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

OFFICE OF PUBLIC AND INDIAN HOUSING

FEB 27 2013

MEMORANDUM FOR: Sandra B. Henriquez, Assistant Secretary
Office of Public and Indian Housing, P

FROM: Dominique Blom, Deputy Assistant Secretary
Office of Public Housing Investments, PI

SUBJECT: Environmental Assessment and Finding of No Significant Impact Under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) for FY2013 Notice of Funding Availability for the Choice Neighborhoods Initiative - Implementation Grants (FR-5700-N-25)

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

The purpose of this NOFA is to announce the availability of FY2013 funds and to provide program information and application instructions for the Choice Neighborhoods Implementation Grant program.

The purpose of Choice Neighborhoods grants is to enable eligible applicants to employ a comprehensive approach to community development centered on housing transformation. The program aims to transform neighborhoods of poverty into viable mixed-income neighborhoods with access to economic opportunities by revitalizing severely distressed public and assisted housing and investing and leveraging investments in well-functioning services, effective schools and education programs, crime prevention strategies, public assets, public transportation, and improved access to jobs. Eligible activities include construction, acquisition, and rehabilitation of housing that incorporates sustainable design principles, including energy efficiency; acquisition, demolition, or disposition of properties; supportive services; partnering to create jobs and job training opportunities; activities that promote sustainable neighborhoods; critical community improvements, etc.

The program authority for the Choice Neighborhoods program is Section 24 of the United States Housing Act of 1937 (42 U.S.C. 1437v), as anticipated to be amended by the Department of Housing and Urban Development Appropriations Act, 2013.

The NOFA provides for environmental review of Choice Neighborhoods projects and activities either (1) by a Responsible Entity under 24 CFR Part 58, where a Public Housing Agency (PHA), either on its own or jointly with a for-profit developer, is the grantee; or (2) by HUD under 24 CFR Part 50 for all other grantees, or where HUD determines it will conduct the environmental review where a PHA is the grantee. Under this NOFA and applicable law, an applicant is prohibited from undertaking any actions that are choice-limiting or could have

environmentally adverse effects, including demolishing, acquiring, rehabilitating, converting, leasing, repairing, or constructing property proposed to be assisted under this NOFA or committing or expending HUD or non-HUD funds for such activities, until a responsible entity completes an environmental review and a PHA submits and obtains HUD approval of a request for release of funds and the responsible entity's environmental certification, in accordance with 24 CFR part 58 or, where HUD performs the environmental review itself under 24 CFR part 50, until after HUD has completed the environmental review and given approval for the action. The environmental review may result in requirements for mitigation or remedial measures or other conditions.

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

Concurrences:

Linda Bronsdon
PIH Environmental Clearance Officer
Office of Policy, Programs and
Legislative Initiatives

Date: 2-27-13 Sign: Linda Bronsdon

Danielle Schopp
Environmental Clearance Officer
Office of Community Planning
and Development

Date: 2/27/13 Sign: Danielle Schopp

Christopher H. Hartenau
Environmental Clearance Officer
Office of General Counsel

Date: 2/27/13 Sign: Christopher H. Hartenau

Approval:

Sandra B. Henriquez
Assistant Secretary
Office of Public and Indian Housing

Date: 03/04/13 Sign: Sandra B. Henriquez