

**NDRC Public Participation and Consultation
Webinar Transcript
Thursday, October 23, 2014
3:00-4:30pm EDT**

Jessica (Operator): Good afternoon. My name is Jessica and I will be your conference operator today. At this time, I would like to welcome everyone to the NDRC Public Participation and Consultation Webinar. All lines have been placed on mute to prevent any background noise. If you should need assistance during the call, please press * then zero and an operator will come back online to assist you. Thank you, Mr. George Martin. You may begin your conference.

George Martin: Thank you, Jessica. Hi, everyone. Thank you for joining us. My name is George Martin. I work for TDA Consulting, which is one of HUD's national technical assistance providers. And I have the pleasure of being on the line with several great presenters from HUD and I am going to introduce them to you in a moment so that we can begin. But before we do that, I want to go spend about one minute going over some technical instructions for this webinar.

So first, I want to remind everyone to give your undivided attention to the webinar and our audio conference today. So if you are on a landline, then turn off your cellphone or put it in another room, and close your other programs and try to give your undivided attention to the content we will be going over.

I also want to let everyone know that if they have technical problems, you can feel free to send questions. There is a chat function on the right hand side of the webinar screen. You can feel free to send questions to the host, that is me. My name, again, is George Martin. And I will try to get those resolved as quickly as possible. You can also call my colleague here in my office with me, Vicky Grim. Her number is on the screen. If you are listening to this message and you were having trouble logging into the webinar portion, if you go back to the original list serve message that came from HUD, the information for me and my colleague, Vicky, are listed on that email and you can contact us and we will try to work with you to get logged into the webinar.

As Jessica said, you have all been placed on mute on the phone. And the reason we do that is because there are a whole lot of us on the line and we do not want someone's dog to be barking in the background and disrupting the whole thing. So we are going to start with a presentation by our HUD presenters and then we are going to move to the Q&A portion of today. And there are going to be two ways you can ask questions. One of them is using the Q&A tool in the WebEx webinar and the other way is verbally, via the conference call. And I am going to go over quickly here instructions on how to do both of those.

So if you want to ask written questions, you are going to use the tool on the right hand side of your screen that says, "Q&A." It might be minimized right now and if you click the little triangle in the corner of it, it will make it bigger on your screen. But you will see here there is an image on the

slide in front of you that shows what it looks like. Your questions will be sent to all the panelists, so myself and our HUD presenters, but they will not be seen by the other attendees on the webinar.

The other thing I want to note about written questions is that unless you specifically ask us to type a response to you, we will most likely be answering those verbally over the phone when it comes to the Q&A time. So if you would like a written response or if you need that accommodation because of a disability, please include that in your written question.

So the other way you can ask questions is over the phone. And since you have been placed on mute, you will have to let Jessica, our operator, know that you want to ask a question. And the way you can do that is by pressing *1 on your keypad and you will be added into a queue of people who want to ask verbal questions. If you decide that you do not want to ask a question anymore or if we answer it before your turn comes up, you can simply press *2 to be removed from the queue.

So we will be posting these slides again – will be on the screen when we get to the Q&A time so you will see all these instructions again.

A few notes on questions is that as I said, we are going to be answering even written questions verbally unless you ask us to do differently. And it is important to note that we expect most attendees to have a lot of questions about this content and we may not be able to answer all of them. HUD is going to try to ask the questions that they believe are most common or widespread among everyone on the line before they answer more specific questions.

Also, if you have questions about the NOFA in general, or aspects of the NOFA that are outside of sort of the citizen participation consultation requirements, those will not be answered. This is part of a series of webinars and this webinar is focusing really just on the citizen participation and consultation requirements. So general questions should be sent to that email address you see on your screen right there – ResilientRecovery@HUD.gov. That is a general email box for questions about this competition and as you see here, it is again up on the screen. You can send any questions that we do not get to today or that are unrelated to this topic to that email address and they will be answered as quickly as possible.

So on that note, I am going to turn over the presentation to Meg Barclay from HUD, who is going to be our moderator for today.

Meg Barclay: Good afternoon, everyone. Thank you, George. As George mentioned, my name is Meg Barclay. I am with the Office of Community Planning and Development here at HUD and I will be moderating today's presentation. We are trying to position the slides here. Just a second. There we go.

I am joined by folks from two offices here at HUD – from the Office of Community Planning and Development, I am joined by Jim Potter in the Office of Environment and Energy and Lynsey Johnson from the Office of Economic Resilience, and also, Jesse Handforth Kome, also from the Office of Block Grant Assistance. She will be helping us out with Q&A later in the presentation. We are also joined by George Williams from the Office of Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity, Office of Policy, Legislative Initiatives, and Outreach. Thank you, George, for joining us.

So a quick agenda for today's presentation and then we will move on to the speakers. We are going to do an overview of the National Disaster Resilience competition, general purposes and provisions, and more specifically, the citizen participation and consultation requirements. We want to go into a discussion of how does the public participation process help you and what kinds of things you should keep in mind this early in the process of developing your application as it relates to citizen participation and consultation. And we will also go over resources that are available to NDRC eligible applicants.

That presentation should take about an hour and then we will go into questions and answers in the last thirty minutes of the period of time that we have today. Please feel free to send Q&A through the tool on the webinar throughout the presentation. We will be monitoring, looking for common questions, and be ready to respond to those when we get to the Q&A portion of today's webinar.

So with that, we will move on to the first part of our presentation. Lynsey Johnson, take it away.

Lynsey Johnson: Thanks, Meg. Good afternoon, everyone. My name is Lynsey and like Meg said, I am with the Office of Economic Resilience. I just want to take a couple minutes to provide an overview of the National Disaster Resilience Competition. I know you probably have heard this a couple different times so we just wanted to get some foundation set. So the National Disaster Resilience Competition makes available nearly one billion dollars to communities that have been impacted by natural disasters between 2011, 2012, and 2013. The funds are intended for recovery and resilience projects to help make impacted areas stronger and better prepared for the future. The NDRC is aimed not just at helping address unmet needs from disasters but also seeks to make the impacted areas more resilient. Ultimately, applicants need to link or tie back the proposals to the disaster from which they are recovering and then pivot and demonstrate how they are going to reduce future risks and advancing broader community development goals within the target geographic area.

The next slide really gives a great overview of the actual process that the NDRC will go through over the next several months. Phase 1 is considered to be the framing phase and will last approximately a hundred and eighty days from the announcement of the NDRC, which was September 17, 2014. This phase is structured to guide each applicant through a broad consideration of its disaster recovery needs, vulnerabilities, stakeholder interests, resilience in other community development objectives, and investment alternatives. The deadline for Phase 1 applications is March 16, 2015.

HUD will invite a subset of applicants from Phase 1 to participate in Phase 2. In Phase 2, applicants will consider and refine approaches at a more granular level of detail to meet the objectives identified in Phase 1. Phase 2 will conclude a hundred and twenty days after the selection of the Phase 1 participants. HUD, at that time, will make funding awards at the conclusion of Phase 2.

Now turning our attention a little bit to the requirements of the consultation and citizen participation elements of the NOFA, the community consultation engagement is worth a significant portion of point within the NOFA. All applicants must consult with adjacent states, tribes, units of general local government – which you will see throughout the presentation as abbreviated UGLGs – and

other states and affected parties in the geographic areas surrounding the potential projects to ensure consistency with applicable regional and redevelopment plans.

We are going to get into this whole section and what this means. I did not know if George, you would like to add anything regarding this specific issue in terms of consultation.

George Williams: Well, I think it is important that as you are building your application, you actually identify the kinds of folks who are in the geographic areas that you are going to be affecting to make sure that you do not leave out folks who have limited English proficiency, folks who have disabilities of various kinds, and other populations that might not otherwise be in the loop of knowing what it is you are going to be doing.

Lynsey Johnson: Excellent, and that is a good point. Our Secretary has stressed the importance to consult with a broad and diverse set of stakeholders as the applications are being prepared, so excellent.

I would like to draw your attention to Appendix I, and that will be your best friend in developing your strategy for consultation and citizen participation. This is an excerpt from Appendix I, the consultation summary portion and I want to highlight the red boxes. The first red box in the first sentence is required of all consultation and citizen participation throughout the process. The second red box highlights what the states are required to do in terms of consultation. And the third red box highlights what the eligible local governments are required to do in terms of consultation. We are going to break that down over the next couple slides to help you understand a little further.

So these are the requirements for all applicants in this process, both state and local government. All consultation and citizen participation must be carried out in a way to sufficiently address the recovery needs, community development issues, and vulnerabilities in the identified affected areas for the qualifying disaster. And then, it also must identify and design an approach that is going to directly address those needs.

And then, turning to what the states are required to do – and like I said, this is a must. This is something that the states must do. They must consult with all disaster affected units of local government including eligible entitlements not identified as an eligible applicant. They must also consult with any other local government or regional agency that is responsible for the metro-wide planning in the area. And then also, must consult with tribes, UGLGs, and other – Uglugs [laughter]– and other stakeholders and affected parties to ensure consistency with the applicable regional development plan.

So there are a lot of great resources that can be pulled from those plans, as well, and so consulting those first off will give you a really great starting point to moving forward.

And in turning to the UGLGs [pronounced Uglugs] for the NDRC, they also have very similar requirements. They must consult with the adjacent UGLGs and other local and regional agencies with the metropolitan planning responsibilities, and then, other adjacent states and geographic areas surrounding the potential project. And similar to the states, they must also additionally consult with

the tribes, UGLGs, and other stakeholders to, once again, ensure that consistency and also, utilize data that might be available to them.

Phase 1 Factor 3, if you look through the NOFA and found that, it is titled “The Soundness of Approach.” There are two key components to that – the consultation and the idea or concept. Both are worth a significant portion of points. And overall, HUD will evaluate your Phase 1 Factor 3 responses for clarity, thoroughness, completeness, and inclusion of the input from needs of, and potential benefits of, vulnerable populations and the businesses that employ and serve them. So ultimately, if you have a really great consultation process, a great idea, it is going to lead to a really sound approach in the end.

This slide is, I think, a really great place to start in terms of trying to formulate and identify a plan. Ultimately, at a minimum, eligible applicants must consult with stakeholders that are in the MID-URN areas – MID-URN stands for Most Impacted and Distressed Area with Unmet Recovery Needs – and that includes adjacent UGLGs. And we are going to look a little closer at Appendix I at the end of this session here and we will be able to discuss a little more about this. But ultimately, if you are able to incorporate a multi-state region, as well as multi-county region, you will receive some additional points for reaching further. But at a minimum, like I said, the MID-URN in the adjacent areas need to be consulted with to get the points for that specific part of the NOFA. And George?

George Williams: Thanks, Sydney, you are doing a great job of making this perfectly plain. I think the message that Sydney is sending, and we are trying to send today, is that Fair Housing and Civil Rights, as far as reaching out to the various different stakeholders and beneficiaries, is not an adjunct or ancillary. They are a central part of what it is that this competition is designed to do. So we are happy to address your concerns later on as you hear our presentations. But I would be remiss if I did not thank Jesse and Meg for inviting Fair Housing to be part of this discussion because it is an important conversation. And we are happy to partner with them and with you in developing some real exciting proposals and grants.

Now there are a lot of civil rights requirements. I am not going to go through all of them. I will just mention that you all have heard this song and dance many times. But it is important that as you develop these proposals using that stakeholder geography schematic here, that you really identify the different populations that you are going to be affecting so as not to inadvertently leave some groups out. There are a lot of points, as Sydney mentioned. You can get awarded for doing a really good job of identifying those populations and making sure that they are included. I just wanted to underscore what Sydney was just saying.

Lynsey Johnson: Thanks. Yeah, that is an excellent point. I mean, really looking at that most vulnerable geography and where you want to spend your grant money from HUD is essential into developing this. So thank you, George.

So we have talked about the consultation for focusing on the consultation and what organizations, government jurisdictions should be consulted in the process. We are going to turn a little bit now to focus on citizen participation requirements in the NOFA. These are, once again, verbatim from the NOFA and you probably already read them going through it. But we just want to make sure that

they are highlighted. At least one public hearing at the applicant's level is required for Phase 1. And ultimately, we are looking for you to provide a reasonable opportunity for citizen comments and then also, having ongoing citizen access to information above the use of the grant fund.

Additionally, we require that you public specific portions of the proposed submission on the website or other place for a reasonable exam period. We also require that you encourage – to notify affected citizens, similar to what George was saying early – and ensure that all citizens have equal access to the information about the program. And then additionally, you must provide a reasonable timeframe and method for receiving comments of the submission.

George Williams: First, let me apologize to Lynsey for butchering her name. [Laughter] I have been calling her Sydney. My apologies.

Lynsey Johnson: I have been called Leslie, Wendy, and I go by anything so no worries.

George Williams: If you had not done it, I would have.

George Williams: Well, thanks for understanding. But I wanted to talk a little bit about the intersections of this kind of initiative and AFFH – Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing. I think it is important that in the backdrop you always keep in mind what the impact of your proposal may have on the outcomes that are sought in Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing. I do not have any specific suggestions for you today but I think in order to is something that you should be sensitive to and be aware of as you are developing your proposals.

Meg Barclay: And this is Meg. I am just going to jump in really quick. I have been watching the questions coming in for the Q&A. We are getting a lot of questions that are more specific to eligible applicants, eligible areas, which are important questions having to do with the NOFA, generally. This webinar is focused on the consultation and public participation requirements of the NOFA. We want to make sure we get those kinds of questions answered. Specifically, we are here to talk a lot about how the public participation requirements of the NOFA are designed to help you meet other environmental review requirements that you may be subject to further down the road once a project has been selected. So if you have questions specifically about how the public participation requirements were developed for the NOFA, what those specific requirements are, who you may or may not need to reach out to, we would love to get those questions today. And with that, we are going to move on.

Lynsey Johnson: Thanks, Meg. And here are just some ways to achieve and some work on deriving community engagement inclusiveness. And once again, we are going to give you some ideas. Next week's webinar is going to focus specifically on citizen engagement and innovative ways to go about it. But ultimately, we suggest that you start looking across regional collaborations and across disciplinary collaborations; looking for community engagement outreach opportunities, especially with the vulnerable populations as identified by George. Also, looking at consultation stakeholder involvement through design implementation and evaluation stages of the project because ultimately, the more you do upfront, it is going to help the overall process in the long run and that is what we are stressing most today. And that you are working with the other organizations because ultimately, they are going to be having data for you, they are going to be having ideas for

you. You cannot go wrong in consulting with other organizations because ultimately, they are going to have a wealth of information that is going to be very pertinent to your application development.

George Williams: I just want to just amplify on what Lynsey has put forth. The importance of bringing all the players, all of the stakeholders to the table and giving their input is really important. So that engagement and inclusiveness piece is something that can help your application stand out among the others if you do a really good job, a really thorough job. Because that has been an area in our civil rights work here at HUD where folks have not often paid close attention to and that is why I am so happy that CPD has invited us to be part of this discussion early on. So you can build this into the foundation of your program. So Lynsey is right on target with her list of issues that should be addressed when you are preparing your applications.

Jesse Handforth Kome: And this is Jesse. One of the reasons that we really wanted the involvement dealing with FHEO's help, dealing with the vulnerable populations was that the research that we have shows that those are the populations who do not recover over long periods of time and sometimes, across generations. And we are hoping that we will get a good example, or maybe multiple examples, as a result of this competition of how targeting and going right at this starting with consultation and all the way through the grant can maybe resolve these problems so they do not have to continue the poverty in America where we have had repeating disasters.

George William: Thank you, Jesse, good.

Jim Potter: This is Jim Potter from Office of Environmental Energy and I wanted to emphasize a few of those requirements and maybe color them a little bit for you, help you understand the significance of them and give you some tips for how you can streamline the process. As you can see on the screen here, there are a number of existing authorities that require public involvement. The problem usually comes in our projects that the timelines for these are very different. One of the ways that we always encourage grantees and HUD staff to work with this is to create a timeline for each of the requirements and then, try to make sure that they have overlapped as much as possible – that they are using the opportunities to the greatest extent possible. We will talk about each of these in a little bit more detail but I wanted to give you the overview of all of the places where public involvement is already required. These are places where you are going to be talking to the community and we want to make sure that you are getting the most out of those meetings.

Now, there are a lot of reasons why public involvement can help you. Those of you familiar with project management techniques will understand crashing scheduling, collapsing the requirements to the critical path. What we are trying to do with Environmental Planning is exactly the same thing. We are taking these opportunities and overlapping them to the point where the meetings for scoping of the National Environmental Policy Act could be used for the Preservation Act consultation process. There are a lot of ways where you can – Meg, can we switch to the next slide?

Meg Barclay: I am so sorry.

Jim Potter: That is all right. There are a lot of places where you can overlap the schedules and create some benefits. There are other things, as Lynsey and George were both talking about earlier, getting better data from the folks that know – the folks that are really involved and understand the

project geography. Crowd sourcing is a great way to quickly get to the problems in an area. I will talk a little bit more about that later because project geography is a little bit different in environmental terms and in environmental justice terms than it is in maybe project terms – something that the project team would be familiar with. But understand that all of those things can work together to be a streamlined process but it really will not be as burdensome as it looks on the surface.

Another idea is buy-in. You know, when you start talking about implementation – and this competition is all about implementation. We want projects on the ground, we want improvements. So we are going to do everything we can to ease that implementation. And one of the ways to do that is to get people involved in the solutions – get them encourage to participate actively. All those things are public involvement. All those things are the purpose of these public involvement processes that are built into so many of the authorities that we work under.

And finally, acceptable mitigations. As it is shown there, the decisions that are made are going to be – the people that are living there are going to be living with the solutions, as well as the current impacts. So we want to make sure that it is going to work for them. Want to make sure that you have gathered all the data, that you have gotten a complete idea of what you are dealing with.

So let's switch to a little bit about terminology. I borrowed this from my environmental justice work and I think it still applies to the other things, as well. But the meaningful involvement that we talk about in public involvement processes and environmental justice, in particular, is the idea of getting to the community early to identify what you have to deal with to allow people to have the opportunity to participate as far as that buy-in process. But also, I think probably more importantly, is that data gathering aspect, right? As any of us that have worked with projects know, surprises are expected. They are expected in terms of time, as well as money. Understanding everything that you have got to deal with upfront is the best way to combat that. It is the best way to know what your costs are going to be, know what your challenges are going to be, know how your project can be impacted by the things that you may not see on the surface. And public involvement, meaningful involvement, of those participants is one way to do that. Next slide? Thanks.

Meaningful participation, this really is the mantra of environmental review. You have got to do early. You have got to think about these things at the earliest possible time because first, as I said before, you need to understand all of the challenges you are dealing with in order to find solutions that work for all of them, or at least the majority of them. But I think more importantly is that the earlier that you identify these challenges, the lower the cost of the mitigation. Sometimes even no cost of mitigation is possible. The example we use for that most often is site planning. One of the things I do at my day job is handle the noise regulation for HUD and it is a very simple thing to put a parking garage next to the highway and the housing on the other side of it so you use that structure as a barrier for the noise that could be impacting the dwelling units. It is a very difficult thing if you had not considered that early and your plans are already gone and everybody wants the housing up against the highway. And your only option at that point is a very expensive wall. So that is the normal example I use for thinking about things early and taking advantage of the information at a time when it will really help your project – make a better project and help your budget and timeline, as well. Next slide?

Now you heard about the...

George Williams: Jim is doing such a great job here that there is not much to add except I was struck when you said, "Surprises are expensive." You know, in terms of not just in a retrofitting context but also, from a civil rights context. Because if you do not do it right the first time and you do not include all the appropriate folks at the table, a lawsuit can be extraordinarily expensive and can be divisive in the community. My shorthand for environmental justice is the fair distribution of environmental benefits and environmental burdens. You know, so whatever the environment presents as a challenge – or an opportunity – it ought to be shared across the spectrum of groups so that one group is not disproportionately impacted by necessary environmental conditions or conversely, another group benefit from the environmental goodies.

Jim Potter: That is a great to think about it, George. Because disproportionality is an important component of environmental justice. If you spread the burdens and the benefits across the community equally, then you do not have an environmental justice problem.

George Williams: Absolutely, that is right.

Jim Potter: That is a really great way to avoid that issue upfront. And again, early environmental planning is the way to do that.

George Williams: Right, good.

Lynsey Johnson: And also, too, I mean, recognizing that governments are dealing with less and less money in terms of staff, in terms of cost, doing and having a really great plan on the forefront of these projects is only going to save staff time, it is only going to save headaches, and ultimately, your budget. So doing this upfront is going to help all that.

George Williams: Very good, thank you.

Jim Potter: So one of the ways that you could crash your schedule, you can overlap the use of requirements, is to make sure that you have got the right people at the table when you have the table set. There are a lot of different people that are involved in various aspects. There is no reason why they cannot be all in the room hearing the same thing at the same time. If you let them know that there is a meeting, you can avoid the – as I said here, the stovepipes, the silos, the cylinders – whatever way you think about segmenting information based on who cares about what. That is difficult to deal with in a planning sense because it does not allow everyone to understand the breadth of the problem that you are dealing with. Then people do not understand why a certain mitigation cannot be in a certain place at a certain time or why one thing will not work that, on the surface, seems to be viable. Residents, community leaders, and elected officials all have a voice whether they are speaking in English or not. And those perspectives are important because they see it in different ways. Different cultures assess information in different ways. That is things that you need to know when you are planning your project. There are a lot of different stakeholders you might not think about and that is one of the reasons why we always say to cast a wide net for whatever kind of meeting you are planning.

George, got anything to add to that?

George Williams: Yeah, it is really important that you identify the naysayers, the adversaries, the advocates who might be big berries later. If I come to the table first off the gate so that they can raise their issues now and you will be able to address them. If you do not invite them, they will show up later.

Jesse Handforth Kome: Yeah, you know, in DRGR when we are testing our data system, we call the naysayers our beta testers. [Laughter] Because they will always tell us what is wrong.

George Williams: Exactly, exactly. So that is just a point I wanted to make that it is really important, as Jim pointed out, to make sure you have all the right parties at the table so they can have input and give you some guidance on how to approach this.

Jim Potter: Yeah, I do not think you will ever go wrong with inviting too many people to a meeting unless you need a microphone you did not plan on. [Laughter]

I wanted to talk a little bit more, also, about the geography of the project. In environmental terms, that is a little different than maybe the property lines that you are dealing with. Environmental justice terms, it is different. The graphic I have got here is a map from a – oh, I feel like I want to apologize for all the UGLGs out there – but this is from a local government. It is from Baltimore City, actually, that maps out the different neighborhoods in a particular part of town. These neighborhood boundaries may not align with the effective community in an environmental justice sense because they might be affected more by physical barriers like highways or train tracks, tank farms, industrial areas, generally. They may not line up with the things you might consider like a zoning map or the other pieces of information that are available to you. So consider the geography – the physical geography – when you are planning out who needs to be at the table. Remember that groundwater contamination will not have any boundaries at all. So when you are looking at the issues that you have to deal with, they are going to tell you what the geography is, and that is really the one thing I wanted to point out about this slide. It is just let the project talk to you.

Now as I said, there are a lot of opportunities already built into various processes. The scoping that is done as part of the National Environmental Policy Act is the upfront project planning. You will do public notification as part of that process, too. The consultations that are done as part of the National Historic Preservation Act are another opportunity. Wherever you have got people gathered talking about the project, you have an opportunity to educate them and to learn what they have to say about the project areas. So please take advantage of all of those and keep in mind these overlapping timelines of different requirements.

George Williams: Nothing to add, Jim. I think you covered it.

Jim Potter: Nothing to add?

Jesse Handforth Kome: I have a point, though. [Overtalking] a real item [laughter].

Jim Potter: You said you were going to wait until the end.

Jesse Handforth Kome: I am bad that way. Well, one of the things we have not said super clearly is why would we want you to crash the schedule. Why did we build so much of the environmental review overlap into the normal CDBG participation and beef up consultation so heavily to cover environmental civil rights? And the reason is because there are time limits on the funding and because we have a long experience in disaster recovery that grantees get the money and then they sit and wait eighteen months or two years sometimes while they are trying to do environmental reviews. And they are getting yelled at by urgent citizens who were affected by a disaster. And so we are trying to find some good examples of ways to braid all of these consultation requirements together, reach the vulnerable populations, get input from them, find out what their priorities and needs are, sew that altogether. And so what we are trying to do is explain to you where those opportunities are to fold these things together, braid these things together, so that you can do this good planning and good consultation, and have a fighting chance. So if you are going to go big on Phase 2, when you get invited to Phase 2, to actually be able to finish before the money gets swept back to the US Treasury.

Jim Potter: As I said before, this is all about implementation. We want to see things on the ground so that is a great point, Jesse. Thank you.

George Williams: Yeah. Thanks, Jesse. I do have one thing I might not have amplified enough, and that is about persons with disabilities. I think it is really important that you partner with some of the disability groups in your communities – you know, centers for independent living, other kinds of groups that do advocacy work for disabilities. Because we often think of those folks as simply being wheelchair users. There is such a range of disabilities that require some accommodation. And I would suggest that as you send out notices for meetings or activities that you ask in your notice for persons to identify any special needs they have to be accommodated. You know, you do not want to hire an American sign language interpreter if you do not need one. But if you have got folks who say they are deaf and they need to have that service, you are required to provide it, and other kinds of accommodations like that. So I want you to think expansively about personal disabilities to be sure that they are not left out.

Jesse Handforth Kome: It is also important not just in a consultation phase because the way we define vulnerable populations – with your office's help, George – is as the people who have trouble getting information about the resources and have trouble accessing information about these resources. So you know, if that is true – and those are the vulnerable populations. We did not define them in a traditional way. We said it is really about being able to figure out what to do and then get a hold of those resources. We definitely have research showing that people with disabilities have a special problem in getting a hold of resources.

Jim Potter: Glad you get that, Jesse.

Jesse Handforth Kome: I got that [laughter].

Jim Potter: Very good.

Lynsey Johnson: All right. We are going to switch over now and actually show you the Appendix I, which is the consultation summary that we referenced earlier in the presentation. And once again, this first paragraph here identifies the “musts” – the requirements that must be done through this process. And we have already gone over those earlier in the process.

The second paragraph really encourages eligible applicants to carry out citizen participation that accounts for public input need to fulfill the environmental review and environmental justice responsibilities, as both George and Jim have so eloquently stated today. And then ultimately, the rest of the appendix will highlight, for both state and local applicants, some of the agencies and jurisdictions to consult with. And it goes all the way through – the first part is for the state and the second part is identifying the public.

Meg Barclay: I would like to call out, for the state ones, because they have been very actively asking these questions – the tribes. Because during this time period, FEMA started giving not just county declarations, they started giving tribal declarations. That means that in the early part of the time period, there are declarations that just show counties but there are tribes inside those counties or educational attainment areas in Alaska or where have you. And then, as you go through time here, there is increasingly tribes getting independent declaration. I can tell you from the traffic we are getting at ResilientRecovery@HUD.gov, the tribes are very, very, very interested all across the country in participating. So I would just call it out for state to be careful and look at your counties carefully and see where the tribes are.

Jim Potter: And where they have been is another important aspect. HUD’s got resources, the Tribal Directory Assessment tool, that will allow you to find out where tribes have interests in counties across the country, as well as their physical locations. Because they moved around, as we moved them around, they have got interests and they want to know about ground disturbance and major projects in a lot of different areas where you might not consider that they have any involvement. So keep that in mind. It is a part of the National Historic Preservation Act’s timeline, travel consultation, and it is an important component that is not overt and might trip you up.

Meg Barclay: And it is expensive to miss. It is one of those expensive surprises if you do not do the work.

Lynsey Johnson: And then, the last part of this Appendix I is actually highlighting the consultation summary chart. Instructions are given for you to complete for both Phase 1 and Phase 2. We request that you use the tables to identify the agency and stakeholder group, agency type or target population, the type of outreach, and then also, the method of notification and the ways that you have notified them. So we just wanted to make sure we highlighted and brought your attention to Appendix I, primarily because it is such a large portion of the application process.

Jim Potter: If I could just point out one little thing about Appendix I while we are here, on the second paragraph where it talks about environmental and environmental justice, if you look at about the middle of that paragraph, that is the discussion about special geographies. I mean, descriptions of projects and their alternatives should include all individual activities related to proposed projects, which may include activities that are near, be necessary to the core of the project, or logical parts of the activity.

Meg Barclay: And for Phase 1, you are going to be doing a proposal that is an idea or concept and not yet a project. But thinking about this early is why we have collapsed the Phase 1 and Phase 2 consultation requirement into a single consultation summary that you will submit for Phase 1 and then, update for Phase 2. So this is our effort to get you to think about this early on the project level, even if there is no project phase submitted as part of Phase 1.

Jim Potter: Yeah, I just wanted to point that out because your extent might be different than you would consider it. The traffic improvements, for example, three blocks away are part of your project by a logical connection and they may not be readily apparent. So keep that in mind as you are moving forward in your planning process.

George Williams: I would just like to point out on page three of the document, it refers to eligible nonentitlement uses of government, local government advocates. It has a category called Public and Private Agencies and Businesses, as required by the regulation. Social and fair housing services groups are really valuable groups to be engaged with because it will often be a pathway to reach populations that you might not otherwise know about.

But this is pretty good – children, elderly persons, persons with disabilities, HIV/AIDS families, individuals, homeless persons – those are all populations that need to be consulted with included in this process.

So the list you are prepared – Jesse and company is pretty good.

Jessie Handforth Kome: Yeah, well, you have helped, by the way [laugh]. Thank you.

George Williams: So if you follow these instructions, it is going to be hard to miss the target.

Meg Barclay: Good. I also wanted to point out that in each of the sections for state and entitlement, you will see there is a section at the end. So it starts with “In order to obtain public input needed to fulfill environmental review and environmental justice responsibilities, applicants are also encourage to consult with these other types of agencies.” So that is just a reminder that we have built in some guidance and some tips into this guidance, which is different than the regular CDBG program, about types of agencies to consider on the front end. So that when it comes time to do your environmental review and you get to those types of questions, that process may be more streamlined then. And the funding, again, will be more easily expended by the two-year deadline.

Jim Potter: Great point, Meg, thanks.

Lynsey Johnson: So just some closing remarks to kind of tie everything together. Ultimately, in order to implement a really successful solution, it is so key to identify and seek commitments from both public and private partners. Leverage is a really huge component of this so that is one way to move forward.

Also, developing a really clear outreach plan, as we have already identified with vulnerable and underserved populations, and making sure that you have that really clear up front so that you can go forward in actually implementing with your planning process and decision-making processes.

And then, we ultimately want you to be successful in this application process. We want to see really great projects and meaningful engagement and participation is going to ensure that probability of success for all stakeholders within your communities. Because ultimately, we want communities to become more resilient in these times of strange or weirder weather.

So with that [interruption]...

Meg Barclay: Really quick. While you are here, there was a question about – somebody asked the question, I just wanted to clarify while we were on Appendix I – had asked about it appears that there are lists here for states and not for entitlements. There is a state section that comes first and then if you continue through the document, there is an entitlement section and a list based on the citizen participation regs for CDBG. Just the second half the document addresses units of general local government separately from state.

So if you are – we will show you how to get to the document in a little bit. But that document is one of the appendices to the NOFA and there is a state and an entitlement section, just to be clear.

Jesse Handforth Kome: Yeah, yeah, I think it is actually in the label. Because it says, “Eligible non-entitlement units of general local government.” And I think you just found us a technical amendment for our NOFA. It is for all UGLGs. That word should not be there. It is just for the eligible fifteen units of general local government. Good catch.

Jim Potter: That was more valuable than I thought it was. [Laughter]

Lynsey Johnson: So just to kind of wrap up, we wanted to identify some resources that are made available to applicants right now. And literally daily, there are more and more resources coming out to help you in developing your application. The first one I want to call attention to are the Rockefeller workshops that are going to be convened within Phase 1. Participation in the workshops are going to be offered to every eligible applicant and Rockefeller is going to be working to send out those invites to the identified personnel. They are going to be called Resilience Academies and those academies are going to offer tools and concepts that ultimately will help identify and assess situations in developing your application processes. So when those become available to you, please take advantage and use those really great resources.

We also identified several links here for other resources that you may find useful. The resilience related resources on HUD Exchange, both links there are providing information on techniques, on best practices, in order to be more climate resilient. So we encourage you to take a look at that.

If you have any other questions on the NDRC, in general, we put the fact sheet on the portal, as well as the competition info graphic, which is actually a really nice distilled visual of what is actually going on and who is eligible and actually, the timeline – the diagram that we had up earlier on the slide.

As always, submit any NDRC questions to ResilientRecovery@HUD.gov.

Meg Barclay: That is me, Meg, and Jim.

Lynsey Johnson: Yeah. So with that, I am going to turn it over to Meg.

Meg Barclay: So we are going to do a quick [background noise] between the computer and the microphone here. We want to do a quick demonstration of the webinar series website. Just bear with me for a second while I get the website up onto our screen. One moment.

Jesse Handforth Kome: While she is doing that, I am going to go ahead and – this is Jesse again – tell you that I am trying every Friday to update the FAQs that are on the second link there, the HUDEXchange.infoCDBG-DRResilientRecovery website. We have FAQs posted there and I am updating those because we are trying very hard not to answer a question for one contestant or potential eligible applicants that we are not providing an answer to everybody. So keep an eye on those FAQs. I am just adding them each week's worth at the end and I will update midweek if something really big comes through. So that is one place to keep an eye out for things that are updating and we will put all the links to the webinars there, as well.

And here goes Meg. She has got our screen changed.

Meg Barclay: I am going to share my desktop and this is – all right, so you should now be seeing the National Disaster Resilience Competition website. This is the main website for the NOFA. I expanded it. So over here on the side, you see a training materials bar on the right hand side and you can click on a link to view upcoming NDRC webinars. And this takes you to the page for our webinar series. So this actually has not only upcoming webinars but it also has the links to the materials for past webinars that have already been done, or where you can get information on how to view webinars that we have actually released the login information for. So you see here we have the two – the materials from the very first webinars that we released when the NOFA was released and you can click on these links to get to the recording but also, download the slides for the webinar itself. I will take you to the first one, for instance. Here is where you can view the recording when you click on this link and also, you can download the slides – or you can also download the recording. And you will see, as the webinar series progresses, these save the date links or in the case of webinars that we are planning to pre-record, you will see these links just turn green as we move through the series and make materials available.

So this is definitely one to bookmark. We have a webinar a week, at least. One week, we have two webinars planned between now and the second week of December. So there will be an email a week, also, giving you the information about how to log into that week's webinar and also, letting you know when materials have been listed to this site. So keep this site bookmarked. You will be able to get to it when you need to look and see when the next webinars are coming available.

So another thing I just wanted to show you while we are on this site. We had a question about downloading or getting access to Appendix I. These are the instructions for downloading the NOFA and all the associated documents from Grants.gov are on this website, the NDRC website. So the

first thing you would do is go to Grants.gov. I am just going to take you to it now and hope that it works the way it did the last time I downloaded it. If you go to “Browse Agencies” here, this tab, and choose the Department of Housing and Urban Development, and then you will see the National Disaster Resilience Competition. I am going to click on that. Go to Application Package tab all the way over here on the right and then click Download under Instructions and Applications. And you can either give your email address or click no, you do not want to supply an email address. And you want to go to Download Application Package and that will download a zip file. Actually, I think that may be the source of confusion. I believe Application Instruction – you download Application Instruction. That will download the zip file.

Jesse Handforth Kome: Yeah, you want the one that says “zip.” Just keeping pushing buttons until it gives you the zip file.

Meg Barclay: So it is a little bit misleading with the terminology. You want to choose Instruction and you will get the whole package. This is the package that includes both the – this is the full NOFA describing all of the rating factors and all of the, you know, what is a complete application – all of the things that we will be telling you all about over the next six weeks. But also, you see here all of the appendices including Appendix I.

Jesse Handforth Kome: And that is actually the number one question right now on ResilientRecovery@HUD.gov is, “How do I find Appendix I?” So I mean, people are starting to get into their consultation and realizing that somehow they did not get that appendix.

Meg Barclay: And so with that, we will go into our regular chat – you know, complete Q&A. We are ready to take questions. I think George was going to go through the instructions again for – or flip to the presentation.

Jesse Handforth Kome: The other George.

Meg Barclay: But George, sorry, George Martin from TDA. We will start cycling through the instructions for submitting questions or sort of raising your hands to submit a verbal question. But I am going to go through some of the more common questions we have been getting in the Q&A so far.

Jesse Handforth Kome: Are funds available for planning questions?

Meg Barclay: It has been asked several different ways. So there has been a question about whether funds are available for planning for Phase 1 planning. Jesse can – especially since that is a – the citizen participation is a component of the planning.

Jesse Handforth Kome: Yeah. So that one is – we have an FAQ up on this already. There are no Phase 1 awards, right? The reward for getting through Phase 1 is a; you are going to know a lot more about what you need to be resilient, and b; you are going to do it well enough that you are definitely going to get invited to Phase 2, right?

So first questioner asked whether it would be eligible under the reserve pool to use some of the reserve pool to reimburse planning costs. And the reserve pool is going to be for people who do not get invited – for applicants who do not get invited to Phase 2. And yes, that is possible but you should know that these grants are going to be relatively small and they cannot be entirely for planning. There is a cap the same as in the regular CDBG program. There is the twenty percent cap on planning and admin together. And on public law 113-2, there is a five percent cap on general administration. And general administration is where the eligibility is if you are a city, for example, for applying for other federal grants.

But there is an additional part of the answer that maybe you had not considered and that is that if you are a CDBG-DR – existing CDBG-DR grantee for these disasters – or if you just have regular CDBG fund, you have access to funds for planning and administration. And very few grantees are completely up against their caps. Those are also a potential source of funding for planning costs, citizen input and information costs, and it has always been an eligible CDBG expense under general administration to apply for other federal grant programs, including the supplemental, provided you make a determination and a community development objective.

So there are other possibilities for funding but we are not doing planning-only grants because our funding purses do not allow it.

So that is one question down and that is definitely already in the FAQs.

Meg Barclay: Okay, we have got another question about in the case where a disaster has occurred and homes were destroyed and owners have moved, are there suggestions for reaching out to former residents in areas like that, if that is a potential target area?

Jesse Handforth Kome: That is something that happens a lot. It is very common. As a matter of considering resilience and access to funding – because this is actually, for those of you who are familiar with the Stafford Act, which drives the FEMA funding. This is section, I think 414 or 404 – I think it is 414 is the Stafford Act. And it was actually put in that law as a result of a very, very bad thing that HUD grantee did where people all moved out of a building that was damaged because it was a disaster. And the HUD grantee had wanted to knock down that building for some time and had knocked it down and then would not let the people come back.

So now, it says that if you touch a property with federal disaster funds after a disaster, you have to find those people and treat them as if they are covered by the Uniform Relocation Act. So it is highly motivational to find those people and look for them. But we know that in real life, it can be very difficult when you are this far after, say, a disaster happened in 2011. So what we look for is due diligence. You need to basically put together a plan, do outreach. A lot of grantees have gone to websites where people can come and say, “I used to live here,” or give you documentation and then you check it against your records. It is not true that if the disaster caused them to move that you can then use federal money on that property without triggering the Uniform Relocation Act because the Stafford Act is going to play through on these funds.

George or anybody, do you have any ideas how you can find people after the fact? Particularly renters will move on you. Homeowners tend to leave a trail, right? You know who has a title.

George Williams: I wish I had a magic wand for that one. It is a very difficult problem. There are usually networks that you find through public outreach will help. Community residents know where their neighbors went or they had family somewhere that they are living with. That is one way but it is really haphazard. It is not as predictable as we would like it to be for a process like this. I do not have any better solutions than that.

Someone needs to know where their mail is getting is getting forwarded, where their bills, their property tax bills are showing up. [overtalking]

Jesse Handforth Kome: Yeah, you can [overtalking] things like Privacy Act issues. So it is always tricky but it is sort of push and pull. You put up a thing that tries to catch them, you get word out through the community networks. You, with any kind of luck, can get a high level political who has access to some kind of meeting to announce that you are looking for specific people. And you would need to document due diligence. We definitely see the – we push for the most outreach in the first couple of years after a disaster. If someone has been gone for two or three years, we realize that it is very difficult. We look more for the posting and the looking for them. But you are going to have to consider that there is an obligation for a certain length of time.

And I actually have been reaching out off and on to the Federal Highway Administration to see what the Federal Highway and what the Army Corps of Engineers and what FEMA do when they have a long run situation like this. And all of them, it just starts attenuating across time but we all require due diligence so far, as I know it.

George Williams: And that is really the only thing you can do. Consolidating properties has been a problem with [interruption] urban development projects forever. And absentee landlords are always a problem. It is difficult to find them. Or scattered, sketchy records at best if you can find that. And I think probably one of the only – if you do not have data that shows where they went, then the public outreach is where you need to focus. You need to find out where the neighbors know they went, where they had family. Again, due diligence. Try your best, use your resources, and document it.

Meg Barclay: We have a question about – and I think we have answered this, in general, but I just want to kind of underline it, if we can – about it says, “Can we pretty much follow the CDBG regulations for citizen participation?”

Jesse Handforth Kome: Yes and no. We did not mess with them that much but we put the consultation part of the reg on steroids. We provided alternative requirement. And to the extent that it is not reflected in your local citizens’ participation plan, you are going to have to adjust for those. So it is sort of a “Yeah, but” answer.

It is going to be very different for states, though. States are going to see – because we provided the waiver, it allows states to act directly and not have to distribute the funding. States are not passthroughs, necessarily, here and may not want to be passthroughs given the time constraint. So you are going to have to do more like entitlement style citizen participation plus this beefed-up consultation in order to get through here.

Meg Barclay: This one sounds a little bit like a general NOFA question to me but I think that there is a way that citizen participation and consultation can sort of enhance the response about...

Jesse Handforth Kome: You mean the one in...?

Meg Barclay: ...data. Does the community use previous census and property data for an application of what was – and then, move forward with the idea of what will be.

Jesse Handforth Kome: You would have to use the data that you have. But it may not necessarily be – I mean, if what they mean is previous census data, I mean, you know the disaster in the most impacted and distressed areas basically made that obsolete. So you also – not just poverty data – you probably have some kind of damage or impact data from FEMA at some level of government. You should have access to that. I know that several applicants have – eligible applicants – have already started talking to SBAs to try to get business data from them. And there are contact people from SBA that we are going to be adding to the next FAQ update so they want to help facilitate that if you do not already have access to that data. And there are going to be other sources of disaster effect or impact data that need to be sort of intervening levels. You cannot go straight from poverty and census data in the past to what you want to do without telling us what happened.

Meg Barclay: But Jesse, is there a way that the citizen participation and consultation process could contribute to how you might demonstrate the most impacted and distressed or unmet recovery needs?

Jesse Handforth Kome: Yeah. And I think that is a good observation because I can give a poor example that has already come out that Rockefeller related to us from one of their calls, which is that there is a city that is already notified the state and it is already documented. That they have an entire neighborhood worth of people in a very poor area that were affected by the disaster but distrust the federal government so much they did not sign up for FEMA funding at all. And they are already doing their consultation and they already know they have enough houses that were in a most impacted and distressed area, sub county area, that were obviously affected by the disaster and never fixed. And so that is a very interesting case. The consultation just made them pop through the threshold. They are going to have to document it in accordance with Appendix G. Am I right on that one? But you know, there to document that and it is an interesting question to deal with.

And so consultation may well give you the most impacted area, but gets you by a whole bunch of other thresholds, obviously, too, because low-mod is a threshold. For meeting a national objective if you – you need low-mod, slum/blight, or urgent need. So absolutely.

George Williams: I just wanted to add that most of the environmental review stuff works on the best available data model. So models might be out of date. By definition, it might just be too old to use. There are things like local health assessments, health impact assessments that might have better data about that particular geography that you are interested in. I would definitely search through the local data sources to find best available. We want authoritative, accurate information but it does not necessarily have to be a particular source.

Jesse Handforth Kome: Well, that is an interesting one you bring up on the health. There is a public health – a county who actually did a survey of all of its health immediately after a flooding event and they all flunked safety standards. They pass now. But they know that any time they get another event, they are going to flunk for a month or two again. And you know...

George Martin: Sure...[interruption]

Jesse Handforth Kome: But they had never told their development agency until they started checking as a result of this. So I mean, consultation is definitely going to help you find some things that you did not even know were there, there is no doubt about it.

Meg Barclay: I think that sort of a followup question to that from an existing CDBG-DR grantee, a large – noting that for those disasters - a large amount of community level data has already been collected through public involvement. Could that contribute to the consultation or citizen participation effort they document for the purpose of an application here? Or would there need to be [interruption]...

Jesse Handforth Kome: Yeah, I mean, we know that our NOFA comes out in the middle of the recovery for everybody who has been working on it. And you will see throughout, particularly page one, where the verb tenses keep changing from present to past to future. And it is pretty much intentional. We know that some of you are going to be answering us, saying, “This is what we already did in terms of consultation and we beefed it up in accordance with the NOFA to meet these particular things. But in general, we were done.” Some of you will be saying, “We are in the middle of it and we added on a few things. And here is what we have done and what we will do.” Some of you – a very few of you – are still getting traction on consultation.

So, we are aware that you may have done something. It has got to be after the date of the qualified disaster, whatever your qualified disaster is – or was.

Meg Barclay: Right. I think that is the important clarification there is that it is related to the qualified disaster and probably the area that you are going to be focusing on as part of your potential application, as well. If it is outside of that little nested area in the graphic from before, it may not necessarily – or the area where you would spend your funds for this particular application.

I think that we have gone through most of the questions we have gotten in the Q&A box. George, do you know if there are any that have raised their hands on the phone?

George Martin: I think Jessica, the operator, could tell us that. Jessica, is there anybody waiting with a question on the queue?

Jessica: Yes, you do have a question from the line of Larry Belmont.

Meg Barclay: Go ahead, Larry.

Lynsey Johnson: Hi, Larry.

Larry Belmont: Hi. Actually, it had to do back with Slide 13.

Jesse Handforth Kome: We are all turning pages.

Larry Belmont: And there was mention of applicant's level of government.

Jesse Handforth Kome: Yup, that is the eligible applicant.

Larry Belmont: Okay, that is what I needed to know. In Pennsylvania, we have the Commonwealth and then we have two counties.

Jesse Handforth Kome: Right. I must point out these are minimum.

Larry Belmont: Right. Oh, right, I understand, yeah, yeah. Yeah, but it did kind of make me wonder. Does that mean that a Commonwealth wide forum would be acceptable?

Jesse Handforth Kome: These are minimum.

Larry Belmont: Okay.

Jesse Handforth Kome: Remember, this citizen participation is layered in with a lot of consultation requirement for the most impacted in this area.

Larry Belmont: Right, I understand. It just struck me as an unusual way to phrase it, that is all. Thank you.

Jesse Handforth Kome: Yeah, we do not usually try to work with both state level and entitlement level, you know, UGLG level applicants in the same thing. And this is what we did for NSP and it worked pretty well. So we went with this again.

Meg Barclay: Thanks, Larry. Are there any other questions on the phone?

Jessica: There are no more audio questions.

Meg Barclay: All right.

Jesse Handforth Kome: Okay, I have noticed a few questions in the queue that are not on citizen participation or consultation, at least not apparently. Please do send your questions to ResilientRecovery@HUD.gov. So far, we have been able to maintain responding to like ninety percent of the questions within twenty-four hours. And I will not swear we can keep that up as we get closer and closer to deadline but we are going to try. Right, Meg?

Meg Barclay: Sure [laughter].

Jesse Handforth Kome: So please send them there and watch for the updates on the FAQs. And thank you very much to whoever it was that pointed out the extra word in Appendix I, the nonentitlement word in the title of that. Eligible should be just eligible units of general local government, not eligible nonentitlement units. You are an eligible applicant of the City, please follow the – not the state directions, the UGLG directions. And we will get that fixed as soon as we can figure out how to do a technical amendment on Grants.gov.

Meg Barclay: We can start an FAQ in the meantime.

Jesse Handforth Kome: Yeah, we can do an FAQ in the meantime.

Meg Barclay: Great.

Jesse Handforth Kome: It will go, “Whoops.”

Meg Barclay: That may be our first one.

Jesse Handforth Kome: Oh, no, Oh no. We have got another one-word one I have got to fix. Fortunately, it is in Phase 2.

Meg Barclay: All right then.

Jesse Handforth Kome: Anybody else have a question you want to type in the queue?

Meg Barclay: Okay. Well, I think that that actually takes us right up to about the amount of time we had planned for this webinar. To thank you, everyone, for getting on the phone. We appreciate your time. We will be posting the slides and the recording and the transcript of this webinar in the next couple of days and you will see them on that webinar series website that we demonstrated earlier on in the presentation. Anybody else have any other parting remarks? Thank you very much.

[Multiple Speakers]

Meg Barclay: Thank you very much. Everybody have a great Thursday.

Jim Potter: Good luck.

Jessica: This does conclude today’s conference. Thank you for your participation. You may now disconnect.