



State of Wisconsin
Department of Administration

CITIZEN PARTICIPATION PLAN

**produced in conjunction with the
State of Wisconsin's Consolidated Plan
for April 1, 2010 through March 31, 2015**

**State of Wisconsin ■ Scott Walker, Governor
Department of Administration ■ Mike Huebsch, Secretary**

INTRODUCTION

This document outlines the State of Wisconsin's responsibilities for obtaining citizen participation in the process of preparing, amending, and updating its Consolidated Plan.

The Consolidated Plan details the State's housing and community development needs, the strategies the State will undertake to address these needs, and the annual action plan for the first and subsequent years that the Plan is in effect.

The Consolidated Plan serves as the State's application to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) for program funds of the Small Cities Community Development Block Grants (CDBG), HOME Investment Partnerships (HOME), Emergency Shelter Grants (ESG), and Housing Opportunities for Persons With AIDS (HOPWA). A number of cities and metropolitan counties¹ within Wisconsin prepare their own Consolidated Plans.

Responsibilities for preparing the Consolidated Plan and its related documents were transferred to the Department of Administration (DOA) from the Department of Commerce in the 2011-2013 Biennial Budget. DOA administers all four U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) formula programs covered by the Plan (CDBG, ESG, HOME, and HOPWA). Through an agreement with DOA, the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation (WEDC) administers the CDBG Economic Development and Community Development programs.

The agency contact for the Consolidated Plan and this Citizen Participation Plan are:

Ms. Lisa Marks, Administrator, Division of Housing

Wisconsin Department of Administration

101 E. Wilson St.

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Madison, WI 53707-7970

(608) 267-0770/(608) 266-5381 (FAX)

¹ Appleton, Beloit, Eau Claire, Fond du Lac, Green Bay, Janesville, Kenosha, La Crosse, Madison, Milwaukee, Milwaukee County, Neenah, Oshkosh, Racine, Sheboygan, Superior, Waukesha County, Wausau, Wauwatosa, and West Allis.

PARTICIPATION IN DEVELOPMENT OF CONSOLIDATED PLAN

The State of Wisconsin shall provide for and encourage local government, agency, and citizen participation in the development of its Consolidated Plan. The State shall undertake the following actions in these areas.

Encouragement of Participation—General

The State shall encourage participation in the development of its Consolidated Plan through the following means:

- 1) Mass mailing paper copies or emailing electronic copies of notices to the assembled distribution lists of the Division of Housing and WEDC and local unit of government clerks.;
- 2) Notices to the various media outlets;
- 3) Notification through the DOA's newsletters;
- 4) Listening sessions and information dissemination at statewide affordable housing and homeless conferences and other relevant events.
- 5) Posting of public notices concerning the Consolidated Plan on the Internet at the DOA website.
- 6) Online Consolidated Plan survey and comment opportunity on the DOA website.

Participation of Nonentitled Municipalities and Other Units of Government

The State shall notify nonentitled municipalities and other units of government directly by email of the Consolidated Plan's development process.

DOA shall solicit ideas regarding the distribution method and priorities for Housing funds annually at related conferences and events. The target audiences are nonentitled units of government, housing agencies, consultants, homeless and special needs service providers.

DOA will work with similar target audiences regarding non-housing CDBG programs. It will engage the committee process when soliciting comments and input regarding program design.

Participation of Public and Private Agencies

Public and private sector agencies that provide assisted housing, health services, and social services shall receive notification by mail or email of the Consolidated Plan's development process. The State shall encourage written comments and attendance at listening sessions and public hearings and use of the DOA website. In addition, DOA shall work with representatives from public and private agencies to help with data

analysis and to provide feedback on the State's housing and community development needs and potential solutions.

Public and quasi-public agencies include: the WEDC, the Wisconsin Housing and Economic Development Authority; the Departments of Health Family Services, Children and Families, Administration, Veterans Affairs; and Corrections, the University of Wisconsin-Cooperative Extension; and, USDA Rural Development.

Private agencies include grantee and applicant organizations of DOA which are located throughout the state, and statewide agencies such as: Foundation for Rural Housing; Wisconsin Community Action Program Association; and the Wisconsin Association of Housing Authorities.

Participation of Citizens

The State shall encourage the participation by its citizens in the Consolidated Plan's development process. In order to maximize the participation of citizens of low income, with mobility or other impairments, or with a language barrier, the State shall, in addition to the steps outlined above:

- 1) Provide an online Consolidated Plan survey on the DOA website to capture comments and recommendations for Consolidated Plan programs and priorities.
- 2) Notify, through direct letters, emails, and publications, the availability of the online survey for the Consolidated Plan development.
- 3) schedule hearings and forums at times and locations that are convenient to potential and actual beneficiaries;
- 4) ensure that hearing and forum sites can accommodate persons with mobility impairments (the advertisement mentioned above will include this information);
- 5) arrange for special communication accommodations, if notified by potential participants at least one week prior to the public hearing;
- 6) accept comments via electronic mail and TTY (the advertisement mentioned above will include the appropriate e-mail address and TTY number).

Access to Information

The State shall make available to units of local government, citizens, agencies, and other interested parties information on the amount of anticipated revenue for housing and community development activities for the following year. Furthermore, the State shall make available information on its proposed range of activities, including the estimated amounts of funds that are proposed to assist residents by income category (extremely low (less than 30% of median family income), very low (31-50% of median family income), and low (51-80% of median family income)). Finally, the State shall address any displacement that its activities would create, and provide information on the steps to assist those displaced.

This information will be available at the public hearings and electronic forums.

Publication of Proposed Consolidated Plan

The State shall have the proposed Consolidated Plan available in print and by electronic means on the Internet.

The public comment period for the proposed Consolidated Plan will be at least thirty days. The State shall publish a notice of the availability for comment in the Wisconsin State Journal on or before the first day of the comment period.

The State shall publish a summary in the Wisconsin State Journal. This summary will include how the public can obtain copies or examine the proposed Consolidated Plan.

The State shall mail printed copies of the proposed Consolidated Plan to the main branches of the public libraries in the following communities: Appleton, Eau Claire, Green Bay, La Crosse, Madison, Marinette, Milwaukee, Platteville, Racine, Rhinelander, Rice Lake, Richland Center, River Falls, Superior, Wausau.

The State shall also make copies available free of charge to the public, both in printed form and by electronic means. A reasonable number of copies will be printed; if that supply is exhausted, the State shall provide additional copies in electronic form only.

Comments on Consolidated Plan programs should be sent to the Division of Housing, Department of Administration, P.O. Box 7970, Madison, WI 53707-7970.

The State shall consider the comments it receives during the comment period as it prepares the final Consolidated Plan. The State shall append a summary of these comments, both those accepted and those rejected, to the final Consolidated Plan.

AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSOLIDATED PLAN

Criteria for Substantial Amendments

The following changes in the State's Consolidated Plan will constitute substantial amendments:

- 1) any substantial change in the method used to distribute CDBG, HOME, ESG, and HOPWA funding;
- 2) any change to the HUD CDBG Program that requires a change to the governing State Administrative Rules;
- 3) any change to the HUD HOME Program, adopted by the state, that involves additions of other forms of investment or changes to guidelines for resale or recapture not previously allowed or approved by HUD;
- 4) any substantial change in the HUD ESG Program priorities that the State has established.

Prior to the submission of a substantial amendment to HUD, the State shall publish notice of its intention to make the substantial amendment in the Wisconsin State Journal. The text of the proposed substantial amendment will be available from the Division of Housing.

The comment period will be not less than 30 days in length unless the Department of Housing and Urban Development waives the 30-day comment period. The DOA shall consider any comments or views received when preparing the final version of the substantial amendment.

Comments should be sent to the Division of Housing, Department of Administration, P.O. Box 7970, Madison, WI 53707-7970.

The DOA shall append a summary of these comments, both those accepted and those rejected, to the final version of the substantial amendment.

PERFORMANCE REPORTS

Prior to the submission of its annual performance report to HUD, the State shall publish notice of its availability for comment in the Wisconsin State Journal. The draft annual performance report will be available from the Department of Administration. The comment period will be not less than fifteen days in length. The State shall consider any comments or views received when preparing the final version of the report. The State shall append a summary of these comments to the final version of the report.

Comments should be sent to the Division of Housing, Department of Administration, P.O. Box 7970, Madison, WI 53707-7970.

ACCESSIBILITY OF CONSOLIDATED PLAN, AMENDMENTS, AND PERFORMANCE REPORT TO PUBLIC

Availability of Documents

The Department shall make available to the public the final Consolidated Plan, any substantial amendments, and annual performance reports. Copies will be available in printed form or electronic means.

Interested parties should request printed or electronic copies from the Division of Housing, Department of Administration, P.O. Box 7970, Madison, WI 53707-7970.

The State shall make these materials also available in a format for persons with disabilities.

Access To Records

The State shall make available to citizens, public agencies, and other interested parties its records relating to the Consolidated Plan, and the use of assistance under this Plan. The state may provide certain data, if voluminous, only in summary format. Any information released will protect the confidentiality of program beneficiaries.

The State shall make an effort to respond to requests for records within fifteen working days.

The State shall maintain such records for a period of five years.

Interested parties should request records on the CDBG, HOME, ESG, and HOPWA programs from the Division of Housing, Department of Administration, P.O. Box 7970, Madison, WI 53707-7970.

CITIZEN PARTICIPATION REQUIREMENTS FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENTS (CDBG PROGRAM)

Units of general local government applying for CDBG funding must adhere to the citizen participation requirements promulgated in the Code of Federal Regulations, Part 24, Section 570.486 (24 CFR §570.486). Specifically, the State shall require that local governments:

- 1) adopt a resolution in support of a citizen participation plan that is in conformance with 24 CFR §570.486;
- 2) include the citizen participation plan in its CDBG application materials;

- 3) provide evidence (e.g., sign-in lists for public hearings) that elements of the citizen participation plan were followed in the preparation of its CDBG application.

COMPLAINTS

The State shall accept any complaint concerning the Consolidated Plan, substantial amendments, and annual performance reports. Complaints should be in written form and should be mailed to:

Division of Housing, Department of Administration, P.O. Box 7970, Madison, WI 53707-7970

The State shall respond to complaints in writing within fifteen working days.

Complaints should be addressed to the Division of Housing, Department of Administration no later than one year after their comment period expires.[⌚]

[⌚] Editing note: The Final Rule is silent on the length of time within which complaints should be accepted. Given that amendments are generally issued annually and the action plan is updated annually, a one-year limit on complaints is a reasonable time standard.