

Notice of Intent to Request Release of Funds [Tiered Review]

July 20, 2026
City of Houston,
Housing & Community Development Department
2100 Travis, 9th Floor, Houston, Texas 77002
(832) 394-6183

On or after July 28, 2026, on behalf of grant recipient Greater East Houston Community Redevelopment Corporation (GEHCRC), the City of Houston will submit a request to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Office of Community Planning and Development (CPD) for the release of approximately \$122,695.00 in Community Project Funding (CPF) under the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2024 (Public Law 118-42) (the FY2024 Act), as amended by actions including the Further Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2024 (Public Law 118-47) (the Further FY2024 Act), where Congress made available “.....*grants under the Economic Development Initiative - Community Project Funding/Congressionally Directed Spending awards.....for.....purposes, and in amounts, specified for Community Project Funding/Congressionally Directed Spending*” to undertake the following project: Mesa Drive Beautification Project along Mesa Drive in east Houston, TX 77013.

Tier I Broad Review Project/Program Title: FY24 Community Project Funding (CPF)/Economic Development – Mesa Drive Beautification Project, Houston, Texas.

Purpose: To enhance the Mesa Drive Corridor in east Houston through economic development and beautification activities through murals and ecological enhancements.

Location: Mesa Drive corridor, Houston, Texas. Bounded by Texas Acorn Avenue (North) and Railroad Drive (South) (approximately 1.88 miles long), extending 600 feet east and west from the centerline of Mesa Drive (approximately 1,200 ft wide). Total area: approximately 271.6 acres. *Note: This project area is in a different location on Mesa Drive, approximately 1 mile north of the previously cleared Part 58 review for the beautification and mural project at the Mesa Drive underpass at Liberty Road and the area at the intersection of Mesa Drive and N. McCarty Street.*

Project/Program Description:

GEHCRC will utilize CPF funds for community beautification activities including ecological enhancements and exterior wall murals in the location as described above.

The activities are described in greater detail as follows:

Activity 1 - Ecological Enhancements (Landscaping): Install shallow, native, water-filtering vegetation (e.g., Inland Sea Oats, White Mistflower, Turk's Cap, Goldenrod) at locations identified by GEHCRC. Maintenance will be hand watering until plants are established. Installation/landscaping activities (e.g., shallow plantings, mulching, placement of stone etc.) will be performed by a landscaping company, local individuals, or volunteers. GEHCRC will abide by all applicable HUD procurement and labor standards. Volunteers, as defined in 24 CFR Part 70,

may receive reimbursement for reasonable out-of-pocket expenses (e.g., meals, transportation) and nominal fees not tied to productivity, provided such payments do not substitute for compensation, as permitted by HUD.

Activity 2 - Community-Driven Murals (Public Art): -Expand existing mural program to additional properties along Mesa Drive. Specific mural sites have not yet been confirmed (to be identified in Tier 2 site-specific reviews). Murals will reflect local culture, involve local businesses, complements beautification and will be on the surface of exterior walls of existing commercial buildings. The project area is an active transportation corridor.

Up to twenty-five (25) sites along Mesa Drive are expected to benefit from the beautification activities that make up this project.

Physical Constraints: No excavation, no grading, no structural work, no trenching for irrigation, no changes to building footprint or use.

Full Documentation of Compliance: Any site-specific review Part 58s that are prepared and completed by the consultant must be provided to HCD Environmental. These and all other supporting documentation must be provided to hcdenvironmental@houstontx.gov. HCD Environmental will need to be provided copies of all mitigation documentation that are part of the site-specific reviews for the Part 58 Environmental Compliance file. In the case of any unforeseen environmental conditions discovered during the course of construction on approved projects, work must stop in the affected area while all proper mitigation can be performed, including appropriate agency consultations. HCD Environmental must be provided with records of the discovery in order to reassess the project being performed as needed.

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 this program when addresses become known.

Estimated Project Cost: Include HUD funding & total estimated project cost.

The Mesa Drive Beautification Project is proposing to use up to \$122,695.00 in 2024 Community Project Fund (CPF) Grant funds, HUD Grant No. B-24-CP-TX-2149.

The activity/activities proposed are categorically excluded under HUD regulations at 24 CFR Part 58 from National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requirements per 24 CFR 58.35(a)(1).

An Environmental Review Record (ERR) that documents the environmental determinations for this project is on file at name and address of RE office where ERR can be examined and name and address of other locations where the record is available for review and may be examined or at <https://www.hudexchange.info/programs/environmental-review/environmental-review-records/>.

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.

Level of Environmental Review Citation: This project is Categorically Excluded, Subject to 58.5, per regulations found at 24 CFR 58.35(a)(1).

Tier 2 Site Specific Review: The site-specific reviews will cover the following laws and authorities not addressed in the Tier 1 broad review:

Contamination and Toxic Substances [24 CFR 50.3(i) & 58.5(i)(2)]

Endangered Species [Endangered Species Act of 1973, particularly section 7; 50 CFR Part 402]

Historic Preservation [National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, particularly sections 106 & 110; 36 CFR Part 800]

Mitigation Measures/Conditions/Permits (if any): For each of the laws and authorities listed in the tier 2 site specific review, describe how issues will be addressed, and how mitigation measures, conditions or permits required will be implemented.

Contamination and Toxic Substances [24 CFR 50.3(i) & 58.5(i)(2)]

Tier 2 will include a visual inspection and, if the building was constructed before 1978, the Tier 2 review will include a lead-based paint risk assessment or paint testing by a certified inspector. If deteriorated paint is present on the mural surface, it will be stabilized via wet scraping and repainting (interim controls) prior to mural installation. If soil contamination is suspected near planting areas, a visual inspection will be conducted and sites with severe contamination or perceived contamination requiring remediation beyond the project scope will be rejected. Environmental screenings (e.g., NETROnline, EPA Mapper) may be used to identify potential contamination to assess shallow planting activities.

Endangered Species [Endangered Species Act of 1973, particularly section 7; 50 CFR Part 402]

Prior to finalizing any site with ground disturbance (shallow planting), the Tier 2 review will query the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Services (USFWS) Information for Planning and Consultation (IPaC) system. To determine lack of suitable habitat, the reviewer will compare the species' preferred environment descriptions from the IPaC report to the actual conditions observed at the specific site. For example: For any listed bird species, the reviewer will confirm absence of mature trees, nesting cavities, or undisturbed thickets. A site visit will document observations with photographs and a brief narrative. If the IPaC report indicates potential presence but the site visit confirms no suitable habitat exists, the Tier 2 review will document and proceed. If suitable habitat is confirmed, the site will be rejected. Given the urban nature of the corridor and absence of suitable habitat, no impacts are anticipated. No formal consultation with USFWS is anticipated; however, should consultation with USFS and/or Texas Parks and Wildlife (TPWD) be determined necessary, it will be undertaken in the course of the site-specific review.

Historic Preservation [National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, particularly sections 106 & 110; 36 CFR Part 800]

For each specific mural or landscaping site, the Tier 2 review will check the Texas Historic Sites Atlas, the Houston Preservation Office and/or the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP).

For Landscaping Sites (Ground Disturbance): Because landscaping involves shallow ground disturbance, each landscaping site will undergo Texas Historical Commission (THC) review at Tier 2. Consultant will prepare draft THC consultation letters. The City of Houston will review and approve all draft letters before they are sent to THC. The City may send the letters directly, or the consultant may send them with HCD Environmental copied for file retention.

In addition to landscaping, for Mural Sites: If the property is 45 years or older or listed/eligible for the NRHP, a site visit and photo documentation will assess the Area of Potential Effect (APE) and THC consultation letters will be prepared and sent following the process described above for the landscaping sites. If the activity results in "No Historic Properties Affected" based on THC feedback, the Tier 2 review will document this finding. If a historic property is affected, the site will be rejected or receive further formal Section 106 consultation in order to resolve any potential adverse impact on historic sites and protect the property as needed.

Tribal consultations have been sent to each of the six (6) Tribes identified by the HUD Tribal Directory Assessment Tool (TDAT) as having interests in Harris County, Texas for thirty (30) days of comment. One Tribe, the Wichita and Affiliated Tribes (Wichita, Keechi, Waco & Tawakonie), Oklahoma responded indicating they had no interests in Harris County at all, and the remaining Tribes did not respond indicating any interest in the site where work will take place. Tribal consultation has been completed.

Documentation: All Tier 2 site-specific reviews will include copies of any THC or Tribal correspondence, site photographs, and the completed Site-Specific Checklist.

If there is any unforeseen discovery of potential historical or Tribal items, work must cease in the affected area while all needed Section 106 and/or Tribal consultation is performed, and proper resolution of all impacts has taken place, with the items protected as needed.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Any individual, group, or agency may submit written comments on the ERR to the City of Houston Housing & Community Development Department either electronically or by U.S. Mail, Attention HCD Environmental, City of Houston/Housing & Community Development Department 2100 Travis, 9th Floor, Houston, Texas 77002 or by email to hcdenvironmental@houstontx.gov. All comments received by July 27, 2026 will be considered by the City of Houston prior to authorizing submission of a request for release of funds.

ENVIRONMENTAL CERTIFICATION

On behalf of GEHCRC, the City of Houston certifies to HUD that John Whitmire, 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 GEHCRC to use HUD program funds.

OBJECTIONS TO RELEASE OF FUNDS

HUD will accept objections to its release of fund and the City of Houston'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 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 (CPD), 1331 Lamar Street, Suite 550, Houston, Texas 77010 or via email to cpdrrofhou@hud.gov. Potential objectors should contact Houston CPD via or by calling (713) 718-3199 to verify the actual last day of the objection period.

*John Whitmire, Mayor
City of Houston*