



# **CITY OF SLIDELL**

## **CITIZEN PARTICIPATION PLAN**

Prepared for Submission to HUD  
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## **CITY OF SLIDELL CITIZEN PARTICIPATION PLAN**

### **INTRODUCTION**

The City of Slidell has prepared this Citizen Participation Plan to provide for and encourage citizen participation in the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program and other HUD Community Planning and Development (CPD) programs. This Plan is an essential element of the City's present and future community development process and has been developed to comply with the regulations and requirements in compliance with 24 CFR 91.105. The purpose of this Citizen Participation Plan is to provide for a viable means by which residents of the City of Slidell, public agencies, and other interested parties can actively participate in the development of documents related to the consolidated planning process including but not limited to the following documents:

- The Consolidated Plan
- The Annual Action Plan
- Equity Plan
- Amendments to the Consolidated Plan, Annual Action Plan, Equity Plan and Citizen Participation Plan
- The Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Report (CAPER)

The Citizen Participation Plan relates to the planning, implementation, assessment and expenditure of funds provided to the City of Slidell by the HUD Office of Community Planning and Development. CPD entitlement funds received by the City consist of the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) and other grants, as may be added by law. In the event that other federal documents stipulate citizen participation requirements, procedures will be followed in accordance with either the federal statute or regulations as set forth for the program. This Plan supersedes all other Citizen Participation Plans.

### **PURPOSE**

The purpose of the Citizen Participation Plan is to identify the process, procedures, and policies to be followed by the City of Slidell concerning the involvement of the citizens in its CPD Programs. It provides mechanisms to ensure citizen participation in the consolidated planning process of the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program and other HUD community development programs by low- and moderate-income persons, minorities, special needs populations and residents where program funds are utilized. The City of Slidell will make every effort to involve citizens in all phases of the development, implementation and assessment of community development programs including, but not limited to, the following phases:

- Identification and assessment of housing and community development needs determination of CDBG projects and documentation; and the development of CDBG applications
- Modifications to approved CDBG projects
- Assessment of CDBG program performance

## **CITIZEN PARTICIPATION**

The Citizen Participation Plan provides a citizen participation structure that adheres to provisions of the Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Code of Final Regulations for the Consolidated Plan (24 CFR Part 91, 105 and subsequent revisions). All residents, particularly low and moderate-income persons, minorities, special needs populations, non-English speaking persons and residents where program funds are utilized are encouraged to submit comments, views, and proposals concerning the City's Community Development Block Grant Program and other CPD programs. The City also encourages local and regional public agencies, local and regional non-profits organizations, continuums-of-care, the business community, faith based and community organizations, public housing residents, and other interested parties to participate.

## **ACCESS TO INFORMATION**

Low and moderate- income residents where program funds are utilized and other interested parties will have the opportunity to receive information, review, and submit comments on any proposed submission concerning the CPD program documents. This includes, but is not limited to the following:

- Consolidated Plan
- Annual Action Plan
- Equity Plan
- Citizen Participation Plan
- Amendments

## **PUBLISHING AND NOTICES**

The City shall provide procedures to be followed for publishing public notices so that affected citizens have sufficient opportunity to review and provide comments.

### Scheduling and Providing Notices of Public Hearings:

Adequate notice shall be given for all public hearings. The public hearings shall be scheduled to ensure and encourage public participation.

### Publishing the Plans:

1. The City of Slidell shall publish in the Official Journal, a minimum of seven (7) days prior to the each public hearing, a legal notice stipulating the location, time, purpose of the public hearing and location of where copies of the entire document may be examined. All notices will be posted at City Hall, 250 Bouscaren Street, Slidell, LA.
2. The City of Slidell shall publish a summary of the Annual Action Plan, Consolidated Plan, Equity Plan, and Substantial Amendments in the Official Journal and on the City of Slidell website and provide copies for review in the Planning Department. Copies may be made available at libraries, government offices and public places. The length of time provided for public review and comment shall be at least thirty (30) days prior to submission of the document to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development or as determined by law.
3. The City of Slidell shall make the Consolidated Annual Performance Report (CAPER) available for review and comment by publishing a summary in the Official Journal, on the City of Slidell website, *myslidell.com*. Copies may be made available at libraries, government offices and public places. The length of time provided for public review and comment shall be at least fifteen (15) days prior to submission to HUD.

### **PUBLIC HEARINGS**

Citizen participation in the community development process will be conducted to actively involve the views and proposals of all citizens, especially low- and moderate income persons and residents where CDBG activities are proposed. The City shall provide for procedures to be followed to ensure reasonable and timely access to meetings.

1. For the Consolidated Plan, Annual Action Plan, conduct at least two (2) public hearings per program year. At least one (1) public hearing will be held during the development of the plan, prior to publication for comment. Together, these public hearings must address housing and community development needs, proposed projects or activities, amount of CDBG funds available, budget, and a review of program performance. Additional hearings may be held, if deemed necessary.
2.
  - a. Provide for a period of not less than thirty (30) days, prior to the submission to consider the views of citizens, public agencies, and other interested parties in prior to submission. The City will respond to all written comments within fifteen (15) working days of receipt. Comments will be included in submission of the requisite plan. Oral comments will be addressed at public hearings.

3. For the initial Equity Plan, citizen participation requirements will be followed in accordance with either the statute or regulations as determined by HUD. For, subsequent Equity Plans, conduct at least two (2) public hearings prior to submission to HUD. At least one (1) public hearing will be held during the development of the plan, prior to publication for comment. Together, these public hearings must address a meaningful evaluation of patterns of segregation, access to opportunity and community assets of the underserved community, evaluation of fair housing strategies and actions for furthering fair housing. Additional hearings may be held, if deemed necessary.
4.
  - a. Provide for a period of not less than thirty (30) days, prior to the submission to consider the views of citizens, public agencies, and other interested parties in prior to submission. The City will respond to all written comments within fifteen (15) working days of receipt. Written and oral comments will be included in submission of the requisite plan. Oral comments will be addressed at public hearings.
5. For Substantial Amendments to the Consolidated Plan, Annual Action Plan, Equity Plan or Citizen Participation Plan conduct at least one public hearing to provide an opportunity for review and comment from citizens, public agencies, and other interested parties. Additional hearings may be held, if deemed necessary.
  - a. Provide for a period of not less than thirty (30) days, prior to the submission to consider the views of citizens, public agencies, and other interested parties in prior to submission. The City will respond to all written comments within fifteen (15) working days of receipt. Comments will be included in submission of the requisite plan. Written and oral comments will be addressed at public hearings.
6. Citizens, particularly those persons of low and moderate- income and residents where program funds shall be utilized, shall be encouraged to participate. Through the public notice, citizens shall be made aware as to where they may submit their views and comments should they be unable to attend the public hearing.
7. The City shall accommodate the needs of citizens with limited English proficiency when a significant number of non-English speaking residents can be reasonably expected to be in attendance or when notified 72 hours prior to the hearing that accommodations are needed.
8. Reasonable accommodations shall be made to meet the needs of any person with a disability who notifies the City of Slidell of intentions to participate in the public hearings.

The City shall attempt to provide reasonable accommodations whenever the Citizen Participation contact person is notified at least 72 hours before the hearing that one or more persons with hearing, vision, mobility, or developmental disabilities will be in attendance.

9. Minutes of all public hearings and an attendance roster shall be kept.

## **AMENDMENTS**

The City of Slidell shall involve citizen participation in substantial amendments to the Consolidated Plan and Annual Action Plan.

A Substantial Amendment to the Consolidated Plan and Annual Action Plan shall include but may not be limited to of the following:

1. Change to the City's activities in the Consolidated Plan or Annual Action Plan, including removal of, or adding new projects or activities or change in location of activities;
2. Revisions of equal to or greater than 50% of the annual CDBG allocation;
3. Change in beneficiaries identified in the Consolidated Plan or Annual Action Plan;

Substantial Amendments to the Equity Plan:

- The City shall periodically review and discuss the effectiveness of the Equity Plan which may result in modifications to the Plan. An amendment is defined as a change in circumstances or factors identified in the Equity Plan that may affect the effectiveness of the plan.

Substantial Amendments to the Citizen Participation Plan:

- The City shall periodically review and discuss the effectiveness of the Citizen Participation Plan which may result in modifications to the Plan. An amendment is defined as a change in circumstances or factors identified in the plan that may affect citizen participation in the community development process.

Minor Amendments to the Consolidated Plan, Annual Action Plan, Equity Plan and Citizen Participation Plan:

- Minor amendments are those amendments that do not meet the definition of a

substantial amendment. Only substantial amendments require public notice and public hearing.

### **TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE**

Technical assistance is intended to increase citizen participation in the community development decision-making process and to ensure that such participation is meaningful. Technical assistance shall also be utilized to foster public understanding of CDBG program requirements. Technical assistance shall be provided upon request and may include, but not be limited to:

- interpreting the CDBG program and its rules, regulations, procedures, and/or requirements
- providing information and/or materials concerning the CDBG program
- assisting low and moderate income citizens, and residents to identify their needs, and to develop activities and proposals for projects that, when implemented, will resolve those needs

When requested, the City of Slidell, through its Planning Department or other appropriate department, shall provide technical assistance to facilitate citizen participation. The level and type of technical assistance shall be determined by the Planning Director and based upon the specific needs of the individual or group.

### **ANTI-DISPLACEMENT**

It is the policy of the City of Slidell to discourage displacement in community development activities. In cases where displacement occurs, the City will follow the requirements of Uniform Relocation Act. The level and type of displacement assistance shall be determined by the Planning Director and consistent with the requirements of the Uniform Relocation Act.

### **COMPLAINTS**

1. All written citizen complaints which identify deficiencies with merit, shall upon careful and prompt consideration be will be handled according to the following procedures.
2. Questions and comments should be directed to CDBG, c/o Planning Department, P. O. Box 828, Slidell, Louisiana 70459, by calling 985-646-4320 or by emailing [cdbg@cityofslidell.org](mailto:cdbg@cityofslidell.org). Individuals who wish to object to any aspect of the Consolidated Plan, Annual Action Plan, Citizen Participation Plan, CAPER, and/or any other documents, thereto may file an official written complaint to the City Planning Department of the City of Slidell.



3. Within three (3) business days of the date on which the complaint was received by the Slidell Planning Department, the Planning Director shall forward the complaint to the Mayor.
4. Within (15) fifteen business days, the City shall forward a response to the complainant.
5. A copy of the written complaint and response shall be forwarded to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, 500 Poydras Street, New Orleans, Louisiana 70130.
6. Individuals who wish to object to any aspect of the Equity Plan may forward their complaints directly to the Department of Housing and Urban Development, 500 Poydras Street, New Orleans, Louisiana 70130.

#### **DISASTER RESPONSE AND EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS.**

In the event that other federal special programs are awarded to the City of Slidell or an emergency declaration is made that affects the administration of existing federal programs that are authorized under the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974, as amended, citizen participation requirements will be followed in accordance with either the statute or regulations as determined by HUD.

In the event of an emergency, declaration existing funding may be re-allocated or new funding may be allocated by HUD. To expedite and streamline the allocation process and to reduce delays in accessing grant funds, the citizen participation requirement will be followed for substantial amendments per HUD notices, waivers, award letters or other HUD communication to the consolidated plan and/or annual action plan(s) or other documents, thereto. When necessary, the requirement to hold in-person public hearings will be suspended to allow for virtual public hearings. Reasonable notice and opportunity for public hearings and comment will be provided.

## DEFINITIONS

**Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing:** Taking meaningful actions to combating discrimination, patterns of segregation, eliminating housing inequities and community assets and fostering communities free from barriers that restrict access to opportunity based on protected characteristics.

**Affordable Housing:** Housing that is affordable to low and moderate- income households and has sufficient number of bedrooms to meet the needs of various sizes of families.

**Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing:** Analysis described in the Fair Housing Planning Guide.

**Annual Action Plan:** This document updates the Consolidated Plan on an annual basis and allocates one (1) year's funding (entitlement and program income) to specific projects and activities for the CDBG programs.

**CAPER (Consolidated Annual Performance Evaluation Report):** This document reports on the progress made in carrying out the Consolidated Plan and Annual Action Plans. The City of Slidell prepares the report annually in accordance with 24 CFR Part 91.105.

**CDBG (Community Development Block Grant Program):** Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) grant which provides for a variety of community development programs that benefit low- and moderate-income persons.

**Citizen Participation Plan:** The Citizen Participation Plan establishes policies and procedures for citizen participation in the development of the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program's goals and priorities. It provides an opportunity for community participation to identify needs and to allocate CDBG funds.

**Consolidated Plan:** The document that is submitted to HUD and serves as the planning document for the jurisdiction and application for CDBG funding. The document is developed in accordance with 24 CFR Part 91 and sets forth the priorities/strategies of the programs for a five-year period.

**Equity Plan:** The plan prepared to advance local equity in housing, community development programs, opportunity and community assets.

**Fair Housing:** Availability and opportunity to live in well-resourced areas without discrimination and other barriers related to race, color, religion, sex (including sexual orientation

or gender identity and non-conformance with gender stereotypes), familial status, national origin or disability.

**Low to Moderate-Income Persons:** An individual from a household with a total income that does not exceed eighty percent (80%) of the median household income for the area adjusted for family size. HUD calculates and publishes the income limits each year.

**Program Year:** The twelve (12) month period in which HUD funds are to be spent by the County for eligible activities; usually beginning July 1 and ending June 30.

**Protected Characteristics:** Characteristics based on race, color, religion, sex (including sexual orientation or gender identity and non-conformance with gender stereotypes), familial status, national origin or disability

**Protected Class:** A group of persons who have same protected characteristics.

**Public Hearing:** A formal opportunity for a governing body or other entity to receive public opinion on subjects that may require action. Notices of public hearings are advertised through various forms of media.

**Subrecipient:** A public or private nonprofit agency, authority or organization, or a for-profit entity or local governments receiving CDBG funds from the County or another subrecipient to undertake activities eligible for assistance. The term does not include contractors providing supplies, equipment, construction or services subject to the procurement requirements in 2 CFR Part 200, as applicable.

**Substantial Amendment:** A substantial amendment is a change to the jurisdiction's planned or actual activities as published in the Consolidated Plan or Annual Action Plan. The City has established and published in the Citizen Participation Plan thresholds to define what constitutes a Substantial Amendment.

**Underserved communities:** Groups or classes of individuals who are protected classes and have not received equitable treatment or community related opportunity.

**Well Sourced Areas:** Areas that have high quality and well maintained community assets.

