# COMBINED NOTICE OF FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT AND

# NOTICE OF INTENT TO REQUEST RELEASE OF FUNDS

## **September 20, 2022**

City of Houston

Housing and Community Development Department (HCDD)

2100 Travis St., 9th floor

Houston, TX 77002

(832) 394-6183/ (832) 394-6397

**These notices shall satisfy the above-cited two separate but related procedural notification requirements for activities to be undertaken by the** *City of Houston, HCDD.*

# REQUEST FOR RELEASE OF FUNDS

On or about **October 6, 2022**, the City of Houston’s Housing and Community Development Department will submit a request to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), for the release of Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds authorized by Title I of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974 (P.L. 93-383, as amended), to undertake a project known as **Fifth Ward Technology Center (FWTC)**.

This project involves the rehabilitation of a former administration building and the new construction of an associated surface level parking lot and stormwater detention area on approximately 30,000 square feet (0.689 acres) of land. Project activities included in this review are acquisition of leveraged land, rehabilitation of the existing building, construction of a parking lot and stormwater detention pond and all soft costs associated with the planning and development of these activities. The CDBG funding will be used on hard and soft construction costs associated with the project.

The former administration building will be rehabilitated and reopened as the Fifth Ward Technology Center (FWTC), a 16,000 square foot co-working space, which will provide affordable co-working space for small businesses and entrepreneurs in need of meeting space, printer and copier services, Wi-Fi and receptionist services. The FWTC will provide 10 offices of various sizes, over 60 individual desk options, conference rooms, a large training room, and a collaborative space that will offer affordable lease options for business owners.

This project will increase productivity, creativity, and opportunities to network with other entrepreneurs in a collaborative, high-growth environment. FWTC’s “plug and play” small business office solution will provide entrepreneurs or small business owners with the use of an affordable community workspace without having the financial obligation for staff support and office equipment, which normally burdens many business start-ups.

The City of Houston has classified the project as an Environmental Assessment (24 CFR 58.36,

subpart E) subject to laws and authorities at 24 CFR 58.5, 24 CFR 58.6, National Environmental

Policy Act (NEPA) analysis, and the additional EA Factors discussed by HUD.

**Project Location:** 0 and 2600 Chew Street

 (Northeastern corner of Chew Street and Sudan Street)

 Houston, Harris County, Texas 77020

(29.7846960 N, -95.3146937 W)

Approximately $750,000.00 of CDBG funds, Grant No. B-20-MC-48-0018, for entitlement projects, will be utilized for this project and the total development cost is estimated at $5,375,000.00.

This project proposes to use the following funding, including:

$ 750,000.00 .........…………….….…………………...……. CDBG (City of Houston Request)

$ 3,700,000.00 ……..….…...…….................... Economic Development Administration (EDA)

$ 925,000.00……..….…...……............................................................ Fifth Ward CRC - Equity

$ 5,375,000.00………..*…………………………………………………….…….…...…………. TOTAL*

# FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

The City of Houston 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. Additional project information is contained in the Environmental Review Record (ERR). The ERR will be made available to the public for review either electronically or by U.S. mail. Please submit your request by U.S. mail to P.O. Box 1562, Houston, TX 77251-1562 or 2100 Travis St., 9th Floor, Houston, TX 77002 or by email to hcdenvironmental@houstontx.gov.

# PUBLIC COMMENTS

Any individual, group, or agency may submit written comments on the ERR to the City of Houston, Housing and Community Development Department, ATTN: Environmental Review Officer, 2100 Travis, 9th Floor, Houston, Texas 77002 or by email to hcdenvironmental@houstontx.gov. All comments received by the close of business on **October 5, 2022** will be considered by the City of Houston prior to authorizing submission of a request for release of funds. Commenters should specify which part of this Notice they are addressing.

# ENVIRONMENTAL CERTIFICATION

The City of Houston certifies to HUD that Sylvester Turner, in his capacity as Mayor 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 City of Houston to use Program funds.

# OBJECTIONS TO RELEASE OF FUNDS

## HUD will accept objections to its release of funds and the City of Houston certification 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 the City of Houston; (b) the City of Houston 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 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 U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, Office of Community Planning and Development, 1331 Lamar Street, Suite 550, Houston, Texas 77010, or by phone at (713) 718-3199, or e-mail to CPD\_COVID-19OEE-HOS@hud.gov (environmental), CPD\_GeneralCorr-HOS@hud.gov; (general). Potential objectors should contact HUD to verify the actual last day of the objection period.

*Sylvester Turner, Mayor*

*City of Houston*