

ATTACHMENT E

**CITIZEN PARTICIPATION PLAN**

*(Adopted April 25, 1995)*

The purpose of this County of Santa Barbara (the County) Citizen Participation Plan is to encourage participation by County residents, especially low- and moderate-income persons and those living in low-income neighborhoods, in the Consolidated Plan process, the development of any significant amendments, performance review. 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. This Citizen Participation Plan has been written to conform to the requirements of 24 CFR 91.105. In an effort to maintain maximum citizen participation, the County shall:

1. Publish this Citizen Participation for public review for a period of 30 days before initial adoption and for, at least, 15 days before the adoption of any significant amendments.
2. Provide residents with reasonable and timely access to local meetings, information, and records relating to the county's proposed use of CDBG or HOME funds, as required by Federal program regulations. The County will locate and schedule citizen participation meetings so as to be convenient to potential or actual program beneficiaries;
3. Publish all notices listed in this plan in the Santa Barbara News Press and in the Santa Maria Times (for forums held in North County). At a minimum, notice of forums, hearings, and funding availability will be published as display advertisements in the "Local" sections of the newspaper;
4. At a minimum, publish notices of public announcing the time, date, and location of meetings, forums or hearings at least 10 days prior to the event. That announcement shall include the topic of the meeting and 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. To the extent feasible, forums and hearings will be scheduled after 5:00 p.m. on weekdays to accommodate persons whose employment would prevent them from attending during the day. Special notice will also be provided to the County Public Housing Authority;
5. Provide accommodation for persons with disabilities by holding meetings and hearings in accessible locations and by providing additional accommodations as requested;
6. Publish a notice of funding availability before adoption of the Consolidated Plan and the start of the County's program year. The notice shall include the amount of funds available and eligible uses of such funds.

7. Provide for language translation for non-English speaking residents during public meetings and hearings where 20% or more of non-English speaking residents can reasonably be expected to participate;
8. Maintain a Public Information File of all housing and community development program materials in the County's Treasurer – Tax Collector Office, Housing Finance and Development Division. Citizens may make written requests to review documents and copies may be made of documents which are 5 or fewer pages. Records will be maintained for, at least five years;
9. Hold public forums (i.e., hearings) before publication of the Consolidated Plan for comment. The hearings, to be held in South and North County locations, will be held to review the County's priorities with regard to funding housing and community development projects. The public will receive information on the amount of money to be available, eligible projects, and the amount of funds available to assist low- and moderate-income households. A public hearing will also be held in front of the Board of Supervisors on housing and community development priority setting before submission of the final Consolidated Plan.
10. Hold public forums (i.e., hearings) to assess public perceptions of housing and community development needs and to review the County's performance meeting its goals as stated in the most-recent Consolidated Plan. These forums shall be held after the end of the County's fiscal year;
11. Publish a public notice which includes an outline of the Consolidated Plan and initiates a 30-day public comment period on the proposed document. Responses to public comment will be included in the final Consolidated Plan. Copies of the Consolidated Plan will be available at the Housing Finance and Development Office and distributed to libraries in various locations throughout the County to be available for public review (locations will be specified in the public notice). Free copies of the Consolidated Plan will be provided to citizens and groups who request it. A summary of public comments and any response to those comments not incorporated in the final document will be published in the final Consolidated Plan;
12. Solicit public comment through publication of amendment and hearings when feasible when an amendment is proposed to be made to the Consolidated Plan. The public shall have 30 days to comment on any significant amendment. An amendment will be made to the plan under the following criteria: proposed changes in the formula for allocation of funds, when CDBG funds are proposed to be used on a different type of eligible activity than originally designated, proposed changes in County-wide priority needs, when additional sources of Federal resources (e.g., homeless funds) are made available to the County effectively requiring the creation of a new program, and an amendment will be required when decisions would affect the expenditure of 20% or more of the funds covered by the Consolidated Plan (including program scope, distribution of funds, type of project, region of expenditure, beneficiaries, etc.). Comments received and any response to those comments not incorporated in the final amendment will be attached to the

Consolidated Plan amendment submitted to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD);

13. Shall publish a notice announcing the availability of the Annual Performance Report for review and comment. The comment period shall extend for, at least, 15 days. A summary of comments shall be attached to the Annual Performance Report when it is submitted to HUD.
14. Provide technical assistance to groups representing low-income persons that request such assistance in developing proposals for funding received through CDBG or HOME funding. 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; and
15. Provide timely written answer to written inquiries, complaints, and grievances – within 15 working days where practicable.
16. Shall minimize displacement by following an approved “Residential Anti-Displacement and Relocation Assistance Plan.”

This Citizen Participation Plan relates to the Citizen Participation Plans of the member cities in the HOME Consortium. For example, public hearings regarding affordable housing needs and resources will be held in both Lompoc and Santa Maria. Public in-put from those hearings will be used by the County in preparation of our needs assessment. However, hearings held by member cities will not substitute for County-held hearings. Citizen Participation Plans for member cities are incorporated by reference.