

# **CITY OF WARREN CITIZEN PARTICIPATION PLAN**

## **Purpose**

The City of Warren currently receives federal funds from the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program, the HOME Investment Partnerships (HOME) Program, and the Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS (HOPWA) Program. The City must prepare and implement a Consolidated Plan to be eligible to receive CDBG, HOME, and/or HOPWA grant funds. The Consolidated Plan is a five-year Strategic Plan that identifies housing and community development needs for the City of Warren and contains goals, objectives and strategies for addressing the highest priority needs. In order for the City to receive HOPWA funds, the Consolidated Plan must also assess the housing needs of persons living with HIV/AIDS (PLWH/A) in the Warren EMA (Warren-Farmington Hills-Troy Metropolitan Statistical Area composed of Lapeer, Livingston, Macomb, Oakland, and St. Clair Counties) and contain long term goals, objectives, and strategies for addressing the highest priority housing needs of PLWH/A.

The Consolidated Plan contains a one year action plan outlining the activities to be funded with the City's CDBG, HOME and HOPWA funds and benchmarks for measuring the City's progress in meeting the highest priority needs. The Action Plan also serves as the application for CDBG, HOME, and HOPWA funds and must be updated annually. The City's Community Development Committee (Committee) is responsible for development and implementation of the Consolidated Plan. The Committee reports to the Mayor and is served by the City's Community Development Staff (staff). The Warren City Council is responsible for adopting the Consolidated Plan.

Citizen participation is required by the federal regulations which govern the Assessment of Fair Housing, (AFH) Consolidated Plan development and adoption, amendments, and performance reports. This Citizen Participation Plan sets forth the policies and procedures the City will follow to encourage citizen participation in the development and implementation of the Consolidated Plan, including the adoption of significant amendments to the Consolidated Plan and the review of performance reports, as well as the AFH. Unless otherwise stated, all public hearings required by this Citizen Participation Plan may be held before Staff, Committee, or City Council.

## **Introduction**

As previously stated, the Consolidated Plan is a five-year Strategic Plan with the goals of providing decent housing, a suitable living environment, and expanding economic opportunities principally for low and moderate income persons. In developing the Plan, the City encourages participation by low and moderate income persons. Particular emphasis is given to those living in blighted areas and those living in areas where CDBG or HOME funds are proposed to be used. Participation by residents of predominately low and moderate income neighborhoods is also encouraged.

To ensure that persons with disabilities are able to participate in the development process, all public hearings will be held at facilities which are accessible to persons with disabilities. If the City is notified in advance, reasonable accommodations will be made to meet the needs of persons with disabilities who would like to attend any scheduled public hearing. Every effort will be made to accommodate reasonable requests for specially formatted documents accessible to persons with disabilities.

Currently, there are also no public or assisted housing developments in Warren. If such housing is constructed in the future, this Plan will be amended as necessary to ensure that the residents of this housing are encouraged to participate.

## Guidelines

In compliance with the applicable federal regulations, the City will follow the minimum guidelines outlined below in seeking citizen input:

### Development Phase - Consolidated Plan/Action Plan

During the development of the Consolidated Plan (updated every 5 years) and/or the Action Plan (updated yearly), the City will hold one public hearing. The purpose of the public hearing is to receive input on the identification of local housing and community development needs and the resources available to address those needs, the prioritization of the needs, and activities proposed to address the highest priority needs.

Notice of the public hearing will be published in the non-legal section of a newspaper of general circulation in the City of Warren and will also be posted on the City's website. A summary notice specific to the HOPWA program will be published in the Detroit News, a newspaper of general circulation in the Warren EMA. Notice will be published at least fourteen (14) days prior to the public hearing date. To further encourage citizen participation, personal notification of the public hearing date will be sent to public agencies, local providers of housing and community development services, and interested citizens. The notification will be sent within five (5) days of the start of the public comment period and at least ten (10) days prior to the public hearing date.

All notices will contain the time, date, and place of the hearing and include the topics to be considered. The notices will also inform the public that they may submit written comments on Plan development to the staff. The period for submitting public comments will last for at least fourteen (14) days following the notice publication.

The City will provide a written response to all comments received during the Plan development phase, both written and verbal. In addition, a summary of all comments and responses will be included in the proposed Plan.

### Adoption Phase - Consolidated Plan/Action Plan

Prior to the adoption of the Consolidated Plan (updated every 5 years) and/or the Action Plan (updated yearly), citizens, public agencies, and interested parties will be given at least thirty (30) days to comment on the proposed Plan. Prior to the start of the public comment period, notice will be published in the non-legal section of a newspaper of general circulation in the City of Warren. Notice will also be posted on the City's website. A summary notice specific to the HOPWA program will be published in the Detroit News, a newspaper of general circulation in the Warren EMA. Notices will also provide the time, date and location of a public hearing that will be held before the Warren City Council. The public hearing will give individuals an opportunity to present oral comments on the proposed Plan. The public hearing will be held at least fourteen (14) days after notice is published.

To further encourage citizen participation, personal notification of the public comment period and public hearing will be sent to public agencies, local providers of housing and community development services, and interested citizens. The notification will be sent within five (5) days of the start of the public comment period and at least ten (10) days prior to the public hearing date.

The summary HOPWA notice will also contain the following information:

- The deadline for submitting written comments.
- The address to submit written comments.
- The location where additional information can be obtained.
- The telephone number to call to request additional information.
- The amount of funding the City anticipates will be available.
- A list of proposed HOPWA activities with the amount of funding proposed for each.

In addition to the information described above, the other notices will include the following information:

- A list of proposed CDBG and HOME activities with the amount of funding proposed for each.
- Locations where the entire Plan will be available for review (at a minimum this will include the Warren libraries, the City Council office, and the office of the Office of Community, Economic and Downtown Development)
- The telephone number to call to request a free copy of the Plan. Every effort will be made to accommodate reasonable requests. The City reserves the right to limit the number of free copies which will be distributed to 10.
- An estimate of the total amount of assistance which will benefit low and moderate income persons.
- A summary of the City's displacement/relocation assistance policy.

The proposed Plan will be revised as necessary after the close of the public comment period. The City will provide a written response to all comments received during the Plan development phase, both written and verbal. In addition, a summary of all comments and responses will be included in the proposed Plan, which will be submitted to the Warren City Council for final consideration and adoption.

#### Adoption Phase - Substantial Amendment to Consolidated Plan/Action Plan

From time to time, it may be necessary to amend the activities outlined in the Consolidated Plan or Action Plan. Minor changes to the Plans may be adopted by the City Council with no citizen participation required. Substantial amendments will be considered and adopted by City Council only after the public has been provided with reasonable notice and offered an opportunity to comment. An amendment which would be considered substantial is as follows:

- Changes which eliminate a planned activity or add a new activity.
- Changes in funding levels that would also result in a considerable change in the scope of the activity.

When a substantial amendment is proposed for adoption, citizens, public agencies, and interested parties will be given thirty (30) days to comment on the proposed amendment. Prior to the start of the public comment period, if the proposed amendment concerns the CDBG or HOME program, notice will be published in the non-legal section of a newspaper of general circulation in the City of Warren; if the proposed amendment concerns the HOPWA program, notice will be published in the non-legal section of the Detroit News, a newspaper of general circulation in the Warren EMA. Notice will also be posted on the City's website. A public hearing may be held during the public comment period. If so, the notice will also provide the time, date and location of the public hearing. Individuals and agencies that will be directly affected by the proposed amendment will be sent personal notification of the amendment. The notification will be sent within five (5) days of the start of the public comment period and at least 14 days prior to the public hearing date.

All notices will include the following information:

- A summary of the proposed amendment indicating the scope, value, and location of the affected activities.
- The impact of the proposed amendment on the total amount of assistance which will benefit low and moderate income persons. (Only applicable to the CDBG program. By regulation HOME and HOPWA activities must benefit low and moderate income persons).
- The deadline for submitting written comments.
- The address to submit written comments.
- The location where additional information can be obtained.
- The telephone number to call to request additional information.

The proposed amendment will be revised as necessary after the close of the public comment period. The City will provide a written response to all comments received regarding the amendment, both written and verbal. In addition, a summary of all comments and responses will be presented to the Warren City Council for consideration at the time the Council is asked to approve the revised amendment.

#### Preparation of Consolidated Plan Annual Performance Report

The City is required to prepare an annual Consolidated Plan Performance Report. Prior to submitting the Report to the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), citizens, public agencies, and interested parties will be given fifteen (15) days to comment on the content of the Report. Prior to the start of the public comment period, notice will be published in the non-legal section of a newspaper of general circulation in the City of Warren. Notice will also be posted on the City's website. The City will hold one public hearing during the public comment period to give citizens the opportunity to present oral comments on the Performance Report. The notice will also provide the time, date and location of the public hearing, which will be held at least fourteen (14) days after the notice is published.

To further encourage citizen participation, personal notification of the public comment period and public hearing will be sent to public agencies, local providers of housing and community development services, and interested citizens. The notification will be sent within five (5) days of the start of the public comment period and at least ten (10) days prior to the public hearing date.

All notices will include the following information:

- A summary of the major accomplishments of the past program year and their relationship to the goals and objectives in the Consolidated Plan/Action Plan.
- Locations where the entire Performance Report will be available for review (at a minimum this will include Warren libraries, the City Council Office, and the office of the Office of Community, Economic and Downtown Development).
- The deadline for submitting written comments.
- The address to submit written comments.
- The location where additional information can be obtained.
- The telephone number to call to request additional information.

The notices will also inform the public that they may obtain more information about the identification and prioritization of local housing and community development needs and about proposing activities to meet those needs by contacting the City's Community Development Staff.

The Performance Report will be revised as necessary after the close of the public comment period. The City will provide a written response to all comments received regarding the Report, both written and verbal. The revised Performance Report, including a summary of all comments and responses, will be submitted to HUD. The comments will also be considered when developing the next Consolidated Plan/Action Plan.

#### Emergency Policies and Procedures

In the event of an emergency declaration, such as COVID-19, that presents a serious and immediate threat to the health and welfare of the citizens of the City, the following citizen participation requirements will be followed:

- A minimum 5-day comment period replaces the regulatory 30-day public comment period requirement for Amendments to the Consolidated Plan and Action Plan
- Virtual meetings that allow citizens to comment online rather than in person will be implemented
- Documents will only be available online, or in hard copy by request
- The publication of notice for public meetings will be shortened from 10-days prior to 5-days prior to the public meetings.

To further encourage citizen participation, personal notification of the public comment period and public meeting will be sent to public agencies, local providers of housing and community development services, and interested citizens.

The proposed amendment will be revised as necessary after the close of the public comment period. The City will provide a written response to all comments received regarding the amendment, both written and verbal. In addition, a summary of all comments and responses will be presented to the Warren City Council for consideration at the time the Council is asked to approve the revised amendment.

#### Assessment of Fair Housing (AFH)

##### *Development of the AFH*

The City of Warren will make available to the public, residents, public agencies, and other interested parties any HUD-provided data and other supplemental information the City plans to incorporate into its AFH at the start of the public participation process. (Or as soon as feasible after) The City will make the HUD-provided data available to the public by cross-referencing to the data on HUD's website. To obtain the views of the community on AFH-related data and affirmatively furthering fair housing in the jurisdiction's housing and community development programs, the City will hold one public hearing prior to publishing the AFH for public comment.

Prior to the adoption of the AFH, citizens, public agencies, and interested parties will be given at least thirty (30) days to comment on the Proposed Plan. Prior to the start of the public comment period, notice will be published in the non-legal section of a newspaper of general circulation in the City of Warren and placed on the City's website. The notice will include the following:

- Locations where the entire Plan will be available for review (at a minimum this will include the Warren libraries, the City Council office, and the office of the Office of Community, Economic and Downtown Development)
- The telephone number to call to request a free copy of the Plan. Every effort will be made to accommodate reasonable requests. The City reserves the right to limit the number of free copies which will be distributed to 10.
- The website for detailed information, including the draft document.
- A summary of the content and purpose of the AFH
- The address to submit written comments
- The deadline for submitting written comments

The City will consider the comments or views of residents, whether received in writing or orally at the public hearings, in preparing the final AFH. A summary of any comments or views, and a summary of any comments or views not accepted and the reasons why, will be attached to the final AFH.

#### *AFH Revisions*

An AFH previously accepted by HUD must be revised and submitted to HUD for review under the following circumstances:

- A material change occurs. A material change is a change in circumstances in the jurisdiction of a program participant 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. Examples include Presidentially declared disasters, under title IV of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5121 et seq.), in the program participant's area that are of such a nature as to significantly impact the steps a program participant may need to take to affirmatively further fair housing; significant demographic changes; new significant contributing factors in the participant's jurisdiction; and civil rights findings, determinations, settlements (including Voluntary Compliance Agreements), or court orders; or
- Upon HUD's written notification specifying a material change that requires the revision.

Revisions to an AFH, as described above, are subject to community participation. The City will follow the notice and comment process applicable to consolidated plan substantial amendments provided above. Upon completion, any revision to the AFH will be made public and submitted to HUD at the time of revision.

#### Public Availability of HUD-Approved Plans and Documents

Within fourteen (14) days after the City receives notice that HUD has approved the City's Consolidated Plan/Action Plan, a notice will be posted on the City's website. This notice will explain that the City's Consolidated Plan/Action Plan has been approved by HUD. The notice will also include the following information:

- Location where the Plan is available for review (Office of Community, Economic and Downtown Development).
- The telephone number to call to request additional information.

Within fourteen (14) days after a substantial amendment to the Consolidated Plan or Action Plan is adopted by City Council, a notice will be posted on the City's website. This notice will explain that the City has adopted a substantial amendment to the Consolidated Plan/Action Plan. The notice will also include the following information:

- Location where the amendment is available for review (office of the Office of Community, Economic and Downtown Development).
- The telephone number to call to request additional information.

Within fourteen (14) days after the City receives notice that HUD has accepted the Consolidated Plan Performance Report, a notice will be posted on the City's website. This notice will explain that the Performance Report has been accepted by HUD. The notice will also include the following information:

- Location where the Report is available for review (office of the Office of Community, Economic and Downtown Development).
- The telephone number to call to request additional information.

## Public Access to Records

Records and documents relating to the general development, amendment, implementation of the Consolidated Plan/Action Plan, or AFH will be retained for five (5) years following adoption of the final amended Plan. Records pertaining to a specific activity will be retained for five (5) years following completion of the activity. Citizens, public agencies, and other interested parties may review all non-confidential information. To review this information, a written request must be submitted to the Community Development Program Staff, c/o the City of Warren Office of Community, Economic and Downtown Development, One City Square, Suite 210, Warren, MI 48093-5283. The City will respond to all requests within five (5) working days by calling or writing the individual to schedule a time during normal working hours when they will be able to examine the specified records. The scheduled time will be no later than ten (10) working days after the request is received (unless the person or agency making the request asks for a later date). No original records may be taken from the Office of Community, Economic and Downtown Development. Copies of the records may be purchased at the standard City fee (currently \$1.00 per page). Additional fees may be charged if it is necessary to specially format the requested records.

The City will make every reasonable effort to encourage the participation of minorities, non-English speaking persons, limited English proficiency persons and persons with disabilities. Efforts may include, but are not limited to; making reports available in a format that is accessible to persons with disabilities (e.g. providing oral, Braille, electronic or large print copies for the visually impaired); providing translation of notices and vital documents; and translation services at public hearings. Such requests will require at least a five (5) working day notices so appropriate arrangements can be made.

## Technical Assistance

The Community Development Program Staff will be available to provide technical assistance to groups representative of persons of low and moderate income in developing proposals for funding assistance under CDBG, HOME or any other program covered by the City's Consolidated Plan. To receive assistance, the group must submit a written request at least six (6) months prior to the start of the program year when intend to seek funding.

At a minimum, Staff will be available to meet with and provide advice to the group on the type of funding likely to be available in the next program year and the types of proposals which are eligible for funding. If a proposed activity supports the City's high priority objectives for meeting the housing and community development needs of low income residents, Staff may work with the group to create a detailed proposal which could be submitted to the Mayor and City Council for funding consideration. Staff will also respond at any time to written requests for information on when, where, and in what format funding proposals are to be submitted.

## Complaints

Extensive efforts will be made to involve citizens in the development, amendment, and implementation of the Consolidated Plan/Action Plan and in the preparation of the Consolidated Plan Performance Report to address citizen concerns prior to the adoption of these documents. However, it is recognized that complaints may be made. The CDBG Technical Committee will be responsible for handling all complaints. The following procedures will be used to address complaints from citizens on the development, amendment, and implementation of the Consolidated Plan/Action Plan or the Consolidated Plan Performance Report:

- A complaint must be submitted in writing to the Community Development Program Staff c/o the City of Warren Office of Community, Economic and Downtown Development, One City Square,

Suite 210, Warren, MI 48093-5283 and it must include a detailed description of the nature of the complaint. The individual or group submitting the complaint must be identified, along with a contact person.

- Within fifteen (15) working days of receipt of the complaint, Staff will respond in writing acknowledging receipt of the complaint and outlining how the City will respond to the complaint.
- Staff will research the complaint and prepare a written report, including recommended action to resolve the complaint. This report will be completed within thirty (30) days of receipt of the complaint.
- Staff will present the complaint, along with their report, to the Committee at their next regularly scheduled meeting. The Committee will approve a plan to resolve the complaint within thirty (30) days of receipt of Staff's initial report.
- The complainant will be sent written notice of the Committee's plan to resolve the complaint within five (5) working days of the Committee taking action.
- The complainant will be required to respond to the Committee's plan for complaint resolution in writing or by phone within fifteen (15) working days of the date notice is mailed.
  - If the complainant responds indicating that the Committee's plan for complaint resolution is acceptable, implementation will begin within five (5) working days.
  - If the complainant responds indicating that the Committee's plan for complaint resolution is unacceptable, the complainant will be asked to appear at a subsequent Committee meeting to appeal the decision, or submit a written rebuttal to the Committee c/o the Community Development Program Staff, City of Warren Office of Community, Economic and Downtown Development, One City Square, Suite 210, Warren, MI 48093-5283.
  - If the complainant does not respond to notice of the Committee's plan for complaint resolution, it will be assumed that the complainant is no longer interested in pursuing the complaint and no further action will be taken.
- If the complainant requests an appeals hearing, the hearing will be scheduled for the next regular Committee meeting occurring at least ten (10) working days after the City receives the request.
  - Other parties involved in the complaint (i.e. rehabilitation contractors) may also be invited to speak at this meeting.
  - The Committee, if possible, will respond during the meeting at which the complainant's appeal is heard. In some cases, they will need additional information or time is needed to deliberate before a decision is made.
- If the complainant submits a written rebuttal, the Committee will review this communication at its next regular meeting occurring at least ten (10) working days after the City receives the rebuttal. The Committee may ask other parties involved in the complaint (i.e. rehabilitation contractors) for additional input before formulating a response. The Committee will respond in writing to the rebuttal.
- The Committee will send a written response to any appeal or rebuttal to the complainant and all other parties involved in the complaint. In this response, the complainant will be informed of any further recourse they may have with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) or the local judicial system.

### Displacement Policy

If the City of Warren undertakes any CDBG, HOME or HOPWA funded activity which results in the permanent involuntary displacement of any person, they will be provided with relocation benefits according to the provisions of the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1974 as amended.