

# **CITIZEN PARTICIPATION PLAN**

## **INTRODUCTION**

In accordance with federal regulations (CFR 91.105), Oakland County is required to set forth the County's policies and procedures for citizen participation in the process of developing and implementing the Consolidated Plan and all its integral components. Citizens may also participate in the development, implementation, and evaluation of the specific activities described within the Consolidated Plan and funded through federal programs such as the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), HOME Investment Partnership Grant (HOME), Emergency Shelter Grant (ESG), and the Comprehensive Housing Counseling Grant (CHC), among other related programs. In addition, input is requested on the annual action plan, consolidated annual performance evaluation report, environmental reviews, request for release of funds and any amendments to these reports.

Oakland County encourages participation by low and moderate-income persons, specifically those living in deteriorated areas and in areas where Federal funds are proposed to be used and by residents of predominately low-and moderate-income neighborhoods.

Oakland County further encourages the participation of residents of public and assisted housing development in the process of developing and implementing the Consolidated Plan, along with other low-income residents of targeted revitalization areas in which housing developments are located. Oakland County provides information to the Housing Authorities about any activities related to the Authorities' housing developments and surrounding communities. The Housing Authorities should make this information available at the annual public hearing it is required to hold under the Comprehensive Grant Program.

Oakland County provides citizens with a reasonable opportunity to comment on the Citizen Participation Plan (including any substantial amendments). The Citizen Participation Plan is a public document. It will be made accessible to those persons with disabilities and/or non-English speaking persons upon request.

Oakland County maximizes citizen participation through a Citizen Advisory Council for housing and community development programs. The council consists of 20 members appointed by the Oakland County Board of Commissioners who are representatives of the communities participating in the urban county CDBG program, County Commissioners, and the general public. The members selected represent Oakland County's low and moderate-income population the federal programs are designed to benefit. The Citizen Advisory Council serves in an advisory capacity to County Staff and the Oakland County Board of Commissioners in assessing county federal grant program policies and operations.

## **PURPOSE**

The Citizen Participation Plan is designed to serve the following specific purposes:

1. To present in a logical sequence the various components of the consolidated plan.
2. To identify the responsible department or agencies of the County Government who administer the various activities related to the Consolidated Plan
3. To clarify the opportunities which citizens, community organizations, neighborhood groups, and others have to work with municipal and county officials in developing each component of the Consolidated Plan and the activities within.
4. To indicate the alternate courses of action that the Federal program(s) regulations make available to citizens, organizations, and local governments.

Any questions or comments on issues or the adequacy of the Citizen Participation Plan should be referred to the Manager of the Oakland County Community and Home Improvement Division, 1200 N. Telegraph Rd., Bldg. 38-E, Pontiac, MI 48341-0414, phone (248) 858-0493 or toll-free 1-888-350-0900, ext. 80493.

## **DEVELOPMENT STAGE**

To develop the Consolidated Plan (once every five years) and each subsequent Annual Action Plan (one each year for five years), Oakland County makes information available to and collects information from:

1. Citizens, Citizen Organizations, Community Groups, Neighborhood Organizations
2. Local Governments participating in the Urban County Program
3. Entitlement Communities
4. Public Housing Agencies
5. Human Service Agencies including Emergency Shelter Providers and Community Housing Development Organizations
6. Other interested parties

Information will be compiled for reference and made available, including:

1. Amount of funding Oakland County expects to receive from:
  - A. Federal Funds
  - B. Program Income
  - C. Matching Funds

2. Range of activities that may be undertaken including estimated amount that will benefit persons of low to moderate income
3. Plan to minimized displacement of persons
4. Plan to assist any person displaced

Oakland County staff presents this information at various public hearings and informal meetings, events, or forums. Citizens may also review this information directly by appointment at the office of Oakland County Community and Home Improvement Division, 1200 N. Telegraph, Bldg. 38-E, Pontiac, MI 48341-0414, Phone (248) 858-0493 or Toll-free 1-888-350-0900, ext. 80493.

## **PUBLIC HEARINGS**

Oakland County shall hold at least two public hearings annually to obtain citizens' views and shall be conducted at a minimum of two different stages of the program year. Together, the hearings shall address housing and community development needs, development of proposed activities, and review program performance. At least one of these public hearings shall be held before the proposed Consolidated Plan is published for comment in order to obtain citizens' views on housing and community development needs, including priority non-housing community development needs. There are public hearings at the community level in the fall of each year.

Adequate advance notice is given to participants (including sufficient information about the event subject matter) in order to allow for informed comment, proposals or recommendations. An event is advertised through the minimum of one of the following methods depending on the event type at least two weeks prior to the event:

1. Advertisement of Public hearing published in a newspaper of general circulation within the county
2. Letters to individual citizens, groups, etc.
3. Letters to those on the Community and Home Improvement mailing list, generally stakeholders
4. Other ways depending on the event (postings, Website, cable access, etc.)

All events are held at times and locations convenient to potential and actual beneficiaries. Public hearings will be held in the evenings to allow for greater participation.

Public Hearings will be accessible. In addition, if a significant number of persons unable to understand the English language can be reasonably expected to attend the hearing, the County shall make sufficient translation services available so that such persons may understand the proceedings.

In order to receive further public participation, Oakland County publishes a summary of the proposed Consolidated Plan as well as an annual plan each year so that interested stakeholders would have an opportunity to examine its contents and submit comments. These summaries are also mailed to the Division's mailing list and copies are made available to the community at large via city/township/village halls, senior centers, libraries, and public service agencies.

## **COMMENTS**

Citizens will have 30 days after publication to make comments, orally at the public hearing or in writing. Oakland County shall consider any comments or views of citizens and/or local governments received in writing or verbally at the hearings in preparing the final Consolidated Plan, amendments, Annual plans, or CAPER. A summary of these comments or views and a summary of any comments or views not accepted and the reason therefor shall be attached to the final Plan or report.

The County will provide a timely, substantive, and written response to every written citizen complaint with 15 working days of its receipt.

## **CRITERIA FOR AMENDMENT OF THE CONSOLIDATED PLAN**

Oakland County shall amend its Consolidated Plan whenever it makes a substantial change in the method or distribution of funds, carries out an activity using funds from any program covered by the plan (including program income derived therefrom) not previously described in the annual action plan (which is part of the Consolidated Plan), or to substantially change the scope, purpose, location, or beneficiaries of an activity.

A substantial change shall be defined as a change in amount of funds equal to or greater than 15 percent of aggregate funds allocated by the County for the appropriate program (CDBG, HOME, ESG) for the program year in question. Changes in the scope, purpose, location, or beneficiaries of a project affecting less than 15 percent of the aggregate program funds for the program and program year in question shall not be considered a substantial change.

If a substantial change does occur, the County shall make the amendment public and provide for a comment period as provided above.

Changes in the use of CDBG funds by local participating communities shall be preceded by a public hearing, to be held at the local jurisdiction, and advertised in the newspaper of greatest local circulation, at minimum.

The County shall also follow these procedures whenever it makes changes in the use of that portion of CDBG funds allocated to the County, and when the County makes a change in the method of distribution of funds. The authority for changing the CDBG

distribution formula rests with the Oakland County Board of Commissioners and the County Executive.

### **CONSOLIDATED ANNUAL PERFORMANCE AND EVALUATION REPORT (CAPER)**

Oakland County is required to make public annually the CAPER, a written summary and evaluation of accomplishments and performance based on the goals and activities described in the Consolidated Plan. This will be performed through a notice published in a newspaper of general circulation within 90 days after the end of the program year.

### **TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE**

The staff of the Community and Home Improvement Division is available to provide technical assistance to any group which represents persons of low- and moderate-income in developing proposals for funding assistance under any of the programs covered by the Consolidated Plan. Assistance does not guarantee funding approval.

In addition, staff is available to answer questions concerning procedures for the development and implementation of the plan and all its components.

Citizens or organizations requesting technical assistance should contact the Community and Home Improvement Division at (248) 858-0493.

### **ADOPTION OF THE CITIZEN PARTICIPATION PLAN**

The County shall provide citizens with a reasonable opportunity to comment on the original Citizen Participation Plan and on any amendments thereto. The Citizen Participation Plan shall be made public and in a format accessible to persons with disabilities.

### **USE OF THE CITIZEN PARTICIPATION PLAN**

The County shall use the Citizen Participation Plan for all housing and community development activities, specifically the CDBG, HOME, and ESG programs.

Citizens are invited to submit written comments on the above referenced Citizen Participation Plan to the Oakland County Community and Home Improvement Division Manager for consideration by Oakland County.

Equal Opportunity Programs/Activities

L. Brooks Patterson  
Oakland County Executive