cash leverage is committed and \$400,000 of supporting commitments is acceptable, HUD will only include \$300,000 of the supporting commitments.

Leveraged Commitments as Percent of Grant Funds Requested (Applications for a Metro Area)	Leveraged Commitments as Percent of Grant Funds Requested (Applications for a Non-metro Area or from a tribal entity)	Points Awarded
25 percent and above	12.50 percent and above	6
Between 21.00 and 24.99 percent	Between 10.00 and 12.49 percent	5
Between 18.00 and 20.99 percent	Between 8.00 and 9.99 percent	4
Between 15.00 and 17.99 percent	Between 7.00 and 8.99 percent	3
Between 10.00 and 14.99 percent	Between 6.00 and 6.99 percent	2

Between 7.00 and 9.99 percent	Between 5.00 and 5.99 percent	1
Below 7.00 percent	Below 5.00 percent	0

## 2. NOFA Priorities.

HUD encourages applicants for funding to undertake programs and projects that contribute to HUD's NOFA Priorities. Applicants that undertake activities that result in achievement of specific NOFA Priorities listed below are eligible to receive priority points in the rating of their application. These points will be awarded only if the application otherwise meets or exceeds the Program's minimum fundable score based on the rating factors of this NOFA.

### **Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing (Planning NOFA or as specified in Individual Program NOFA)**

**a. Policy Priority: Participative Planning and Implementation – 1 point.**: You will receive 1 NOFA priority point by identifying the steps that you will take that will ensure that traditionally marginalized populations (such as racial and ethnic minorities, public or HUD-assisted housing residents, and persons with disabilities) will be able to meaningfully participate in the planning process. To earn this point you must identify the specific populations that the planning process will include, identify community organizations that represent these populations (if any exist), and describe how these populations will be included in the planning process. For tribal entities, please note that for the purposes of this notice tribal community members can be considered traditionally marginalized populations, and you may receive up to 1 point by describing the steps you will take to ensure that residents of the targeted tribal community and/or targeted housing will be able to meaningfully participate in the planning process, as described above. For this rating subfactor, FY 2010 – 2014 Planning Grantees must describe how they will meet these objectives during the Action Activities process (see subfactor o).

### **Increase Energy Efficiency and the Health and Safety of Homes (Capital Investment and Planning NOFAs or as Specified in Individual Program NOFA)**

**b. Policy Priority: Renewable Energy – 1 point.** One of HUD's strategic goals is to increase the health and safety of homes and embed comprehensive energy efficiency and healthy housing criteria across HUD programs. Increasing the number of energy efficient homes will create positive impacts on resident health, resident energy budgets, environmental outcomes including pollution and greenhouse gases, and lower costs to taxpayers in HUD-assisted housing. You will receive **1** point if you certify that your plan will incorporate (or has incorporated for FY 2010 – 2014 Planning Grantees who have submitted their Final Transformation Plan) renewable energy technologies on-site (including Solar Thermal Electric, Photovoltaics, Landfill Gas, Wind, Biomass, Geothermal Electric, Combined Heat and Power, Municipal Solid Waste, Small Hydroelectric, Fuel Cells using Renewable Fuels) in the redevelopment of the target housing.

## 3. Bonus Points.

In support of certain inter-agency initiatives, HUD awards bonus points to projects where the preponderance of work will occur in a designated zone, community or region. **These points will be awarded only if the application otherwise meets or exceeds the Program's minimum fundable score based on the rating factors of this NOFA.**

HUD encourages activities in communities with Preferred Sustainability Status (PSS) and/or Promise Zones (PZ), HUD will award two (2) points for qualified activities within a designated zone or area and supporting either or both initiative(s). In no case will HUD award more than two bonus points for these activities.

a. To receive **Preferred Sustainability Status Communities Bonus Points**, applicants must submit form HUD2995, Certification of Consistency with Sustainable Communities Planning and Implementation, signed by the designated Preferred Sustainability Status Community point of contact. Designated PSS Communities Points of Contacts can be found on HUD's website at [http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/program\\_offices/administration/grants/nofa11/psscontacts](http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/program_offices/administration/grants/nofa11/psscontacts).

b. To receive **Promise Zones Bonus Points**, applicants must submit form HUD 50153, Certification of Consistency with Promise Zone Goals and Implementation, signed by the Promise Zone Official authorized to certify the project meets the criteria to receive bonus points. To view the list of designated Promise Zones and persons authorized to certify, please go to [https:// www.hudexchange .info/ promise-zones/ promise-zones- designees/](https://www.hudexchange.info/promise-zones/promise-zones-designees/).

## **B. Reviews and Selection Process.**

1. HUD’s selection process is designed to ensure that grants are awarded to eligible applicants that submit the most meritorious applications. HUD will consider the information you submit by the application deadline date. After the application deadline date, HUD may not, consistent with its regulations in 24 CFR part 4, subpart B, consider any unsolicited information that you or any third party may want to provide. HUD may verify information provided in your application as needed by sending a written request for clarification. Responses to such inquiries will be required within 2 business days.

### **2. Application Screening.**

#### **a. HUD will screen each application to determine if:**

- (1) The Statutory and Regulatory Requirements in section III.C.1 are met;
- (2) The Additional Requirements to be Rated criteria in section III.C.4 are met;
- (3) It is deficient, i.e., contains any Technical Deficiencies; and
- (4) It meets the threshold criteria listed in section III.C.2.

**b. Corrections to Deficient Applications – Cure Period.** The subsection entitled, “Corrections to Deficient Applications,” in section V.B.3 of the General Section is incorporated by reference and applies to this NOFA, except that clarifications or corrections of technical deficiencies in accordance with the information provided by HUD must be submitted within five business days (i.e. excluding Saturdays, Sundays and federal holidays) of the date of receipt of the HUD notification. If the deficiency cure deadline date falls on a Saturday, Sunday, federal holiday, or other day when HUD’s Headquarters offices in Washington, DC, are closed, then the applicant’s correction must be received on the next day that is not a Saturday, Sunday, or federal holiday, or other day when the HUD’s Headquarters offices in Washington, DC, are closed. Examples of curable (correctable) technical deficiencies include, but are not limited to, inconsistencies in the funding request, the Key Eligibility Data Form is not filled out completely, failure to submit the standard forms (e.g., form HUD-2880), and failure to submit a signature and/or date of signature on a certification. Failure to submit a narrative exhibit or an attachment is not a technical deficiency that can be correctable. As detailed in the General Section, all technical deficiency cure items must be submitted by facsimile using the Facsimile transmittal form HUD-96011 and inserting in the box for name of the document, Technical Deficiency or TC, plus the name of the document being faxed. HUD will match the item to the electronic application so HUD’s official records are complete including all cure items.

**c. Applications that will not be rated or ranked.** HUD will not rate or rank applications that do not meet the eligibility criteria, do not meet the Statutory and Regulatory Requirements described in section III.C.1, do not meet the Additional Requirements to be Rated described in III.C.4, are deficient at the end of the cure period stated above and in V.B.3 of the General Section, or that have not met the thresholds described in III.C.2 of this NOFA. Such applications will not be eligible for funding.

### **3. Preliminary Rating and Ranking.**

#### **a. Rating.**

- (1) Reviewers will preliminarily rate each eligible application, SOLELY on the basis of the rating

factors described in V.A of this NOFA.

(2) HUD will assign a preliminary score for each rating factor and a preliminary total score for each eligible application.

**b. Ranking.** After preliminary review, applications will be ranked in score order.

#### **4. Final Panel Review.**

**a.** A Final Review Panel will:

(1) Review the Preliminary Rating and Ranking documentation to:

(a) Ensure that any inconsistencies between preliminary reviewers have been identified and rectified; and

(b) Ensure that the Preliminary Rating and Ranking documentation accurately reflects the contents of the application.

(2) Assign a final score to each application and rank them in score order; and

(3) Recommend for selection **the most highly rated applications**, subject to the amount of available funding.

(4) Selection Considerations:

(a) Minimum scoring. To qualify for a Choice Neighborhoods Planning Grant, applicants must earn a minimum of 50 percent of the points for each overall Rating Factor category in Need, Capacity and Soundness of Approach. Any applicant that does not reach these minimum scoring criteria will not be awarded a Planning Grant.

**5. Tie Scores.** If two or more applications have the same score and there are insufficient funds to select all of them, HUD will select for funding the application(s) with the highest score for the overall Need Rating Factors. If a tie remains, HUD will select for funding the application(s) with the highest score for the overall Soundness of Approach Rating Factors, then Need- Severe Distress of the Targeted Neighborhood Rating Factors, then overall Capacity Rating Factors.

**6. Grant Type Discretion.** HUD will award Planning and Action Grants to the top scoring applicants, and has the discretion to award and anticipates awarding Planning Grants to the next set of highest scoring applicants.

**7. Remaining Funds.** HUD reserves the right to reallocate remaining funds from this NOFA to other eligible activities under section 24 of the 1937 Act, including Choice Neighborhoods Implementation Grants.

**a.** If the total amount of funds requested by all applications found eligible for funding under this NOFA is less than the amount of funds available from this NOFA, all eligible applications will be funded in rank order and those funds in excess of the total requested amount will be considered remaining funds.

**b.** If the total amount of funds requested by all applications found eligible for funding under this NOFA is greater than the amount of funds available from this NOFA, eligible applications will be funded until the amount of non-awarded funds is less than the amount required to feasibly fund the next eligible application. In this case, the funds that have not been awarded will be considered remaining funds.

**8. Review and Selection Process References from the General Section.** The following sub-sections of V.B of the General Section are hereby incorporated into this NOFA:

**a.** Threshold Eligibility Review (V.B.1);

**b.** Corrections to Deficient Applications (V.B.3);

**c.** Rating Panels (V.B.4);

**d.** Rating (V.B.5);

- e. Ranking (V.B.6); and
- f. Selection for Funding (V.B.7).

### **C. Anticipated Announcement and Award Dates.**

HUD anticipates announcing awards under this NOFA approximately 5 months after the application due date.

## **VI. Award Administration Information.**

### **A. Award Notices.**

Following the evaluation process HUD will notify successful applicants of their selection for funding. HUD will also notify all other applicants, whose applications were received by the deadline, that have not been chosen for award. Notifications will be sent by email, delivery receipt requested, to the person designated in item 8F of the SF424 and to the person listed as authorized representative in item 21 of the SF424.

- 1. Negotiation.** Section VI.A.6 of the General Section is hereby incorporated.
- 2. Adjustments to Funding.** The Adjustments to Funding section of VI.A.7 of the General Section is hereby incorporated. Specifically, HUD may adjust the grant award amount for any or all applications in order to meet any statutory requirement that designates a portion of the FY2015/2016 Choice Neighborhoods appropriations to be awarded to public housing authorities and to provide tenant protection vouchers to grantees (if funds are not available from the tenant protection voucher fund).
- 3. Funding Errors.** Section VI.A.10 of the General Section is hereby incorporated.
- 4. Performance and Compliance Actions of Funding Recipients.** Section VI.A.8 of the General Section is hereby incorporated.
- 5. Debriefing.** HUD will provide each applicant who has been ranked a copy of the total score received by its application and the score received for each rating factor.
- 6. Initial Announcement.** The HUD Reform Act prohibits HUD from notifying you as to whether or not you have been selected to receive a grant until it has announced all grant recipients. If your application has been found to be ineligible or if it did not receive enough points to be funded, you will not be notified until the successful applicants have been notified. HUD will provide written notification to all applicants, whether or not they have been selected for funding.
- 7. Award Letter.** The notice of award letter is signed by the Secretary, the Assistant Secretary for Public and Indian Housing, or the Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for Public and Indian Housing and will be delivered by email and the U.S. Postal Service.
- 8. Choice Neighborhoods Grant Agreement.** When you are selected to receive a Choice Neighborhoods grant, HUD will send you a grant agreement, which constitutes the contract between you and HUD to carry out and fund Choice Neighborhoods Planning Grant activities or Choice Neighborhoods Planning and Action Grant activities. It is effective on the date of HUD's signature.

### **B. Administrative, National and Departmental Policy Requirements.**

Certain Administrative, National and Departmental Policy Requirements apply to all HUD programs, including this NOFA. For a complete list of these requirements, see Section VI.B. of the General Section.

In addition to those in Section VI.B. of the General Section, the following requirements apply:

**1. LOCCS Requirements.** The grantee must record all obligations and expenditures in the Line of Credit Control System (LOCCS).

**2. Final Audit.** Grantees are required to obtain a complete final closeout audit of the grant's financial statements by a certified public accountant, in accordance with generally accepted government audit standards. A written report of the audit must be forwarded to HUD within 60 days of issuance. Grant recipients must comply with the requirements of 2 CFR part 200.

### **C. Reporting.**

Please refer to Section VI of the General Section for a description of the general reporting requirements applicable to all HUD NOFAs.

#### **1. Quarterly Report.**

a. If you are selected for funding, you must submit a quarterly report to HUD.

(1) HUD will provide training and technical assistance on the filing and submitting of quarterly reports.

(2) Filing of quarterly reports is mandatory for all grantees, and failure to do so within the required timeframe will result in suspension of grant funds until the report is filed and approved by HUD.

(3) Grantees will be held to the milestones in the program schedule, as approved by HUD.

(4) Grantees must also report obligations and expenditures in LOCCS, or its successor system, on a quarterly basis.

#### **2. Final Report.**

a. The grantees shall submit a final report, which will include a financial report and a copy of its Choice Neighborhoods Transformation Plan. The financial report shall contain a summary of all expenditures made from the beginning of the grant agreement to the end of the grant agreement and shall include any unexpended balances.

b. The final narrative and financial report shall be due to HUD 90 days after either the full expenditure of funds, or when the grant term expires, whichever comes first.

**3. Race and Ethnic Data Reporting.** The race and ethnic data reporting requirements of VI.C.2 of the General Section are hereby incorporated.

Questions regarding specific program requirements should be directed to the point of contact listed in Section VII below.

### **VII. Agency Contact(s).**

HUD staff will be available to provide clarification on the content of this NOFA. Please note that HUD staff cannot assist applicants in preparing their applications. Questions regarding specific program requirements should be directed to the point of contact listed below.

Before the application deadline date, HUD staff will be available to provide you with general guidance and technical assistance. However, HUD staff are not permitted to assist in preparing your application. If you have a question or need a clarification, you may send an e-mail message to [ChoiceNeighborhoods@hud.gov](mailto:ChoiceNeighborhoods@hud.gov). Before the application deadline date, frequently asked questions (FAQs) on the NOFA will be posted to the Choice Neighborhoods webpage at <http://www.hud.gov/cn/>. You may obtain general information about HUD's Choice Neighborhoods program from HUD's Choice Neighborhoods website at <http://www.hud.gov/cn/>.

Questions concerning the General Section should be directed to the Office of Strategic Planning and Management, Grants Management and Oversight Division at 202-708-0667 (this is not a toll-free number). Persons with hearing or speech impairments may access these numbers via TTY by calling the toll-free Federal Relay Service at 800-877-8339.

## VIII. Other Information.

**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement.** The information collection requirements in this this notice have been approved by OMB under the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (44 U.S.C.3501-3520). In accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act, HUD may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information unless the collection displays a valid OMB control number. Each Program NOFA will identify its applicable OMB control number unless its collection of information is excluded from these requirements under 5 CFR part 1320.

A Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) with respect to the environment has been made for this NOFA in accordance with HUD regulations at 24 CFR Part 50, which implement section 102(2)(C) of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4332(2)(C)). The FONSI is available for inspection at HUD's Funds Available web page at [http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal /HUD?src=/program\\_offices /administration /grants /fundsavail](http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal /HUD?src=/program_offices /administration /grants /fundsavail).

**A. Posting Application Information.** After the selection process, HUD may post on-line certain summary and contact information from Choice Neighborhoods applications (e.g., the Executive Summary, neighborhood map, Lead Applicant contact information) in order to facilitate connections between eligible applicants (both those selected for grant funding and those who are not) and other entities (e.g., foundations, philanthropies) that might be interested in supporting the project proposed in the application.