

II. Citizen Participation Plan

A. Introduction:

The City of Portland has had an adopted Citizen Participation Plan since the inception of the Community Development Block Grant Program in 1975. The original plan is in compliance with Section 104(a)(3) of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974, and provides the basis for this document, the City's revised Citizen Participation Plan. The revised plan is required and is in compliance with federal regulations for the Consolidation of Community Planning and Development Programs of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, 24 CFR Part 91.

The purpose of the Citizen Participation Plan is to ensure that the City has undertaken an effective process that encourages input and participation from all citizens, non-profit organizations, and other interested parties. The Citizen Participation Plan must also ensure that they have access to meetings, access to information, and public hearings on the plan. Technical assistance must also be provided, upon request, to organizations that would like to develop proposals for funding under the City's Housing and Community Development Program.

The Citizen Participation Plan must encourage the participation and input of all Portland residents, especially low income persons living in neighborhoods that are eligible and targeted for activities funded by the Community Development Block Grant and other HUD Programs. Residents of the Portland Housing Authority developments are also encouraged to commit and become involved in the process of developing the City's Consolidated Housing and Community Development Plan, as well as minorities, non-English speaking persons and persons with disabilities.

Citizens are also encouraged to participate in any proposed amendments to the Consolidated Plan, as well as the annual performance report to be submitted to HUD.

B. Participation:

In order to encourage participation, involvement and input from a broad range of Portland citizens, particularly low income persons, public housing residents, minorities and persons with disabilities, the City will implement the following six elements of its Citizen Participation Plan.

1. City Manager's Policy Advisory Committee (CMPAC):

CMPAC is an ongoing Committee with broad representation from neighborhood organizations, to United Way of Greater Portland, the Portland Housing Authority/staff and residents, the Chamber of Commerce, senior citizens, persons with disabilities, the homeless, and the NAACP. CMPAC's responsibilities are to advise the City Manager as to the social, economic and neighborhood revitalization needs, and their relative priorities, within the community, to develop strategies to address those needs, and to recommend annual activities that implement the strategies, to be funded under the Housing and Community Development Program. CMPAC also advises the City Manager as to the program's performance.

The by-laws and membership of the City's Manager's Policy Advisory Committee as of January 1995 are available in the Community Development Office.

2. Consolidated Housing and Community Development Mailing List:

The City's Community Development Division maintains a consolidated mailing list that includes a wide range of social service agencies, neighborhood associations, civic organizations, individual and other interested parties. The mailing list is used to inform the community, in particular stakeholders in the Consolidated Housing and Community Development Plan, of general time frames, meetings, anticipated funding, availability of draft reports and the procedures the City will follow in developing the plan. A copy of the 1995 Consolidated Housing and Community Development mailing list is attached in Appendix I.

3. Housing and Community Development Brochure:

Each year the City will produce and mail an informational brochure, regarding the Housing and Community Development Program, to each household in the City. At a minimum, the informational brochure will announce the schedule and location of the annual neighborhood meetings, summarize key economic, housing and community development activities accomplished during the preceding year, identify key City officials, and encourages participation and input into the development of Consolidated Housing and Community Development Plan. The brochure may also include a citizen survey to solicit direct input from the public.

4. Neighborhood Meetings:

Each year the City will hold a series of seven neighborhood meetings in order to inform the public of the Housing and Community Development Program, the anticipated funding, and to obtain direct input from the public in regard to the performance of specific activities and the need and location of future activities. The City will also use these meetings to inform the public of the process of developing the Consolidated Plan.

A neighborhood meeting will be held in each of the City's five City Council Districts, as well as one on Peaks Island, and one in Council Chambers for the combined island neighborhoods. The meetings will be chaired by the Councilor from that district, City administrative staff will be available for technical assistance.

In addition to the schedule announced in the informational brochure, advertisements stating the time and location for each meeting will be placed in the local newspaper, and special notices will be distributed by the elementary schools in each neighborhood.

5. Special Solicitation:

The City will request information from housing and social service organizations, that provide services in Portland, for inclusion in the Consolidated Housing and Community Development Plan. The information requested will be in the areas of current needs in the community, future trends, strategies for addressing needs and the performance of the City's recent activities.

6. Adjacent Jurisdictions:

In order to inform towns and cities adjacent to Portland of the purpose and process of developing the Consolidated Housing and Community Development Plan, at a minimum the City will publish information and articles in the monthly newsletter of the Greater Portland Council of Governments, as needed. These jurisdictions also have access to advertisements placed in the Portland Press Herald. The City of Portland will seek comments from adjacent jurisdictions in regard to how the proposed activities may impact on their communities.

C. Access to Information:

Prior to the adoption of the Consolidated Housing and Community Development Plan, the City will make available to citizens, public agencies, and other interested parties, information regarding the purpose and process for developing the plan, the anticipated funding to be received, and the range of activities that are eligible and planned to be undertaken.

The City will use many of the same mechanisms described in the previous section to provide access to this information, including, the network created by the City Manager's Policy Advisory Committee, the consolidated mailing list, the informational brochure and the neighborhood meetings.

Beyond the mechanisms previously described, the City will also take the following steps to provide access to information.

1. Publish a summary of the proposed Consolidated Plan in the Portland Press Herald, prior to the 30 day public comment period.
2. Make the proposed Consolidated Plan available for review by the public at a number of locations, including the reference room of the Portland Public Library, in the file titled "City of Portland Documents:", and at City Hall, in the Community Development Office, Room 313.
3. Conduct a 30 day public comment period to receive comments from citizens, public organizations, other interested parties and stakeholders. The 30 day comment period will be advertised in a legal notice placed in the Portland Press Herald, prior to its commencement.
4. Citizens, public agencies and other interested parties will also have access to records, on a timely basis, relating to the City's Consolidated Plan and the use of funding from the previous five years. These records are also available at the Community Development Office, Portland City Hall, 389 Congress Street, Room 313.

D. Public Hearings:

In addition to the seven neighborhood public, (previously described) which are held prior to when the proposed Consolidated Plan is published for comment, the City will hold a minimum of two public hearings per year to obtain input from citizens in regard to housing and community development needs, development of proposed activities and to review program performance.

The public hearings will be held prior to the City Council's adoption of the Consolidated Plan and vote on its annual budget plan. The City will notify the general public of the time and dates of the hearing, by placing a legal advertisement in the Portland Press Herald at least 15 days prior to the date of the hearing. The City will notify public agencies, organizations and other stakeholders through a special mailing, a minimum of 10 days prior to the hearing.

The public hearings will be held at Portland City Hall, in City Council Chambers in the early evenings between 4:00 p.m. and 9:00 p.m.

E. Technical Assistance:

The City's Community Development Division offers technical assistance, upon request, to all organizations and agencies, serving low income neighborhoods and persons, for the purpose of developing proposals to request funding under its Housing and Community Development programs and activities. The technical assistance may take the form of information regarding the time frame for applications, eligibility of specific activities, and completion of the application forms including the budget pages. This technical assistance is, available upon request, from the staff of the Community Development Division, City Hall, 389 Congress Street, Room 313, 874-8300 ext. 8730.

F. Comments and Complaints:

The City will consider all comments, whether received in writing or orally, in the development of the Consolidated Plan and performance report. A summary of the comments or views, both used and unused in the preparation of the document, and the reason, will be attached to the final Consolidated Plan, amendment of the plan, or performance report.

The City will respond to all complaints regarding the Consolidated plan, or activities implemented under the plan, in writing within 15 working days of receiving them, where feasible. Responses will be substantive, where appropriate. When complaints remain unsatisfied, the staff will bring the complaint to the City Manager for review and resolution. The City Manager may refer the complaint to the City Council Housing Committee, if appropriate, for review and resolution.

G. Amendments to the Consolidated Housing and Community Development Plan

Due to changes in local needs, during the program year, amendments and revisions to the Consolidated Plan may be necessary. Some of them may be substantial amendments that significantly alter the priorities of the 5-year Strategy and the activities within the annual plan. Most will be minor in nature, requiring only insignificant shifting of funds from one account to another, in order to properly complete an activity. This may include the reprogramming of contingency or surplus funding. The following criteria and procedures will govern how the City implements substantial amendments and funding revisions.

1. Substantial Amendments:

Substantial amendments are defined as follows:

- The City proposes to use more than 25% of its fiscal year allocation, from any one HUD Program, to undertake one or more new activities.
- The City proposes to alter the location or beneficiaries of previously approved activities whose cost exceeds 25 percent of the fiscal year allocation for any one HUD Program.
- The City proposes to alter the 5-year strategy within the Consolidated Plan by adding a new priority, previously not considered, in order to undertake new activities that fiscal year.

- Substantial amendments require a written submission to HUD for approval, prior to implementation. Prior to the submission to HUD, the following steps will be completed.
 - a. The City Manager's Policy Advisory Committee will review and comment on the proposed change to the City Manager.
 - b. A legal notice will be placed in the Portland Press Herald, announcing the proposed change, a minimum of 15 working days prior to City Council Consideration.
 - c. The City Council will hold a public hearing on the proposed changes prior to its review and approval.

2. Funding Revisions:

Funding revisions are defined as minor programmatic or budgeting changes, necessary to fund new activities or secure adequate funding to complete approved activities. Funding revisions will be addressed in the following ways:

- a. Any new activities proposed to be funded with either reprogrammed contingency funds or with monies from another account will require City Council approval, preceded by a public hearing. The City Manager's Policy Advisory Committee will review and recommend action to the City Manager prior to City Council action.
- b. Any fund transfer from one activity to another that increases the under funded activity in excess of 25% of the original allocation will require City Council approval, preceded by a public hearing.
- c. Any fund transfers from one approved activity to another (including contingency funds), on an overrun-underrun basis, will be approved on an administrative basis.

H. Adoption of the Citizen Participation Plan

The Citizen Participation Plan will be adopted as part of the City's Consolidated Housing and Community Development Plan, thereby going through the same process of local review and public comment, ending with a 30 day public comment period and City Council approval.

Amendments and changes to the Citizen Participation Plan will be addressed in the annual update of the Consolidated Housing and Community Development Plan.