

**CITIZEN PARTICIPATION PLAN
OF THE
CITY OF TUSCALOOSA
DISASTER RECOVERY
Amended December 17, 2013**

- I. Statement of Purpose: This Citizen Participation Plan of the City of Tuscaloosa Disaster Recovery seeks to provide for and encourage the participation of citizens in the development of the Disaster Recovery Action Plan, any substantial amendments to the Action Plan, and any other associated performance reports. The Plan also provides for the participation of citizens in the development of local applications for the Community Development Block Grant Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR) and throughout the implementation of funded CDBG-DR projects. The City of Tuscaloosa aims to encourage participation by low and moderate income persons, residents of low and moderate income areas as determined by the State, the homeless, persons with disabilities, persons living with AIDS, and representative organizations of these groups. This Citizen Participation Plan has been designed to meet the requirements of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974, as amended.

- II. Effective Date: This Citizen Participation Plan will become effective????

- III. Disaster Recovery Action Plan: During the development of the Action Plan, the City of Tuscaloosa shall:
 - A. Make available to citizens, public agencies, and other interested parties information that includes the amount of assistance that the City of Tuscaloosa expects to receive from the Community Development Block Grant Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR) program including the grant and program income and the range of activities that may be undertaken using these funds, including the estimated amount that will benefit persons of low and moderate income; and the plans to minimize displacement of persons and to assist any persons displaced. This information will be made available before the adoption of the Action Plan.
 - B. Provide technical assistance to groups representative of persons of low-and moderate-income that request assistance in developing proposals. The level and type of assistance to be provided will be at the discretion of the applicant.

- C. Publish the proposed Action Plan in a manner that affords citizens, units of general local governments, public agencies, and other interested parties a reasonable opportunity to examine its contents and to submit comments on both the Action Plan and the performance of the applicant. This information will be summarized and published in one or more newspapers of general circulation. The summary will include a description of the contents and purposes of the proposed Action Plan and a list of the locations where copies of the entire proposed Action Plan may be observed.

- D. Make available free of charge to interested citizens and groups copies of the proposed and final Action Plan as well as any amended versions of the Action Plan. Copies will be available from various offices at the City of Tuscaloosa. Copies of the proposed and final plan will also be available for review at a public library branch system listed in the published summary and on the City of Tuscaloosa’s recovery webpage.

- E. Hold at least two public hearings on housing and community development needs before the Action Plan is published for comment.
 - 1) The City of Tuscaloosa shall give ample advance notice of the hearing to citizens by: publishing notice in a newspaper of general circulation which includes information on the purpose, time, and location of the hearing; posting on the City of Tuscaloosa’s recovery webpage; informing the council members of each district; posting notice of the hearing at the main library branch; and providing other notice as determined by the City of Tuscaloosa.

 - 2) The City of Tuscaloosa shall hold the hearings at a time and location suitable to potential and actual beneficiaries and with accommodations for persons with disabilities. The City of Tuscaloosa shall hold these hearings at a location around the City to provide opportune access to residents living in the recovery and/or affected area. The City of Tuscaloosa shall select a time and date for holding the hearing at each location which will attempt to maximize the participation of interested citizens. Participation by low-and moderate-income persons who reside

in slum or blighted areas or other areas which CDBG-DR funds are proposed to be used are particularly encouraged.

3) In the case where a significant number of non-English speaking residents can be reasonably expected to participate, the City of Tuscaloosa will provide a qualified interpreter at the public hearing to accommodate the needs of these residents.

F. The City of Tuscaloosa will receive comments on the proposed Action Plan from citizens and units of general local government for a period of not less than seven (7) days.

G. Consider any comments or views of citizens and local officials received in writing or orally at the public hearings when preparing the final Action Plan. A summary of these comments or views and a summary of any comments or views not accepted and reasons therefore shall be attached to the final Action Plan.

IV. Substantial Amendments to the Action Plan: When considering substantial amendments to the Action Plan, the City of Tuscaloosa shall:

A. Amend the Action Plan if any one of the following actions are proposed:

1. A change in the City's allocation priorities or changes in the method of distribution of funds covered by the Action Plan.
2. Implementation of an activity using funds from any program covered by the Action Plan (including program income) not previously described.
3. A change in the purpose, scope, location, or beneficiaries of a program funded by the Community Development Block Grant Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR).
4. A change of more than five percent (5%) in the funding allocation between the activity categories described.

5. The implementation of an additional HUD-authorized “wavier” of any major programmatic rules or regulations; and
6. Any action that HUD deems to be a significant amendment that needs public input prior to enacting.

Any one of the proceedings listed in Section IV (A) (1-6) shall constitute a “substantial amendment” to the Action Plan.

- B. Provide citizens and local officials with reasonable notice and an opportunity to comment on substantial amendments to the Action Plan. Reasonable notice must include a summary of the proposed change and its potential effect on households of low and moderate income. The summary must be published in newspaper of general circulation across the city and include an opportunity for written comment by interested citizens and groups for a period of not less than seven (7) days before the amendment is implemented. The published summary must indicate that written comments must be submitted by a specified date to the City of Tuscaloosa.
 - C. Consider any comments or views of citizens and local officials received in writing or orally at public hearings, if held, in preparing the substantial amendment of the Action Plan. The City of Tuscaloosa shall attach to the substantial amendment to the Action Plan a summary of comments or views accepted and a summary of comments of comments or views not accepted and the reasons therefore.
- V. Availability of the Action Plan and Related Documents to the Public: The City of Tuscaloosa shall make available to the public free of charge and upon request the final Action Plan as adopted and any substantial amendments, and any associated reports. Copies of the final Action Plan will also be available for review at the local public library and the City of Tuscaloosa’s recovery webpage. Upon request, the City of Tuscaloosa will also make available the final Action Plan as adopted, any substantial amendments, and any associated reports in a form accessible to persons with disabilities.
- VI. Access to Records Associated with the Action Plan: The City of Tuscaloosa will provide reasonable and timely access to information relating to the Action Plan and

the City's use of assistance under the Community Development Block Grant Disaster Recovery program during the preceding years.

VII. Complaints Associated with the Action Plan and Related Documents: The City of Tuscaloosa will provide a timely, substantive written response within fifteen (15) working days to every citizen complaint related to the Action Plan, substantive amendments and associated reports.

VIII. Synopsis: The City of Tuscaloosa has followed four basic criteria in the development of the Citizen Participation Program:

1. It is the right of the people affected by the public program to have access to and influence on the process by which decisions about their living are made.
2. The best intentioned officials and technicians are often, by their training, experiences, and life styles, unfamiliar with or intensive to the problems and aspirations of residents. Therefore, resident ideas and priorities can result in more relevant, sensitive and effective plans and programs.
3. The process of participation makes it possible for those citizens formerly outside the system to learn how it functions and how to make it function in their interests.
4. Local government must develop new relationships with responsiveness to people throughout the community if it is to effectively meet the community's needs.

IX. Public Review of Citizen Participation Plan: The City of Tuscaloosa has undertaken steps which ensure that community involvement is a vital part of local government. The City of Tuscaloosa will make the Citizen Participation Plan public and will provide citizens and local officials a reasonable opportunity to comment for a period of not less than seven (7) days on the original Citizen Participation Plan and on any substantial amendments to the Citizen Participation Plan.