COUNTY OF VENTURA ENTITLEMENT AREA
CONSOLIDATED PLAN
CITIZEN PARTICIPATION PLAN
(Revised May 8~~7~~, 2018~~3~~*)

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May 7, 2013 modified to address sole administrative function of the EA grant by the County of Ventura, modify verbiage to clarify Part VI-Amendments and consolidate outreach requirements for plans preparation.
May 8, 2018 clarified language around public hearings, time to request special accommodation, substantial and less than substantial amendments, as well as miscellaneous small corrections.

Part I – Introduction

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) requires a community receiving funding under Community Planning and Development formula grant programs to submit to HUD a Consolidated Plan of the community's objectives for housing and community development. This plan must address unmet public service and housing needs of low-income persons and families, and provide a five-year strategic plan and an annual plan for each of the five designated years to meet those needs.**

The formula grant programs include but are not limited to Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), Emergency Solutions Grants (ESG), HOME Investment Partnerships (HOME), and Housing Opportunities for Persons With Aids (HOPWA).

An important component in both the preparation and maintenance of the County of Ventura Entitlement Area's Consolidation Plan and Annual Action Plan is a Citizen Participation Plan which must provide for and encourage citizens, including minorities, non-English speaking persons and persons with mobility, visual, or hearing impairments to participate in the development of these plans, any substantial amendments to these plans and the Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Report (CAPER). In addition, coordination with the various housing authorities within the Entitlement Area is an essential component of the Citizen Participation Plan and will be implemented as required.

The Citizen Participation Plan is designed to specifically encourage participation in the development of the Consolidated Plan and/or Annual Action Plan by low- and moderate-income persons, particularly residents of slum and blighted areas or predominately low- and moderate-income neighborhoods, where HUD program funding is proposed to be used. Low-income person means a member of a family that has an income equal to or less than the Section 8 very low-income limit established by HUD. Unrelated individuals shall be considered as one-person families for this purpose. Moderate-income person means a member of a family that has an income equal to or less than the Section 8 low-income limit and greater than the Section 8 very low-income limit, established by HUD. Unrelated individuals shall be considered as one-person families for this purpose.

** These requirements are detailed in the Federal Register of January 5, 1995, Part VI, Department of Housing and Urban Development, Office of the Secretary, 24 CFR Part 91, et al., Consolidated Submission for Community Planning and Development Programs; Final Rule.

Part II – Consolidated Plan and Annual Action Plan Preparation

The Consolidated Plan is typically a five-year strategic plan to address unmet public service and housing needs of low-income persons and families within the Entitlement Area. For each of the five years, an Annual Action Plan is developed in preparation for the subsequent grant year which identifies specific activities, goals and funding allocations. The Citizen Participation Plan addresses both preparation cycles alike and are therefore presented in this section together.

A. Public Hearings

1. The county shall hold a minimum of two public hearings in preparation of the Consolidated Plan and/or Annual Action Plan. Two are required; additional public hearings are optional as necessary or desired. The purpose of these hearings is to obtain citizens' comments on the unmet needs of low- and moderate-income persons regarding housing, community and economic development and public service. To accomplish this requirement, the county and the participating cities may hold joint hearings or separate public hearings within each jurisdiction as necessary.

    a. The first public hearing will be held to initialize the development process of each plan. Community needs and priorities are presented by county and city staff and public comments are received. Applications are made available for the next grant year Annual Action Plan. This meeting is mandatory for all applicants.

    b. In preparation of the Consolidated Plan, a second public hearing may be held to solicit public comment on activities which could be implemented to address the unmet needs identified at the first public hearing.

    In preparation of the Annual Action Plan, a second public hearing may~~will~~ be held by the county and the participating cities prior to the adoption of the proposed plan by the Board of Supervisors. The purpose of this hearing is to obtain citizens' comments on proposed activities and funding allocations. This meeting is mandatory for all applicants recommended for funding.

    c. A final public hearing will be held to obtain citizens' comments on proposed activities and to present the Consolidated Plan and/or the Annual Action Plan to the Board of Supervisors for approval.

2. The public hearings will be held in the Ventura County Government Center and/or in facilities in or adjacent to low/moderate income neighborhoods. The hearing presenting the Consolidated Plan and/or Annual Action Plan will be held in the Board of Supervisors Hearing Room. City public hearings may also be held in City Council chambers or in facilities in or adjacent to low/moderate income neighborhoods.

3. At least one of the public hearings may be scheduled during the evening to ensure the maximum attendance by residents. Persons with mobility, visual or hearing impairments shall be accommodated, upon request, with at least 48~~72~~ hours notice prior to the hearing date. A Spanish language translator shall be provided at each hearing and other translators may be made available upon request.

4. The hearings shall be announced in at least one newspaper of general circulation in English. (Circulation should be countywide for county public hearings and a minimum of citywide for city public hearings.) The announcement may also appear in at least one Spanish language newspaper of general circulation, if appropriate. The hearings may also be announced as a public announcement on radio stations as appropriate and announced through an informational flyer distributed/posted by Housing Authorities, public service and other organizations. At least one Spanish language radio station may be informed and the flyer may be prepared in Spanish. The announcement for the first public hearing will also be mailed and/or e-mailed to the current list of HUD partners, subrecipients and other interested parties in the County of Ventura.

5. The hearings shall be announced a minimum of 10 days in advance of the proposed meeting dates. The public notice shall contain information sufficient to permit informed comment about the subject of the hearings.

6. A public hearing announcement will be forwarded to the pertinent housing authorities with a request to forward the information to its public housing residents.

7. The notices for the County of Ventura public hearings will be posted on the County Executive Office, HUD ~~Programs~~ Grants web page.

B. Public Outreach and Access

1. Prior to the adoption of the Consolidated Plan and/or Annual Action Plan by the Board of Supervisors (and in conjunction with the second required hearing) the following information shall be made available to citizens, public agencies and other interested parties:

   a. Amount of funds available for the proposed plan (including program income).

   b. Range of activities that may be undertaken.

   c. Activities and funds that will benefit persons of extremely-low, low and moderate income.

   d. Plans to minimize displacement in compliance with, the Uniform Relocation Act and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970, as amended.

2. A summary of the proposed Consolidated Plan and/or Annual Action Plan (Part II – B. 1 above) shall be published in at least one newspaper of countywide circulation and the announcement may also appear in at least one Spanish language newspaper of general circulation. Public service announcements may also be provided for local radio stations. The summary shall describe the contents and purpose of the plan(s) and include a list of the locations where copies of the entire plan(s) may be examined. As a minimum, copies of the proposed plan(s) shall be available for public review at City Halls located in Fillmore, Moorpark, Ojai, Port Hueneme, Santa Paula, and the County Executive Office of the County of Ventura.

3. The full Consolidated Plan and/or Annual Action Plan shall be made available on the County Executive Office HUD Programs web page.

4. The Consolidated Plan and/or Annual Action Plan shall be made available for public comments for a minimum of 30 days prior to submission to HUD.

5. Citizens are encouraged to participate in an advisory role in the planning, implementation, and assessment of the projects recommended under the plan(s).

Part III – Technical Assistance

The county shall provide, upon request, technical assistance to groups representative of extremely low- and low- income residents wishing to develop proposals for funding assistance under any of the programs covered by the Consolidated Plan to be included in the Annual Action Plan. Technical assistance will include an overview of the purpose of the HUD funded programs and requirements. The county shall determine the level and type of assistance consistent with HUD policies and regulations.

Part IV – Program Income Reuse Plan

The county shall reallocate program income into the program or activity that generated the income, unless that activity no longer exists. In this case, funds will be reallocated in accordance with guidelines in the next section of this plan.

Part V – Amendments

1. The county shall amend the Consolidated Plan/Annual Action Plan when:

    a. An activity described in the approved plan is canceled;

    b. An activity not previously described in the approved plan is added; or

    c. A change in the purpose, scope, location, or beneficiaries of an activity occurs.

2. Amendments are considered substantial changes and require official action when:

   a. Grant funds are allocated to a new activity for the first time, and/or

   b. A funding increase in a current activity, or a change in the use of funding from one eligible activity to another, which represents:

      I. More than $100,000 in CDBG funding,
      II. More than $100,000 in HOME funding, or
      III. More than $30,000 in ESG funding.

3. Changes which are less than substantial are changes which represent less than the amounts listed in Part IV, 2, b above, and which do not have a significant impact on the project's purpose, scope, location, or beneficiaries.

   If an activity not identified for funding in the current program year, but is the same or similar to an activity that was funded in another program year, and receives funding less than the amounts listed in Part IV, 2, b above, and there is no significant change in the project (purpose, scope, location, or beneficiaries), it is not considered a substantial change.

   Reallocation of funding among program years is not considered a substantial change.

4. Administration of amendments will be handled as follows:

   a. Amendments which are defined as substantial changes shall be posted on the County of Ventura HUD Grants webpage and noticed in at least one newspaper of general circulation a minimum of 30 days prior to a public hearing and action by the Board of Supervisors and implementation. Depending upon the amendment and/or the project area, the notice may appear in both an English and Spanish newspaper which targets the area of interest.

   b. Amendments which are defined as less than substantial may be made effective administratively or by Board of Supervisors' action (15 day public notice and hearing) depending upon the nature of the amendment.

5. Amendments to the Citizen Participation Plan may be considered substantial as determined by the county based on the nature of the amendment.

6. All amendments (substantial and other) will be forwarded to HUD annually or as appropriate. A summary of public comments or views will be attached to the substantial amendment of the plan.

Part VI – Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Report (CAPER)

1. The county will prepare the CAPER as required at the close of the grant year which shall be made available for public comment for a minimum of 15 days prior to submission to HUD.

2. The CAPER will be available similar to the Consolidated Plan and Annual Action Plan as outlined in Part II – B. 2 and 3.

3. The public comments will be considered and responded to as appropriate with a summary of the comments attached to the CAPER for submittal to HUD.

Part VII – Displacement of Persons

The Citizen Participation Plan must, as required by 24 CFR Part 91, Section 91.105, "set forth the jurisdiction's plans to minimize displacement of persons and to assist any persons displaced...."

The county and participating jurisdictions will, as much as possible, pursue projects which promote affordable housing, i.e., new construction and rehabilitation, which will not dislocate persons or families. (Some temporary relocation may be required for rehabilitation projects). If permanent relocation is necessary (due to the acquisition of an occupied residence planned for major reconstruction or demolition, etc.), the county and participating jurisdictions will comply with the Uniform Relocation and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970 as amended, which establishes types and levels of assistance required depending upon the circumstances. Certification of compliance is included in the Ventura County Consolidated Plan.

The county has on file its Residential Anti-displacement and Relocation Assistance Plan as required under Section 104(d) of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974, as amended, which pertains to any activity assisted with funding under the CDBG, ESG or HOME programs.

Part VIII – Availability

1. The Consolidated Plan, Annual Action Plans, substantial amendments, CAPER and the Citizen Participation Plan will be available to the public, including the availability of materials in a form accessible to persons with disabilities, upon request.

2. The Consolidated Plan, Annual Action Plans, CAPER, the Citizen Participation Plan and the Uniform Relocation and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970 as amended, will be available for review at the County of Ventura, County Executive

Office, Ventura County Government Center, Administration Building, 800 South Victoria Avenue, Ventura, CA, 93009, during working hours.

3. The county and participating cities will provide citizens, public agencies, and other interested parties with reasonable and timely access to information and records relating to the Consolidated Plan and the county's use of assistance under the programs covered by the Consolidated Plan during the preceding five years.

Part IX – Citizen Participation Coordinator

1. The Citizen Participation Coordinator shall be the CDBG Management Analyst in the Ventura County Executive Office.

2. The Citizen Participation Coordinator shall make past and present programmatic and funding information available to citizens during all phases of the HUD Community Planning and Development Program cycle, upon request.

Part X – Comments and Complaints

1. The county shall consider all verbal or written comments or views of citizens received at the public hearings in preparing the final Consolidated Plan, Annual Action Plans, amendments to these plans, Section 108 Loan applications, CAPER or the Citizen Participation Plan.

2. A summary of these comments or views shall be attached to the final Consolidated Plan, Annual Action Plans, amendments of these plans, CAPER or Citizen Participation Plan and submitted to HUD as appropriate.

3. The county will respond, in writing, to complaints or grievances within 15 days, where practical.

Part XI – Contingency Plan in the Event of an Emergency/Disaster

1. In the event of an emergency or disaster that presents a serious and immediate threat to the health and welfare of the citizens of the county, the noticing requirements for public hearings shall be reduced to ten calendar days.

2. Reprogramming of funds in the event of such an emergency will require approval by the County Board of Supervisors when they are in session or ratification of the reallocation when the Board is dark.