June 9, 2020

To Whom It May Concern:

Pursuant to HUD environmental regulations, the City of Pittsfield has undertaken an environmental review of the activities and projects it has budgeted and funded for the upcoming 2021 fiscal year beginning July 1, 2020 through June 30, 2021. These activities and projects will be funded with federal Community Development Block Grant program funds.

Many of the activities and projects to be undertaken during the 2020 fiscal year were determined to be exempt from the provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and other laws and authorities cited in Section 58.5. Other specific activities and projects are summarized on the attached notice. Based upon the aforementioned environmental review process, the City of Pittsfield has determined that these specific activities and projects listed on the attached notice are categorically excluded under HUD regulations at 24 CFR Part 58 from National Environmental Policy Act requirements but will require further review when exact locations are determined. Therefore, a request for release of funds (RROF) must be submitted to HUD regarding the activities in the attached notice. The RROF process requires a 10-day public comment period.

Pursuant to HUD regulations, you have been identified as someone that should receive a copy of the attached notice.

If you should have any questions or comments, please contact me at (413) 499-9358.

Sincerely,

Justine Dodds
Environmental Clearance Officer and
Community Development and Housing Program Manager

JAD/
Enclosure
CITY OF PITTSFIELD

NOTICE OF INTENT TO REQUEST RELEASE OF FUNDS (NOI/RRF)

City of Pittsfield
Department of Community Development
City Hall - 70 Allen Street
Pittsfield, MA 01201

NOTICE:
Issued: June 10, 2020
Expires: June 19, 2020
Grant #: B20-MC-25-0020

Contact: Deanna L. Ruffer, Director
Telephone: (413) 499-9368

TO ALL INTERESTED AGENCIES, GROUPS AND PERSONS:

On or about June 20, 2020, the City of Pittsfield’s Department of Community Development will submit a request to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development for the release of Community Development Block Grant funds (CDBG) funds under Title I of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974 for the following projects:

1. PROJECT TITLE: Housing Rehabilitation – Estimated CDBG grant funds: $150,000

   PROJECT DESCRIPTION: Loans and deferred payment loans to income eligible, residential, owner-occupied and tenant-occupied housing. Also available are: lead paint grants; and hardship grants for emergency repairs. Locations to be determined.

2. PROJECT TITLE: Handicapped Access Grants – Residential Housing – Estimated CDBG grant funds: $25,000

   PROJECT DESCRIPTION: The installation of exterior ramps at residential housing units occupied by handicapped persons. Locations to be determined.

3. PROJECT TITLE: Economic Development Loans – Estimated CDBG grant funds: $40,000

   PROJECT DESCRIPTION: Low interest rate loans to small businesses in conjunction with other public and private sources. Recipients and locations of loans to be determined

4. PROJECT TITLE: Vacant Building Demolitions – Estimated CDBG grant funds: $175,000

   PROJECT DESCRIPTION: The demolition of vacant, condemned structures for health and safety reasons. Locations to be determined

5. PROJECT TITLE: Removal of Architectural Barriers – Estimated CDBG grant funds: $59,000

   PROJECT DESCRIPTION: Deferred payment loans for private and non-profit, non-residential, property owners to make handicapped accessible improvements to their buildings. Locations to be determined.

6. PROJECT TITLE: Skate Park Improvements – Estimated CDBG grant funds: $150,000

   PROJECT DESCRIPTION: Planned improvements at the Skate Park.

7. PROJECT TITLE: Homeless Shelter Improvements – Estimated CDBG grant funds: $100,000

   PROJECT DESCRIPTION: The rehabilitation of 55 Fenn Street for use as an emergency and winter shelter.

Note: All projects are to be located in Pittsfield (Berkshire County), MA
The activities proposed are categorically excluded under HUD regulations at 24 CFR Part 58 from National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requirements. 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 Pittsfield Department of Community Development (DCD), Room 205, Pittsfield City Hall, 70 Allen Street, Pittsfield, MA 01201 or by email to j dodds@cityofpittsfield.org. The ERR can be accessed online at the following website www.cityofpittsfield.org

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Any individual, group, or agency may submit written comments on the ERR to the Pittsfield Department of Community Development. All comments received by 4:00 p.m., June 19, 2020 will be considered by the City of Pittsfield prior to authorizing submission of a request for release of funds.

ENVIRONMENTAL CERTIFICATION

The City of Pittsfield certifies to HUD that Linda M. Tyer, in her official 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 Pittsfield to use Program funds.

OBJECTIONS TO RELEASE OF FUNDS

HUD will accept objections to its release of funds and the City of Pittsfield’s 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 Pittsfield; (b) the City of Pittsfield 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 HUD at CPD COVID-19 OEE- BOS@HUD.GOV. Potential objectors should contact HUD to verify the actual last day of the objection period.

Linda M. Tyer, Mayor
70 Allen Street, City Hall
Pittsfield, MA 01201

******************************************************************************

Distribution Date: Wednesday, June 10, 2020
CITY OF PITTSFIELD

CDBG - HUD

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW RECORD

HUD YEAR 2020
ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW RECORD
TABLE OF CONTENTS
&
24 CFR - PART 58-ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW PROCEDURES

SECTION I: Copy of Current Year Budget
Summary of Environmental Clearance Status - Current Year

SECTION II: Request for Release of Funds and Certification

SECTION III: Release of Funds Letter from HUD

SECTION IV: Exempt Activities – Section 58.34(a)(1)-(12) & (b)

SECTION V: Categorically Excluded Activities – Determined by Review to be Exempt – Section 58.35(a)(1)-(6)

SECTION VI Categorically Excluded Activities – Not Subject to Section 58.5 – Section 58.35(b)(1)-(7)

SECTION VII: Categorically Excluded Activities - Requiring Further Review

SECTION VIII: Activities Requiring an Environmental Assessment
ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW RECORD

STATEMENT: Exempt Status Determination
GRANT PROGRAM: CDBG Year 46 Budget – FY 2021 (HUD Year 2020)
GRANT NO: B20-MC-25-0020
CITY/TOWN: Pittsfield, Massachusetts

The following activities have been reviewed under Section 58.34(a)(1)-(11) and have been determined to be exempt from the provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and other laws and authorities cited in Section 58.5. No further environmental review or a request for release of funds is required. Compliance with any applicable requirements of Section 58.6 is required.

- Administration
  * Activity Delivery Costs
  * Program Administration Costs
  * Office Supplies and Administrative Expenses
  * Fair Housing
- Human (Public) Service Grants
- Morningside and Westside Initiative Clean-ups
- Miscellaneous Rehabilitation Program Administrative Expenses (Including Temporary Relocation Expenses)
- PERC Administrative Expenses
- Demolition Design Costs; Demo Historic Research; Hazardous Materials Reports
- Planning Studies
CDBG YEAR 46: DESCRIPTION OF EXEMPT PROJECTS

ADMINISTRATION: 24 CFR 58.34(a)(3):

Activity Delivery Costs: Staff salaries, fringe, and overhead costs directly related to carrying out activities eligible at 570.201 through 570.204. Estimated cost: $371,619.
Office Supplies and Administrative Expenses: Equipment purchases; leases; travel; postage; advertising; printing; dues and registration; miscellaneous expenses. Estimated cost: $37,051.
Fair Housing: Provision of information and counseling to City residents. Cost included in program administration budget above.

HUMAN (PUBLIC) SERVICE GRANTS: 24 CFR 58.34(a)(4): This activity consists of the funding for various human service organization programs, with an emphasis on collaborative efforts. $154,500 is allocated for this program year.

WESTSIDE AND MORNSIDE NEIGHBORHOOD CLEAN-UPS: 24 CFR 58.34(a)(4): This activity involves the payment for disposal of trash through the provision of dumpsters and junk haulers as well as the cost to purchase trash bags. The labor is comprised of volunteers from Initiative Steering Committee members and local residents. A total of $7,000 ($3,500 for each neighborhood clean-up) is budgeted for the fiscal year.

MISC HOUSING REHAB PROGRAM ADMIN EXPENSES: 24 CFR 58.34(a)(3)(5)(6)(8): This item is for various expenses for the housing rehab program that are not attributable to specific rehab projects. For example, mileage reimbursement, software technical support charges, temporary relocation expenses and software license fees. A total of $10,852 is allocated from this prior program year’s funding.

PERC ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES: 24 CFR 58.34(a)(3): The payment of miscellaneous administrative costs incurred by the Pittsfield Economic Revitalization Corporation regarding the administration of CDBG funded economic development loans and grants. A total of $8,500 is allocated for the fiscal year.

DEMOLITION DESIGN COSTS; DEMOLITION HISTORIC RESEARCH; HAZARDOUS MATERIALS REPORTS: 24CFR 58.34(a)(2)(5)(8): CDBG funds in the approximate amount of $10,000 for the payment of historical research required for the City's demolition delay ordinance; demolition design costs; and hazardous materials assessment prior to the demolition of vacant structures. These funds are included in the budget for Vacant Building Demolitions.

PLANNING STUDIES: 24 CFR 58.34(a)(1): Budgeted funds of $20,000 are to be used to pay for necessary planning studies as determined throughout the fiscal year.
ENVIROMENTAL REVIEW RECORD

STATEMENT:  Categorically Excluded Activities
Determined by Review to be Exempt (24 CFR Part 58)

GRANT PROGRAM:  CDBG Year 46 Budget – FY 2021 (HUD Year 2020)
GRANT NO:  B20-MC-25-0020
CITY/TOWN:  Pittsfield, Massachusetts

The following categorically excluded activities – as defined in Section 58.35(a) - have been reviewed for compliance with the laws and authorities listed in Section 58.5 and have been found to require no compliance with any of those laws and authorities. In accordance with the provisions of Section 58.34(a)(12) these activities are determined to be exempt, and no Request for Release of Funds and Certification is required. Compliance with any applicable requirements of Section 58.6 is required. Documentation of the review supporting this Determination is attached.

- Homeless Shelter- 55 Fenn Street
- SkatePark- Appleton Avenue
CDBG YEAR 46 DESCRIPTION OF CATEGORICALLY EXCLUDED PROJECTS DETERMINED BY REVIEW TO BE EXEMPT

HOMELESS SHELTER 55 FENN STREET: 24 CFR 58.35(a)(1): Budgeted funds of $100,000 are to be used for the rehabilitation of 55 Fenn Street for the emergency and winter shelter.

SKATE PARK IMPROVEMENTS: 24 CFR 58.35(a)(1): Budgeted funds of $150,000 are to be used for planned improvements at the Skate Park.
ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW RECORD

STATEMENT: Categorical Exclusions Not Subject to Section 58.5 (24 CFR Part 58)
GRANT PROGRAM: CDBG Year 46 Budget – FY 2021 (HUD Year 2020)
GRANT NO: B20-MC-25-0020
CITY/TOWN: Pittsfield, Massachusetts

The Department of Housing and Urban Development has determined the categorically excluded activities listed in Section 58.35(b)(1)-(7) would not alter any conditions that would require a review or compliance determination under the Federal Laws and authorities listed in Section 58.5. No Request for Release of Funds and Certification is required [except in exceptional circumstances cited in Section 58.35(c)]. Compliance with any applicable requirements of Section 58.6 is required. Documentation of the review supporting this Determination is attached.

- Economic Development Technical Assistance Grants and Loans (not associated with construction or expansion)
CDBG YEAR 46 DESCRIPTION OF CATEGORICAL EXCLUSIONS NOT SUBJECT TO SECTION 58.5

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE GRANTS AND LOANS (not associated with construction or expansion): 24 CFR 58.35(b)(4): Economic Development Loans and Technical assistance grants to small businesses in conjunction with other public and private sources.$90,000 in FY2021 CDBG funds have been budgeted for this purpose along with $75,000 in carryover funds. Program income from Economic Development Loans estimated at $40,000 will be available to fund loans along with existing revolving loan funds.

WESTSIDE RIVERWAY PARK (LINDEN & DEWEY): 24 CFR 58.35(b)(7): Budgeted CDBG funds of $5,000 from this fiscal year are to be used for brownfield compliance fees and additional design or planning costs to assist in the construction of the linear park along the Housatonic River at Dewey Avenue. Fiscal year 2021 CDBG funding is supplemental assistance to the CDBG funding provided from the City’s 2015 (HUD Year 2014) budget.
ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW RECORD

STATEMENT: Determination of Categorically Excluded Activities Requiring Further Review
GRANT PROGRAM: CDBG Year 46 Budget – FY 2021 (HUD Year 2020)
GRANT NO: B20-MC-25-0020
CITY/TOWN: Pittsfield, Massachusetts

The following activities have been reviewed under the provisions of Section 58.35(a) and have been determined to be categorically excluded from the NEPA requirements. However, after further review made in accordance with the requirements of 58.5, it is found that these activities will require further environmental reviews during the course of the program year. As reviews are completed, a copy of the documented checklist and supporting data will be attached to this statement.

- Removal of Architectural Barriers
  * Small Business and Non-Profit Grants for Accessible Improvements
- Housing Rehabilitation
  * Owner-Occupied and Investor Loans
  * Lead Paint Grants
  * Hardship Grants
- Residential Handicapped Accessibility Grants
- Economic Development Loans (associated with construction or expansion)
- Vacant Building Demolitions
CDBG YEAR 46: DESCRIPTION OF CATEGORICALLY EXCLUDED PROJECTS REQUIRING FURTHER REVIEW DURING THE PROGRAM YEAR

REMOVAL OF ARCHITECTURAL BARRIERS: 24 CFR 58.35(a)(2): This activity funds grants for private, non-residential property owners and non-profit organizations that own their own buildings to make handicapped accessible improvements to those buildings. Matching funds are required. A total of $59,000 has been allocated for this activity during the program year.

HOUSING REHAB HARDSHIP GRANTS: 24 CFR 58.35(a)(3)(i): This activity consists of the provision of grants up to $5,000 awarded to low-income single or 2-family, owner-occupied homeowners. Funding is utilized for emergency situations such as furnace/boiler replacement and sewer line breaks.

LEAD PAINT REMOVAL GRANTS: 24 CFR 58.35(a)(3)(i)&(ii): This high priority activity will provide 50% funding, through grants, to remove lead paint from housing under HUD’s lead paint regulation. Lead paint abatement is performed as part of the housing rehabilitation program and is not a separate activity.

HOUSING REHAB LOANS AND DPL’S: 24 CFR 58.35(a)(3)(i)&(ii): This activity will assist eligible owner-occupied homeowners and multi-family owners with housing rehabilitation activities. Priority is based on date of application and is given for major system failures (e.g. roof, heating, electrical). A total of $150,000 in CDBG funding has been allocated for the entire housing rehabilitation budget which includes hardship grants (above); lead paint removal grants (above); low and zero percent loans; and deferred payment loans for the fiscal year. Revolving loan funds will also be used to combine with grant funding to put together a financing package for the property owner.

HOUSING REHAB HANDICAP ACCESS GRANTS: 24 CFR 58.35(a)(2): This activity will provide for the installation of exterior ramps to residential housing units occupied by handicapped persons. A total of $25,000 has been allocated for this activity during the program year.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT LOANS: 24 CFR 58.35(a)(3)(iii) and/or (5): Low interest rate loans and loan guarantees to small businesses associated with construction or expansion and in conjunction with other public and private sources. Terms of loans are based on need and risk of each assisted business. Based upon recent experience, the City expects leverage of 3:1 from private sources. A total of $40,000 in CDBG (program income) funding in addition to revolving loan funding has been allocated for this activity.

VACANT BUILDING DEMOLITIONS: 24 CFR 58.35(a)(4)(i)&(ii): This activity involves the demolition of vacant, derelict structures for health and safety reasons. A total of $175,000 in FY21 CDBG funding has been allocated for this activity during the program year.
ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW RECORD

STATEMENT: Determination of Activities Requiring an Environmental Assessment
GRANT PROGRAM: CDBG Year 46 Budget – FY 2021 (HUD Year 2020)
GRANT NO: B19-MC-25-0020
CITY/TOWN: Pittsfield, Massachusetts

The following activity has been reviewed under Section 58.34 and 58.35 and found to be neither Exempt nor Categorically Excluded from Part 58 and NEPA requirements. Therefore, an Environmental Assessment will be prepared in accordance with Subpart E of 24 CFR Part 58 and attached to this statement.

- No Activities Require an Environmental Assessment
There are currently no projects requiring an environmental assessment.