

Notice of Intent to Request a Release of Funds

July 27, 2020

Name of Responsible Entity [RE]: City of Cincinnati
801 Plum Street
Cincinnati, Ohio 45202
(513) 352-6146
communitydevelopment@cincinnati-oh.gov

These notices shall satisfy two separate but related procedural requirements for activities to be undertaken by the City of Cincinnati for the 2020 – 2024 Consolidated Plan.

REQUEST FOR RELEASE OF FUNDS

On or about August 17, 2020 the City of Cincinnati will submit a request to the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development, the administering agency, for the release of Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) and HOME Investment Partnerships Program (HOME) funds under Title 1 of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974 (PL 93-383), as amended, to undertake the projects listed for the purpose listed below with specific project locations if applicable.

The following activities proposed have been reviewed to determine the level of environmental review required and have been determined to be categorically excluded per 24 CFR 58.35(a) and subject to 24 CFR 58.5; all projects will receive a further case-by-case review for compliance with applicable historic, floodplain, coastal barrier, runway protection zone, noise pollution, and air pollution regulations before funds are released to the specific activity. The amounts listed are for the calendar year 2020 and may be similarly funded in subsequent years during the 2020 – 2024 Consolidated Plan. The City of Cincinnati will undertake the projects described with entitlement funds from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), under Title 1 of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974. An Environmental Review Record that documents the environmental determinations for the projects are on file at the City of Cincinnati Department of Community and Economic Development, 805 Central Avenue Suite 700, Cincinnati, Ohio 45202 and may be examined or copied weekdays 9 a.m. through 4 p.m. The ERR may be requested via electronic-mail at CommunityDevelopment@Cincinnati-Oh.gov or via phone at (513) 352-6146. Hard copies and / or electronic copies will be sent as requested.

Grant	Program Name	Project Description	2020 Budget
CDBG	Commercial and Industrial Redevelopment Program	<p>The Commercial and Industrial Redevelopment Program, formerly known as The Strategic Program for Urban Redevelopment (SPUR) facilitates catalytic redevelopment of abandoned, vacant, or underutilized industrial and commercial sites throughout the City. The program focuses on addressing environmental contamination and obstacles preventing development of blighted areas, specifically in areas with imminent threats to human health and the environment. The funds are utilized for environmental assessments, contamination remediation, public improvements, infrastructure improvements, acquisition, demolition, stabilization, and other related activities to facilitate redevelopment.</p> <p>For the purposes of this NOI/RROF, the activities covered by this program will only address facilities and improvements that are in place and will not alter size or capacity by more than 20% and will not involve a change in land use.</p>	\$456,776.03
CDBG	Compliance Assistance Repairs for the Elderly (CARE)	The CARE program provides grants to low income, elderly and/or disabled homeowners to correct code violations issued pursuant to an exterior property condition inspection and code enforcement action. The assistance includes correcting emergency exterior code violations such as leaking roofs, dilapidated porches, unsafe stairs, exterior wall repair, and painting.	\$100,000
CDBG	Floating Initiatives for Strategic Housing (FISH)	FISH will provide a float loan for gap financing for the renovation of multifamily units and single-family development, permanent supportive housing, emergency stabilization, infrastructure, urban homesteading projects, and the construction, conversion, renovation, rehabilitation of shelters for the homeless, or assisting persons that are homeless and/or addicted to opioids by the acquisition, construction, reconstruction, installation, or rehabilitation of transitional housing (public facilities). Applicants can apply under the competitive Housing Notice Of Funding Availability (NOFA) that the City issues at least once a year. Applications must meet underwriting and subsidy layering requirements to be considered. Floating Initiatives for Strategic Housing is an opportunity for the City to spur transformative housing development by leveraging resources to revitalize City neighborhoods, creating long-term livability benefits.	\$0

Grant	Program Name	Project Description	2020 Budget
CDBG	Green Urban Watershed Restoration	Green Urban Watershed Restoration will work to build and strengthen capacity in order to focus on community and economic development, public facilities, community engagement, streetscape activities, and increase professional capacity. Green Urban Watershed Restoration focuses on the urban environment and civic engagement to catalyze community-driven change creating community parks and green spaces, building healthy communities, revitalizing urban waters and the communities in the urban core. The program also includes a green workforce development program providing job readiness, basic environmental and technical skills, water testing, greenhouse skills, invasive species removal and green infrastructure improvement. Participants in the job training program will receive multiple certifications and trainings pertinent to their work and job sector at large.	\$50,000
CDBG	Hazard Abatement Program	The mission of the Hazard Abatement Program is to preserve public health, safety, and welfare through demolition or barricading of blighted buildings. The program demolishes condemned buildings after normal code enforcement activities have been exhausted. The program also secures vacant abandoned buildings against entry by trespassers.	\$750,000
CDBG	Historic Stabilization of Structures	The Historic Stabilization of Structures Program abates public nuisance conditions and stabilizes historic properties. Under Ohio Law if there is a historic building that is deemed a public nuisance, the City has the right to abate the public nuisance conditions without taking ownership of the property. This program is designed to maintain the public health, safety, and welfare while at the same time preserving the historic structures for potential future rehabilitation.	\$200,000
CDBG	Housing Repair Services	The Housing Repair Services Program provides grants for emergency and critical repairs to very low-income homeowners. Emergency services are limited to two emergencies per household per year and have a maximum of \$2,500. Critical repairs are those needed for the safety of the property owner and have a maximum of \$10,000. This program will also address code violations for low income homeowners. In addition to addressing housing repairs for homeowners, this program addresses the mobility needs of disabled and elderly renters and owner-occupied units and will address healthy home issues that may be causing health effects of the occupants.	\$1,850,000

Grant	Program Name	Project Description	2020 Budget
CDBG	Neighborhood Business District Improvement Program	The Neighborhood Business District Improvement Program enhances the business environment in the City's neighborhood business districts by constructing streetscape, public improvements, public facilities, infrastructure, façade improvements, or other development activities. The projects are awarded on a competitive annual application process after an extensive peer review.	\$920,000
CDBG	Revolving Initiatives for Strategic Housing (RISH)	RISH will provide revolving loan funds for gap financing for the renovation of multifamily units and single-family development, permanent supportive housing, emergency stabilization, infrastructure, urban homesteading projects, and the construction, conversion, renovation, rehabilitation of shelters for the homeless, or assisting persons that are homeless and/or addicted to opioids by the acquisition, construction, reconstruction, installation, or rehabilitation of transitional housing (public facilities). Applicants can apply under the competitive Housing Notice Of Funding Availability (NOFA) that the City issues at least once a year. Applications must meet underwriting and subsidy layering requirements to be considered. Revolving Initiatives for Strategic Housing is an opportunity for the City to spur transformative housing development by leveraging resources to revitalize City neighborhoods, creating long-term livability benefits.	\$0
CDBG	Strategic Housing Initiatives Program (SHIP)	SHIP provides gap financing for the renovation of multifamily units and single-family development, permanent supportive housing, emergency stabilization, infrastructure, urban homesteading projects, and the construction, conversion, renovation, rehabilitation of shelters for the homeless, or assisting persons that are homeless and/or addicted to opioids by the acquisition, construction, reconstruction, installation, or rehabilitation of transitional housing (public facilities). Applicants can apply under the competitive Housing Notice Of Funding Availability (NOFA) that the City issues at least once a year. Applications must meet underwriting and subsidy layering requirements to be considered. Strategic Housing Initiatives Program is an opportunity for the City to spur transformative housing development by leveraging resources to revitalize City neighborhoods, creating long-term livability benefits.	\$500,000
CDBG	Vacant Lot Reutilization	The Vacant Lot Reutilization program funds the reuse of vacant and blighted lots in eligible census tracts into gardens or pocket parks.	\$30,000

Grant	Program Name	Project Description	2020 Budget
HOME	CHDO Development Projects	HUD requires that at least 15% of the federal HOME allocation be used in development projects in partnership with Community Housing Development Organizations (CHDOs). These funds will be used for both rental and homeowner projects, new construction and renovations, with certified CHDOs. CHDOs are required to re-certify their designation bi-annually.	\$0
HOME	Single Family Homeownership Development	Habitat for Humanity of Greater Cincinnati builds and renovates single family homes for low-to moderate-income homebuyers. The program provides construction subsidy and homebuyer assistance. Eligible costs include infrastructure and construction costs for newly constructed or rehabilitated units, construction alterations to blend units with existing neighborhood styles, and accessibility modifications.	\$0
HOME	Strategic Housing Initiatives Program (SHIP)	SHIP provides gap financing for construction and renovation of multifamily units and single-family development, and permanent supportive housing. Applicants can apply under the competitive Housing Notice Of Funding Availability (NOFA) that the City issues at least once a year. Applications must meet underwriting and subsidy layering requirements to be considered. Strategic Housing Initiatives Program is an opportunity for the City to spur transformative housing development by leveraging resources to revitalize City neighborhoods, creating long-term livability benefits.	\$1,988,454.53

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Any individual, group, or agency may submit written comments on the ERR to the City of Cincinnati Department of Community and Economic Development. All comments received by August 14, 2020 will be considered by the City of Cincinnati prior to authorizing submission of a request for release of funds.

ENVIRONMENTAL CERTIFICATION

The City of Cincinnati certifies to HUD that Aisha Tzillah, Responsible Entity's Certifying Officer, is her capacity as City of Cincinnati Community Development Administrator consents to accept the jurisdiction of the Federal Courts if an action is brought to enforce responsibilities in relation to the environmental review process and that these responsibilities have been satisfied. HUD's Ohio's approval of the certification satisfies its responsibilities under the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA), and related laws and authorities and allows the City of Cincinnati, Ohio to use the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) and HOME Investment Partnerships Program (HOME) Funds.

OBJECTIONS TO RELEASE OF FUNDS

HUD will accept objections to its release of funds and the City of Cincinnati, Ohio's certification for a period of **fifteen (15)** days following the anticipated submission date or its actual receipt of the request (whichever is later) only if they are on one of the following bases: (a) The certification was not executed by the Certifying Officer of the City of Cincinnati; (b) The City of Cincinnati has omitted a step or failed to make a decision or finding required by HUD regulations at 24 CFR Part 58; (c) the grant recipient or other participants in the development process have committed funds, incurred costs or undertaken activities not authorized by 24 CFR Part 58 before approval of a release of funds by HUD; or (d) another Federal agency acting pursuant to 40 CFR Part 1504 has submitted a written finding that the project or projects are unsatisfactory from the standpoint of environmental quality. Objection must be prepared and submitted in accordance with required procedure (24 CFR Part 58, Sec. 58.76), and shall be addressed to, via electronic-mail, the HUD Columbus Field Office at CPD_COVID-19OEE-COL@HUD.gov. Potential objectors should contact the HUD Columbus Field Office via electronic-mail to verify the actual last day of the objection period.

THE COMMENT PERIOD FOR THIS PUBLIC NOTICE EXPIRES FIFTEEN (15) DAYS FROM THE DATE OF PUBLICATION

Aisha Tzillah, Community Development Administrator, RE Certifying Officer
Community and Economic Development Department



Note: The seven or ten-day public comment periods are the minimum time periods required by regulation prior to submission of a Request for Release of Funds and Certification (form HUD-7015.15) to HUD. The Responsible Entity may choose to allow a longer comment period. The fifteen-day objection period following submission of the request is a statutory requirement. The objection period follows the submission date specified in the Notice of the actual date of receipt by HUD, whichever is later.

Following completion of the comment period Responsible Entities may FAX the form HUD-7015.15 to HUD together with a copy of the public notice and a cover letter stating whether comments were received and, if so, how the recipient responded to the comment. The Request for Release of Funds and Certification should not be submitted before the recipient has responded. If the request is sent by FAX, the original signed form should be mailed to HUD. The date of receipt by FAX will be counted as the submission date. However, HUD will not issue the 7015.16 "Authority to Use Grant Funds" until after the original signed form is received.