

Public Comments for Orange County Draft CDBG-DR Action Plan

The public comment period for the draft Community Development Block Grant—Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR) action plan in Orange County lasted from December 11, 2023, to January 11, 2024. Throughout this period, a total of eleven (11) comments were received.

Comments could be submitted using the following formats:

- Emailing Disaster.Recovery@ocfl.net
- Attending the public hearing and providing oral and/or written comments
- Mailing a letter to the Orange County Housing and Community Development Division at
ATTENTION: CDBG-DR Program
 525 E. South Street, Orlando, FL 32801

The below table provides a summary of the comments received and the County’s response.

CDBG-DR Topic	Date of Comment	Comment and/or Question Received	County Response																		
Housing	12/12/2023	<p>Good morning, is there a breakout of the Housing Program funds? I see that there is \$108,746,160 allocated for Housing, but did not see how much was allocated for Rehab and Reconstruction, Rental Assistance, etc. Thank you.</p> <p>Received via email from Robert Bell at BHL Federal Government Contracting -- rbell@bhlffederal.com</p>	<p>Good morning, thank you for your inquiry in regard to the draft CDBG-DR Action Plan. Since being published for a public comment period on December 11, 2023, the draft Action Plan was updated to include the following details in regard to the housing programs to be funded with CDBG-DR dollars.</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="1163 992 2053 1222"> <thead> <tr> <th>Housing Programs</th> <th>Budgeted Amount</th> <th>% of Total Allocation</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Single-Family Homeowner Housing Rehabilitation and Reconstruction</td> <td>\$ 35,000,000</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Rental Housing Rehabilitation</td> <td>\$ 13,000,000</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Rental Assistance (Temporary)</td> <td>\$ 150,000</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>New Affordable Housing Construction</td> <td>\$ 60,596,160</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Total Housing Programs Budget</td> <td>\$108,746,160</td> <td>49.5%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Table 61. Budget for Housing Programs</i></p> <p>This program breakdown, as well as additional details on the project selection process and program implementation, will be provided during the Board of County Commissioners’ public hearing tomorrow, January 9th, 2024. The final CDBG-DR Action Plan will be posted on the program website (www.ocfl.net/CDBG-DR) once it is approved by HUD. The BCC meeting will start at 1:30 pm (link to the agenda here: https://apps.ocfl.net/eAgenda/archive/Agenda_01-09-24/Agenda_01-09-24)</p>	Housing Programs	Budgeted Amount	% of Total Allocation	Single-Family Homeowner Housing Rehabilitation and Reconstruction	\$ 35,000,000		Rental Housing Rehabilitation	\$ 13,000,000		Rental Assistance (Temporary)	\$ 150,000		New Affordable Housing Construction	\$ 60,596,160		Total Housing Programs Budget	\$108,746,160	49.5%
Housing Programs	Budgeted Amount	% of Total Allocation																			
Single-Family Homeowner Housing Rehabilitation and Reconstruction	\$ 35,000,000																				
Rental Housing Rehabilitation	\$ 13,000,000																				
Rental Assistance (Temporary)	\$ 150,000																				
New Affordable Housing Construction	\$ 60,596,160																				
Total Housing Programs Budget	\$108,746,160	49.5%																			

			<p>24.pdf). The CDBG-DR Action Plan public hearing is the last item on the Board’s agenda, so we anticipate it to be heard after 4 pm. Should you choose to provide comments in person, you will be allotted 3 minutes to do so (time can be yielded). Residents must be present to provide public comments/yield their time. The BCC meeting can also be viewed online in real time on Orange TV https://www.ocfl.net/OpenGovernment/OrangeTVVisionTV/OrangeTVLive.aspx. Thank you for your interest in the CDBG-DR program and have a great day! (Responded on 01/08/2024 at 11:10AM)</p>
<p>General</p>	<p>12/14/2023</p>	<p>To whom this may concern, we are writing to get more details on the CDBG Program, we have a 501C3 Non-Profit service in Orlando, FL and we would like to see how we can continue this work.</p> <p>Received via email from Lonzell McKnight at McKnight Ministries Inc.-- mcknightministriesinc@gmail.com</p>	<p>Good morning, thank you for your interest in the CDBG-DR program.</p> <p>We are currently in the process of finalizing the CDBG-DR Action Plan that outlines the proposed use of funds. The plan will be presented to the Board of County Commissioners (BCC) tomorrow, January 9th, 2024. Once approved by the Board, the plan will be submitted to our funding agency, HUD, for review. We anticipate that implementation of programs (to be funded with CDBG-DR dollars) will begin in late March-April of 2024. The staff’s presentation to the Board tomorrow will provide additional details on the programs to be funded, as well as eligible recipients of funds and the selection process for specific activities. The final CDBG-DR Action Plan will be posted on the program website (www.ocfl.net/CDBG-DR) once it is approved by HUD.</p> <p>The BCC meeting will start tomorrow (1/9/24) at 1:30 pm. The CDBG-DR Action Plan public hearing is the last item on the Board’s agenda, so we anticipate it to be heard after 4 pm. Should you choose to provide comments in person, you will be allotted 3 minutes to do so (time can be yielded). Residents must be present to provide public comments/yield their time. The BCC meeting can also be viewed online in real time on Orange TV: https://www.ocfl.net/OpenGovernment/OrangeTVVisionTV/OrangeTVLive.aspx. Thank you again for your interest in the CDBG-DR program and have a great day! (Responded on 01/08/2024 at 11:24AM)</p>

<p>Transportation</p>	<p>12/27/2023</p>	<p>Hello, hope you had a great Christmas holiday and a happy new year. Just to update that we met with Commissioner Maribel Gomez Cordero and her assistant Phillip De Toledo last week, myself with Pastor Nick Acevedo and we discussed Church's flooding mitigation new stormwater plan for the Meadow Woods TOD PPPT project. Jim Mikes will be communicating with County on the steps to implement it. Because the Meadow Woods auto oriented PD is part of the Sunshine Corridor TCAR study (and eventual third NEPA study on Meadow Woods) we will be sharing our flooding concerns and suggestions with FDOT (herein copied).</p> <p>When Ian struck Orange and Osceola counties it impacted the Church and the community to the extent of increase in auto traffic along Landstar Blvd as Meadow Woods for almost two weeks of service became the "terminus station with bus bridge service" to the Osceola County stations. While the Osceola County stations were not operational, Meadow Woods was fully operational.</p> <p>The Boggy Creek basin-creek outflow structure system begins next to the Sand Lake SunRail Station, the waters collected flows downstream intersecting Taft Vineland Rd (part of TCAR study area) and flows to the closed golf course and its stormwater system impacting neighborhoods that are part of the original Meadow Woods DRI Map H on the Weatherbee Roadside and Landstar Blvd-Rhode Island Woods Circle as well.</p> <p>Whatever happens with the floodwaters in and around Taft Vineland Rd and the as proposed by Universal Studios central Transfer Station (at Strates Circus property) that downstream dirty waters runoff directly impacts Meadow</p>	<p>Good morning, thank you for your comments on the draft CDBG-DR Action Plan.</p> <p>Please note that approximately 40% of the total allocation of CDBG-DR funds (\$219,712,000 allocated to Orange County for long-term disaster recovery programs and activities) is budgeted for infrastructure/public facilities/mitigation programs and activities, to include flood and drainage, stormwater management, and capacity improvement projects and activities. Such projects are to be implemented by the County Departments and Divisions, local jurisdictions, and non-profit entities. Projects will be selected on a competitive basis, based on the project location, immediate needs, implementation readiness, potential leverage of funds, and other criteria that are to be developed over the next few months, as the program implementation begins.</p> <p>The Board of County Commissioners (BCC) will hold a public hearing on the CDBG-DR Action Plan tomorrow, January 9th, 2024. The BCC meeting will start at 1:30 pm (link to the agenda here: https://apps.ocfl.net/eAgenda/archive/Agenda_01-09-24/Agenda_01-09-24.pdf). The CDBG-DR Action Plan public hearing is the last item on the Board's agenda, so we anticipate it to be heard after 4 pm. Should you choose to provide comments in person, you will be allotted 3 minutes to do so (time can be yielded). Residents must be present to provide public comments/yield their time. The BCC meeting can also be viewed online in real time on Orange TV: https://www.ocfl.net/OpenGovernment/OrangeTVVisionTV/OrangeTVLive.aspx.</p> <p>Please note that a summary of your comments will be included with the final submission of the CDBG-DR Action Plan to HUD (in the attachment). Thank you again for your detailed comments and have a great day! <i>(Responded on 01/08/2024 at 11:03AM)</i></p>
------------------------------	-------------------	---	--

		<p>Woods. Just like the expansion of S. Orange Avenue from a two-lane road to a six one, the closed golf course receives a lot of stormwaters from upstream parcel owners where it seems to be that they like to see those dirty waters flow out of their properties and to impact someone and somewhere else.</p> <p>When Landstar Corporation and County envisioned "Meadow Woods" in the early 1980s, they never thought that now in 2024, it would be a community in need of redevelopment as caused by the passing of time, change in demographics and the placement of a heavy rail diesel trains commuter train station where next year the TCAR study is probably going to show that indeed we are the closest fully operational transfer station option to OIA's intermodal to South Florida private passenger train service via Brightline.</p> <p>“Why new SunRail South Orlando stop should mimic New York’s Jamacia Station” - https://www.bizjournals.com/orlando/blog/2015/06/why-new-sunrail-south-orlando-stop-should-mimic.html?s=print</p> <p>“With federal aid, Orange County looks to prevent future storm flooding” - https://www.orlandosentinel.com/2023/12/27/with-federal-aid-orange-county-looks-to-prevent-future-storm-flooding/</p> <p>Received via email from Jose Hoyos at Medow Woods TOD -- communityconsulting@msn.com</p>	
<p>General</p>	<p>12/28/2023</p>	<p>Good morning, we are interested in receiving more information about the Orange Counties Plan of Action for the HUD monies being distributed. When and how will</p>	<p>Good morning, thank you for your interest in the CDBG-DR program. We are currently in the process of finalizing the CDBG-DR Action Plan that outlines the proposed use of funds. The plan will be presented to the Board of County Commissioners (BCC) tomorrow, January 9th, 2024.</p>

	<p>Orange County publish opportunities to women owned small business owners?</p> <p>Received via email from Juliette Finzi at GB Unlimited LLC -- juliette@gbunlimitedllc.com</p>	<p>Once approved by the Board, the plan will be submitted to our funding agency, HUD, for review. We anticipate that implementation of programs (to be funded with CDBG-DR dollars) will begin in late March-April of 2024. The staff's presentation to the Board tomorrow will provide additional details on the programs to be funded, as well as eligible recipients of funds and the selection process for specific activities. The final CDBG-DR Action Plan will be posted on the program website (www.ocfl.net/CDBG-DR) once it is approved by HUD.</p> <p>The CDBG-DR program guidelines require a summary of procurement documents, as well as all of the information pertaining to the program implementation (and funding opportunities) to be posted on the program website: www.ocfl.net/CDBG-DR. Additionally, the County's procurement guidelines include requirements and specifics for participation for minority/small/women-owned businesses. For federally funded procurements, the County is required to take necessary affirmative steps to assure that minority business, women business enterprises, and labor surplus area firms are used when possible.</p> <p>In regard to the public hearing on the CDBG-DR Action plan, the BCC meeting will start tomorrow (1/9/24) at 1:30 pm. The CDBG-DR Action Plan public hearing is the last item on the Board's agenda, so we anticipate it to be heard after 4 pm. Should you choose to provide comments in person, you will be allotted 3 minutes to do so (time can be yielded). Residents must be present to provide public comments/yield their time. The BCC meeting can also be viewed online in real time on Orange TV: https://www.ocfl.net/OpenGovernment/OrangeTVVisionTV/OrangeTVLive.aspx. Thank you again for your interest in the CDBG-DR program and have a great day! (Responded on 01/08/2024 at 11:56AM)</p>
--	--	---

<p>General</p>	<p>01/04/2024</p>	<p>County Staff, I am writing to address some concerns regarding the ongoing public comment period for the Community Development Block Grant Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR) Action Plan in Orange County.</p> <p>Firstly, I commend the effort in initiating the public comment period, which is crucial for community engagement. However, I respectfully request an extension of at least an additional week for community organizations to provide comprehensive comments on the extensive 150-page document. The current 30-day period coinciding with the holiday season has posed challenges for many, limiting the ability to thoroughly review and respond to the proposed plan.</p> <p>Furthermore, I seek clarification on the specifics of the public hearing scheduled for Tuesday, January 9, 2024. Could you please provide details on the starting time for the comment period on January 9th, as well as the allotted time for each speaker during the hearing?</p> <p>In my review of the CDBG-DR Plan, I noted an important discrepancy on page 127 related to the implementation of resilient policies and sustainable land development regulations. While the document highlights initiatives tied to Vision 2050 and updates to the land development code (Orange Code), the current fourth revision of the Orange Code appears to lack provisions aligning with the outlined resiliency and sustainability policies in Vision 2050. While acknowledging that the Orange Code is still in progress, it is crucial to ensure that it adequately incorporates the resiliency-related policies from Vision 2050. Failing to include these provisions may hinder the effective implementation of critical resiliency measures in our community. I understand that ongoing studies are required to focus these funds on areas of greatest need, and I encourage their prompt completion.</p>	<p>Good morning, thank you for your comments related to the draft CDBG-DR Action Plan. In regard to the 30-day public comment period – please feel free to submit any additional comments you might have until the end of this week 01/12/2024. To the best of our ability, we will try to address the comments received in the final CDBG-DR Action Plan that is due to be submitted to HUD by January 18, 2024. The Board of County Commissioner’s meeting will start tomorrow at 1:30 pm (link to the agenda here: https://apps.ocfl.net/eAgenda/archive/Agenda_01-09-24/Agenda_01-09-24.pdf).</p> <p>The CDBG-DR Action Plan public hearing is the last item on the Board’s agenda, so we anticipate it to be heard after 4 pm. Each speaker will get 3 minutes to provide comments (time can be yielded). Residents must be present to provide public comments/yield their time.</p> <p>In regard to comments on resiliency and sustainability policies being reviewed/updated/implemented by Orange County, please note that the draft CDBG-DR Action Plan reflects initiatives implemented to date, and it can further be amended over the CDBG-DR program implementation period (of 6 years) to reflect new data, research, and policy changes. As such, the staff will continue monitoring other on-going initiatives (Vision 2050, Orange Code updates, other studies being done by the County and regional studies related to climate change, sustainability, and resiliency) to ensure alignment with the CDBG-DR programs, projects, and activities as they are being implemented. It should be noted that one of the goals of the CDBG-DR Action Plan is to increase the County’s resiliency to similar types of events (such as Hurricane Ian) in the future through mitigation and other programs being funded with CDBG-DR dollars. Thank you and have a great day! <i>(Responded on 01/08/2024 at 10:45AM)</i></p>
-----------------------	-------------------	---	--

		<p>Additionally, the reference to heat-related issues without corresponding emergency planning raises concerns that should be addressed promptly.</p> <p>I appreciate your attention to these matters and look forward to your timely response. Our collective efforts in refining these plans will undoubtedly contribute to the long-term well-being and resilience of our community.</p> <p>Thank you for your dedication to this important endeavor.</p> <p>Received via email from Laura Betts at The Cleo Institute -- lbetts@cleoinstitute.org</p>	
<p>General</p>	<p>01/09/2024</p>	<p>Hello! If you have a mailing list for press releases regarding the block grant, we would like to be added: cfl@mutualaid.community</p> <p>We worked with a number of families after Hurricane Ian who are still not able to live in their homes, and we would like to keep them informed about this grant.</p> <p>Received via email from Rachel Kinbar at Central Florida Mutual Aid -- cfl@mutualaid.community</p>	<p>Good afternoon, thank you for your interest in the CDBG-DR Program. As of now, we do not maintain an email list for press releases. All of the information about the program, to include news and announcements, it uploaded on the program website: www.ocfl.net/CDBG-DR.</p> <p>Thank you again and have a great day! <i>(Responded on 01/17/2024 at 2:20PM)</i></p>

<p>General</p>	<p>01/10/2024</p>	<p>Dear Gentlepersons: We appreciate the opportunity to provide comments on Orange County's CDBG-DR Action Plan. The Plan reflects an extensive amount of research and outreach. We appreciate the priority indicated for supportive housing and housing/services for those at risk of homelessness.</p> <p>Our main comment relates to Action Plan page 123 - Ref: "CDBG-DR funds can be used to assist eligible beneficiaries in the purchase of flood insurance to assist property owners who receive CDBG-DR assistance with rehabilitation or reconstruction of their property, subject to cost reasonableness."</p> <p>As noted in the December presentation to County Commissioners, issues with continued flooding and insurance were the two most cited recovery needs. We are requesting attention to potential eligible use of DR funds for property insurance coverage in addition to flood insurance. Our experience outlined below can hopefully clarify this need:</p> <p>Payment of premiums for property insurance on our 544 permanent supportive housing units is required in order to conduct operations, including DR eligible property rehab/construction activities. Following Hurricane Ian, (1) our property insurance covered 0% of \$175,000 in damages and we used our funds (\$175,000) to complete repairs to 83 units so that residents could return from a shelter to their apartments; and (2) subsequent to Hurricane Ian, our annual property insurance premiums increased 2.25 times from \$58,929 to \$133,842. We applied for a FEMA grant (\$17,000 approved) and an SBA loan which is still (going through 8 case managers and counting) being processed 18 months after Hurricane Ian.</p> <p>Our residents have incomes at 30-50% of AMI. We have modest capital reserves for unanticipated occurrences so had to use operating reserves. The total of the above-mentioned expenses (\$250,000) came close to wiping out</p>	<p>Good afternoon, thank you for providing comments on the draft CDBG-DR Action Plan. Please note that a summary of your comments will be included with the final submission of the CDBG-DR Action Plan to HUD (in the attachment).</p> <p>We acknowledge your comments in regards to the rising insurance premiums costs and the need to address this as a systematic financial issue affecting providers of affordable housing, to include providers of supportive housing. The challenges related to rising insurance costs were also noted during the community engagement and outreach efforts conducted by the Housing and Community Development Division as part of the CDBG-DR planning process and documented in meeting summaries (can be accessed here: https://www.ocfl.net/NeighborsHousing/OCDisasterRecovery/CommunityEngagement.aspx). While CDBG-DR funds might not be used to provide insurance assistance/reimbursements beyond the level outlined in the Federal Register Notice (“... CDBG–DR funds may be used to assist beneficiaries in the purchase of flood insurance to comply with this requirement, subject to the requirements of cost reasonableness and other federal cost principles”), the County is evaluating other possibilities of assistance to ensure the continuous affordability of the available housing stock, both – homeowner occupied units and rental units.”</p> <p>Thank you again for your detailed comments and have a great day! <i>(Responded on 01/17/2024 at 12:55PM)</i></p>
-----------------------	-------------------	--	---

the operating reserve funds we maintain for operating cash flow, particularly program and project expenses we have to incur before they are re-imbursed by City and County agencies for programs and services we provide under contract. This reimbursement can take up to 6 months from the County. Normally, our operating reserves bridge the reimbursement cycle for local government payment of invoices. This period increased from 60 to 90 days for the County in 2022 to our situation in 2023, when the payment period has expanded to 180 days for the County. Our operating cash flow reserve was barely able to accommodate this extended reimbursement cycle -in fact, we had to obtain a bank line of credit to cover the gap.

The significant expenditure then needed for Hurricane Ian flooding repairs, combined with post-Ian property insurance premiums doubling plus, decimated our operating reserve cushion. While we scraped together the current year premium payment, this amount is not feasible on an ongoing basis. Reimbursement of the \$158,000 advanced for apartment repairs after Ian - albeit at least 2 years after the expenditure -would be welcome and appears to be DR -eligible. [HUD: "As such, the reimbursement provision allows grantees to make funds available for necessary recovery assistance for private owners who used their own limited resources for short-term recovery-related costs after a disaster with no assurance of receiving CDBG-DR assistance. The terms of this provision are designed to ensure that short-term outlays do not impede long-term recovery. However, the terms are time-limited to ensure that CDBG-DR funds are expended only for necessary expenses of recovery.]

Without reference to insurance costs other than Flood Insurance noted in the County's Draft Plan, the more than doubled property insurance premium impedes our long-term recovery.

Lument Study Highlights Challenges and Strategies for Multifamily Investors: *Concerns remain over borrowing and insurance costs. To gauge industry sentiment, Lument*

partnered with market research firm Beresford Research to complete 300 surveys with executives working for conventional multifamily and affordable housing developers and investors in the third quarter of 2023.

Almost all of the (300) survey respondents, 98%, reported that insurance costs are an issue for their companies. Because of the skyrocketing costs, 60% said they have put development of new properties on hold, and 50% said they have withdrawn or curtailed investments in markets that are prone to natural disasters; and

In terms of strategies to mitigate or offset sharply the skyrocketing insurance costs, 39% said they are self-insuring or creating a captive insurance company, followed by 38% passing on some of the costs to tenants through higher rents and 38% withdrawing from markets with higher insurance costs."

There is a larger systemic issue in the multifamily sector relied on to produce housing for CDBG-DR target income housing. This is nearly always multifamily rental housing.

We cannot pass on costs to very low-income tenants through higher rents. We would request CDBG-DR Action Plan allow: (1) reimbursement of current property insurance premiums; and (2) attention by the County to this as a systemic financing issue that needs to be addressed in order to continue to provide supportive housing and deliver resilient energy-efficient housing for low-income residents.

Received via email from Helanie M. Blum, Esq at Pathlight HOME -- Helaine@pathlighthouse.org

<p>General</p>	<p>01/12/2024</p>	<p>We are writing to share comments on Orange County’s Action Plan for CDBG-DR. As you know, over a year after Hurricane Ian, it is clear that our communities are still struggling to recover, particularly when it comes to meeting housing needs and preparing for increasing frequency and strength of environmental disasters. We valued the opportunity to have been included in the initial engagement of advocacy groups and community members during the development of the Action Plan. It was a pleasure to work with your team and to share the perspectives and experiences of our communities. With that, it is important to us that the implementation of the Action Plan continues and deepens this commitment to community engagement.</p> <p>As one step to ensure an equitable implementation of this funding, we’d like to propose the establishment of a Disaster Housing Taskforce that is composed of members representative of underserved communities as stakeholders who will have a voice in decision-making and the realization of the Action Plan. This may require adding or removing seats or revising member selection of current boards processes to ensure current or new committees are demographically reflective of their jurisdictional constituency.</p> <p>Additionally, Mr. Glasser, you noted in your remarks to the Board of County Commissioners on Tuesday, January 9th that the Orange County Government will need to expand operations through staff capacity and consultants. We’d like to propose the onboarding of outreach staff dedicated to this project. Our experience tells us that it is imperative that expansion includes hiring, training, and supporting outreach staff that are tasked with engaging with community members directly and with cultural competency. Community-based organizations are on the ground in communities every day. Consultation with them on community engagement can offer a wealth of knowledge and perspectives from lived experience that can help define, refine, and improve this work.</p>	<p>Good afternoon, thank you for taking time to provide comments on the draft CDBG-DR Action Plan. Please note that a summary of your comments will be included with the final submission of the CDBG-DR Action Plan to HUD (in the attachment).</p> <p>We acknowledge your comments related to the following items, and our preliminary responses are provided below the bold:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishment of a taskforce composed of members representing underserved communities as stakeholders – to ensure an equitable and just implementation of the CDBG-DR Program; Community Development Advisory Board (CDAB) will provide an oversight of the CDBG-DR Program. The Board is composed of 7 members (one member appointed by each commissioner and an at-large representative) who are familiar with federal entitlement grants and were involved in the planning process for CDBG-DR funds. More information can be found here: https://apps.ocfl.net/aware/advisory/board_details.asp?id=8. Any changes related to the program oversight will need to be approved by the BCC. • In-depth onboarding and training of outreach staff dedicated to the CDBG-DR Program (to ensure cultural competency, language accessibility, and an adequate level of collaboration with community based organizations); To date, program marketing and outreach functions were carried out by the Housing and Community Development Division staff (primary Planning and Development Section that administers federal funds for public services and homeless services and has a working knowledge of local nonprofits/community partners). As the program implementation begins, the County plans to hire additional staff. All new CDBG-DR personnel, as well as any consultant(s) hired to aid in program management and administration, will have some outreach duties and responsibilities. As such, the County plans to coordinate with other Divisions (Neighborhood Services, Communications, etc.) on language accessibility and fair and equitable access to the CDBG-DR program/activities information. As we begin the program implementation, the County intends to collaborate with community partners, residents of the affected
-----------------------	-------------------	--	---

Further, the necessity of this capacity can be seen in the results of the online “CDBG-DR Citizen Survey” used in the development of the Action Plan. Even though the survey was translated into the two languages (Spanish and Haitian Creole) that represent the highest number of people in Orange County with limited English proficiency, the survey only received 3.37% of responses in Spanish and no responses in Haitian Creole. Without dedicated outreach staff who are committed to language accessibility and have a directive from the County to meet equity goals, history has shown us time and again that our underserved populations will be left out of decision making on funding implementation. In addition to outreach staff, there should be close communication with community-based, faith based, and other organizations deeply rooted in the community.

Additionally, we know communities of color and working-class communities have been underinvested in by our leaders for generations and face a tougher road to recovery, and immigrant communities, LGBTQ+ people, and people with disabilities were also particularly vulnerable in the aftermath of the storm and must not just be considered in this plan but be met with solutions that are uniquely able to meet their needs.

We also want to underscore the importance of prioritizing projects in the areas that have been identified as having had the hardest impact. This metric often includes material damage to property and thus invariably prioritizes areas with access to other resources. **As all of Orange County is eligible for this funding, we want to ensure that members of our community that face the hardest recovery (again, LGBTQ+ individuals, immigrants, people of color, workers, those with disabilities and more) are receiving the resources.** Community members should be informed and be able to access these resources they need to thrive and build resiliency.

- areas, and other stakeholders to make sure those in need to assistance are aware of the program/can access/apply for assistance.
- **Need for a close collaboration/communication with community-based, faith-based and grassroots organizations as the CDBG-DR Program implementation begins;** Please see the response to the previous comment. The County intends to take measures and steps to ensure fair and equitable access to program funds for marginalized communities and those in most need.
 - **Involvement of marginalized groups in the program implementation;** See comments above. The County plans to continue community engagement and outreach over the life cycle of the CDBG-DR Program (6 years).
 - **Prioritization of projects in the areas identified as having had the hardest impact;** The Housing and Community Development Division will work with other departments/divisions of the County to ensure that the damages in the most impacted areas are addressed by leveraging various sources of funds.
 - **Insufficient time to provide comments on the draft CDBG-DR Action Plan.** To ensure access to CDBG-DR funds, the County is required to submit its CDBG-DR Action Plan by January 18, 2024. The Plan can later be amended should the County’s needs change/additional information become available.

Thank you again for your detailed comments and have a great day!
(Responded on 01/17/2024 at 1:42PM)

As hurricanes and other climate emergencies are quickly becoming the new norm, we have an obligation not just to rebuild housing and physical infrastructure, but to invest in people and strengthen communities. Leaving renters and communities of color from the conversation only further destabilizes families and entire neighborhoods, and they need to be actively involved in the development of the housing plans. The Action Plan must protect our families and strengthen low and moderate-income communities - including renters, mobile home communities, and those in precarious housing situations.

Finally, while we understand that the process was expedited based on the timeline provided by HUD, we want to acknowledge that the draft was released during the winter holidays when many of our offices were closed. In addition to the priorities outlined above, we want to highlight that there are inevitably more comments we could have made with more time to fully digest the 150+ page plan, thus further underscoring the need for more engagement during the implementation process. There should be a collaborative space for decision-making processes where community representatives, such as community-based organizations, can be part of the prioritization and implementation of initiatives.

This is an important moment for Orange County. Let's continue to be a model for others and be bold by leaning into an equitable plan for recovery, together. We look forward to working with you.

Received letter via email from Robin D. Harris at All Things Innovative; Jonathan Alingu and Chris Furino at Central Florida Jobs with Justice; Yoca Ardit-Rocha, The CLEO Institute; Yesica Ramirez, Farmworker Association of Florida; Tessa Petit, Florida Immigrant Coalition; MacKenzie Marcelin, Florida Rising; Paula Muñoz, Florida Student Power Network; Felipe Sousa Lazaballet, Hope CommUnity Center; and Faruk Bagdah, Observatorio Ambiental Hispano.

<p>Public Hearing Comment</p>	<p>01/09/2024</p>	<p>Thank you, Mayor, commissioners, Mitchell.</p> <p>This CDBG-DR plan provides an incredible opportunity for Orange County residents and surrounding communities. I fully support the efforts this funding will afford. I am Allison Krall, President/CEO of Coalition for the Homeless of Central Florida, we have the honor of serving approximately 700 moms and/or dads with children, single men and women experiencing homelessness every single day. Last fiscal year we assisted over 2,100 find housing.</p> <p>Recognizing the woeful shortage of housing availability for the lowest income in our community, combined with the increase in rent and the cost of about every aspect of living, it is a very tough time for many vulnerable people.</p> <p>Expansion of Emergency Shelter Capacity: This funding will allow for shoring up the infrastructure and increasing capacity of facilities that provide shelter during times of crisis weather events, such as natural disasters including hurricanes. These shelters provide for the most vulnerable in the community from those whose homes may be at risk to flooding and high winds, those who have physical disabilities, to those experiencing homelessness. This is an opportunity to ensure those who need shelter from the storm can find it in a safe, secure environment. Ensuring the safety of our neighbors is of paramount importance especially during emergency weather events.</p> <p>Emergency Homeless Shelter Capacity: With a shortage of shelter beds throughout CF for those with special needs, this funding will provide an opportunity to increase capacity for those very vulnerable populations, including those experiencing homelessness, every day and especially during weather events.</p> <p>Permanent Supportive Housing – Building Continuum:</p>	<p>Good afternoon, thank you for taking time to provide comments during the public hearing on the CDBG-DR Action Plan that took place on January 9, 2024.</p> <p>Please note that a summary of your comments will be included with the final submission of the CDBG-DR Action Plan to HUD (in the attachment).</p> <p>We would like to acknowledge your comments related to expansion of emergency shelter capacity and meeting the needs for permanent supportive housing and housing for special needs populations.</p> <p>Thank you again for your detailed comments, and</p> <p>Have a great day!</p> <p><i>(Responded on 01/17/2024 at 2:17 PM)</i></p>
--------------------------------------	-------------------	--	--

		<p>Permanent supportive housing meets a critical need for those most vulnerable on our streets, provides long-term rental assistance to those who have been homeless for a long time, have a disabling condition and are at risk of dying on our streets. We have an opportunity to further build this infrastructure.</p> <p>Housing for Special Needs Populations: We have a chance to impact the housing inventory for special needs populations, including elderly men and women, those who suffer with debilitating disabilities and those experiencing homelessness.</p> <p>Thank you for giving me the opportunity to support projects that will positively impact the housing status of those most at risk in our community.</p> <p>Thank you to Mitchell Glasser and team for making this a community-wide planning process.</p>	
<p>Public Hearing Comment</p>	<p>01/09/2024</p>	<p>Hello Mayor and County Commissioners</p> <p>I have the privilege and pleasure to serve as the Deputy District Director for Congressman Maxwell Alejandro Frost.</p> <p>Congressman Frost represents Florida’s 10th Congressional District which includes portions of unincorporated-Orange County <u>within your districts</u>, as well as four municipalities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The City of Orlando • City of Winter Park • City of Maitland • And the Town of Eatonville. <p>Today, I’m here to give comment on Orange County’s Action Plan regarding \$219M from HUD’s Community Development Block Grant -Disaster Recovery program. These CDBG-DR funds are the result of Hurricane Ian, a FEMA declared Disaster.</p> <p>Because of HUD’s designation of the County as a Most Impacted and Distressed Area, we’re thankful for HUD’s</p>	<p>Good afternoon, thank you for providing comments during the public hearing on the CDBG-DR Action Plan that took place on January 9, 2024.</p> <p>Please note that a summary of your comments will be included with the final submission of the CDBG-DR Action Plan to HUD (in the attachment).</p> <p>We would like to acknowledge your comments in regards to equitable access to CDBG-DR funds for all Orange County jurisdictions, regardless of their size and internal capacity, and note that technical assistance will be provided during the upcoming Request for Applications processes to ensure the access to funds is fair and equitable, as required by the Program regulations.</p> <p>Thank you again for your detailed comments, and</p> <p>Have a great day! <i>(Responded on 01/17/2024 at 12:07PM)</i></p>

decision to provide these funds directly to Orange County. We believe this allows for a more streamlined process to assist impacted communities. As a long-time participating jurisdiction of HUD, we trust Orange County to administer these funds and we want to applaud the County for

- conducting a comprehensive Unmet Needs Assessment,
- doing unprecedented levels of community engagement and outreach,
- and collaborating with local stakeholders and county residents to produce this Action Plan.

I'd especially like to highlight the impressive community outreach done by the Housing and Community Development Division, which as you know immediately followed their involvement with county-wide community engagement for Vision 2050.

Our office was able to attend 6 of the 13 public meetings, and also shared the citizen participation survey with our constituents via newsletter and social media. The County also received input from dozens of non-profit organizations, and most of the municipalities in our district were also able to attend a meeting held on September 13th for local jurisdictions.

I'm here today for 3 reasons:

1. To acknowledge the County for producing a plan using robust data and working diligently to design the plan using community input;
2. To support the request for resources (staff, technology, and otherwise) to efficiently administer and monitor this significant amount of funds, and the resulting programs and projects. This CDBG-DR program is clearly no small matter -- \$219M within a 6-year window. It is critical to provide the organization and structure to support this program.
3. And finally, we'd like to make a note about jurisdictions within Orange County having

equitable access to these disaster recovery funds. As the recipient of these funds, Orange County has a full County to consider. We understand that there needs to be an RFP process for municipalities because of their status as subrecipients, but it's important to note, that like the storm did not discriminate by jurisdictional boundaries, the relief and assistance should not either. While some jurisdictions may have greater capacity than others, we want to stress that smaller jurisdictions with less capacity also have vulnerable populations and should be provided the support and technical assistance to access these funds. We have copies of the project lists shared with the County from our municipalities, I'd like to highlight some of those projects here:

City of Winter Park has provided a list, which includes improvements to Killarney Dr East and the Lake Killarney Weir and to mitigate flooding around lake Killarney which affects both Winter Park and unincorporated Orange County residents.

The Town of Eatonville has a list of projects and is requesting funds for items such as a Flood Control Study and Wastewater Inflow & Infiltration improvements.

And the City of Orlando, also has a project list, which I'd like to highlight, really does a tremendous job of addressing one of our communities' greatest needs – housing. by seeking to create new affordable housing and preserve what we currently have. It is a tremendous unmet need, because unlike other places in the country that may see the population decrease from a disaster area, Orange County and City of Orlando experience the opposite. We cannot take eyes off of housing.

With that said, Thank you again for your time today and your service to Orange County.

<p>Public Hearing Comment</p>	<p>01/09/2024</p>	<p>Mayor and Commissioners -</p> <p>Thank you for giving us the opportunity to comment on the plan for investing the County’s disaster recovery funding from HUD.</p> <p>First, I want to acknowledge with appreciation the significant amount of work County staff has put into drafting this plan - clearly there has been significant research and community engagement. We are grateful for Mitchell, Nancy, Janna and other’s work and their outreach to the homeless service providers during the process of developing this plan.</p> <p>As you know, people who are most vulnerable during any disaster - from hurricanes to extreme heat - are our unhoused neighbors. The most effective way to mitigate their vulnerability is to ensure our community has an adequate stock of affordable housing throughout the entire county and region. We ask that the County prioritize housing investment for persons facing the greatest cost burden, and at the greatest risk of ongoing or future homelessness, including those persons who are below 50% of area median income. Additionally, households at less than 30% area median income have the greatest challenges avoiding homelessness or moving back into stable housing after a homeless episode. It is worth noting that many of the areas identified as having the largest percentage of residents facing extreme cost burden are also areas with a greater preponderance of mobile homes that are significantly vulnerable during natural disasters - are areas that still report significant unmet housing needs - and many of which, for example those in the upper eastern part of the county and the north western part of the county - have no permanent shelter options despite their resident’s incredible vulnerability to experience homelessness.</p>	<p>Good afternoon, thank you for taking time to proving comments on the CDBG-DR Action Plan during the public hearing that took place on January 9, 2024.</p> <p>Please note that the following comments will be included in the final submission to HUD (in the attachment).</p> <p>We would like to acknowledge your comments in regards to the need for adequate stock of affordable housing throughout the county, prioritization of housing investments for persons facing the greatest cost burden and those at risk of becoming homeless, vulnerability of residents of mobile homes during the disasters, and the need to expand capacity of congregate and non-congregate emergency shelters. These needs have been noted in the Action Plan needs assessment and led to the allocation of almost 50% of the CDBG-DR Program Budget for housing programs and activities, to include construction of new affordable rental housing for special needs population, such as seniors, homeless, and persons with disabilities.</p> <p>Orange County will continue to coordinate with providers of homeless services, to include the local homeless response system/Continuum of Care, as the program implementation begins and over the grant cycle period. <i>(Responded on 01/17/2024 at 12:39 PM)</i></p>
--------------------------------------	-------------------	---	--

	<p>While seeking permanent housing options, persons experiencing unsheltered homelessness, and those who would become homeless as a result of a storm, are desperate for congregate and non-congregate shelter opportunities, year-round, that can accommodate their partners, possessions and pets. Low-barrier, 24-hour shelter capacity across the county would immediately reduce disaster influenced risks both before and after our community sustains another natural disaster. We are grateful for the County’s support of the existing homeless shelters that are concentrated in a small geographic area, we also ask that the County maximize the use of these CDBG-DR funds to create new, geographically diverse shelter opportunities that will meet the needs of all of its citizens experiencing homelessness.</p>	
--	--	--