City of Bellflower

Citizen Participation Plan

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Appendix A: Public Comments
City of Bellflower
Citizen Participation Plan
For the Consolidated Plan Documents

I. Purpose

The City of Bellflower is an entitlement jurisdiction receiving Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) and Home Investment Partnership (HOME) funds directly from the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). Pursuant to the CDBG and HOME program regulations, the City is required to prepare a five-year Consolidated Plan and annual updates to guide and report on the use of CDBG and HOME funds. Annual reviews of program performance are also required.

This Citizen Participation Plan (CPP) sets forth the City of Bellflower's policies and procedures for citizen participation in the development of the Consolidated Plan Documents and any subsequent amendments. The CPP provides an opportunity for nonprofit service agencies and the community to work in partnership with the City to identify needs and allocate CDBG funds. While this plan will aim to ensure the participation of all citizens, special assurances will be made to ensure the participation of the following: extremely low-, low-, and moderate-income persons; persons living in areas where federal funds are proposed to be used; residents of assisted housing; low income residents of target revitalization areas; minorities; non-English speaking persons; and persons with physical disabilities.

II. Definitions

For purposes of the CDBG and HOME programs, the following definitions will apply:

**Consolidated Plan Documents (CPD)** - For the CDBG and HOME programs for the City of Bellflower, the Consolidated Plan Documents will include the following:

- Five-Year Consolidated Plan
- Five-Year Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Choice
- Citizen Participation Plan
- One Year Action Plan
- Consolidated Annual Performance Evaluation and Report (CAPER)
Low and Moderate Income Households - Pursuant to HUD regulations, the primary beneficiaries of the CDBG and HOME programs should be low and moderate income households, generally defined by HUD as follows:

- **Extremely Low-Income**: 0-30% of County Median Family Income (MFI) adjusted for household size
- **Low-Income**: 31-50% of County MFI adjusted for household size
- **Lower-Income**: 0-50% of County MFI adjusted for household size
- **Moderate-Income**: 51-80% of County MFI adjusted for household size

Specific income limits for the CDBG and HOME programs will be adjusted annually based on County Median Family Income data published by HUD.

Low and Moderate-Income Area - Generally defined as a census tract(s) or block group(s) in which a minimum of 51 percent of the residents have an income not exceeding 80 percent of the County median income.

Slum or Blighted Area - An area meeting the definition of a slum, blighted, deteriorated or deteriorating area under State or local law, typically identified as a Redevelopment Project Area, or where there is a substantial number of deteriorating or dilapidated buildings or improvements throughout the area.

III. Citizen Participation Strategy

The City of Bellflower recognizes that CDBG and HOME funds are tax money returned to the City to be used primarily to benefit extremely low-, low-, and moderate-income persons. City staff and officials are stewards of this public money and will openly discuss all records, except those confidential records protecting a household's privacy. The City presents the following as its policy defining its Citizen Participation Strategy:

A. Decision Making Bodies

The City of Bellflower has established a Staff Working Group to assist the City Council in making funding decisions relating to the CDBG and HOME programs. The functions and composition of these groups are described below:

1. **Staff Working Group**

   The Staff Working Group is comprised of the Economic Development Director, Economic Development Staff and the City Manager. The Staff Working Group performs in an advisory manner to the City Council concerning making funding decisions, planning, implementing, and assessing the CDBG programs/activities.
related to capital expenditures, public services and economic development and HOME-funding housing programs/activities. This will be accomplished through the following tasks:

- Information dissemination during the CDBG/HOME funding application process, and other HUD application processes as applicable;
- Preparation of project recommendations for City Council's review and final approval; and
- Review of project/program process.

2 City Council

After reviewing the recommendations from the Staff Working Group, the City Council makes the final funding determination on the use of CDBG and HOME funds.

**B. Program Planning Process**

The City of Bellflower will adhere to the following citizen participation process when conducting program planning and reporting for the CDBG and HOME programs.

1 Citizen Participation Plan

a. **Plan Development**

i) *Plan Review and Comment* - The Draft Citizen Participation Plan (CPP) will be made available for public review for a 30-day period. Written comments will be accepted during the 30-day public review. A summary of the comments and views, and City responses must be attached to the CPP

ii) *Public Hearing* - The City Council will conduct a public hearing to accept public comments on the Draft CPP

b. **Plan Amendment**

i) *Public Review and Comment* - Substantial amendments to the CPP will be made available for public review for a 30-day period. Written comments will be accepted during the 30-day public review. A summary of the comments and views, and City responses must be attached to the amendment.

ii) *Public Hearing* - No public hearing is required.
Five-Year Consolidated Plan

a. Plan Development

i) Consultation - The City of Bellflower shall encourage its residents, especially those residing in predominately low- and moderate-income neighborhoods, to participate in the development and subsequent adoption and implementation of the Consolidated Plan. This could be done through publications, notices, and public meetings and public hearings.

Other actions to encourage citizen participation are providing notices through press releases and direct mailings of notices to social service agencies, including those that provide assisted housing, health services, and social services (including those focusing on services to children, elderly persons, persons with disabilities, persons with HIV/AIDS, and those that provide services to the homeless during the preparation of the Consolidated Plan). A variety of mechanisms may be utilized to solicit input from these services/agencies. These include telephone or personal interviews, mail surveys and consultation workshops. Notices shall be provided in Spanish and English and or contain a statement asking non-English-speaking residents to contact the City if they need assistance in the translation of these notices.

ii) Public Review and Comment - The Draft Consolidated Plan will be made available for public review for a 30-day period. Written comments will be accepted during the 30-day public review. A summary of the comments and views, and City responses must be attached to the Consolidated Plan.

iii) Public Hearings/Meetings - Pursuant to HUD regulations, at least two public meetings/hearings per year are required for the Consolidated Plan development. City Staff will conduct the first public hearing/meeting to accept public input on community needs during the development stage of the Draft Consolidated Plan. The City Council will then conduct a second public hearing/meeting to accept comments on the Draft Consolidated Plan which will be provided for public review for a 30-day period (see above).

b. Plan Amendment

i) Substantial Change - The City will formally amend its approved
Five-Year Consolidated Plan whenever a decision is made to propose a substantial change in allocation priorities or method of distribution of funds.

For the purpose of the Five-Year Consolidated Plan, a "substantial change" will constitute a cumulative change equal to or in excess of 50% of the City's CDBG or HOME entitlement for a program year.

For example, if the Five-Year Consolidated Plan's *Priority Needs Summary Table* indicates a "Low Priority Need" for multi-family housing rehabilitation and third year into the five-year time frame, the City decides to change the priority to "High" level priority in order to implement the multi-family rehabilitation program using 50% or more of the City's annual CDBG allocation, this change in allocation priority would constitute a substantial change to the Five-Year Consolidated Plan and a formal amendment to the Plan is warranted.

Changes in the allocation priorities not amounting to 50% of the entitlement will not be considered as a substantial change to the Five-Year Consolidated Plan, no formal amendment to the Plan requiring public review and comment will be warranted. City Council approval of the priority changes is still required.

However, if a program or type of programs is indicated in the Five Year Consolidated Plan as "No Such Need," the City will need to amend the Consolidated Plan in order to implement the program(s) regardless of the level of funding. Any time a change from "No Such Need" to a Low, Medium, or High level priority is considered by HUD as a substantial amendment to the Consolidated Plan.

**ii) Public Review and Comment** - Substantial amendments to the Consolidated Plan will be made available for a 30-day public review. Written comments will be accepted during the 30-day public review. A summary of the comments and views, and City responses must be attached to the amendment.

**iii) Public Hearings** - No public hearing is required.

3. **One Year Action Plan**

   a. **Plan Development**

   i) **Consultation** - In addition to Bellflower residents, the City will ensure that public (including City staff) and private agencies that
provide the following services will be consulted in the development of the One Year Action Plan.

- Health Services
- Social Services for Children, Elderly, Disabled, Homeless, Persons with AIDS, State and Local Health Agencies
- Adjacent Local Governments
- Economic Development Interests
- Public Housing Agency

These persons/agencies will be contacted and brought into the process in the following manner.

- Each year, the City will send written Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) to each cooperating department and nonprofit agency advising them that the planning cycle has begun for CDBG and HOME funds, and that the City is accepting project proposals, provided funds are available.
- City staff will conduct outreach to special interest groups in Bellflower, such as at risk youths, senior citizens, and the disabled, when appropriate and necessary
- The City will conduct an eligibility analysis on all project proposals submitted, and review the eligible proposals for service provider grants with the Staff Working Group for funding consideration.

ii)  **Public Review and Comment** - The Draft Action Plan incorporating the City's proposed uses of CDBG and HOME funds will be made available for public review for a 30-day period. Written comments will be accepted during the 30-day public review. A summary of the comments and views, and City responses, must be attached to the Action Plan.

iv)  **Public Hearings** – The City Council will hold one public hearing to discuss all eligible project proposals and funding recommendations for both public service grants and capital outlay project, and make funding decisions. At this public hearing, the Council will accept comments and community input on the Draft Annual Action Plan,
which will be available for public review for a 30-day period prior to
the public hearing.

b. Plan Amendment

i) Substantial Change - The City will formally amend its approved
Action Plan whenever a decision is made to propose a substantial
change to the Plan, either by

• carrying out an activity not previously described in the
  Action Plan;

• canceling an activity previously described in the Action
  Plan;

• increasing or decreasing the amount to be expended on a
  particular activity from the amount stated in the Action
  Plan by more than 50 percent; or

• substantially changing the purpose, scope, location, or
  beneficiaries of an activity.

Changes in funding for an existing activity not amounting to more
than 50 percent of activity allocation will not be considered as a
substantial change to the One Year Action Plan; no formal
amendment to the Action Plan requiring public review and comment
will be warranted. The change in funding will be at the discretion of
the City Manager. The change will be documented by the Economic
Development Director via memorandum in the project file.

ii) Public Review and Comment - Substantial amendments to the
Action Plan will be made available for a 30-day public review.
Written comments will be accepted during the 30-day public review.
A summary of the comments and views, and City responses must
be attached to the Action Plan.

iii) Public Hearings - No public hearing is required.


a. Public Review and Comment - The Consolidated Annual Performance and
Evaluation Report (CAPER) will be made available for a 15-day public review.
Written comments will be accepted during the 15-day public review. A
summary of the comments and views, and City responses must be attached
to the CAPER.
b. **Public Hearing** - A second public hearing will be conducted to receive public input on annual accomplishments contained in the Consolidated Annual Performance Evaluation Report and to meet the federal requirements at 24 CFR 91.105 (e).

5. Five-Year Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Choice (AI) Development

a. **Consultation** - During the development of the Five-Year AI, the City will consult the following services/agencies to solicit their input on fair housing issues in the City:
   - Fair Housing Organizations
   - Other local governments
   - Advocacy groups for special needs households
   - Affordable housing providers
   - Banks and other financial institutions
   - Educational institutions

   A variety of mechanisms may be utilized to solicit input from these services/agencies. These include telephone or personal interviews, mail surveys, and consultation workshops.

b. **Public Review and Comment** - The Draft AI will be made available for public review for a 30-day period. Written comments will be accepted during the 30-day public review. A summary of the comments and views, and City responses must be made attached to the AI.

c. **Public Hearings** - The City Council will conduct a public hearing/meeting to accept public input on fair housing issues during the development stage of the Draft AI. The City Council will also conduct a public hearing to accept comments on the Draft AI which will be provided for public review for a 30-day period (see above).

IV. Public Notification

**A. Public Meetings and Hearings**

Staff will ensure adequate advance notice of all public meetings and hearings to reach out to the entire community. Adequate noticing will include:
• Publishing notices in the Long Beach Press-Telegram and/or other newspapers of general circulation in the City

• Posting Notices at City Hall and the Brakensiek Branch of the County of Los Angeles Library.

Notices will be published and posted at least ten (10) days prior to the meeting date. For those non-English-speaking residents who wish to participate and be heard at any of these public meetings, the City will make all efforts to provide the necessary interpreters upon request and with advance notice of two (2) business days prior to the meeting.

Agendas of all public meetings and hearings are posted and available for review on the Internet, located on the City of Bellflower's Web Page at www.bellflower.org.

B. Documents for Public Review

Notices of availability of draft CPD for public review and a summary of the CPD will be published in a display ad in the Long Beach Press-Telegram.

V. Access to Meetings

All public hearings will be conducted at the following location:

City Council Chambers, Bellflower City Hall
16600 Civic Center Drive
Bellflower, CA 90706

It is the intention of the City of Bellflower to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) in all respects. If an attendee or participant at a public hearing needs special assistance beyond what is normally provided, the City of Bellflower will attempt to accommodate these people in every reasonable manner. The City Clerk must be notified at least 48 hours prior to the public hearing.

VI. Availability of Documents Public Review

The City will place draft copies of the Consolidated Plan Documents and substantial amendments to these documents for public review at:

Front Counter of the Economic Development Department
Bellflower City Hall, Second Floor
16600 Civic Center Drive
Bellflower, CA 90706
The counter is open to the public Monday to Thursday, from 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., and every other Friday, from 8:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

The City will provide a reasonable number of free copies of the documents to citizens and groups that request copies. Notices of availability of draft documents for public review will be published as specified in Section IV.B of this CPP.

VII. Access to Records

The City will ensure timely and reasonable access to information and records related to the development of the Consolidated Plan Documents (CPD), and the use of monies for programs funded by CDBG and HOME funds. Information to be made available will include budget and program performance information, meeting minutes, and comments received by the City during the development of the CPD. Requests for information and records must be made to the City of Bellflower in writing. Staff will respond to such requests within 15 working days or as soon as possible thereafter.

VIII. Technical Assistance

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

- Establish an annual project proposal submission and review cycle Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) that provides information, instructions, forms and advice to interested extremely low-, low- and moderate-income citizens or representative groups so that they can have reasonable access to the funding consideration process.

- Provide self-explanatory project proposal forms and instructions to all persons who request them whether by telephone or by letter. The City’s funding application form is designed to be easily understood and short, while still covering all key items necessary to judge the validity of the request. Statistics concerning specific areas of the City are furnished by City staff upon request.

- Answer, in writing, all written questions and answer verbally all verbal inquiries received from citizens or representative groups regarding how to write or submit eligible project proposals.

- Meet with groups or individuals as requested, to assist in identifying specific needs and to assist in preparing project proposal applications.

- Obtain information in the form of completed project proposal forms from citizens or non-profit agencies and assemble a list of proposals available for public review.
• Conduct a project eligibility analysis to determine, at an early stage, the eligibility of each project. In cases where only minor adjustments are needed to make proposals eligible or otherwise practical, City staff will advise the applicants on the options available and desired changes to the proposals.

IX. Comments and Complaints

A. Comments

Citizens or the City government, as well as agencies providing services to the community, are encouraged to state or submit their comments in the development of the CPD and any substantial amendments to the CPD. Written and verbal comments received at public hearings or written comments received during the comment period, will be considered and summarized, and included as an attachment to the City’s final CPD. Written comments should be addressed to:

Economic Development Department
Bellflower City Hall, Second Floor
16600 Civic Center Drive
Bellflower, CA 90706

A written response will be made to all written comments within ten working days, acknowledging the letter and identifying a plan of action, if necessary every effort will be made to send a complete response within 15 working days to those who submit written proposals or comments.

B. Complaints

Complaints regarding the CPD planning process and CPD amendments must be made within 30 days from the date the document is published for comment. A written response will be made to all written complaints within 15 working days, acknowledging the letter and identifying a plan of action, if necessary.

The City will accept written complaints provided they specify

• The description of the objection, and supporting facts and data, if any
• Provide name, address, telephone number, and a date of complaint.

X. Anti-displacement/Relocation

In the event that any residential displacement and relocation must take place in order to carry out a program activity, the City of Bellflower ensures that it will develop an Anti-displacement and Relocation Plan in connection with that project as applicable per Federal regulations.
In the event that any acquisition and relocation must take place in order to carry out a program activity, Bellflower will also comply with the acquisition and relocation requirements of the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970, as amended, and implementing regulations of 49 CFP part 24.

XI. Appeals

Appeals concerning the CPD, statements, or recommendations of the staff should be made to the following persons in order presented:

- Economic Development Director
- City Manager
- City Council
- Los Angeles Area Office of HUD (if concerns are not answered)

Appendix A
Public Comments

2014 Amendment

The Draft Amendment to the Citizen Participation Plan (CPP) for Consolidated Plan Documents was made available for a 30-day public review period beginning on March 1, 2014. Copies of the Draft Amendment to the CPP were placed at the front counter of the City of Bellflower Economic Development Department.

0 comments were received on the Draft Amendment to the CPP during the review period.

Adoption of the amended CPP for Consolidated Plan Documents occurred on March 31, 2014.

2019 Amendment

The Draft Amendment to the Citizen Participation Plan (CPP) for the Con Plan Public Hearings/Meetings and the Annual Action Plan Public Hearing was made available for a 30-day public review period beginning on May 2nd, 2019 and ending on June 1st, 2019. Copies of the Draft Amendment to the CPP were placed at the front counter of the City of Bellflower Economic Development Department.
0 comments were received on the Draft Amendment to the CPP during the review period. Adoption of the amended CPP for Consolidated Plan and Action Plan Public Hearings/Meetings occurred on June 2, 2019.