

Public Participation Plan

I. Applicability and adoption of the citizen participation plan.

A. Encouragement of citizen participation.

Citizens are to be encouraged to participate in the development of the consolidated plan, any substantial amendments to the consolidated plan, and the performance report. These requirements are designed especially to encourage participation by low- and moderate-income persons, particularly those living in slum and blighted areas and in areas where CDBG funds are proposed to be used and by residents of predominantly low- and moderate-income neighborhoods. Appropriate actions will be taken to encourage the participation of all its citizens, including minorities and non-English speaking persons, as well as persons with disabilities. Statewide and regional institutions and other organizations that are involved with or affected by the programs or activities covered by the consolidated plan (including businesses, developers, and community and faith-based organizations) will be involved, or encouraged to participate, in the process of developing and implementing the consolidated plan. Alternative public involvement techniques that encourage a shared vision of change for the community and the review of program performance, e.g., use of focus groups, use of Internet, etc will be explored.

B. Citizen and local government comment on the citizen participation plan and amendments.

A reasonable opportunity to comment on the original citizen participation plan and on substantial amendments to the citizen participation plan will be provided to citizens and units of general local government will be provided, and the citizen participation plan will be made public. The citizen participation plan will be in a format accessible to persons with disabilities, upon request.

II. Development of the consolidated plan.

A. Before the consolidated plan is adopted, the State will make available to citizens, public agencies, and other interested parties information that includes the amount of assistance the State expects to receive and the range of activities that may be undertaken, including the estimated amount that will benefit persons of low- and moderate-income and the plans to minimize displacement of persons and to assist any persons displaced. The state will make this information available on the state public hearing website at least two weeks before the plan is adopted.

B. The State will publish the proposed consolidated plan in a manner that affords citizens, units of general local governments, public agencies, and other interested parties a reasonable opportunity to examine its contents and to submit comments. The state will publish the consolidated plan on its website and provide copies to the state library as well as make it available in other formats upon request. In addition, the State will provide a reasonable number of free copies of the plan to citizens and groups that request it.

C. There will be at least one public hearing on housing and community development needs before the proposed consolidated plan is published for comment.

1. Hearings on housing and community development needs will take place on a region by region basis and will provide at least 7-14 days notice in locally circulated newspapers.

2. The hearings are held regionally for convenience to the potential and actual beneficiaries, and contact information is provided in the announcement so that persons with disabilities may acquire accommodations in accordance with the Americans With Disabilities Act.

3. An interpreter will be provided in public hearings non-English speaking residents can be reasonably expected to participate.

D. There will be a period of 30 days, to receive comments from citizens and units of general local government on the consolidated plan.

E. The State will consider any comments or views of citizens and units of general received in writing, or orally at the public hearings, in preparing the final consolidated plan. A summary of these comments or views, and a summary of any comments or views not accepted and the reasons therefore, shall be attached to the final consolidated plan.

III. Amendments.

A. Criteria for amendment to consolidated plan. A substantial amendment to the consolidated plan will be defined as a significant modification to the scope of work, a change in the method of distribution, or funding.

B. Reasonable notice and an opportunity to comment on substantial amendments will be provided to citizens and units of general local government. All amendments will undergo the same process as is required for the consolidated plan for notice and comment.

C. The State will consider any comments or views of citizens and units of general local government received in writing, or orally at public hearings, if any, in preparing the substantial amendment of the consolidated plan. A summary of these comments or views, and a summary of any comments or views not accepted and the reasons therefore, shall be attached to the substantial amendment of the consolidated plan.

IV. Performance Reports.

A. Citizens will be provided with reasonable notice and an opportunity to comment on performance reports. Notice and comment will be received in the same manner as the consolidated plan for performance reports. There will be a period of at least 15 days, to receive comments from citizens and units of general local government on the

consolidated plan.

B. The state will consider any comments or views of citizens received in writing, or orally at public hearings in preparing the performance report. A summary of these comments or views shall be attached to the performance report.

V. Citizen participation requirements for local governments.

Units of general local government receiving CDBG funds from the State will comply with citizen participation requirements as described in the State CDBG Application Guide.

VI. Availability to the public.

The consolidated plan as adopted, substantial amendments, and the performance report will be available to the public, including the availability of materials in a form accessible to persons with disabilities, upon request. These documents are available on the state website or by request to the state Division of Housing and Community Development.

VII. Access to records.

The state will provide citizens, public agencies, and other interested parties with reasonable and timely access to information and records relating to the state's consolidated plan and the state's use of assistance under the programs covered by this part during the preceding five years.

VII. Complaints.

The citizen participation plan shall describe the
The State will provide a timely, substantive written response to every written citizen complaint, within an established period of time (within 15 working days, where practicable).