



City of Visalia, CA

Citizen Participation Plan
2025/26 – 2029/30



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Article I. Summary

The City of Visalia (City) is an entitlement jurisdiction that receives grant funding from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).

The federal entitlement grant funds include:

1. Community Development Block Grants (CDBG)
2. HOME Investment Partnerships Program (HOME)

The HUD Code of Final Regulations for the Consolidated Plan (Con Plan) (24 CFR Part 91 Sec. 91.105) requires that the City adopt a Citizen Participation Plan (CPP) that sets forth the City's policies and procedures for citizen participation in the planning, execution, and evaluation of the Consolidated Plan, Annual Action Plans (AAP), and Consolidated Annual Performance Evaluation Reports (CAPER).

This Citizens Participation Plan shall be effective until amended or superseded.

This CPP provides guidelines for the City to provide and encourage public participation to residents, community stakeholders, and grant beneficiaries in the process of drafting, implementing, and evaluating the Consolidated Plan and related documents. The citizen participation process includes outreach, public hearings, community forums, and opportunities for comment.

Article II. Amendments Criteria

Minor Amendment: A minor amendment includes the following:

3. Necessary for substantially preserving all the programs and activities identified in a Plan.
4. Necessitated by insignificant changes in the funding levels between HUD's initial estimates of funding amounts and HUD's final allocation notification to the City.
5. That does not meet the thresholds to qualify as a Substantial Amendment.

Substantial Amendment: A substantial amendment includes the following:

6. Increases or decreases the amount allocated to a category of funding within the City's entitlement grant programs by 75 percent or more.
7. Significantly changes an activity's proposed beneficiaries or persons served
8. Allocates funding for a new activity not previously described in the Action Plan

Citizen Participation in the Event of a Substantial Amendment

In the event of a substantial amendment to the Consolidated Plan or Annual Action Plan, the City, depending on the nature of the amendment, will conduct at least one public hearing, which could be "virtual", per HUD recommendations. This hearing will follow a comment period of no less than 30 days, where the proposed substantially amended Consolidated Plan will be made available to interested parties. Citizens will be informed of the public hearing through daily newspaper notification and the City's website prior to the hearing.

Changes in Federal Funding Level

Any changes in federal funding level after the Consolidated Plan or Annual Action Plan's draft comment period has expired and the resulting effect on the distribution of funds will not be considered an amendment or a substantial amendment.

Access to Records

To the extent allowed by law, interested citizens and organizations shall be afforded reasonable and timely access to records covering the preparation of the Consolidated Plan and/or Annual Action Plan, project evaluation and selection, HUD's comments on the Plan and annual performance reports. In addition, materials on formula grant programs covered by the Consolidated Plan and/or Annual Action Plan, including activities undertaken in the previous five years, will be made available on the City's Housing Department website at www.visalia.city and will be available during normal business hours at City of Visalia Housing Division at 707 W. Acequia Ave., Visalia, CA 93291.

Complaints and Grievances

Citizens, administering agencies, and other interested parties may submit complaints and grievances regarding the programs the City of Visalia Housing Division. Complaints should be in writing, specific in their subject matter, and include facts to support allegations. The following are considered as constituting complaints to which a response is due:

The administering agency has purportedly violated a provision of the Citizen Participation Plan;
The administering agency has purportedly violated a provision of federal CDBG or HOME program regulations; and the administering agency, or any of its contractors, has purportedly engaged in questionable practices resulting in waste, fraud or mismanagement of any program funds.

Residents may also present complaints and grievances orally or in writing at the community meetings and/or public hearing. All public comments, including complaints and grievances, made either orally or in writing within the 30-day public comment period, will be included in the final Consolidated Plan and/or Annual Action Plan. Such complaints or grievances about the CDBG or HOME program may be directed to the City of Visalia Housing Division at 707 W. Acequia Ave., Visalia, CA 93291 or via email at housing@visalia.city.

Timely Response to Complaints or Grievances

Upon receipt of a written complaint, the designated representative at the City shall respond to the complainant within 10 working days and maintain a copy of all related correspondence, which will be subject to review.

Within 10 working days of receiving the complaint, the designated representative shall discuss the matter with the department manager and respond to the complainant in writing. A copy of the City's response will be transmitted concurrently to the complainant and to the Finance Director. If, due to unusual circumstances, the designated representative finds that they are unable to meet the prescribed time limit, the limit may be extended by written notice to the complainant. The designated representative's notice must include the reason for the extension and the date on which a response is expected to be generated, which may be based on the nature and complexity of the complaint. Public review materials and performance reports will include data, as appropriate under confidentiality regulations, on any written complaints received and how each was resolved.

Article III. Definitions

Analysis of Impediments (AI) to Fair Housing Choice: The program participant must continue to conduct an analysis of impediments (AI) in accordance with existing HUD regulations. Future Plans will occur every five years with the Con Plan unless otherwise required by HUD.

Annual Action Plan (Annual Plan): The Annual Plan summarizes the activities that will be undertaken in the upcoming Fiscal Year (FY) to meet the goals outlined in the Con Plan. The Annual Plan also identifies the federal and non-federal resources that will be used to meet the goals of the approved Con Plan.

Citizen Participation Plan (CPP): The CCP provides guidelines by which the City will promote engagement in the planning, implementation, and evaluation of the distribution of federal funds, as outlined in the Con Plan, Annual Plan, and CAPERs.

Community Development Block Grant (CDBG): HUD's CDBG program provides communities with resources to address a wide range of housing and community development needs that benefit very low- and low-income persons and areas.

Consolidated Annual Performance Evaluation Report (CAPER): The CAPER assesses the City's annual achievements relative to the goals in the Con Plan and proposed activities in the Annual Plan. HUD requires the City to prepare a CAPER at the end of each fiscal year.

Consolidated Plan (Con Plan): HUD requires entitlement jurisdictions to prepare a Con Plan every five years. The Con Plan is a strategic plan that identifies housing, economic, and community development needs and prioritizes funding to address those needs over a five-year period.

Department Of Housing and Urban Development (HUD): HUD is the government agency that creates and manages programs pertaining to federal home ownership, affordable housing, fair housing, homelessness, and community and housing development.

Displacement: Displacement refers to the involuntary relocation of individuals from their residences due to housing development and rehabilitation activities paid for by federal funds.

Eligible Activity: Activities that are allowable uses of the three federal funds (CDBG, NSP and HOME) covered by the CPP as defined in the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Title 24 for HUD.

Entitlement Community: A city with a population of at least 50,000, a central city of a metropolitan area, or a qualified urban county with a population of at least 200,000 that receives grant funding from HUD. HUD awards annual grants to entitlement community grantees on a formula basis 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. HUD awards grants to carry out a wide range of community development activities directed toward revitalizing neighborhoods, economic development, and providing improved community facilities and services. The City of Visalia is an Entitlement Community jurisdiction.

Home Investment Partnerships Program (HOME): HOME is a federal block grant program that is designed to exclusively create affordable housing for low- and moderate-income households.

Low- and Moderate-Income Benefit Area (LMA): CDBG funded activities must principally benefit low- and moderate-income persons, aid in preventing or eliminating slums or blight, or meet a community development need having a particular urgency because existing conditions pose a serious and immediate threat to the health or welfare of the community and other financial resources are not available to meet that need. The City provides activities under this category, an area benefit activity which is primarily residential and who are at least 51 low- and moderate-income persons. Some activities which may meet the requirements include

parks, neighborhoods, facilities, community centers and streets, which serve an identified geographic area, primarily by Low/Mod income person.

Low- and Moderate-Income Limited Clientele (LMC): A Low/Mod income limited clientele activity is an activity which provides benefits to a specific group of persons rather than everyone in an area generally. It may benefit particular persons without regard to the area in which they reside, or it may be an activity which provides benefit on an area basis but only to a specific group of persons who reside in the area. In either case, at least 51% of the beneficiaries of the activity must be low/mod income persons. Statutory limitations preclude certain activities.

Low and Moderate Housing Activities (LMH): The housing category of Low/Mod income, qualifies activities that are undertaken for the purpose of providing or improvement permanent residential structures which, upon completion, will be occupied by Low Income households.

Low and Moderate Income (LMI): As defined annually by HUD LMI is 0-80% of Area Median Income (AMI) for a jurisdiction. This includes those individuals presumed by HUD to be principally LMI (abused children, battered spouses, elderly persons, severely disabled adults, homeless persons, illiterate adults, persons living with AIDS and migrant farm workers). HUD utilizes three income levels to define LMI households:

- Extremely low income: Households earning 0-30 percent of the AMI (subject to specified adjustments for areas with unusually high or low incomes)
- Low income: Households earning 30-50 percent of the AMI (subject to specified adjustments for areas with unusually high or low incomes)
- Moderate income: Households earning 50-80 percent of the AMI (subject to adjustments for areas with unusually high or low incomes or housing costs)

Low and Moderate Job Creation or Retention (LMJ): The job creation and retention Low/Mod income category addresses activities that are designed to create or retain permanent jobs, at least 51% of which (computed on a full-time equivalent basis) will be made available to or held by Low Mod Income persons.

Program Year: the “program year” is July 1st through June 30th.

Public Hearing: Public hearings are designed to provide the public the opportunity to make public testimony and comment. Public hearings related to the Consolidated Plan are to be advertised in local newspapers and made accessible to non-English speakers and individuals with disabilities.

Article III. Roles, Responsibilities, and Contact Information

The City is a federal entitlement community jurisdiction and is a recipient of CDBG and HOME funding from the federal government.

Visalia City Council: The Visalia City Council is the elected legislative body governing the City. It is responsible for approving the City's Five-Year Consolidated Plan, Annual Action Plans, amendments to the Plans, and CAPERs prior to their submission to HUD. City Council meetings are generally held the first and third Monday of each month beginning at 4:00 pm for a Work Session and 7:00 pm for the regular session. The meetings are held at the City Hall, Council Chambers at 707 W. Acequia Avenue, Visalia, CA 93291. All City Council meetings are held in facilities that are accessible to persons with disabilities.

The City of Visalia is based on district elections. The adopted map sets City Council Districts is available on the City's website at www.visalia.city.

Citizen's Advisory Committee (CAC): The Citizen's Advisory Committee meets on the first Wednesday of each month at 5:30pm in the City administration building at 220 North Santa Fe Street, Visalia, CA 93291. The committee acts as a liaison between the general public, and the City Council concerning community issues.

City of Visalia General Contact: The General Contact Information for the City of Visalia's HUD Entitlement Programs is:

City of Visalia
Attention: Housing Division
707 West Acequia Avenue
Visalia, CA 93291
Housing@visalia.city
559-713-4460

Article IV. Citizen Participation Policies

Availability of Draft and Approved Documents

The draft CPP, Consolidated Plans, Annual Action Plans, and any substantial amendments will be made available for public review and comment for a minimum of 30 days prior to their submission to HUD. The draft CAPER will be available for public review and comment for a minimum of 15 days prior to its final submission to HUD. Previously approved plans and amendments will be available to residents, public agencies, and other interested stakeholders.

The CPP is designed to facilitate and encourage residents to participate in the Consolidated Plan process. In particular, the CPP seeks to encourage the involvement of LMI persons. The draft and final versions of the CPP, Consolidated Plan, Annual Plan, CAPER, and all related amendments will be available online at the City's Finance Department-Housing Division website at www.visalia.city. Hard copies of all documents will be available at the City of Visalia, 707 W. Acequia Ave., Visalia, CA 93291.

The City will use the following process to adopt and make any subsequent changes to the documents listed below:

- The City will place public notice in the Visalia Times-Delta, on the City's Web site (www.visalia.city) and at City Hall West (707 W. Acequia Ave.), City Hall East (315 E. Acequia Ave.), City Hall North (220 North Santa Fe Street), the Visalia Branch Library (200 W. Oak Ave.) and two community centers—Anthony Community Center (345 N. Jacob St.) and Visalia Senior Center (310 N. Locust St.) - in advance of a 30-day public review and comment period.
- Residents have 30 days to review the Citizen Participation Plan from the date of the notice.
- During the 30-day public review and comment period, the document will be available for review at City Hall West (707 W. Acequia Ave.), City Hall North (220 North Santa Fe Street), and copies of the document will be available to the public upon request.
- Residents may file comments in writing at City Hall West (707 W. Acequia Ave.) and/or via email at housing@visalia.city during the 30-day period from the date of the notice.
- The City Council will adopt the CPP at a public hearing.

Any change in the public participation process as outlined in this document will require an amendment to the CPP.

2025 Five Year Consolidated Plan and First Year Annual Action Plan

The steps outlined below provide opportunities for public involvement in the preparation of the Five-Year 2025 Consolidated Plan and the First Year Annual Action Plan:

The response to the surveys, community outreach and the Census Data collected for the City of Visalia are used to identify and prioritize which barriers to address which helps filter which programs to fund going forward. To solicit community input, which is essential to determining these needs and priorities, the City will:

- Consult with local public agencies that assist low- and moderate-income persons and areas, including City staff, state and federal agencies, neighboring local governments, and regional agencies.
- Consult with private agencies, including local nonprofit service providers and advocates such as the local public housing agency, health agencies, homeless service providers, nonprofit housing developers and social service agencies (including those focusing on services to children, the elderly, persons with disabilities, persons with HIV/AIDS, persons with substance abuse problems, etc.).

- Place public notices in the Visalia Times-Delta, the Kings/Tulare Homeless Alliance listserv, on the City's Web site (www.visalia.city) and at City Hall East (315 E. Acequia Ave.), City Hall West (707 W. Acequia Ave.), City Hall North (220 North Santa Fe Street), the Visalia Branch Library (200 W. Oak Ave.) and two community centers—Anthony Community Center (345 N. Jacob St.) and Visalia Senior Center (310 N. Locust St.)—30 days in advance of a meeting. The notice will include the amount of funds available, the range of activities that could be undertaken and the amount that would benefit LMI persons.
- Hold a minimum of two public hearings within the community to solicit input on needs and priorities for the Consolidated Plan and the Annual Action Plan.
- Hold a minimum of one public hearing before the City Council to solicit input on needs and priorities for the Consolidated Plan and the Annual Action Plan.
- Provide residents with 30 days to review the draft Consolidated Plan and/or the draft Annual Action Plan from the date of the notice.
- Provide residents with a 30-day period from the date of notice to file comments at City Hall West (707 W. Acequia Ave.) and/or via email at housing@visalia.city.
- Present the Five-Year Consolidated Plan and First Year Annual Action Plan to City Council for adoption.
- Consider all comments and views expressed by the public, whether given as verbal testimony at the public hearing or submitted in writing during the review and comment period. The final documents will have a section that includes all comments, along with any explanations as to why any comments were not accepted.

Substantial Amendments to Five-Year Consolidated Plan and First Year Annual Action Plan

Amendments to the Five-Year Consolidated Plan, Annual Action Plan are necessary whenever one of the following is proposed:

- To make a substantial change in the allocation priorities or a substantial change in the method of distribution of funds. A substantial change increases or decreases the amount allocated to a category of funding within the City's entitlement grant programs by 75 percent or more.
- To carry out an activity using funds from any program not covered by the Five-Year Consolidated Plan (including program income) not previously described in the Five-Year Consolidated Plan.
- To substantially change the purpose, scope, location or beneficiaries of an activity.

The following procedures apply to Substantial amendments:

- The City will place public notices in the Visalia Times-Delta post on the City's Web site (www.visalia.city); the Kings/Tulare Homeless Alliance listserv, and at City Hall West (707 W. Acequia Ave.) City Hall East (315 E. Acequia Ave.), City Hall North (220 N. Santa Fe St.), the Visalia Branch Library (200 W. Oak Ave.), and two community centers—Anthony Community Center (345 N. Jacob St.) and Visalia Senior Center (310 N. Locust St.)—in advance of a 30-day public review and comment period.
- Residents have 30 days to review the proposed Substantial amendment from the date of the notice.
- During the 15-day public comment period, the document will be available for review at the City's Housing Division at City Hall West (707 W. Acequia Ave.), and on the City's website at www.visalia.city. Copies of the document will be available to the public upon request.
- Residents may file comments at City Hall West (707 W. Acequia Ave.), and/or via email at housing@visalia.city during the 30-day period from the date of the notice.
- The City will hold a minimum of one public hearing within the community to solicit input on the Substantial Amendment.
- The City will hold a minimum of one public hearing before the City Council to solicit input on the

Substantial Amendment.

- In preparing a final Substantial amendment, careful consideration will be given to all comments and views expressed by the public, whether given as verbal testimony at the public hearing or submitted in writing during the review and comment period. The final amendment will have a section that includes all comments, plus explanations as to why any comments were not accepted.

Annual Action Plan and Consolidated Annual Performance Evaluation Report (CAPER)

The City must submit an Annual Action Plan and a Consolidated Annual Performance Evaluation Report (CAPER) to HUD.

Annual Action Plan

The Annual Action Plan summarizes the activities that will be undertaken in the upcoming FY to meet the goals outlined in the Con Plan. The following steps outline the opportunities for public involvement in the Annual Action Plan:

- The City will place public notices in the Visalia Times-Delta, provide notice to the Kings/Tulare Homeless Alliance for inclusion in their listserv, post notice on the City's Web site (www.visalia.city), at City Hall West (707 W. Acequia Ave.), City Hall East (315 E. Acequia Ave.), City Hall North (220 N. Santa Fe St.), the Visalia Branch Library (200 W. Oak Ave.) and two community centers—Anthony Community Center (345 N. Jacob St.), and Visalia Senior Center (310 N. Locust St.)—in advance of a 30-day public review and comment period.
- Residents will have 30 days to review the Annual Action Plan from the date of the notice.
- During the 15-day public comment period, the document will be available for review at the City's Housing Division at City Hall West (707 W. Acequia Ave.), and on the City's website at www.visalia.city. Copies of the document will be available to the public upon request.
- Residents may file comments at City Hall North (220 N. Santa Fe St.) during the 30-day period from the date of the notice.
- The City will hold a minimum of one public hearing within the community to solicit input on needs and priorities for the Annual Action Plan.
- The City will hold a minimum of one public hearing before the City Council to solicit input on needs and priorities for the Annual Action Plan.
- In preparing the Action Plan, careful consideration will be given to all comments and views expressed by the public, whether given as verbal testimony at the public hearing or submitted in writing during the review and comment period. The final report will have a section that includes all comments, plus explanations as to why any comments were not accepted.

CAPER

The CAPER must describe how funds were actually used and the extent to which these funds were used for activities that benefited low- and moderate-income people. The following steps outline the opportunities for public involvement in the CAPER:

- The City will place public notices in the Visalia Times-Delta, on the City's Web site (www.visalia.city) at City Hall West (707 W. Acequia Ave.), City Hall East (315 E. Acequia Ave.), City Hall North (220 N. Santa Fe St.), the Visalia Branch Library (200 W. Oak Ave.) and two community centers—Anthony Community Center (345 N. Jacob St.), and Visalia Senior Center (310 N. Locust St.)—in advance of a 15-day public review and comment period.
- Residents will have 15 days to review the CAPER from the date of the notice.
- During the 15-day public comment period, the document will be available for review at the City's Housing Division at City Hall West (707 W. Acequia Ave.), and on the City's website at www.visalia.city. Copies of the document will be available to the public upon request.

- Residents may file comments at City Hall West (707 W. Acequia Ave.), and/or via email at housing@visalia.city during the 15-day period from the date of the notice.
- In preparing the CAPER, careful consideration will be given to all comments and views expressed by the public, whether given as verbal testimony at the public hearing or submitted in writing during the 15-day review and comment period. The final report will have a section that includes all comments, plus explanations as to why any comments were not accepted.

Public Hearings/Public Meetings

The City will hold public hearings for the Consolidated Plan, Annual Action Plan, CAPER, amendments made to the CPP, or Substantial amendments. Consolidated Plan hearings will include City staffed community meetings, and a minimum of one City Council Public Hearing for the adoption of the Consolidated Plan and Annual Action Plan.

The City Council Public Hearing will be held at City Hall Council Chambers. Listening devices, interpretation services, and other assistance to disabled persons or those with limited English proficiency will be provided upon request, requiring up to five business days prior notification to the City Clerk. Requests for disability-related modifications or accommodations required to facilitate meeting participation, including requests for auxiliary aids, services or interpreters, require different lead times, of up to five business days. Please keep this in mind and provide as much advance notice as possible to ensure availability. Assistive Listening Devices (ALD's) are available upon request. Public hearings and/or meetings may be held virtually.

Notice of Hearings and Review Periods

To allow the public to provide comments prior to the submission of approved documents to HUD, the City will hold a public review period of at least 30 days for each Con Plan, Annual Action Plan, CPP, and Substantial amendment.

The City will establish a public review period of at least 15 days for each CAPER to allow for public comments prior to the submission of approved documents to HUD.

Completed drafts of the Five-Year Consolidated Plan and First Year Annual Action Plan, CPP, and any Substantial amendments will be available for public review and comment for 30 days.

Completed drafts of the Subsequent Annual Action Plans will be available for public review and comment for 30 days.

Completed drafts of the CAPER will be available for public review and comment for 15 days.

Copies of these draft plans will be available to the public for review, at City Hall West (707 W. Acequia Ave) and on the City of Visalia website at www.visalia.city.

To ensure that all residents, including minorities, persons with limited English proficiency, persons with disabilities, residents of public housing, and LMI residents can participate in the public review process, the City will provide residents, public agencies and other stakeholders the following:

- Notice of opportunity to comment via e-mail, U.S. mail, and/or in person at public hearings on the Consolidated Plan, Annual Plan, CAPER, Substantial amendments, and CPP.
- Notice of applicable public review period and public hearings using an email distribution list maintained by the City for those parties expressing interest in receiving information and updates related to the City's five-year Consolidated Plan, Annual Action Plan, CAPER, Substantial amendments and CPP. To be added to this email distribution list, please submit a request to housing@visalia.city with the subject line: Con Plan distribution list.
- Notices will be distributed through various methods, including e-mail, websites, social media outlets,

listservs, newsletters, office postings, and newspaper postings.

- Public notices will announce the availability of relevant draft documents for public review and include an introduction of the document, its contents, and purpose. The notices will describe how to obtain a copy of the document for review and clearly list all scheduled hearings with dates, times, and locations. The notices will include information on how to access staff report and related documents online and list locations where hard copies will be available.
- Notices of the availability of draft documents and the review periods will be distributed, published, and posted on the City of Visalia's Finance Department-Housing website at www.visalia.city. Notices will be distributed and published at least 15-days for CAPER's and 30-days for Con Plan, Action Plans, Substantial Amendments, and CPP before the final public hearing and will include information regarding how to request accommodation and services available for persons with disabilities who wish to attend the public hearings.
- Newspaper postings of the notices for the Consolidated Plan, Annual Action Plan, CAPER, Substantial amendments, and amendments to the CPP will be provided in the Visalia Times-Delta, or other local newspaper, and the Tulare Kings Hispanic Chamber of Commerce's newsletter. Consolidated Plan and Action Plan notices will be sent to an e-mail distribution list maintained by the City's Finance Department-Housing. Members of the public may be added to this distribution list by contacting housing@visalia.city. Although the City will prioritize the use of email to distribute the public notices to residents, it will continue to send hard copies to the public via U.S. Postal Service to residents with no email access, upon request.

The City often combines notices complying with several individual requirements into one document for dissemination and publication. The City is receptive to suggestions for ways to improve its process for notifying the public of upcoming public hearings and the availability of draft documents for public review.

The City will consider comments and views expressed by residents, public agencies, and other stakeholders via email, writing, or orally at public meetings. In each Five-Year Consolidated Plan, Annual Action Plan, CAPER, Substantial amendment or CPP submitted to HUD, the City will provide an attachment that includes all written communications received and a summary of each oral comment during the applicable 30-day or 15-day public review period; the City's subsequent action; and the reasons for non-action, if none was taken. This information will also be available to the public as part of the final document.

Anti-Displacement Policy

As part of the CPP, the City must maintain a displacement policy. Displacement refers to the involuntary relocation of individuals from their residence due to housing development and rehabilitation paid for with federal funds. The City will continue to use existing federal and state relocation guidelines, as applicable, to minimize displacement and to alleviate the problems caused by displacement. Both the federal government and the State of California have specific requirements dictating the number of benefits and assistance that must be provided to lower income persons and households relocated from their homes as a result of displacement. Depending on the funding source, displaced persons may be offered one or more of the following:

- A rent subsidy for another unit
- A cash payment to be used for rent or a down payment on the purchase of a dwelling unit
- Moving and related expenses

The City's rehabilitation programs may also incur relocation issues when they provide minor additions to existing dwellings to address overcrowding. Any temporary relocation costs, if applicable, are included in the rehabilitation loan package offered to clients.

Technical Assistance

The City will, to the extent practicable, respond to requests for technical assistance by groups representing persons of low- and moderate-income developing funding proposals for any program covered by the Consolidated Plan in accordance with grant procedures. This may include, but is not limited to, providing information regarding how to fill out applications, other potential funding sources, and referrals to appropriate agencies within and outside the City. "Technical assistance," as used here, does not include the provision of funds to groups requesting such assistance. Assistance will also be provided by the City's Finance Department-Housing to interested individuals and resident groups who need further explanation on the background and intent of the Housing and Community Development Act, interpretation of specific HUD regulations, and project eligibility criteria for federal grants.

Activities Exempt from Substantial Amendment Citizen Participation Requirements

It may be necessary to amend the Consolidated Plan and/or Annual Action Plan in the event of an emergency such as a natural disaster. These amendments may include funding new activities and/or the reprogramming of funds including canceling activities to meet community development needs that has a particular urgency. Therefore, the City may utilize its CDBG funds to meet an urgent need without the normal public comment period, which is otherwise required for substantial amendments. To comply with the national objective of meeting community development needs having a particular urgency, an activity will alleviate existing conditions that the City of Visalia certifies:

- Pose a serious and immediate threat to the health and welfare of the community;
- Are of recent origin or recently became urgent;
- Are unable to be financed by the City on its own; or
- Other funding resources are not available to carry out the activity.

Urgent Need

If Urgent Need funds are received due to a natural disaster or pandemic, the public comment period can be reduced to a 5-day publication and public comment period. During an Urgent Need public comment period a community meeting or workshop is not required, although a public hearing will still take place to accept any public comments. A public notice will be posted in a local newspaper of circulation at least 5 days prior to the public hearing date to provide reasonable notice and opportunity to comment. The Urgent Need public comment period can be reduced to 5 days to assist in expediting funds as quickly as possible. All meetings held during an Urgent Need may be conducted virtually.

Availability of the Citizen Participation Plan

Citizens and organizations may obtain a copy of the City of Visalia Citizen Participation Plan by contacting the City of Visalia Housing Division at housing@visalia.city or (559) 713-4460.