

NOTICE OF FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT AND NOTICE OF INTENT TO REQUEST RELEASE OF FUNDS

January 11, 2021
City of Saint Paul
1100 City Hall Annex
25 West Fourth Street
Saint Paul, MN 55102
(651) 266-6655

These notices shall satisfy two separate but related procedural requirements for activities to be undertaken by the City of Saint Paul.

REQUEST FOR RELEASE OF FUNDS

On or about January 11, 2021, the City of Saint Paul will submit a request to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) for the release of CARES Act CDBG-CV funds under Title I of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974, as amended (PL 93-383), to undertake projects in the amounts set forth below for the purposes stated. The project to be funded is in response to the Presidentially declared COVID-19 pandemic with an expedited request for funds to coincide with the 15-day public comment period.

For all the programs listed below, the following environmental review conclusion is that all these activities are Exempt or Categorically Excluded Not Subject to §58.5 (CENST) and converted to Exempt pursuant to 24 CFR §58.34:

Southern Minnesota Regional Legal Services Extension/\$50,000/ Public services to prevent, prepare for and respond with activities to include fair housing activities by extending a contract with Southern Minnesota Regional Legal Services to provide legal services to St. Paul tenants at or below the federal poverty level on cases involving housing codes, abate unlawful utility termination, and evictions by landlords in retaliation for obtaining code inspections or otherwise enforcing their rights to reasonable repair.

Saint Paul Public Library Holds Lockers/\$232,000/ Public services in response to the coronavirus by adding contactless self-service pickup option of materials via hold lockers to the Saint Paul Public Library system. This project would expand hold locker locations from one (1) to seven (7) locations. The following library locations will receive one 20-unit holds locker: Sun Ray Library (2105 Wilson Ave, St Paul, MN 55119), Saint Anthony Park Library (2245 Como Ave, St Paul, MN 55108), Dayton's Bluff Library (645 E 7th St, St Paul, MN 55106), George Latimer Central Library (90 W 4th St, St Paul, MN 55102), Hamline Midway Library (1558 W Minnehaha Ave, St Paul, MN 55104), and Hayden Heights Library (1456 White Bear Ave, St Paul, MN 55106). The two libraries receiving one 10-unit holds locker are: Rice Street Library (1011 Rice St, St Paul, MN 55117) and Riverview Library (1 George St E, St Paul, MN 55107).

Freedom House Fire Station Acquisition/\$1,160,000/ Acquisition of Freedom House Fire Station 51 located at 296 7th St W, Saint Paul, MN 55102 to address COVID-19 pandemic by significantly increasing the availability of day space shelter options, especially over the winter months with dangerously low temperatures for the unsheltered homeless. It will be open 7 days a week from 8 AM to 8 PM as a daytime drop in and access to social services, resources, and as a referral center. The City of Saint Paul intends on transferring ownership of Fire Station 51 to

Listening House, current lessee and proposed service provider with experience providing critical services to homeless residents, to better serve this population.

Como Zoo Distance Learning/\$620,000/ The Como Park Zoo and Conservatory (1225 Estabrook Dr, Saint Paul, MN 55103) will develop three unique education programs (targeting students in grades 1-6): Virtual Content for Schools, Summer Zoo School, and Distance Learning support with topics focused on living things featuring plants, animals, and nature. Two full-time Education Coordinators and three full-time Education Specialists will support the programs with coordination, curriculum writing, and teaching. These three initiatives are in response to COVID-19 and supports the schools in their response to distance learning and in/out of school instruction. The program will be for the 20-21 and 21-22 school years and includes two full summer seasons of offerings. The funds will be used for staffing expenses and supplies.

Expanding Citywide Meal Access Update/\$675,000/ The program is an expansion of the City of Saint Paul food distribution in response to COVID-19 and increasing food insecurity to City residents. Distribution locations are recreation centers based on areas with more than 20% of households lacking accessibility to a vehicle, areas of concentrated poverty or people of color among other criteria. The expansion is anticipated to serve an additional 1.9 plus million meals in 2021. The funds will support staff salaries, winter supplies, and staff expenses of partner sites.

Library Bookmobile/\$350,840/ The project will purchase a customized vehicle to support the city-wide City of Saint Paul program Bookmobile Services providing library materials, activities, services to residents that face barriers to accessing library facilities, such as the elderly, disabled and low-income residents, and includes wi-fi access for households without access. The existing Bookmobile vehicle is past its useful life and doesn't meet the current needs and conditions of patrons. The vehicle to be purchased will be optimized as an extension of the library to meet resident needs and modified in accordance with public health guidance during the COVID-19 pandemic. The funds will be used for the acquisition of a new vehicle and the maintenance and operations for 2 years ending in December 2022.

Tier 1 Broad Level Review: The following activities are Categorically Excluded Subject to §58.5 (CEST):

CV-Commercial Node and Citywide Economic Development/Citywide/\$236,650/Activities to prevent, prepare for and respond to the coronavirus, carried out by the City to support businesses impacted by COVID-19 with technical assistance, expansion, rehabilitation, energy conservation improvements, acquisition, and leasehold improvements citywide. The program is categorically excluded based on 24 CFR Part 58.35(a)(3)(iii).

Tier 2 Site Specific Review: The above activities will be assessed on a site-by-site basis in the site-specific reviews. Tier 2 site specific reviews will be completed for those laws and authorities not addressed in the Tier 1 broad review for each address under these programs when addresses become known. The Tier 2 site specific reviews will assess compliance with the following Statutes, Executive Orders and Regulations listed at 24 CFR §58.5:

Airport Hazards [Clear Zones and Accident Potential Zones; 24 CFR Part 51 Subpart D] A map will be used to identify the project site in relation to Minneapolis-Saint Paul and Holman Field Airports. A buffer and flight path layers will be used to evaluate the site's conformance to the Clear Zones and Accident Potential Zones using the City's internal GIS webmap.

Flood Insurance [Flood Disaster Protection Act of 1973 and National Flood Insurance Reform Act of 1994 [42 USC 4001-4128 and 42 USC 5154a]] All projects in the FEMA-designated Special Flood Hazard Areas (SFHAs) will be required to maintain flood insurance. Therefore, all site-specific reviews will include a Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM). Projects within a SFHA must also provide proof of insurance. No sites requiring elevation or other changes will be allowed.

Contamination and Toxic Substances [24 CFR 50.3(i) & 58.5(i)(2)] (HUD Standard) Each site will be mapped and their proximity to contaminated and toxic sites evaluated using the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency's data within 1 mile, and sites within 3,000 feet will be evaluated more closely to determine if the site is safe for employees and patrons of the business. Given the scope of the project, which is limited to minor rehabilitation and COVID- related operations retrofits, little can be done to remediate for toxics or contamination within the scope of this action; however, other funding sources will be considered for cleanup efforts if it is determined to be necessary as sites are evaluated with consultation with HUD and DNR. Otherwise, any sites that is impacted by contamination or hazardous substances will not be selected.

Endangered Species [Endangered Species Act of 1973, particularly section 7; 50 CFR Part 402] The iPaC identified 6 endangered species and 15 migratory birds (see attached iPaC document). The site-specific review will include an endangered species review and consulting with the US Fish and Wildlife Service as needed. Any sites that negatively impacts endangered species will not be selected.

Explosive and Flammable Hazards (Above-Ground Tanks) [24 CFR Part 51 Subpart C] Each site will be mapped and their proximity to above ground tanks evaluated using the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency's data within 1 mile, and sites within 3,000 feet will be evaluated more closely to determine if the site is safe for employees and patrons of the business. If remediation is necessary the DNR, MPCA, County, and other relevant agencies will be consulted on next steps.

Floodplain Management [Executive Order 11988, particularly section 2(a); 24 CFR Part 55] Each site will be compared to the FEMA maps to determine whether the property is within the 100-year floodplain. For any proposed projects within the 100-year floodplain, a 5-step process will be completed to evaluate the practicable mitigation measures. Projects within the 500-year floodplain will also be evaluated and may require DNR consultation. No sites requiring elevation or other changes will be allowed.

Historic Preservation [National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, particularly sections 106 & 110; 36 CFR Part 800] Any site that is within a designated historic district or older than 50 years old will include SHPO consultation to determine if the project site could be designated a historic site or would potentially negatively impact an historic site. If the site is a historic site, the review will include consultation with SHPO and the City of Saint Paul's Historic Preservation Commission to see if the site can only include temporary interior improvements or if a reversible building improvement is permitted. However, due to the limited scope of the project, alterations to commercial buildings that impact the historic character are not expected.

Wetlands Protection [Executive Order 11990, particularly sections 2 & 5] The DNR wetlands layer has been integrated with the City of Saint Paul's GIS webmap to be used in mapping the site in relation to wetland. Any sites that are located within or encroach into the wetland will be further evaluated with the DNR and any relevant agencies. The scope of project

being COVID-19 social distancing measures, such as partitions, technology, and better filtration systems, may not impact the wetlands; however, if repairs or other retrofits do happen to be within the wetland they will be thoroughly reviewed. No sites will be selected if it involves new construction within a wetland.

Environmental Justice [Executive Order 12898] According to the Minnesota State Demographer, the City of Saint Paul became a majority minority city in 2017. The two largest non-white racial groups identify as Asian and Black. Approximately 25% of Saint Paul's residents live in poverty, and there is a significant confluence of race and poverty in the city. Between a third and a half of Saint Paul is designated by the Metropolitan Council as ACP50 areas, or Areas of Concentrated Poverty where 40% or more of the residents have family or individual incomes that are less than 185% of the federal poverty threshold and at least 50% of residents are people of color. Projects will be carefully evaluated for Environmental Justice impacts.

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

The City of Saint Paul has determined that the projects are either exempt pursuant to HUD regulation 24 CFR §85.34 or are categorically excluded under HUD regulations at 24 CFR Part 58 from National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requirements per the specific regulations cited above. An Environmental Review Record (ERR) that documents the environmental determinations for these projects is on file at the City of Saint Paul and will be made available for review either electronically or by U.S. mail. Please submit your request by U.S. mail to Addison Vang, 1400 City Hall Annex, 25 West 4th Street, Saint Paul, MN 55102 or by email to Addison.Vang@ci.stpaul.mn.us. The ERR can also be accessed online at the following websites: <https://www.hudexchange.info/programs/environmental-review/environmental-review-records/> and <https://www.stpaul.gov/departments/planning-economic-development/consolidated-plan>.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

The funds being requested are needed on an emergency basis due to the declared emergency. The public comment and objection periods have been combined into one 15-day comment period so all comments should be submitted to both HUD and the City of Saint Paul. Any individual, group, or agency may submit written comments on the ERR to both the City of Saint Paul, Department of Planning and Economic Development, Grants Management and HUD. Please submit comments to the City of Saint Paul by U.S. Mail to Julie Hostak, Grants Specialist, 1100 City Hall Annex, 25 West 4th Street, Saint Paul, MN 55102 or by email to Julie.Hostak@ci.stpaul.mn.us and to HUD by email to CPD_COVID-19OEE-MIN@hud.gov. All comments received **by January 26, 2021**, will be considered by the City of Saint Paul. If after the 15-day comment period ends, no comments are received or all comments received have been resolved, HUD may issue the Authority to Use Grant Funds authorizing the release of funds. Comments should specify which Notice they are addressing.

ENVIRONMENTAL CERTIFICATION

The City of Saint Paul certifies to HUD that Melvin Carter III 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 Saint Paul to use Program funds.

OBJECTIONS TO RELEASE OF FUNDS

HUD will accept objections to its release of fund and the City of Saint Paul's certification for a period of fifteen days following the anticipated submission date at the time the City of Saint Paul publishes this notice or HUD's 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 Saint Paul; (b) the City of Saint Paul 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 via email in accordance with the required procedures (24 CFR Part 58, Sec. 58.76) and shall be addressed to the Minnesota Office of the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), Community Planning and Development (CPD) via email at CPD_COVID-19OEE-MIN@hud.gov. Potential objectors should contact HUD via email to verify the actual last day of the objection period.

Melvin Carter III, Mayor
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