Guidebook: Maximizing Investments Toolkit

Contents

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1. Introduction to Toolkit

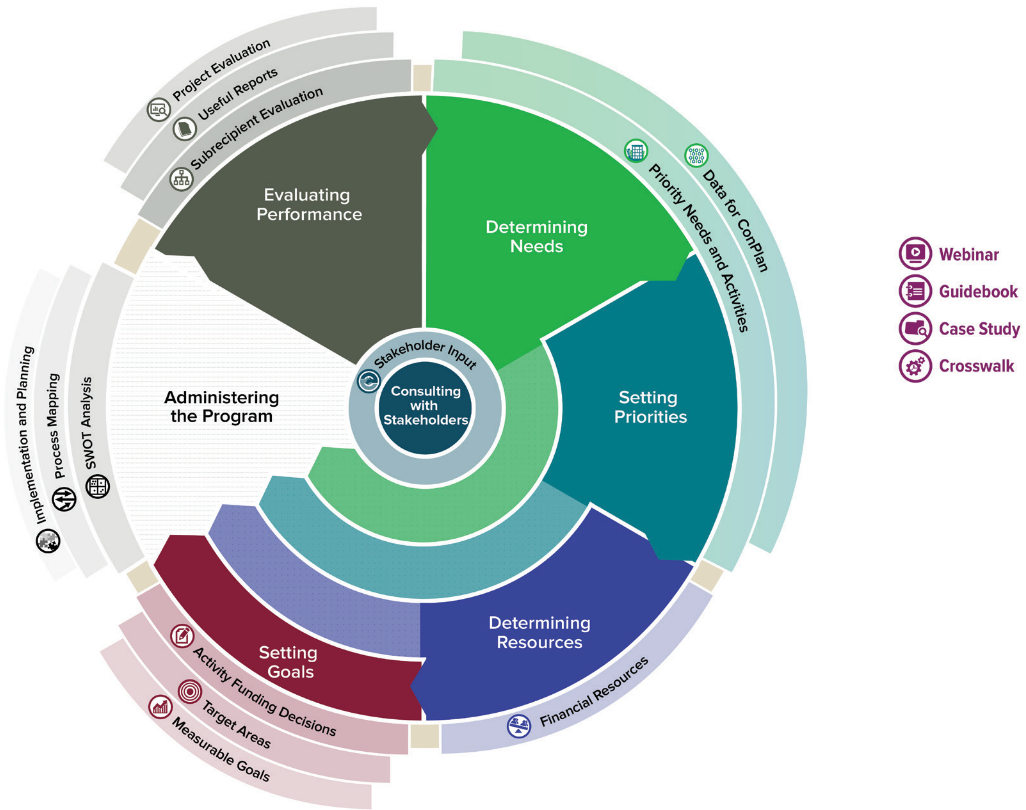
The Maximizing Investments Toolkit does not introduce the concept of planning. Rather it assumes that the grantee has a basic understanding of the planning process. The tools are designed to help grantees leverage their planning knowledge to support maximizing their investments.

In view of changing economic environments nationally and in many local housing markets, grantees must reassess how they use their federal, state, local, and private funds. Program design and redesign often occurs only every three to five years as grantees undertake the consolidated planning process. However, throughout the implementation cycle, grantees should continually evaluate and adjust their programs to ensure that resources are being used as effectively and efficiently as possible to meet their goals. HUD encourages grantees to regularly look at how they invest their Community Planning and Development (CPD) program resources, increase the extent to which they leverage other funds, and develop place-based strategies that result in greater impact.

The Maximizing Investments Toolkit includes tools and guidance to help grantees identify local housing and community development needs and determine how to use available resources most effectively to address those needs. The tools are intended to help grantees navigate the process of setting goals for their investments and identify ways to maximize the impacts of these investments. In essence, the Toolkit helps answer this question: With high demand and limited funds, how can grantees make a real difference? Making well-informed and strategic choices is the first step.

The tools provided here will help grantees leverage the CPD investments they are planning in their communities with existing assets and resources that may be available locally. Such investments might be a plan to build a new library, launch new social services for seniors, redevelop an underutilized site, or undertake a specific partnership opportunity. The Maximizing Investments Toolkit also includes tools that will help grantees identify and bring new resources to their communities. While the tools are geared to helping grantees with consolidated planning, they also are designed to assist grantees with program design, whether it occurs as part of or outside of the consolidated planning process.

Consolidated Planning Process and Maximizing Investments Toolkit



1.1 Linking the Maximizing Investments Toolkit to the eCon Planning Suite in IDIS

In May 2012, HUD's Office of Community Planning and Development (CPD) introduced the eCon Planning Suite to help grantees use the consolidated planning process to promote the strategic use of CPD program funds and create programmatic efficiencies. The eCon Planning Suite does this by creating a common planning platform for the CDBG, HOME, HOPWA, and ESG programs, uploading data into the system and providing spatial analysis tools.

With the eCon Planning Suite, grantees can create needs-based and market-driven housing and community development plans that leverage multiple resources. The eCon Planning Suite, including the Consolidated Plan Template in IDIS and CPD Maps, supports grantees in identifying priority needs and geographic target areas. Taken together, the planning suite and the maps can help grantees assess the full scope of affordable housing and community development concerns, including any geographic variations within the jurisdiction.

The tools in the Maximizing Investments Toolkit support the different elements of the Consolidated Plan Template in IDIS and, where appropriate, indicate links to specific screens of the Consolidated Plan Template. The tools also identify areas where the information provided in the template can inform other components of the planning process.

A table presented later (section 2.1) illustrates the connections between the components of the consolidated planning process and the tools in the Maximizing Investments Toolkit as well as how they relate to the specific sections of the Consolidated Plan Template.

1.2 Components of the Consolidated Planning Process

Stage	Description
Consulting with Stakeholders	Grantees are required to provide opportunities for public participation and consultation while developing the Consolidated Plan. Grantees must summarize their citizen participation efforts, including efforts to broaden public participation, and summarize citizen comments or views on the plan, including comments not accepted and the reasons why they were not accepted.
Evaluating Performance	Tracking progress throughout the program year can help grantees identify and address issues that could otherwise lead to difficulty satisfying commitment and expenditure requirements. Tracking progress also gives grantees an opportunity to evaluate the effectiveness of their programs.
Determining Needs	The grantee should define the varying needs within the community in the areas of affordable housing, community development, and homelessness through a needs assessment and a market analysis.
Setting Priorities	The level of community need will likely always be greater than the resources available to meet the need. Accordingly, the first step of the Strategic Plan is to prioritize needs. Priority needs should be addressed by the goals outlined in the Strategic Plan.
Determining Resources	The grantee should identify the financial and organizational resources available to address priority needs, knowing that the level of resources available will play a key role in determining strategies and goals.
Setting Goals	Once priorities have been established, grantees must develop a set of goals based on the availability of resources and local organizational capacity.
Administering the Program	Grant administration and project implementation are critical to the success of programs. By assessing how programs are administered, grantees can ensure efficient and effective program operation.

The consolidated planning process, like the program design process, has several components, or stages, during which knowledge is accumulated and applied. The Maximizing Investments Toolkit focuses specifically on how grantees can analyze data and evaluate opportunities during each of these stages to develop strategies that maximize the impacts of CPD funds. The tools and products included in the Maximizing Investments Toolkit cover planning that is both needs-driven and place-based and relate to the following critical components of the planning process.

The first two components of planning— 1) Consulting with Stakeholders and 2) Evaluating Performance— are the cornerstones of consolidated planning and program design and should be woven throughout the planning and design process. Public participation and program evaluation will help grantees make informed decisions throughout the planning process.

1.3 The Iterative Nature of Consolidated Planning

The information gathering and assessment process for each of the components of the Consolidated Plan framework inform and influence the other components. For example, when consulting with stakeholder organizations on community need, a grantee may also explore the organization's capacity, other projects, and financial leveraging opportunities. The information gathered should inform not only the needs assessment but also the strategic and action plans. When working through each of the components of the process, the grantee should look for and respond to areas of convergence and opportunity that may surface, as well as identify any gaps that will need to be addressed.

The different components of the planning process function like pieces of a puzzle that can be assembled in multiple ways using different sequences that ultimately form a complete picture. Because there is no one way to approach strategic planning for the Consolidated Plan, and no one way to maximum the impact of program funds, HUD has designed the Maximizing Investments Toolkit to allow grantees to use the tools that best fit their planning needs at any stage within the process.

While the Maximizing Investments Toolkit is organized according to how each tool most directly relates to the components of the consolidated planning process, many of the tools can contribute to more than one component. This reflects the iterative nature of consolidated planning; information the grantee learns in one stage may inform other aspects of the plan. Ultimately, when identifying goals and priorities, grantees should consider all of the information they have gathered throughout the process.

1.4 Program Design as Part of the Consolidated Planning Process

Program design is an integral part of the consolidated planning process. While preparing the Consolidated Plan, grantees evaluate existing programs to determine how well they are meeting changing community needs. The planning process allows grantees to take a step back and evaluate their goals and strategies as well as their ability to implement programs effectively. As a result, a grantee may decide to discontinue some programs and modify others.

When a grantee approaches program design outside of the consolidated planning process, the process may look the same but be completed on a smaller scale. Instead of reviewing all programs at the same time within the larger context of the Consolidated Plan, grantees can evaluate and design a program at any point during implementation. Grantees may choose to evaluate one or two programs at a time or focus on several at once. Often, changes to program design that are made outside of the consolidated planning process require an amendment to the grantee's Consolidated Plan.

Program design review outside of the consolidated planning process is often prompted by a change in internal or external circumstances, such as the loss of administrative capacity or a change in a market dynamic. Regardless of the catalyst, grantees will follow a similar process. The tools in the Maximizing Investments Toolkit are designed to assist grantees with program design as part of or outside of the consolidated planning process.

1.5 Program Design Considerations

Focus on Change

For HUD grantees, program design begins with an examination of current housing and community development programs to identify where changes are needed to improve efficiency and effectiveness and better respond to current conditions. Sometimes grantees are resistant to change because they and their stakeholders are accustomed to operating programs in a certain way. By realizing that programmatic changes are essential in new economic environments, grantees can lay the foundation for stakeholder understanding that even though institutional change is often difficult, it is necessary.

Capacity to Design Programs

Program design takes staff focus and time. Many variables need to be considered to ensure that the program remains effective despite changing economic conditions. While the need for evaluating and changing a program design may be clear, grantees should pay special attention to how the design will be carried out and by whom. When undertaking program restructuring, the grantee must ensure that staff capacity is adequate for evaluating and making thoughtful decisions about how to modify a program while also maintaining quality in existing programming.

Data Quality

To make data-driven decisions about program design, grantees need good information. The available data must be evaluated for accuracy and sufficient detail to represent community needs and market conditions. In its analysis, a grantee must consider the limitations of the data.

Data points both internal and external to the grantee agency or department should be taken into account. Data can explain external market mechanics—such as housing market dynamics, poverty rates, and business development trends—and gauge internal effectiveness— such as the grantee's and subrecipients' ability to meet goals, achieve outcomes, and deliver services in a timely way.

Program Redesign and Project Selection

Often a grantee's program design decisions influence project selection criteria. The criteria the grantee has used in the past to select housing and community development projects may change subtly or radically. The grantee should clearly articulate these selection criteria changes in its program design guidance documents, explaining why the changes will improve the program and how they will guide funding decisions in the future. This can reduce confusion or misunderstanding in the community about the aims of the new program structure and why the changes are necessary.

Current and Potential Partner Evaluation

Grantees rely on strong partnerships to implement effective programs and adjustments to program design may require new skill sets for program implementation. Partners from previous engagements may not be appropriate for carrying out new requirements. Grantees should consider how they will evaluate the fit of current and future organizational partners. Some things they may consider include partners'

- current staff capacity,
- management capacity,
- financial stability,
- history of compliance with program requirements,
- professional qualifications, and
- quality of previous work.

Systems and Administrative Infrastructure

To ensure efficiency and effectiveness in program delivery, the grantee must develop strong program administrative systems. Without adequate internal infrastructure, implementing effective programs is difficult as critical components of program administration and compliance are liable to be overlooked and ensuing problems can disrupt program delivery. When engaging in a program design process, a grantee must assess its administrative capacity in such areas as financial management and policies and procedures.

In particular, grantees should determine whether program changes will add administrative burden in a resource-limited environment. Because the goal is to create programs that are effective and financially efficient, grantees should carefully review program costs, including hidden administrative costs, to weigh the costs against the benefits of a new program design.

Grantees should ask themselves the following questions:

What services and activities do we currently provide? What works well? What doesn't? How can we improve program administration?

What programmatic changes are needed now or will be needed in the future? What new systems and administrative infrastructure will we need to implement them?

2. Maximizing Investments Tools

This section describes how the tools in the Maximizing Investment Toolkit are designed to help with the various stages of the planning process. As mentioned previously, given the iterative nature of the consolidated planning process, the tools can be used at multiple points in the process. It is not necessary for grantees to take advantage of every tool or product available listed here. HUD encourages grantees to use the tools that work best for their situation, based on the capacity and organization of the grantee and/or participating jurisdiction.

The Maximizing Investments Toolkit includes the following tools:

Webinar: Using the Consolidated Plan to Maximize Investments—This video introduction to the Maximizing Investments Toolkit reviews what it means to maximize investments and how consolidated planning and the toolkit support the effective use of resources.

Case Study: Neighborhood Planning in Rye, Indiana—This fictional case study illustrates how community involvement and intentional planning can increase the impact of grantee investments. Highlights of several tools that connect to the planning process and screenshots of the Consolidated Plan Template and maps created with CPD Maps demonstrate how real communities can use HUD toolkits.

Crosswalk: Linking the Consolidated Plan Template to the Maximizing Investment Toolkit—The crosswalk is a matrix that links each tool to the Consolidated Plan regulations and the applicable screens of the Consolidated Plan Template in IDIS. Use the crosswalk to see how and when to use the Maximizing Investment tools to support creation of a collaborative, data-driven, and strategic Consolidated Plan.

Using Stakeholder Input in Consolidated Planning—This suite includes guidance for effectively engaging with stakeholders and identifying capable partners. It includes a user-friendly tool to help manage the consultation process, catalogue and sort input, and generate reports to assist with grantee analysis.

Evaluating Subrecipients to Optimize Performance—This tool helps grantees conduct a performance evaluation for subrecipients and subgrantees and to use the results to inform future strategies and investment decisions. Use this tool to go beyond compliance monitoring to get the most out of partnerships.

Using Reports to Assess Progress and Inform Planning—This tool assists grantees with evaluating their performance to inform future strategies and investment decisions. Grantees already prepare and review IDIS accomplishment reports and annual reports for HUD; this tool is designed to help grantees analyze the data in these reports to determine whether their Action Plan goals are being met and if their goals and strategies should be adjusted.

Weighing the Value of Projects and Activities—This tool provides guidance on funding decisions by helping grantees review the alignment of funded projects and activities with their vision and goals. It also provides guidance on what to do if projects and activities are misaligned with vision and goals. Use this tool to ensure projects and activities are working toward the desired outcomes.

Matching Priority Needs with Activities—This tool is designed to help grantees explore activities that can be implemented (in-house or with partners) to address priority needs. By creating a crosswalk between data points about community needs and potential activities, this tool helps grantees take the first step in data-driven strategy development.

Using Data for Consolidated Planning—This tool guides grantees in using data effectively and accurately in consolidated planning and identifies strategies for avoiding information overload. A checklist provides an organized guide to data points and sources that can be used to complete each section of the eCon Planning Template.

Deciding Which Activities to Fund—This tool outlines factors that grantees may wish to consider in making and evaluating investment decisions. The factors include priority needs, market conditions, geographic targets, potential partners, and HUD resources. Use this tool to compare activities or specific proposals to see which are likely to help reach grantee goals.

Developing Goals and Strategies for Target Areas—Place-based planning focuses on the revitalization of an area by building on its assets and leveraging other investments to generate a larger overall impact. By working with community partners to define and coordinate strategies and leverage other funding resources, grantees can create a critical mass of investment to propel revitalization forward. This tool guides grantees through developing a vision, goals, and strategies and designing activities to implement place-based investment in their communities.

Writing Measurable Goals—This tool uses a FAQ (frequently asked questions) format to explain the role of goal setting in the consolidated planning process. Follow the examples and illustrations to develop measurable goals and objectives using the SMART method: specific, measurable, action oriented, realistic, and time-based.

Assessing Capacity with SWOT Analysis—SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats) is a standard method organizations can use to assess their internal and external capacity. Grantees can use this tool to complete a SWOT in person or remotely using our collaborative online tool.

Improving Performance with Process Mapping—Process mapping is a way of reviewing existing processes and improving them for maximum efficiency and effectiveness. Efficient and effective processes contribute to maximizing investments by ensuring that grantees are administering programs cost-effectively and have good staff morale and good working relationships with partners, leading to efficient project delivery and successful projects. Grantees can follow instructions provided by this tool to successfully use process mapping at their organizations.

Thinking About Implementation When Planning—When planning how they will use HUD funds, grantees should carefully consider how they will implement their programs. This tool will guide grantees in developing strategies and activities that are not only feasible but that also can be delivered efficiently and cost-effectively.

2.1 Putting It Together: Consolidated Planning, the Consolidated Plan Template, and the Maximizing Investments Toolkit

The matrix below illustrates how the tools in the Maximizing Investments Toolkit relate to each of the components of the Consolidated Plan Template described earlier. This process is not linear; grantees can pick and choose the tools that are most useful to them at any point in the process.

Stages	eCon Plan Template Screen(s)	Maximizing Investments Tools
Introductory Materials	These tools do not relate to specific screens in the eCon Plan Template. They are introductory materials to the Maximizing Investments Toolkit.	Webinar: Using the Consolidated Plan to Maximize Investments Case Study: Neighborhood Planning in Rye, Indiana Crosswalk: Linking the eCon Plan Template to Maximizing Investment Toolkit
Consulting with Stakeholders	Consultation: PR-10 Citizen Participation: PR-15 Needs Assessment: NA-10 to NA-50 Market Analysis: MA-10 to MA-50 Institutional Delivery Structure: SP-40	Using Stakeholder Input in Consolidated Planning
Evaluating Performance	CAPER: CR-05 to CR-75	Evaluating Subrecipients to Optimize Performance Using Reports to Assess Progress and Inform Planning Weighing the Value of Projects and Activities
Determining Needs and Setting Priorities	Needs Assessment: NA-10 to NA-50 Market Analysis: MA-10 to MA-50 Priority Needs: SP-25	Matching Priority Needs with Activities Using Data for Consolidated Planning
Determining Resources	Consultation:PR-10 Institutional Delivery Structure: SP-40 Goals: SP-45 Influence of Market Conditions: SP-30 Anticipated Resources: SP-35 Expected Resources: AP-15	

Setting Goals	Goals: SP-45 Annual Goals and Objectives: AP-20	Deciding Which Activities to Fund Developing Goals and Strategies for Target Areas Writing Measurable Goals
Administering the Program	Institutional Delivery Structure: SP-40 Monitoring: SP-80	Assessing Capacity with SWOT Analysis Improving Performance with Process Mapping Thinking About Implementation When Planning

3. How to Use the Maximizing Investments Toolkit

HUD expects grantees to use the Maximizing Investments Toolkit in ways that are appropriate to the grantees' unique circumstances. Grantees may use the tools at different points in the planning process and in the sequence that is most useful to them. This section illustrates one of the many ways a grantee might approach using the Maximizing Investments Toolkit:

Getting Started: Grantees should use these tools to orient themselves to the toolkit and understand how the tools fit into the planning process.

- **Webinar:** This webinar will orient grantees to the Maximizing Investments Toolkit and describe how to use the toolkit during the consolidated planning process for a holistic approach to addressing community needs.
- **Case Study:** Grantees can review the case study to see examples and applications of the concepts embedded in many of the tools.
- **Crosswalk:** Grantees can use this tool in two ways: (1) they can start with the critical components (consulting with stakeholders, evaluating performance, determining needs, setting priorities, determining resources, setting goals, and administering the program) to learn how to incorporate them into the IDIS screens or (2) they can start with the Con Plan screens (Needs Assessment, Market Analysis, Strategic Plan) to see which components should be addressed in each screen.

Once grantees have familiarized themselves with the steps and components of the process, they can use the following tools to add information about partners, past performance, and impacts to assess the strengths and weaknesses of their community development programs.

- **Using Stakeholder Input in Consolidated Planning:** This tool helps grantees think about when, where, and how to involve stakeholders in planning and how to catalogue stakeholder comments to identify patterns and common themes.

- **Using Reports to Assess Progress and Inform Planning:** This tool can inform grantees about the previous year's accomplishments and identify what worked effectively and what could be improved.
- **Assessing Capacity with SWOT Analysis:** Grantees may use SWOT analysis to determine their current position in the marketplace, opportunities for influence, and future strategy.
- **Thinking About Implementation When Planning:** Thinking ahead to the implementation phase during planning can help ensure that activities grantees will eventually fund are feasible and to factor in potential challenges early in the process.

These tools provide guidance to grantees on how to assess local resources, areas of high and low capacity, and the current programmatic environment in which the community development programs operate. The information gleaned from these tools can provide a platform from with to launch discussions with the community and stakeholders and help the grantee interpret findings discovered through the needs assessment process.

When assembling data and consulting with the community and stakeholders to determine current needs and market conditions, grantees may start to develop a vision for the community. The following tools may help the grantee analyze information to decide on its strategic priorities and refine its vision. Ultimately, the grantees' goals will be informed by the needs it can address effectively.

- **Matching Priority Needs with Activities:** This tool enables grantees to link need data with potential activities to assess how the activities will work to address the needs.
- **Using Data for Consolidated Planning:** This tool will help grantees use available resources to their advantage and explore ways to use data effectively and accurately.
- **Deciding Which Activities to Fund:** This tool helps grantees identify and assess potential investments to meet goals.

Once the grantee has outlined a vision for the community or a target area, it must articulate specific goals and planned activities. However, to establish feasible and productive goals, the grantee needs to determine its priorities and assess potential strategies. The tools below are designed to help grantees define the outcomes they seek, develop informed strategies, and identify the activities that will result in the desired outcomes.

- **Deciding Which Activities to Fund:** This tool helps grantees to identify and assess potential investments to meet goals.

- **Evaluating Subrecipients to Optimize Performance:** This tool can be used by grantees to assess the ability of current partners to perform the roles to which they already have been assigned and to ensure that they are operating optimally.
- **Using Reports to Assess Progress and Inform Planning:** This tool helps grantees to assess progress to see if goals are realistic.
- **Weighing the Value of Projects and Activities:** This tool helps grantees to identify if current programs support strategies and gives guidance for program realignment.
- **Developing Goals and Strategies for Target Areas:** This tool helps grantees consider place-based planning strategies as an option in their planning process.
- **Writing Measurable Goals:** This tool teaches grantees how to write goals that are measurable, time focused, clear, and achievable. Goals are critical for the planning process, to assist grantees in measuring results, and in demonstrating the effects of program-funded activities.

Together, these tools help grantees determine what is working well and what could be improved with respect to funding, programs, and partners to achieve the goals and outcomes of the plan in development.

Grantees will want to periodically evaluate their performance. This is a critical step to ensure that programs are effective in addressing needs and achieving the grantees' objectives. The following tools are designed to assist grantees with evaluating performance and using the results of this assessment to strengthen programs:

- **Evaluating Subrecipients to Optimize Performance:** Grantees can use the performance evaluation of subrecipients to inform future strategy and investment decisions.
- **Using Reports to Assess Progress and Inform Planning:** Grantees can analyze progress reports to illustrate the impacts of their investments, figuring out what works and what does not.
- **Weighing the Value of Projects and Activities:** Grantees can use this tool to guide upcoming funding decisions; the checklist helps grantees assess alignment of investments with goals.
- **Improving Performance with Process Mapping:** Grantees can use process mapping to make changes to implementation systems within the organization.

Grantees may use these tools to support a feedback loop to evaluate the impacts of their activities on an ongoing basis. These tools help to determine if partners are successfully supporting the plan, if programs align with the mission, and if the overall plan is on track.

4. Additional Guidance and Resources

HUD has developed written guidance and several other toolkits to assist grantees with the consolidated planning process. Below is a glossary of common terms, resources that are available on the HUD Exchange, and a list of other toolkits with a brief description.

4.1 Commonly Used Terms

Following is a list of terms used throughout the Maximizing Investments Toolkit and their definitions for the purposes of this toolkit.

Activity: a project or service that is funded with CPD funds.

Asset: a community feature that adds value and is advantageous to the area. Examples of community assets include transit stops, educational and other institutions, private investment in the area, infrastructure features, and local partner capacity.

Citizen participation: opportunities for the public to participate in the development of the Consolidated Plan, as required by regulation at 24 CFR 91.105, 91.115. For example, the jurisdiction may hold meetings and focus groups, conduct surveys, provide written correspondence, and make the draft plan available for public comment for a specified period.

Consultation: the process by which jurisdictions reach out to and work with other public and private agencies in developing the Consolidated Plan.

Goals: the grantee's plans to use the resources available to address priority needs. The goals serve as a management tool to help the grantee track and monitor performance throughout the term of the Consolidated Plan.

Grantee: a recipient of CDBG, HOME, ESG, and/or HOPWA funding.

Investments: the expenditure of CPD and other funding to develop an asset that is expected to produce desired results at a later time.

Leveraging: use of non-HUD resources to support investment of HUD program funding. Resources can be financial or in-kind contributions.

Priority Need: a lack of something requisite, desirable, or useful and requiring supply or relief that will be addressed by the goals outlined in the Strategic Plan.

Partners: organizations that implement or assist in implementing activities or that contribute funding. Partners can be individuals, businesses, or agencies that are key investors of HUD resources in the area.

Projects: the eligible programs or activities that will take place during the program year to address the priority needs and specific objectives identified in the Strategic Plan.

Resources: the federal, state, local, and private funding expected to be available to the jurisdiction to address priority needs and specific objectives identified in the Strategic Plan.

Stakeholder: a person, community, organization or entity that is affected directly or indirectly by the goals and strategies of the Consolidated Plan.

Subrecipient: a public or private nonprofit agency, authority, or organization, or an entity receiving funds from the recipient to undertake eligible projects and activities.

Target areas: locally designated areas where revitalization efforts are carried out through multiple activities in a coordinated and geographically concentrated manner.

4.2 HUD Guidance

For additional guidance on the consolidated planning process and completing the eCon Planning Suite Template in IDIS, please refer to the eCon Planning Suite Manual, available at https://www.hudexchange.info/resource/2641/econ-planning-suite-desk-guide-idis-conplan-action-plan-caper-per/ .

For additional guidance on CPD Maps, please refer to the CPD Maps Desk Guide https://www.hudexchange.info/resource/2405/cpd-maps-desk-guide/

For specific Consolidated Plan content questions, please consult the regulations, which can be found at http://www.hud.gov/offices/cpd/about/conplan/pdf/finalrule_bookview.pdf

For frequently asked questions and answers, please consult the FAQ section https://www.hudexchange.info/resource/3177/econ-planning-suite-faqs/

For tutorials and webinars about the eCon planning suite and CPD maps, visit the HUD Exchange https://www.hudexchange.info/consolidated-plan/

For technical help using the Consolidated Plan Template in IDIS, refer to the troubleshooting guide https://www.hudexchange.info/resource/2650/troubleshooting-guide-consolidated-plan-template-in-idis/

In addition to the guidance above, HUD plans to release an online curriculum in Fall of 2015. This curriculum will be available in the Consolidated Plan section of the HUD Exchange.

4.3 Other Related Toolkits

eCon Planning Suite Citizen Participation and Consultation Toolkit

This toolkit provides strategies for grantees that would like to review and assess existing citizen participation and consultation practices. It also provides tools for planning future outreach activities. The objectives of this toolkit are to help grantees do the following:

- Use the eCon Planning Suite to analyze and communicate housing and community development needs and meet the citizen participation and consultation requirements in the consolidated planning process.
- Assess existing citizen participation and consultation efforts and identify strengths and weaknesses to improve future efforts.

- Engage stakeholders and the public in developing strategies to address needs and improve the Consolidated Plan as a whole.
- Learn about "best practices" in citizen participation and consultation that can be achieved through the use of new technology, such as the eCon Planning Suite and other Internet-based platforms

The toolkit includes quick-start guides for 19 activities that can be used to address different citizen participation or consultation priorities.

https://www.hudexchange.info/consolidated-plan/econ-planning-suite-citizen-participation-and-consultation-toolkit/

Guide to the Data-Driven Planning Toolkit in CPD Maps

The Data-Driven Planning Toolkit in CPD Maps helps HUD grantees analyze and compare housing and economic development data by neighborhood, surrounding jurisdiction, county, region, and other states.

Using the Toolkit to design data-driven Consolidated Plan priorities and strategies can benefit HUD grantees in a number of ways, including the following:

- Identifying which housing and economic problems are most prevalent within the jurisdiction
- Assisting with the needs assessment and market analysis requirements of the Consolidated Plan
- Displaying the geographic relationships of the most severe problems, so grantees can allocate limited resources and set appropriate goals to address priority needs

This guide explains how to set up and use the Data-Driven Planning Toolkit effectively to interpret a broad range of data and apply it to the consolidated planning process.

https://www.hudexchange.info/resource/3818/guide-to-the-data-driven-planning-toolkit-in-cpd-maps/