

**FY2011 Choice Neighborhoods Planning Grant
NOFA Questions and Answers**

1. Will there be a separate FY 2011 HOPE VI Implementation Grants NOFA or FY 2011 Choice Neighborhoods Implementation Grant NOFA?

No, the Department decided to combine the FY 2010 and FY 2011 funding for both grant types. HUD announced the HOPE VI Revitalization Grants in May and will announce the Implementation Grants by the end of September.

2. If an applicant applies for and is awarded a FY 2011 Planning Grant, and HUD subsequently issues a NOFA for Implementation Grants in the fall, will that applicant be eligible to apply for an Implementation Grant in response to that NOFA?

Yes, however, HUD anticipates stating in the FY 2012 Implementation Grants NOFA that the maximum amount of funding for which a Planning Grantee would be eligible will be reduced by the amount of the Planning Grant award.

3. Are Choice Neighborhoods Implementation Grants only awarded to previous Choice Neighborhoods Planning Grantees?

No, other planning projects that have not previously received a HUD Planning Grant are eligible for Implementation Grants (as long as they meet the other eligibility criteria). Furthermore, recipients of a Planning Grant must compete for an Implementation Grant and would not receive a preference or bonus points in that application.

4. In regard to the Promise Neighborhood Category Preference, the NOFA says that HUD will set aside four Choice Neighborhoods Planning Grants for those that received a Planning Grant from the Department of Education's Promise Neighborhoods program for the same target neighborhood. If the target neighborhood for Choice Neighborhoods is a subset of an area that received a Promise Neighborhoods grant (fully contained within it, but somewhat smaller), will we still qualify for this Category Preference?

Yes, this would still qualify for the category preference.

5. The data that we received from the mapping tool related to the Eligible Neighborhoods threshold is different from the data we received for last year's application using the same neighborhood boundaries. Why?

Where available, HUD is using more recent data for the mapping tool for the FY 2011 Planning Grants competition. For example, it now uses 2005-2009 American Community Survey (ACS) data rather than the 2000 Census data for some indicators.

6. With regards to the criteria for crime data used in the Eligible Neighborhoods threshold and one of the Need rating factors, we have a question regarding the Police Service Area (PSA). According to the NOFA, we should submit data for the Part I Violent Crime Rate in the precinct/PSA in which the target housing is located. In our city, the police jurisdictions are by District, with a smaller community policing beat jurisdiction. There are no precincts. Can we use the community policing beat jurisdiction an acceptable PSA for the Planning Grant application?

Yes, a police 'beat' does constitute a PSA, as does a police district, zone, and sector.

- 7. The Certification of Severe Physical Distress required for the Eligible Housing threshold can be signed by either a registered architect or registered engineer. In the Need rating factor for structural deficiencies, the NOFA instructs us to provide a letter signed by a registered engineer. Are we correct in reading this to mean that a letter submitted by a registered architect is not sufficient for the rating factor?**

Yes, the NOFA requires a letter that can only be signed by a registered engineer. You must submit the information in the form of a letter signed by a registered engineer in order to earn any points for this rating factor.

- 8. As an alternate to demonstrating distress through a low REAC score, we understand that we can provide an excerpt from a Physical Needs Assessment (PNA) report. Are there HUD standards for the PNA?**

HUD has not established formal standards for PNAs. Generally it should be prepared by an independent registered engineer. We would suggest that it take into account the life cycle replacement costs of all building systems for a period of 20 years and be based on the physical inspection of at least 10 percent of the dwelling units and 50 percent of the non-dwelling space.

- 9. In the Need rating factor where we can use an estimate for rehabilitation costs from a PNA as a percentage of the TDC limit in lieu of REAC scores, is it acceptable for an MTW housing authority to use its own HUD-approved TDC limit? Or must the housing authority use the standard HUD TDC limit?**

HUD will use the standard TDC limits as published in PIH Notice 2010-20.

- 10. For the inadequate schools documentation, is a letter from the superintendent stating that the school in the target neighborhood is a low-performing school currently receiving Title I funds sufficient? Is there any specific language this certification letter must include to be valid?**

The supporting documentation for inadequate schools needs to come from the state education agency, not the local superintendent. If providing a certification, it needs to confirm that the school does indeed meet the definition of either a low-performing school or a persistently-lowest achieving school in the NOFA (which are the same definitions used by the U.S. Department of Education).

- 11. Is there a specific budget form required like there was in the FY2010 application?**

No, applicants may present the sources and uses information in whatever format they choose.

- 12. Can we have a “super team” of consultants serve as our Planning Coordinator?**

No, in accordance with definition stated in the NOFA, the Planning Coordinator must be a single person or entity. This is to ensure that there is a designated lead for the planning process. However, there is no limit to the number of partners you may assemble to contribute to the plan.