



Spokane County

WASHINGTON

CITIZEN PARTICIPATION PLAN

Updated 2020

Adopted by the Spokane County Board of Commissioners on May 12, 2020 Resolution 20-0343

Spokane County Community Services, Housing, & Community Development



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INTRODUCTION

Spokane County is designated as an urban consortium, entitlement community, by the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). The geographic area of the entitlement includes the twelve cities and towns and the unincorporated areas of Spokane County, exclusive of the City of Spokane, which is a designated entitlement community, also administering HUD funds. Spokane County, reestablishes the urban consortium, as required, every three years and administers HUD funds and provides staffing for the Housing and Community Development Advisory Committee (HCDAC). The HCDAC is comprised of representatives from each jurisdiction in the urban consortium and members at large for the unincorporated areas. This Citizen Participation Plan is effective immediately upon adoption by the Spokane County Board of Commissioners (BOCC) and expires upon replacement.

OBJECTIVES

1. Provide guidance to the Spokane County residents that will promote and expand citizen participation in the Consolidated Planning Process
2. Provide citizens with an avenue for making public comment
3. Support transparent communication between CSHCD and the citizens of Spokane County

CONTACT INFORMATION

Citizens are encouraged to offer public comments at any time. To do so, please contact CSHCD directly by emailing thennessy@spokanecounty.org or calling (509) 477-2588.

Citizens are encouraged to attend HCDAC meeting held on the second Thursday of the month at 4:00 p.m. They do not meet in February, April, July, August or December. Meetings are located at the CSHCD building at 312 West 8th Avenue, Spokane, WA 99204 in the 5th floor conference room. The HCDAC accepts comments from the public at the end of each meeting.

PROGRAMS

The Citizen Participation Plan focuses on two programs administered by Spokane County with funds from HUD; Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) and HOME Investment Partnership Program (HOME). If funding from US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) is delayed, Spokane County Community Services, Housing and Community Development intends to utilize CDBG administration funds to prepare Annual Action Plans and other required documents, in anticipation of advertised CDBG and HOME allocation and contract with HUD to be executed at Spokane County's earliest available date.

Community Development Block Grant Program - CDBG (24 CFR Part 570)

The Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Entitlement Program provides annual grants on a formula basis to entitled cities and counties to develop viable urban communities by providing decent housing and a suitable living environment and by expanding economic opportunities, principally for low- and moderate-income persons. The program is authorized under Title 1 of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974, Public Law 93-383, as amended; 42 U.S.C.-5301 et seq.

Spokane County was notified on April 1, 2020, concerning the availability of Federal Corona virus Aid, Relief and Economic Security Act (CARES Act), in supplemental Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding for grants to prevent, prepare for, and respond to coronavirus (CDBG-CV grants). Upon a declared national emergency stimulus funds may become available to Spokane County.

HOME Investment Partnerships Program (24 CFR Part 92)

The HOME investment Partnerships Program (HOME) provides formula grants to states and localities that communities use often in partnership with local nonprofit groups to fund housing projects including building, buying, and/or rehabilitating affordable housing for rent or homeownership or providing rental assistance to low-income people. It is the largest Federal block grant to state and local governments designed exclusively to create affordable housing for low-income households.

ENCOURAGEMENT OF CITIZEN PARTICIPATION

Spokane County is required to adopt a Citizen Participation Plan (CPP) that sets forth policies and procedures for citizen participation (**24CFR 91.105 (a)(1)**). The CSHCD is responsible for the creation of the five-year Consolidated Plan, Annual Action Plan(s), Consolidated Annual Performance Evaluation Report (CAPER), Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Choice and Fair Housing Plan. Each document will be discussed in greater detail below with a citation of the corresponding federal regulation. Citizens are encouraged to become familiar with these community planning documents and offer comment on ways to make our overall community impact greater for low- and moderate-income individuals.

Consolidated Plan (24 CFR 91.200)

The Consolidated Plan is a five-year strategic plan, designed to help local jurisdictions assess their affordable housing and community development needs, market conditions, and make data-driven, place-based investment decision. The consolidated planning process serves as the framework for a community-wide dialogue to identify housing and community development priorities that align and focus funding from the entitlement programs; CDBG and HOME.

Annual Action Plan (24 CFR 91.220)

The Consolidated Plan is carried out through Annual Action Plans, which provide concise summaries of the actions, activities, and specific federal resources (CDBG and HOME) that will be used each year to address the priority needs and specific goals identified in the Consolidated Plan.

Consolidated Annual Performance Evaluation Report – CAPER (24 CFR 91.520)

Annually, Spokane County reports on accomplishments and progress toward Consolidated Plan goals in the Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Report (CAPER).

Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Choice (AI) - Assessment of Fair Housing (AFH)

HUD, on January 2, 2018, announced an extension to the requirement for a regional Assessment of Fair Housing (AFH). The extension allows Spokane County to continue to use and update the Analysis of Impediments (AI) to Fair Housing Choice and Fair Housing Plan which was adopted in 2015 by the BOCC,

and accepted by the federal office of Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity (FHEO). The Updated AI and Plan were adopted on September 18, 2018 with Resolution # 2018-0680

Citizen Participation Plan – (CPP) (24 CFR 91.105)

The CPP sets forth the policies and procedures for citizen participation throughout the Consolidated Planning process. The CPP must facilitate citizen participation throughout the Consolidated Plan’s initial development, substantial amendment process and the annual performance report. CPP regulations require active citizen participation, with a special emphasis on efforts to encourage participation from the following populations:

- Low- and moderate-income persons
- Residents of slums, blighted areas, and predominately low- and moderate-income areas
- Non-English-speaking persons
- Persons with disabilities
- Public housing residents and other low-income residents of Spokane County.

Community Partners

CSHCD will seek participation from local and regional partners related to the goals of HUD’s entitlement programs. Participation will be sought from Spokane County jurisdictions including; Spokane Valley, Fairfield, Rockford, Waverly, Latah, Spangle, Millwood, Liberty Lake, Medical Lake, Cheney, Airway Heights, Deer Park and the City of Spokane.

Participation is also encouraged with the Regional Continuum of Care, social service providers, community centers, housing developers, housing providers, businesses, Spokane Housing Authority, Washington State Human Rights Commission, Northwest Fair Housing Alliance, The Spokane Regional Health District, elected officials, and other County departments or divisions involved with program implementation.

COMMENT PROCESSES

CITIZEN PARTICIPATION PLAN COMMENT PROCESS

CSHCD will seek public comment on all documents related to the Consolidated Plan. Efforts to engage the citizens of Spokane County will include ongoing communication with community partners and updates to the CSHCD website as information becomes available. Interested citizens are encouraged to attend open public meetings held by the Housing and Community Development Advisory Committee (HCDAC) and Spokane County Board of Commissioners (BOCC) who work with CSHCD to develop the Consolidated Plan and other related documents. CSHCD will adhere to this Citizen Participation Plan (CPP). Citizens may submit public comment to any alteration of the CPP. CSHCD reserves the right to amend and edit the CPP as necessary. Citizens will be notified whenever the CPP is amended and given an opportunity to make public comment during a period not less than fifteen (15) calendar days. In the case of a declared emergency and when HUD guidance is provided to alter the minimum fifteen day public comment period to five (5) days, the public comment period will be reduced as allowed by HUD. No edits or revisions to the CPP are allowed without completing the minimum comment period and public hearing before the

HCDAC. CSHCD will provide a summary of all public comments received related to the CPP to the HCDAC and the BOCC prior to final adoption.

The public may access these materials by contacting the Housing and Community Development Division at, 312 West 8th, Spokane, WA 99204, (509) 477-2588, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. Materials are also available at the CDBG and HOME Program web page address: <http://www.spokanecounty.org/1232/Community-Development>.

All citizens, including low- and moderate-income persons, persons living in low- and moderate-income neighborhoods, minority populations, non-English speaking persons, persons with disabilities, persons with HIV/AIDS and their families, homeless persons/agencies, and residents of public and assisted housing developments are encouraged to participate in the development and review of the CPP. Spokane County is committed to providing equal access to its facilities, programs and services for persons with disabilities and non-English speaking persons.

The Spokane County website can be translated in to approximately 95 different languages. Assistive technology such as a Braille reader, a screen reader, or TTY are compatible with Spokane County's website. Persons who need accessibility assistance can also contact us by phone through the Federal Information Relay Service at 1-800-877-8339 for TTY/Voice communication.

CONSOLIDATED PLAN NEEDS ASSESSMENT AND ADOPTION PROCESS

Citizens are encouraged to actively engage in the development of each Consolidated Plan which sets goals for five-years that are implemented annually with Annual Action Plans.

The Draft Plans will be available on the County website for review and comment prior to adoption and implementation. Citizens are offered an opportunity to request amendments to the Consolidated Plan on an annual basis. Interested citizens are encouraged to request public notices through the Spokane County website at <http://www.spokanecounty.org/1232/Community-Development> and participate in identifying community development needs in Spokane County. The Consolidated Plan will have a 30-day public comment period prior to the HCDAC Public Hearing and an additional two-week comment period prior to final adoption by the BOCC. Unless there is an emergency situation and guidance from HUD that allows a five (5) day public comment period, in which case there will solely be BOCC action due to the emergency.

All CSHCD funded projects must comply with the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition for Federal and Federally-Assisted Programs. **(49 CDR Part 24)**

ANNUAL ACTION PLAN (AAP) COMMENT PROCESS

The HCDAC will hold a Public Hearing to gain public comment on the Annual Action Plan (AAP) prior to the start of each Program Year (PY). Program Years begin on July 1 and end on June 30 for HUD programs administered by CSHCD. Annual Action Plans, including a list of proposed projects for the PY will have a thirty-day comment period prior to the Public Hearing before the HCDAC.

Citizens are encouraged to provide public comments at the Public Hearing in-person, via email, or in writing. Annual Action Plans have a 30-day public comment period prior to the HCDAC Public Hearing and an additional two-week comment period prior to final adoption by the BOCC. CSHCD accepts all comments

and the HCDAC determines what changes should be made to the AAP. Comments that do not result in a change to the AAP are recorded in the Public Hearing minutes.

SUBSTANTIAL AMENDMENTS TO PRIOR YEARS' PLANS COMMENT PROCESS

The HCDAC will hold a Public Hearing on substantial amendment(s) to prior years' plans as required by HUD **(24 CFR 91.505)**.

Amendments to Prior Years' Plans are sometimes needed because of unforeseen circumstances at the time of funding. After funding awards are made, any funds returned from projects, either completed under budget or cancelled, are normally reallocated to the next Annual Action Plan Program Year. Substantial amendments will normally have a thirty-day public comment period prior to the Public Hearing before the HCDAC, unless there is an emergency situation. The substantial amendment(s) will then be reflected in the CAPER for the appropriate Program Year (PY).

Substantial amendment(s) are based on the following criteria:

- Projects which had a change in funding of 30% or greater from allocation to close out
- Carrying out a project, using funds from any program covered by the Consolidated Plan (including program income), not previously described in the action plan; or
- Significant change to the purpose, scope, location, or beneficiaries of a project.
- Stimulus funds may be received upon national emergency and because of established timelines will be considered substantial amendments.

Substantial amendments may include responses to local Disaster Response and Recovery as required. **(CPD 17-06)**. Typical disaster recovery programs may include:

- Housing rehabilitation
- Housing reconstruction
- Homebuyer programs replacing disaster damaged residences
- Acquisition programs that purchase properties in floodplains
- Infrastructure improvements
- Demolition of buildings
- Reconstruction or replacement of public facilities
- Small business grants and loans
- Relocation assistance for people moved out of floodways
- Public service activities that do not duplicate those of the Small Business Administration and/or the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).

Citizens are encouraged to provide comment at the Public Hearing in-person, via email, or in writing. In the case of emergencies, when social distancing is required of local, state or federal government, electronic participation opportunities will be provided via the Spokane County Website. CSHCD accepts all comments and normally, the HCDAC makes a final recommendation to the Spokane County Board of Commissioners (BOCC).

The BOCC, after an additional two-week Public Notice, will also hold a Public Hearing and make the final determination on substantial amendments to prior years' plans, approval of the Draft Annual Action Plan and list of proposed projects. In the case of a national emergency the comment period will be five (5) days.

Types of public notice include: Public notice in the Spokesman Review and posted on Spokane County's website. The Spokane County website allows interested citizens to sign up for email notices which will direct them to the public notice, when it is posted on the website. The CSHCD will make every effort to provide notice to the public and to those who request email notices.

ANALYSIS OF IMPEDIMENTS TO FAIR HOUSING CHOICE COMMENT PROCESS

An updated Analysis of Impediments and Fair Housing Plan will be available on the County website for review and comment prior to adoption and publication fall of 2023 or when HUD provides updated guidance, whichever comes first. Citizens are encouraged to participate in public outreach efforts and provide comment related to fair housing issues in Spokane County. The Analysis of Impediments will have a fifteen-day public comment period prior to the Public Hearing before the HCDAC. The BOCC will approve the AI during a regular public meeting on the consent agenda.

Spokane County continues to affirmatively further fair housing with an annual Fair Housing Conference, which is planned in partnership with the Washington State Human Rights Commission, Spokane City, Northwest Fair Housing Alliance, and the City of Coeur D'Alene.

Types of public notice include: Public notice in the Spokesman Review and on Spokane County's website. The Spokane County website allows interested citizens to sign up for email notices which will direct them to the public notice, when it is posted on the website. The CSHCD will make every effort to provide notice to the public and to those who request email notices.

CAPER PUBLIC COMMENT PROCESS

CSHCD will seek public comment at the end of each program year as required by HUD. Citizens are encouraged to review the CAPER and evaluate progress being made toward achieving the needs and goals (five-year) identified in the Consolidated Plan. CSHCD will provide Public Notice in advance of the public comment period. The CAPER will have a fifteen-day comment period prior to a Public Hearing before the HCDAC. Citizens are encouraged to provide public comment at the Public Hearing in-person, via email, or in writing. The BOCC will approve the CAPER during a regular public meeting on the consent agenda.

Types of public notice include: Public notice in the Spokesman Review and posted on Spokane County's website. The Spokane County website allows interested citizens to sign up for email notices which will direct them to a public notice when it is posted on the website. The CSHCD will make every effort to provide notice to the public and to those who request email notices.

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS AND FUNDING POLICIES COMMENT PROCESS

The CSHCD Funding Policies and Request for Proposal (RFP) will be made available for public comment prior to a Public Hearing before the HCDAC, annually, in the fall. CSHCD Funding Policies and RFP will have a fifteen-day public comment period. Within the RFP is a timeline showing the process for preparing and

submitting information to the public for comment, as well as, HUD deadlines for the CDBG and HOME programs. Citizens are encouraged to provide comment at the Public Hearing in-person, via email, or in writing. CSHCD accepts all comments and the HCDAC makes a final recommendation to the Spokane County Board of Commissioners (BOCC). The BOCC will approve the RFP and funding policies at a regular public meeting on the consent agenda.

Types of public notice include: Public notice in the Spokesman Review and posted on Spokane County's website. The Spokane County website allows interested citizens to sign up for email notices which will direct them to a public notice when it is posted on the website. The CSHCD will make every effort to provide notice to the public and to those who request email notices.

Housing and Community Development Advisory Committee (HCDAC) Public Meetings

HCDAC meetings are held at 312 West 8th Avenue, Fifth Floor Conference Room, Spokane, WA 99204 in the CSHCD building. The CSHCD building meets ADA accessibility requirements. Public meeting dates are published annually with the CSHCD Funding Policies and RFP timeline. The HCDAC normally meets on the second Thursday of the month at 4PM. The HCDAC does not meet in December, February, April, July or August; they may however have a second meeting for allocation discussions in January if necessary.

When there is a national emergency the HCDAC may meet electronically.

Public Hearings

Public hearings may be conducted by the HCDAC, the BOCC or both depending on program requirements. See the following table to understand minimum comment periods and opportunities to participate in Public Hearings. When there is a national emergency the BOCC may meet electronically.

Citizens are encouraged to provide public comment at the Public Hearing in-person, via email, in writing or attend electronically. CSHCD accepts all comments and the HCDAC makes a final recommendation to the Spokane County Board of Commissioners (BOCC).

<i>CSHCD Planning Documents</i>	<i>Minimum Comment Period</i>	<i>HCDAC Public Hearing</i>	<i>Comment Period prior to BOCC Hearing</i>	<i>BOCC Public Hearing OR Consent Agenda</i>
Funding Policies and RFP	15 Calendar Days	YES	NA	Consent Agenda
Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing / Fair Housing Plan	15 Calendar Days	YES	NA	Consent Agenda
Citizen Participation Plan	15 Calendar Days	YES	NA	Consent Agenda
CAPER	15 calendar days	YES	NA	Consent Agenda
Consolidated Plan and Annual Action Plans	30 Calendar Days NA for emergencies	YES NO in emergencies	2 weeks Five (5) Days in Emergency	Public Hearing
Substantial Amendments to Prior Years'	30 calendar days NA for emergencies	YES No in emergencies	2 weeks Five (5) Days in Emergency	Public Hearing
Amendments to Consolidated Plan Priorities	30 calendar days	YES	2 weeks	Public Hearing

Normally, Public Hearings are held at the CSHCD building, the Spokane County Regional Health Building or the Spokane County Public Works Building. These buildings meet ADA accessibility requirements. The

Funding Policies and RFP published annually in the Fall contains a timeline for anticipated public hearings during the program year. The CAPER and Citizen Participation Plan Public Hearing before the HCDAC will typically be combined with Funding Policies and RFP. The Spokane County website allows interested citizens to sign up for email notices which will direct them to a public notice when it is posted on the website. The CSHCD will make every effort to provide notice to the public and to those who request email notices.