

NORTH SUBURBAN CONSORTIUM

91.105

CITIZEN PARTICIPATION PLAN

(a) (1)

The North Suburban Consortium (NSC) hereby agrees to comply with all provisions as outlined in Title 24, Part 91 of the Code of Federal Regulations 91.401 and 91.105 outlining regulations with regard to a Citizen Participation Plan. These regulations set forth submission requirements for Community Planning and Development Programs.

(a) (2) Encouragement of Citizen Participation

The North Suburban consortium comprised of the communities of Malden, Medford, Melrose, Arlington, Chelsea, Revere, Everett and Winthrop are required to follow a detailed Citizen Participation Plan in accordance with the CFR regulations in paragraph (a) (1). It is the jurisdiction's intent to encourage citizens to participate in the development of its Annual Consolidated Plan any "substantial amendments" and the NSC Consolidated Annual Performance Reports (CAPER).

Participation is especially encouraged by low and moderate income residents. Further, NSC advocates participation by its minority population, non-English speaking population and persons with disabilities by working with the appropriate city/town departments and/or organizations best able to facilitate communication with these residents.

Participation by public housing residents will be encouraged by posting notices and holding public hearings at some of the HA community centers. Whenever possible, announcements about the public input & comment hearings will be inserted into PHA newsletters, as well. Information about Consolidated Plan activities has been made available to all Housing Authorities for the purpose of annual public hearings required under the Comprehensive Grant Program and they are encouraged to disseminate the information to their residents for participation in the process.

(a) (3) Comment on Citizen Participation Plan & Amendments

Publication of the Draft Consolidated Plan, of which this Citizen Participation Plan is part of, typically in mid-April. Copies of the plan will be made available to all City Commissions, Planning Boards, Human Service Departments, local CHDO's and Housing Authorities. The plan will be made available in an appropriate format for those residents with certain disabilities or language needs other than English upon request. All comments may be submitted to either the NSC Representative Member or a member community "in writing, orally at public hearing, or electronically via email".

(b)(1) Development of the Consolidated Plan

The Consortium has made available to its citizens, public agencies and interested parties information that include the amount of assistance the jurisdiction expects to receive, including grant funds and program income. The NSC also makes available for comment the range of activities that are scheduled to be undertaken.

(b)(2) Publication

The Citizen Participation Plan requires NSC to publish the proposed Consolidated Plan by notice in local newspapers of general circulation. Citizens will be afforded an opportunity to examine said plan during regular hours at locations in every NSC member community during this 30 day Comment Period. A reasonable number of copies will be made available for review. Additionally, the plan will be available 24 hours a day during the 30 day comment period for download on the NSC's website, www.northsuburbanconsortium.org.

(b)(3) Development Stage Public Hearing

The Citizen Participation Plan provides for at least one public hearing during the development stage of the Consolidated Plan. A public hearing for public input that was advertised jurisdiction-wide will be conducted in Malden, prior to the drafting of the Consolidated Plan. At the input hearing, the NSC representative member will present the amount of NSC funding to be available for expenditure, HOME as well as the typical and previous year expenditures. Should other member community's want to hold their own public input hearing, the NSC Consolidated Plan allows for that. Comments received **there, and at the are held in Malden**, will be incorporated into the Con Plan.

(b)(4) Thirty Day Comment Period

An advertised period of at least 30 days is required by the Citizens Participation Plan for the public to review and comment on the draft plan.

(b)(5) Consideration of Public Comments

NSC will consider all comments whether in writing or verbal in the preparation of the final plan. A summary of all comments received and their effect on the plan shall be attached to the final document.

(c) (1) Criteria for Amendments to Consolidated Plan

“Substantial amendments” are defined as lump-sum changes involving more than ten percent of the total budget for the program year or changes involving more than ten percent of any individual program category. A change in the way funds are distributed would constitute a policy change and therefore be classified as a “substantial amendment”.

(c)(2) Opportunity for Comment

The NSC provides its citizens a reasonable opportunity to comment on the draft Citizen Participation Plan and on any amendments to the final Citizen Participation Plan when the plan was developed in 1995, by making the plan public. The full consolidated Plan, of which the Citizen Participation Plan is a part, will be noticed in the newspaper and to certain government bodies, both upon its completion and upon its substantial amendment, and the Citizen Participation Plan, as well as the Consolidated Plan itself, will be available for comment every year as described in this document.

(c)(3) Comments

Any comment, written or oral, shall be considered in preparing the Consolidated Plan. A summary of these comments or views whether accepted or not together with reasons therefor shall be attached to the substantial amendment of the Consolidated Plan.

(d)(1) Performance Reports

The residents of the NSC jurisdiction shall be provided with reasonable notice and an opportunity to comment on Consolidated Annual (CAPERS) performance reports. A newspaper advertisement and posted notices will appear not less than 15 days before required submission to HUD.

(d)(2) Comments

Any comment, written or oral, shall be considered in the final draft of performance reports. A summary of these comments or views whether accepted or not together with reasons therefor shall be attached to the performance report, either at the time of submission, as an addendum when available.

(e)(1) (2) Public Hearings and Notice Thereof

At least two public hearings are required per year to obtain citizens views and to respond to proposals and questions. These public hearings shall occur at two different stages of the program year. The hearings shall address housing and needs, development of proposed activities and review of program performance. To obtain the input views of NSC residents on housing needs, including homeless & non-homeless special needs, the Citizen Participation Plan provides that at least one of these hearing is held before the proposed Consolidation Plan is published for comment.

The 2nd hearing is held once the draft plan is developed, soliciting comment on that draft plan.

(e)(3) Public Hearings Times/Location

All public hearings have been held or are scheduled to be held in the evening to ensure maximum participation and at locations that are handicapped accessible.

(e)(4) Non-English Speaking Participation

The NSC jurisdiction is predominantly English speaking and hearings were conducted in English. There are, however, more than 35 different languages spoken within the jurisdiction according to the U. S. Census. Upon request, NSC is prepared to offer “translations” in cooperation with appropriate city/town departments and any other local organizations that may be of assistance on this matter.

(f) Meetings

The Citizens Participation Plan shall provide residents of the NSC jurisdiction reasonable and timely access to local meetings.

(g) Availability to the Public

The Citizens Participation Plan provides that the Consolidation Plan as adopted, substantial amendments and the performance report will be available to the public, including availability of materials in a form accessible to persons with disabilities, upon request. **These documents are available during business hours at the ??????????www.??????**

(h) Access to Records

NSC member communities will provide for full and timely disclosure of its program records and information consistent with applicable state and local law regarding personal privacy and obligations of confidentiality.

(i) Technical Assistance

Technical assistance for development of proposals for the different programs within the jurisdiction is available upon request at all Planning and Community Development Offices located in the city/town halls of each member. This policy is in effect during the entire program year.

(j) Comments and Complaints

NSC shall consider any comments or views of citizens and/or organizations received either in writing, via email or orally at public hearings, in preparing the final Consolidated Plan, amendments to the Plan or performance reports. A summary of these comments whether accepted or not together with reasons therefor, will be attached to the final Consolidated Plan, amendment or performance report, whichever is appropriate.

NSC will provide a timely, substantive written response to every written citizen complaint within 15 working days from receipt of such complaint. Citizens with complaints about aspect of any program activity are encouraged to telephone the Director of Community Development or his/her designee in each member community so that the complaint can be addressed as soon as possible.

(k) Use of Citizen Participation Plan

NSC shall follow its Citizen Participation Plan.

(l) Responsibility

The requirements for citizen participation do not restrict the responsibility or authority of each member community for the development and execution of its Consolidated Plan.