August 14, 2013

The Honorable Carlos M. Santini Rodríguez
Commissioner
Puerto Rico Office of the Commissioner for Municipal Affairs
P.O. Box 70167
San Juan, PR 00936

Dear Commissioner Santini Rodríguez:

SUBJECT: Community Development Block Grant Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR) Program
Grant Number B-08-DI-72-0001
HUD Approval of Substantial Amendment

On July 12, 2013, the Department received a proposed substantial amendment from the Puerto Rico Office of the Commissioner for Municipal Affairs (OCAM) for the Disaster Community Development Block Grant Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR) Program dated July 11, 2013. OCAM’s proposed substantial amendment to the CDBG-DR has now been approved by HUD.

Should you have any further questions or concerns, please contact Mr. Ricardo Miranda, Senior Community Planning and Development Representative, at (787) 274-5883. Thank you.

Sincerely

Maria R. Ortiz
Director
Office of Community Planning and Development

cc: Tomasita Rosado
SUBSTANTIAL AMENDMENT TO THE 2008 DISASTER RECOVERY ACTION PLAN

The Office of the Commissioner of Municipal Affairs (OCAM) is amending its Action Plan for the 2008 Disaster Recovery Program in the following ways:

- Modify the limits for the allocation per housing unit in the Buyout Program, under the Disaster Recovery Enhancement Fund;
- Add a general recapture policy for all activities under the 2008 Disaster Recovery Program;
- Modify the allocation of funds for various municipalities.
- Add several program requirements for the 2008 Disaster Recovery program and for the Disaster Recovery Enhancement Fund.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

According to federal regulations in, Federal Register Vol. 74, No.29 Feb.2009, notification to the public is required regarding changes that substantially amend an Action Plan. HUD is waiving the traditional requirement for citizen participation under CDBG, as to allow the publication period for no less than 7 calendar days of public comment. This final amendment will be posted in OCAM’s official website along with a summary of citizen comments received within the 7-day comment period.

The announcement of this amendment was published on June 19, 2013; thus, the period for comments ended on June 28, 2013. A copy of the comments is attached at the end of this document, however, no comments were received. The Agency is submitting the final amendment to HUD for final approval.

CHANGES TO THE ACTION PLAN

The Commonwealth of Puerto Rico was originally awarded $17,982,887.00 under Public Law (P.L.) 110-329 to assist in addressing the long-term recovery impacts from the 2008 disasters. The State’s Disaster Recovery Action Plan was approved by HUD on September 17, 2009. Additionally, on September 28, 2010, HUD notified The Commonwealth of Puerto Rico an additional award in Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) disaster recovery funds for $12,000,000. The award responded to the Commonwealth’s identification of eligible activities under the Disaster Recovery Enhancement Fund (DREF). The combined allocation of these funds provided OCAM with a total of $29,982,887.00 under both appropriations.

Various municipalities have formally requested a revision to the maximum that is allowed under the buyout program established for the Disaster Recovery Enhancement Fund (DREF). Due to changes in the housing market, OCAM is revising the caps for each of the activities under DREF. With these changes, municipalities will have greater flexibility in the management and development of their buyouts programs.

Due to several changes in the projects within the municipalities, OCAM is modifying the final allocation of funds for the municipalities outlined in the table below. The new allocation is based on several funds recaptured from DREF and Affordable Rental Housing Activities. Additionally, the new distribution
allocates additional funds to high performing municipalities, with existing programs and already identified projects.

Furthermore, OCAM is establishing a new recapture policy for the 2008 Disaster Recovery Program (DR-2008). Such policy will apply to the regular DR-2008 activities, affordable rental housing activities and all activities under the Disaster Recovery Enhancement Fund. OCAM is also allowing for a transfer of residual funds within municipalities’ Basic Allocation projects, to their administration activity.

Finally, OCAM is encouraging municipalities to expend their funds in a timely manner for both its 2008 Disaster Recovery Fund and the Disaster Recovery Enhancement Fund.

All other sections of the initial amendment remain unchanged.

CHANGES IN COST ALLOCATION PER UNIT OF THE DREF PROGRAM

Previously under the DREF Program, municipalities could invest up to $90,000 per home unit, including demolition and delivery costs. Such limit allowed for a particular set of caps for acquisition, rehabilitation, construction, delivery and demolition costs (see table below). With this amendment, OCAM is increasing this limit to $125,000 per home unit. The previous caps established for acquisition, demolition, rehabilitation, construction, and project delivery costs are eliminated. The new cap is for the overall investment per unit (see table below). This will allow municipalities to have greater flexibility on how they manage and develop their projects. If a municipality decides to adapt its project to the proposed rules, it will need to show a detailed cost analysis by each specific address. Even though the caps for delivery and demolition are removed, OCAM will evaluate these costs for their reasonableness. Any municipality that used the exception process for the maximum allocation per housing unit—outlined in the previous amendment—will not be required to submit a new amendment to their proposals. Municipalities will be allowed via exception, to increase the cost allocation per unit, only under certain circumstances:

- The municipality is unable to find appropriate housing units inventory at prices below the cap per unit. In this case, the municipality must show that they conducted reasonable efforts to find appropriate housing units. Reasonable efforts include contacting local banks and inquiring about foreclosed properties, reviewing local classifieds in newspapers and specialized internet platforms, among other activities.

- The municipality is unable to build or rehabilitate housing units under the cost allocation cap per unit. The municipality must show that they conducted reasonable efforts to build or rehabilitate housing units under the stated limit.

Before requesting funds to OCAM, municipalities must submit a detailed cost allocation budget by unit address (budget must be previously evaluated by OCAM’s personnel). The abovementioned changes will only apply to projects which demonstrate a substantial change in their circumstances, and which are able to show evidence of reasonable change in their previous cost structure, as outlined in their original proposals.
### CHANGES IN THE ALLOCATION OF FUNDS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity Number</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Existing Budget</th>
<th>Net Transfer</th>
<th>New Budget</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CANCELLED ACTIVITY:</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adjutant- Affordable Rental Housing</td>
<td>$140,000.00</td>
<td>($140,000.00)</td>
<td>$0.00</td>
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<td>CANCELLED ACTIVITY:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Las Piedras- Disaster Recovery Enhancement Fund</td>
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<td>TRANSFER:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sabana Gigante- Affordable Rental Housing</td>
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<td>TRANSFER:</td>
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<tr>
<td>San Lorenzo- Disaster Recovery Enhancement Fund</td>
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<td>TRANSFER:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Usadillo- Disaster Recovery Enhancement Fund</td>
<td>$2,687,000.00</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Includes - if needed - among others, costs related to moving and relocation expenses.*

### TABLE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Previous Allocation per housing unit</th>
<th>Proposed new Allocation per housing unit</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Acquisition</strong></td>
<td>Up to $90,000</td>
<td>No cap</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Project delivery costs</strong></td>
<td>Up to $2,000</td>
<td>No cap</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Demolition</strong></td>
<td>Up to $15,000</td>
<td>No cap</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sub-total per unit</strong></td>
<td>Up to $90,000</td>
<td>Up to $125,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>New housing construction or Rehabilitation</strong></td>
<td>Up to $90,000</td>
<td>No cap</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Project delivery costs</strong></td>
<td>Up to $2,000</td>
<td>No cap</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Demolition</strong></td>
<td>Up to $15,000</td>
<td>No cap</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sub-total per unit</strong></td>
<td>Up to $90,000</td>
<td>Up to $125,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Municipalities with a residual amount of funds in their projects (sobrantes) may use such funds for the administration activity, only on their Basic Allocation projects. OCAM will not allow any transfer of funds for admin activities, in both the Affordable Rental Housing project(s) and Disaster Recovery Enhancement Fund (DREF) project(s). The transfer of funds to admin activities is subject to the approval of OCAM. The agency will consider if such transfer complies with the five percent cap (5%) for administrative expenses established in Federal Register /Vol. 74, No. 29 for the DR-2008 grant.

**Recapture Policy**

Any funds recaptured by OCAM from the participating municipalities, will be distributed to other municipalities that participated under the program. This may include any funds willingly returned by the municipalities. The method of redistribution is to be governed by the general performance of the municipalities (expenditure rate and project’s balance) within the Disaster Recovery Program, or by specific need criteria (disaster related unmet needs and already identified projects), according to the program’s purpose and objective.

**Timely Expenditure of Funds**

All municipalities participating in the 2008 Disaster Recovery program must demonstrate a reasonable effort to expend their total allocation in a timely manner. This includes the Affordable rental housing projects, DREF and regular 2008 Disaster Recovery projects under the basic and competitive grant. Municipalities which are not able to demonstrate substantial progress in their projects could be subject to a recapture by OCAM.
APPENDIX: SUMMARY OF PUBLIC COMMENTS AND OCAM'S RESPONSE

No comments were received during the public comment period.
NOTA ACLARATORIA
PUBLICADO EL MIÉRCOLES 8 DE JUNIO DE 2013, EN EL PERIÓDICO OFICIAL HOJAS ROJO El Acta de publicación se pasó el día 19 de junio, indicando la fecha del 26 de julio de 2013 como fecha límite para recibir comentarios a la enmienda propuesta. El mismo debo haber sido, en su lugar, el 28 de junio de 2013.
El contenido remitido del Acta publicada anteriores queda inalterado.