State of Wyoming
Citizen Participation Plan

This plan may be obtained in alternative formats, upon request. Este plan se puede obtener en diferentes formatos, a pedido".

BACKGROUND

The Wyoming Citizen Participation Plan (CPP) contains policies and procedures for public involvement in the Department of Housing and Urban Development's (HUD) Consolidated Plan process, in accordance with 24 CFR 91. The following six entitlement grant programs of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) were consolidated into a single planning and application process:

- Community Development Block Grant (CDBG).
  Administered by the Wyoming Business Council (WBC), serving as the lead agency for the plan.
- Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG).
  Administered by the Wyoming Department of Family Services.
- HOME Investment Partnerships Program (HOME).
  Administered by the Wyoming Community Development Authority.
- National Housing Trust Fund.
  Administered by the Wyoming Community Development Authority.
- Housing for Persons with Aids (HOPWA).
  Administered by the Wyoming Department of Health.
- Continuum of Care Grant (CoC).
  Administered by the Wyoming Homeless Collaborative.

This document contains the following information:

- Citizen participation.
- Public information and assistance.
- Public notices, hearings and comment period.
- Access to information and records.
- Annual Performance Report and Citizen Participation Evaluation.
- Complaint procedures.
- Amendment procedures.

INTRODUCTION

The Consolidated Plan is a planning tool to address identified needs in the areas of housing, homelessness and community and economic development. These programs improve communities by providing access to affordable, quality housing, a suitable living environment and expanded economic opportunities.

The Consolidated Plan includes:

- Planning and application information.
- Descriptions of the current conditions for housing, living environments and economic opportunity in the state for low- and moderate-income people.

- Development needs and how grant funds received will address those needs.
- The amount of assistance the state expects to receive from each program.
- The range of activities that may be done.
- Prioritization of the activities to be undertaken.
- Benefits to those who are low to moderate income.
- Plans and assistance to those who might be displaced as a result of any activity funded by these programs.
- Family income limits determining eligibility, established by HUD on an annual basis and posted at https://www.huduser.gov/portal/datasets/il.html.

The WBC, as the lead agency, will ensure the CPP is followed and will work with the partner agencies to complete each document required by HUD. The following documents are part of the Consolidated Plan process:

- Consolidated Plan, required every five years.
- Assessment of Fair Housing (AFH), required every five years.
- Annual Action Plan, required every year.
- Performance Report, required every year.

Public participation is encouraged in the development and revisions of the AHF, Consolidated Plan, Annual Action Plans and Performance Reports (24 CFR § 91.115(a)(2)(i)).

CITIZEN PARTICIPATION

The Consolidated Plan is developed in consultation with public and private agencies providing housing, health and social services, services for the chronically homeless, service or information agencies related to slum and blight, and with local governments. The WBC and other partner agencies operating under the Consolidated Plan will maintain and develop distribution lists of those groups and will provide, an opportunity for members of the public and agencies to add contact information (24 CFR § 91.110 (a)).

The plan provides for and encourages public participation, emphasizing involvement by low and moderate-income people, particularly those living in slum and blighted areas. All residents are encouraged to participate including minorities, non-English speaking persons and persons with disabilities (24 CFR § 91.115(a)(2)(i)).

For the purposes of the rule, “community participation” means a solicitation of views and recommendations from members of the community and other interested parties, a consideration of the views and recommendations received, and a process for incorporating such views and recommendations into decisions and outcomes. 24 C.F.R. § 5.152.

The WBC will consult with statewide and regional institutions, Continuum of Care, and other organizations (including businesses, developers, nonprofits, philanthropic organizations and community- and faith-based organizations) involved with or affected by the programs and activities in the plan are encouraged to participate. Information will be distributed through multiple distribution lists for further dissemination including, but not limited to, the following (24 CFR § 91.115(a)(2)(ii)):

- Wyoming Economic Development Association.
- Wyoming Association of Municipalities.
- ServeWyoming.
- Wyoming Community Foundation.

- Wyoming Chapter of the National Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials.
- Department of Health, Multicultural Office.
- Wyoming Workforce Services, Vocational Rehabilitation.
- Wyoming Homeless Collaborative (Continuum of Care).
- Wyoming Association of Churches.

Groups serving low- and moderate-income people, non-English speaking people, or people with disabilities are asked to post or distribute information for their clientele.

The WBC will employ communications means designed to reach the broadest audience. Participation is encouraged by using several public involvement techniques. Information on the development of the Consolidated Plan may be gathered via ((24 CFR § 91.115(a)(2)(iii)):

- Online survey.
- Outreach to agencies and organizations providing services.
- Conference and meeting attendance.
- Public meetings and focus groups.
- Publications and reports of agencies and organizations providing services.
- Other outreach opportunities that arise.

As soon as feasible after the start of the public participation process, the State will make HUD-provided data and any other supplemental information the State intends to incorporate into its AFH available to the public, public agencies and other interested parties. The State may make the HUD-provided data available by cross referencing HUD's website (24 CFR § 91.115(b)(1)(i)).

The WBC will evaluate its effectiveness in engaging the public on an annual basis.

PUBLIC INFORMATION AND ASSISTANCE

The WBC will post information on an annual basis on its website detailing: (24 CFR § 91.115(b)(ii))

- The amount of funds each program expects to receive.
- The range of activities that may be undertaken by each program.
- The amount benefiting low- and moderate-income people.
- Family income limits determining program eligibility.
- Plans to minimize the amount of and assist displaced persons.
- Copies of the five-year Consolidated Plan, Annual Action Plan and Performance Reports.

The website will be updated with the method of distribution, meeting notices, progress reports, draft plans, annual updates, amendments, performance reports, and other information necessary to provide the pubic with an understanding of the plan, its development, opportunities to comment, and the state's performance in implementing the plan. The public will have an opportunity to easily submit comments. The website will include contact information including phone and email (24 CFR § 91.115(b)(2)).

Digital access to any and all materials will be available; printed materials will be provided upon request. All materials will be provided at no cost. Reasonable efforts will be made, upon request to the agency contact at the WBC, for special accommodations and alternative material formats for persons with disabilities and those who are non-English-speaking. (24 CFR § 91.115(a)(4) & (b)(ii)).

Partner agencies responsible for the HUD funds will provide technical assistance to individuals, groups, or representatives of low-income persons requesting assistance in the development of proposals for funding under any of the HUD programs covered by the Consolidated Plan. Such assistance will include, but not be limited to, the following types of activities:

- Written information such as program guidelines, rules and application forms.
- Data to assist with application preparation.
- Consultation and training on various areas of program compliance.

PUBLIC NOTICES, HEARINGS AND COMMENT PERIOD

The partner agencies will host at least one public hearing on housing and community development needs, as well as one hearing for proposed strategies and actions for furthering fair housing consistent with the AFH before the Consolidated Plan is published for comment (24 CFR § 91.115(b)(3)).

The partner agencies will hold public comment periods once the AFH, Consolidated Plan and Annual Action plans are complete before submitting the plans to HUD (24 CFR § 91.115 (a)(3) & (b)(i)). Communications will include summary of the document, content, purpose and a list of locations the full plan can be found.

The partner agencies will employ communications means designed to reach the broadest audience. Public notice and information may include following forms (24 CFR § 91.115(b)(3)(i)):

- Paid advertising in the newspaper of greatest statewide distribution.
- Press release forwarded to all media outlets.
- Mail (hard copy or electronic) to agencies and organizations providing services.
- Social media avenues, such as Facebook and Twitter.
- Posted on websites of funding agencies.

Public hearings will include (24 CFR § 91.115(b)(3)(i)):

- Public notice at least 14 days prior to the hearing.
- A reasonable attempt will be made to notify organizations representing low- and moderate-income persons and request they provide their members and constituents with meeting notices and information.

Public hearings and informational meetings held at locations accessible to and times convenient for low- and moderate -income families ((24 CFR § 91.115(b)(3)(ii)).

- Reasonable attempts will be made for special arrangements, upon request, to accommodate non-English-speaking and disabled persons ((24 CFR § 91.115(b)(3)(iii)).
- Public information-gathering meetings and hearings held via video conferences from main locations that are publically accessible.
- Presentations will be available on the WBC website as soon as possible after hearings.
- Detailed summaries of hearings will be posted on the WBC website as soon as possible.
- A 30-day comment period after the draft plan is complete. There will be an additional 15-day comment period if significant changes are made as a result of the public process ((24 CFR § 91.115(b)(4)).

The partner agencies will consider any comments or views of residents and local governments received in writing, or orally at the public hearing, in preparing the final documents related to the Consolidated Plan. A summary of these comments, and a summary of any comments not accepted and the reasons why, will be attached to the final respective plans ((24 CFR § 91.115(b)(5)).

ACCESS TO INFORMATION AND RECORDS

The WBC and partner agencies will provide reasonable and timely access to information relating to the data or content of the draft and final plans, including those of the past five years.

Standard documents include:

- The Assessment of Fair Housing.
- The proposed and final Consolidated Plan.
- The proposed and final Annual Action Plan.
- The proposed and final substantial amendments.
- Annual Performance Reports.

Standard documents will be available on the WBC and partner websites. Reasonable efforts will be made to make documents available in a form accessible to persons with disabilities or other languages, upon request. Contact the following agencies for further information regarding each program ((24 CFR § 91.115(d)(2)(f)(g)):

Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)
Wyoming Business Council
214 W. 15th St.
Cheyenne, WY 82002
Phone: (307) 777-2800
www.wyomingbusiness.org

Home Investment Partnerships Program (HOME)
Wyoming Community Development Authority (WCDA)
155 N. Beech St.
Casper, WY 82601
Phone: (307) 265-0603
www.wyomingcda.com

National Housing Trust Fund
Wyoming Community Development Authority (WCDA)
155 N. Beech St.
Casper, WY 82601
Phone: (307) 265-0603
www.wyomingcda.com

Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG)
Wyoming Department of Family Services
2300 Capital Ave.
Cheyenne, WY 82002

Phone: (307) 777-3313
http://dfsweb.wyo.gov

Housing for Persons with AIDS (HOPWA)
Preventive Health & Safety Division
6101 N. Yellowstone Rd., Ste. 510
Cheyenne, WY 82002
Phone: (307)777-5856
http://wdh.state.wy.us/phsd/aids/ryan.html

Homelessness Prevention and Continuum of Care
Wyoming Department of Family Services & Wyoming Homeless Collaborative
Homeless Service
2300 Capital Ave.
Cheyenne, WY 82002
Phone: (307) 777-6948
http://dfsweb.wyo.gov/child-support-enforcement/homelessness

ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORT AND CITIZEN PARTICIPATION EVALUATION

The Annual Performance Report is available for review, generally in March. The review process includes:

- Notification to the public of the draft Performance Report and opportunity for public comment will be made through a paid advertisement in the newspaper with the largest statewide circulation in addition to press releases sent to all Wyoming media outlets.
- A comment period of no less than 15 days.
- A public hearing will be held upon the request of 20 or more individuals.
- A summary of comments received will be attached to the Performance Report.

The partner agencies will evaluate the public participation and levels of public engagement at the same time. The evaluation will consist of:

- Meeting attendance.
- Number and type of public comments received.
- Feedback solicited from individuals and organizations.
- Growth of contact and distribution lists maintained by the WBC.

Identified changes or additions will be made to improve citizen involvement (24 CFR § 91.115(3)(d)(i)). Any comment received in writing, or orally at a public hearing, will be considered. A summary of the comments or views will be attached to the Performance Report (24 CFR § 91.115 (d)(2)).

ASSESSMENT OF FAIR HOUSING (AFH)

The Assessment of Fair Housing will follow all of the procedures mentioned in this document, with a few additions:

- The assessment will include, in addition to organizations mentioned earlier, tenant organizations or PHA-related residency resources, realtors, property management companies, and lenders.

- The WBC will consult with other public and private agencies that provide assisted housing, health services, and social services (including those focusing on services for children, elderly persons, persons with disabilities, persons with HIV/AIDS and their families, or homeless persons), community-based and regionally-based organizations that represent protected class members, and organizations that enforce fair housing laws.
- Make the HUD–provided data and any other data to be included in the AFH available to its residents, public agencies, and other interested parties.
- Publish the proposed AFH in a manner that affords residents and others the opportunity to examine its content and submit comments.
- Provide for at least one public hearing during the development of the AFH.
- Provide a period of not less than 30 calendar days to receive comments from residents of the community.
- If submitting a revised AFH to HUD, the WBC will also provide for community participation before the revision is submitted.

COMPLAINT PROCEDURES

The public may send written complaints related to the Consolidated Plan and its associated planning efforts to the Wyoming Business Council. A written response will be issued within 15 working days. Other forms of complaints will be accepted if a written complaint is not possible (24 CFR § 91.115(d)(2)(h)).

Wyoming Business Council
214 W. 15th St.
Cheyenne, WY 82002
Phone: (307) 777-2800
www.wyomingbusiness.org

AMENDMENT PROCEDURES

The AFH, Consolidated Plan and Annual Action Plan are amended any time there is a significant change. The following are considered significant amendments (24 CFR § 91.115(c)(1)(i)):

- The elimination of an activity originally described in the plan.
- The addition of an activity not originally described in the plan.
- Change in criteria used to rate and rank applications.
- Significant changes in funds allocated to program components.
- Receipt of any additional federal funds.
- Change in purpose, scope, location or beneficiaries of activities described in the plan.

Significant changes to the AFH include (24 CFR § 5.164 (a)(1)(i):

- Presidentially declared disasters 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.
- Civil rights findings, determinations, settlements (including Voluntary Compliance Agreements).
- Court order.

The public notification process is the same as the Consolidated Plan, and the WBC will employ communications means designed to reach the broadest audience, with these exceptions:

- An agency may decide a public meeting or hearing is not necessary or practical. A public hearing will be scheduled upon request of 20 or more individuals.
- If a public meeting or hearing is held, notification is made in the same way as a Consolidated Plan hearing.
- If a public meeting or hearing is not conducted, notification to the public of the draft amendment and opportunity for public comment will be made through:
    - Paid advertisements in the newspaper with the largest statewide circulation.
    - Press releases sent to all Wyoming media outlets.
    - Mail (hard copy or electronic) to all persons who previously indicated interest in the planning process or who are affiliated with a business or organization typically involved with programs covered by the Consolidated Plan.
- The affected program in cases of amendments of a program-specific nature will be the responsible entity for the public involvement process However, in every case, amendment information will be posted on the WBC website.
- A 30-day comment period after the draft plan is complete. An additional 15-day comment period will be held if significant changes are made as a result of the public process.
- A summary of the comments or views received and a summary of any comments or views not accepted, and the reasons why, will be attached to the substantial amendment of the AFH or Consolidated Plan 24 CFR § 91.115 (c)(3).

PUBLIC COMMENT –MAY 24, 2016 – JULY 15, 2015

The Citizen Participation Plan became final on July 18, 2016, with no changes to the plan. Public comment was for the most part positive, with no suggestions on how to improve it.

1. The Citizen Participation Plan looks well thought-out and thorough. If you are setting up a mailing list of agencies I would appreciate being on that list. I would be happy to also share information to the City website and social media sites.
2. Great idea! I'd like to see the state become more involved in area's dealing with slum and blight to give the local jurisdictions more support, especially when dealing with out of state owners. Out of state owners are a big problem in many Wyoming municipalities. The Town of Glenrock is dealing with an out of state owner who owns condemned properties in our downtown and 115 residential lots that he refuses to maintain and sell. The towns attorney is very cautious with this out of state owner, because he is also an attorney. Over half of the 115 lots are zoned R-2 which is a multi-family residential zone, that could be developed into townhouses, duplexes and double wide manufactured homes that could easily be low to moderate income housing.
3. I'm impressed with the time and effort put into this project however, I worry/wonder what the current downturn in the state's economy will have in the next 5 years.
4. An awesome concept. What better way to help people than asking them what they think their needs are. Especially since housing needs are a prominent issue in Wyoming.
5. This is an awesome idea by the Wyoming Business Council! Thanks for supporting our Communities.
6. The United States of America is a constitutional republic which means Americans are obliged to obey the laws that their representatives in Congress pass and that pass constitutional muster. Edicts like this one from a federal bureaucracy (HUD) are in no sense binding on either Wyoming

citizens or Wyoming state agencies (WBC) and should be ignored. In fact, this kind of imperial overreach from the Obama administration is particularly galling in that Wyoming's state government is currently cutting the state budget as a result of lost mineral tax revenue WHICH ALSO RESULTS from another Obama administration imperial edict which should have been vigorously resisted BUT WAS NOT. The correct response from the sovereign State of Wyoming to the HUD bureaucrats should be that we are a nation of laws not men and no matter how much Barack Obama wishes to order American citizens about like so many indentured servants, we will not be wasting our money creating a "five-year Consolidated Plan" or anything of the like. If HUD wants to have a "five-year Consolidated Plan" they can create one for Wyoming (on their dime) and submit it to our legislature for consideration. Or, if the US Congress thinks the states should have a "five-year Consolidated Plan" then they can pass such legislation including the funding necessary for its implementation. And if Wyoming's Attorney General thinks such legislation does not violate the US Constitution or Wyoming's Constitution then Wyoming's legislature can take up the matter in their next session to determine how and who to implement it. In short, it is high time Wyoming's elected officials STOP ACCEPTING AND ASSENTING TO WASHINGTON'S DIKTAT. Elected officials at any level of government are the servants of the citizens NOT THE OTHER WAY ROUND.