



Citizen Participation Plan for Housing and Community Development Programs

Amended October 6, 2025

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Introduction

The City of Orlando (City) seeks federal funding from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to accomplish desired activities in low- and moderate-income neighborhoods through the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program, HOME Investment Partnerships (HOME) Program, Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) Program and Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS (HOPWA) Program. Federal regulations for these programs require the establishment of a Citizen Participation Plan (CPP) to encourage and facilitate input by citizens and to establish standards for the public participation process. The CPP sets forth the City's policies and procedures for citizen participation in the development of the CPP, Consolidated Plan, Annual Action Plan, Substantial Amendments and Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Report (CAPER).

While citizen participation is essential for a viable program, the final authority for decision-making rests with the Mayor and City Commissioners. The exchange of information among citizens, City staff and elected officials provides for a stronger, more responsive housing and community development effort in the City of Orlando.

Citizen Participation

The City is committed to providing opportunities for its citizens to participate in an advisory role in the planning, implementation and assessment of federal Housing and Community Development programs. Citizen participation is essential during the planning process for the CPP, Consolidated Plan, Annual Action Plan, Substantial Amendments and CAPER, including: identifying needs, setting priorities based on identified needs and recommending activities to meet high-priority needs, as well as evaluating the effectiveness of the activities.

The CPP is designed to gather input from persons with low- and moderate- incomes, persons living in slum and blighted areas, persons living in areas where CDBG, HOME, ESG and HOPWA funds are being used or are proposed to be used, residents of public housing, and residents of primarily low- and moderate-income neighborhoods (at least 51% of the residents are low- and moderate-income persons). The City encourages broad community participation, including the participation of local and regional institutions, the Continuum of Care, businesses, developers, nonprofit organizations, philanthropic organizations and community and faith-based organizations that represent and/or serve these populations.

In addition, the City of Orlando utilizes the expertise of citizens, through their participation on a variety of committees (such as the Affordable Housing Advisory Committee, the State Housing Initiatives Partnership (SHIP)/HOME Review Committee, the CDBG Review Committee, the ESG Review Committee, the HOPWA Review Committee and advisory committees related to HOPWA), to provide advice and to recommend policy changes as well as make certain funding recommendations.

In order to encourage and support public participation, the City will provide information, hold public hearings and give citizens the opportunity to comment. Citizens will be provided with reasonable and timely access to these public meetings.

If funds are unexpended from a prior year or become available during the current fiscal year, City of Orlando Housing and Community Development Department staff may make funding recommendations directly to City Council on projects or activities that are consistent with the Consolidated Plan, in order to meet community needs and to facilitate the timely expenditure of grants. All City Council meetings are open to the public and ADA accessible.

Amendments to the Citizen Participation Plan

The CPP may be periodically amended. The City will publish notification of the availability of the CPP in accordance with the Public Notices section. Citizens will have fifteen (15) days to review the amended CPP and submit comments to the City before the amended CPP is submitted to City Council for adoption. All City Council meetings are open to the public and ADA accessible.

During times of a national declared disaster or pandemic such as COVID-19, the comment period may be reduced to a period of no less than five (5) days.

Public Hearings

The City will hold at least two (2) public hearings per year to obtain citizen input and to respond to questions in the development of the Consolidated Plan, the Annual Action Plan, and the Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Report (CAPER). These public hearings will be conducted at different times during the program year, to address housing and community development needs, discuss proposed activities, and review program performance.

The first public hearing will be held to accept public comments during the development of the Annual Action Plan, and will be held on a weekday, between the hours of 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. This hearing will also be used to obtain input regarding the Consolidated Plan, during years that the Consolidated Plan is being developed. The second public hearing will be held later in the year to accept public comments on the DRAFT Action Plan before it is submitted to HUD, and will be held on a weekday at 5 p.m.

Public hearings will be advertised approximately fourteen (14) days in advance in the Orlando Sentinel. The location of the public hearing may be at Orlando City Hall, 400 South Orange Avenue, Orlando, FL 32801, which is a central, accessible location or at one of the City's community centers, unless otherwise noted in the hearing notification.

The City will make reasonable efforts to accommodate persons with special needs who notify the City at least two (2) business days prior to the hearing with their request for special accommodations. Upon request from non-English speaking citizens, efforts will be made to have personnel fluent in the respective language present at these hearings.

Public Notices

To accomplish community-wide participation, the City will publish notification of the public hearings, the availability of the CPP, the summary of the proposed Consolidated Plan, proposed Annual Action Plan, proposed Substantial Amendments and the availability of the CAPER in the Orlando Sentinel. The Orlando Sentinel is the primary newspaper of general circulation in the Orlando region.

During the comment period, copies of the proposed CPP, proposed Consolidated Plan, proposed Annual Action Plan, proposed Substantial Amendments and the CAPER will be made available for review and comment on the City of Orlando's website at orlando.gov/housing and at the following locations:

City of Orlando Housing and Community
Development Department – Orlando City Hall
400 South Orange Avenue, Seventh Floor
Orlando, FL 32801

Orlando Public Library
101 East Central Boulevard
Orlando, FL 32801
(*Orange County Library System*)

Orlando Housing Authority
390 North Bumby Avenue
Orlando, FL 32803

For HOPWA related items, the following additional libraries will be added:

Tavares Public Library
314 N. New Hampshire Avenue
Tavares, FL 32778
(*Lake County Library System*)

Jean Rhein Central Branch Library
215 N. Oxford Road
Casselberry, FL 32707
(*Seminole County Library System*)

Hart Memorial Central Library
211 E. Dakin Avenue
Kissimmee, FL 34741
(*Osceola County Library System*)

Upon request, the City will mail copies to the homebound and provide a reasonable number of free copies to citizens and groups.

Consolidated Plan

The Consolidated Plan is a five-year strategic plan that serves as the planning document for the City, in order to apply for funding under the CDBG, HOME, ESG and HOPWA Programs. Through this document, the City identifies needs and goals for community planning, development and housing programs during the designated five-year period. The plan is submitted to HUD on or before August 16, prior to the start of the first year of the new five-year period.

In order to ensure citizen participation, the City will consult with citizens and focus groups (i.e. for-profit and nonprofit organizations, businesses, developers, community and faith-based organizations, philanthropic organizations, local and regional institutions and the Continuum of Care), prior to the development of the Consolidated Plan. Before the City adopts the proposed Consolidated Plan, the City will provide citizens, public agencies and other interested parties with the following:

- 1 - Opportunities to provide the City with input on housing and community development needs as part of the preparation of the Consolidated Plan;
- 2 - The amount of funds the City expects to receive from HUD for the implementation of the CDBG, HOME, ESG, and HOPWA Programs, including program income received through activities under these programs;
- 3 - The range of activities that may be undertaken under each of these programs and the estimated amount of funds that will benefit low- and moderate-income residents;
- 4 - The plans to minimize displacement of persons and to assist anyone displaced pursuant to the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970, as amended. The types and levels of assistance the City will make available to displaced persons are contained in the City's relocation plan. A separate One-for-One Replacement Plan will be made available to inform the public about planned activities that will cause the demolition of habitable or inhabitable units and their replacement. A public notice advertising the availability of the One-for-One Replacement Plan will be published in the Orlando Sentinel.
- 5 - Any HUD-provided data and supplemental information the City plans to incorporate into the Consolidated Plan.

The City will work with the Orlando Housing Authority to encourage the participation of residents of public and assisted housing developments in the process of developing and implementing the Consolidated Plan. This is an opportunity for interested persons to ask questions and provide input during the development of the Consolidated Plan.

Comment Period

The City will publish notification of the availability of the proposed Consolidated Plan in accordance with the Public Notices section. The notification will include a summary of the proposed Consolidated Plan. Citizens will be given the opportunity to comment on the proposed Consolidated Plan for a period of not less than thirty (30) days before the Consolidated Plan is approved by City Council and submitted to HUD. Comments may be made to the City of Orlando Housing and Community Development Department. All comments or views of citizens received in writing, or orally at public hearings, will be considered by the City before submitting the Consolidated Plan to HUD.

The Consolidated Plan will be available on the City's website at orlando.gov/housing. In addition, copies of the Consolidated Plan will be provided to citizens and groups, upon request, free of charge during the comment period.

A summary of all comments received and a summary of any comments not accepted and the reasons therefore will be attached and made a part of the corresponding final Consolidated Plan.

Annual Action Plan

An Annual Action Plan is prepared during each year of the five-year Consolidated Plan and specifies the amount of funding the City anticipates receiving from HUD, and related program income, under the CDBG, HOME, ESG and HOPWA programs. The Annual Action Plan serves as the application for funding to HUD and describes the activities/projects to be undertaken to address the needs and priorities identified in the Consolidated Plan. The Annual Action Plan is submitted to HUD on or before August 15 each year.

Comment Period

The City will publish notification of the availability of the proposed Annual Action Plan in accordance with the Public Notices section. Citizens will have thirty (30) days to review the proposed Annual Action Plan and submit comments to the City of Orlando Housing and Community Development Department before it is submitted to City Council for adoption. The public will be provided with reasonable access to records, subject to all local, state, and federal laws regarding privacy and obligations of confidentiality, during the public comment period.

A summary of all comments received and a summary of any comments not accepted with the reasons therefore will be attached and made a part of the Annual Action Plan.

Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Report (CAPER)

The Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Report (CAPER) is the annual report that provides details of the City's performance in the administration of funding provided under the CDBG, HOME, ESG, and HOPWA programs during the previous grant year and tracks progress made towards the five-year goals established in the Consolidated Plan. It describes how funds were expended for activities that benefited low- and moderate-income residents. The CAPER is submitted to HUD by December 30 and is the basis for an evaluation of annual accomplishment and progress towards goals established in the Consolidated Plan.

Comment Period

The City will publish notification of the availability of the CAPER in accordance with the Public Notices section. Citizens will have no less than fifteen (15) days to review the proposed CAPER and submit comments to the City of Orlando Housing and Community Development Department before it is submitted to HUD. The public will be provided with reasonable access to records,

subject to all local, state, and federal laws regarding privacy and obligations of confidentiality, during the public comment period.

A summary of comments received, including any comments received in writing or orally at public hearings, and the City's response will be attached to and made a part of the final CAPER.

Substantial Amendments

The City of Orlando will consider the following changes to be Substantial Amendments to the Consolidated Plan and/or the Annual Action Plan:

1. A change involving more than fifty percent of the annual funding available in the use of funds from one eligible activity to another eligible activity; and
2. A change that adds a new activity.

Comment Period

The City will publish notification of the availability of proposed Substantial Amendments in accordance with the Public Notices section. Citizens will have no less than thirty (30) days to review the proposed Substantial Amendment and submit comments to the City of Orlando Housing and Community Development Department before it is submitted to City Council for adoption. The public will be provided with reasonable access to records, subject to all local, state, and federal laws regarding privacy and obligations of confidentiality, during the public comment period.

A summary of comments received and a summary of comments not accepted with the reasons therefore will be attached and made a part of the Substantial Amendment. The Substantial Amendment will be transmitted to HUD.

Expediting Substantial Amendments

It may be necessary to expedite substantial amendments to the Consolidated Plan and/or the Annual Action Plan in the event of a declared disaster or emergency. There are three types of disasters/emergency events that may necessitate an expedited substantial amendment including (1) Man-Made disasters, (2) Natural disasters, and (3) Terrorism. Man-made disasters can include chemical spills, mass rioting, power outages, dam failure, plant explosions, etc. Natural disasters can include earthquakes, tsunamis, hurricanes, tornadoes, wild fires, flooding and public health issues such as wide-spread disease such as the recent coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19). Terrorism events include bomb threats, biochemical attacks like the spread of anthrax, or cyber-attacks like hacking, phishing, and virus distribution, etc.

These expedited substantial amendments may include funding new activities and or reprogramming of funds including canceling activities to meet needs resulting from a declared disaster or emergency. Therefore, the City of Orlando may utilize CDBG, HOME, ESG and HOPWA funds to meet these needs with a 5-day public comment period instead of a 30-day public

comment period which is otherwise required for substantial amendments. For CDBG funding under FY2019-2020, FY 2020-2021 and the Coronavirus Aid Relief and Economic Security ACT or CARES Act, the City of Orlando may provide 5-day notice of a proposed change for public comments as allowed under the HUD waiver. Special ESG funding under the CARES Act referred to as ESG-CV to address the COVID-19 pandemic does not apply to citizen participation requirements that would otherwise apply to ESG funds.

Virtual Public Hearings/Meetings

In the event of a declared disaster or emergency, it may be necessary for the City to conduct virtual public hearings/meetings due to the inability to hold in-person public hearings due to social distancing and/or limits for public gatherings for public health reasons. The City will provide reasonable notification under the same mediums for publishing and posting notices for the public as appropriate and provide access for citizens in accordance with the disaster/emergency or HUD provisions. The City will allow for the receipt of citizen comments and publicly present comments during the public hearings and will provide timely responses to citizen questions and issues.

Technical Assistance

The City of Orlando Housing and Community Development Department will work with organizations and individuals who are interested in submitting a proposal to obtain funding assistance under any of the CDBG, HOME, ESG or HOPWA Programs. Staff will also provide guidance on the interpretation of the federal regulations, the strategies and objectives of the Consolidated Plan and the Annual Action Plan, and will provide referrals to other agencies, including HUD, when necessary. Technical assistance will also be provided to potential applicants to assist them in the development of proposals for funding under any of the programs covered by the Consolidated Plan. Receiving staff assistance does not guarantee that an applicant will receive funding.

Complaint Procedure

Citizens with complaints concerning the Consolidated Plan, Annual Action Plan, Substantial Amendments and CAPER should contact the Housing and Community Development Department by calling 407.246.2708 or in writing to: City of Orlando Housing and Community Development Department, 400 South Orange Avenue, Orlando, FL 32801.

The City will provide a written response to all complaints received in writing, or orally, within fifteen (15) working days of their receipt, when practicable. A record will be maintained of all complaints received that will include the nature of the complaint, referrals made, and the final disposition.

Availability to the Public

Copies of all final documents will be kept on file with the Housing and Community Development Department at Orlando City Hall, 400 South Orange Avenue, Orange, FL 32801, and will be made available for public inspection and review during regular business hours. The City will provide copies to citizens and groups, upon request, including large print copies for the visually impaired. The City will also provide final copies of these documents to the Orlando Housing Authority so they can make this information available at their annual public hearing, required for the Public Housing Agency Plan.

Adoption of this Amended CPP

The availability for public review of this amended Citizen Participation Plan (CPP) was published in the Orlando Sentinel on September 21, 2025. In addition, the draft of the amended CPP was posted on the city's website at orlando.gov/housing. Citizens have fifteen (15) days to review the amended CPP and submit comments to the City of Orlando Housing and Community Development Department before it will be submitted to City Council for adoption on October 6, 2025.