

CITY OF ODESSA, TEXAS
CDBG/HOME
CITIZEN PARTICIPATION PLAN



CITY OF ODESSA COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT
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I. OVERVIEW.

The City of Odessa (City) annually receives Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) and HOME Investment Partnerships Program (HOME) funds from the U.S. Department of Housing and Community Development (HUD) which it administers through the City's Community Development and Code Enforcement Department. The primary purpose of CDBG is to develop viable communities through the provision of decent housing, a suitable living environment and expanding economic opportunities for low- and moderate-income persons. HOME funds provide a wide range of activities including building, buying, and/or rehabilitating affordable housing for rent or homeownership or providing direct rental assistance to people who are low-income.

As a recipient of these funds, the City is required to produce the following documents:

- Consolidated Plan – a five-year plan that documents the housing and community development needs, outlines strategies to address those needs, and identifies proposed program accomplishments;
- Assessment of Fair Housing (AFH)/Analysis of Impediments (AI) to Fair Housing Choice The preparation of an AFH/AI is required every five (5) years. The AFH/AI is an analysis of fair housing issues in the City of Odessa and region that results in goals the City sets forth to achieve over the program participant's coming Consolidated Plan planning cycle;
- Annual Action Plan that describes specific CDBG and HOME-funded projects that will be undertaken over the course of the upcoming program year; and
- Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Report (CAPER) – evaluates the use of CDBG and HOME funds from the previous program year.

This Citizen Participation Plan provide citizens and other interested parties opportunities to participate in the planning, implementation, and evaluation of the CDBG and HOME programs and to review and comment on the documents listed above.

II. CITIZEN PARTICIPATION COORDINATOR

The City's Community Development and Code Enforcement Department Director is responsible for ensuring involvement of citizens and organizations as described throughout this Citizen Participation Plan.

The Citizen Participation Coordinator can be contacted by:

1. Mailing Address:

City of Odessa
Community Development & Code Enforcement Department
PO Box 4398
Odessa, TX 79760

2. Telephone: *(Monday – Friday, 8am-5pm):* (432) 335-4820

3. Email: tjrbryant@odessa-tx.gov

III. ENCOURAGEMENT OF CITIZEN PARTICIPATION.

The City of Odessa strongly encourages participation by low-and moderate-income persons, particularly those persons living in areas designated by the City as a target area, in a slum and blighted area, in areas where CDBG funds are proposed to be used, and by residents of predominantly low-and-moderate-income neighborhoods.

The City will take appropriate actions to encourage the participation of all residents in the process of developing and implementing an AFFH, Consolidated Plan and Annual Action Plan, including minorities and non-English speaking persons, as well as persons with disabilities. The City encourages the participation of community stakeholders, especially those that assist low-and-moderate-income persons with improving self-sufficiency .

This Citizen Participation Plan outlines the City's responsibility for providing opportunities for active citizen participation. The goals of the Citizen Participation Plan are to:

1. Encourage citizen participation by all residents, emphasizing involvement of low- and moderate-income residents, people with disabilities, minorities, and residents of assisted housing;

2. Encourage participation of local and regional institutions, Continuums of Care, and other organizations in the process of developing and implementing the AFH and the Consolidated Plan.
3. Encourage participation of broadband internet service providers, organizations engaged in narrowing the digital divide, and emergency management agencies in the process of developing the Consolidated Plan.
4. Inform citizens of the Consolidated Plan and the Annual Action Plan, including funds available for CDBG and HOME Programs and eligible activities under these programs;
5. Give all citizens an opportunity to identify and respond to priority needs;
6. Give all citizens an opportunity to identify and respond to proposed projects and the use of funds; and
7. Give all citizens an opportunity to review and comment on program performance.

The City shall follow a citizen participation plan that addresses the following issues: participation, access to meetings, access to information, access to records, Public Hearings, notice of hearings, public comments, technical assistance, complaints, and amendments.

a) Encouragement of Citizen Participation

All citizens will be encouraged to participate in the development and review of the:

- Consolidated Plan: Five-Year Plan
- Assessment of Fair Housing;
- Annual One-Year Action Plans;
- Substantial Amendments to the One-Year Action Plans or Five-Year Plan;
- Citizen Participation Plan; and
- Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Report (CAPER)

b) Public Hearings

Public Hearings will be held at times and locations which permit broad participation by citizens, elected and other government officials, organizations, and other groups eligible for projects and activities funded by the City's Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) or HOME Investment Partnerships (HOME) funds. In the event Federal, State or Local authorities declare a disaster, a public health issue, recommends social distancing, or limits public gatherings for public health reasons, Virtual Public Hearings will be held. All Public Meetings will conform to applicable Texas open meeting laws

The City will conduct a minimum of four Public Hearings during each program year.

1. City Council will conduct a Public Hearing before making annual CDBG and HOME funding allocation decisions.
2. A second Public Hearing will be held at the beginning stages of developing the proposed Consolidated Plan and Annual Action Plan. Residents, units of general local government, public agencies, and other interested parties are urged to attend the Hearing to provide their views and respond to proposals and ask questions.
3. A third Public Hearing will be conducted after the Consolidated Plan and/or Annual Action Plan are published for public review and comments. Residents, units of general local government, public agencies and other interested parties are urged to attend the Hearing to provide their views and respond to proposals and ask questions.
4. The fourth Public Hearing is held by the City Council to collect public input on the City's performance during the last program year. The Consolidated Annual Performance Evaluation Report (CAPER) analyzes progress towards the goals established in previous plans about the unit of measure for the project, as well as timely completion. This report also provides information on the performance of funded projects in relationship to the program objectives.

The CAPER will be made available for public review and comment before the date of the hearing. And the City shall consider any comments or views received. A summary of all comments or views, and a summary of any comments or views not accepted, shall be attached to the final CAPER.

The City will receive comments from citizens on its plan for a period of not less than 30 days prior to submission of the Consolidated Plan or Annual Action Plans to HUD. All comments or views of citizens received in writing during the 30-day comment period will be considered in preparing the final Consolidated Plan and Annual Action Plan. A summary of these comments or views and a summary of any comments or views not accepted and the reasons for not accepting them shall be attached to the final Consolidated Plan and Annual Action Plan.

The public may comment on any proposed documents in writing or at the Public Hearing. Written comments must be directed to the Director, Community Development and Code Enforcement Department, PO Box 4398, Odessa, TX or tjrbryant@odessa-tx.gov. The City shall consider all comments received in preparing these documents.

IV. PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE AND PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD REQUIREMENTS

Notices of public meetings, Public Hearings, substantial amendments, notifications of comment periods, and the notification of the City’s proposed and actual use of CDBG/HOME funds will be posted in the Odessa American newspaper and on the City’s Community Development web page: [www.odessa-tx.gov/172/community - development](http://www.odessa-tx.gov/172/community-development).

Citizens, organizations, agencies, and other interested parties will be encouraged to submit their comments on the proposed Consolidated Plan, Annual Action Plan and CAPER. Minimum comment periods are listed below:

Document	Comment Period
Citizen Participation Plan	15 calendar days
Consolidated Plan	30 calendar days
Assessment of Fair Housing/ Analysis of Impediments	30 calendar days
Annual Action Plan	30 calendar days

CAPER	15 calendar days
Substantial Amendment	30 calendar days

V. ACCESS TO RECORDS

The City shall provide citizens, public agencies, and other interested individuals with reasonable and timely access to information and records relating to the Consolidated Plan and the City’s use of CDBG and HOME Program funds during the preceding five years.

The public may access these materials by contacting the Citizen Participation Coordinator. Reasonable accommodation for persons with disabilities will be made upon request. Information is also available on the City’s Community Development web page at www.odessa-tx.gov/172/community-development.

VI. PROGRAM YEAR AND FUNDING AVAILABILITY

The City’s Program Year is from October 1 through September 30 each year. The City publishes a Notice of Program Year Availability of CDBG and HOME funds. Through this notice, The City will make available to citizens, public agencies, and other interested stakeholders with information that includes the amount of funding the City expects to receive and the range of activities that may be undertaken. The Notice will also inform the public of the time and place of Public Hearings.

VII. COMPETITIVE FUND ALLOCATION PROCESS

The City receives annual allocations of CDBG and HOME funds from the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). After funding awards are made, any funds returned from projects, either completed under budget or cancelled, are reallocated in the next program year funding cycle.

The City uses a competitive fund allocation processes to recommend HOME and CDBG projects for funding to the City Council. The public is notified about the application for funding process in the same way documents for review are advertised. Notice of funding availability is also emailed to nonprofits, and past recipients. The process also includes an application workshop and technical assistance.

VIII. NON-ENGLISH SPEAKING AND HANDICAPPED RESIDENTS

All public meetings, workshops, and hearings are held in a way that are accessible to people with disabilities. Upon reasonable request to the Citizen Participation Coordinator, the City will provide translators at Public Hearings and meetings. Telephonic oral language service (interpretation) is also available.

Reasonable accommodations will also be provided to disabled persons, or non-English speaking persons needing assistance in reviewing CDBG/HOME program materials or documents.

IX. TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

The City will provide technical assistance to develop an application for funding for individuals or groups that request such assistance to the Citizen Participation Coordinator.

X. PROCEDURES FOR COMPLAINTS OR GRIEVANCES

Complaint or grievance on housing or community development programs should be directed to the Citizen Participation Coordinator. Persons submitting written complaints will be provided written responses within 15 working days.

Citizens wishing to object directly to HUD may send written objection to:

U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
Office of CPD- Fort Worth Regional Office
ATTN: CPD, 6AD
307 W. 7th St., Suite 1000
Fort Worth, TX 76102

XI. AMENDMENTS TO CONSOLIDATED PLAN AND/OR ACTION PLANS

Prior to submitting substantial amendments to HUD, the City will provide citizens a 30-day notice of an opportunity to comment. The City shall consider all comments received in preparing substantial amendments. A summary of all comments received shall be attached to any substantial amendment. Any comments that are not accepted shall be included in this summary along with the reason they were not accepted

A substantial amendment is defined, in accordance with 24 CFR 91.505(a), as:

- a) A change in allocation priorities (any change greater than 30 percent in an individual project budget) or a change in the method of distribution of funds;
- b) Carrying out an activity (including those funded exclusively with program income) not previously described in the Consolidated Plan or Annual Action Plan; or
- c) A change in the purpose, scope, location, or beneficiaries of an activity

Changes that are not considered substantial amendments:

- a) Changes to the CDBG or HOME budget for a project by an amount that is less than 30 percent;

- b) Consolidated Plan data updates such as census data, income limits, fair market rents, HOME high and low rent limits, HOME subsidy limits, and similar types of data;
- c) A minor change in location if the purpose, scope, and intended beneficiaries remain essentially the same; or
- d) The transfer of funds within a project from one approved budget line item to another approved budget line item (e.g., construction rather than engineering).

XII. MINIMIZING DISPLACEMENT

The City of Odessa will follow HUD Handbook 1378 policies for displaced persons due to relocation funded in whole or in part by HUD funds. The handbook consolidates basic requirements and HUD policy guidance on acquisition and relocation under the Uniform Relocation Act of 1974 and Section 104 (d) of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974. These requirements and policies are followed when acquiring real property or displacing persons for a project or program with HUD financial assistance.

The City's CDBG/HOME housing rehabilitation and reconstruction programs are voluntary and relocation assistance is not provided.

XIII. CONTINGENCY PLAN IN THE EVENT OF AN EMERGENCY OR DISASTER

The City shall comply with all HUD memorandums and notices that direct citizen participation requirements in the event of a local, state, or national emergency or disaster. These requirements shall supersede any conflicting provisions of the Citizen Participation Plan. Following the HUD standards will allow the City to respond in the most expeditious manner to secure and access new HUD funding and/or re-allocate existing funding