

**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
2517 WASHINGTON AVENUE**

Marjorianna Willman, Executive Director
Louisiana Housing Corporation (LHC)
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(225) 763-8700

Notice Issued: August 13, 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 30, 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 acquisition and new construction of four (4) residential units located at 2517 Washington Ave, New Orleans, Orleans Parish, LA 70113. **PROJECT ISSUES:** Floodplain Management – The project is located in the 500-year floodplain. **MITIGATION:** The structure will be elevated to two feet above the base flood elevation; proof of flood insurance will be maintained; and construction activities will be subject to local approvals, codes, and insurance requirements. The total amount of funding requested is **\$570,000.00** 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 State Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Community Development Block Grant – Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR) funds for the proposed acquisition and development of three parcels consisting of approximately 0.3 acre of cleared, vacant land addressed at 2505 and 2517 Washington Avenue and 2723 Freret Street, New Orleans, Louisiana.

2505 Washington Avenue & 2723 Freret Street – These parcels, collectively addressed at 2723 Freret Street and will be owned by Wilcox Academy Way, LLC, are proposed for the construction of an Early Childhood Education (ECE) facility. The proposed facility will include an approximately 10,000 square foot (sf) learning center with 13 classrooms serving children from birth to age four.

2517 Washington Avenue – This parcel is proposed for acquisition and construction of a multi-unit, residential rental property. The proposed residential construction will include a two-story, four-unit residential structure encompassing approximately 3,000 sf. Each unit will offer two bedrooms and one bathroom. Approximate center coordinates for the proposed project site are as follows: Latitude - 29° 56' 19.86" and Longitude - 90° 05' 29.62".

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) Construction of buildings will be located outside of the 500-year floodplain was considered, (3) Elevation of the proposed structures to the applicable flood elevation of 14 feet NAVD88 per current regulations, and (4) 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 is 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 last paragraph 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 28, 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