

Citizen Participation Plan

I. INTRODUCTION

On behalf of the Santa Barbara County HOME Consortium and the CDBG Urban County, the County of Santa Barbara Housing and Community Development Department (HCD) has designed this community-wide Citizen Participation Plan (CPP) to provide for and encourage citizen participation in the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) and HOME Investment Partnerships programs. This plan is an essential element of the Consortium's/Urban County's present and future community development process and has been developed to comply with the requirements of 24 CFR 91.105.

The primary goal of this Citizen Participation Plan is to provide all residents of the County and its cities with adequate opportunity to participate in the Consolidated Plan process, the development of any significant amendments, and performance review. The parties involved in the process comprise neighborhood and citizen groups, non-profit agencies, community-based organizations (including faith-based organizations), social service agencies, business organizations, and Santa Barbara County Residents, especially low- and moderate- income persons and those living in low-income neighborhoods. The Citizen Participation Plan is prepared to ensure that the views of low- and moderate-income residents and other interested parties are fully considered when assessing housing and community development needs and the distribution of Federal resources through the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) or HOME programs.

II. PUBLIC ACCESS TO INFORMATION

The County of Santa Barbara will maintain a Public Information File of all housing and community development program materials in the County's Housing and Community Development Department, Housing Finance Division. Residents may make written requests to review documents and copies may be made of documents which are five or fewer pages. Records will be maintained for at least five years.

Copies of the Consolidated Plan and Annual Action Plan for both the CDBG Urban County and HOME Consortium will be available at the following locations:

- County of Santa Barbara Housing and Community Development Department, Housing Finance Division, 105 E. Anapamu St. Room 3, Santa Barbara, CA 93101
- City of Buellton Community Development Department, 331 B-Park Street, Buellton, CA 93427
- City of Carpinteria Community Development Department, 5775 Carpinteria Ave., Carpinteria, CA 93013
- City of Lompoc Community Development Department, 100 Civic Center Plaza, Lompoc, CA 93438
- City of Solvang Community Development Department, 411 Second St., Solvang, CA 93464

Copies of the Consolidated Plan and Annual Action Plan for the HOME Consortium will additionally be available at the following locations:

- City of Santa Maria Community Development Department, 110 S. Pine St. #101, Santa Maria, CA 93458
- City of Goleta Redevelopment and Neighborhood Services Department, 130 Cremona Dr. Suite B, Goleta, CA 93117

During the 30-day review periods, the Draft Consolidated Plans and Draft Annual Action Plans for both the HOME Consortium and the CDBG Urban County will additionally be available at the following locations:

- Santa Barbara County Public Library, Main Branch, 40 E. Anapamu St., Santa Barbara, CA 93101
- Santa Barbara County Library, Carpinteria Branch, 5141 Carpinteria Ave., Carpinteria, CA 93013

- Santa Barbara County Library, Eastside Branch, 1102 E. Montecito St., Santa Barbara, CA 93103
- Santa Barbara County Library, Goleta Valley Branch, 500 N. Fairview Ave., Goleta, CA 93117
- Santa Barbara County Library, Montecito Branch, 1469 East Valley Rd., Montecito, CA 93108
- Vandenberg Village Library, 3755 Constellation Rd., Lompoc, CA 93436
- Solvang Branch Library, 1745 Mission Dr., Solvang, CA 93463
- Lompoc Library, 501 E. North Ave., Lompoc, CA 93436
- Buellton Library, 140 W. Highway 246, Buellton, CA 93427
- Santa Maria Library, 420 S. Broadway, Santa Maria, CA 93454

III. PUBLIC NOTICE

An advance public notice shall be published at least 10 days prior to a scheduled public hearing (the hearing will be held on the 11th day). The public notice will announce the date and location of the public hearing. The notice will summarize a list of the proposed needs, objectives and goals, along with the proposed projects and activities for the Plans and Substantial Amendments to the Plans, including the CPP. The notice should clearly state the start and end date of the comment period, if one applies. The content of the notice shall convey to the residents a clear understanding of the event being announced. The notice shall also request that those individuals needing special accommodations for disabilities (e.g., sign language interpreter, hearing devices) contact the County so that such accommodations can be made.

Public notices shall be published as display advertisements in the “Local” section of a newspaper that is generally circulated countywide (e.g. Santa Barbara News-Press). Additionally, for hearings that pertain to a specific region of the County, notices shall be published in the applicable regional newspaper (Santa Maria Times, Lompoc Record, Coastal View News [Carpinteria]). A “Proof of Publication” shall be requested from each newspaper.

If the hearing to which the notice pertains will be held in front of the Board of Supervisors, the Clerk of the Board will publish the legal notice for the department when directed to do so in the Special Instructions section of the Board Letter. The Board Letter direction should specify the following:

- Frequency and date range a notice shall appear (e.g., ten days prior to the hearing)
- Publication title (e.g., Santa Barbara News-Press, Santa Maria Times, etc.)
- Applicable government code
- If the department will fulfill a noticing requirement

The notice shall be attached with the Board Letter to the electronic mail when it is sent to the Clerk of the Board for docketing. Once the Proof of Publication is received, HCD shall provide a copy of it and the notice to the Clerk of the Board for their file.

IV. PUBLIC HEARINGS

Public hearings will be held during all phases of the community development process, as outlined herein, to assess public perceptions of housing and community development needs and to review the HOME Consortium’s/CDBG Urban County’s performance in meeting its goals as stated in the most recent Consolidated Plan. The County shall provide for language translation for non-English speaking residents during public meetings and hearings where 30% or more of non-English speaking residents can be reasonably expected to participate, or upon request made prior to the hearing. Any questions that individuals may have concerning a program shall be answered by HCD staff, and any comments, suggestions, and/or proposals will be received.

- Any sign in sheets circulated at hearings shall be kept, along with agendas, minutes, and proofs of publication, in a public file in the County HCD department.

A. PUBLIC HEARING TIMES AND LOCATIONS

The County will locate and schedule citizen participation meetings so as to be convenient to potential or actual program beneficiaries. To the extent feasible, forums and hearings shall be scheduled after 5:00 p.m. on weekdays to accommodate persons whose employment would prevent them from attending during the day.

Public hearings shall be held in either a central location in the County, or two meetings shall be held; one in North County and another in South County. The County shall provide accommodation for persons with disabilities by holding meetings and hearings in accessible facilities and by providing additional accommodations as requested. For meetings where a significant amount (30% or more) of non-English speaking residents are reasonably expected to participate, language translation will be provided.

V. PLAN DEVELOPMENT

Every year the Santa Barbara County HCD Department shall prepare a calendar containing a schedule for the preparation of the Plans. This schedule shall contain tentative dates for the preparation of the Plans, along with the dates for publication of public notices, public hearings and comment start and end periods.

A. CONSOLIDATED PLAN

1. GENERAL INFORMATION

The Consolidated Plan is a comprehensive document providing a detailed description of the housing and community development needs in the County of Santa Barbara and its member cities. The needs are prioritized and a strategy developed with goals and activities for addressing the needs. This Plan is submitted to HUD at least once every five years.

2. THE PROCESS

- a. Public forums (i.e., hearings) shall be held before publication of the Consolidated Plan for comment. The hearings will be held to review the HOME Consortium's/CDBG Urban County's priorities with regard to funding housing and community development projects. The public will receive information on timing and availability of funding, eligible projects, and the amount of funds that will be available to assist low and very low-income households. These hearings shall be publicly noticed in accordance with Section III of this CPP.
- b. Hard copies of the DRAFT Plans shall be delivered to CDBG Urban County Member Cities or HOME Consortium Member Cities, the County Housing Authority, and all Public Libraries within the County for public review during the 30-day review period. Free copies of the Plans will be provided to those who request it.
- c. A public notice shall be published which includes an outline of the Plan and initiates a 30-day public comment period on the proposed document. A summary of public comments and any response to those comments, whether incorporated into the plan or not, will be published in the final plan.
- d. A public hearing on the departmental agenda of the Board of Supervisors on housing and community development priority setting shall be held before submittal of the final Plan to HUD.

B. ANNUAL ACTION PLAN

1. GENERAL INFORMATION

The Annual Action Plan will implement the objectives, goals and strategies identified in the Consolidated Plan. The Action Plan shall outline the amount and source of funding available, the activities for each objective, and goal for each of these activities for the year.

2. THE PROCESS

- a. The County shall publish a notice of funding availability (NOFA) before the adoption of the Annual Action Plan and the start of the County's fiscal year. The notice shall include the amount of funds available and eligible uses of such funds.
- b. Public forums (hearings) shall be conducted before the publication of the Action Plan to solicit input specific to the needs and priorities of area residents. These hearings should be published in accordance with Section III of this CPP.
- c. A public notice shall be published which includes an outline of the Plan and initiates a 30-day public comment period on the proposed document. A summary of public comments and any response to those comments, whether incorporated into the plan or not, will be published in the final plan.
- d. A public hearing on the administrative agenda of the Board of Supervisors on housing and community development priority setting shall be held before submittal of the final Plan to HUD.

C. THE CONSOLIDATED ANNUAL PERFORMANCE AND EVALUATION REPORT (CAPER)

1. GENERAL INFORMATION

At the end of each year, on behalf of the HOME Consortium/CDBG Urban County, the County of Santa Barbara must submit to HUD its Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Report (CAPER) within 90 days of the close of the program year. The CAPER provides program and financial performance data, as well as provides a narrative on progress towards meeting the goals set forth in the Consolidated Plan and Annual Action Plan, comparing actual accomplishments to planned actions, and assessing the HOME Consortium's/CDBG Urban County's overall performance.

2. THE PROCESS

The County shall publish a notice announcing the availability of the CAPER for public review and comment. The comment period shall extend for a minimum of 15 days. Any and all comments received will be considered in the preparation of the CAPER. A summary of all comments shall be duly noted and attached to the CAPER when it is submitted to HUD.

*NOTE: Presentation of the CAPER to the Board of Supervisors is not required before submittal to HUD

VI. PLAN AMENDMENTS

A. GENERAL INFORMATION

The Consolidated Plan and Annual Action Plan may be amended to add or delete action items or objectives throughout each of their terms. If a change meets the definition of "Substantial Change", then the plans must be amended through the citizen participation process.

- HUD defines a Substantial Change to the Consolidated Plan as:
 - The deletion or addition of an objective, program or project, or any changes to the Priority Needs Summary Table.
- HUD defines a Substantial Change to the Annual Action Plan as:
 - Addition of a new project or activity not described in the Annual Action Plan
 - Elimination of an existing activity described in the Annual Action Plan
 - Change in the funding amount for a project or activity by 50% or more
 - Change in the purpose or scope of a project or an activity to the extent that it would be considered a new project or an activity
 - Change in the location of the project or activity
 - A change in more than 50% of the original beneficiaries

Substantial amendments are subject to the citizen participation process in accordance with this Citizen Participation Plan. All amendment(s) must be available to the public for comment through the following process.

B. THE PROCESS

1. Presentation of a substantial amendment(s) made to either the Consolidated Plan or the Annual Action Plans require advance notice to the public. A summary of the amendment(s) will be published in a notice to solicit comments within a period of 30 days before the amendment is implemented. The publication should clearly state the start and end date for the comment period, and should follow the procedures outlined in Section III of this CPP.
2. Any and all comments or views of citizens received in writing or orally at public hearings will be considered in preparing the amendment to the Plan. A summary of these comments, and a summary of any comments not accepted and reasons therefor, shall be attached to the amendment of the plan.
3. A public hearing to approve the amendments will be held before the Board of Supervisors. The date of this hearing must be announced in a public notice.
4. The amendment(s) will then be submitted to the Los Angeles HUD field office, and copies will be made available to the public at locations listed in Section II of this plan.

VII. ANTI-DISPLACEMENT POLICY

The federal regulations require that jurisdictions set forth their plans to minimize displacement of persons, even if no displacement is expected to occur, and state how this information is available.

The Santa Barbara County HOME Consortium and CDBG Urban County shall minimize displacement by following the approved “Residential Anti-Displacement and Relocation Assistance Plan”. This document is available for public review at the office of the Housing and Community Development Department, Housing Finance Division.

VIII. TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

The County of Santa Barbara shall provide technical assistance to groups representing low-income persons that request such assistance in developing proposals for funding received through the CDBG or HOME programs. Technical assistance will be provided through informational workshops, informational memoranda, proposed activity questionnaires during the application activity selection process, and staff availability on an on-going basis to respond to questions or meet with interested groups.

IX. COMPLAINTS

Residents are encouraged to provide input to the County of Santa Barbara regarding the Consolidated Plan process, the development of any significant amendments, and performance review. A substantive written response will be provided to written inquiries, complaints and grievances within 15 working days from the date of receipt, when practicable. Those making complaints will be encouraged to propose alternatives and solutions for consideration in addressing the issue(s) brought forth.