

#### IV. DEVELOPMENT OF THE PLAN

*91.200 (b)*

- *Identify the lead agency or entity for overseeing the development of the plan and the major public and private agencies responsible for administering programs covered by the consolidated plan.*
- *Identify the significant aspects of the process by which the plan was developed, and the agencies, groups, organizations, and others who participated in the process.*
- *Describe the jurisdiction's consultations with housing, social service agencies, and other entities, including those focusing on services to children, elderly persons, persons with disabilities, persons with HIV/AIDS and their families, and homeless persons.*

*91.200(c)*

- *The plan shall also include a concise summary of the citizen participation process, public comments, and efforts made to broaden public participation in the development of the Consolidated Plan.*

The Community & Economic Development Office is the lead agency responsible for overseeing the development of the Consolidated Plan and for administering the CDBG and HOME programs.

The process of developing the Plan began with a Public Hearing in September 2007 to hear community views on housing and community development needs, as well as comments on prior program year performance.

In November 2007 through February 2008, CEDO consulted with a number of groups and organizations, sharing or asking for data and for input on needs, priorities, inclusion of low-income residents in the CDBG allocation process and other issues. Those groups and organizations included representatives of:

Housing Agencies:

Burlington Housing Authority  
Champlain Housing Trust  
Cathedral Square Corporation  
Housing Vermont  
Vermont Housing Finance Agency  
Habitat for Humanity

Agencies Serving Children:

Regional Early Childhood Planning Group  
Child Care Resource

Agency Serving People Living with HIV/AIDS:

Vermont CARES

Agencies Serving Seniors and Persons with Disabilities:

Cathedral Square Corporation  
Howard Center  
Champlain Valley Agency on Aging  
HomeShare Vermont  
Vermont Department of Aging and Independent Living  
AARP Vermont  
Champlain Senior Center  
Heineberg Senior Center

Agencies Serving the Homeless and Low-Income Residents:

Champlain Valley Office Economic Opportunity / Chittenden Community Action  
Committee on Temporary Shelter (homeless adults and families)  
Women Helping Battered Women (domestic violence)  
Spectrum Youth and Family Services (homeless youth)  
Vermont Legal Aid  
ReCycle North  
Community Health Center, Homeless Healthcare Project  
Fletcher Allen Healthcare  
Lund Family Center  
Howard Center (homeless with mental health needs)  
Vermont CARES  
Vermont Division of Economic Services (TANF agency)

Other Agencies:

United Way of Chittenden County  
Vermont Student Assistance Corporation  
Vermont Department of Health

For-Profit Entities:

Banks and Credit Unions that are part of the CASH Coalition of Chittenden County

State, Adjacent Government and Metropolitan Planning Agencies

Copies of the draft Plan will be mailed to the Vermont Department of Housing & Community Affairs and to the Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission.

Citizen Participation

CEDO met with each of the Neighborhood Planning Assemblies (NPAs) during December 2007 through February 2008 to discuss the Consolidated Plan and, in particular, proposed changes to the Citizen Participation Plan. The NPAs are grassroots associations, created by City Charter, which exist in each of city's wards and which meet monthly as organized, democratic forums where neighbors can learn about public issues that affect them and advise city government of their concerns and needs. CEDO also met separately with the citywide NPA Steering Committee for additional discussion about the Consolidated Plan.

The draft Consolidated Plan was published online in mid- March 2008. Notice of the draft Plan was published in a local newspaper and on CEDO's website. Notice was also mailed to the CDBG mailing list and to over 1,000 residents through an e-newsletter.

A Public Hearing on the Consolidated Plan will be held before City Council on April 28, 2008. The Public Hearing will be televised over the local public access television station. A summary of the public comments which the city receives will be included at Appendix C.

The most meaningful way in which Burlington residents participate in the Consolidated Plan process is their involvement in the nuts and bolts of spending decisions. Each of the city's seven wards elects a representative to the CDBG Advisory Board and collectively, those residents have a majority voice in making recommendations to the Mayor about how to spend the city's CDBG funding each year. The Board's recommendations have traditionally been adopted without change by the Mayor and City Council.

In addition, the city actively encourages residents of low- and moderate-income neighborhoods to submit applications for CDBG funding for neighborhood improvements. These resident-generated applications, which are discussed and approved by the Neighborhood Planning Assemblies before moving forward in the allocation process, have been effective not only in improving neighborhoods but also in bringing residents together to act collectively to address local needs.

The city continues to look for new ways to meaningfully include its citizens – especially its low-income citizens – in the development of the Consolidated Plan. One seat on the CDBG Advisory Board has been and will continue to be reserved for a resident living in subsidized housing. This year, the city explored the possibility of reserving a seat for a TANF (Temporary Assistance for Needy Families) participant, with Board service to count towards community placement requirements, but was not able to make that fit with TANF program requirements. However, the city was able to create a new seat for a low-income city resident participating in the Single Parent Program at Champlain College.

There are also ways beyond designated seats at the decision-making table to bring low-income citizens into the process. For example, this year a group of low-income residents joined the Board at its first meeting to show a video they had made – called “Imagine If You Were Poor Like Me” – and to talk about what would most help them to get where they would like to be in five years and about what stands in the way.