

## CITIZEN PARTICIPATION PLAN

### INTRODUCTION

The US Department of Housing and Urban Development requires that the Five Year Consolidated Plan (CP) for each entitlement agency adopt a Citizen's Participation Plan (CPP). This Citizen Participation Plan has been adopted by the City of Homestead and is in conformance with the provisions of Federal regulations.

Required by HUD regulation and Public Law 100-242, the Citizen's Participation Plan (CPP) outlines the methods used in the development, from a public input process, of the Five Year Consolidated Plan (CP) and Annual Action Plans (AAP) and how Homestead provides for maximum citizen participation in the development of these plans.

The methods used by the City of Homestead for allowing citizen participation and input for the development of the Consolidated Plan provides for the most basic and appropriate level of citizen participation. It is the intent of the City to provide for the maximum level of citizen participation in order to gather the most meaningful, thorough and effective input from its citizens. Citizen participation is broad due to the types of areas the City covers, which includes urban, rural and agricultural. At the same time, the process makes sure that the low and moderate income, disabled, elderly and other special populations are involved in the total input process.

The citizen participation/input process consists of the following summary of steps which maximizes the citizen's participation in the development of the Five Year Consolidated Plan and the Annual Action Plan for Homestead, as well as the substantial amendments for either document. Details of each of these steps follow in the sections of this Citizen's Participation Plan.

Citizen Participation requirements shall not be construed to restrict the responsibility or authority of the City for the development and execution of its entitlement program activities. The Homestead City Council remains the sole approving authority for the Plan and any amendments.

### **Applicability and Adoption of the Citizen Participation Plan**

Pursuant to 24 CFR Part 91, Consolidated Submissions for Community Planning and Development Programs, the jurisdiction is required to certify that it has developed and is acting in compliance with a Citizen Participation Plan that sets forth the jurisdiction's policies and procedures for citizen participation. The plan must include the following topic areas:

1.

**CITIZEN PARTICIPATION:** Provide for and encourage citizen participation, with particular emphasis on participation by persons of low and moderate-income. Of particular importance are those residents living in slum and blighted areas and where

Federal funds are proposed to be used. Encourage the participation of all residents, including minorities, non-English speaking persons and persons with disabilities;

2.

**CITIZEN COMMENTS:** Provide citizens with a reasonable opportunity to examine the proposed Consolidated Plan, Action Plans and Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Reports. Provide a mechanism to submit written and oral comments and to provide for the consideration of these comments. Provide for a system for handling citizen complaints;

3.

**SUBSTANTIAL AMENDMENTS:** Provide for specification of criteria that the City of Homestead will use to determine what constitutes a substantial change in the City's planned or actual activities. This process will include a procedure for notification of the public and receipt of comments;

4.

**PUBLIC HEARINGS:** Provide public hearings to obtain citizen views on housing and community development needs, at times and locations that are convenient to potential and actual beneficiaries. Allow for citizens to respond to proposals relative to the selection of funded activities. Respond to questions at all stages of the community development program, including the development of needs, the review of proposed activities and the review of past program performance;

5.

**REASONABLE AND TIMELY ACCESS:** Provide citizens with reasonable and timely access to local meetings, information and records related to City of Homestead's proposed and actual use of funds at times and locations convenient to potential or actual beneficiaries including;

- Annual Action Plans (AAP)
- Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Reports (CAPERs)
- Five Year Consolidated Plan (CP)
- Substantial Amendments to any plan

Accommodations for persons with disabilities and groups of non-English speaking persons will be made upon notification to the City within a reasonable time frame.

6.

**INFORMATION PROVIDED:** Provide information to citizens, public agencies and other interested parties, that includes the amount of Federal Assistance available to the City of Homestead and the activities that may be undertaken. The information will include the estimated amount of funds that will benefit persons of low and moderate-income as well as plans to minimize displacement (even if no displacement is expected to occur);

7. **TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE:** Provide technical assistance to group representatives of persons of low- and moderate-incomes that request such assistance;
8. **PUBLIC HOUSING AUTHORITIES:** Provide for consultation between City of Homestead and the Public Housing Authority in order to encourage participation by residents of public and assisted housing developments in the process and implementation of the Consolidated Plan. Provide information to this agency about Consolidated Plan activities, so this information can be used in the Comprehensive Grant Program process;
9. **NON-ENGLISH SPEAKING RESIDENT NEEDS:** Identify how the needs of non-English speaking residents will be met in the case of public hearings where a significant number of non-English speaking residents can be reasonably expected to participate;
10. **PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES:** Provide accommodations for access to public hearing sites and public meetings for Persons with Disabilities;
11. **COMPLAINT RESOLUTION:** Provide for timely written answers to written complaints and grievances.

### **Encouragement of Citizen Participation**

To obtain the views of citizens, i.e., low to moderate-income persons, those living in slum and/or blighted areas and in areas where entitlement funds are proposed to be used, minorities, non-English speaking persons, persons with disabilities, public agencies, residents of public and assisted housing developments and other interested parties on housing and community development needs, the following strategies will be implemented:

1. Consult with interested area social/health service/housing providers such as: the Miami-Dade County Health Department, the Housing Authority, etc.
2. Maintain a directory and contact list for these agencies.
3. Specify how the contacts will be made and what media sources will be used.
4. Provide bi-lingual notices, if necessary.

This Citizen Participation Plan (CPP) addresses the procedures to obtain public input for completion, review, revision and adoption of documents required by HUD. These documents include the CPP itself, as well as the Five Year Consolidated Plan (CP), including Substantial Amendments, the Annual Action Plan (AAP) and the Comprehensive Annual Performance and Evaluation Report (CAPER).

## CITIZEN PARTICIPATION PLAN (CPP)

**CPP Update:** To update the existing Citizen Participation Plan (CPP) under the auspices of the Homestead City Council after receiving input from the public, City staff and any City advisory bodies tasked with the review or oversight of this subject matter. The CPP shall be included in conjunction with the Five Year Homestead Consolidated Plan submission to HUD.

1. Present proposed revisions to the Citizen Participation Plan to the public for input and recommendations.
2. Submit the revised Citizen Participation Plan to the Homestead City Council in conjunction with the approved Consolidated Plan or the Annual Action Plan. Once approved by City Council, the CPP shall be included with the submission of the Five Year Homestead Consolidated Plan to HUD.

**Citizen Comment on the Citizen Participation Plan (CPP) and Amendments:** Citizen comments at all public meetings/hearings will be solicited.

1. A summary of citizen comments received in writing, or orally at public meetings, will accompany all submissions to HUD. Advertising and conducting public hearings will be the responsibility of the City of Homestead.
2. Where a significant number of non-English speaking residents can be reasonably expected to participate, a method of communication will be provided for non-English speaking residents as well as accommodations for persons with disabilities, upon forty-eight (48) weekday hour notification to the City of Homestead.
3. When possible, citizen surveys will be included at appropriate public meetings and with agencies involved with providing services. Bi-lingual surveys will be available where it is anticipated that a significant number of non-English speaking residents will attend.
4. Notice of the discussion and adoption of the CPP and any amendments must be distributed at least fourteen (14) days in advance of the presentation of the amendments to the City Committee of the Whole.
5. Written comments should be addressed to the office of:

City of Homestead  
Evelin Simpson  
715 NE 1st Road  
Homestead, Florida 33030  
(305) 224-4547

6. The City shall respond to any written responses or comments from citizens within thirty (30) days, where practical.

## **FIVE YEAR CONSOLIDATED PLAN (CP)**

**CP Preparation:** To obtain input from public and private agencies, as well as State and/or local health and child welfare agencies that assist in housing, health, economic development, social services and child care agencies to low to moderate-income residents of Homestead, the City will take the following steps:

1. Consult with interested area social/health service/housing providers such as: the Miami-Dade County Health Department and the Housing Authority; etc.
2. Conduct a minimum of one (1) and preferably two (2) neighborhood meetings for the purpose of citizen input on community needs. The first meeting will be held in an area of predominantly low and moderate-income residents and the second at a location that is accessible to beneficiaries of the funds.
3. Create a summary of citizen comments received in writing, or orally at public meetings, to be included in all submissions to HUD. Advertising and conducting public hearings will be the responsibility of the City of Homestead.
4. Advertise all public meetings and workshops to solicit input for the preparation of the CP in a newspaper of general circulation at least fourteen (14) days prior to the scheduled meeting/hearing. The advertisement will include:
  - the purpose of the hearing;
  - date;
  - time; and
  - location
5. Provide a draft of the CP for public review and comment at sites of public access such as government buildings, libraries, etc., as well as on the City's website not less than thirty (30) days prior to the plan's submission.
6. The public hearings/meetings will be held at sites that are accessible to low and moderate income persons, persons with disabilities, the elderly and other special populations.
7. Electronic copies of the plan will also be made available to the public upon request.
8. Where a significant number of non-English speaking residents can be reasonably expected to participate, a method of communication will be provided for non-English speaking residents and accommodations will be provided for persons with disabilities, upon forty-eight (48) weekday hours notification to the City of Homestead.
9. Response to inquiries, comments and complaints that are received will be answered by the City within 30 days of receipt.

### **Criteria for Amendment(s) to Five Year Consolidated Plan**

**Amendment to Five Year Consolidated Plan (CP):** The City may from time to time find it necessary to amend its CP. The following will define what constitutes and does not constitute a substantial amendment to the CP:

Definitions of Substantial Amendments:

The following definitions are essential to understanding the elements regarding the entitlement funding. These definitions refer to the main elements of **Activities** and **Projects**.

**Activities:** Activities refer to the specific services that are provided to the low to moderate income population. HUD provides a list of these activities as well as a description of what comprises the Activity, eligibility and identification numbers.

**Projects:** Each Activity may be comprised of one or more Projects that are designed to achieve the goal of the particular Activity. The Projects are the specific requests for funding from subrecipients that are included in the Annual Action Plan.

Changes that **are** considered a substantial amendment:

- A change in the methodology of the distribution of funds.
- Addition of an activity not previously covered in the Five Year Consolidated Plan.

Changes that **are not** considered a substantial amendment:

- A change to one of the priorities.
- Addition of a project not previously covered in the Five Year Consolidated Plan.

Any proposed changes that are considered a substantial amendment shall be advertised for public review and comment in a newspaper of general circulation. Comments from the general public will be given due consideration by City staff before a proposed substantial amendment is presented to the City Council for approval. Non substantial amendments shall be made by City staff and shall not be presented for public review.

### **Availability to the Public**

To provide the public an opportunity to share their views and to respond to the Five Year Consolidated Plan and any substantial amendments as adopted, the following strategies will be implemented:

1. The City of Homestead will post the CP on the City website.
2. All reasonable efforts will be taken to make the CP, accessible to persons with disabilities, upon request.

### **Access to Records**

To provide an opportunity for citizens to receive information, submit comments and/or submit grievances on the proposed CP the following strategies will be implemented:

1. Advertise a summary of the Five Year Consolidated Plan, or a substantial amendment in a newspaper of general circulation, soliciting comments for a

- period of thirty (30) days. The summary will describe the contents and purpose of the CP and will include locations where the entire plan may be examined.
2. Copies of the documents will also be placed on the City website.
  3. The City will make available electronic copies of the documents to citizens and groups that request it.
  4. Comments on the documents can be forwarded to;

City of Homestead  
Evelin Simpson  
715 NE 1st Road  
Homestead, Florida 33030  
(305) 224-4547

5. If not satisfied at the local level, complaints may be forwarded to HUD.

### **Complaints**

The City of Homestead will act swiftly and objectively in resolving all written complaints and grievances utilizing the following strategies:

1. The City of Homestead will respond to citizen complaints/grievances within thirty (30) days. The Director's response will indicate the avenue(s) of appeal to the complainant.
2. Citizens may, at any time during the complaint resolution process, contact the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) directly at the following address:

U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development  
Office of Community Planning and Development  
909 SE First Avenue, Room 300  
Miami, Florida 33131-3028

## ANNUAL ACTION PLAN (AAP)

**AAP Preparation:** To obtain input from public and private agencies, as well as State and/or local health and child welfare agencies that assist in housing, health, social services and child care agencies to low to moderate-income residents of Homestead, the City will take the following steps:

1. Conduct a public meeting for the purpose of citizen input on the AAP.
2. A summary of citizen comments received in writing, or orally at public meetings, will accompany all submissions to HUD. Advertising and conducting public hearings will be the responsibility of the City of Homestead.
3. Advertise all public meetings and workshops to solicit input for the preparation of the AAP in a newspaper of general circulation at least fourteen (14) days prior to the scheduled meeting/hearing. The advertisement will include:
  - the purpose of the hearing;
  - date;
  - time; and
  - location
4. Provide a draft of the AAP for public review and comment at sites of public access such as government buildings, libraries, etc., as well as on the City's website not less than thirty (30) days prior to the plan's submission.
5. The public hearings/meetings will be held at sites that are accessible to low and moderate income persons, persons with disabilities, the elderly and other special populations.
6. Electronic copies of the plan will also be made available to the public upon request.
7. Where a significant number of non-English speaking residents can be reasonably expected to participate, a method of communication will be provided for non-English speaking residents and accommodations will be provided for persons with disabilities, upon forty-eight (48) weekday hours notification to the City of Homestead.
8. Response to inquires, comments and complaints that are received will be answered by the City within 30 days of receipt.

### Criteria for Amendment(s) to Annual Action Plan

**Amendment to Annual Action Plan (AAP):** The City may from time to time find it necessary to amend its AAP. The following will define what constitutes and does not constitute a substantial amendment to the AAP:

Definitions of Substantial Amendments:

The following definitions are essential to understanding the elements regarding the entitlement funding. These definitions refer to the main elements of **Activities** and **Projects**.

**Activities:** Activities refer to the specific services that are provided to the low to moderate income population. HUD provides a list of these activities as well as a description of what comprises the Activity, eligibility and identification numbers.

**Projects:** Each Activity may be comprised of one or more Projects that are designed to achieve the goal of the particular Activity. The Projects are the specific requests for funding from subrecipients that are included in the Annual Action Plan.

Changes that **are** considered a substantial amendment:

- A change in the methodology of the distribution of funds.
- Addition of an activity not previously covered in the Five Year Consolidated Plan.

Changes that **are not** considered a substantial amendment:

- Projects that are within the described, approved, and outlined activity plans that have been advertised to the public and submitted to HUD.
- Changes to project budget that are less than \$50,000 or 45% of the project budget (whichever is smaller).

Any proposed changes that are considered a substantial amendment shall be advertised for public review and comment in a newspaper of general circulation. Comments from the general public will be given due consideration by City staff before a proposed substantial amendment is presented to the City Council for approval. Non substantial amendments shall be made by City staff and shall not be presented for public review.

### **Availability to the Public**

To provide the public an opportunity to share their views and to respond to the Annual Action Plan the following strategies will be implemented:

1. The City of Homestead will post the AAP on the City website.
2. All reasonable efforts will be taken to make AAP accessible to persons with disabilities, upon request.

### **Access to Records**

To provide an opportunity for citizens to receive information, submit comments and/or submit grievances on the proposed AAP the following strategies will be implemented:

1. Advertise a summary of the AAP, or a substantial amendment in a newspaper of general circulation, soliciting comments for a period of thirty (30) days. The summary will describe the contents and purpose of the AAP and will include locations where the entire plan may be examined.
2. Copies of the documents will also be placed on the City website.

3. The City will make available electronic copies of the documents to citizens and groups that request it.

4. Comments on the documents can be forwarded to;

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5. If not satisfied at the local level, complaints may be forwarded to HUD.

### **Technical Assistance**

To provide technical assistance to groups representing low and moderate-income persons, the following strategy will be implemented:

1. Technical assistance will be provided by City staff to group representatives of low and moderate-income persons that request such assistance in developing proposals for funding assistance under any programs covered by the Five Year Consolidated Plan.

### **Complaints**

The City of Homestead will act swiftly and objectively in resolving all written complaints and grievances utilizing the following strategies:

1. The City of Homestead will respond to citizen complaints/grievances within thirty business (30) days. The Director's response will indicate the avenue(s) of appeal to the complainant.
2. Citizens may, at any time during the complaint resolution process, contact the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) directly at the following address:

U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development  
Office of Community Planning and Development  
909 SE First Avenue, Room 300  
Miami, Florida 33131-3028

### **Solicitation Process**

The City of Homestead uses a Formal Application Process (a.k.a. RFA or RFP) in the Annual Action Plan for designation of funding. This process requires the submission of a formal

application, typically undertaken once a year in conjunction with the City's planning process. Applications are evaluated based on explicit selection criteria. The City of Homestead will select from applicants who are requesting funding using this criteria established by the City.

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

To provide an opportunity for citizens to receive information and/or submit comments regarding the Comprehensive Annual Performance Report (CAPER) the following strategies will be implemented:

1. The City shall publish notification of the availability of the CAPER for review by the public in a newspaper of general circulation fifteen (15) days prior to submission of the CAPER to the Committee of the Whole. The notification shall identify the locations at which the CAPER may be examined.
2. Citizens will be given a period of fifteen (15) days to submit comments on the CAPER prior to the report's submission to the City Committee of the Whole.
3. CAPER results will also be presented at a public meeting that is held annually in the first quarter of the succeeding year following the publication of the performance report.

### **Availability to the Public**

To provide the public an opportunity to share their views and to respond to the Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Report as adopted, the following strategies will be implemented:

1. The City of Homestead will post the Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Report, as adopted on the City website.
2. All reasonable efforts will be taken to make the Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Report accessible to persons with disabilities, upon request.

### **Access to Records**

To provide an opportunity for citizens to receive information, submit comments and/or submit grievances on the CAPER the following strategies will be implemented:

1. Advertise that the CAPER or a summary of the CAPER is available for period of 15 days for public comment. This advertisement will be in a newspaper of general circulation. The advertisement will describe the contents and purpose of the CAPER and will include locations where the document may be examined.
2. Copies of the documents will also be placed on the City website.
3. The City will make available electronic copies of the documents to citizens and groups that request it.
4. Comments on the documents can be forwarded to;

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5. If not satisfied at the local level, complaints may be forwarded to HUD.