

CITY OF NORTH LITTLE ROCK



CITIZEN PARTICIPATION PLAN

Community Development Agency
700 West 29th Street
North Little Rock, AR 72114
501-340-5342
nlr.ar.gov/communitydevelopment



Amended: May 22, 2026

PURPOSE OF CITIZEN PARTICIPATION PLAN

This Citizen Participation Plan (CPP) sets forth the City of North Little Rock's policies and procedures for citizen participation, per federal U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) regulations at 24 CFR 91.105, related to the Consolidated Submissions for Community Planning and Development Programs. The CPP provides for and encourages citizen participation in the development of the Consolidated Plan, any substantial amendments to the Consolidated Plan, the Annual Action Plan, any substantial amendments to the Annual Action Plan, and the Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Report (CAPER).

The CPP provides an opportunity for the community to work in partnership with the City to identify needs, and ensures continuity of citizen involvement in the planning, development, implementation and assessment of Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) and Home Investment Partnership (HOME) programs funded through the Community Development Agency.

The Citizen Participation process is designed to encourage all citizens, including persons of low to moderate income, minorities, non-English speaking persons, persons with disabilities, residents of low to moderate income areas where housing and community development funds may be spent, and residents of public and assisted housing to participate in determining housing and community development needs within their communities.

HUD issued an interim final rule, "FR-6519-I-01 Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing Revisions" with an effective date of April 2, 2025, which modifies how grantees demonstrate compliance with the obligation to promote fair housing while removing specific fair housing planning requirements established in previous rules. Key changes under the interim final rule include: 1) Simplified AFFH Rule Certification Process: the Assessment of Fair Housing/Analysis of Impediments (AFH/AI) is no longer required, although the City as a grantee must still certify and take actions related to promoting fair housing, such as efforts to eliminate housing discrimination or to improve housing conditions. 2) Removal of Certain Reporting and Assessment Requirements: The rule eliminates prior provisions that required local and state governments to analyze racial or ethnic disparities in housing needs and submit detailed fair housing assessments. 3) Continued Fair Housing Act Compliance: While the rule changes reporting and planning requirements, the City as a grantee must still comply with the Fair Housing Act. The law prohibits housing discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex, disability, familial status, or national origin.

PROGRAM YEAR AND PLANNING PROCESS

The local program year for all affected housing and community development programs begins on January 1 and ends on December 31 of each year. Prior to submission of the Consolidated Plan and Annual Action Plan, the following steps will be taken:

- Obtain citizen input on the development of the Five Year Consolidated Plan and the Annual Action Plan

- Provide information on the purpose and amounts of the different entitlement grant programs and other resources anticipated for the benefit of low to moderate income persons, and receive public comment on the allocation of resources among those programs
- Obtain information regarding affordable housing concerns, community development concerns, fair housing concerns, and related issues

CONSOLIDATED PLAN (FIVE-YEAR STRATEGY AND ANNUAL ACTION PLAN)

In developing the Consolidated Plan and annual updates, the City of North Little Rock is guided by two leading principles:

- **Consumer Service:** focus program efforts on the most critical needs
- **Comprehensive Approach:** achieve empowerment of individuals and families while ensuring long economic independence

Inherent in these principles is extensive, relevant, and ongoing citizen participation. The City of North Little Rock believes it is essential to have widespread, meaningful participation throughout the planning process to ensure genuine community “ownership” of the Plan.

The Consolidated Plan consists of three parts: the needs assessment, housing and community development strategic plan and an action plan. Commonly known as the Consolidated Plan, the needs assessment and housing and community development strategic plan are updated every five years. The Action Plan is updated annually, reflecting annual CDBG and HOME funding allocations.

The Consolidated Plan identifies the housing and community development needs in the City, prioritizes the needs for funding, and prescribes a comprehensive strategy for addressing the needs. To maintain relevance, an Annual Action Plan is developed which includes the following elements:

- Dollar amounts proposed for each activity
- A description and location of each activity
- The entity responsible for implementation of each activity
- Time frame for each activity

In all cases, the Consolidated Plan and Action Plan will seek to minimize the displacement of residents from their homes or places of business. In the event the City undertakes an activity that would involve displacement, the City will refer to procedures identified within the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970 (URA), as amended. The CDBG and HOME programs must also comply with the anti-displacement requirements of Section 104(d) of the URA.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

The Community Development Agency will hold at least two public hearings to obtain residents' views prior to the submission of the Consolidated Plan and Annual Action Plan. At least one of the public hearings will be held before the proposed Consolidated Plan and Action Plan are published for comment. All notices of public hearings will be published in the local newspaper at least five (5) days in advance of the meeting date and will encourage participation by the residents of the City. Virtual hearings may be held in lieu of in-person hearings if national/local health authorities recommend social distancing and limiting public gatherings for public health reasons.

Notice of public hearings will be mailed to the social service agencies, local housing and nonprofit providers serving low income clientele, businesses, leaders of neighborhood associations, previous participants and commentators and others expected to desire input, and persons who have requested to be placed on the citizen participation mailing list. Accommodations for those with disabilities and/or with limited English proficiency will be made upon request to the greatest extent possible.

ACCESS TO PARTICIPATION

Access for Persons with Disabilities

Public hearings and meetings will be held in locations accessible to the mobility impaired. Accommodations will be made for visual or hearing impaired and persons with disabilities upon request. Arrangements may be made by contacting the Community Development Agency, (501) 340-5342, at least 72 hours in advance of the meeting for which assistance is desired.

Language Barriers

Transition of oral communications or written materials into other languages is not provided on all items. When staff is made aware that persons are non-English speaking and desire information pertaining to community development and housing programs, or wish to participate in hearings or other public meetings, staff shall initiate procedures to provide translation services. Requests should be directed to the Community Development Agency, 700 West 29th Street, North Little Rock, AR, (501) 340-5342, at least 72 hours in advance of the meeting for which assistance is desired.

Access to Records

The City shall provide citizens, public agencies, and other interested parties reasonable and timely access to information and records relating to the Consolidated Plan and Action Plan, as well as the City's use of assistance under CDBG and HOME Programs.

Copies of adopted versions of the Consolidated Plan, Annual Action Plan, substantial amendments, significant revisions, the Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Report, the Citizen Participation Plan, and

other program information regarding use of funds will be maintained by the Community Development Agency and made available to the public upon request.

The public may access these materials by contacting the Community Development Agency, 700 West 29th Street, North Little Rock, AR 72114, (501)340-5342, between 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday. Reasonable accommodations for persons with disabilities will be made upon request.

**PUBLIC COMMENT AND ADOPTION OF
FIVE YEAR CONSOLIDATED PLAN / ANNUAL ACTION PLAN**

- The City will publish a notice announcing the 30-day public comment period on the proposed Consolidated Plan and/or Action Plan. The notice will be published in the local newspaper and include a brief summary of the Consolidated Plan and/or Action Plan that describes the contents and purpose and a list of the locations where copies of the Plan may be examined. Notice will be distributed through direct mail-out to interested parties and will also be posted on the City website.
- The proposed Consolidated Plan and/or Action Plan will be available for public view on the City website and at the following locations.
 - Community Development Agency (700 West 29th Street)
 - North Little Rock City Hall (300 Main Street)
- Upon request, the proposed Consolidated Plan and/or Annual Action Plan will be made accessible to any person with disabilities.
- The City Council will conduct a public hearing and will consider any comments received on the Consolidated Plan and/or Action Plan. A summary of comments will be attached to the applicable document. The Consolidated Plan and/or Annual Action Plan will be adopted upon a majority vote of the City of North Little Rock City Council.
- The adopted Consolidated Plan and/or Action Plan will be submitted to the Little Rock Field Office of the U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).
- When national/local health authorities recommend social distancing and limiting public gatherings for public health reasons, availability of paper copies of documents for review may be limited. Upon request, copies may be made available by email or an alternative method.

AMENDMENT OF THE CONSOLIDATED PLAN AND ACTION PLAN

The City may amend the adopted Consolidated Plan and Action Plan. The following outlines the criteria and procedures to be used when amending the Consolidated Plan and Action Plan.

Substantial Amendment Criteria

Five Year Consolidated Plan and Annual Action Plan – The City will amend its approved Five Year Consolidated Plan and/or Annual Action Plan whenever a decision is made to propose a substantial change in allocation priorities. For the purpose of the Consolidated Plan and Annual Action Plan, a “substantial change” will constitute a cumulative change equal to or in excess of 25% of the City’s CDBG or HOME entitlement for a program year.

Changes in funding priority not amounting to more than 25% of a program year (minor amendment) will not be considered a substantial change to the Consolidated Plan; no formal amendment to the Consolidated Plan requiring public review and comment will be warranted. For example, an amendment to the Consolidated Plan is needed if the Five Year Consolidated Plan identifies only a low priority need for historic preservation, but during the five-year time frame the City decides to establish a CDBG-funded historic preservation program that amounts to more than 25% of the City’s annual allocation.

The City will amend its approved Consolidated Plan and/or Action Plan whenever one of the following decisions is made:

- To carry out an activity not previously described in the Plan
- To cancel an activity previously described in the Plan unless the subrecipient was not able to obtain other funds needed to carry out the activity
- To substantially change the purpose, scope, location, or beneficiaries of an activity

Changes in funding for an existing activity (project) not amounting to more than 25% of a program year will not be considered a substantial change to the Action Plan; no formal amendment to the Action Plan requiring public review and comment will be warranted. Any funds remaining after the completion of a project may be transferred to other existing projects if approved by the City Council.

Amendment Process

The following procedures will ensure that all citizens will have a chance to comment on the proposed amendment to the Five Year Consolidated Plan and Action Plan.

- Publish a notice of the 30-day public comment period on the proposed amendment to the adopted Consolidated Plan and/or Annual Action Plan. The notice will be published in the local newspaper and include a summary of the amendment and where copies of the proposed amendment may be examined. Notice will be distributed through direct mail-out to interested parties and will also be posted on the City website.
- The proposed amendment will be available for public review on the City website and at the following locations:
 - Community Development Agency (700 West 29th Street)
 - NLR City Hall (300 Main Street)

- The City will consider any comments or views of citizens received in writing, or orally, before adopting a substantial amendment to the Consolidated Plan and/or Annual Action Plan. A summary of comments will be attached to the substantial amendment.
- Adoption of amendment by the City Council
- The adopted amendment will be submitted to the Little Rock Field Office of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).
- When national/local health authorities recommend social distancing and limiting public gatherings for public health reasons, availability of paper copies of documents for review may be limited. Upon request, copies may be made available by email or an alternative method.

ACTIVITIES EXEMPT FROM SUBSTANTIAL AMENDMENT CITIZEN PARTICIPATION REQUIREMENTS

Disaster / Emergency Events

It may be necessary to expedite substantial amendments to the Consolidated Plan and/or Action Plan in the event of a declared disaster or emergency. Types of disasters/emergency events that may necessitate an expedited substantial amendment include (but are not limited to):

- Man-Made-disasters
 - Can include chemical spills, mass rioting, power outages, dam failure, plant explosions
- Natural disasters
 - Can include earthquakes, hurricanes, tornadoes, wild fires, flooding and public health issues such as wide-spread disease such as the recent coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19), etc.
- Terrorism
 - Can include bomb threats, biochemical attacks like the spread of anthrax, or cyber-attacks like hacking, phishing, and virus distribution, etc.

Expedited substantial amendments may include funding new activities and/or the reprogramming of funds including canceling activities to meet needs resulting from a declared disaster or emergency. Therefore, the City may utilize CDBG or HOME funds to meet these needs without the normal public comment period that is otherwise required for substantial amendments.

With respect to a declared disaster, the City may elect to use CDBG, HOME, or State of Arkansas funds to address needs not provided for by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and the Small Business Administration (SBA), or other disaster relief efforts. Funding for disaster relief may not duplicate other efforts undertaken by federal, state or local sources unless allowed by the federal government. Potential eligible uses of funds are those that are included in this Citizen Participation Plan, the Consolidated Plan, or any other CDBG, HOME, or State eligible use. HUD may provide new guidance on eligible uses with which the

City will comply and possibly choose to utilize. Program requirements must be followed unless waived by applicable authorities.

Urgent Needs

It may be necessary to amend the Consolidated Plan and/or Action Plan in the event of a disaster or emergency events as described above. These amendments may include funding new activities and / or the reprogramming of funds including canceling activities to meet community development needs that have a particular urgency. Therefore, the City of North Little Rock may utilize its CDBG or HOME funds to meet an urgent need without the normal public comment period, which is otherwise required for substantial amendments.

To comply with the national objective of meeting community development needs having a particular urgency, an activity will alleviate existing conditions that the City of North Little Rock certifies:

- Pose a serious and immediate threat to the health and welfare of the community
- Are of recent origin or recently became urgent
- The City is unable to finance the activity on its own, and
- Other resources of funding are not available to carry out the activity.

A condition will generally be considered to be of recent origin if it developed or became critical within eighteen (18) months preceding the City's certification.

If HUD allows, such as through a waiver, activities under the urgent need national objective to be funded without the requirement that the City is unable to finance the activity on its own and other resources of funding are not available to carry out the activity, the City will only certify that the activity poses a serious and immediate threat to the health and welfare of the community and is of recent origin or recently became urgent.

CONSOLIDATED ANNUAL PERFORMANCE AND EVALUATION REPORT (CAPER)

The Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Report (CAPER) details the accomplishments of the Consolidated Plan and the Action Plan and actions taken to overcome effects of identified impediments to Fair Housing. The following procedures will ensure that all citizens will have a chance to comment on the CAPER.

- A notice of the 15-day public comment period will be published on the CAPER. The notice will be published in the local newspaper and will include the locations at which the CAPER can be reviewed.
- The CAPER will be available for public review on the City website and at the following locations:

- Community Development Agency (700 West 29th Street)
- North Little Rock City Hall (300 Main Street)
- Upon request, the CAPER will be made accessible to any person with disabilities.
- A summary of citizen comments will be attached to the CAPER.
- After the 15-day comment period, the CAPER will be submitted to the Little Rock Field Office of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).
- When national/local health authorities recommend social distancing and limiting public gatherings for public health reasons, availability of paper copies of documents for review may be limited. Upon request, copies may be made available by email or an alternative method.

PUBLIC NOTICE AND OUTREACH

An informed citizenry is critical to effective and responsive housing and community development programs. Efforts to educate residents and empower their participation are an ongoing element of the Consolidated Planning process.

As the fundamental means of notifying interested citizens about the Consolidated Plan and related activities, such as the Annual Action Plan or the Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Report (CAPER), the Director of Community Development will utilize advertisement notices in newspapers of general circulation. Such notices will be published at least five (5) calendar days prior to public hearings. All notices will be written in plain, simple language and direct efforts will be undertaken to publish and / or post information at locations that will elicit maximum low-and moderate-income and minority participation.

Public outreach will be facilitated through the use of Public Advertisements that describe the Consolidated Planning process, opportunities for citizen participation and available funding through the CDBG and HOME program. The City's Consolidated Plan mailing list will likely include social service agencies, local housing and nonprofit providers serving low income clientele, businesses, leaders of neighborhood associations, previous participants and commentators and others expected to desire input, and persons who have requested to be placed on the citizen participation mailing list. This list is updated periodically and is available for inspection at the Community Development Agency.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Upon request, staff will provide technical assistance to groups representing extremely low, low and moderate income persons to develop funding requests for CDBG and HOME eligible activities. Technical assistance will be provided as follows:

- Answer, in writing or verbally, all inquiries received from citizens or representative groups relating to funding requests.
- Meet with groups or individuals as appropriate, to assist in identifying specific needs and to assist in preparing request/application for assistance.
- Provide bilingual translation on as needed basis.

PROCEDURES FOR COMPLAINTS

The Community Development Agency (CDA) will receive written complaints regarding the Consolidated Plan, Substantial Amendments, the Annual Action Plan, Substantial Amendments, Significant Revisions, and the Consolidated Performance and Evaluation Report (CAPER) at 700 West 29th Street, North Little Rock, AR 72114. The CDA will provide a written response within 15 working days, where practicable.

ADMINISTRATIVE UPDATES

Changes to the Consolidated Plan, Annual Action Plan, and/or Citizen Participation Plan that do not meet the criteria for standard or substantial amendments and do not require citizen participation are defined as administrative updates. Examples of administrative updates include grammatical or structural edits that do not substantially change scope or meaning, or changes or updates to contact information.

ASSURANCES

The City of North Little Rock assures that the most diligent efforts will be made to comply with the process and procedures outlined in this Citizen Participation Plan.

HOME PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

The City uses the HOME affordable homeownership limits provided by HUD.