

## IX. CITIZEN PARTICIPATION PLAN

*Sec. 91.105 (a)(1)*  
*The jurisdiction is required to adopt a citizen participation plan that sets forth the jurisdiction's policies and procedures for citizen participation.*

The City of Burlington, through its Community & Economic Development Office, strongly encourages public involvement in the Consolidated Plan process and use of Community Development Block Grant money, including

Section 108 guarantee loan funds. This Citizen Participation Plan outlines the city's policies and procedures regarding that public involvement.

The Citizen Participation Plan, together with the Consolidated Plan, the Annual Action Plans, any substantial amendments to these Plans, the annual performance reports on the progress of the Consolidated Plan, and applications for Section 108 loan guarantee assistance are available at the Community & Economic Development Office and on its website.

This Plan, together with all other materials relating to the City's CDBG and HOME programs, are available in alternative formats for persons with disabilities. For information, contact the Community & Economic Development Office at 865-7144 or 865-7142 TTY.

### Citizen Advisory Board

1. A Citizen Advisory Board will make recommendations each year to the Mayor and City Council on the allocation of CDBG funds.
2. The Board will include:
  - One elected representative from each of the City's seven wards, chosen through the Neighborhood Planning Assemblies.
  - One representative from the United Way of Chittenden County.
  - One representative of the State of Vermont.
  - One Burlington resident participating in the Single Parent Program at Champlain College.
  - Three representatives of the City of Burlington appointed by the Mayor, including one tenant living in public housing or subsidized housing. In appointing representatives, the Mayor will attempt to ensure to the fullest extent possible that the Board represents the existing diversity of the community.
3. The members of the City Council Community Development & Neighborhood Revitalization Committee will serve as *ex officio* members of the Board.

### Public Hearings

1. The city will hold at least two public hearings during the year to obtain citizen's views about housing and community development needs, development of proposed activities and review of program performance. At least one public hearing will be held to obtain the views of citizens on housing and community development needs (including priority nonhousing community development needs) before the Consolidated Plan is published for comment and before any application for Section 108 loan guarantee assistance is submitted.
2. The city will ensure adequate public notice before each public hearing, with sufficient information published about the subject of the hearing to permit informed comment. Public hearings will be announced online and in the newspaper. Citizens will be notified of the public hearings at least two weeks before they are held.
3. Advanced public notice will also be given of all public meetings relating to the Consolidated Plan and performance progress, such as those of the Citizen Advisory Board and Neighborhood Planning Assemblies.
4. The city will hold all public hearings at times and locations convenient to potential and actual beneficiaries, and accommodations will be made for people with disabilities. All hearings will be held in accessible locations, and sign language interpreters will be made available upon advance request. Public hearings will be televised on the local public access channel.
5. The city will provide interpretation services for non-English speaking residents at public hearings upon advance request, provided such services are available in the community.

### Development of the Consolidated Plan

1. The city, through CEDO, will make a concerted effort to notify citizens, agencies and organizations of the development of the consolidated plan and the availability of CDBG funds through mailings, online postings and public notices in the newspaper. In addition, CEDO will notify the Steering Committees of the city's Neighborhood Planning Assemblies.
2. CEDO will conduct workshops at various and convenient times to inform and educate citizens on the development of the Consolidated Plan and the availability of funds. CEDO will provide technical assistance to all applicants, with special efforts to assist the Neighborhood Planning Assemblies in the development of applications for funding – particularly those Neighborhood Planning Assemblies which include predominately low and moderate income neighborhoods. Citizens, through the Neighborhood Planning Assemblies, will be encouraged to discuss the various activities funded by CDBG grants and other HUD programs.

3. Before the city adopts the Consolidated Plan, the city will make available to citizens, public agencies and other interested parties information that includes the amount of assistance the city expects to be made available, the range of activities that may be undertaken, the estimated amount that will benefit persons of low and moderate income, and any activities likely to result in displacement.
4. The city will publish its proposed Consolidated Plan for review and comment. The city will publish a newspaper summary describing the contents and purpose of the Consolidated Plan and listing the locations where the entire plan may be examined. The entire plan will be made available for review and examination at the Community & Economic Development Office and on its website.
5. The city will receive and consider comments on the proposed Consolidated Plan for 30 days before preparing the final Consolidated Plan.

#### Development of Section 108 Loan Guarantee Assistance Applications

1. Before the city submits an application for Section 108 loan guarantee assistance, the city will make available to citizens, public agencies and other interested parties information that includes the amount of assistance the city expects to be made available (including program income), the range of activities that may be undertaken, the estimated amount that will benefit persons of low and moderate income, and any activities likely to result in displacement.
2. The city will publish its proposed application for review and comment. The city will publish a newspaper summary describing the contents and purpose of the application and listing the locations where the entire application may be examined. The entire application will be made available for review and examination at the Community & Economic Development Office and on its website.
3. The city will receive and consider comments on the proposed application for 30 days before preparing the final application.

#### Amendments to the Consolidated Plan

1. The City will amend its approved Consolidated Plan whenever it makes one of the following decisions:
  - a. To make a substantial amendment in allocation priorities or a substantial amendment in the method of distribution of funds;
  - b. To carry out an activity not previously described in the Action Plan, using funds from any program covered by the Consolidated Plan (including program income);  
or
  - c. To substantially amend the purpose, scope, location or beneficiaries of an activity.

2. "Substantial amendment" is defined as a change in a planned or actual activity proposed after the official adoption of the Consolidated Plan that affects 10% or more of the city's current annual allocation of CDBG or HOME funds.
3. Substantial amendments to the approved Consolidated Plan must be authorized by the Mayor and the Board of Finance, and will be made public by postings and public notices in the newspaper.
4. The city will receive and consider comments on substantial amendments to the Consolidated Plan for 30 days before implementing those amendments.

#### Performance Reports

1. The city will prepare a performance report each year on the progress of the Consolidated Plan in accordance with the requirements of the U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development.
2. Citizens will be afforded notice of the performance report through online postings and newspapers. The performance report will be available at CEDO and on its website for review, and will be mailed to all members of the Citizen Advisory Board who request a copy.
3. The city will receive and consider comments on the performance report for 15 days before the report is submitted to HUD.

#### Access to Information and Records

1. The city, through CEDO, will provide citizens, public agencies and other interested parties with reasonable and timely access to information and records relating to the city's Consolidated Plan and the city's use of funds under the CDBG and HOME programs during the preceding five years.
2. The city, through CEDO, will regularly communicate with citizens and applicants for CDBG funds (and particularly with the Neighborhood Planning Assemblies) regarding the progress of the Consolidated Plan. Neighborhood Planning Assembly representatives of the Citizen Advisory Board will be encouraged to communicate with the Neighborhood Planning Assemblies on the progress of the Advisory Board.

#### Comments and Complaints

1. The city will consider any comments or views of citizens received in writing, or orally at public hearing, in preparing this Citizen Participation Plan, the final Consolidated Plan, substantial amendments to either Plan, and the annual performance reports. A summary of these comments or views will be attached to the Citizen Participation Plan, the final Consolidated Plan, substantial amendment or performance report.

2. The city, through CEDO, will respond to written complaints received by CEDO relating to the Consolidated Plan, any amendments to the Plan, and the annual performance reports. Upon request, CEDO will transcribe oral complaints for signature by the complaining person or organization. Where practicable, CEDO will respond to complaints within 15 working days of receiving the written complaint.

### Displacement

The City will minimize displacement of persons (families, individuals, businesses, nonprofit organization and farms) and will assist any persons displaced as a result of projects assisted with CDBG, HOME and/or Section 108 funds in accordance with the City of Burlington's Housing Initiatives Program Displacement Policy. That policy is available upon request from CEDO.