



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT
WASHINGTON, DC 20410-7000

ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR
COMMUNITY PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

Mr. Alexander Zektser
OMB Desk Officer
Office of Management and Budget
New Executive Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20503

Dear Mr. Zektser,

The Department of Housing and Urban Development is seeking emergency review of the Paperwork Reduction Act (PRA) requirements contained in the Federal Register Notice "Rebuild by Design – Competition and Registration." The Notice of Paperwork Submission (copy enclosed), proposed for immediate Federal Register publication, explains the burden of the collection requirements and invites the public to comment on them.

The Department, in conjunction with the Hurricane Sandy Rebuilding Task Force, is launching "Rebuild By Design," a multi-stage regional design competition that seeks to promote resilience in the areas recovering from Hurricane Sandy. The storm was an unanticipated event that has forced the Department and the Task Force to work rapidly to restore homes, businesses and infrastructure and to prepare the region for future storms. Rebuild By Design, a signature initiative of the Department and the Task Force, will encourage innovation and harness the knowledge and expertise of the nation's design community to help protect Federal investments made during the Sandy recovery process. Winning designs from the competition may be implemented by states and/or units of general local government in the region using disaster recovery funding allocated through HUD's Community Development Block Grant Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR) program. Congress has instructed HUD to allocate CDBG-DR funding as expeditiously as possible to ensure that the region's recovery moves forward without delay, and it is essential that grantees have the opportunity to make use of the ideas that are generated by the competition when implementing their CDBG-DR rebuilding plans.

Rebuild By Design is being run under the authority of the America COMPETES Reauthorization Act of 2010, which requires the head of the agency running the competition to publish a notice in the Federal Register announcing the subject of the competition, the rules for eligibility, the registration process, the prize amount, and the basis on which a winner will be selected. In accordance with the Request for Qualifications in the Notice, competition participants must submit a twelve page application that contains: a list of competition team members; the team's area of focus in the competition; a summary of the team's strengths and relevant experience; the team's relevant projects and expertise; and the team's conceptual approach. The application will be used to determine whether the team is qualified to progress to the second round of the competition and receive an initial award of \$100,000.

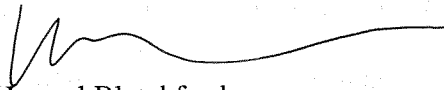
Due to the urgency of the Hurricane Sandy recovery, of which this competition is a significant component, the Secretary has directed that prospective teams submit their applications by July 19, 2013, thus rendering it impossible to comply with the standard PRA Collection review

timeline. This emergency processing is requested to ensure that the Department can launch the competition quickly and so that communities can initiate their recovery activities and benefit from the competition's winning designs. HUD agrees that subsequent stages of the competition are not an emergency and will go through the 60 and 30-day comment period as necessary. HUD will include an additional section to the Stage 1 federal register notice setting out all the information required of a 60-day notice and asking for comment. If any significant comments are submitted, HUD will address those comments before moving on to Stage 2.

In compliance with the requirements of 5 CFR 1320.13, this letter requests emergency processing within two days from the date of the Federal Register publication of the Notice of Submission of Proposed Information Collection to OMB.

Thank you for your consideration and assistance.

Sincerely,



Laurel Blatchford
Executive Director,
Hurricane Sandy Rebuilding Task Force

Enclosures