

CITY OF FORT LAUDERDALE

Citizen Participation Plan

2010 - 2011

The following information describes the citizen's participation process adopted by the City of Fort Lauderdale on March 7, 1995 for the development of its Consolidated Plan. This Citizens Participation Plan outlines steps to be taken to encourage citizens to participate in the development of the Consolidated Plan, any Substantial Amendments to the Consolidated Plan and the Consolidated Annual Performance Report (CAPER):

Public Meetings and Public Hearings

At least two public meetings/hearings are held: the public meeting/hearing is held to review and receive comments on community development and housing needs, the amount of assistance the City expects to receive and the range of activities that may be undertaken; the public hearing is held to review and receive comments on the draft performance report and to present any HUD comments on the City's programs to our City Commission. Additional public meetings and/or hearings may be held if necessary to receive comments on proposed substantial changes to previously approved projects or for other citizen participation purposes. Public hearings are held in the City Commission Chambers or 8th floor conference room in the evenings to encourage participation. City Hall is centrally located, and is particularly convenient for residents of neighborhood areas most likely to benefit from programs and services funded by federal and state dollars, and is accessible to the handicapped. From time to time public meetings/hearings may be convened in similar facilities located in the affected neighborhoods. Those public meetings are typically held at the Mizell Center, which is located in the center of the Northwest Redevelopment Community and is home to the City's Housing and Community Development Division.

The City of Fort Lauderdale administers a year-round process, which encourages citizens to participate in the planning, implementation, and evaluation of its AAP. The Community Services Advisory Board (CSB) serves as a community wide citizen advisory body to the City Commission. It is composed of up to sixteen members appointed by the City Commission, and representative of residents from identified geographical sections as well as the diverse cultural, socio-economic, and professional sectors characteristic of the City. They regularly meet on the second Monday of each month (except August) at the Fort Lauderdale City Hall located at 100 North Andrews Avenue. Public notice of these meetings is given in accordance with legal requirements. Most CDBG-related public hearings are convened as a part of CSB meetings.

Community Meetings

In addition, informal planning meetings are held to inform citizens of the availability of grant funding for the CDBG, HOME, ESG and HOPWA Program. The purpose of the meetings is to inform the public of the eligible uses of the grant funds and to receive input on community and housing related needs. Meeting advertisements are run in newspapers of general circulation.

Three meetings were held on February 18, 2010. Sixty-one individuals attended the three meetings. Discussions on the following subjects were reviewed: CDBG Application process and required documentation, Community Services Advisory Board CDBG Application review process, City Commission approval of CSB award recommendations, HUD yearly allocations for all grants, review of CDBG/HOME budget, Public Service monies available this fiscal year, review of specific programs being funded this fiscal year, review of HOPWA funding from previous year, review of current year HOPWA RFP strategies, request for new HOPWA funding strategy, i.e., Housing Case Management and Homeless Management Information Systems, review of current year HOME CHDO RFP process, ESG homeless prevention strategy, Homeless Assistance strategy and review of the City of Fort Lauderdale's 5 Year Consolidated Plan.

Citizen Comments/Complaints

All written comments received during the Public Meetings and Public Hearings or by mail, email or telephone call are included in the final Consolidated Plan, Annual Action Plan and CAPER documents. The public will have the opportunity to comment on the following HUD required documents as follows:

- Consolidated Plan 30 days
- Annual Action Plan 30 days
- Substantial Change Amendments 30 days
- CAPER 30 days

The City is committed to addressing all written comments/complaints during its decision making process at its Public Hearing or in writing by the Housing & Community Development Division. All comments/complaints and responses are maintained on file. Citizens may send their comments/complaints concerning the Consolidated Plan, Annual Action Plan, Substantial Change Amendments and CAPER to:

Housing & Community Development Manager
City of Fort Lauderdale
Housing and Community Development Division
1409 N.W. 6th Street
Fort Lauderdale, FL 33311
E-mail: communitydevelopment@fortlauderdale.gov

A record will be maintained of all the written comments/complaints received and will include the nature of the comment/complaint, referrals made and the final resolution.

In an effort to ensure that all citizens of the City participate in this process, minutes of all Community Services Advisory Board meetings are placed on the City's website and all meetings are advertised as open to the public.

All written comments/complaints received related to the Consolidated Plan, Annual Action Plan, Substantial Change Amendment or CAPER will be accepted. No comments/complaints are rejected.

Substantial Change Policy

The City submits on an annual basis an Annual Action Plan (AAP) of the Consolidated Plan to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), which describes the activities to be undertaken with Community Development Block Grant funds. The City may find it necessary, from time-to-time, to amend its AAP because it decides:

1. To cancel an activity described in the AAP; or
2. To undertake an activity not described in the AAP; or
3. To substantially change the purpose, scope, location or beneficiaries of an activity.

An activity **will be** considered substantially changed if:

- a. The proposed funding of the activity is increased by more than \$50,000 or 45% of the activity budget, whichever is greater; or

Changes that **are not** considered substantial amendments:

- a. Changes to the budget are less than \$50,000 or 45% of the activity budget does not constitute a substantial change.
- b. Consolidated Plan data updates such as census data, income limits, fair market rents, subsidy limits and similar types of data does not constitute a substantial change.
- c. Activity budget line item changes in the HOPWA Program. The transfer of some (but not all) funds from one approved activity to another approved activity does not constitute a substantial change.

Prior to amending its AAP, the City will publish a public notice in local newspapers, informing citizens of the amendment and providing a 30-day public comment period. The City will consider all comments received, and, if appropriate, will modify the proposed amendment(s). City Commission approved amendments will be submitted to HUD. A complete description of any changes adopted will be made available to the public. The City Commission adopted this revised policy on June 15, 2010.

The following format will be used for published notices on CDBG amendments:

“The City of Fort Lauderdale is considering amending its (insert year) Annual Action Plan of the Consolidated Plan, submitted to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) for funding under the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program. In accordance with the Substantial Change Policy of the City’s HUD approved Consolidated Plan, any change in a CDBG assisted activity as a result of the addition or cancellation of a program or a change in the purpose, scope, location or beneficiary of an activity, requires a program amendment to the Annual Action Plan of the Consolidated Plan.

The proposed change would reprogram funds as follows: (Outline program changes)

In accordance with federal regulations, the City is hereby establishing a 30-day public comment period to receive input on the proposed amendment to its Annual Action Plan of the Consolidated Plan. Public comments on this item will be accepted during the 30-day public comment period from (insert date) to (insert date). In addition, public input will be accepted at a public hearing of the City Commission to be held on (insert day of week and date of Commission meeting). At the close of the public hearing, the City Commission will consider a motion approving the program amendment to the Annual Action Plan of the Consolidated Plan.

Commission meetings are held in the City Commission Chambers in City Hall located at 100 North Andrews Avenue at 6:00 p.m. Prior to the (insert date of Commission meeting) meeting, if you would like more information on the nature or location of the projects affected, or if you would like to comment on the proposed changes during the public comment period, you should contact the Office of Housing & Community Development, 1409 N.W. 6th St., Fort Lauderdale, Florida 33311. You may call the Housing and Community Development offices at (954) 828-4527.”