

Appendix A - Municipality of Anchorage (Municipality) Citizen Participation Plan

The Municipality must develop and follow a Citizen Participation Plan to receive federal funds for the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), HOME Investment Partnerships (HOME), Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) and National Housing Trust Fund Grant (HTF) programs. The Citizen Participation Plan (CPP) covers the five-year Consolidated Plan (Con Plan), the Assessment of Fair Housing (AFH) as part of the Con Plan, each subsequent Annual Action Plan (AP), each year's Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Report (CAPER), and any amendments to the Plans.

1. Purpose

This Citizen Participation Plan sets forth the policies and procedures for citizen participation in Anchorage's Con Plan process. The Municipality is responsible for the citizen participation process.

This Citizen Participation Plan encourages citizens to participate in the Con Plan process from the beginning. It outlines the procedures for community approval of the Con Plan, for addressing concerns and complaints, and for making amendments to the plan after approval.

2. Opportunities

The Municipality urges citizens to voice their concerns and share their ideas concerning CDBG, HOME, ESG and HTF program funds. It welcomes comments and suggestions regarding the CPP, Con Plan, AFH, APs, and CAPERs.

To encourage citizen participation, the Municipality will undertake the following activities each year.

- Hold at least four public hearings at different times during the program year;
- Offer public comment periods for the draft versions of the Con Plan, AFH, APs, and CAPERs;
- Consult with various groups to review needs, strategies, actions, projects, and performance;
- As soon as practical after HUD makes AFH-related data available to the Municipality, the Municipality will make such information and any other supplemental information the Municipality plans to incorporate into the AFH available to the public, public agencies, and other interested parties (24 CFR 91.105(b)(1)(i));
- Distribute notice of availability of copies of the draft Con Plan, AFH, APs, and CAPERs to the Housing, Homeless and Neighborhood Development Commission, Anchorage Coalition to End Homelessness (Continuum of Care), Federation of Community Councils, Alaska Housing Finance Corporation, other public and private agencies that provide assisted housing, health services, and social and fair housing services, Municipal residents, and other groups as appropriate and upon request; and

- Provide the public with notice of citizen participation opportunities through email distribution lists kept for this purpose, and announcement of public hearing dates through newspaper publication a minimum of one week before date of public hearing. Related information will be posted on the Municipal website.

3. Public Hearings and Meetings

The Municipality will hold at least two public hearings per year to obtain public comments on needs, strategies, actions, projects, and performance. If a need exists and resources permit, the Municipality will include other public meetings in addition to the hearings. The Municipality will hold public hearings and provide opportunities for public comment. To encourage the participation of public housing residents, the Municipality will try to hold one public meeting in a public housing community or in a place convenient to one or more public housing communities.

The Municipality will hold hearings covered by this Citizen Participation Plan at times and locations convenient to potential and actual beneficiaries, and with accommodation for persons with disabilities (24 CFR 91.105(f)). The Municipal Assembly may hold additional public hearings to approve plans and substantial amendments, appropriate grants, and allocate and award grant funds.

When the Municipality is concerned about significant public health risks that may result from holding in-person public hearings, the Municipality may undertake a virtual public hearing (alone, or in concert with an in-person hearing) and allow questions in real time, with answers coming directly from the Municipality to all “attendees”. As with an in-person hearing, the Municipality will provide accessibility for persons with disabilities and Limited English Proficiency to participate.

The ESG-CV funds require no consultation and citizen participation; however, the Municipality will publish how the allocation has or will be used on the appropriate Municipal web page. The Municipality will publish the ESG-CV allocations on the Anchorage Health Department, Community and Safety Development web page before funds are awarded. The CDBG-CV required public comment period is reduced to not less than 5 days and the public hearing may be virtual.

Public Hearing #1—Proposed Needs, Strategies, and Projects

The Municipality will hold the first public hearing each year to obtain citizens’ views and to respond to proposals and questions. It will be held before the 30-day public comment period begins for the Con Plan, AFH and an AP (24 CFR 91.105(e)(iii)). The public hearing will contain a discussion of the following items:

- The amount of assistance the Municipality expects to receive in the coming program year for the CDBG, HOME, ESG and HTF programs, including Program Income.
- The range of activities that the Municipality may undertake, including the estimated amount that will benefit low- and moderate-income persons.

- Address the proposed strategies and actions for affirmatively furthering fair housing consistent with AFH.
- The priority needs in the Con Plan.
- The five-year strategies in the Con Plan designed to address those needs.
- A discussion of the programs and activities necessary in the upcoming program year to carry out those strategies.

Public Hearing #2—Annual Action Plan or 5-Year Con Plan

The Municipality will hold the second public hearing each year to obtain citizens' views and comments on the draft AP or five-year Con Plan. This public hearing will be held during the 30-day public comment period.

Public Hearing #3— Annual Action Plan or 5-Year Con Plan

The third public hearing of each year will be conducted at the Municipal Assembly during the official approval of the AP or five-year Con Plan; this meeting occurs after the 30-day comment period on the draft has ended.

Public Hearing #4— Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Report (CAPER)

The Municipality will hold the fourth public hearing no later than one week before the CAPER is due to HUD.

4. Public Comment Period

To provide Anchorage's residents with maximum feasible input into the Con Plan, AFH, APs and CAPERs, the Municipality provides the following public comment periods:

- Citizens may comment on the draft Con Plan, AFH, APs and substantial amendments for 30 days from the publication date.
- Citizens may comment on draft CAPERs for 15 days from the publication date.

To make comments on these documents, citizens may send written comments to the address under "Contact Information"; send an email to email address under "Contact Information"; or attend the public meetings and hearings described above. The participation of all citizens is encouraged and reasonable accommodation will be made for those persons with disabilities who need auxiliary aids, services, or special modifications and non-English speaking persons.

The Municipality will include a summary of citizen comments regarding each document and a summary of any comments not accepted (and the reasons why particular comments were not accepted). Public comments are any oral or written testimony provided at any public hearings, or any written testimony provided during the citizen comment period.

5. Consultation Activities

The Municipality will consult with other groups as appropriate, including but not limited to the Anchorage Coalition to End Homelessness (the Continuum of Care), Federation of Community Councils, community councils, and social service agencies. For the AFH, the Municipality will consult with other public and private agencies that provide assisted housing, health services,

and social services, including those focusing on services to children, elderly persons, persons with disabilities, persons with HIV/AIDS and their families, homeless persons, organizations that represent protected class members and organizations that enforce fair housing laws (24 CFR 91.100(a)(1)). Additionally, the Municipality will consult with the Alaska Housing Finance Corporation regarding public housing agency needs, comprehensive grant program activities, neighborhood improvement programs, and resident programs and services (24 CFR 91.100(c)(1)).

These groups may provide comments on the draft Con Plan, AFH and APs, including needs and proposed strategies, actions, projects, and substantial amendments.

6. Distribution of Draft Documents

The Municipality will make the Con Plan, AFH, APs and CAPER available in both print and electronic versions as requested. Draft plans and reports will be posted on the Municipality website. The Municipality will also make these documents available in a format accessible to persons with disabilities or non-English speaking persons upon request.

7. Notification of Public Participation Opportunities

The Municipality will provide citizens with reasonable opportunities for comment on the Con Plan, AFH, APs and CAPERs. The Municipality will place a public notice concerning the availability of these documents in one newspaper of general circulation. Citizens may send a request to Community Safety and Development to be added to the email distribution list.

The Municipality may also provide notice in a variety of additional ways that include the following:

- Notice may also be sent out by email;
- Electronic notification via facsimile;
- Direct mailing;
- Posting of notices on bulletin boards, public counters, and flyers in public agencies and community facilities; and
- Posting on the Municipality's website.

8. Amendments to the Consolidated Plan and Annual Action Plans

Con Plan regulations (24 CFR 91.505) indicate that the Anchorage Housing and Community Development Plan (including the Con Plan, AFH and APs) may be changed in two ways after it is adopted by the Municipality and approved by HUD. The process used depends upon whether the change will be a non-substantive, or a substantial amendment.

The Municipality must amend its approved Con Plan, AFH or APs before it may make any of the following changes.

- A change in the allocation priorities or a change in the method of distributing funds.
- The addition of a new activity, using CDBG, HOME, ESG and HTF funds (including Program Income), not previously described in an AP.

- A change in the purpose, scope, location, or beneficiaries of an activity previously approved in an AP.
- The material change(s) in circumstances in Anchorage that affects the information on which the AFH is based, to the extent that the analysis, the fair housing contributing factors, or the priorities and goals of the AFH no longer reflect actual circumstances (24 CFR 91.105(c)(ii)) and (24 CFR 5.164).

The Municipality will make the amendment public and will notify HUD about the amendment. The Municipality will ensure that all amendments are contained in the CAPER submitted to HUD after the end of the program year. The Municipality reserves the right to make non-substantive changes to the Con Plan, AFH or an AP without opening a public comment period.

Non-Substantial Amendments

A non-substantial amendment includes any changes to an AFH or AP not considered a substantial amendment.

Substantial Amendments

Con Plan, AFH and AP regulations consider certain amendments to be substantial amendments that require a public comment period and additional citizen participation. A substantial amendment would be triggered by any of the following activities.

- Changes in the use of CDBG funds from one HUD, CDBG eligible activity to another (24 CFR 91.05(c)(1)). Budget increases or decreases, by themselves, do not constitute a substantial amendment.
- Any new project not previously included in the Con Plan or an AP.
- A change in project location if the project moves outside of previously identified geographical boundaries or results in a different service area.
- The target population benefiting from an activity or project changes from the previously identified target population.
- An increase or reduction in the amount budgeted for a project or activity by more than 50% of the original budget or by more than \$100,000, whichever is greater.
- The material change(s) in circumstances in Anchorage that affects the information on which the AFH is based, to the extent that the analysis, the fair housing contributing factors, or the priorities and goals of the AFH no longer reflect actual circumstances (24 CFR 91.105(c)(ii)) and (24 CFR 5.164).

Public Participation and Approval Process for Substantial Amendments

If the Municipality should need to make a substantial amendment to its approved Con Plan, AFH or AP, it will follow the public participation and approval process below, which is substantially like that for an AP.

Notification of Substantial Amendment

The Municipality will notify the community of any proposed substantial amendment that is available for comment. Notification will be provided, at a minimum, by placing a public notice in one newspaper of general circulation and by distributing the notice to interested parties through Community Safety and Development's email distribution list. Interested parties may be added to the email distribution list by sending an email request to Community Safety and Development.

Public Comment Period of Substantial Amendment

The public will be invited to comment on the proposed substantial amendment for a minimum of 30 days. During the public comment period, the Municipality will hold at least one public hearing to allow the public to make comments in person. Comments will also be accepted in writing during the public comment period.

Consultations

Depending on the nature of the amendment, the public participation process may also include consultation with other organizations.

Comments Considered

The Municipality will consider any comments received in writing or at the public hearing. It will make any appropriate changes to the amendment in response to the comments and consultation(s) and attach a summary of these comments along with a summary of the Municipality's response to them, to the substantial amendment.

Final Approval

The substantial amendment will be submitted to the Municipal Assembly for approval.

9. Obtaining Citizen Comments

The Municipality will summarize oral comments from public hearings and any written comments it receives concerning the Con Plan, AFH, APs or CAPER. The Municipality will consider all comments received during the public comment period, make any appropriate changes to the subject document in response to the comments, and attach a summary of the comments, along with a summary of the Municipality's response to them, to the document. Members of the public may obtain copies of the full version of written or public hearing comments by contacting Community Safety and Development.

10. Outreach to Persons with Disabilities and Non-English-Speaking People

To provide full access to programs under the Con Plan, AFH, APs or CAPERs for non-English speaking persons (24 CFR 91.105(a)(4)), the Municipality may undertake the following actions:

- Communicate with organizations serving various ethnic groups to insure adequate involvement with this community;
- Disseminate program materials and public hearing notices to nonprofit organizations serving the Municipality's culturally diverse population;

- Publish notices of public hearings, information availability, and citizen meetings for the proposed Con Plan and any substantial amendments in non-English publications available within the Anchorage community; and
- Provide interpreters (if available) at public hearings when the Municipality expects a significant number of non-English speaking residents to attend, or upon request.

To provide full access to programs under the Con Plan, AFH, APs or CAPERs for persons with disabilities, the Municipality will undertake one or more of the following actions:

- Select only sites for public hearings that are accessible for persons with physical disabilities;
- Provide a verbal summary or recorded summary of the Con Plan to persons with visual impairments;
- Provide sign-language interpreters or written translation at public hearings when the Municipality expects a significant number of people with hearing loss to attend, or upon request; and
- Conduct outreach to community organizations that represent persons with disabilities as part of the Con Plan process.

Non-English-speaking residents, persons with a hearing impairment, sight-impaired and blind individuals, and other persons with physical disabilities and special needs may call, write, in person, or send an email to Community Safety and Development; PO Box 196650, Anchorage, AK 99519-6650 (mail); (907) 343-4881 (telephone); Jedediah.drolet@anchorageak.gov (email); or (907) 343-4468 (TTY/TDD).

11. Public Information and Access to Records

Citizens, public agencies, and other interested parties may review information and records relating to the Con Plan. The Municipality will provide public access to information about the HUD programs under its Con Plan, including the following documents that the Municipality maintains on file.

- Federal Laws: Summary of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1977; Title I of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974, as amended: The National Affordable Housing Act (as amended)
- Federal Regulations: CDBG, HOME, ESG and HTF Program regulations; related issuances and provisions (i.e. Uniform Relocation Assistance)
- Con Plan, Assessment of Fair Housing, APs and Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Reports
- Information about the Municipality's CDBG, HOME, ESG and HTF programs
- Anchorage's Citizen Participation Plan for 2018-2022
- The Municipality's HUD information: grant agreements, audit records, evaluation reports, approval letters, and related correspondence

- The Municipality’s public meeting records: public meetings, informal meetings with civic and neighborhood groups, and related notifications pertaining to programs under the Con Plan

Individuals may access many of these documents at no cost by the Internet at the Municipality’s website

<http://www.muni.org/Departments/health/PHIP/CSD/Pages/Default.aspx>, at Community Safety and Development’s office, Municipal libraries, or by contacting Community Safety and Development staff. Many federal documents may be accessed at www.hudclips.org.

To locate records and arrange space for viewing, the Municipality requests written notice a minimum of 2 days before review. Review of records that are at least 2 years old will require a 5-day notice. Requests for multiple copies of the same documents may be subject to a per page copying charge that will not exceed the copying charge to the Municipality.

12. Technical Assistance

Upon request, the Municipality may provide technical assistance to neighborhood groups, nonprofit organizations, and other organizations representative of low- and moderate-income people who wish to develop proposals for funding assistance under any programs covered by the Con Plan. The Municipality will determine the level and type of technical assistance on a case-by-case basis.

Additionally, Municipal staff will work with organizations funded under an AP to ensure that funds are being spent for their intended purpose and within the rules and regulations of the federal government.

13. Complaints

Municipal Code Title 7 – Purchasing and Contracts and Professional Services governs the submission of complaints regarding the competitive award of funding. Residents should file such complaints with the Municipal Purchasing Department according to procedures described in procurement documents.

Citizens should submit all other complaints to the Municipality, which will provide a substantive written response to every written citizen complaint related to the Citizen Participation Plan, the Con Plan, AFH, APs, substantial amendments to APs and CAPERs within 15 working days (24 CFR 91.105(j)). Send formal complaints to address under “Contact Information”.

Complaints
Municipality of Anchorage
Anchorage Health Department
Human Services Division
Community Safety and Development
P.O. Box 196650
Anchorage, Alaska 99519–6650

Such substantive complaints must address the following issues (specified in HUD regulations).

- The Municipality’s description of needs and objectives in its Con Plan is plainly inconsistent with available facts and data.
- The Municipality’s proposed activities are plainly inappropriate in meeting the needs and objectives identified by the Municipality.
- The Municipality’s application does not comply with HUD requirements regulating programs under the Con Plan or other applicable laws.
- The Municipality’s application proposes activities that are otherwise ineligible as specified in applicable HUD regulations.

The Municipality will attach a summary of citizen comments and complaints and a summary of any comments not accepted (and the reasons why the Municipality did not accept them) to the final Con Plan, AFH, APs, CAPERs, or substantial amendment.

Contact Information

Municipality of Anchorage
Anchorage Health Department
Human Services Division
Community Safety and Development (CSD)
825 L Street, Room 506
Anchorage, AK 99501
Mail: P.O. Box 196650
Anchorage, Alaska 99519-6650
Phone: 907-343-4881
E-mail: ahdcsdplans@anchorageak.gov