

NOTICE OF INTENT TO REQUEST RELEASE OF FUNDS FOR TIERED PROJECTS
NOTICE OF FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT
FINAL NOTICE AND PUBLIC EXPLANATION OF A PROPOSED ACTIVITY IN
A FEDERAL FLOOD RISK MANAGEMENT FLOODPLAIN OR WETLAND

Date of Notice: January 14, 2026

Pinellas Recovers – People First Housing Recovery CDBG-DR Programs
400 S Fort Harrison Avenue, Suite 349
Clearwater, FL 33756
(727) 464-7757

These notices shall satisfy three separate but related procedural notification requirements for activities to be undertaken by the Pinellas County's Pinellas Recovers: People First Housing Recovery CDBG-DR Programs. The activities will assist Pinellas County homeowners, excluding St. Petersburg (they received their own disaster allocation), affected by the impacts of the 2023 and 2024 Florida severe storms and flooding that included Hurricanes Idalia, Helene and Milton that made landfall in or near Pinellas County.

REQUEST FOR RELEASE OF FUNDS

On or about January 30, 2026, Pinellas County will submit a request to the US Department of Housing and Urban Development for the release of Community Development Block Grant Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR) funds under the Disaster Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2025, as outlined in the Federal Register, 90 FR 4759 (January 21, 2025), as amended, to undertake the following project:

Pinellas Recovers: People First Hurricane Recovery is a suite of residential housing programs for eligible County residents whose homes sustained damage from the 2023 and 2024 disasters: New Construction, Homeowner Reimbursement, Local Landlord (Small Rental Rehabilitation/Reconstruction) assistance and Homebuyer Assistance Programs. The Homeowner Rehabilitation/Reconstruction Program and the Local Landlord Program provide funding primarily for low-to-moderate-income (LMI) homeowners and small rental owners who rent to LMI tenants for a specific period. Both programs will provide direct construction support for storm-impacted stick-built single-family homes, concrete block/concrete masonry units, modular, mobile, or manufactured homes units (MHUs), and other single-family residence types, including townhomes, duplex, triplex, quadplex and condominiums. The activities covered by rehabilitation in these two programs may include but are not limited to; repair or replacement of structure elements such as roof, windows, doors, sheetrock, plumbing, electrical fixtures, HVAC, elevation, lead-based paint, asbestos, radon, etc. testing and mitigation (as necessary), and ADA improvements. The activities covered by reconstruction in these two programs will include rebuilding a structure within the original footprint on the same site. The Strategic Relocation and Revitalization Program will move those unable to rebuild on the same lot to areas outside the floodplain. The Homeowner Reimbursement Program will offer direct reimbursement assistance to homeowners affected by the above-mentioned disasters for incurred eligible expenses to a primary residence prior to application for federal assistance from Pinellas County. The Homebuyer Assistance Program will assist low-to-moderate renters to transition to homeownership.

Program Allocations are as follows:

Homeowner Rehabilitation & Reconstruction Program (HRRP)	\$490,000,000
Strategic Relocation & Revitalization Program	\$10,000,000
Homeowner Reimbursement Program (HRP)	\$20,787,758
Small Rental Rehabilitation/Reconstruction Program (Local Landlord Program - LLP)	\$57,865,307
<u>Homebuyer Assistance Program</u>	<u>\$20,000,000</u>
Total HUD Disaster Assistance Allocated:	\$598,653,065

To facilitate environmental review of the proposed activities, Pinellas County is implementing a tiered environmental review approach in accordance with HUD regulations at 24 CFR 58.15. The Environmental Review will be tiered at an Environmental Assessment (24 CFR 58.36) level of review and is subject to laws and authorities at 24 CFR 58.5, 24 CRR 58.6 and NEPA analysis. The Tier 1, or Broad Level of Review, of this process has concluded. Two (2) Site-Specific Review versions will be created based on activity; Version 1 for Reimbursement, Rehabilitation, Reconstruction projects; and Version 2 for Demolition and New Construction projects.

Once home sites are identified for assistance, the appropriate Tier 2 (site-specific) review will take place, and the following elements will be reviewed:

Version 1: Flood Insurance, Contamination and Toxic Substances, Floodplain Management, Historic Preservation, Wetland Protection.

Version 2: Flood Insurance, Contamination and Toxic Substances, Endangered Species, Explosive and Flammable, Floodplain Management, Historic Preservation, Noise Abatement & Control, and Wetland Protection.

Detailed information on these reviews and any mitigation measures implemented are available at Pinellas County.

FINAL NOTICE AND PUBLIC EXPLANATION OF A PROPOSED ACTIVITY IN A FEDERAL FLOOD RISK MANAGEMENT STANDARD DESIGNATED FLOODPLAIN OR WETLAND

This is to give notice that Pinellas County has conducted an evaluation as required by Executive Order 11988 as amended by Executive Order 13690, and Executive Order 11990, in accordance with HUD regulations at 24 CFR 55.20 Subpart C: Procedures for Making Determinations on Floodplain Management and Wetlands Protection. The proposed activities are funded under the CDBG-DR Program (B-25-UU-12-0007). The proposed projects will take place on owner-occupied home sites that sustained damage from Hurricane's Debby, Helene and Milton throughout Pinellas County and the municipalities located within Pinellas County. According to the FEMA Flood Map Service Center, there are approximately 189,649 acres of 100-year floodplain, 18,076 acres of 500-year floodplain, and 37,861 acres of Coastal High Hazard Areas (V Zone), and approximately 1,152 acres of Floodway areas within Pinellas County. Additionally, Pinellas County contains approximately 228,507 acres of mapped wetlands which includes Palustrine Forested Wetlands, Freshwater Marshes and Wet Prairies, Estuarine Wetlands (including mangrove swamps) and tidal marshes along coastal zones according to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service National Wetlands Inventory. According to the Federal Flood Standard Support Tool (FFSST), no CISA data is available for Pinellas County. The Federal Flood Risk Management Standard (FFRMS) floodplain will be determined at a site-specific level using the 0.2 percent flood approach (0.2PFA) or the freeboard value approach (FVA) when appropriate, based on current and best available information.

Pinellas County has considered the following alternatives and mitigation measures to minimize adverse impacts and to restore and preserve natural and beneficial functions and intrinsic values of the existing floodplain and wetland: Alternative Locations Outside the FFRMS floodplain and wetlands, Initiating Other Flood Protection Measures (Levees, barrier walls around neighborhoods), and the No Action Alternative. Program designs restrict funds from being utilized to purchase alternate lots to move homeowners, additionally subdivision space and lots are not readily available within Pinellas County and the cost for utilizing this alternative would increase costs resulting in assisting fewer homeowners. The use of Other Flood Protection Measures is also cost prohibitive and would not result in full recovery for the residents with damaged homes. The No Action alternative would not address Pinellas County's need for decent, safe, and sanitary housing for residents. Pinellas County considers the People First Housing Recovery CDBG-DR Programs to be the preferred option as it allows affected residents the ability to rehabilitate, reconstruct, and/or be reimbursed for safe and sanitary housing in their current social milieu and where risk to future flooding events is greatly lessened through elevating to current FFRMS requirements. The project will only be funded if it meets the following site-specific hazard mitigation requirements:

- Substantially damaged, reconstructed, or replaced homes in the FFRMS floodplain will be required to meet a minimum elevation of two feet above base flood elevation, or locate the home outside of the FFRMS

floodplain, whichever is greater. This elevation requirement also applies to mobile/manufactured housing units (MHUs);

- Homeowners whose residence is within the SFHA 100-year floodplain will be required to maintain flood insurance under the NFIP for the entirety of the home's existence in order to be eligible for this and future federal funding;
- Reconstructed homes, replaced MHUs, and new construction will be subject to Coastal High Hazard Area design requirements if located in a FEMA-designated V flood zone.

Since elevating a home adds significant cost to a reconstruction project, site-specific alternatives may be considered to achieve flood mitigation. This could include allowing a reconstruction or new construction residence to be built on a different footprint, on the same property outside of the FFRMS floodplain and wetland, if this mitigates risk and does not cause other environmental issues. Replacement of MHUs or new construction to alternate property outside of the FFRMS floodplain and wetland must be to an existing infill lot with utility connections in place.

Pinellas County has reevaluated the alternatives to building in the FFRMS floodplain and has determined it has no practicable alternative to floodplain development. Environmental files documenting compliance with Executive Order 11988 as amended by Executive Order 13690, and Executive Order 11990 are available for public inspection, review and copying upon request at the times and location delineated in the public comments section of this notice for receipt of comments.

There are three primary purposes for this notice. First, people who may be affected by activities in floodplains and wetlands and those who have an interest in the protection of the natural environment should be given an opportunity to express their concerns and provide information about these areas. Second, an adequate public notice program can be an important public educational tool. The dissemination of information and request for public comment about floodplains and wetlands can facilitate and enhance Federal efforts to reduce the risks and impacts associated with the occupancy and modification of these special areas. Third, as a matter of fairness, when the Federal government determines it will participate in actions taking place in floodplains and wetlands, it must inform those who may be put at greater or continued risk.

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

Pinellas County has determined that the project will have no significant impact on the human environment. Therefore, an Environmental Impact Statement under the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA) is not required. Additional project information is contained in the Environmental Review Record (ERR) on file at Pinellas County, 400 S Fort Harrison Avenue, Suite 349, Clearwater, FL 33756, Pinellas, FL 33756 and may be examined or copied weekdays 9 A.M to 4 P.M.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Any individual, group, or agency may submit written comments on the ERR to the Pinellas County at the above address or to recover@pinellas.gov. All comments received by January 29, 2026, will be considered by Pinellas County prior to authorizing submission of a request for release of funds. Comments should specify which Notice they are addressing.

ENVIRONMENTAL CERTIFICATION

Pinellas County certifies to HUD that Erica Henry in her capacity as Disaster Recovery Program Manager of Pinellas County 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 Pinellas County to use HUD Program funds.

OBJECTIONS TO RELEASE OF FUNDS

HUD will accept objections to its release of funds and the Pinellas County'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 Pinellas County; (b) Pinellas County 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 the HUD Office of Disaster Recovery, at 451 7th Street, SW, Washington, DC 20410. Potential objectors should contact this HUD office to verify the actual last day of the objection period.

Erica Henry, Disaster Recovery Program Manager - Certifying Officer
Pinellas County