**CITY OF PETALUMA**

**COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT PROGRAM**

**CITIZEN PARTICIPATION PLAN**

First Modified January 27, 2021

Draft for March 7th 2024

**INTRODUCTION**

The City of Petaluma receives an annual entitlement grant under the federal government Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program. As a requirement for receiving these entitlement grants, Title I of the National Affordable Housing Act mandates that jurisdictions prepare:

* A five-year Consolidated Plan (Con Plan) and Consolidated Annual Action Plan (Annual Action Plan or AAP) that identify the local community development needs and set forth a funding strategy to address those needs. The purpose of the Consolidated Plan (Con 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.
* A Consolidated Annual Performance Evaluation Report (CAPER) that assesses the jurisdictions annual achievements relative to the goals described in the Consolidated Plan and is the last step in the annual process.
* The Citizen Participation Plan (CPP) describes the City’s process to facilitate and engage citizens to participate in an advisory role in the planning, implementation, and assessment of the Consolidated Plan and Annual Action Plans (Action Plan).

This March 2024 Citizen Participation Plan amends the current 2021 Citizen Participation Plan to more fully describe the actions that Petaluma will take to support the participation of all residents of the City.

**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, per HUD guidelines: 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. 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 over 120 languages including English and 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 posted on the City’s official website at: <https://cityofpetaluma.org/housing-reports-documents/>. Upon request, the city will provide appropriate auxiliary aids or services for those individuals who have hearing, sight or speech impairments.

Copies of Petaluma’s Citizen Participation Plan, the 2020-2024 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:

11 English Street

Petaluma, CA 94952

707-778-4563

housing@cityofpetaluma.org

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 make any subsequent changes to its Citizen Participation Plan.

* The City will place public notice in the *Argus Courier* newspaper, and on the City’s website )
* Residents will be provided 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 submit written public comment by emailing comments to [cityclerk@cityofpetaluma.org](mailto:cityclerk@cityofpetaluma.org) or through the agenda portal on the City of Petaluma webpage <https://cityofpetaluma.org/meetings/> select the date of meeting and the scroll to the options column on the right and click the icon 
* 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 substantial amendments of the Plan.

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 Con Plan 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 (https://cityofpetaluma.org).
* A public meeting will be held before the City Council meeting to solicit input on needs and priorities for the Con Plan 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 Con Plan 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 Con Plan and the Annual Action Plan.
* The City Council will adopt the Con Plan and/or Annual Action Plan.
* In preparing the final Con Plan 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.

**The Role of Low-Income People**

The law requires that the primary purpose of the programs covered by this Citizen Participation Plan is to improve communities by providing decent housing, a suitable living environment, and growing economic opportunities – all principally for low- and moderate-income people.

Because the amount of federal CDBG financial assistance the City receives annually is based upon the economic and housing needs of Petaluma, it is necessary that public participation genuinely involve low-income residents who experience these conditions. Involvement by low-income residents is encouraged at all stages of the process:

* Identifying needs
* Setting priorities among those needs
* Monitoring program implementation

**The Stages of the Consolidation Plan Process**

The policies and procedures in this Citizen Participation Plan relate to several stages of action mentioned in law or regulation:

1. Identification of housing and community development needs
2. Preparation of a draft use of funds for the upcoming year (the Annual Action Plan) and the Consolidated Plan every five years
3. Formal approval of the Annual Action Plan by the Petaluma City Council
4. On occasion during the Plan year, it may prove necessary to redirect funds already approved in the Action Plan. In that event, an amendment will be proposed, considered, and acted upon by the Authorizing Official (the City Manager) or the City Council.
5. After a program year is complete, the CAPER is drafted for public review, City Council review, and submittal to HUD.

**The Program Year**

The “Program Year” for the City of Petaluma coincides with our fiscal year, July 1 through June 30.

**PUBLIC NOTICE**

**Items Covered by the Public Notice Requirement**

There shall be advanced public notice once a federally required document is available, such as the Annual Action Plan, 5-year Consolidated Plan, proposed “substantial” amendment (i.e., any funding change amounting to more than 10% of the annual grant), and the CAPER.

In addition, there shall be advanced public notice of all public hearings relating to funding or the planning process covered by the Citizen Participation Plan.

**“Adequate” Public Notice**

Adequate advance notice is “timely;” and it is given with enough lead time for the public to take informed action. The amount of lead time for the notice will be at least 30 days and the content of the notice will give the residents a clear understanding of the event and the issues being noticed.

**Forms of Public Notice**

1. Public notice will be published in the Argus-Courier.
2. Notices will also be provided to the owner-operators of the City’s low-mod income housing communities and nonprofit agencies providing service to lower income residents.
3. Notice will be sent to any person or organization requesting to be included in a mailing list.

**Public Access to Information**

As required by law, CDBG staff will provide the public with reasonable and timely access to information and records relating to the data or content of the Consolidated Plan, as well as the proposed, actual, and/or past use of funds covered by this Citizen Participation Plan. Regarding the past use of funds, the law requires reasonable public access to records about any use of these funds during the past five years.

**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-line and at Petaluma City Hall at 11 English 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 wheelchair 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 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:

Mr. Jason Pu / David Passey

San Francisco Regional HUD Office

One Sansome St, Suite 1200

San Francisco, CA 94124-6572

415-489-6400

**CITIZENPARTICIPATIONPLAN/CDBGDOCUMENTS**