

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.

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 four 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 Community Development Authority (WCDA)
- Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) - Administered by the Wyoming Homeless Collaborative.
- HOME Investment Partnerships Program (HOME) - Administered by WCDA.
- National Housing Trust Fund (NHTF) - Administered by WCDA.

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Background

In accordance with the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), units of state governments that receive federal funding are required to adopt a citizen participation plan (24CFR Section 91.115) that sets forth policies and guidelines for citizen participation. This CPP outlines citizen participation for the Consolidated Plan, Annual Action Plans, Amendments to Plans, and Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Reports. These reports outline the use of federal funds to meet state identified housing and community development needs and include the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), the HOME Investment Partnerships Program (HOME), the Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG), and the National Housing Trust Fund (NHTF). The Wyoming Community Development Authority (WCDA) is the lead agency for the development of this CPP and for the aforementioned program reports.

WCDA recognizes the importance of citizen engagement and is committed to the continued expansion and proactive citizen engagement. To enforce these efforts, WCDA will undertake the following:

- Evaluate citizen engagement on an annual basis.
- Partner with local stakeholders, service providers, and community groups to disseminate information.
- Solicit feedback from participants on ways to improve outreach and communication.

Consolidated Planning Programs

The Consolidated Planning process is a five-year cycle in the State of Wyoming, which most recently restarted with the 2023-2027 Consolidated Plan. The Consolidated Plan evaluates the housing and community development needs of the state, identifies priorities, and sets goals for spending over the next five years. These goals include funding amounts for HOME, CDBG, ESG, and HTF. Each Annual Action Plan provides specific projects that will be undertaken during each program year to meet those overarching goals. The Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Report (CAPER) evaluates progress under each year's Action Plan. Every five years an Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Choice is conducted to evaluate the barriers to accessing housing and steps to mitigate those barriers.

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)).

Contact Information

WCDA 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:

- Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Choice.
- The proposed and final Consolidated Plan.
- The proposed and final Annual Action Plan.
- The proposed and final substantial amendments.
- Annual Performance Reports.

Contact the following agencies for further information regarding each program ((24 CFR § 91.115(d)(2)(f)(g))):

Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)

Wyoming Community Development Authority
155 N. Beech St
Casper, WY 82601
www.wyomingcda.com
307-265-0603
1-800-273-4632
TTY: 711-265-0603

Home Investment Partnerships Program (HOME)

Wyoming Community Development Authority
155 N. Beech St
Casper, WY 82601
www.wyomingcda.com
307-265-0603
1-800-273-4632
TTY: 711-265-0603

National Housing Trust Fund

Wyoming Community Development Authority
155 N. Beech St
Casper, WY 82601
www.wyomingcda.com
307-265-0603
1-800-273-4632
TTY: 711-265-0603

Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG)

Wyoming Homeless Collaborative Homeless Service
2300 Capital Ave.
Cheyenne, WY 82002
Phone: (307) 777-6948
<http://dfsweb.wyo.gov/child-support-enforcement/homelessness>

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. WCDA 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.

WCDA 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 (24 CFR § 91.115(a)(2)(ii)).

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. These groups are continually updated based on new information and increasing collaborative outreach.

WCDA 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 AI, Consolidated Plan, or other documents 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)).

Document Availability

Documents will be available for public inspection at the start of each comment period. These comment periods vary based on each document type and are outlined in the next section. Documents will be available on WCDA’s website and available in print form at the WCDA office upon request.

Public notification

The public will be notified of document availability through a variety of means in order to reach the greatest number of people possible, as well as to ensure equitable access. Document availability will be publicized through:

- Paid advertisements in the newspaper with the largest statewide circulation
- Email notification to stakeholders, service providers, developers, and other email lists
- Notification on the WCDA website

Notification will be provided at least seven (7) days prior to the release of the document.

Public Meetings, Hearing, and Comment Periods

The publication of each document will coincide with the beginning of the comment period. Consolidated Plan, Analysis of Impediment, and Annual Action Plans will be made available for public review for a minimum of 30 days. CAPER documents will be made available for a minimum of 15 days. During this time, WCDA will accept any and all written comments, as well as comments received at public meetings and hearings.

Public Meetings

For Consolidated Plan and Analysis of Impediment document development, a minimum of two public meetings will be held. One will be held prior to the release of the Plan for public comment, and one will be held during the public comment period. These meetings will follow the public notification process outlined below. These meetings will be held either in person or with a hybrid option to attend virtually. For Annual Action Plans and CAPER documents, one public meeting will be held during the comment period. These meetings will follow the public notification process outlined below.

Public Notification

Public meetings for the Consolidated Plan, AI, Annual Action Plan, and CAPER must be distributed at least seven (7) days prior to the meeting date. The public will be notified of public meetings through a variety of means in order to reach the greatest number of people possible, as well as to ensure equitable access. Document availability will be publicized through:

- Paid advertisements in the newspaper with the largest statewide circulation
- Email notification to stakeholders, service providers, developers, and other email lists
- Notification on the WCDA website

WCDA 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)).

Analysis of Impediments

The Analysis of Impediment* will follow all 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.
- WCDA 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 AI

- available to its residents, public agencies, and other interested parties.
- Publish the proposed AI in a manner that affords residents and others the opportunity to examine its content and submit comments.
- Provide at least one public hearing during the development of the AI.
- Provide a period of not less than 30 calendar days to receive comments from residents of the community.
- If submitting a revised AI to HUD, WCDA will also provide for community participation before the revision is submitted.

The State of Wyoming will prepare either an Analysis of Impediment **OR a subsequent fair housing document per HUD requirements.*

Language Accessibility

WCDA will make reasonable efforts to make documents available in a form accessible to persons with disabilities or other languages, upon request. In addition, translation services may be provided for public meetings. Requests must be made at least five (5) days prior to a public meeting. These requests should be directed to WCDA.

Wyoming Community Development Authority
 155 N. Beech St.
 Casper, WY 82601
 (307) 265-0603
 1-800-273-4632
 TTY: 711-265-0603
www.wyomingcda.com

Outreach & Accessibility

Public hearings and document accessibility will include (24 CFR § 91.115(b)(3)(i)) 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 publicly accessible.
- Presentations will be available on the WCDA website as soon as possible after hearings.
- Detailed summaries of hearings will be posted on the WCDA 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)).

To encourage citizen participation with historically underrepresented groups, WCDA will also employ the following to encourage citizen engagement:

- Follow procedures which inform and encourage citizens to participate in the planning

and evaluation process. Special emphasis shall be placed on procedures which emphasize the participation of low and moderate income, minority and disabled persons who reside in slum and blight areas, and in other areas where CDBG funds are proposed for expenditure or are being expended.

- Provide citizens with reasonable and timely access to meetings, information and records relating to proposals for the use of funds being applied for as well as the actual prior use of funds. Applicants/grantees must take steps to ensure that pertinent application/program information and records are accessible to the public, and that the public has been made aware of when and where material is available for inspection.
- Hold public hearings to obtain citizen views and to respond to proposals and questions at all stages of the program, including at least the development of needs, the review of proposed activities, and the review of program performance. The public hearings shall be held after adequate notice, at times and locations convenient to potential or actual beneficiaries and with accommodation for the disabled and those with limited English proficiency.
- Provide technical assistance, upon request, to groups of persons of low and moderate income, or their representatives, when such assistance is needed in developing proposals for the use of CDBG funds. The level and type of assistance is to be determined by each applicant/grantee but must also provide for assistance to those disabled and/or limited English proficiency.
- Provide a timely written response to written complaints and grievances related to the plans. A timely response is one which is made within fifteen (15) business days from receipt of the written complaint/grievance.
- Maintain citizen participation files which contain documentation that demonstrates compliance with all requirements contained in the Citizen Participation Plan for the municipality.

Amendment Procedure

When a revision, deletion, or addition needs to be made to the Consolidated Plan, Action Plan, or CAPER during the course of the funding year it represents, this change may warrant an amendment or a substantial amendment to the document. WCDA has established parameters that direct the agency to what will warrant a substantial amendment over an administrative amendment, thus initiating the citizen participation requirements.

Substantial Amendment

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

- Change in its allocation priorities or a change in the method of distribution of funds in an amount greater than 10% of the original allocation for the program.
- 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, locations or beneficiaries (10% or more of the original) of a goal of objective described in the plan.

In the event of a Substantial Amendment, the public notification process is the same as the Consolidated Plan, and WCDA will employ communications means designed to reach the broadest audience, and will include:

- Public notification of the Substantial Amendment, plan availability, and public meeting, made through:
 - Paid advertisements in the newspaper with the largest statewide circulation
 - Email notification to stakeholders, service providers, developers, and other email lists
 - Notification on the WCDA website
- 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 WCDA 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 24 CFR § 91.115 (c)(3).

Administrative Amendment

In the event a plan amendment is completed that does not meet the criteria above, it will be considered an Administrative Amendment. This will not require a comment period or public notification. The updated Plan, however, will be available on WCDA's website for public viewing.

Complaint Process

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

Wyoming Community Development Authority
155 N. Beech St
Casper, WY 82601
www.wyomingcda.com
307-265-0603
1-800-273-4632
TTY: 711-265-0603

WCDA will respond to all written complaints within 15 business days. In that response, WCDA will either: (1) provide assistance to the citizen to resolve the issue if possible; (2) explain why assistance cannot be provided and describe any further resources, if any, to assist the citizen in resolving the issue; or (3) provide the citizen with an estimated time frame WCDA will answer their complaint.

Public Comment

This Citizen Participation Plan was put out for public comment on November 23, 2023. Any public comments will be included below.

No public comments were received.