



CITIZEN PARTICIPATION PLAN

Marion County Consortium (Marion County and City of Ocala)

This Citizen Participation Plan was adopted by Resolution ----- of the Marion County Board of County Commissioners on _____, 2026.

This plan amends and supersedes prior versions of the Citizen Participation Plan for Marion County and the city of Ocala, Florida and is in compliance with Section 104(a)(3) of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974.

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PURPOSE AND GOALS

Marion County and the city of Ocala have prepared the Citizen Participation Plan (CPP), in compliance with the citizen participation requirements of 24 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Section 91.105, Marion County (also referred to as “the County”) as it relates to the administration of federal funds provided by U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). Marion County serves as the lead jurisdiction of the Marion County HOME Consortium (Consortium) as a recipient of HOME Investment Partnerships Program (HOME) funds.

The Consortium is comprised of Marion County and the city of Ocala. Each member of the Consortium is responsible for the development of its own individual CPP for Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds and any other HUD programs.

The steps described in the CPP relate to the planning and expenditure of funds provided to the County by HUD’s Office of Community Planning and Development (CPD). CPD entitlement funds received by the County include the CDBG, HOME, ESG, and Section 108 Loan Guarantee Program, and other federal grant programs, as may be added by law.

This CPP presents the County’s plan for providing for and encouraging all citizens to participate in the development, revision, amendment, adoption, and implementation of:

- The Five-year Consolidated Plan
- The Annual Action Plan (AAP)
- The Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Report
- The Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Choice (AI)/Assessment of Fair Housing (AFH)/Equity Plan
- Amendments to the CPP
- Amendments to the Consolidated Plan or AAP
- Other grants, as may be added by law.

CFR for citizen participation:

- [24 CFR Part 91.105](#) Local Governments Citizen Participation
- [24 CFR Part 91.100](#) Local Governments Consultation
- [24 CFR Part 91.401](#) HOME Consortia

Marion County and the city of Ocala are entitlement recipients of CDBG funds. The County is an eligible HOME entitlement community and formed a consortium with the city of Ocala so it too may receive HOME funds on an annual basis. The County also receives Emergency Solutions Grants (ESG) funds as an entitlement. These programs are administered through HUD for the benefit of low- and moderate-income residents in unincorporated areas of the County and within the city limits of Ocala.

ENCOURAGEMENT OF CITIZEN PARTICIPATION

The County believes that the citizen participation process provides an important opportunity for its residents—especially low- and moderate-income residents, nonprofit groups (neighborhood organizations), authorities, and other service providers—to be actively involved in the preparation and implementation of the Consolidated Plan. The County encourages the participation of local and regional institutions, the Continuum of Care, and other organizations (including businesses, developers, nonprofit organizations, philanthropic organizations, and community-/faith-based organizations) in the process of developing and implementing the documents related to the consolidated planning process.

Also, the County will encourage participation from broadband internet service providers, organizations engaged in narrowing the digital divide, agencies that manage flood-prone areas, public land or water resources, and emergency management agencies.

This CPP actively encourages widespread citizen participation, with a special emphasis on good faith efforts to encourage participation from the following populations:

- Low- and moderate-income residents.
- Residents of slums, blighted areas, and predominately low- and moderate-income areas where 51 percent of the residents are at or below 80 percent of the area median income.
- Residents of areas designated as a revitalization area.
- Non-English-speaking persons.
- Persons with disabilities.
- Public housing residents and other low-income residents of targeted revitalization areas.

The CPP ensures that all parties, including residents, nonprofit organizations, and other interested organizations, are afforded adequate opportunity to review and comment on plans, programs, activities, and reports covering the County's federally funded housing and community development programs. This includes minority populations, people with limited English proficiency, and persons with disabilities.

To accomplish this purpose, the goals of the CPP are to:

- Provide opportunities for citizens to express their views and proposals concerning needs in the community and establish priorities concerning these needs.
- Provide opportunities for citizens to take part in policy formation regarding the Consolidated Plan.
- Ensure that citizens are provided with reasonable and timely access to local meetings, public hearings, information, and records relating to the Consolidated Plan including the range of activities that may be undertaken, the amount of anticipated funding, and proposed and actual use of funds.
- Provide technical assistance to a representative of persons of low and moderate income who request such assistance in developing proposals.
- Provide opportunities for citizens to review and comment on proposed formula grant

activities and use of funds.

- Ensure that citizens have questions and complaints answered in a timely and responsive manner.
- Ensure that the needs of non-English-speaking residents will be met in the case of public hearings where a significant number of non-English-speaking residents can be reasonably expected to participate.
- Provide reasonable accommodation for persons with disabilities wishing to participate in the community development planning process.

Non-English Speakers

The County shall take reasonable steps to provide language assistance to ensure meaningful access to participation by non-English speaking and limited-English-proficient residents (LEP) and the County has an established LEP Policy. Any non-English-speaking resident who wishes to participate may contact Marion County Community Services prior to the hearing so that adequate arrangements can be made. Reasonable accommodations at the public hearing such as sign language interpretation or alternate formats for printed material are available for individuals with disabilities with a minimum of two-days of advance notice.

Notices for public hearings and public display of plans developed by Marion County Community Services will be available in English and may be available in Spanish and other languages, as feasible. When general circulation publications in languages other than English are available, notices will be posted in these publications.

To encourage these residents to participate in the development of the Analysis of Impediments (AI), and Assessment of Fair Housing (AFH) Plan(s) and the Consolidated Plan, the County will undertake the following initiatives in addition to publishing advertisements in one local newspaper for these activities:

- Upon request, stakeholder interviews or focus group sessions will be scheduled during the stakeholder consultation processes for both the AI and AFH Plan(s) and Consolidated Plan and will focus on persons with limited English proficiency.
- The County will provide meetings in languages other than English upon request, if feasible.
- The County will use the County's [language access handbook](#) to provide guidance to ensure fulfillment of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and Executive Order 13166 requirements for agencies that are recipients of federal financial assistance.

Persons with Disabilities

To encourage the participation of persons with disabilities, the County will:

- Conduct all public meetings in locations that are handicapped accessible

If requested, the County will mail copies of public meeting notices to persons who are homebound and request such accommodation no fewer than two days prior to the public meeting at the following email address: CommunityServices@MarionFL.org.

Access to Meetings

Meetings and forums shall be held in accessible locations to ensure that architectural barriers do not preclude the attendance of persons with disabilities. In addition, accommodation will be provided, upon request, for attendees who have hearing or visual challenges.

Citizens with disabilities who may be unable to review these documents at publicized locations should contact Marion County Community Services for specific assistance in obtaining the Consolidated Plan for review and for assistance in submitting comments via CommunityServices@MarionFL.org.

POLICIES

- Utilize existing partnerships and organizations in the community (in addition to the public hearing process and public notices in newspapers) to encourage participation, including participation by minorities, non-English-speaking residents, and persons with disabilities; to identify housing needs and needs of the homeless and special populations; and to aid in the development of the Consolidated Plan.

The Consortium encourages the participation of local and regional institutions, the Continuum of Care, and other organizations (including businesses, developers, nonprofit organizations, philanthropic organizations, community/faith-based organizations, providers of broadband internet service providers, organizations engaged in narrowing the digital divide, and agencies whose primary responsibilities include the management of flood-prone areas, public land or water resources, and emergency management agencies.

Examples of organizations that may be used to assist in this process include the Marion County Hospital District, United Way of Marion County, College of Central Florida, the Continuum of Care, the Affordable Housing Advisory Board, the Housing Finance Authority, and other human service agencies serving residents of the County.

- Create or support neighborhood-based citizen advisory committees in areas targeted for comprehensive revitalization activities under federal grant programs. These committees will advise on needs and activities relative to their community.
- Provide housing authorities within the jurisdiction with information about Consolidated Plan activities related to the housing authorities' developments and surrounding communities so that the housing authority can make this information available at the annual public hearing required under the formula grant program.

Public Comment Period

The comment periods for plans and reports are listed in the following table and are described in more detail in this section.

Document	Comment Period
Consolidated Plan & AAP	30 calendar days
Substantial Amendment to Consolidated & AAP	30 calendar days
Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Choice (AI)	30 calendar days
CPP	30 calendar days
Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Report	15 calendar days

CITIZEN COMMENT ON THE CPP AND AMENDMENTS

- The Consortium will provide public notice of the proposed CPP and amendments prior to adoption and allow a 30-day period for public comments. The notice will provide sufficient information about the plan or amendment to permit informed comment. The notice will include the location for viewing the plan, indicate the dates of the comment period, and provide a means for transmitting comments to the Growth Services Department. The notice will be published in a newspaper of general circulation in legible print. In addition, notices will also be published on the County’s website, www.MarionFL.org.
- Upon request, the CPP will be provided in a format to accommodate persons with disabilities (e.g., oral, Braille, electronic, or large-print copies and/or delivering copies to the homebound) and for minority populations and persons with limited English proficiency.
- Upon declaration of a state of emergency, whether federal, state, or local, and a notice of waiver by HUD, the time period for public comments may be changed per HUD guidelines.

Development of the Analysis of Impediment to Fair Housing Choice (AI)

- Consultation: On February 9, 2023, HUD published in the Federal Register a notice of proposed rulemaking entitled “Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing.” The proposed rule, which builds on and refines HUD’s 2015 rule, would faithfully implement the Fair Housing Act’s statutory mandate that HUD ensures that recipients of its funding affirmatively further fair housing. Until the Final Rule is released, the expectation is that Consolidated Plan program participants should continue to update their Development of the AI in accordance with the HUD Fair Housing Planning Guide. HUD encourages program participants to collaborate in opportunities to share resources and address fair housing issues, including but not limited to:
 - a. Public housing authorities, including residents, resident advisory boards, resident councils, and resident management corporations.
 - b. Other providers of assisted housing, health services, and social services, including those focusing on services to children, elderly persons, persons with disabilities, persons with HIV/AIDs and their families, and homeless persons.
 - c. Community-based and regionally based organizations that represent protected class members and organizations that enforce fair housing laws, such as state or local fair housing enforcement agencies.

- d. Regional government agencies, adjacent units of local government, and local government agencies, including local government agencies with metropolitan-wide planning and transportation responsibilities.
- Consultations with the agencies set forth above could include, but are not limited to, telephone or personal interviews, internet surveys, focus groups, public hearings, and workshops.
- Publishing data: The Consortium will make available HUD-provided data and other supplemental information the Consortium plans to incorporate into the AI at the start of the public participation process, or as soon as feasible thereafter. HUD-provided data will be made available by cross-referencing the data on HUD's website.
- Public hearing: The Consortium will hold a public hearing during the development of the AI and prior to the time the proposed AI is published for comment.
 - a. The purpose of the hearing will be to obtain the views of citizens on AI-related data and affirmatively furthering fair housing.
 - b. A public notice will be published in a newspaper of general circulation at least 15 days prior to the public hearing. The notice will provide a reasonable explanation of the subject of the hearing, date, time, and place as well as provide contacts for accommodating persons with disabilities and non-English-speaking residents. The notice will be published in legible print. Additional notices may be provided through the government access channel, agency newsletters, and special notices to interested agencies, groups, and persons.
 - c. To ensure that times and locations of public hearings are convenient to potential and actual beneficiaries, the public hearing will be held at varying public locations and times to be announced at least 15 days prior to the meeting with accommodation for persons with physical disabilities. Upon request, the Consortium will make provisions for the special needs of non-English-speaking persons, as well as for the visually and hearing impaired.
- Availability to the public:
 - a. After the development of a proposed AI, the Consortium will publish a summary of the proposed AI and the provision of a public comment period in a newspaper of general circulation, in legible print. The summary will also be published on the County's website.
 - b. The summary will describe the contents and purpose of the AI and will include a list of the locations where copies of the entire proposed Plan may be examined.
 - c. The Consortium will provide a reasonable number of free copies of the AI to citizens and groups that request it.
 - d. The Consortium will provide a period of 30 days after the published notice for comments.
- Comments on the plan: All comments and views of citizens received in writing, or orally at the public hearings, will be considered by the Consortium in preparing the final AI. A summary of these comments or views and a summary of any comments or views not accepted, and the reasons therefore, will be attached to the final AI.

Development of the Consolidated Plan

Prior to the adoption of the Consolidated Plan, the following information will be made available to citizens, public agencies, and other interested parties in the manner and at the time specified.

- **First public hearing:** The Consortium will hold a public hearing during the planning process and prior to the time the proposed Consolidated Plan is published for comment.
 - a. The purpose of the hearing will be to obtain the views of citizens on housing and community development needs, including priority non-housing community development needs, to review program performance for the preceding program year and, if requested, to provide technical assistance on the development of potential activities.
 - b. The Consortium will publish a public notice in a newspaper of general circulation at least 15 days prior to the public hearing. The notice will provide a reasonable explanation of the subject of the hearing, date, time, and place and will provide contacts for accommodating persons with disabilities and non-English-speaking residents. The Consortium will publish the notice in a newspaper of general circulation in legible print, as well as on the County's website. Additional notices may be provided through the government access channel, agency newsletters, and special notices to interested agencies, groups, and persons.
 - c. To ensure that the times and locations of public hearings are convenient to potential and actual beneficiaries, the Consortium will hold the public hearing in the evening at a central location in the county with accommodation for persons with physical disabilities. Upon request, provisions will be made for the special needs of non-English-speaking persons, as well as for the visually and hearing impaired.
- **Notice of funding availability:**
 - a. Upon notification by HUD of the amount of funding to be received for the upcoming program year, the Consortium will publish the following information in legible print in a newspaper of general circulation and on the County's website, www.MarionFL.org.
 - Amount of assistance the jurisdiction expects to receive (including grant funds and program income) and the range of activities that may be undertaken with the funds available.
 - b. Additional notices may be provided through a government access channel, coalition newsletters, and mailings.
 - c. Any funds not committed in any fiscal year or any funds returned to the County by a previous awardee may be distributed to an agency whose application was not chosen, or the funds may be offered under a new notice of funding availability.
- **Availability to the public:**
 - a. After the development of a proposed Consolidated Plan, including a preliminary recommendation of projects, activities, and programs for the upcoming fiscal year, the Consortium will publish the following in legible print in a newspaper of general circulation and on the County's website, www.MarionFL.org.

- o A summary of the proposed Consolidated Plan; the estimated amount of grant funds that will benefit persons of low and moderate income; a statement that the jurisdiction's plan to minimize displacement of persons and to assist any persons displaced is available for viewing with the Consolidated Plan; and the provision of a public comment period.
 - b. The summary will describe the contents and purpose of the Consolidated Plan and will include a list of the locations where copies of the entire proposed Consolidated Plan may be examined.
 - c. A reasonable number of free copies of the Consolidated Plan and displacement information will be provided to citizens and groups that request it.
 - d. A period of 30 days after the published notice will be provided for comments.
- Second public hearing: After the comment period, a public hearing will be held on the Consolidated Plan and proposed activities by the Board of County Commissioners (BOCC).
 - a. The purpose of the hearing is to provide an opportunity for public comment on the Consolidated Plan and proposed activities to the Marion County Board of County Commissioners (BCC) prior to approval for submittal to HUD.
 - b. The Consortium will publish a public notice to the County's website, www.MarionFL.org, and in legible print in a newspaper of general circulation at least 15 days prior to the public hearing. The notice will provide a reasonable explanation of the subject of the hearing, date, time, and place and will provide contacts for accommodating persons with disabilities.
 - c. The hearing will be held in varying public locations and times to be announced at least 15 days prior to the meeting. Upon request, provisions will be made for the special needs of disabled and non-English-speaking persons, as well as for the visually and hearing impaired.
 - Comments on the plan: The Consortium will consider all comments and views of citizens received in writing, or orally at the public hearings, within the publicly noticed timeframe for comment submittals when preparing the final Consolidated Plan and will attach a summary of these comments or views and a summary of any comments or views not accepted and the reasons to the final Consolidated Plan.

Development of the AAP

The AAP is a component of the Consolidated Plan. The AAP describes the County's proposed use of available federal and other resources to address the priority needs and specific objectives in the Consolidated Plan for each program year, the proposed method for distributing funds to local non-profit organizations, and the geographic areas to which the County will direct assistance.

Prior to the adoption of the AAP, the following information will be made available to citizens, public agencies, and other interested parties in the manner and at the time specified.

- First public hearing: The Consortium will hold a public hearing during the planning process and prior to the time the proposed AAP is published for comment.

- a. The purposes of the first public hearing will be to obtain the views of citizens on housing and community development needs, including priority non-housing community development needs; to review program performance for the preceding program year; and, if requested, to provide technical assistance on the development of potential activities.
 - b. The Consortium will publish a public notice on the County's website, www.MarionFL.org, and in legible print in a newspaper of general circulation at least 15 days prior to this public hearing. The notice will provide a reasonable explanation of the subject of the hearing, date, time, and place, as well as contacts for accommodating persons with disabilities and non-English-speaking residents. The Consortium may provide additional notices through a government access channel, agency newsletters, and special notices to interested agencies, groups, and persons.
 - c. To ensure that the times and locations of public hearings are convenient for potential and actual beneficiaries, the Consortium will hold the public hearing in the evening at a central location in the county with accommodation for persons with physical disabilities. Upon request, the Consortium will make provisions for the special needs of non-English-speaking persons and the visually and hearing impaired.
- Notice of funding availability:
 - a. Upon notification by HUD of the amount of funding to be received for the upcoming program year, the Consortium will publish the following information in legible print in a newspaper of general circulation, and on the County's website, www.MarionFL.org.
 - Amount of assistance the jurisdiction expects to receive (including grant funds and program income) and the range of activities that may be undertaken with the funds available.
 - b. The Consortium may provide additional notices through the government access channel, coalition newsletters, mailings, and special notices.
 - c. Any funds not committed in any fiscal year or any funds returned to the County by a previous awardee may be distributed to an agency whose application was not chosen, or the funds may be offered under a new notice of funding availability.
 - Availability to the public:
 - a. After the development of a proposed AAP, including a preliminary recommendation of projects, activities, and programs for the upcoming fiscal year, the Consortium will publish the following in a newspaper of general circulation in legible print and to the County's website, www.MarionFL.org.
 - A summary of the proposed AAP; the estimated amount of grant funding that will benefit persons of low and moderate income; a statement that the jurisdiction's plan to minimize the displacement of persons and to assist any persons displaced is available for viewing with the AAP; and the provision of a public comment period.
 - b. The summary will describe the contents and purpose of the AAP and will include a list of the locations where copies of the entire proposed plan may be examined.

- c. The Consortium will provide a reasonable number of free copies of the AAP and displacement information to citizens and groups that request it.
- d. The Consortium will provide a period of 30 days after publishing the notice for comments.
- **Second public hearing:** After the comment period, a public hearing will be held on the AAP and proposed activities by the BOCC.
 - a. The purpose of the hearing is to provide an opportunity for public comment on the AAP and proposed activities to the BOCC prior to approval for submittal to HUD.
 - b. The Consortium will publish a public notice to the County's website, www.MarionFL.org, and in legible print in a newspaper of general circulation at least 15 days prior to the public hearing. The notice will provide a reasonable explanation of the subject of the hearing, date, time, and place and will provide contacts for accommodating persons with disabilities.
 - c. The hearing will be held in varying public locations and times to be announced at least 15 days prior to the meeting. Upon request, provisions will be made for the special needs of disabled and non-English speaking persons, as well as for the visually and hearing impaired.
- Comments on the plan: The Consortium will consider all comments and views of citizens received in writing, or orally at the public hearings, when preparing the final AAP and will attach a summary of these comments or views and a summary of any comments or views not accepted and the reasons to the final AAP.

Consolidated Plan Substantial Amendments

- The following criteria constitute a Substantial Amendment to the Consolidated Plan (see the definition of Substantial Amendments at the end of this document):
 - a. The use of funds changing from one eligible activity to another. Movement of funds from contingency to eligible activities, or movement of residual funds to contingency, are not considered Substantial Amendments.
 - b. An activity not previously identified in the Consolidated Plan or AAP is added.
 - c. A decision making a change in the allocation priorities or a change in the method of distribution of funds.
 - d. The addition or deletion of an activity or project outlined in the one-year AAP.
 - e. The purpose, scope, or beneficiaries of an activity are substantially changed. An activity will be considered substantially changed when any one of the following criteria apply:
 - The activity no longer principally benefits 50 percent of the targeted population as identified in the AAP (e.g., senior citizens in certain areas, low- and moderate-income homeowners, homeless men, residents of X neighborhood instead of Y neighborhood, pregnant teenagers).
 - The activity no longer addresses one of the three national objectives identified in the AAP (e.g., shelter for homeless persons, center for senior citizens, housing for low- and moderate-income households, training as daycare providers) or the activity ceases to address the elimination of slums and blight as identified in the AAP.

- An increase in the amount funded for an activity or project in excess of 50 percent of the original amount proposed for funding.
- Activities that must be dropped due to circumstances beyond the control of the Consortium are not considered Substantial Amendments; i.e., a sub-grantee elects not to proceed with an activity; the activity fails because a property owner refuses to sell, etc. In such instances, no decision process is involved, and it is not necessary to modify or amend the change through the citizen participation process. However, the reallocation of funds to a new activity not previously described in the AAP will be a Substantial Amendment.
- In the case of a local emergency, such as a natural disaster or other large-scale emergency, funds may be allocated to eligible activities needed to assist in disaster relief without triggering a substantial amendment with approval from the BOCC and City Council. The Consortium's process for implementing Substantial Amendments is as follows:
 - a. Publish a notice in a newspaper of general circulation giving the proposed change the Consortium is considering, and the availability of any materials on the change. The notice will provide sufficient information about the amendment to permit informed comment. The notice will be published in a newspaper of general circulation and in legible print and on the County's website. A 30-day comment period will follow the notice of proposed amendment.
 - b. Upon declaration of a State of Emergency, whether federal, state, or local, and a notice of Waiver by the HUD, the Consortium may change (shorten) the time period for public comments per HUD guidelines.
 - c. Upon declaration of a State of Emergency, whether federal, state, or local, and a notice of Waiver by the HUD, the availability of a public hearing shall include a virtual meeting per HUD guidelines.
 - d. The Consortium may make other notifications of the proposed Substantial Amendment as deemed appropriate.
 - e. At the end of the 30-day comment period, the Consortium will consider all comments received prior to preparing the final proposed Substantial Amendment and attach a summary of these comments or views, and a summary of any comment or views not accepted and the reasons, to the Substantial Amendment transmitted to HUD.
 - f. Place the proposed change on the Marion County BOCC and the Ocala City Council's agenda for consideration.
 - g. When adopted, distribute a description of the change, including summaries as described above, to affected cities, agencies, or entities and to all persons or agencies that sent written comments. Also, the Consortium will send a news release to local media.
 - h. Send a description of the changes to HUD, including the summaries described above.

MINOR AMENDMENTS

Minor Amendments (Administrative Transfers) represent any action that changes an activity budget in an AAP by less than 50 percent. These require the signature of the Marion County Community Services department director or designated representative, but do not require

public notice or approval by the county commission.

PERFORMANCE REPORTS

The Consortium will advertise the availability of performance reports for viewing by the general public in legible print in a newspaper of general circulation. The notice will provide sufficient information about the performance report to permit informed comment. A 15-day comment period will follow this advertisement. A summary of these comments will be attached to the performance report. The Consortium may provide additional notices through the government access channels or on the Consortium's websites.

Meetings

The Consortium will provide reasonable and timely notice of all meetings so that all interested parties may have a chance to attend.

Availability to the Public

The Consortium will make available for public inspection the adopted Assessment of Fair Housing, including any revisions to the AI, Consolidated Plan (including Substantial Amendments to said plan), AAP (including amendments), and the performance report described above. The Consortium will, upon request, make these documents available in formats that are accessible to persons with disabilities.

Access to Records

All records and information relating to the Assessment to Fair Housing, the Consolidated Plan, and the use of funds under these plans will be available for public inspection for a period of not less than five years. All documents relevant to the CDBG, HOME, and ESG programs will be made available during normal working hours for citizen review upon request at the locations listed below:

Marion County:
Community Services
2710 E. Silver Springs Blvd.
Ocala, FL 34470
352-671-8770
www.MarionFL.org/CommunityServices
Email: CommunityServices@MarionFL.org

City of Ocala:
Development Services
201 SE Third St.
Ocala, Florida 34471
352-629-8322
www.OcalaFL.gov/CommPrograms

Since older records may be in storage, a waiting period may be necessary while the information is retrieved. In all cases, persons wishing to view archived records or documents are requested to set up an appointment at least 24 hours in advance with Marion County Community Services, so that the requested information may be gathered together. A reasonable number of copies will be made available without charge. Numerous copies are available for a nominal fee in accordance with state law.

Technical Assistance

- Technical assistance will be provided to any low- and moderate-income residents upon request. This assistance may take, but is not limited to, the following forms:
 - a. Staff participation in committee meetings, including coordination of target area committees.
 - b. Workshops for agencies proposing projects.
 - c. One-on-one technical assistance provided in person, over the phone, by email, at a public meeting, or at scheduled and advertised public hearings. The level and type of assistance will be determined as needed on a case-by-case basis.
 - d. Assisting with the establishment of neighborhood planning committees.
- The Consortium may provide other types of technical assistance as deemed appropriate.

Complaints

Any person wishing to make a formal complaint concerning any aspect of the Assessment of Fair Housing (including revisions), Consolidated Plan (including amendments), AAP (including amendments), and performance reports may do so using the contact information provided in the Access to Records section in the previous page. Persons wishing to make a complaint in person should call for an appointment; appointments will occur within a reasonable amount of time from the request. A substantive written response will be made to every written citizen complaint within 15 business days of receipt, when practicable.

Use of the Plan

The Consortium will follow this CPP in the development of the Assessment of Fair Housing, any revisions to the AI, the Consolidated Plan and any corresponding Substantial Amendments, the AAP and any corresponding Substantial Amendments, and the performance report.

Jurisdiction Responsibility

The requirements for citizen participation do not restrict the responsibility or authority of the Consortium for the development and execution of its Consolidated Plan or Assessment of Fair Housing.

Anti-Displacement

The Consortium has adopted an Anti-Displacement and Relocation Policy to minimize the extent to which low- and moderate-income residents will have to leave their homes as a result of the use of these federal dollars. This policy also describes how the Consortium will compensate people who are displaced as a result of the use of these funds, specifying the type and amount of compensation. Projects that include or that will include federal funding (e.g., CDBG) and will acquire, demolish, or rehabilitate a building that has residential or commercial tenants in place must follow the federal relocation requirements of the Uniform

Relocation Act and the Real Property Acquisitions Regulations for Federal and Federally Assisted Programs, as well as Section 104(d), if applicable.

PUBLIC RECORDS

- For questions regarding the application of chapter 119, Florida Statutes, or Marion County's duty to provide public records relating to this CPP, contact the county's custodian of public records at:

Public Records

601 SE 25th Ave.

Ocala, FL 34471

Phone: 352-438-2380

Fax: 352-438-2309

Email: PublicRecords@MarionFL.org

- If the city of Ocala has questions regarding the application of chapter 119, Florida statutes, or the city of Ocala's duty to provide public records relating to this CPP, contact the city's custodian of public records at:

Angel Jacobs

City Clerk Office

110 SE Watula Ave.

Ocala, FL 34471

Phone: 352-629-8266

Fax: 352-629-5208

Email: AJacobs@OcalaFL.gov

DEFINITIONS

Activity—Specific projects developed by funded organizations for targeted beneficiaries.

Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Choice (AI)—A document submitted to HUD every five years that, with community participation, identifies fair housing issues and contributing factors and results in prioritizing.

Annual Action Plan (AAP)—A document submitted to HUD annually that, with community participation, summarizes the actions and activities to be undertaken by Marion County and the City of Ocala and specific federal and non-federal resources that will be used yearly to address the priority needs and specific goals identified in the Consolidated Plan. The AAP serves as the application for funding for the CPD formula grant programs (CDBG, ESG, or HOME).

Anti-Displacement and Relocation Policy—In accordance with the 24 CFR Part 42.325, this plan shall indicate the steps that will be taken by Marion County and the City of Ocala consistent with other goals and objectives of the program to minimize the displacement of families and individuals from their homes and neighborhoods as a result of any assisted

activities. The plan shall provide for relocation assistance and one-for-one replacement units.

Applicant/Grantee—The government body that applies for funding under the formula grant and is responsible for complying with all regulations governing the program. For the Consortium, the applicant is the Marion County Commission. The applicant becomes the grantee when funding is received.

Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)—A federally funded grant program established to develop viable communities, including decent housing, a suitable living environment, and economic opportunity for low- and moderate-income persons. The grant also provides funds for the elimination of slums and blight.

Consolidated Plan—A five-year planning document submitted to HUD every five years that, with community participation, identifies the Consortium's affordable housing and community development needs and priorities.

Consolidated Planning Process—The Consolidated Planning process is the means to meet the application requirements for CDBG, HOME, and ESG. This process replaces prior planning and application requirements with a single document and satisfies the submission requirements of the four formula grant programs for local jurisdictions.

Consortium—The Consortium consists of Marion County and the city of Ocala. Marion County serves as the lead agency for the Consortium.

Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG)—A federally funded grant program, formerly the Emergency Shelter Grant, established to engage homeless individuals and families living on the street, improve the number and quality of emergency shelters for homeless individuals and families, help operate these shelters, provide essential services to shelter residents, rapidly re-house homeless individuals and families, and prevent families/individuals from becoming homeless.

Formula grant—As used in this document, this refers to federal grant programs under which the Consortium receives funding as an entitlement (i.e., CDBG, HOME, and ESG).

HOME Investment Partnerships Program (HOME)—A federally funded grant program established to expand the supply of decent, safe affordable housing for persons of low and moderate income and expand the capacity of Community Housing Development Organizations to increase housing opportunities.

National objectives—Each activity, except planning and administrative activities, must meet one of HUD's three national objectives:

- Benefit low- and moderate-income persons.
- Aid in the prevention or elimination of slums or blight.
- Meet community development needs having a particular urgency.

Projects—Groupings of activities that may represent major types of programs funded in action plans and amendments such as housing, economic development, or infrastructure.

Predominately low- and moderate-income neighborhood—Generally defined as a primarily

residential area comprised of census tracts and/or census tract block group(s) in which a least 51 percent of the residents have an income not exceeding 80 percent of the area median income.

Substantial Amendment—As defined by the HUD regulations in accordance with the 24 CFR Part 91.505, a grantee’s CPP shall include:

- Changing allocation priorities or methods of distribution.
- Adding an activity not previously identified in the Consolidated Plan or Action Plan.
- Carrying out new activities with CPD funds or changing the purpose, scope, location, or beneficiaries of activity.

U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development (“HUD”)—The federal department that administers the CDBG, HOME, and ESG programs.