



Citizen Participation Plan for HUD Programs

Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)
HOME Investment Partnerships Program (HOME)

As Amended May 18, 2020 and July 26, 2021

If you would like to request the Citizen Participation Plan in an accessible format (e.g. oral, Braille, electronic, or large print copies), or translation requests, please contact the Planning and Development Department at 225 4th St N, Fargo, ND 58102 (701-241-1474, ND Relay TTY 800-366-6888 or 711) or Planning@FargoND.gov

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Executive Summary [24 CFR Part 91 Subpart B 91.105 (a)]

The City of Fargo receives funding from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) for two federal programs: the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) and the HOME Investment Partnerships (HOME). The City then distributes this funding throughout the Fargo community. As a recipient of these federal funds, the City is required to adopt, publish, and follow a Citizen Participation Plan (CPP).

The CPP guides how and when the City of Fargo engages with citizens, business owners, and other stakeholders. Through the use of public comment periods, public meetings, and public hearings, people help to identify community needs, priorities, and solutions for which federal CDBG and HOME funds may be used to address.

The following HUD-required documents will be addressed by this CPP:

- Consolidated Plan (“Five Year Plan”)(ConPlan)
- Annual Action Plans (AAP)
- Assessment of Fair Housing/Analysis of Impediments (AFH/AI)
- Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Report (“CAPER”)
- Amendments

The calendar below is an outline of the public participation activities that occur in the development of the ConPlan (every 5 years), AAP (annually), and the CAPER. It includes the timeline for which they generally occur. At a minimum, the City will hold two public hearings per program year, conducted at two different stages of the program year. One of these public hearings will be held as a public input meeting outside of a City Commission meeting.

May 1	Beginning of program year
Early to Mid-July	CAPER comment period (15 days) CAPER due to HUD by July 31 (unless granted an extension)
September - December	Community Consultations for AAP (annually)/ConPlan (every 5 years) Public Hearing #1: Public Input Meeting for AAP (2 week notice)
October - January	Call for Proposals for AAP (“NOFA” or Notice of Funding Availability) Reviewing submissions, project selection, and drafting AAP/ConPlan
February - March	Public Hearing #2: AAP/ConPlan Hearing at City Commission (2 week notice), AAP/ConPlan Comment Period (30 days), AAP/ConPlan City Commission Approval
March 15	AAP/ConPlan Submission to HUD
April 30	End of program year

Note: With the exception of the May 1 – April 30 program year, the timeline may vary depending on circumstances. Generally, timelines may be extended and rarely, if ever, are they earlier than what is listed in this timeline.

I. Introduction to Community Development and HUD Programs

What is Community Development?

Community Development is a practice involving research, evaluation, collaboration, and strategic planning, mostly associated with affordable housing, homelessness, employment, transportation, and community resources and assets (e.g., social, environmental/natural, political, cultural, financial, built, and human capitals etc.). The City of Fargo has a Community Development (CD) Division within the Planning & Development Department. The CD Division is responsible for plan development of its Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) grants, which include the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) and the HOME Investment Partnerships Grant (HOME). The City Commission maintains final approval of annual and consolidated plans and budgets.

Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)

The goal of the CDBG program is to develop viable urban communities by providing decent housing and suitable living environments, as well as expanding economic opportunities for low- and moderate-income persons. It is a program designed to be flexible and tailored to community development needs and priorities. At least 70% of CDBG funds over a period of three years must be used to benefit people with low and moderate incomes. This does not include planning and administrative costs, but does include program income. Eligible activities under CDBG include, but are not limited to:

- Acquisition of real property
- Demolition
- Rehabilitation of residential and non-residential structures
- Construction of public facilities or neighborhood centers, improvements (e.g., water, sewer, streets), and the conversion of school buildings for eligible purposes or playground updates and modification for accessibility
- Public services (grant is capped, typically under \$150,000 per year for entire community)
- Activities relating to energy conservation and renewable energy resources
- Economic development and job creation/retention activities

HOME Investment Partnerships (HOME)

The goal of the HOME program is to create affordable rental or ownership housing for low-income households. Eligible activities enable communities to respond to affordable housing challenges within the community. All beneficiaries of HOME programs or projects must have incomes at or below 80% of the area median income (AMI). Specific activities under HOME may have stricter income requirements. Eligible activities under HOME include:

- New construction (ownership or rental)
- Rehabilitation (ownership or rental)
- Homebuyer Assistance (e.g., downpayment and closing cost assistance)

- Tenant-based Rental Assistance

II. Definition of Citizen Participation Plan Terms

This section contains definitions of frequently used terms and phrases used throughout the Citizen Participation Plan.

Low- and Moderate-Income Households, Neighborhoods, & Clientele

HUD regulations require that at least 70% of CDBG funding and all of HOME funding must benefit people with low to moderate incomes. Depending on the program, HUD allows the City to use multiple methods to determine whether a program or project is benefitting people with low to moderate incomes. For the HOME program, the City may only use Method 1 below. For CDBG, the City may use both methods listed.

These are general definitions. A project or program may have specific (or lower) income requirements to be considered initially eligible to participate.

Method 1: Low- to Moderate-Income Household: HUD defines low- to moderate-income thresholds based on area median income (AMI) and family size on an annual basis. HUD generally considers a household as low- to moderate-income if its income is at or below 80% of the AMI.

Example: Sally lives alone and earns \$40,000 a year. The AMI of a one-person household in her area is \$100,000. Sally qualifies as low- to moderate-income because she earns 40% of the AMI.

Method 2: Low- to Moderate-Income Neighborhood (“Area Benefit” – “LMA”): This method does not consider the income of a specific household, but rather all the people living in a particular area. HUD uses estimates from the American Community Survey to determine whether 51% or more of people living in an area have income at 80% or less of AMI. If so, this area is considered to be a “low- to moderate-income area” (LMA). The City follows determinations made by HUD as to which census tracts qualify.

Public Notice

Public notices are utilized to alert the public to a public comment period or to give adequate and timely notice of a public hearing or meeting. A public notice will be published in *The Forum* and on the City’s website. Public notices will contain:

- Summary of the contents and purpose of the proposed plan or amendment
- List of locations where a full draft can be accessed
- Dates of the public comment period
- Date and time of public hearing and approval if required
- How/where interested parties can submit comments

Additionally, public notices will include the following where required:

- Description of the meeting location as accessible to individuals with disabilities
- Information on how to request reasonable accommodations
- Availability of language interpretation and/or translation services and how to request
- Contact information for the Section 504 coordinator
- State TTY/Relay information
- Non-discrimination and equal employment/equal housing statements

The City may also alert the public and interested community development partners through flyers, e-mail distribution lists, social media, press releases, and other methods.

Public Comment

During a public comment period, residents, public agencies, and other interested parties may submit comment the following ways:

- In writing:
 - In-person or mailed to City of Fargo, Planning & Development, 2nd Floor, 225 4th St N, Fargo, ND 58102
 - Via e-mail to Planning@FargoND.gov
 - Online via the Department's "Contact Us" page on the City of Fargo's website, currently located at: <http://fargond.gov/city-government/departments/planning-development/contact-us>
- Verbally:
 - Attending and speaking at the public hearing/meeting (as applicable)
 - Via telephone to the Planning & Development's office at 701.241.1474 TTY 800.366.6888 or 711
 - In-person to the Planning & Development's office, 2nd Floor, Fargo City Hall, 225 4th St N, Fargo, ND 58102

Planning & Development

Planning & Development is the department of the City of Fargo which administers HUD funds. When instructed in the Citizen Participation Plan to contact the Planning & Development Department, interested parties can do so in the following ways:

City of Fargo Planning and Development 225 4th Street North Fargo, ND 58102	E-mail: Planning@FargoND.gov Phone: 701.241.1474 TTY: 800.366.6888 or 711 Fax: 701.241.1526
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III. Encouraging Citizen Participation

Citizen participation is essential to the City and community in identifying community development needs and assets, assessing the effectiveness of ongoing housing and community development programs, and developing community development priorities and solutions. Citizen participation in the following HUD reports and plans is mandated. The reports and plans are listed below along with a brief description of the purpose of the plan or report.

Description of HUD Plans and Reports

1. Five-Year Consolidated Plan: The Five-Year Consolidated Plan (also referred to as the Consolidated Plan, ConPlan, or Five-Year Plan) is a framework for the City's priorities and goals related to housing and community development. As part of the planning process, the City consults with residents and stakeholders as to the needs and market conditions in order to make data-driven, place-based investment decisions. The City uses the ConPlan to help make annual funding decisions and demonstrate to HUD that annual projects align with the ConPlan's goals, strategies, and priorities.
2. Substantial Amendment to the Consolidated Plan: There may be a need to amend the goals, strategies, or priorities identified in the ConPlan. Regulations allow for the City to amend the original document in order to reflect changes in the community or respond to the capacity of local organizations or the City to carry out the work.
3. Annual Action Plan: The Annual Action Plan (AAP) identifies the specific projects or programs in the community that will receive HUD funds. It provides a concise summary of the actions, activities, budgets, and specific federal and non-federal resources that will be used each year to address the priority needs and specific goals identified by the ConPlan.
4. Substantial Amendment to the Annual Action Plan: As with the ConPlan, the City may amend an AAP. This could occur to remove a program or project that is unable to come to fruition; to add new projects or activities as needs arise; or something as simple as an address being identified for an already approved project. A substantial amendment to the AAP would require a substantial amendment to the ConPlan if the priority or goals are new or changed and differ from the approved ConPlan.
5. Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Report (CAPER): The CAPER is a program year-end annual report about accomplishments and progress toward ConPlan goals during the program year. The City also reports on the beneficiaries of projects and programs which received HUD funding to demonstrate compliance with civil rights requirements and ensure at least 70% of CDBG funding and all of HOME funding has benefitted low- to moderate-income neighborhoods or individuals. CAPERs are due to HUD 90 days after the close of the program year.

6. Assessment of Fair Housing/Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Choice (AI): The Assessment of Fair Housing/Analysis of Impediments to fair housing addresses patterns of integration and segregation; racially or ethnically concentrated areas of poverty; disparities in access to opportunity; and disproportionate housing needs. The AI helps to identify fair housing issues and other contributing factors. The City uses this information to set goals that will address issues. These goals inform subsequent housing and community development planning processes.

Encouragement of Citizen Participation from Particular Groups

The City encourages all residents and stakeholders to participate in developing and implementing the plans and reports outlined in the previous section, “Description of HUD Plans and Reports.” The City especially encourages participation from the following:

- Low- and moderate-income persons, particularly those persons:
 - living in areas designated by the City as a revitalization area
 - living in a slum and blighted area
 - living in areas where CDBG funds are proposed to be used
 - living in a core neighborhood (See City’s Core Neighborhood Plan)
- Residents of predominantly low- and moderate-income neighborhoods or areas
- People from marginalized or minority groups
- Non-English speaking persons
- Persons with disabilities

The City also encourages participation from the following types of organizations in developing and implementing the Assessment of Fair Housing/Analysis of Impediments, Consolidated Plan, and Annual Action Plan:

- Local and regional institutions
- Continuums of Care
- Other organizations, both private and public, such as businesses, developers, nonprofit organizations, philanthropic organizations, and community-based and faith-based organizations
- In conjunction with consultation with the Fargo Housing and Redevelopment Authority (FHRA), the City will encourage the participation of residents of public and assisted housing developments including any resident advisory boards, resident councils, and resident management corporations
- Other low-income residents of targeted revitalization areas in which the FHRA’s developments are located
- FHRA will be provided information about ConPlan activities, the Assessment of Fair Housing/Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Choice, and Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing strategies and activities if those activities are related to the PHA’s developments and surrounding communities. FHRA will then make this information available at its annual public hearing(s) required for the PHA Plan.

The City will consult with the following in developing the Consolidated Plan:

- Broadband internet service providers
- Organizations engaged in narrowing the digital divide
- Agencies whose primary responsibilities include the management of flood prone areas, public land, or water resources
- Emergency management agencies
- Adjacent local governments

Community Development Mailing List

The City of Fargo's Planning & Development staff maintain a mailing and e-mail list of housing and community organizations in the area who have opted in. The City uses this list to keep in communication with organizations regarding community meetings, public hearings, requests for proposals, and more related to the City's HOME and CDBG programs. An organization can be placed on the mailing and/or e-mail list by contacting Planning & Development.

IV. Accessibility

Access to Meetings, Materials, and Records

Meetings and Public Hearings. The City provides citizens with reasonable and timely access to local meetings and public hearings. For the purposes of this section, "meetings" shall mean both meetings and public hearings. The notice period and location of notices are further detailed in Section V. Meetings will be held in a location accessible for those with disabilities. All public hearings and most public meetings are held at Fargo's City Hall, which was constructed in 2018 and is a fully accessible location serviced by public transit. If meetings are held in an alternative location, the City will locate a facility serviced by public transit and accessible to individuals with disabilities.

Upon request, the City will provide translated document summaries, documents in alternative formats, or interpretative services at meetings for community members with a disability or limited English proficiency. The City will preemptively provide these services if a significant number of individuals with interpretation or translation needs are reasonably expected to participate. Public notices will indicate if these services are scheduled to be available at a meeting. Otherwise, the City will provide these reasonable accommodations to any individual with a requested notice of forty-eight (48) hours to Planning and Development. All public notices for meetings and hearings related to HUD programs will make note of the availability of these services and the contact information to request them.

Availability to the Public. The following documents, both proposed and as adopted, will be available to the public. A reasonable number of free copies will be provided upon request to Planning and Development. Upon request to the Planning and Development Department, the

documents will be made available in accessible formats (e.g., oral recordings, Braille, electronic, or large print).

- Consolidated Plan
- Annual Action Plan
- Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Report
- Substantial Amendments
- Citizen Participation Plan
- Assessment of Fair Housing/Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Choice (and any revisions)

Full-length draft documents will be made available to the public in the following ways.

- Electronic Formats
 - Online via the City's official website, www.FargoND.gov
 - Via e-mailed PDF
 - Fargo Main Library at 102 3rd St N, Fargo, ND 58102
 - Dr. James Carlson Library at 2801 32nd Ave S, Fargo, ND 58103
 - Northport Library at 2714 Broadway N, Fargo, ND 58102
 - Fargo Housing and Redevelopment Authority at 325 Broadway N, Fargo, ND 58102
- Hard Copy Formats (during the location's normal business hours)
 - Planning and Development at Fargo City Hall, 2nd Floor, 225 4th St N, Fargo, ND 58102

Access to Records. The City will provide citizens, public agencies, and other interested parties with reasonable and timely access to information and records relating to the City's Consolidated Plan, Assessment of Fair Housing/Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Choice, and its use of assistance under HUD programs during the preceding five years. Requests can be made to Planning & Development. Costs for duplication of materials and staff time to produce records will be subject to North Dakota open records laws beginning at North Dakota Century Code §44-04-17.1. A reasonable number of free copies shall be provided.

Limited English Proficiency (LEP)

The City of Fargo has adopted a Language Access Plan, which ensures the City will take reasonable steps to provide language assistance to ensure meaningful access to participation by non- or limited- English-speaking residents in federal programs. The City will provide translated notices, translated summaries of plans and reports, translated application materials, oral interpretation of plans and reports, and oral interpretation at public meetings and hearings upon request to Planning and Development.

The City of Fargo is unaware of non-English language publications in which to publish public notices. However, there are many groups in the area which provide services to individuals with limited English proficiency. Notices of input meetings and public hearings will be sent to organizations which frequently work or come into contact with LEP individuals. This may include, but is not limited to, Fargo Public Schools' Adult Education Center, Cultural Diversity Resources, and the New American Consortium. Many other organizations engaged in this work are already on the Planning & Development Department's community development mailing list.

V. Development of Plans and Reports

The following sections define the steps the City will take to engage residents and stakeholders in developing the Consolidated Plan (ConPlan), the Annual Action Plan (AAP), Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Report (CAPER), and the Assessment of Fair Housing/Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Choice (AI).

Consolidated Plan/Annual Action Plan/Assessment of Fair Housing/Analysis of Impediments

The public participation requirements for the ConPlan, AAP, and Assessment of Fair Housing/Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Choice are the same. During the first year of a ConPlan (e.g., 2025's Annual Action Plan under the 2025-2029 Five-Year Consolidated Plan), both the ConPlan and the AAP will be prepared at the same time under the same public participation process. A new Assessment of Fair Housing/Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Choice will be conducted with each new Five-Year Consolidated Plan.

Step 1: Initial Public Input Hearing/Meeting

The City of Fargo's Community Development Division will convene a public hearing "public input meeting" prior to publishing the Consolidated Plan/Annual Action Plan/Assessment of Fair Housing/Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Choice. This public hearing will obtain the views of citizens on housing and community development needs (including priority non-housing community development needs), the development of proposed activities, and proposed strategies and actions for affirmatively furthering fair housing consistent with the Assessment of Fair Housing/Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Choice (AI). It will also provide an overview of the previous program year's performance by presenting a summary of the previous year's Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Report (CAPER).

As soon as feasible after the start of the public participation process, the City will make the HUD-provided data and any other supplemental information the City plans to incorporate into its Consolidated Plan available to its residents, public agencies, and other interested parties. The City may make the HUD-provided data available to the public by cross-referencing to the data on HUD's website.

Hearing Time and Location. The initial public input hearing/meeting for the development of the ConPlan/AAP will be held at Fargo City Hall at 225 4th Street North, Fargo, ND 58102. The initial

public input hearing/meeting is typically held during the day. The City may conduct a second public input meeting during the evening to reach more potential or actual beneficiaries of CDBG and HOME programs.

Public Notice. Public notice will be given no later than two (2) weeks before the public hearing/meeting. The public notice and materials available at the public hearing/meeting will contain the following information for citizens, public agencies, and other interested parties:

- A description of the funding sources available
- The amount of assistance the City expects to receive, including grant funds and program income
- The range of activities that may be undertaken
- Plans to minimize displacement of persons and to assist any persons displaced, with specific types and levels of assistance the City will make available (or require others to make available) to persons displaced.

NOTE ON DISPLACEMENT: The City will discourage projects that involve the displacement of persons. If displacement does occur, the City will follow *HUD Handbook 1378: Tenant Assistance, Relocation and Real Property Acquisition* and comply with the provisions of the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisitions Policies Act of 1970, as amended, as well as any other relocation regulations imposed by HUD.

- The estimated amount that will benefit persons of low- and moderate-income
- The deadline for submitting proposals

Step 2: Call for Proposals/Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA)

After the initial public input hearing/meeting, the City of Fargo's Community Development Division will generally solicit annual and ongoing proposals from community organizations for programs or projects to receive funding for the program year, although not required. All eligible projects and activities must be a HOME-eligible project or program; and/or meet one of the three national objectives of the CDBG program, which are:

- Benefit to low- and moderate-income persons
- Addressing slums and blight
- Meeting a particular urgent community development need (rarely used nationwide)

Planning & Development staff will make a preliminary determination of eligibility under federal rules and regulations and will review the proposals for completeness. All proposals must be completed in their entirety and accurately describe the activity and/or project for which funds are requested. The final stage of funding consideration will consist of the annual action plan public hearing held at a City Commission meeting.

Step 3: 30-Day Public Comment Period and Public Hearing

Public Comment. Upon staff completion of the ConPlan/AAP draft, it will be published for a public comment period of no less than thirty (30) days unless otherwise prescribed by HUD (e.g., length of public comment period waivers).

Public Notice. Public notice of the 30-day public comment period for the draft ConPlan/AAP/Assessment of Fair Housing/Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Choice will be published the day before the public comment period begins.

Public Hearing. During the public comment period, the City will hold a public hearing to receive comments on the proposed ConPlan/AAP during a regularly scheduled City Commission meeting. Notice of the public hearing will be published no less than two (2) weeks prior to the scheduled hearing. In most cases, the City expects to publish the notice of the public hearing concurrently with the public comment notice.

Step 4: Submission to HUD

At the conclusion of the public comment period, staff will compile a summary of comments or views received, and a summary of any comments or views not accepted and the reasons why and attach it to the final plan. This final document will be presented to the City Commission for approval. Once authorized to do so by the City Commission, staff will submit the final plan to HUD.

Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Report (CAPER)

The CAPER is a program year-end annual report about accomplishments and progress toward ConPlan goals during the program year. The City also reports on the beneficiaries of projects and programs which received HUD funding to demonstrate compliance with civil rights requirements and ensure at least 70% of CDBG funding and all of HOME funding has benefitted low- to moderate-income households. CAPERs are due 90 days after the close of the program year unless granted an extension by HUD.

Step 1: Preparing the Report

Planning & Development Staff will draft the annual report (CAPER). During this time, staff may consult with community organizations and local agencies to solicit updated information about activities undertaken during the program year to further the goals of the ConPlan/AAP.

Step 2: Publishing Draft Report

Public Comment. Once complete, the draft CAPER shall be made publicly available for a public comment period of no less than fifteen (15) days.

Public Notice. Notice of the opening of the public comment period will be published the day before the public comment period begins.

Step 3: Submission to HUD

After the conclusion of the public comment period, Planning & Development staff will compile a summary of comments or views submitted during the public comment period, and a summary of any comments or views not accepted and the reasons why and attach it to the final CAPER. The CAPER will then be submitted to HUD.

VI. Amendments to Plans and Assessments

Amendments to the Consolidated Plan or Annual Action Plan

Changes in community conditions, City staff capacity, staff capacity of organizations receiving HUD funding, or written direction from HUD may require the City to amend a Consolidated Plan or Annual Action Plan. There are three kinds of amendments to a ConPlan or AAP that may occur:

Substantial Amendment

An amendment is considered substantial when:

- Changes in the use of CDBG funds from one eligible activity to another are made
- Changes in funding by at least 10% of the amount allocated to the City's entitlement grant programs for that program year are made
- A deletion of an activity or project described in the ConPlan or AAP occurs
- An addition of an activity or project not described in the ConPlan or AAP occurs
- Major changes in the purpose, scope, location, or beneficiaries of an activity are made
- Carrying out an activity using funds from any program covered by the ConPlan (including program income, reimbursements, repayment, recaptures, or reallocations from HUD), not previously described in the AAP
- Change in allocation priorities
- Change in method of distribution of funds

Public Comment. The proposed substantial amendment shall be made publicly available for a public comment period of no less than thirty (30) days unless otherwise prescribed by HUD.

During the public comment period, the proposed amendment may be electronically distributed to the Community Development Committee. Staff may present a summary in person to the Committee in addition to the electronic distribution.

Public Notice: Notice of the 30-day public comment period will be published the day before the public comment period begins.

Public Hearing: During the public comment period, the City will hold a public hearing to receive comments during a regularly scheduled City Commission meeting. **Only the following proposed amendments require a public hearing; no other amendments will require a public hearing:**

1. Addition or cancellation of an activity
2. Changes in funding are made by at least 10% of the amount allocated to the City's entitlement grant programs for that program year

Notice of the public hearing to receive comments on the proposed amendment(s) will be published no less than two (2) weeks prior to the scheduled hearing. In most cases, the City expects to publish the notice of the public hearing concurrently with the public comment notice.

All substantial amendments will be considered approved at the end of the public comment period and after review and consideration of any public comments received. Staff will compile a summary of comments or views received, and a summary of any comments or views not accepted and the reasons why and attach it to the final substantial amendment. Notification of amendments will be provided to HUD upon each amendment.

Emergency Amendment

An emergency amendment is developed in response to a local emergency and will typically be consistent with HUD's "urgent need" criteria. Notice of proposed emergency changes will be published in *The Forum* at least seven (7) days prior to the City Commission meeting at which the change will be considered. The City Commission, prior to taking action, will consider all comments on the proposed change. The City Commission may make the proposed change, reject the proposed change, or make a modified change. The Planning & Development department will provide an explanation for public review of written comments and other public comments not accepted by the City Commission.

Minor Amendment

Any changes to the Assessment of Fair Housing/Analysis of Impediments, Five-Year Consolidated Plan, or Annual Action Plan not meeting the criteria described in the "Substantial Amendment" or "Emergency Amendment" sections above will be considered a minor amendment or revision. Such changes will not be published or subject to a public participation process nor will they require approval by the City Commission. Generally, minor amendments are technical, clerical, or grammatical in nature, with the exception of budget changes under the amount that falls under the definition of a substantial amendment.

Amendments to the Citizen Participation Plan

A substantial amendment to the Citizen Participation Plan (CPP) is defined as:

- A change in the definition of a Substantial Amendment for the Consolidated Plan or AAP; or
- A change in the required public notification periods or public hearings; or
- A change to the City's policies or procedures regarding citizen participation, to such an extent it can no longer reasonably be construed as meeting the original intent

A substantial amendment to the CPP requires an amendment process that includes:

Public Comment: The amended version of the CPP shall be made publicly available for a public comment period of no less than thirty (30) days unless otherwise prescribed by HUD.

Public Notice: Notice of the 30-day public comment period will be published the day before the public comment period begins.

All substantial amendments will be considered approved at the end of the public comment period and after review and consideration of any public comments received. Staff will compile a summary of comments or views received, and a summary of any comments or view not accepted and the reasons why and attach it to the final substantial amendment. Notification of amendments will be provided to HUD upon each amendment.

Any other changes to the CPP, such as updates to fix typographical errors, website links, or contact information will not be considered a substantial amendment and will not be published for public comment or require commission approval.

VII. Technical Assistance

Planning & Development staff will provide technical assistance to groups representative of persons of low- and moderate-income that request such assistance in commenting on the Assessment of Fair Housing/Analysis of Impediments and in developing proposals for funding assistance under funding programs described in the Five-Year Consolidated Plan and Annual Action Plan. The City will determine the level and type of assistance provided to a group on a case-by-case basis. Technical assistance provided by the City will not include the provision of funds to the group or grant writing.

VIII. Complaints

Individuals or agencies with complaints related to the Consolidated Plan, Action Plan, Assessment of Fair Housing/Analysis of Impediments, amendments or revisions, or the performance report may submit a written complaint to the Planning & Development Department:

City of Fargo
Planning & Development Department
225 4th Street N
Fargo, ND 58102

E-mail: Planning@FargoND.gov

Web: <http://fargond.gov/city-government/departments/planning-development/contact-us>

Response: Anyone who submits a written complaint to the Planning & Development Department will receive a written response within fifteen (15) working days where practicable. If a substantive written response is not practicable within that time frame, a written acknowledgement will be mailed within fifteen working days and include an estimate for when a substantive written response can be expected.

X. COVID-19, Expedited Procedures, and Virtual Hearings

This section of the Citizen Participation Plan explains how the City will communicate and take comment from the public under expedited procedures in the event of a public health emergency or disaster and upon direction from HUD. These expedited procedures can apply to drafting, proposing, or amending the ConPlan, AAP, or the CPP.

Public Comment. The proposed draft plan or amendment shall be made publicly available for a public comment period of no less than five (5) days unless otherwise determined by HUD (e.g., waiver, regulation, writing, etc.).

Public Notice. Notice of the opening of the public comment period will be published the day before the public comment period begins.

Public Hearing. An in-person public hearing is not required if national and/or local health authorities recommend social distancing and limited public gatherings for public health reasons and a virtual hearing provides reasonable notification and access for citizens in accordance with the grantee's certifications, timely responses from local officials to all citizen questions and issues, and public access to all questions and responses.

In this situation, the City may hold a virtual public hearing on the proposed draft or amendment. The public notice advertising the 5-day public comment period, unless otherwise determined by HUD, shall also notify the public of the date of the virtual public hearing, information on how to view the virtual hearing, and information on how to participate in the virtual hearing. Prior to the virtual public hearing, staff will compile a summary of comments or views received, and a summary of any comments or views not accepted and the reasons why and present those at the virtual public hearing and attach them to the draft plan. Once authorized by City Commission, staff will submit the plan to HUD.