Guidance on NSP Appraisals – Voluntary Acquisitions

Acquisitions financed with NSP grant funds are subject to the URA, and its implementing regulations at 49 CFR Part 24, and the requirements set forth in the NSP Notice that was published in the Federal Register on October 6, 2008. HUD anticipates that most of these transactions will qualify as voluntary acquisitions under the applicable regulations of 49 CFR 24.101(b). The URA regulations do not specifically require appraisals in connection with voluntary acquisitions under 49 CFR 24.101(b). However, the NSP Notice requires appraisals to be performed with respect to the NSP funded acquisition of foreclosed upon homes and residential properties, even though they may be considered voluntary under the URA. In those cases, the URA appraisal requirements of 49 CFR 24.103 must be met. The following guidance on appraisals pertains to acquisitions of foreclosed upon homes and residential properties which meet the applicable voluntary acquisition requirements of 49 CFR 24.101(b) and reflects applicable URA requirements and the NSP requirements, including the URA appraisal requirements of 49 CFR 24.103.

1. The NSP grantee must ensure that the owner is informed in writing of what the grantee believes to be the market value of the property; and that the NSP grantee will not acquire the property if negotiations fail to result in a an amicable agreement (see 49 CFR 24.101(b)(1) & (b)(2)).

2. If NSP funds are to be used to acquire a foreclosed upon home or residential property (other than through donation), the grantee must ensure that the purchase price includes a discount from the value established by an appraisal that meets the following requirements:

    a. The appraisal must have been completed within 60 days of the offer made for the property (we have advised that an initial offer can be made, subject to the completion of the appraisal within 60 days of a final offer).

    b. The appraisal must meet the URA definition of an appraisal (see 49 CFR 24.2(a)(3) and the five following requirements (see 49 CFR 24.103(a)(2)):

        i. An adequate description of the physical characteristics of the property being appraised (and, in the case of a partial acquisition, an adequate description of the remaining property), including items identified as personal property, a statement of the known and observed encumbrances, if any, title information, location, zoning, present use, an analysis of highest and best use, and at least a 5-year sales history of the property.

        ii. All relevant and reliable approaches to value. If the appraiser uses more than one approach, there shall be an analysis and reconciliation of approaches to value used that is sufficient to support the appraiser's opinion of value.

iii. A description of comparable sales, including a description of all relevant physical, legal, and economic factors such as parties to the transaction, source and method of financing, and verification by a party involved in the transaction.

iv. A statement of the value of the real property to be acquired and, for a partial acquisition, a statement of the value of the damages and benefits, if any, to the remaining real property, where appropriate.

v. The effective date of valuation, date of appraisal, signature, and certification of the appraiser.

c. The appraiser shall disregard any decrease or increase in the fair market value of the real property caused by the project for which the property is to be acquired or by the likelihood that the property would be acquired for the project, other than that due to physical deterioration within the reasonable control of the owner.

d. If the owner of a real property improvement is permitted to retain it for removal from the project site, the amount to be offered for the interest in the real property to be acquired shall be not less than the difference between the amount determined to be just compensation for the owner's entire interest in the real property and the salvage value (defined at §24.2(a)(24)) of the retained improvement.

3. The NSP grantee has a legitimate role in contributing to the appraisal process, especially in developing the scope of work and defining the appraisal problem. The scope of work and development of an appraisal under these requirements depends on the complexity of the appraisal problem. HUD's guide to preparing an appraisal scope of work under the URA is available in HUD Handbook 1378-Appendix 19 or through the following link:

   http://www.hud.gov/offices/adm/hudclips/handbooks/cpdh/1378.0/1378x19CPDH.pdf

4. The NSP grantee shall establish criteria for determining the minimum qualifications and competency of appraisers. Qualifications shall be consistent with the scope of work for the assignment. The NSP grantee shall review the experience, education, training, certification/licensing, designation(s) and other qualifications of appraisers, and use only those determined by the NSP grantee to be qualified.

5. If the NSP grantee uses a contract (fee) appraiser to perform the appraisal, such appraiser shall be State licensed or certified in accordance with title XI of the Financial Institutions Reform, Recovery, and Enforcement Act of 1989 (FIRREA) (12 U.S.C. 3331 *et seq.*).

Questions:

1. **Can the lender's appraisal be used if it is reviewed for compliance with the URA requirements?**

   Yes, if it meets the requirements in 2-5 above.

2. **Must appraisals for the voluntary acquisition of NSP funded foreclosed upon homes and residential properties have a review appraisal performed?**

   No. Although the URA criteria for appraisals refer to qualifications for review appraisers, the NSP grantee is not required to have a review appraisal performed in connection with voluntary acquisitions under 49 CFR 24.101(b).

3. **Must a scope of work be developed?**

   Yes, if the NSP grantee is procuring the services of an appraiser (or requires someone else to procure those services) or is relying on a lender's (the owner of the foreclosed upon property) appraisal that is determined by the NSP grantee to meet above requirements. No, if the appraisal is performed by otherwise qualified in-house appraisal staff, although it is still advisable in such cases.

U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)

Guide for Preparing An Appraisal Scope of Work

The Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act (URA) and its implementing regulations (49 CFR Part 24) set forth minimum requirements for real property acquisition appraisals for Federal and federally-assisted programs. Appraisals subject to the URA must be prepared according to these requirements. The acquiring agency may also have additional supplemental appraisal requirements which may be attached.

The acquiring agency has a legitimate role in contributing to the appraisal process, especially in developing the scope of work and defining the appraisal problem. The scope of work and development of an appraisal under these requirements depends on the complexity of the appraisal problem

The scope of work is a written set of expectations that form an agreement or understanding between the appraiser and the agency as to the specific requirements of the appraisal, resulting in a report to be delivered to the agency by the appraiser. It includes identification of the intended use and intended user; definition of fair market value; statement of assumptions and limiting conditions; and certifications. It should specify performance requirements, or it should reference them from another source, such as the agency's appraisal procedural manual. The scope of work must address the unique, unusual and variable appraisal performance requirements of the appraisal. Either the appraiser or the agency may recommend modifications to the initial scope of work, but both parties must approve changes.

SCOPE OF WORK: The appraiser must, at a minimum:

1. Provide an appraisal meeting the definition of an appraisal found at 49 CFR 24.2(a)(3).

2. Afford the property owner or the owner's designated representative the opportunity to accompany the appraiser on the inspection of the property.

3. Perform an inspection of the subject property. The inspection should be appropriate for the appraisal problem, and the scope of work should address:

- The extent of the inspection and description of the neighborhood and proposed project area,
- The extent of the subject property inspection, including interior and exterior areas,
- The level of detail of the description of the physical characteristics of the property being appraised (and, in the case of a partial acquisition, the remaining property),

4. In the appraisal report, include an adequate description of the physical characteristics of the property being appraised (i.e., sketch of the property and provide the location and dimensions of any improvements) and a description of comparable sales. The appraisal report should also include adequate photographs of the subject property and comparable sales, and provide location maps of the property and comparable sales

5. In the appraisal report, include items required by the acquiring agency, including but not limited to the following:

- Property right(s) to be acquired, e.g., fee simple, easement, etc.,
- Value being appraised (usually fair market value), and its definition
- Appraised as if free and clear of contamination (or as specified),
- Date of the appraisal report and the date of valuation,
- A realty/personalty report as required by 49 CFR 24.103(a)(2)(i),
- Known and observed encumbrances, if any,
- Title information,
- Location,
- Zoning,
- Present use, and
- At least a 5-year sales history of the property.

6. In the appraisal report, identify the highest and best use. If highest and best use is in question or different from the existing use, provide an appropriate analysis identifying the market-based highest and best use.

7. Present and analyze relevant market information. (*Specific requirements for market information should be included in the agency's appraisal procedural manual and should include research, analysis, and verification of comparable sales. Inspection of the comparable sales should also be specified.)*

8. In developing and reporting the appraisal, disregard any decrease or increase in the fair market value of the real property caused by the project for which the property is to be acquired, or by the likelihood that the property would be acquired for the project. (*If necessary, the appraiser may cite the Jurisdictional Exception or Supplemental Standards Rules under USPAP to ensure compliance with USPAP while following this and other Uniform Act requirements.)*

9. Report his or her analysis, opinions, and conclusions in the appraisal report.

ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS FOR A SCOPE OF WORK:

INTENDED USE: This appraisal is to estimate the fair market value of the property, as of the specified date of valuation, for the proposed acquisition of the property rights specified (i.e., fee simple, etc.) for a Federally assisted project.

INTENDED USER: The intended user of this appraisal report is primarily the acquiring agency, but its funding partners may review the appraisal as part of their program oversight activities.

DEFINITION OF FAIR MARKET VALUE: This is determined by State law. Fair market value, however, is generally defined as the price that a seller is willing to accept and a buyer is willing to pay on the open market in an arm's length transaction, and usually includes the following:

1. Buyer and seller are typically motivated;

2. Both parties are well informed or well advised, each acting in what he or she considers his or her own best interest;

3. A reasonable time is allowed for exposure in the open market;

4. Payment is made in terms of cash in U. S. dollars or in terms of financial arrangements comparable thereto; and

5. The price represents the normal consideration for the property sold unaffected by special or creative financing or sales concessions granted by anyone associated with the sale.

CERTIFICATION: The appraisal shall include a certification of the appraiser (see attached sample or insert agency's certification).

ASSUMPTIONS AND LIMITING CONDITIONS: The appraiser shall state all relevant assumptions and limiting conditions. In addition, the acquiring agency may provide other assumptions and conditions that may be required for the particular appraisal assignment, such as:

- The data search requirements and parameters that may be required for the project.
- Identification of the technology requirements, including approaches to value, to be used to analyze the data.
- Need for machinery and equipment appraisals, soil studies, potential zoning changes, etc.
- Instructions to the appraiser to appraise the property "As Is" or subject to repairs or corrective action.
- As applicable include any information on property contamination to be provided and considered by the appraiser in making the appraisal.

CERTIFICATE OF APPRAISER - SAMPLE

I hereby certify:

That on _____ date(s), I personally made a field inspection of the property herein appraised and have afforded the owner or a designated representative the opportunity to accompany me on this inspection. I have also personally made a field inspection of the comparable sales relied upon in making said appraisal. The property being appraised and the comparable sales relied upon in making this appraisal were as represented in the appraisal.

That to the best of my knowledge and belief the statements contained in the appraisal herein set forth are true, and the information upon which the opinions expressed therein are based is correct; subject to the limiting conditions therein set forth.

That I understand that such appraisal may be used in connection with the acquisition of property for a project utilizing U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development funds.

That such appraisal has been made in conformity with appropriate laws, regulations, and policies and procedures applicable to appraisal of property for such purposes; and that to the best of my knowledge no portion of the value assigned to such property consists of items which are noncompensable under the established law of said State.

That any decrease or increase in the fair market value of real property prior to the date of valuation caused by the project for which such property is acquired, or by the likelihood that the property would be acquired for such project, other than that due to physical deterioration within the reasonable control of the owner, was disregarded in determining the compensation for the property.

That neither my employment nor my compensation for making this appraisal and report are in any way contingent upon the values reported herein.

That I have no direct or indirect present or contemplated future personal interest in such property or in any benefit from the acquisition of such property appraised.

That I have not revealed the findings and results of such appraisal to anyone other than the proper officials of the acquiring agency or officials of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development and I will not do so until so authorized by said officials, or until I am required to do so by due process of law, or until I am released from this obligation by having publicly testified as to such findings.

That I have not given consideration to, or included in my appraisal, any allowance for relocation assistance benefits.

That my opinion of the fair market value of the property to be acquired as of the _____ day of _____ 20 _____ is $_____ based upon my independent appraisal and the exercise of my professional judgment.

Name _____ Signature _____

Date _____

(Note: Other statements, required by the regulations of an appraisal organization of which the appraiser is a member or by circumstances connected with the appraisal assignment or the preparation of the appraisal, may be inserted where appropriate.)