

CITY OF LIVERMORE CITIZEN PARTICIPATION PLAN

The City of Livermore (City) is an Entitlement City in the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's (HUD) Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program. CDBG regulations require Entitlement jurisdictions to have a Citizen Participation Plan which describes the City's policies and procedures for public involvement in the CDBG program and offers provisions which:

- Provides for and encourages public participation, particularly of low and moderate income people, people of color, non-English-speaking persons, people with disabilities, seniors, homeless persons, Housing Authority clients;
- Provides community members with reasonable and timely access to local meetings, information and records related to the City's proposed use of Program funds;
- Provides for technical assistance in developing proposals for funding;
- Provides for convenient and accessible public hearings to obtain community member views and questions regarding needs, proposed activities and Program performance;
- Provides for timely written answers to written complaints and grievances; and
- Provides non-English speaking and disabled community members a method for participating in public hearings.
- Provides guidance on public processes during local emergencies

As required by federal regulations 24 CFR Part 91.105, the City of Livermore (the "City") has developed this Citizen Participation Plan (the "Plan") to ensure citizen input informs how the City will use federal funds received annually from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). The Plan requires at least two public hearings per year to obtain community member views and to respond to proposals and questions. The Community Development Department/Housing and Human Services Division has primary responsibility for managing the citizen participation process, the development and implementation of programs and the reporting of annual accomplishments referenced in this Citizen Participation Plan.

The following describes actions to be taken by the City of Livermore to ensure that the above requirements are met.

ENCOURAGING PARTICIPATION OF IMPACTED COMMUNITIES

To determine the most appropriate uses of federal funds, the City of Livermore desires to consult community members for whom the funds are designed to serve, particularly low and moderate income people, people of color, non-English-speaking persons, people with disabilities, seniors, homeless persons, Housing Authority clients, and community based organizations.

Who Are Low-Income Residents? Where Are Low-Income Neighborhoods?

To be eligible for program assistance, a family must have an income at or below 80% of adjusted median income (AMI). Annually, HUD publishes income data¹ for Program eligibility, also known as Section 8 Income Limits, by family size. (Updated income limits can always be found on the Alameda County Housing and Community Development website at https://www.acgov.org/cda/hcd/hud-income-rent_limits.htm) Persons whose incomes are at or below 80% AMI, and/or who live in assisted housing and/or a low-income neighborhood are particularly encouraged to become familiar with the purpose and activities of the Program.

How Can Low-Income Residents Participate in the Program?

Low-income residents may participate in the Program by talking or writing directly to the Community Development Department (CDD) Housing and Human Services (HHS) Division about housing and human service's needs; participating in public meetings/hearings to provide feedback on how program funds to benefit low-income residents and/or neighborhoods; and talking or writing directly to the Human Services Division staff regarding the proposed use of program funds, performance and results. Low-income residents also may participate as beneficiaries of the program services offered by City, or by City-funded community-based organizations. Contact information for Human Services Division staff may be obtained by visiting the City website at www.cityoflivermore.net.

REASONABLE AND TIMELY ACCESS TO PROGRAM INFORMATION

How Can Community Members Learn About the Program?

The City is responsible for providing information about CDBG. Requests for specific information regarding the activities, regulation and/or administration of the CDBG program should be directed to Human Services staff, who may be contacted in person or by phone Monday - Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. The HHS is located at 1052 South Livermore Ave., Livermore, CA 94550; 5925.960.4580), and 925.960.4104 (TDD).

Alameda County Housing and Community Development (ACHCD) is the lead agency for the consortium of public agencies, which administers HOME funds throughout Alameda County. Information regarding HOME-funded activities in Livermore is available at the City of Livermore Housing and Human Services office located at 1052 South Livermore Ave., Livermore, CA 94550 or by phone at 925.960.4580. For more information regarding the HOME Consortium's Citizen Participation Plan, including public hearings and opportunities to comment on the proposed use of HOME funds, contact ACHCD at 670-5280 (Voice), 265-0253 (TDD).

Citizens are encouraged to review and print available program documents,

including Request for Proposals and proposed and adopted Program Plans and Performance Reports, on the City website at www.cityoflivermore.net.

The City periodically makes information available to citizens through the publication of notices. Copies of public notices also are posted or available on the City's main website www.cityoflivermore.net.

The City also may announce information during the City Council meetings so that citizens have access to this information. City Council meeting materials and videos are available on the City of Livermore's website, www.cityoflivermore.net.

PUBLIC PROCESS FOR DETERMINING PROGRAM FUNDS

Community Needs Identification

The City will hold a community needs meeting once per year prior to releasing any Notice of Funding Availability/Request for Proposal (NOFA/RFP) or publishing a draft Annual or Consolidated Plan for public comment. Current grantees, impacted community members described above, community based organizations, and local agencies will be contacted to solicit their input on the prior grant cycle program outcomes, priority needs of the community, and proposed uses for the anticipated CDBG, HOME and/or other local funding for the upcoming grant cycle. The City will review project outcomes from the prior program year and hold one or more community meetings to assist in the assessment of future needs based on information provided by providers, impacted community members, and consumers of services. The City will then prioritize the needs and submit recommendations for the City Council to adopt and include as a part of the Notice of Funding Availability/Request for Proposal (NOFA/RFP) described below.

Grant Application and Funding Recommendation Process

The application process for each new CDBG and HOME program cycle will begin after the annual community needs process in the late Fall. Human Services staff will prepare a Notice of Funding Availability/Request for Proposals (NOFA/RFP) with the following information:

1. The total amount of federal funds available or anticipated to be available to the City of Livermore for community development and housing activities;
2. The range of activities that may be financed with federal funds;
3. The funding priorities identified in the annual community needs process and adopted by City Council;
4. The objectives set forth by the federal government that must be met to qualify for funding;
5. The procedure to follow for submitting proposals to the City and a brief summary of the entire application process, including a schedule of applicable notices and meetings;
6. Any additional information that City staff determines to be significant to any

particular program year (i.e., new regulations).

The NOFA/RFP will be published and circulated at least thirty (30) days prior to the deadline set for accepting proposals. The NOFA/RFP will be e-mailed to local nonprofit organizations and agencies as well as circulated using methods described in the "Public Notice" section below. Applicants will be required to meet one of the community needs priorities with their proposed projects.

The proposals submitted will be reviewed and evaluated, and posted for public comment per the process described in subsequent sections of the plan, and submitted to the City Council for review at a public hearing. The City Council will select the projects to be funded and the level of funding for each project.

A draft "Annual Plan" for the new program year will be prepared and published for public comment. The draft profile will be forwarded to Alameda County Housing and Community Development Department for inclusion in the Alameda County HOME Consortium's Annual Action Plan. Upon completion of the review period, City staff will forward all comments to the City Council, with a staff report, requesting a final determination of community needs and selected CDBG and HOME projects. The City Council will review all comments received from citizens regarding the draft profile and approve a final Annual Plan at a public hearing at their regularly scheduled meeting following the end of the comment period.

Award of Funding

Upon final determination by the City Council of the projects to be included in the City's applications for funds, Community Development staff will notify, in writing, all individuals and/or organizations submitting proposals of the action taken by the City Council. Community Development staff will forward the correspondence explaining the City Council's action within fifteen (15) working days of the meeting.

The projects selected by the City Council, in addition to comments from citizens regarding the needs of the community, will be included in the City's Action Plan for the new program year and forwarded to Alameda County Housing and Community Development Office for inclusion in the Annual Action Plan for the Alameda County HOME Consortium. This is forwarded by Alameda County to the San Francisco Office of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) prior to the federal deadline.

The City may enter into one or two-year agreements with grantees. Due to the timing of the Federal funding allocations, funding recommendations may be adjusted to increase or decrease proportionately to match the final annual federal funding allocation.

Schedule for Funding Priorities and Recommendations:

The following schedule generally applies to the City's funding priority and application process:

Fall/Winter (September-January):

- Invitation of public comments regarding housing and human services needs;
- Workshops and outreach to identify priority community needs
- Public hearing on housing and human service needs, program performance, and when applicable, proposed program funding
- Notice of Program Funding Availability/Request for Proposals (NOFA/RFP) for CDBG projects (every other year).

Spring: (March-May):

- Invitation of public comments regarding proposed Consolidated Plan and/or Annual Action Plan (30-day comment period)
- Public hearing on proposed Consolidated Plan and/or Annual Action Plan regarding
- City Council approval CDBG projects (every other year)

Summer/Fall (August-September):

- Notice of Program Consolidated Annual Performance Evaluation Report (CAPER) availability for the federally CDBG/HOME funded grants only (15-day comment period)

Additional Funding Opportunities

The City from time to time become aware of additional funds available for allocation. The City may recommend funding of projects proposed by City staff or others already on file with the City. Publication of these and other proposed actions not listed above will be noticed in accordance with the following:

- Notices of public hearings are published at least thirty (30) days in advance of the meeting at which the hearing will take place.
- Invitations for public comments and/or submission of other written materials are published at least fifteen (15) days in advance of the submission deadline.

Citizen Participation Requirements in State of Emergency

The City of Livermore shall comply with all U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) memorandums and notices that transmit citizen participation requirements in the event of a local, state, or national emergency or disaster. In order to secure and access new HUD funding and/or re-allocate existing HUD funding to allow the City to respond to the state of emergency in the most expeditious manner, such HUD memorandums and notices automatically supersede any conflicting provisions of the Citizen Participation Plan, and therefore no formal amendment is required when such emergency memorandums and notices are in effect.

COMMUNITY INPUT REGARDING THE PROGRAMS

Public Comments and Notices

At various times throughout the year, the City will specifically request public comments on various aspects of the CDBG and HOME programs, including development of the Consolidated Plan and Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing Assessment.

Public hearing announcements, requests for public comment, and the NOFA/RFP will be advertised in one or more of the following methods:

- a. Article(s) in the City-wide Newsletter.
- b. News releases to local media outlets, including non-English media organizations.
- c. Paid advertisements in the local newspaper(s), including non-English language publications.
- d. Social media targeting impacted communities
- e. Email announcements to participants of programs serving impacted communities

All notices will be published in easily readable type and every effort will be made to ensure notices are accessible to impacted community members, people with disabilities, and non-English speakers.

The City will maintain an attitude of openness and helpfulness in order to encourage public response through an atmosphere of mutual cooperation. Community members may comment orally at a public hearing described below or in writing directly to the City at the address stated in the public notice.

The City Council will consider oral and written citizen comments on all aspects of the Program prior to Council actions. A summary of public comments will be attached to the related Program documents as adopted by the City Council. Records of oral and written comments are retained by the City for a minimum of five (5) years.

The City will record the following items of comment in its annual performance report(s):

- a. Copies of all comments submitted, throughout the year, by citizens in regard to the City's performance.
- b. A summary of any actions taken in response to the comments received.

Public Hearings

The City of Livermore will hold two public hearings a year in conjunction with City Council meetings for the purpose of soliciting community input regarding:

1. Human Services needs and program performance; and
2. The City's Five-Year Consolidated Plan, Annual Action Plan for the CDBG and HOME programs.

The Livermore City Council meets on the 2nd and 4th Monday of each month beginning at 7:00 p.m. Public hearings will be noticed at least two weeks prior to the scheduled meeting using methods described in the prior section. Public hearings and other City-related items to be considered by the City Council are identified in the meeting agenda, which is available from the City Clerk's office (City Hall, 1052 South Livermore Avenue, 2nd floor). An agenda is posted on the bulletin board outside of City Hall and on the bulletin board at the meeting site and can be accessed on the City's website: www.cityoflivermore.net

The City Council meets at the Council Chambers on Pacific Ave. The City Hall is on a major bus line and has public bicycle, automobile and disabled parking immediately adjacent to the building. City efforts to make public hearings accessible to non-English speakers and people with disabilities are described in subsequent sections.

Plan Amendments:

Regulations require an amendment to the Consolidated Plan and Annual Action Plan when the City decides not to carry out an activity, decides to add a new activity, or substantially changes the purpose, scope, location or beneficiaries of an activity. "Substantial change" in an activity includes:

- A variation of \$10,000 or more than 25% of the funded amount (whichever is greater);
- A 50% or greater variation in the quantifiable objectives of the activity (such as number of persons served, units of service, linear feet of concrete, etc.);
- A change in the goal(s) of the activity (such as job creation, acquisition of a facility, provision of child care);
- The City publishes notices announcing proposed amendments to the Consolidated Plan and Annual Action Plan. Citizens' comments (30-day comment period) regarding these amendments are considered by the City Council during deliberations on the proposed amendments.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE TO LOW- AND MODERATE-INCOME GROUPS

What Assistance is Available to Help Groups Develop Proposals for Funding?

The City's and/or the grantee's designee Request for Proposals (RFP) provides detailed information regarding Program rules and eligibility and includes instructions for completing the proposal form. The City and/or the grantee's designee formally requests program proposals through a published notice, which includes the schedule for submission and possible funding. Proposals are accepted, evaluated by the Human Services Commission, and may be recommended to the City Council for partial or full funding per the published schedule. RFP's are released annually or every other year depending on funding needs.

During this process, groups desiring information and guidance regarding the development of a specific project proposal should attend the pre-proposal conference at the beginning of the RFP period and may reserve up to 30 minutes of staff time; additional time may be allocated upon request and at the discretion of staff.

Upon request, the City and/or the grantee's designee will also accept and review Program proposals at other times of the year and will provide guidance as to the eligibility and appropriateness of the proposed projects. Such proposals may, at City's discretion, be recommended for funding through amendments to the Consolidated Plan and Annual Action Plan, subject to citizen comment and City Council adoption.

It should be understood that the proposer is responsible for both the content and preparation of the proposal, and that the staff makes no commitments regarding the feasibility and/or fundability of a specific project.

DISPLACEMENT MINIMIZATION

It is the intent of the City of Livermore to avoid, whenever possible, the involuntary displacement of any family, household, individual, business or non-profit organization as a result of acquisition, rehabilitation or demolition activity funded through the CDBG or HOME programs.

As a general rule and under routine circumstances, the City will not undertake any CDBG or HOME project which will result in the involuntary displacement of low/moderate income households from their homes. If, however, involuntary displacement does, in fact, occur as an unanticipated result of any activity funded by CDBG or HOME funds (or an activity which is not funded by CDBG or HOME funds, but part of a larger CDBG or HOME funded project), the City will adhere to its approved "Residential Relocation Plan" to provide assistance to the displaced households.

TIMELY WRITTEN ANSWERS TO WRITTEN COMPLAINTS AND GRIEVANCES

How Are Complaints and Grievances Regarding the Program Handled?

The City provides written response to written complaints and grievances from citizens, within 15 business days where practicable. However, citizens having complaints regarding a specific City-funded agency or organization are encouraged to direct their complaints to the Board of Directors of that agency and to send a copy of the complaint to the City. City program staff will review subgrantees' responsiveness to such complaints as part of its regular monitoring process and respond if and as appropriate.

NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY

The City of Livermore encourages people of color, women, and people with disabilities to participate in the planning and implementation of, and to seek CDBG funding from the City. Pursuant to Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) (Codified at 42 United States Code Section 12101 and 28 Code of Federal Regulations Part 35), and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the City of Livermore does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, ancestry, sex, disability, age or sexual orientation in the provision of any services, programs, or activities. To arrange an accommodation in order to participate in this public meeting, please contact the ADA coordinator at adacoordinator@cityoflivermore.net or call (925) 960-4170 (voice) or (925) 960-4104 (TDD) at least three (3) business days in advance of the meeting.

LANGUAGE ACCESS

To maximize public participation, the City will work with organizations, local leaders, and media outlets serving non-English speaking communities. The City will make every effort to create multilingual and culturally relevant outreach materials for public participation processes.

How Can Non-English Speaking Residents Participate in Public Hearings?

The City of Livermore has a network of employees speaking some 40 languages who can act as interpreters for residents seeking information regarding programs. If notified at least five business days in advance that non-English speaking residents wish to participate in a public hearing for CDBG-funded programs, the City will arrange to have an interpreter present. Please contact City at 925.960.4580 (Voice) 925.960.4104 (TDD). If a significant number of non-English speaking residents are expected to participate at a public hearing, the City will make every effort to accommodate them through the translation of meeting materials, use of bilingual City staff, and/or by hiring a translator for the meeting.

PROVISIONS FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

If notified at least two business days in advance that person(s) with disabilities will need assistance to participate in a public hearing concerning CDBG-funded programs, the City will arrange to have an interpreter, reader, or aide available as needed. Accessible seating for persons with disabilities (including those using wheelchairs) is available. Minutes of the meeting are available in enlarged print. Audiotapes of the meeting are available upon request. Please contact the City at 925.9604580 (Voice), 925.960.4104 (TDD) at least five business days before the meeting to request any other reasonable accommodations that may be necessary.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION DURING LOCAL EMERGENCIES

During local emergencies, the City may conduct public hearings virtually, shorten public comment periods, and modify participation processes per guidance and permission from HUD. Virtual community meetings and public hearings will be held using an accessible platform that allows for the City to respond to questions from the public in real time.