

2 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

THE 2005 CONSOLIDATED PLAN, HAS BEEN PREPARED BY THE FIVE COUNTY ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNMENTS TO DOCUMENT THE HOUSING, COMMUNITY, AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT NEEDS OF SOUTHWESTERN UTAH. THIS CHAPTER DESCRIBES PUBLIC PARTICIPATION IN DEVELOPMENT OF THE PLAN, INCLUDING A PROGRAM DESCRIPTION, A DESCRIPTION OF INVOLVED ORGANIZATIONS, OUTREACH EFFORTS PURSUED, AND A SUMMARY OF SUGGESTIONS MADE DURING A 30-DAY COMMENT PERIOD.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Public participation is important in any comprehensive planning process and is essential in the development of the Five County Association of Governments Consolidated Plan. Input is solicited not only on the plan but also in the development of regional priorities and goals, community development, economic development, housing, rating and ranking process and other components of the plan.

ORGANIZATIONS AND GROUPS

The following organizations and groups participated in the development of the 2005 Five County Consolidated Plan:

Southwest Utah Continuum of Care Committee: The Continuum of Care is a voluntary organization that includes many jurisdictions in the region and non-profit organizations that represent and provide services to homeless individuals and others with special needs. The committee which includes WARC, Red Rock Center for Independence, area housing authorities, Care and Shares throughout the region, the Dove Center, Canyon Creek Crisis Center, etc.... are active members of the Continuum. These organizations assisted in providing input and coordination of regional planning efforts by providing data, feedback, information and technical support on issues effecting the Southwest regions homeless population.

Other Groups: Additional non-profit organizations providing services to low-income clients were utilized in development of the plan. Those include: Area Agency on Aging Services who provided information on the needs and programs of the Senior populations and Color Country Community Housing who gave technical support and data on developing affordable housing.

Steering Committee: The Steering Committee has the responsibility for setting policy and directing the efforts of the Association. The Steering Committee consists of one commissioner from each of the five county commissions, a mayor representing the incorporated communities in each county, and a representative from each of the five school districts within the region. In addition, representatives from Southern Utah University and Dixie State College, as well as State Legislators serve as ex-officio members. The Steering Committee meets monthly. The meetings are held at various locations in each county on a rotating basis. This committee is responsible to formally approve and adopt the Consolidated Plan.

OUTREACH EFFORTS

Dissemination of Information. The Association is committed to make the public aware of our regional efforts, and also provides various ways to gather feedback from citizens and city staff/government. To provide information and receive comments, the

following are some of the methods utilized.

Jurisdictions. For the community sections of the Plan, information packets for needs assessments, capital investment lists, and community profile facilities lists were mailed to mayors, town clerks, special service districts, county clerks, commissioners, school districts, and economic development professionals. These packets included the previous year's information contained in the Community Development section, which the jurisdictions were asked to update. In addition, each jurisdiction was directly contacted by Association staff to assist in completing the updated information. Community and Economic Development staff traveled throughout the region to verify data provided by jurisdictions for their housing surveys.

Public Input. A public hearing for the Consolidated Plan was held during a 30-day comment period. Community interaction is provided through the Association website. The Consolidated Plan is posted on the web, along with other documents, and the public is invited to comment on via e-mail, by phone or regular mail.

The Association newsletter has also been utilized to highlight selected elements of the Plan. For example, an article was published on the housing survey, with contact information to provide input or ask questions. The newsletter is published quarterly and distributed to a large mailing list including jurisdictions, agencies, and special interest groups throughout the five county region. The newsletter highlights activities of the Association, including activities associated with the Consolidate Plan and CDBG Program and is also posted on the Association website.

The Human Services division of the Association of Governments conducts Public Forums during the spring in each of the five counties to gather input from agencies, jurisdictions, and clients. In addition, the division completed a Human Services Needs Assessment, surveying over 1,188 individuals from throughout the five county region. Information from forums and needs assessment are used to prioritize area needs and human resource development.

30-Day Comment Period. A draft of the plan was submitted to the Utah Division of Housing and Community Development on November 1, 2004 for review. A 30-day comment period followed during which written and oral comments were solicited.

Mailing List. The Association maintains a mailing list of more than 300 local agencies and individuals that may have an interest in the Consolidated Plan. This list is utilized to circulate the notice for the Open House, Public Hearing, and 30-day comment period.

Public Open House. A public open house was held in Cedar City to solicit public input. In addition, a public hearing was held in conjunction with the Steering Committee meeting during the 30-day comment period. The event was noticed in the

newspaper and AOG newsletters were mailed to jurisdictions, organizations and individuals throughout the region. This forum was provided to encourage review and comments on the Plan.

Critique and Final Approval by Steering Committee. The Steering Committee reviews specific elements of the plan, such as the priorities and goals, for recommended action. In addition, they provide input into the development process of the plan, review the final plan document and adopt the final plan. Representatives of the Steering Committee include mayors, commissioners, and school district representatives who provide a balanced regional perspective.

PUBLIC COMMENT INFORMATION & RESULTS

The 2005-06 Consolidated Plan public hearing was held in conjunction with the Five County Association of Government Steering Committee meeting on November 17, 2004 at the Five County AOG in St. George, Utah. An Open House was held in the Five County AOG Cedar City Office on November 4, 2004. The Open House was advertised in The Spectrum as well as through notification in the Five County AOG newsletter. The Public Hearing notice was published in The Spectrum as well as notification provided in the AOG newsletter. Notice of the Public Hearing was also provided in the Steering Committee packets which are disseminated to more than 100 agencies, jurisdictions, and citizens. Both the Open House and Public Hearing were also noticed on the Five County website ([http:// www.fcaog.state.ut.us](http://www.fcaog.state.ut.us)). Publication notices for these announcements are included as part of the Appendices, as well as minutes covering input received.

30-DAY COMMENT PERIOD INFORMATION & RESULTS

A public hearing was held on November 17, 2004 at the Five County Association of Governments office in conjunction with the regular meeting of the Steering Committee. The hearing was noticed by publication in The Spectrum. Notification was also posted on the Five County website and in the Five County AOG newsletter. Publication notices for these announcements are included as part of the Appendices, as well as minutes and information covering input received.

The plan was also available for public review during the 30-day comment period at the Five County Association of Governments offices: 1070 West 1600 South, St. George, UT and 88 East Fiddlers Canyon Drive, Cedar City, Utah.