

CITY OF PETALUMA

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT PROGRAM

CITIZEN PARTICIPATION PLAN

INTRODUCTION

The City of Petaluma, as an Entitlement Jurisdiction under the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program, is required by statute to have in place a detailed Citizen Participation Plan which contains the City's policies and procedures that describes the actions to be taken to provide for, and to encourage, citizen participation in the development of the Consolidated Plan and Annual Action Plans, and substantial amendments to an adopted Consolidated Plan, and the annual performance report. The purpose of the Consolidated Plan is to state, in one document, the jurisdiction's plan to pursue the CDBG program's goals of developing viable urban communities by providing decent housing and a suitable living environment and expanding economic opportunities principally for low- and moderate-income persons. This March 2011 Citizen Participation Plan amends the current 1999 Citizen Participation Plan to more fully describe the actions that the City of Petaluma will take to encourage the participation of all residents. This plan was approved by City Council on April 4, 2011.

Encouraging Public Participation

Citizens are encouraged to participate in the development of the Consolidated Plan and Annual Action Plans, any substantial amendments to an adopted Consolidated Plan, and the annual performance report. Special efforts will be made to encourage participation by person of low- and moderate-income who are: 1) residents of slum and blighted areas, 2) residents of areas in which community development funds are proposed to be used, 3) residents of predominantly low- and moderate-income neighborhoods, 4) residents of any designated neighborhood revitalization areas, 5) minorities, 6) non-English speaking persons, and 7) persons with mobility, visual or hearing impairments.

In an attempt to reach the low- and moderate-income citizens listed above, the City will distribute notices announcing 1) public hearings and other public meetings related to the consolidated planning process, 2) funding availability and applicant workshops, 3) publication of the draft Consolidated Plan and 5) publication of the draft annual performance report. Low and Moderate Income households are households earning less than 80 percent of Petaluma's

median family income according to HUD's annual income limits. They are broken down into the following income designations:

- Very Low Income: Households with incomes 30 percent or less of Petaluma median family income adjusted to household size.
- Low Income: Households with incomes from 31 percent to 50 percent of the Petaluma median family income adjusted for household size.
- Moderate Income: Households with incomes from 51 percent to 80 percent of Petaluma median family income adjusted to household size.

The notices will be distributed to community-based organizations throughout the City and serve low- and moderate-income persons. Notice will be sent to any person or organization requesting to be included in a mailing list. Information will be posted on the City's website where it can be read in English or Spanish. Also, The City of Petaluma's website has implemented considerations for screen readers for better accessibility to our website.

Notices of public hearings and other public meetings related to the consolidated planning process, funding availability and applicant workshops, availability of the draft Consolidated Plan and annual Action Plans and the annual performance report will also be published in the *Argus Courier* both in English and in Spanish, as well as on the City's official website.

Copies of Petaluma's Citizen Participation Plan, the 2010-2015 Consolidated Plan, and the Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Report (CAPER) are currently available only in English. Residents needing those (or any other) materials in other languages are encouraged to contact the City of Petaluma Housing and Block Grant Division staff at:

27 Howard Street

Petaluma, CA 94952

707/778-4555

bgaebler@ci.petaluma.ca.us or scastellucci@ci.petaluma.ca.us

Every effort will be made to fill those requests.

The City will provide technical assistance, particularly to any persons or groups representing persons with very low and low income. Such assistance shall be used to develop funding proposals for assistance with the CDBG program. Assistance will include at least one annual applicant workshop where City staff will provide information and assistance on funding

applications. Additional technical assistance will be available by individual appointments with the City staff. Technical assistance might include the following:

- Assisting with forms/applications
- Explaining the process for submitting proposals
- Explaining federal and local requirements
- Providing comments and advice on the telephone or in meetings
- Reviewing and commenting on draft proposals

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Citizen Participation Plan

The Citizen Participation Plan is designed to facilitate and encourage residents to participate in the Consolidated Plan process. In particular, the Citizen Participation Plan seeks to encourage the involvement of low- and moderate-income persons.

The City will use the following process to adopt and made any subsequent changes to its Citizen Participation Plan.

- The City will place the draft of its Citizen Participation Plan on the City's website (www.cityofpetaluma.net) and notify interested participants.
- The public will have 30 days to review the Citizen Participation Plan from the date of the notice.
- During the 30-day public review and comment period, the document will be available for review at the City Hall, 11 English Street. Copies of the document will be available to the public upon request.
- Residents may file comments in writing at City Hall, 11 English Street, Petaluma during the 30-day period from the date of the notice.
- The City Council will adopt the Citizen Participation Plan and any amendments.

Consolidated Plan and Annual Action Plan

To identify the needs of low- and moderate-income persons of the City, priorities will be established based on housing and community development needs. To solicit community input, the following will occur:

- City staff will encourage the participation of residents of assisted housing development in developing and implementing the ConPlan and the Action Plan.
- City staff will consult with private agencies, including nonprofit service providers and advocates such as homeless service providers, nonprofit housing developers and social service agencies.
- The City will place public notices, in English and Spanish, in the *Argus Courier* newspaper and on the City's Website (www.cityofpetaluma.net).
- A public meeting will be held before the City Council meeting to solicit input on needs and priorities for the ConPlan and the Annual Action Plan. An estimate of funding will to be used for activities that benefit low- and moderate-income persons will be provided at this public meeting. The meeting will be held in a location accessible to all interested persons.
- Residents have 30 days to review the draft ConPlan and/or draft Annual Action Plan from the date of the notice.

- Residents may file comments at City Hall, 11 English Street, Petaluma during a 30-day period from the date of the notice.
- A public hearing will be held before the City Council to receive comments and approve and ConPlan and the Annual Action Plan.
- The City Council will adopt the ConPlan and/or Annual Action Plan.
- In preparing the final ConPlan and/or Annual Action Plan, careful consideration will be given to all comments and views expressed by the public, whether given as verbal testimony at the public hearing or submitted in writing during the review and comment period. The final documents will have a section that includes all comments, plus explanations as to why any comments were not accepted.

Substantial Amendments

Amendments to the Consolidate Plan or the Annual Action Plan will be necessary whenever one of the following is proposed:

- To make a substantial change in the allocation priorities or a substantial change in the method of distribution of funds. A substantial change would affect 75 percent of the respective document.
- To substantially change the purpose, scope, location or beneficiaries of an activity.
- A change in the amount of CDBG funds allocated to an eligible activity if the change exceeds 10% of the annual grant.

The same procedures that are followed for Consolidated Plan and Annual Action Plan will be followed for any amendments to either of those documents.

Consolidated Annual Performance Evaluation Report (CAPER)

Every year, the City must submit to HUD a Consolidated Annual Performance Evaluation Report (CAPER). The CAPER must describe how funds were used and the extent to which these funds were used for activities that benefitted low- and moderate-income people. The following steps outline the opportunities for public involvement in the CAPER:

- The City will place public notices in the Argus Courier newspaper and on the City's website (www.cityofpetaluma.net)
- Residents have 15 days to review the CAPER from the date of the notice.
- During the 15-day public review and comment period, the document will be available for review at the City's Housing office as well as on the City's website. Copies of the document will be available to the public upon request.
- Residents may file comments at the City Hall, 11 English Street, Petaluma during the 15-day period from the date of the notice.
- In preparing the CAPER, careful consideration will be given to all comments and views expressed by the public that were submitted during the review and comment period.

The final report will have a section that includes all comments, plus explanations as to why any comments were not accepted.

Standard Documents

Standard documents include:

- The proposed and final Annual Action Plan
- The proposed and final Consolidated Plan
- Any proposed and final “substantial” amendments to either the Action plan or the Consolidated Plan
- The CAPER
- The Citizen Participation Plan

Availability of Standard Documents

In the spirit of encouraging public participation, copies of standard documents will be provided (either pro bono or on a loaner basis) within two working days of a request. The materials will be available in a form accessible to persons with a disability, to the extent possible.

The standard documents will be available at the Petaluma Public Library during public notice periods and, at all times, on the City’s website, and at the Block Grant Office at 27 Howard Street in Petaluma.

Access to Public Hearings

Public hearings will be held only after there has been adequate notice (as described earlier in this Plan). Hearings will be held at the regularly scheduled evening City Council meeting (7:00 start time). The meetings will be held in the City Council Chambers in City Hall (11 English Street), which is wheel chair accessible, accessible by bus, and is not an intimidating building to those who might benefit from the use of the funds or might have comments to make regarding the use of the funds or other program input. The

City shall provide interpreters for non-English speaking persons and/or the hearing impaired when requested. Translators, American Sign Language interpreters, and/or assistive listening devices for individuals with hearing disabilities will be available. A minimum of 48 hours is needed to ensure the availability of translation services. This information is also put in the public notice published in the *Argus Courier*.

The Conduct of Public Hearings

To ensure that public hearings are meaningful to the residents, each public hearing will be conducted in the presence of the Mayor and City Council. After completing and submitting a brief speaker's card, each resident wishing to speak will be given 3 minutes to do so.

Complaint Procedures

Written complaints from the public will receive a meaningful written or verbal response immediately.

Persons wishing to object to HUD approval of an application shall submit such objections to the HUD regional Office within thirty (30) days of the publication of the notice that the application has been submitted to HUD. Complaints should be addressed to:

Ms. Maria Cremer

San Francisco Regional HUD Office

600 Harrison Street, 3rd Floor

San Francisco, CA 94107-1300

415/489-6572