

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT, NOTICE OF INTENT TO REQUEST RELEASE OF GRANT FUNDS, AND FINAL NOTICE AND PUBLIC EXPLANATION OF A PROPOSED ACTIVITY IN A 500 - YEAR FLOODPLAIN
2312 – 14 AND 2316 LOUISIANA AVE

Marjorianna Willman, Executive Director
Louisiana Housing Corporation (LHC)
2415 Quail Drive, Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70808
(225) 763-8700

Notice Issued: August 1, 2024

This notice shall satisfy three separate but related procedural notification requirements for activities to be undertaken by the LHC, as well as satisfy three comment periods between LHC and HUD.

REQUEST FOR RELEASE OF FUNDS. On or about **August 20, 2024** the LHC will submit a request to HUD for the release of funds under the *ALLOCATIONS, WAIVERS AND ALTERNATIVE REQUIREMENTS FOR GRANTEES RECEIVING COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT DISASTER RECOVERY FUNDS IN RESPONSE TO DISASTERS OCCURRING IN 2020 AND 2021. THE CONTINUING APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2023, THE FURTHER CONTINUING AND SECURITY ASSISTANCE APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2023, AND THE CONSOLIDATED APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2023 (PUBLIC LAW 117-43, 117-180) FEDERAL REGISTER DOCKET NO. FR-6368-N-01, FR- 6303-N-01*, for the purpose of the redevelopment of a former fire station into a mixed-use building with a childcare facility and seven (7) residential units located at 2312-14 and 2316 Louisiana Ave, New Orleans, Orleans Parish, LA 70115. **PROJECT ISSUES:** 1) Site Contamination – Lead-based paint and asbestos are present. 2) Historic Preservation – The Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma requested an inadvertent discovery clause be written into the contract. The project is located in a historic district. 3) Floodplain Management – The project is located in the 500-year floodplain. 4) Noise Abatement and Control – The day-night noise level is within the normally unacceptable range. **MITIGATION:** 1) All lead-based paint and asbestos will be abated by LDEQ-certified contractors. 2) If significant archaeological materials (i.e., stone arrowheads, ceramics, and early building foundations) or should human burials/remains be unearthed, site activities would cease immediately, all agency officials contacted, and any discoveries shall be kept private and confidential. The project will comply with the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation. 3) The residential units will be located on the second floor, a subsurface stormwater drainage system will be installed, and proof of flood insurance will be kept on file. 4) A noise attenuation plan will be followed to lower the interior noise levels below 45dB. The total amount of funding requested is **\$725,000.00 in CDBG-DR funds.**

FINAL NOTICE AND PUBLIC EXPLANATION OF A PROPOSED ACTIVITY IN A 500-YEAR

FLOODPLAIN: This is to give notice of the LHC proposed activity within a 500-year Floodplain. The LHC has conducted an evaluation as required by Executive Orders 11988 and 11990 in accordance with HUD regulations at 24 CFR 55.20 to determine the potential affect that its activity in the floodplain will have on the environment.

The LHC is proposing to utilize United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Community Development Block Grant – Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR) funds for the future use of the former fire station site addressed at 2312-14 Louisiana Avenue for mixed use; childcare facility on the ground floor and residential occupancy on the second floor. The site will be redeveloped to serve the Central City community with a Type III early childhood education (ECE) center serving up to 65 students on the building's ground floor and ancillary structure. The ECE will include four classrooms, three restrooms, a food prep and storage area, the electrical and plumbing room, and two stairwells that serve the upstairs residential component (one of these stairwells will be for emergency egress only). The ancillary structure will be converted into two classrooms with a shared restroom in the existing tack room. The second floor of the former fire station will be redeveloped with seven permanently affordable apartments. The vacant parcel addressed at 2316 Louisiana Avenue is proposed for outdoor space to serve both the early childhood education facility, residents, and to create stormwater management infrastructure that will serve both lots. Approximate center coordinates for the site are Latitude 29° 56' 05.55" North (29.934875) and Longitude 90° 05' 42.24" West (90.095067).

The LHC has considered the following alternatives and mitigation measures to be taken to minimize adverse impacts and to restore and preserve natural beneficial values: (1) Alternative site locations outside of the proposed floodplain were considered, (2) Elevation of the existing structure to applicable standards was considered, (3) Residential units

will be constructed on the second floor of the existing structure, (4) Maintenance of flood insurance as needed and (5) All construction activities must conform to the local floodplain and building requirements.

The LHC has reevaluated the alternatives to building in the floodplain and has determined that it has no practicable alternative. Environmental files that document compliance with steps 3 through 6 of Executive Order 11988, are available for public inspection, review and copying upon request at the times and location delineated in the section of this notice for receipt of comments.

There are three primary purposes for this notice. First, people who may be affected by activities in floodplains and those who have an interest in the protection of the natural environment should be given an opportunity to express their concerns and provide information about these areas. Second, an adequate public notice program can be an important public educational tool. The dissemination of information and request for public comment about floodplains can facilitate and enhance Federal efforts to reduce the risks and impacts associated with the occupancy and modification of these special areas. Third, as a matter of fairness, when the Federal government determines it will participate in actions taking place in floodplains, it must inform those who may be put at greater or continued risk.

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT: LHC has determined that the project will have no significant impact on the human environment. Therefore, an Environmental Impact Statement under the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA) is not required. An Environmental Review Record (ERR) that documents the environmental determinations for this project is on file at LHC, 4000 S. Sherwood Forest Blvd., Baton Rouge, LA 70816, and (225) 763-8700 and may be examined or copied weekdays 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: Any individual, group, or agency disagreeing with this determination, or wishing to comment on the project may submit written comments to this office by mail to the LHC Environmental Department or by email to Amber Lavergne at alavergne@lhc.la.gov. All comments received by **August 16, 2024** will be considered by this office prior to authorizing submission of a request for release of funds. Commenters should specify which part of this Notice they are addressing.

ENVIRONMENTAL CERTIFICATION: This Office certifies to HUD that Marjorianna Willman, in her capacity as Executive Director, 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 approval of the certification satisfies its responsibilities under NEPA and related laws and authorities, and allows the LHC to use HUD Program Funds.

OBJECTIONS TO RELEASE OF FUNDS. HUD will consider objections to its release of funds and LHC's certification received for a period of fifteen 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 LHC approved by HUD; (b) LHC 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 project have committed funds or incurred costs 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 is unsatisfactory from the standpoint of environmental quality. Objections must be prepared and submitted in accordance with the required procedures (24 CFR part 58, sec. 58.76) and shall be addressed to:

Tennille Parker
Director Disaster Recovery & Special Issues, Office of Community Planning and Development
Department of Housing and Urban Development
451 Seventh Street SW, Room 7-272
Washington DC 20410

Potential objectors should contact HUD to verify the actual last day of the objection period.

Marjorianna Willman, Executive Director
Louisiana Housing Corporation