

PMC-EF2a

100402

**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY
EERE PROJECT MANAGEMENT CENTER
NEPA DETERMINATION**



RECIPIENT: City of Cincinnati

STATE: OH

PROJECT TITLE : Cincinnati City ARRA- EECBG Act.7 (Urban Garden)

Funding Opportunity Announcement Number	Procurement Instrument Number	NEPA Control Number	CID Number
	DE-EE0000704		0

Based on my review of the information concerning the proposed action, as NEPA Compliance Officer (authorized under DOE Order 451.1A), I have made the following determination:

CX, EA, EIS APPENDIX AND NUMBER:

Description:

- A9** Information gathering (including, but not limited to, literature surveys, inventories, audits), data analysis (including computer modeling), document preparation (such as conceptual design or feasibility studies, analytical energy supply and demand studies), and dissemination (including, but not limited to, document mailings, publication, and distribution; and classroom training and informational programs), but not including site characterization or environmental monitoring.
- B5.1** Actions to conserve energy, demonstrate potential energy conservation, and promote energy-efficiency that do not increase the indoor concentrations of potentially harmful substances. These actions may involve financial and technical assistance to individuals (such as builders, owners, consultants, designers), organizations (such as utilities), and state and local governments. Covered actions include, but are not limited to: programmed lowering of thermostat settings, placement of timers on hot water heaters, installation of solar hot water systems, installation of efficient lighting, improvements in generator efficiency and appliance efficiency ratings, development of energy-efficient manufacturing or industrial practices, and small-scale conservation and renewable energy research and development and pilot projects. The actions could involve building renovations or new structures in commercial, residential, agricultural, or industrial sectors. These actions do not include rulemakings, standard-settings, or proposed DOE legislation.

Rational for determination:

The City of Cincinnati is proposing to use \$82,500 in DOE funding to conduct environmental site assessments of vacant city lots in preparation for their potential use as community gardens, management of the Urban Garden Project and for site development, mileage and educational materials relating to the Urban Garden Project. Cincinnati's Urban Gardening Program will expand upon an existing pilot gardening program that converts vacant city lots into community based gardens.

A contract with a local garden center to support the creation of one full-time job to oversee the program will be developed. The scope of work includes selecting city parcels that could be added to the program, developing information and resource data, fulfilling signage requirements per parcel, promoting the program throughout the City, and educating program participants via informational presentations, brochures, and web-based materials. This project will expand the existing pilot gardening program from 11 acres to 41 acres. The expansion to Cincinnati's Urban Gardening Program will generate up to 300,000 pounds of produce per year, save 9,000 gallons of gas, and reduce carbon dioxide emissions by 79 metric tons. A reduction in the distance of transport for produce will lead to a reduction in the use of fuel which in turn will lead to a reduction in CO2 emissions.

City-owned sites that have potential for gardening use will be identified by the Office of Environmental Quality in collaboration with other City departments and/or the Civic Garden Center. Working with the Real Estate Department, the list of potential sites will be circulated within the City for comment by various Departments on possible use/restriction. A list of sites will be supplied to Keramida (a third party environmental services company) and they will conduct Transaction Screen Environmental Site Assessments of the properties. The screenings will follow the American Society for Testing and Materials (ASTM) Standard Transaction Screen Process, Designation E 1528-06. (Form is attached in the PMC)

Along with the DOE NEPA review, each site will be submitted to the City ER Officer for case-by-case review and approval. Each site and any intended improvements will also be submitted to the Department of City Planning for environmental and historical review by the Historic Conservation/Land Use Management department. If all environmental and historical reviews give site approval, and City Departments have released the property for use, parcels will be offered for gardening. A lease will be provided to the tenant. The parcels will utilize EECBG funds for site development, including soil, compost, fencing, tool rental, and/or seeds & plants.

Potential urban agriculture sites may be in or adjacent to a floodplain area. Use would be limited to gardening or orchards, and no permanent structures would be built on the sites. The garden sites are not expected to have

significant impacts to floodplains. If deemed incompatible with City guidelines and/or the DOE NEPA process as described in the project description, EECBG funds would not be used at the site.

The actions involved with this activity have been determined to have no significant impact to human health and/or environment; therefore, they are categorically excluded under CX A9 "Information gathering" and CX B5.1 "actions to conserve energy" from further NEPA review.

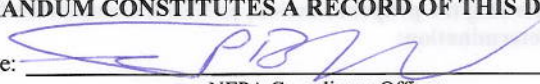
NEPA PROVISION

Note to Specialist :

None Given.

SIGNATURE OF THIS MEMORANDUM CONSTITUTES A RECORD OF THIS DECISION.

NEPA Compliance Officer Signature: _____



NEPA Compliance Officer

Date: _____

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FIELD OFFICE MANAGER DETERMINATION

Field Office Manager review required

NCO REQUESTS THE FIELD OFFICE MANAGER REVIEW FOR THE FOLLOWING REASON:

- Proposed action fits within a categorical exclusion but involves a high profile or controversial issue that warrants Field Office Manager's attention.
- Proposed action falls within an EA or EIS category and therefore requires Field Office Manager's review and determination.

BASED ON MY REVIEW I CONCUR WITH THE DETERMINATION OF THE NCO :

Field Office Manager's Signature: _____

Field Office Manager

Date: _____