



UNION CITY

Citizen Participation Plan

**Community Development Block Grant
Program**

I. INTRODUCTION

The Union City Community Development Block Grant Program is funded by the federal Community Development Block Grant Program established by the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974. From 1975 to 1987 Union City received funds under the Act as part of the Alameda County "Urban County". In 1988, Union City began receiving funds directly from the federal government as an entitlement community. In 1991, the City became a member of the Alameda County HOME Consortium.

The CBDG Program funds various eligible activities to fulfill the following program objectives:

A. HOUSING REHABILITATION

1. Promote the maintenance and repair of housing for low and moderate income persons and the disabled.
2. Rehabilitate existing substandard housing for low and moderate income owners and renters.

B. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

1. Promote economic development that will eliminate blight and/or benefit low and moderate income persons.

C. FAIR HOUSING

1. Promote fair housing

D. PUBLIC SERVICES

1. Promote programs which help meet the needs of the community's disadvantaged.

The role that citizens play in the CDBG Program is an important one. The success of the City's program is dependent upon continuous involvement of citizens at several levels in the formulation and operation of the CDBG program.

In accordance with the provisions of Section 104(a) of the 1987 Housing and Community Development Act, this Citizen Participation Plan reflects the various ways in which citizens participate in the total Community Development Block Grant Program to work toward the fulfillment of the overall program goals.

GENERAL

I. Purpose and Goals

The overall purpose of the citizen participation plan is to encourage and provide citizens of Union City with an opportunity to participate in an advisory role in planning, implementing, and assessing the Union City Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program. More specifically, the aims of the Plan are:

- A. Encourage citizens, particularly very-low- and low-income residents of low- and moderate-income neighborhoods, to participate in the development of the five -year Consolidated Plan, annual Action Plan, substantial amendments to the Plans, and the Annual Performance Report.
- B. To identify community needs which can be addressed by the CDBG program; and
- C. To provide community support and participation in the various projects sponsored by CDBG

II. General Approach to Citizen Participation

A. Open Participation

All aspects of citizen participation will be conducted in an open manner with freedom of access for all interested persons. Citizens will be encouraged to participate in all aspects of the CDBG Program.

In the case of target area improvements, such as streets or parks, target area residents will be encouraged to participate in the development and review of policy decisions regarding the implementation of such projects.

Citizens will also be encouraged to suggest program and marketing improvements, and to evaluate the CDBG program.

B. Funding Availability

Citizens, public agencies, and other interested parties will have information available to them that includes the amount of assistance the jurisdiction expects to receive and the range of eligible activities that may be undertaken. This information will be published in a newspaper of general circulation at least 30 days prior to the date applications for funding are due.

C. Public Review Period

The public review periods will be scheduled as required and as detailed in Section V and VII of this plan.

D. Technical Assistance Provided by Both City and County Staff

City staff will offer technical assistance to citizens, citizen organizations, groups of low and moderate income persons, and groups of residents of blighted neighborhoods which request assistance in developing proposals and a statement of views.

Technical assistance includes provisions of necessary information, counseling on procedures and processes, and assistance in completion of any and all forms necessary to submit a proposal or statement of a viewpoint.

E. Public Information Records Available to the Public

The City will provide for full and timely disclosure of its program records and information consistent with applicable State and local laws regarding personal privacy and confidentiality.

Documents relevant to the program will be made available upon request (written or oral) for citizen review during normal working hours at the Union City Civic Center.

Citizens will be provided with reasonable access to records regarding the past use of funds.

Records of all public meetings and hearing will be maintained.

All key documents, including the proposed and approved application for the current year and all prior applications, letters of approval, grant agreement, the citizen participation plan, evaluation reports, and performance reports required by HUD will be maintained.

Other records include documents regarding other important program requirements, such as contracting procedures, environmental policies, fair housing and other equal opportunity requirements, and relocation provisions. Flyers, newspapers, articles, newsletters and other documents used to inform citizens of the funding and program will be available.

Records of clients which are private in accordance with applicable laws shall not be made available to the public.

F. Bilingual Information

The City recognizes the needs of its non-English speaking residents and will attempt to meet those needs. The City will provide information and staff assistance in languages, as necessary and reasonable expected, to allow non-English speaking residents the opportunity to participate in the CDBG program.

III. Levels of Participation

There are three levels in the Union City CDBG citizen participation process: individual citizen, neighborhood, and citywide. This structure maximizes the opportunities citizens have to participate in the program. Each level includes distribution of information on the program, community outreach, and public hearings or meetings held to plan and implement the program as needed.

A. Individual Citizen Level

Citizens have an opportunity to register comments or complaints by letter, telephone or in person. Staff will respond to all citizen comments, complaints and grievances within fifteen (15) working days of their receipt where practicable.

B. Neighborhood Level

Within the city there are target neighborhoods which are the focus of CDBG activities. These neighborhoods are comprised of over 51% low/moderate income households.

Public meetings, City-wide newsletters and other means of outreach will be used to assure participation by neighborhoods in the planning and implementation of all neighborhood based projects. The meetings will be advertised in a timely manner and substantial efforts made to notify all neighborhood residents of meetings.

C. City Wide Level

A public hearing will be held annually before the City Council to allow citizen review and comment on the annual funding and needs statements. All necessary information for such citizen review and assessment will be made available at the hearing as well as in advance of the hearing. In addition, a public hearing will be held annual before the Alameda County HOME Consortium to allow citizen review and comment on annual program performance. All necessary information for such citizen review and assessment will be made available at the hearing as well as in advance of the hearing.

V. Program Evaluation

The annual Consolidated Annual Plan Performance and Evaluation Report (CAPER) on the overall CDBG program will be made available to the public for review and comment. The Alameda County HOME Consortium holds a public hearing on Program performance within 90 days of the end of each program year.

VI. Union City Displacement Plan

Union City will comply with Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) regulations, Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition for Federal and Federally Assisted Programs of 1986, when real property is acquired to implement activities of the HCD program and if persons are involuntarily displaced. Guidelines are applicable to real property owners, tenants, business establishments and mobile homes.

When relocation will occur, persons scheduled to be displaced are furnished with a written description of the urban county relocation program as soon as feasible. The program includes a description of replacement housing and other relocation payments conditions of eligibility and procedures for obtaining payment, advisory services that are available, explanation of the 90 day advance notice and assurance that the displaced cannot be required to move permanently unless at least one comparable replacement dwelling has been made available.

Benefits include a choice from three or more comparable replacement dwellings or replacement housing payments, transportation to inspect housing, payment for moving and related expenses and counseling to minimize adjustment hardships.

- A. General: Union City will comply with Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) regulations, Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition for Federal and Federal Assisted Programs of 1986, when real property is acquired to implement the HCD Program and if persons are involuntarily displaced. Guidelines cover real property owners, tenants, business establishments and mobile homes.
- B. Acquisition: Real property will be acquired expeditiously and by negotiation only after a written appraisal. Owners will be offered just compensation and will be paid before surrendering possession of their property.
- C. Relocation: As soon as feasible, persons scheduled to be displaced are furnished with a written description of the urban county relocation program. The program includes a description of the replacement housing and other relocation payments, condition of eligibility and procedures for obtaining payment, advisory services that are available, explanation of the 90 day advance notice and assurance that the displaced cannot be required to move permanently unless at least one comparable replacement dwelling has been made available.

VII. The Five-Year consolidated Plan, Annual Action Plan, Annual Performance Report (CAPER) and substantial Amendments to the Consolidated Action Plans

This section is applicable to each jurisdiction participating in the Alameda County HOME Consortium, which includes Union City. The HOME Consortium was established in 1991 for the development or rehabilitation of affordable housing. The HOME Consortium includes the cities of Alameda, Fremont, Hayward, Livermore, Pleasanton, San Leandro, and Union City, and the Urban County jurisdictions of Albany, Dublin, Emeryville, Newark, and Piedmont, and the unincorporated areas. Each CDBG entitlement jurisdiction has adopted this section as a part of its Citizen Participation Plan. As lead agency of the Alameda County HOME Consortium, Alameda County HCD is responsible for coordinating the Alameda County HOME Consortium Consolidated Plan, Action Plan, and Annual Performance Report.

A main goal of the Citizen Participation Plan is to encourage citizens, particularly low and moderate income residents of low and moderate income neighborhoods, to participate in the development of the five-year Consolidated Plan, annual Action Plan, substantial amendments to Consolidated/Action Plans, and the Annual Performance Report.

The five-year Consolidated or annual Action Plan is due to HUD 45 days before the start of the program year. The Annual Performance Report (CAPER) is due to HUD 90 days after the end of the program year.

A. Consolidated Planning Process

As part of the consolidated planning process, at least two public hearings will be held each program year to obtain citizens' views and to respond to proposals and questions. The public hearings will be conducted at two different stages of the program year with one occurring prior to the Consolidated or Action Plan being published for comment. Together the hearings must address housing and community development needs, development process of proposed activities, and review of program performance.

1. The first public hearing will be held prior to the draft publication of the five-year Consolidated or annual Action Plan. This hearing will address housing and community development needs and development of proposed activities.

2. The second public hearing will be held during the 15-day public review period for the Annual Performance Report. This hearing will address a review of program performance.

3. Both public hearings are held during a regular meeting of the Alameda County Housing and Community Development Advisory Committee (HCDAC) which is made up of nine members appointed by the Alameda County Board of Supervisors.

4. All hearings will be held at times and locations convenient to potential and actual beneficiaries and will accommodate persons with disabilities. Notices for hearings will be published in one or more local newspapers of general circulation, and notices will be sent to interested parties, including, but not limited to: associations, non-profit organizations, and service providers.

5. There shall be a 30-day public review period during which citizens may comment on the Consolidated Plan or Action Plan. A public notice for the public review period will be published in one or more local newspapers of general circulation, and notices will be sent to interested parties, including, but not limited to: associations, non-profit organizations, and service providers.

6. Public notices will include a summary of the contents and purpose of the Consolidated Plan, annual Action Plan, or Annual Performance Report, and include a list of the locations where complete copies may be examined.

7. Summaries of the five-year Consolidated or annual Action Plan and Annual Performance Report will be available in formats accessible to persons with disabilities, upon request.

8. The five-year Consolidated or annual Action and Annual Performance Report will be made available at libraries, government offices and public places during the 30 or 15 day public review period, as applicable.

9. The five-year Consolidated or annual Action Plan and Annual Performance Report will be provided free-of-charge to a reasonable number of citizens and groups that request them.

10. Any comments or complaints of citizens received in writing, or orally at the public hearings shall be considered by the Alameda County HOME Consortium. A summary of the comments or complaints, and a summary of any comments or complaints not accepted and the reasons therefore, will be attached to the applicable document upon submission to HUD.

11. In May, during a regularly scheduled meeting of the Board of Supervisors, a public hearing will be held on the proposed Consolidated or Action Plan prior to final approval.

12. HCD will publish in the "Community Calendar" section of local newspapers, scheduled meeting dates of the HCDAC allowing for citizen comment throughout the program year.

B. Substantial Amendments to the Consolidated/Action Plans

Citizens will be given reasonable notice and an opportunity to comment on substantial amendments made to the Consolidated or Action Plan.

1. Public Notice and Review

a) Alameda County HCD will issue a public notice on behalf of any HOME Consortium jurisdiction making a HOME Program substantial amendment to the Consolidated or Action Plan. All public notices shall describe the substantial amendment being proposed to the Consolidated or Action Plan.

b) Each entitlement jurisdiction is required to issue a public notice for any substantial amendment to its CDBG Program – an Affidavit of Publication must be forwarded to Alameda County HCD for Consolidated Plan records. All public notices shall describe the substantial amendment(s) being proposed to the Consolidated or Action Plan.

c) Summaries of the public notice will be available in formats accessible to persons with disabilities, upon request.

d) There will be a public review period of 30 days during which comments on the substantial amendment may be made before the amendment is implemented. Comments may be registered in writing or orally.

e) Any comments or views of citizens received in writing or orally shall be considered by the Alameda County HOME Consortium. A summary of the comments or views, and a summary of any comments or views not accepted and the reasons therefore, will be attached to the substantial amendment upon submission to HUD. HCD staff will respond to all comments within fifteen (15) working days of their receipt, where practicable.

2. Criteria for Substantial Amendments

a) HOME Program

1) The Alameda County HOME Consortium shall have the authority to establish criteria for substantial amendments for the HOME Program.

2) Changes in the use of HOME funds from one eligible activity to another shall constitute a substantial amendment, subject to the requirements set forth under this section.

b) CDBG Programs

1) Individual CDBG entitlement jurisdictions shall establish criteria for substantial amendments for their individual CDBG Programs. Union City's criteria are included in Appendix A.

C. Eligible Activities under the HOME Program and CDBG Program

1. HOME Program

a) HOME funds may be used by a participating jurisdiction to provide incentives to develop and support affordable rental housing and home ownership affordability through the acquisition (including assistance to home buyers), new construction, reconstruction, or moderate or substantial rehabilitation of non-luxury housing with

suitable amenities, including real property acquisition, site improvements, conversion, demolition, and other expenses, including financing costs, relocation expenses of any displaced persons, families, businesses, or organizations, to provide tenant-based rental assistance, including security deposits; to provide payment of reasonable administrative and planning costs; and to provide for the payment of operating expenses of community housing development organization. The housing must be permanent or transitional housing, and includes permanent housing for disabled homeless persons and single-room occupancy housing.

2. CDBG Programs

a) Individual CDBG entitlement jurisdictions shall describe eligible activities under their individual CDBG Programs. Union City's eligible activities are discussed in Section I of this plan.

APPENDIX A
SUBSTANTIAL AMENDMENTS TO THE
UNION CITY
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT PROGRAM

Criteria for Substantial Amendments to the Consolidated Plan or Action Plan

Changes in the use of CDBG funds from one eligible activity to another shall constitute a substantial amendment, subject to the requirements set forth under Section VII of the Citizen Participation Plan.

Eligible Activities

Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds may be used to fulfill any of the following program objectives:

- 1) Maintain the housing stock by rehabilitating existing substandard housing for low and moderate persons and the disabled.
- 2) Acquire/rehabilitate facilities providing programs for the benefit of low and moderate income persons.
- 3) Develop rental housing opportunities for low and moderate income households.
- 4) Promote economic development and neighborhood revitalization in target areas that will benefit low and moderate income persons.
- 5) Provide assistance for public service agencies benefitting primarily low and moderate income persons.
- 6) Provide public improvements in target areas.
- 7) Remove architectural barriers and improve physical access and mobility for the disabled.