

METROPOLITAN GOVERNMENT OF NASHVILLE-DAVIDSON COUNTY
METROPOLITAN DEVELOPMENT AND HOUSING AGENCY
CITIZEN PARTICIPATION PLAN

INTRODUCTION

The Citizen Participation Plan is designed to provide for and encourage citizen involvement in the development, implementation and evaluation of housing and community development programs in Metropolitan Nashville-Davidson County, Tennessee. While the processes contained in this Citizen Participation Plan may be used to address a broad range of public and private resources, this Plan is specifically designed to meet the citizen participation requirements for the Consolidated Plan for housing and community development needs of Metropolitan Nashville-Davidson County. Completion of the Consolidated Plan is required by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development in order for Metropolitan Nashville-Davidson County to receive federal funds allocated through the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), the HOME Investment Partnerships Program (HOME), the Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG), and the Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS (HOPWA) Program.

As the lead agency responsible for the preparation and administration of the Consolidated Plan, the Metropolitan Development and Housing Agency (MDHA) has the primary responsibility for developing and implementing the Citizen Participation Plan. Per the federal regulations found at 24 CFR 91, the citizen participation plan must provide for and encourage citizens to participate in the development of the Consolidated Plan, the annual action plan, any substantial amendments to the Consolidated Plan, and the annual performance report. The plan is designed especially to encourage participation by low-and moderate-income persons, particularly:

- a. those living in slum and blighted areas,
- b. in areas where CDBG funds are proposed to be used,
- c. residents of predominantly low- and moderate-income neighborhoods,
- d. residents of public and assisted housing developments, and
- e. residents of targeted revitalization areas in which the developments are located.

MDHA will follow its citizen participation plan to the greatest extent possible. The requirements for citizen participation do not restrict the responsibility or authority of MDHA for the development and execution of its Consolidated Plan. MDHA will provide citizens with a reasonable opportunity to comment on amendments to the citizen participation plan and will make the citizen participation plan public. The citizen participation plan must be in a format accessible to persons with disabilities, upon request.

The Community Development Department of MDHA is the point of contact for all questions, comments, complaints, and requests for technical assistance. The Community Development Department can be contacted by telephone at 615-252-8505 or by e-mail at comments@nashville-mdha.org. Please address all correspondence to:

MDHA Development Department
Attn: Consolidated Plan
P.O. Box 846
Nashville, TN 37202

MDHA will maintain a contact list to keep interested parties informed with updates regarding the Consolidated Plan. To be added to the contact list call 615-252-8505.

THE CONSOLIDATED PLAN & ANNUAL ACTION PLAN

Every five years MDHA develops a long-term strategic plan called the Consolidated Plan. The Consolidated Plan guides the programs that MDHA will undertake each year. In addition to the Consolidated Plan, MDHA must prepare an annual action plan that describes the actions to be taken in a specific program year. To ensure public participation in the development of the Consolidated Plan and annual action plan, MDHA will hold a public hearing, accept public comment, and issue public notices for the Consolidated Plan and for each annual action plan.

Public Notice & Publication

MDHA will publish a public notice in a non-legal section of The Tennessean and at least one weekly minority and Hispanic newspaper, to announce the public comment period, at least 10 days before a public hearing. MDHA will also publish a notice on its website. The notice will include a general summary and the location where copies of the entire plan may be obtained. MDHA will also send the notice to all members of the Consolidated Plan contact list. Notices will also be distributed to local elected officials, affordable housing forums/groups, public housing Resident Associations, Continuum of Care membership, and other interested parties and groups.

MDHA is required to publish each proposed plan in a manner that affords citizens, public agencies, and other interested parties a reasonable opportunity to examine its contents and to submit comments. MDHA will provide a reasonable number of free copies of the plan to citizens and groups that request it. MDHA will make every effort to provide reasonable accommodation for

reviewing the document upon request. Copies of each plan will be available for review at MDHA and on the MDHA website at: www.nashvillemdha.org/consolidated-plan.

Public Hearings

MDHA will hold at least one public hearing per year during the development of the Annual Action plan. The purpose of the public hearings is to obtain citizens' views, respond to proposals, and answer questions. The hearings will address housing and community development needs, proposed activities, and review of program performance. MDHA will make every effort to provide reasonable accommodations and services to assist persons with disabilities or sensory impairments. Translation services may be offered upon request.

Public Comments

MDHA will provide a period of at least 30 days to receive comments from citizens on each proposed plan. MDHA will consider any comments or views of citizens received in writing, or orally at the public hearings, in preparing the final adopted plan. A summary of these comments or views shall be attached to the final adopted plan.

PLAN AMENDMENTS

In the course of administering the four federal programs, MDHA may need to amend the Consolidated Plan or an annual action plan. When the amendment is significant and meets the criteria set forth below, the change will be considered a substantial amendment and MDHA will undertake additional actions in accordance with the Citizen Participation Plan to ensure citizens have an opportunity to comment. Changes to the Consolidated Plan that do not meet the criteria for substantial amendments and do not require citizen participation are defined as administrative updates. Examples of administrative updates include grammatical or structural edits that do not substantially change the scope or meaning of an activity; and changes in the coding or eligibility determination of a project that does not change the scope, location, or beneficiaries. Records of all amendments will be maintained at MDHA for public review and entered in Integrated Disbursement and Information System (IDIS) as required by HUD.

CRITERIA FOR SUBSTANTIAL AMENDMENTS – UNRELATED TO DISASTER/EMERGENCY EVENTS

If a plan amendment meets any of the following criteria, MDHA will consider the amendment to be substantial and undertake the additional steps described in this section to ensure public participation:

- a) The addition of a goal not described or the deletion of an existing goal in the Consolidated Plan;
- b) A change in goal funding described in the Consolidated Plan that is increased or decreased by more than 35% of that goal;
- c) The addition of a new project not previously described in the current year's annual action plan;
- d) A fiscal change to a project in the current year's annual action plan to increase or decrease the project by more than 25% of the total allocation of CDBG, HOME, ESG, and HOPWA funds for the program year with the following exception:
 - o Funds that were made available through the process described in the Action Plan and could not be committed/expended due to lack of demand may be reallocated to other eligible activities; or
- e) A substantial amendment is required by HUD.

Public Notice & Publication

In the case of any proposed substantial amendment, MDHA will publish a public notice in *The Tennessean* and at least one weekly minority and Hispanic newspaper to announce the public comment period a minimum of 10 days before a public hearing. The notice will include a summary of the amendment and a list of the locations where copies of the amendment may be examined. MDHA will also maintain a contact list of interested parties and send information regarding the amendment to all members on the contact list.

Public Comments

MDHA will provide a period of at least 30 days to receive comments on the substantial amendment before the amendment is implemented. MDHA will consider any comments or views of citizens received in writing, or orally at public hearings, if any, when adopting the amendment. MDHA will attach a summary of these comments and MDHA's response to the final adopted amendment.

DISASTER/EMERGENCY EVENTS THAT REQUIRE EXPEDITED SUBSTANTIAL AMENDMENTS

For CDBG funding under FY 2019-2020, FY 2020-2021, and the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act or CARES Act, participating cities may provide a 5-day notice/comment period of a proposed off-cycle change as allowed under a HUD waiver. This includes any new activities proposed. A public hearing is not required but documentation relative to off-cycle activity planning applies.

Special ESG funding under the CARES Act referred to as ESG-CV to address the COVID19 pandemic does not have citizen participation requirements that would otherwise apply to ESG funds; however, MDHA will publish how the ESG-CV funding has or will be used on MDHA's website and other appropriate Metro websites.

It may be necessary to expedite substantial amendments to the Consolidated Plan in the event of a declared disaster or emergency. There are three (3) types of disasters/emergency events that necessitate an expedited substantial amendment including (1) Man-Made-disasters, (2) Natural disasters, and (3) Terrorism. Man-made disasters can include chemical spills, mass rioting, power outages, dam failure, plant explosions, etc. Natural disasters can include earthquakes, tsunamis, hurricanes, tornadoes, wild fires, flooding and public health issues such as wide-spread disease such as the recent coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19). Terrorism events include bomb threats, biochemical attacks like the spread of anthrax, or cyber-attacks like hacking, phishing, and virus distribution, etc.

These expedited substantial amendments may include funding new activities and/or the reprogramming of funds including canceling activities to meet needs resulting from a declared disaster or emergency. Therefore, the MDHA may utilize CDBG, HOME, ESG, or HOPWA funds to meet these needs with a 5-day public comment period instead of a 30-day public comment period, which is otherwise required for substantial amendments.

With respect to a declared disaster, the MDHA may elect to use CDBG, HOME, or ESG funds to address needs not provided for by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and the Small Business Administration (SBA), or other disaster relief efforts. Funding for disaster relief may not duplicate other efforts undertaken by federal or local sources unless allowed by the federal government. Potential eligible uses of funds are those that are included in the Consolidated Plan or any other CDBG, HOME, or ESG eligible use.

HUD may provide new guidance on eligible uses in which the MDHA will comply with and may utilize as well.

All eligible CDBG activities, including those to address declared disasters or emergencies, must meet one of three national objectives which are: (1) Benefit to low- and moderate-income (LMI) persons; (2) Aid in the prevention of slums or blight; and (3) Meet a need having a particular urgency (referred to urgent need). MDHA may carryout eligible CDBG activities to meet needs resulting from declared disasters or emergencies under any one of the three national objectives.

PERFORMANCE REPORTS

Each year MDHA must submit a Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Report (CAPER) to HUD. This report is due 90 days after the close of the program year. To ensure public participation in the review of the performance report, MDHA will hold a public hearing, accept public comment, and issue public notices.

Public Notice & Publication

MDHA will publish a public notice in *The Tennessean* and at least one weekly minority and Hispanic newspaper to announce the public comment period a minimum of 10 days before a public hearing. MDHA will also maintain a mailing list of interested parties and send information to all members of the mailing list. MDHA will provide a reasonable number of free copies of the performance report to citizens and groups that request it. Copies of each report will be available for review at MDHA and on the MDHA website at: www.nashville-mdha.org/consolidated-plan.

Public Hearings

MDHA will hold at least one public hearing per year during the preparation of the annual report. The purpose of the public hearings is to obtain citizens' views, answer questions, address housing and community development needs, and review program performance.

Upon request, MDHA will provide for translation services to meet the needs of non-English speaking residents. MDHA will also take whatever actions are appropriate to serve the needs of persons with disabilities.

Public Comments

MDHA will provide a period of at least 15 days to receive comments on the annual report before the report is submitted to HUD. MDHA will consider any comments or views of citizens received in writing, or orally at public hearings, if any, when preparing the final report. MDHA will attach a summary of these comments and MDHA's response to the final annual report.

INFORMATION

In addition to providing participation in the development of plans and the review of the annual report, MDHA 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 use of federal funds. MDHA will provide access to records for the current program year and previous five program years. This information includes, but is not limited to, the citizen participation plan,

the Consolidated Plan as adopted, annual action plans, performance reports, and any substantial amendments. MDHA will make these records available in a form accessible to persons with disabilities, upon request. Most records are maintained at MDHA in the Community Development Department, located at 712 South Sixth Street.

Records may be reviewed by appointment during regular business hours.

MDHA will also provide citizens with reasonable and timely access to local meetings held in regard to the Consolidated Plan and the activities undertaken as part of the Consolidated Plan.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

MDHA must provide technical assistance to groups representative of persons of low- and moderate-income that request such assistance in developing proposals for funding assistance under any of the programs covered by the Consolidated Plan. To request technical assistance, contact the Community Development Department using the contact information listed in the Introduction.

COMPLAINTS

MDHA will maintain a file that documents all citizen complaints and MDHA's response for any complaints related to the Consolidated Plan, amendments, and performance report. MDHA will provide a substantive written response to every written citizen complaint within 15 working days of the receipt of the complaint. In addition, MDHA will consider these complaints when evaluating program performance as part of the annual report to HUD. Address all complaints to the Community Development Department using the address given in the Introduction.

DISPLACEMENT

Displacement occurs when an individual, family, partnership, association, corporation, or organization moves from their home, business, or farm, or moves their personal property as a direct result of a federally-funded acquisition, demolition or rehabilitation. Generally, displacement does not include persons displaced temporarily from their dwelling for less than 12 months while it is being rehabilitated. Displaced persons and entities are eligible for relocation assistance under federal law.

As a part of this plan, MDHA is required to describe its plans to minimize displacement of persons and to specify the types and levels of assistance MDHA will make available to persons displaced.

To minimize displacement, MDHA will avoid the acquisition and demolition of occupied structures. When displacement is necessary and unavoidable, MDHA will offer the following types of assistance.

For Residential Displacements

- Provide relocation advisory services to displaced tenants and owner occupants
- Provide a minimum 90 days written notice to vacate prior to requiring possession
- Reimburse for moving expenses
- Provide payments for the added cost of renting or purchasing comparable replacement housing.

For Nonresidential Displacements (businesses, farms, and nonprofit organizations)

- Provide relocation advisory services
- Provide a minimum 90 days written notice to vacate prior to requiring possession
- Reimburse for moving and re-establishment.