

**NOTICE TO PUBLIC OF FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT
ON THE
ENVIRONMENT AND NOTICE TO PUBLIC OF INTENT TO
REQUEST RELEASE OF FUNDS/FRANKLIN COUNTY, OHIO**

(COMBINED NOTICE)

DATE: March 13, 2016

TO ALL INTERESTED AGENCIES, GROUPS AND PERSONS:

On or about April 15, 2016, Franklin County, Ohio will request the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to release federal funds under Title I of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974, as amended (P.L. 93-383) and Section 288 of Title II of the Cranston Gonzales National Affordable Housing Act (NAHA) as amended, and grants under the Emergency Shelter Grant (ESG) Program. (The federal funds under this request are \$1,796,411 in 2016 Community Development Block Grant program funding, \$633,726 in 2016 HOME program funding and \$164,136 in 2015 Emergency Services Grant program funding.)

The projects listed below do not include exempt projects that do not require environmental assessments and the projects listed below do not include projects that have already had environmental reviews conducted on them (typically during previous years) as those reviews are viewed as possessing a “continued relevance.” (The County’s 2016 letter of continued relevance citing those projects is available to the public by contacting the point of contact listed below.)

I. A Finding of No Significant Impact applies to the following project:

1. Community Housing Network CHN West \$250,000 HOME

HOME funds will be used for the new construction and rehabilitation of sixty-five (65) scattered units across ten (10) properties. Of the ten properties, four (4) are located within county limits, and six (6) are in the City of Columbus. They will offer forty-nine (49) one-bedroom units, ten (10) two-bedroom units, and six (6) three-bedroom units. All of the units are

garden style flats and when complete, the totality of CHN West will be rent subsidized.

The reasons the above project has been given a “Finding of No Significant Impact” and as such, the County will not be preparing an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for it are as follows: 1) As a result of on-site visits, it has been determined that major impacts to the existing environmental conditions will not result from these projects. 2) Only short-term impacts due to typical construction noise and dust are anticipated. 3) This short-term impact will be mitigated by standard construction practices and the benefit the improvements will garner Franklin County once completed. 4) No reasonable alternatives exist to these proposed projects. “No action” on the projects would result in continued deterioration of community public facilities and infrastructure. Further, no action would reduce the county’s ability to utilize its available resources to implement its Consolidated Plan.

II. The following twenty-four (24) projects have been determined to be categorically excluded:

Infrastructure and Neighborhood Conservation Program

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|-------|---|-----------|
| IN06a | City of Whitehall Curb & gutter project | \$110,000 |
| IN06b | Clinton Township Street repair | \$105,000 |

Housing Stabilization and Improvement Program

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|-------|--|-----------|
| HS06a | Home Rehabilitation – Urgent Repair Grants | \$700,000 |
| HS06b | Elderly & Senior Homeowners Assistance Program | \$80,000 |
| HS06c | First-time Homebuyers Downpayment-assistance | \$100,000 |
| HS06d | Home Prosperity – Ohio State Extension Office | \$35,000 |

Economic Development Program

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|-------|------------------------------|-----------|
| ED06a | Microenterprise Loan Program | \$120,000 |
| ED06b | Business Development | \$75,000 |
| ED06c | Fresh Foods Initiative | \$50,000 |
| ED06d | Respite Connections | \$50,000 |
| ED06e | Lemonade Stand | \$15,000 |

Public and Social Service Support Program

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|-------|---|----------|
| PS06a | Housing Retention Specialist | \$52,500 |
| PS06b | Lifecare Alliance – Nutritional Program | \$40,000 |
| PS06c | Rebuilding Together | \$50,000 |
| PS06e | Housing Counseling – Homes on the Hill | \$15,000 |
| PS06f | M.O.B.I.L.E | \$25,000 |

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|-------|--|----------|
| PS06i | Individual Development Accounts | \$25,000 |
| PS06j | Community Gardens – Franklin park Conservatory | \$25,000 |
| PS06k | Stepping off to College – East Columbus Dev. Company | \$26,000 |
| PS06l | Homelessness Outreach | \$75,000 |

Grant Program Administration and Compliance

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|-------|---|----------|
| GA06b | Fair Housing Services | \$90,000 |
| GA06c | Housing Advisory Board | \$10,000 |
| GA06d | Youth Council – Franklin Co. Jobs & Family Services | \$30,000 |

Emergency Solutions Support

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|--------|--|-----------|
| E06S01 | Community Shelter Board/YWCA Family Center | \$164,136 |
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II. The following twenty-four (24) projects have been determined to be categorically excluded:

1. City of Whitehall Street Improvement Project CDBG

CDBG funds will be used for street resurfacing of five (5) residential blocks in the City of Whitehall (San Jose Lane).

2. Clinton Township Street Improvement Project CDBG

CDBG funds will be used for street resurfacing of two (2) residential blocks in Franklin Township (Aubrey Road).

3. Urgent Repair Grants CDBG

This allocation provides funding for (3) separate emergency repair assistance programs: the Urgent Repair program to address emergency housing conditions; the Sewer Repair program to address emergency health conditions and the Handicapped Accessibility program to address accessibility issues for occupants

4. Elderly & Senior Homeowners Assistance CDBG

This allocation will provide minor home maintenance and repair services to elderly and disabled homeowner-occupants in Franklin County. Eligible homeowners may receive up to \$1,000 in home repairs within one calendar year.

5. First-time Homebuyer Downpayment-Assistance CDBG

The County's First-time Homebuyer Downpayment-Assistance program is administered by the Columbus Housing Partnership. This allocation also pays for the client's participation in a homebuyer counseling program, which that client must successfully complete in order to access the downpayment assistance.

6. Microenterprise Loan Program CDBG

This allocation to the Economic & Community Development Institute provides a microenterprise revolving loan program for low and moderate income business owners who employ 1-5 employees. The activities funded under this contract include: the screening of eligible clients, certifying the completion of a required, corresponding business education course, the underwriting of loans, the servicing of loans during repayment period and the management of the revolving loan fund account.

7. Microenterprise Business Development CDBG

This allocation to Increase, Inc. provides an entrepreneurial development training program. The program is comprised of four courses: (1) Personal Finance; (2) Intro to Business; (3) Developing Your Business Plan and (4) Advanced Management Seminars in Financial Management; Sales & Marketing; Human Resource Management and Business taxes.

8. Fresh Foods Initiative CDBG

This allocation to the United Way of Central Ohio will attempt to link local grocers with businesses located in low-income neighborhoods to provide fresh foods to local residents

9. Respite Connections CDBG

Respite Connections provides training and job sourcing services to individuals with disabilities

10. Lemonade Stand

CDBG

Implementation, marketing, and administration of Youth Lemonade Stand Day, a youth entrepreneur initiative designed to teach youth how to start, own and operate their own micro-business by operating a lemonade stand.

11. Housing Retention Specialist

CDBG

This allocation to the Community Housing Network provides housing retention services to low income tenant households that have a history of mental illness, addiction and homelessness.

12. LifeCare Alliance Nutritional Program

CDBG

This allocation to the Lifecare Alliance provides nutritional services to eligible individuals

13. Rebuilding Together Tool Loan Library

CDBG

Rebuilding Together Central Ohio provides a tool bank for low-income County residents

14. Housing Counseling

CDBG

Administered by Homes on the Hill, this program will provide housing counseling (in conjunction with homeownership) to eligible homeowners and potential homeowners advising those clients in regards to defaults, foreclosures and credit issues.

15. MOBILE- Hearing Enhancement Services

CDBG

Mid-Ohio Board for an Independent Living Environment (M.O.B.I.L.E) provides hearing enhancement equipment for low-income deaf residents of Franklin County.

16. OSU- Home Prosperity

CDBG

Ohio State University Extension Office will offer pre-purchase homeownership workshop series to assist low income residents in the Cities

of Whitehall, Reynoldsburg and Grove City to reach their goal of becoming homeowners.

17. Community Gardens

CDBG

Franklin Park Conservatory to provide community garden grants for low-to-moderate income neighborhoods in Franklin County, outside the city of Columbus.

18. Individual Development Accounts

CDBG

This program through the East Columbus Development Company supports Individual Development accounts (IDA)s which are savings accounts paid into by qualifying individuals that are matched by public and private sources designed to assist the participant in escaping poverty and achieve wealth through asset acquisition.

19. Stepping off to College IDA

CDBG

This program through the East Columbus Development Company supports Individual Development accounts (IDA)s for students prepping for college, providing them with laptops after they successfully pass a curriculum.

20. Fair Housing Services

CDBG

This allocation to the Columbus Urban League provides for fair housing services to the community including education, advocacy, testing and enforcement of fair housing laws and implementation of the community Fair Housing Plan.

21. Housing Advisory Board

CDBG

The Housing Advisory Board (HAB) was established to help expand and preserve the supply of affordable housing throughout Franklin County. HAB serves that end by reviewing and making recommendations on bond projects to the Franklin County Board of Commissioners and monitoring those subsequently, successfully funded projects.

22. Homelessness Outreach

CDBG

Community Shelter Board provides homelessness outreach services to individuals and families at risk of or currently experiencing homelessness.

23. Youth Council

CDBG

Franklin County Jobs & Family Services provides leadership skills development, community engagement and activism, personal and social responsibility and advocacy skills for Franklin County youth.

24. Emergency Solutions Grant

ESG

Funding will provide operating dollars to an emergency housing agency to offer shelter and supportive services to individuals, families, youth, and women with children.

It has been determined that this request for release of funds will not constitute an action significantly affecting the quality of the human environment and accordingly Franklin County has decided not to prepare an EIS under the National Environmental Policy Act of 1996 (P.L. 91-190). All activities where specific sites are to be determined (e.g., home repair) will be reviewed for standing environmental concerns, including a Section 106 flood plain review prior to the undertaking of that activity. Environmental Review Records (ERRs) for the above cited projects have been conducted by Franklin County, which documents the environmental review of the projects, and more fully sets forth the reasons why an EIS is not required.

The ERRs are on file and are available for public examination and copy upon request at: the Franklin County Department of Economic Development and Planning, 150 S. Front Street, Suite 10, Columbus, Ohio 43215 between the hours of 9 a.m. and 4 p.m. week days excluding holidays. They are also available by phoning Mark Paxson at (614) 525-5578 or e-mailing him at mstpaxson@franklincountyohio.gov.

No further environmental review of such projects is proposed to be conducted prior to the request for release of federal funds.

Public Comments on Finding

All interested agencies, groups and persons agreeing or disagreeing with the decisions rendered are invited to submit written comments for consideration to the attention of James Schimmer, Director of the Department of Economic Development and Planning. Such written comments should be received at the above stated address on or before April 8, 2016. Please indicate if your comments address the project where a Finding of No Significant Impact has been determined or one of the other projects indicated in this notice. All such comments so received will be considered and Franklin County will not request the release of federal funds or take any administrative action on the inclusive projects prior to the date specified. Further, all such written comments will be forwarded to HUD in conjunction with the County's request for release of funds.