



City of Punta Gorda, Florida CITIZENS PARTICIPATION PLAN

Introduction –

The City of Punta Gorda, Florida is required by law, 24 CFR 91.105, to develop and follow detailed, written policies and procedures known as a Citizen's Participation Plan. This Plan is designed to involve the public, particularly low- and moderate-income people, in developing and implementing its Consolidated Plan and its integral components: annual action plans; annual performance reports, and amendments. The Citizen's Participation Plan must be published and available to the public.

The Consolidated Plan is a five (5) year plan describing the City's development needs, resources, priorities and proposed activities to be undertaken with certain U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) programs, which include the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program.

The City will provide the public opportunities to participate, and will consult with other public and private agencies in the planning and implementation of the Consolidated Plan and its integral components.

Encouraging Public Participation –

The law, 24 CFR 91.105, requires the citizen participation plan provide for and encourage public involvement, and is designed to encourage participation by low- and moderate-income persons, particularly those living in slum and blighted areas and in areas where CDBG funds are proposed to be used, and by residents of predominantly low- and moderate-income neighborhoods. Participation is to occur during the development of the Consolidated Plan and its components, as well as when any amendments to the document(s) are proposed, and when performance is reported. The City will take whatever action is necessary to encourage the participation of all its citizens, including minorities and non-English speaking persons, as well as persons with disabilities. In addition, the City will encourage the participation of local and regional institutions and other organizations (including businesses, developers, and community and faith-based organizations) in the process of developing and implementing the Consolidated Plan and its components, as well as when any amendments to the document(s) are proposed, and when performance is reported. Currently all documents are in English only; however, if other languages are needed, please contact:

City of Punta Gorda
Urban Design Division 326 W. Marion Avenue
Punta Gorda, Florida 33950

The City of Punta Gorda will provide information to the Punta Gorda Housing Authority and other public and private agencies providing assisted housing, health services, social services to ensure that residents/public are informed about the Consolidated Plan process and their opportunity to participate.

The City of Punta Gorda will hold a public meeting each year to obtain citizens' views and to respond to proposals and questions. The meeting will be held prior to the Consolidated Plan and/or Annual Action Plan being published for comment and will:

- Announce funding
- Availability of technical assistance
- Solicit public opinion on housing and community development needs
- Report on program performance
- Solicit comments on strategies and proposed use of funds

The public meeting will be held at a time and location convenient to the majority of the target population – low- and moderate-income people, residents of predominantly low- and moderate-income neighborhoods, and others likely to benefit from the program. Additionally, the meeting location will be within or in close proximity to a CDBG-eligible area, and accessible to people with disabilities and non-English speaking residents. Where a significant number of non-English speaking residents can be reasonably expected to participate in a public hearing, upon request, the City will provide an interpreter.

Public Meeting Notices –

Notice of all public meetings will be published and posted as follows:

- Published as display ads in local, general circulation newspapers and posted on the city's website, www.ci.punta-gorda.fl.us, at least 14 days prior to the meeting.
- Notices will be posted in public places, such as neighborhood center(s) in the CDBG-eligible area and the public library. Each notice will specify the date, time, place and purpose of the meeting, as well as contact data for additional information.

Information –

The City of Punta Gorda will provide program and policy information to stakeholders, including the general public, public and private agencies providing housing assistance, health services, social services, child welfare services, economic development services, job training and employment assistance services, the Punta Gorda Housing Authority, and other interested parties. This information will include:

- The grant funding the City expects to receive through the Community Development Block Grant;
- The range of activities that may be undertaken, as well as activities previously funded;
- The city's process of developing the Consolidated Plan and its components, including applications that may be submitted by potential subrecipients;
- The public's role in the program; and
- Other materials as needed to inform and educate the public about the program.

This information may be provided by direct mail, at public meetings, and on the city's website, www.ci.punta-gorda.fl.us.

The proposed and adopted Citizen Participation Plan, Consolidated Plan, Annual Action Plan, as well as substantial amendments, and the performance report will be accessible to the public at no cost on the city's website, www.ci.punta-gorda.fl.us. Additionally, these documents will be available for review in the offices of the City of Punta Gorda Urban Design Division and the City Clerk's Office, the public library and neighborhood center(s).

Comments –

Oral comments recorded at a public meeting and written or emailed comments made during the Consolidated Plan process will be accepted by the Urban Design Division until a specified date (a minimum of 30 days to comment will be provided). The comment period associated with a specific activity will be published in a display ad in local, general circulation newspapers. All comments will be considered. A summary of all comments, including comments not accepted and the rationale for their rejection will be attached to the final Consolidated Plan, Action Plan and/or Performance Report, as appropriate.

Amendments –

Amendments that fall under the definition of "substantial change" shall be subject to a 30-day public comment period. "Substantial change" shall be defined as:

- Any new activity;
- Any deletion of a budgeted activity;
- Any change in an activity's national objective designation.

A summary of any substantial amendment will be published in local, general circulation newspapers, followed by a 30-day public comment period, which will be defined in the public notice.

All comments will be considered. A summary of all comments, including comments not accepted and the rationale for their rejection will be attached to the Amended Consolidated Plan, Action Plan and/or Performance Report, as appropriate.

Technical Assistance –

The Urban Design Division will assist organizations and individuals of low- and moderate-income people interested in submitting a proposal to obtain funding for an activity.

- Requests for technical assistance must be made in writing, specifying the name of the organization or individual requesting assistance, the name, address, phone number and/or email address of a contact person;
- The nature of technical assistance requested;
- Immediate problems and the reason for the request.

Complaints and Grievances –

Substantive, written responses to written complaints and or grievances will be provided within 15 working days of receipt, where practical.

Relocation –

The city's policy is to administer the Community Development Block Grant Program without displacement. In the event displacement is unavoidable, the city and/or other responsible party(s) will comply with the regulations of the Uniform Relocation Act and Section 104(d).

Access to Records –

Program information and records are available upon request at the Urban Design Division during normal business hours, Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. Such documents include the following:

- All mailing and promotional materials;
- Records of public meetings;
- All key documents, including prior applications, letters of approval, grant agreements, the citizen participation plan, performance reports, evaluation reports, other reports required by the U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, the proposed and approved application for the current year;
- Copies of the regulations and issuances governing the program; and
- Documents regarding other important program requirements, such as contracting procedures, environmental policies, fair housing and other equal opportunity requirements, and relocation provisions.

To submit comments about the program:

Mail:
The City of Punta Gorda
Urban Design Division
326 W. Marion Avenue
Punta Gorda, FL 33950

Email: urbandesign@pgorda.us

Phone:
941-575-3372

Fax:
941-575-3356