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PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Lafourche Parish Government
Lafourche Parish Affordable Rental Housing Program
Final Notice and Explanation of a Proposed Activity
in the 100-Year Floodplain**

Date of Publication: February 17, 2012

This is to give notice that the Lafourche Parish Government has conducted an evaluation as required by Executive Order 11988 in accordance with HUD regulations at 24 CFR 55.20 to determine the potential affect that its activity in the floodplain will have on the environment. A Notice of Early Public Review was published in the Advocate newspaper, in the Daily Comet newspaper, and made available to other interested parties and regulatory agencies.

The Lafourche Parish Government and Housing Authority of Lafourche Parish intend to undertake a housing project for low and moderate income persons to be funded by the Louisiana Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program, Hurricanes Gustav and Ike, Parish-Implemented Recovery Program, Affordable Rental Program. The proposed project is located in the 100-year floodplain as described below:

+/-5.28 acres of land located between Greenville/St. Patrick Streets and Paul/Peggy Streets
Raceland, Louisiana
29°42' 58.88"N, -90°36' 33.82"W, 29°42' 58.02"N, -90°36' 32.01"W, 29°42' 49.98"N, -90° 36' 39.37"W, 29° 42' 49.20"N, -90° 36' 37.60"W/Raceland/Section 61/T16S/R18E
Raceland, Louisiana

This project is needed because it will increase the supply of affordable housing stock for needy families in Lafourche Parish. The project cannot be undertaken in any other location because this site is already owned by the Housing Authority of Lafourche Parish and it is an ideal location for development. The following alternatives were considered:

Alternative 1. Locate the Project site outside of the Floodplain

It was determined that the cost of purchasing a parcel of property outside of the floodplain property would be too expensive thus causing the rental rates to be too high for the market conditions within the regions. The proposed site is currently owned by the Housing Authority of Lafourche Parish.

Alternative 2. Locate the Project on the presently owned site which is located within the Floodplain

- a. Locating the project on the presently owned site makes the rental rates feasible for the market within the region.

- b. The site is located directly behind the Housing Authority Office making it very practicable for maintaining and administering the property.
- c.
- d. During serious weather conditions such as Hurricanes Katrina, Gustav, Ike and Rita, the site has not flooded because it is protected by forced drained pumps and a levee system.
- e. The site is located in the middle of an already-established residential district with single family units on the east and west sides and public housing units on the south side. On the north, the site is bounded by the Housing Authority Office.
- f.
- g. The site is located close to employment opportunities, schools, shops, churches, and grocery stores. Property is bounded by hard-surfaced public streets with access to water, gas, electrical, and telecommunication services. New sewage systems will be provided for the property.

Alternative 3. No Action or Alternative Actions that Serve the Same Purpose

A no action alternative was considered and rejected because of Housing Authority of Lafourche Parish records revealing that 268 individuals/families are on the waiting list for housing units. The proposed residences are needed to assist in alleviating the housing shortage situation in Lafourche Parish.

In accordance with 24 CFR 55.20, the Lafourche Parish Government has documented that there are no practicable alternatives to locating the proposed project in the floodplain. The proposed project is designed to minimize adverse impacts and preserve the natural floodplain. Mitigation measures to be taken to minimize adverse impacts and to restore and preserve natural and beneficial values to the floodplain will be undertaken. This activity will have no significant impact on the environment for the following reasons:

1. The structures will be elevated at a minimum of one foot above the BFE and have a footprint designed to minimize environmental impacts. The design will also minimize potential damage to the property as a result of the flooding. The area currently does not experience flooding and will especially be protected with new structures at an elevation of +6.00, about 3.5' above the existing grade.
2. The Lafourche Parish Government in conjunction with the Housing Authority of Lafourche Parish has a warning and evacuation plan to safely notify and evacuate people from the area. There is no history of flooding in this area, and it is not anticipated that damage to the structures will happen even if flooding should occur.
3. Lafourche Parish is a member of the National Flood Insurance Program; therefore, any structure owned by the Parish that is located in the flood zone will be covered by flood insurance. Even though flooding is not anticipated, the Parish and/or the Housing Authority of Lafourche Parish will maintain flood insurance on all buildings in order to mitigate any possible effects of flooding.

It has been determined that there is no practicable alternative to locating the project on this presently owned flood zone site. This is due to the need to provide housing and services to needy families; the availability of the property; the ideal location of the property; the need to construct an economically feasible project; and the ability to mitigate and minimize impacts on human health, public property, and floodplain values. The proposed design conforms to applicable floodplain protection standards. The development of these housing units will have a minor impact on the floodplain because of elevated construction, minimum impervious surfaces, and slow-draining shallow swales. The site will maintain an open space for recreational opportunities, and residents of the community will benefit from the project.

This notice with a request for comment was made available to all interested federal, state, and local public agencies, organizations, and individuals known to be interested in this proposed action by posting at

www.lafourchegov.org.

A full description of the proposed action may be reviewed at the Lafourche Parish Government, 402 Green Street, Thibodaux, Louisiana 70301, weekdays between 9:00 am and 4:00 pm. If you need to provide comments or make contact by phone, calls or e-mails may be made to Crystal Chiasson, Parish Administrator at 985.446.8427 or chiassoncd@lafourchegov.org. Special accommodations should be requested at least 3 days prior to the above contact person. Written comments will be received until the end of business day on Monday, February 27, 2012.

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