

Early Notice and Public Review of a Proposed Activity in a 100-Year Floodplain

To: All interested Agencies, Groups and Individuals (FEMA, U.S. EPA Region 6, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and Harris County Flood Control District) and the Public at Large

This is to give notice that the City of Houston Housing and Community Development Department (City) under Part 58 has determined that the following proposed action under the Community Development Block Grant Disaster Recovery program is located in a floodplain. The City will be identifying and evaluating practicable alternatives to locating the action in the floodplain and the potential impacts from the proposed action, as required by Executive Orders 11988, in accordance with HUD regulations at 24 CFR 55.20 Subpart C Procedures for Making Determinations on Floodplain Management.

This project, which takes place on an approximately 1.56 acre (68,000 square foot) site located in the 100-year floodplain, proposes to utilize federal CDBG Hurricane Harvey 2017 Disaster Recovery funds to reconstruct an existing senior apartment building in order to more successfully mitigate potential flooding on site. In the wake of Hurricane Harvey, 2100 Memorial, a 197-unit independent living senior community, suffered devastating loss from 5' of flood water and wind driven rain from the storm. This proposal offers an option to reconstruct the property, that not only mitigates the existing environmental and flood hazards, but provides an economical investment to preserve affordable housing in a high cost market for a 40-year period.

This proposal includes the full demolition of the existing 13 story building and full reconstruction of all 197 units over a one-story podium to elevate all inhabitable floors above the floodplain. Reconstruction will also include the construction of a water detention vault to meet current rainwater and flood mitigation standards.

Located in Tax Reinvestment Zone 13, the 2100 Memorial community will provide a mix of one and two bedroom units, as well as efficiency units. The development will target Seniors with income levels between 50 and 60 percent of the Area Median Income.

Natural and beneficial functions of the floodplain include floodwater storage and attenuation. There is minimal potential for historic or cultural resources due to a lack of historic sites on site and confirmation with the state historic preservation officer. No suitable habitat for federal or state-listed species is present on the property and since it is developed there is no meaningful timber or wildlife resources present.

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. Commenters are encouraged to offer alternative sites outside of the floodplain, alternative methods to serve the same project purpose, and methods to minimize and mitigate impacts. 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.

This notice is required by Section 2(a)(4) of Executive Order 11988 for the Protection of Floodplains, and is implemented by HUD Regulations found at 24 CFR 55.20 Subpart C Procedures for Making Determinations on Floodplain Management. The 8-Step Decision Making Process includes public notices and the examination of practicable alternatives to building in the floodplain. Additional project information, including maps of floodplains for the project area and its census tracts, is contained in the Environmental Review Record (ERR) on file at Housing & Community Development Department, City of Houston, 2100 Travis Street, Houston, Texas 77002 and may be examined or copied weekdays 8am to 5pm.

Written comments should be sent to HCDD at 2100 Travis Street, 9th Floor, Houston, Texas 77002, Attention: Tom McCasland, HCDD Director. Comments may also be submitted via email to Matthew.Jenkins@houston.tx.gov, Julia.Thorp@houston.tx.gov, or Samuel.Lilley@houston.tx.gov. Telephone inquiries regarding this public comment process will be addressed at (832) 394-6018. The minimum 15 calendar day comment period will begin the day after the publication and end on the 16th day after the publication. Such comments should be received by HCDD on or before **January 2, 2020**.

City of Houston: Sylvester Turner, Mayor
HCDD: Tom McCasland, Director
December 18, 2019