

Summary of Consolidated Plan Development Process

INTRODUCTION

Federal regulations mandate that jurisdictions receiving funds from federal housing programs prepare a Consolidated Plan which consolidates into a single submission the planning and application aspects of the following federal programs: Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), HOME Investment Partnership (HOME), Housing Opportunities for People with AIDS (HOPWA), and the Emergency Shelter Grant (ESG).

Alameda County Housing and Community Development Department (HCD) is the lead agency for the Alameda County HOME Consortium, which includes the cities of Alameda, Fremont, Hayward, Livermore, Pleasanton, San Leandro, and Union City, and the Urban County, which includes the cities of Albany, Dublin, Emeryville, Newark, and Piedmont, and the unincorporated areas of the County. The HOME Consortium (referred to as the Consortium in this document) has adopted a five-year consolidated planning cycle starting July 1, 2005 through June 30, 2010 and has produced this Plan for that cycle.

This Consolidated Plan has been prepared for all jurisdictions in the Consortium. Alameda County's Housing and Community Development Department (HCD) coordinated the process with the assistance of community development and planning staff from each of the Consortium's jurisdictions.

The HOME Program provides flexible funding to states and local governments for affordable housing programs for low income households. HOME funds can be used to acquire, rehabilitate, finance, and construct affordable rental or ownership housing, provide tenant-based rental assistance, or provide operating expenses of community housing development organizations. HOME-assisted housing must be permanent or transitional.

The HOME Consortium receives an annual allocation of HOME funds which is divided among the eight CDBG-entitlement jurisdictions (Alameda, Fremont, Hayward, Livermore, Pleasanton, San Leandro, Union City, and the Urban County). In addition, as mandated by HUD, 15% of the annual set-aside for Community Housing Development Organization (CHDOs). CHDOs are locally based nonprofit organizations which provide housing that is affordable to lower income persons. CHDO projects can be developed, rehabilitated or managed. CHDOs must maintain at least one-third of their governing board's membership from residents of low income neighborhoods, low income residents, or elected representative of low income neighborhood organizations. Alameda County HCD administers Urban County and CHDO projects, while the remaining Consortium jurisdictions administer their allocations with monitoring oversight by Alameda County HCD.

The Consolidated Plan is an important document for the HOME Consortium. It is required for state and local jurisdictions applying for funds under the programs listed below, it also serves as a five year comprehensive plan. Built on interagency coordination, consultation, and public participation, the Consolidated Plan focuses attention on housing and community development needs and resources available to meet these needs.

Under Title I of the National Affordable Housing Act, state and local governments that apply for direct assistance under certain HUD programs must have a Consolidated Plan that is approved by HUD. For other applicants, the Act requires that an applicant for funding be certified as consistent with a HUD approved Consolidated Plan.

Programs that are subject to Consolidated Plan requirements include the following:

- Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program
- Emergency Shelter Grants (ESG) Program
- Grants for Regulatory Barrier Removal Strategies and Implementation
- HOME Investment Partnership (HOME) Program
- HOPE VI (Public Housing Homeownership Program)
- Hope of Youth: Youthbuild
- Housing Opportunities for People with AIDS (HOPWA) Programs
- The John Heinz Neighborhood Development Program
- The Lead-Based Paint Hazard Reduction Program
- Low Income Housing Preservation Program (State-administered only)
- Revitalization of Severely Distressed Public Housing
- Single Room Occupancy Housing (SRO) Program
- Shelter Plus Care Program
- Supportive Housing Program
- Supportive Housing for the Elderly (Section 202) Program
- Supportive Housing for Persons with Disabilities (Section 811) Program

To receive funding under these programs, the applicant (whether a city, housing authority, nonprofit organizations, etc.) must include a certification of consistency with an approved Consolidated Plan when submitting its application.

OVERVIEW OF CONSOLIDATED PLAN CONTENTS

Policy recommendations presented in the Consolidated Plan are consistent with policies in previously adopted documents prepared by the Consortium jurisdictions, such as Housing Elements, Public Housing Authority Plans, and Redevelopment Area Implementation Plans. One difference between the Consolidated Plan and other planning documents, such as the Housing Element, is the Consolidated Plan focuses attention on the housing and community development needs of low and moderate income households, the homeless, and those with special housing needs, while the Housing Element considers all income levels and land use issues.

The topics covered in the Consolidated Plan are specified in the federal regulations requiring the document. Citizen participation is not only encouraged but required. A complete description of the citizen participation process follows.

The Consolidated Plan contains three broad sections: the first section profiles housing and homeless needs along with current market conditions; the second section includes five-year

Housing and Community Development Strategic Plans for each of the Consortium participating jurisdictions; the third section consists of one-year Action Plans for the use of HOME funds in the Consortium, and for the use of non-HOME (e.g. CDBG, ESG, HOPWA) funds for each of the Consortium's participating jurisdictions.

SIGNIFICANT ASPECTS OF THE CONSOLIDATED PLAN PROCESS

Much of the Consolidated Plan draws from statistical information from the 2000 Census. This was the most recent time data on the census tract level was collected. Where there has been reliable, more recent statistical information collected, it has been utilized. All discussions on housing needs and conditions have been updated where possible.

Development of Homeless Needs Survey

The first section of the Consolidated Plan includes an extensive analysis of homeless needs, available resources and service gaps in Alameda County based on the Alameda County-wide Homeless Continuum of Care Plan. This portion of the Consolidated Plan was developed through coordination with homeless service providers working in Alameda County within the broader context of the Alameda County-wide Continuum of Care Plan.

Non-Housing Community Development Needs Survey

Each participating jurisdiction in the HOME Consortium is responsible for preparing a Five-Year Housing and Community Development Strategic Plan for inclusion in the Consolidated Plan. The non-housing Community Development portion of the Plan addresses community development needs which are eligible for CDBG funding and which the jurisdiction considers a priority over the planning period of this document. Participating jurisdictions developed this section in a number of ways – through consultation with agencies to discuss community development needs, sending surveys out to those agencies and organizations to obtain information and data, and public meetings for citizen input on community development needs.

Other Consultation on Development of Consolidated Plan

In addition to the consultations mentioned above, the HOME Consortium Consolidated Plan was prepared through consultation with other public and private entities. A comprehensive list of the agencies, organizations and documents consulted is in the Appendix.

The HOME Consortium Technical Advisory Committee composed of staff from all jurisdictions in the HOME Consortium, met bi-monthly to provide policy input into the Consolidated Plan planning process. The Alameda County Lead Poisoning Prevention Program provided valuable information on the number of households at risk of lead poisoning, and the programs currently operating or planned to mitigate lead-based paint hazards. The three public housing authorities operating in the HOME Consortium (City of Alameda, City of Livermore, and Alameda County (including the City of Dublin)) were consulted to obtain information contained within the Public Housing Plans including current data on Public Housing and Section 8 housing needs, public housing improvements, and other activities.

CITIZEN PARTICIPATION PROCESS

Community participation is a very important part of the Consolidated Plan development process. Many organizations were contacted during the development period (For a complete list, please see the appendix.). These included a large number of homeless service providers, service clients, and other entities involved in serving the homeless, people-at-risk of homelessness and other special needs groups such as people with disabilities, frail elderly, or people with alcohol and/or other drug problems.

A pre-draft public hearing on the Consolidated Plan took place on January 11, 2005 at the Housing and Community Development Advisory Committee meeting. The meeting was held during the evening to attract people who work to attend and participate. The purpose of the meeting was to present an overview of the Consolidated Plan, and review and solicit input on the housing and community development needs in the HOME Consortium.

The 30-day public comment period for the Consolidated Plan required by HUD, took place from March 28, 2005 through April 26, 2005. A public hearing was held on April 7, 2005 to take comments on the draft HOME Consortium Consolidated Plan. This meeting was held at the County's Community and Housing Development office in Hayward. Public Notices are placed in all Alameda Newspaper Group (ANG) newspapers in Alameda County (Alameda Times Star, Oakland Tribune, Hayward Daily Review, Fremont Argus and the Tri-Valley Herald). The notice includes provisions for how the disabled can access the meeting along with a detailed description of what is included in the Consolidated Plan. The Urban County's Citizen's Action Participation Plan does not include requirements for printing notices in non-English speaking newspapers; however, several jurisdictions (Hayward and Fremont) do publish the notices for their meeting in Spanish language papers. At the public hearing, the hearing is listed and noticed as a hearing in the agenda. A sign-in sheet is circulated for attendance. HCD staff present the staff report regarding the Consolidated Plan. Committee members ask questions of staff, the public is then asked to make comments. Any comments are recorded in the meeting and are also listed below.

The draft Consolidated Plan was distributed to all cities and main library branches in Alameda County, HUD, and any interested citizens, organizations, or agencies. Once the Consolidated Plan is adopted, it will be made available along with any substantial amendments (if necessary) and the annual performance reports made to the general public. Distribution will be the same as mentioned above as well as any requests made to HCD for a copy of the Consolidated Plan. Materials will also be made available in alternate formats upon request.

In addition the public will also have an opportunity to comment on the HOME Consortium's Consolidated Evaluation and Annual Performance Reports (CAPER). The CAPER is due to HUD on September 30, 2005. The HOME Consortium will hold a 15-day public comment period during the beginning part of September 2005.

Citizen Complaint Process

The Alameda County Housing and Community Development Department used the Community Development Block Grant guidelines to develop the following process. This process applies to all HUD funded programs administered by the Alameda County Housing and Community Development Department (HCD).

All aspects of programs administered by HCD are conducted with freedom of access for all interested persons. Citizens are encouraged to be involved in the development of programs offered by HCD including recommending program policies and funding, the five year Consolidated Plan, Annual Action Plan, Substantial Amendments to the Consolidated/Action Plans, Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Report, and the Citizen Participation Plan.

Citizens have an opportunity to register complaints by letter, telephone or in person directly to HCD. Citizens are encouraged to initially register complaints by telephone, directly to the HCD staff involved in the relevant program, since oftentimes complaints can be resolved satisfactorily at this level. HCD staff will investigate complaints and respond as quickly as possible. HCD staff will respond in writing to all written citizen complaints within fifteen (15) working days of their receipt, where practical.

Any citizen not satisfied by the response of HCD staff, may request further review of their complaint by writing the Alameda County Housing Director. The Housing Director will respond in writing to all written complaints within thirty (30) working days of their receipt, where practical. The Housing Director will consult with and inform the applicable Urban County Technical Advisory Committee representative(s), HOME Consortium Technical Advisory Committee representative(s) and Housing and Community Development Advisory Committee member(s) as appropriate. If not satisfied at this level, citizens may request further review by the Alameda County Community Development Agency Director

Citizens may also file complaints directly to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). Per HUD procedures, HUD will forward the complaint to the Chief Executive Officer of Alameda County. A copy of the letter accompanying the complaint will be sent to the complainant. The Chief Executive Officer has fifteen (15) working days from the date of the HUD letter to respond directly to the complainant and must forward a copy of the response to HUD for their further review.

All documentation including final disposition of the complaint will be retained by HCD for a period of no less than three years from the date of disposition.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Public comments may be presented at the public hearing or in writing to Alameda County HCD. Comments received will be summarized and a response provided, if appropriate.

No public comments were received by HCD during the public comment period.

Institutional Relationships to Carry Out the Consolidated Plan

Many groups and individuals were contacted in preparing the Consolidated Plan. The HOME Consortium maintains formal contact and works closely with the Public Housing Authorities located within the jurisdiction. The coordination and consultation for both the PHA Plan and the HOME Consortium's plan ensures that both groups will work together to empower local public housing residents and to coordinate efforts to obtain affordable housing programs in the Consortium area. The details of how this will take place are identified throughout both plans.

The HOME Consortium also has a formal relationship with the County-wide effort on Welfare-to-Work Coordination. The Alameda County Private Industry Council (PIC)/Workforce Investment Board (WIB) will have a seat that is dedicated to housing funders. For the next two years the seat will be held by a representative from the Alameda County Housing Authority. After that, the seat will be held by a HOME Consortium member.

The Alameda County-wide Homeless Continuum of Care Council will continue to work on addressing homelessness on a county-wide basis. Much of the work of this council is discussed in the homeless section.