URBAN INITIATIVES (UI)
Commitment and Disbursement Procedures for Local Program Administrators
Updated March 2013

The procedures set forth in this document should be followed by organizations administering Urban Initiatives (UI) programs awarded through the Consolidated Funding Application (CFA) process. Local Program Administrators (LPAs) must follow these procedures to report on program activity and to request disbursement of funds from the NYS Housing Trust Fund Corporation (HTFC).

This document provides LPAs with instructions on commitment and disbursement procedures established by HTFC and the Office of Community Renewal (OCR). Each form referenced in this document is available as a fillable form on the UI program web site: http://www.nyshcr.org/Forms/UI/

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Designation of Depository Form

Local Program Administrators must designate a bank account to receive UI funds directly from HTFC. LPAs must complete and sign Section I of the Designation of Depository for Direct Deposit of Funds form. The LPA must then have their chosen financial institution complete and sign Section II of the form. The LPA must return the original form to the following address:

NYS Office of Community Renewal
Hampton Plaza
38-40 State Street, 6^{th} Floor
Albany, NY 12207-2804

When projects are completed and appropriate paperwork is submitted, HTFC will use this bank account information to transfer funds to the LPA through an Automated Clearing House (ACH), i.e. direct deposit, procedure. The LPA must disburse funds to the property owner or vendor within five business days of receipt, except where such funds are to reimburse the LPA for payments already disbursed to the property owner or vendor.

Authorized Signature Form

An Authorized Signature Form must be completed to designate the representative(s) authorized to sign disbursement requests and must reflect the LPA's written policy on internal controls.

A board member should authorize the executive director or fiduciary staff member to sign disbursement requests. To maintain effective internal controls, the OCR suggests that the person responsible for preparing paperwork for disbursement requests should not also be authorized to sign disbursement requests. Please contact your OCR representative for additional guidance.

Instructions for Authorized Signature Form:

- **Recipient Name**: Enter the Local Program Administrator (LPA) name. The LPA is the recipient not-for-profit organization or municipality.
- **SHARS ID**: This is the eight digit identification number that is available on the grant agreement and award materials.
- **Mailing Address**: Enter the mailing address of the LPA.
- **Contact Person**: Provide a name and phone number for the person OCR should contact with questions related to the Authorized Signature Form.
- **Request for Funds Requires (check one)**: Check the box that represents the number of signatures required to authorize a disbursement. It is recommended that two signatures be required for the authorization of requests for funds to maintain effective internal controls.
- **Persons Authorized to Sign Disbursement Requests**: Enter the name, title, date, and signature of the persons authorized to sign the Local Administrator Disbursement Request Form.
- **Certification**: Enter the name and title of the representative authorizing the signatures. This representative may **not** also be an individual authorized to sign disbursement requests. This certification must be signed and dated at least one day after the form has been completed and each authorized signatory has signed and dated the form.

Project Commitment and Set up

HTFC and OCR use the data provided on the Project Set up form to monitor program status and to reserve funds for the building or project identified on the form. The LPA is responsible for submitting accurate Project Set up forms to OCR. Set up forms may be submitted via mail, fax, or e-mail to your OCR representative. OCR will confirm accuracy of building information and allowable funding amounts presented on the Project Set up form.

The Project Set up process first requires a commitment at the local level to the project. It is expected that the LPA will have a preliminary agreement with the property owner to do the specified work prior to requesting Project Set up from OCR. The State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) must also issue a clearance determination prior to UI Project Set up. LPAs must submit the Project Set up form to commit funds for a building prior to the start of construction.

Project Set up Form:

- **Date**: Enter the date that the form is prepared.
- **SHARS ID**: This is the eight digit identification number that is available on the grant agreement and award materials.
- **LPA Name**: Enter the name of the Local Program Administrator (LPA). The LPA is the recipient not-for-profit organization or municipality.
- **Person completing form**: Provide a name and phone number for the person completing the form, or a person OCR should contact with questions related to Project Set up.
- Check the box for **Project Set up**.
- Indicate whether the Set up is **Original** (first time submission for the building) or **Revised** (revised budget information).

Project Information

- **Project Name**: Enter the formal or informal name used to refer to this property, e.g. property owner name, business name, or building use.
- **Project Street Address**: Enter the street address of the building. Confirm that the building address is accurate by referencing a tax bill or consulting the local assessor’s office. Please note OCR’s database tracks projects by street address and staff will typically use the confirmed street address to reference a project.
- **SWIS Code**: The Statewide Information System is a numbering system established by the Office of Real Property Service to uniquely identify each county, city, town, or village. This code is provided on a tax bill.
- **Section / Block / Lot**: Enter the tax parcel ID or Section / Block / Lot (SBL) number associated with the building. Confirm that the building address matches the SBL by referencing a tax bill or consulting the local assessor’s office.

Project Activity Costs

Enter the applicable budget information for the building. Indicate the amount designated as UI funds in the first column and the amounts attributed to Owner Match and Other Match in the second and third columns respectively.

- Project Delivery expenses must be documented at the time of Set up, and must be *project* specific expenses. If the Project Delivery expense is not for site tests/ surveys or design, add the expense under Other and specify the type of expense. Project Delivery expenses are subject to review and approval by the OCR.

- If a completed building is "reopened" for additional renovations, a revised Set up form must show the total project budget.

Clearances (for Project Set up & Project Completion)

- **HTFC Determination Letter Date**: Provide the date of the determination letter issued by the NYS Housing Trust Fund Corporation's Environmental Analysis Unit (EAU) for the UI contract.

- **Environmental Conditions**: Check Yes or No to indicate if the HTFC environmental clearance letter was issued with conditions, or requires follow-up information for the site specific reviews.

- Enter the **Date** the **Building Specific Environmental Checklist** was completed, and attach a copy. If the UI contract involves a single project, this date may be the same as the initial **HTFC Determination Letter**.

- **Environmental Hazards**: Check Yes or No to indicate if Environmental Hazards were identified when the Building Specific Environmental Checklist was completed for the property.

- **SHPO Clearance Letter**: Enter the date of the clearance letter issued by the NYS Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation (OPRHP/SHPO) and attach a copy of the letter to the Set up form.

- **SHPO Conditions**: Check Yes or No to indicate if the OPRHP/SHPO letter issued conditions for compliance.

Number of Units

In the three fields in the left column, enter the total number of Residential, Commercial and Civic / Community Units *in the building*. Do not leave a field blank; enter a zero if the building does not contain units of each type. In the three fields in the right column, enter the number of Residential, Commercial and Civic / Community Units *assisted with UI funds*. Again, do not leave a field blank enter a zero if a unit type was not assisted. Every renovation project must assist at least one unit.

Revised Set up

If the amount of UI funds committed to a project increases or decreases, the amount of UI funds set aside for the activity must be revised. In such cases, the LPA must submit a Project Set up form with the Revision box checked, showing the new totals.

Cancelling a Set up

If a commitment is withdrawn and a building project does not proceed, the building Set up must be cancelled. The cancellation is important for maintaining accurate funding commitment information and assisted unit totals. If a property is withdrawn from participation, please notify OCR staff in writing, and clearly document the cancellation in the UI project files. Please note, buildings may not be cancelled or removed once UI funds have been disbursed for the project.

Disbursement Requests

LPAs must submit the Project Set up form to commit funds for a building prior to requesting disbursement of funds. LPAs may then request disbursement of UI funds for completed activities by submitting the required forms and applicable supporting documentation. A disbursement request requires:

- Local Program Administrator Disbursement Request Form
- Detail Sheet(s)
- Project Completion Form *(for completed buildings/projects)*
- Supporting documentation & cancelled checks
- Inspection reports
- Before and after photographs must be taken of each project documenting the building renovations or other work completed. Please provide photos by email to your OCR representative. The digital photo file names should include the SHARS ID and building address. Please do not send hard-copy photographs unless specifically requested by OCR.

Request forms and supporting documents should be packaged and submitted in the order identified above. A single disbursement request package may include requests for funds on multiple buildings or activities. To do this, complete a single LPA Disbursement Request Form and include Detail Sheets with the listed supporting documentation attached in the order identified on the Project Detail Sheet(s). Please use paper clips or binder clips only, do not staple materials included in disbursement requests.

Recipients may choose to scan and email disbursement requests for preliminary review by an OCR representative. Payments will not be processed, however, until an original, signed request is submitted by mail.

OCR will make payments to LPAs through an automated deposit system, which is usually completed within 2-3 weeks from the time of the request. Incomplete paperwork or insufficient supporting documentation will delay payments.

Per the grant agreement, all UI funds disbursed to the LPA for building projects must be provided to the property owner within five business days of deposit.

Local Administrator Disbursement Request Form

- **LPA Name**: Enter the name of the Local Program Administrator (LPA). The LPA is the recipient not-for-profit organization or municipality.
- **SHARS ID**: Enter the eight digit identification number that is available on the grant agreement and award materials.
- **Name and phone number of the person completing this form**: Provide a name and contact information for the person completing form, or the person OCR should contact with questions related to the disbursement paperwork.
- **Date**: Enter the date that the disbursement request paperwork is prepared.

- **Mailing Address**: Enter the complete mailing address of the LPA.
- **Total UI Contract amount**: Enter the full amount of the UI contract, e.g., $200,000.
- **Total amount of this request**: Enter the full amount of the attached disbursement request. This amount must equal the total of the amounts indicated on the attached Project Detail Sheet(s).
- **Payee Certification**: Enter the name(s) and title(s) of the LPA representative(s) indicated on the Authorized Signatory Form. Once the request is prepared and reviewed, the Authorized Signatories must sign and date the form. In signing the certification on the Local Administrator Disbursement Request form, the LPA is certifying that the reimbursement requested: complies with the requirements of the Grant Agreement between HTFC and the LPA; contains eligible expenses; does not include taxes from which the State is exempt; and does not duplicate reimbursement or disbursement of costs and/or expenses from any other source.

Administrative Funds Detail Sheet

An Administrative Funds Detail Sheet must be prepared and submitted each time reimbursement of Administrative expenses is requested. All dollar amounts entered on the form must be supported by payroll documentation, invoices and receipts.

LPAs are permitted to request an initial disbursement of up to 40% of the budgeted Administrative funds prior to completion of building projects. Administrative funds beyond the initial 40% will be available based on overall program completion. This will be determined by evaluating the percentage of program funds disbursed, and the proposed program activities.

Allowable uses of Administrative funds include salaries and related costs associated with the administration of the grant, including consultant expenses, or equipment and supplies used exclusively for the UI program. It is acceptable to request UI Administrative funds for a pro-rated portion of the cost, based on the percentage designated for UI use. Requests for payment of Administrative costs must be charged to Administration and not to other activities (e.g. Building Renovation) or Project Delivery.

The first Administrative Funds Detail Sheet submitted will serve as the formal commitment of the budgeted Administrative funds.

- **SHARS ID**: Enter the eight digit identification number that is available on the grant agreement and award materials.
- **LPA Name**: Enter the name of the Local Program Administrator (LPA). The LPA is the recipient not-for-profit organization or municipality.
- **Time Period**: Enter the range of dates for which payment of administrative expenses is requested. For the initial 40% drawdown of funds, an estimated time period will be accepted.
- **Staff Salaries**: Enter the names and job titles of staff members for the LPA whose duties include UI program administration, and for whom a disbursement of Administrative funds is being requested. (Individuals providing consulting or other professional services outside of the LPA organization should be listed on the lines for Other.)
- **Amount Requested for this Period:** Enter the amount of requested funds for each staff salary included in this request.
- **Amount Requested to Date**: Enter the sum of the administrative funds requested to date for each staff person included. This amount should be the sum of prior requests, and not include the amount requested for this period.
- **Total Salaries**: These fields will automatically calculate the totals identified above for staff salaries.
- **Fringe Benefits**: Enter the amount of fringe benefits being requested.
- **Total Personnel Services**: These fields will automatically calculate the total salaries and fringe benefits identified above.
- **Other Than Personnel Services (OTPS)**: Enter non-personnel related costs included in the request for administrative funds.

- **Total OTPS**: These fields will automatically calculate the total OTPS items identified above.
- **Other**: Enter any other administrative expenses included in the request for administrative funds. Typically, this includes consultants and other professional services.
- **Total Administrative Funds Requested**: These fields will automatically calculate the amounts entered for this this period, and the total of prior requests. If the amounts indicated are not correct, please check the amounts entered above.
- **Total Administrative Funds**: Enter the total amount of administrative funds contracted as part of the program budget. Refer to Schedule A of the grant agreement. This amount should stay the same on each request.
- **Balance of Administrative Funds:** This field will use the amounts identified in the "Total Administrative Funds Requested" and "Total Administrative Funds" fields to automatically calculate balance of administrative funds.

Project Detail Sheet

Project Detail sheets are used to organize and itemize the invoices and receipts that must be provided as supporting documentation. Organize contractor invoices and receipts in the order listed on the Project Detail Sheet(s). A separate Project Detail Sheet(s) must be submitted for each building for which funds are requested.

- **SHARS ID**: Enter the eight digit identification number that is available on the grant agreement and award materials.
- **Project/Building Name**: Enter the formal or informal name used to refer to this property, e.g. property owner name, business name, or general building use.
- **Project/Building Address**: Enter the street address of the building. This should be the address confirmed following the approved Project Set up for the building.
- **Project/Building % Complete**: Enter the percent of the total project that is complete. Disbursement of UI funds is available based on percent complete. If the building is 100% complete, and the disbursement request is for the full amount of UI funds set up, a Project Completion form must be included with the request.
- Enter the **UI Funds Set Up for Construction/Renovation**: This is the amount of UI funds committed (Using a Project Set up form) for the project activity.
- Enter the total **UI Funds Set Up for Project Delivery**. This amount is indicated on the project delivery subtotal line on the most recent Set up form for the building, under UI Project.
- Enter the **Activity Request Amount** included in this request for the project construction or renovation activity.
- Enter the **Project Delivery Request Amount** included in the disbursement request.
- **Activity Total Requested to Date**: Enter the cumulative amount previously disbursed for the building.
- **Project Delivery Total Requested to Date**: Enter the cumulative amount previously disbursed for Project Delivery on the building specified.
- **Invoice Date or Number**: The purpose of the project detail sheet is to organize supporting documentation for a disbursement request. Please provide the date or number for the first invoice or receipt included in the disbursement request.
- **Proof of Payment/Check #**: Proof of payment must be included for all supporting documentation. Provide the check number used to pay the invoice, if applicable.
- **Contractor/Vendor Name**: Use this field to identify the contractor or vendor that issued the receipt or invoice. The contractor or vendor name listed must match the supporting invoice(s) provided.
- **Trade or Work performed**: Indicate the type of construction activities provided by contractor, e.g. installed windows, repointed brick façade. <u>Brief responses only.</u>

- **Invoice Amount**: Enter the amount charged by the contractor or vendor indicated. This amount should directly match the invoice(s) provided. Multiple invoices from one contractor/vendor may be combined to get the "Invoice Amount."
- **Amount of this Draw**: Enter the portion of the invoice amount for which you are requesting reimbursement from UI funds. The sum of the amounts indicated in the Amount of this Draw fields on detail sheet(s) must equal the Activity Request Amount provided in the top portion of the form **and** the Total Amount of this Request indicated on the Local Program Administrator Disbursement Request form.
- **Amount Requested Other Source, Specify source and amount**: If an invoice or receipt has been or will be submitted for reimbursement from another source, please indicate the source and amount requested from the other source.
- **100% Complete**: Check Yes or No to indicate if the contract with the specified contractor or vendor described is complete.

If additional Contractor Information fields are needed, please complete and attach additional Project Detail Sheets with the same information provided in the top portion of the form.

Project Completion Form

A Project Completion form must be submitted with the final disbursement request for each building or project. Data provided on the Project Completion report should be current to the day the form is submitted.

The Project Completion form is the same form as the Project Set up form. The Project Completion form verifies final project budget data, required clearances (for example: final property inspection, environmental review, SHPO clearance, and lead abatement when applicable), and assisted building unit information.

Provide all information included on the Project Set up for the building with final budget information, in addition to the following:

- **Clearances (for Project Completion)**
  - If the Set up form indicates that Environmental Hazards were identified when the property was evaluated using the environmental checklist, provide the **date the site was determined free from environmental hazard**.
  - Provide the **Date of the Final Inspection**. Before a final payment can be made, a final inspection is required and documentation must be provided with the disbursement request.
  - Provide the **date assisted units were determined lead-safe** if residential units were assisted with UI funds or exterior renovations having a direct impact on residential units were completed, e.g. window replacement or repair.

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  Eligible occupants of UI assisted residential units are persons or families whose income does not exceed 80% of the area median income for the metropolitan statistical area (MSA) or county in which the project is located. If the renovation project provided assistance to residential units, please complete page two of the Project Completion form to provide information about the units assisted.

Supporting Documentation

The UI program operates fully as a reimbursement program and payment will be made only upon satisfactory completion of building projects. Disbursement Requests must be accompanied by appropriate, legible supporting documentation to substantiate expenses. LPAs must provide copies of detailed invoices or receipts and proof of payment in the form of cancelled checks and lien releases.

OCR may request additional documentation, such as bids and the full scope of work, to maintain effective internal controls. LPAs must clearly communicate the necessity of this documentation to the participating building owners and contractors prior to the start of construction. Cash payments will not be reimbursed.

Copies of invoices from contractors must support the information provided on the Project Detail Sheet(s). Please organize contractor invoices and receipts in the order listed on the Project Detail Sheet(s), using paperclips, not staples. If formal invoices are not available, required information must be provided on the letterhead of the contractor, containing at a **minimum** the following elements:

- The contractor's name, business address and contact information;
- The building address where the work was completed;
- The date(s) the work was done;
- A description of the work completed; and
- The dollar amount of the work (Taxes must not be included in the request)

Copies of invoices from consultants or vendors must support any project delivery and administrative expenses listed on the Project Detail Sheet(s). LPAs must generate invoices for in-house staff time and have supporting payroll documentation available.

For the initial or up-front disbursement of UI administrative funds, estimate the amount of time the requested funds are expected to cover administrative expenses. For later disbursements of UI administrative funds, indicate the time period for the administrative expenses that are included in this disbursement request. Itemize administrative expenses that are in addition to staff or consultant time.

LPAs must retain the original versions of all supporting documentation in project files at their office.

Recordkeeping, Reporting, and Monitoring

All Local Program Administrators are responsible for maintaining complete program and project files, including participant applications, eligibility documentation, work specifications, bid documents, financial commitments, contracts, contractors' invoices, inspection reports, documentation on historic preservation issues, lead-based paint, environmental conditions and clearances, and UI program correspondence. Files will be examined by an OCR representative during monitoring and technical assistance visits.