

CITIZEN PARTICIPATION PLAN



CITY OF ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND

Adopted May 1999

INTRODUCTION

In 1994, the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) issued regulations governing the planning process for Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds. This planning process, known as the Consolidated Plan, is a comprehensive planning document that identifies the City's overall housing and community needs and maps out a strategy to address those needs.

These regulations also require that Annapolis adopt a Citizen Participation Plan that sets forth the City's policies and procedures for involving citizens in the planning process. The City of Annapolis, following the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) regulations found in 24 CFR Part 91, Section 105 of the Consolidated Plan regulations, has developed the following Citizen Participation Plan. The citizen participation and consultation process is an essential component in the development of the City's Consolidated Plan.

Toward this end the City will solicit and encourage citizen participation through its Housing and Community Development Committee (HCDC). HCDC is a seven-member committee responsible for planning and implementing housing and community development projects in the City. The committee consists of three City aldermen who are the three members of the City's housing and human welfare committee, the chair of the Annapolis Housing Authority and three residents of the city who possess a demonstrated interest in housing and community development concerns. HCDC meets monthly (fourth Wednesday) at 7:30 p.m. in the City Council Chamber, 160 Duke of Gloucester Street, Annapolis, Maryland. Additionally, the committee holds special meetings in the community to give citizens opportunities to participate in planning activities. HCDC reviews and recommends for City Council approval all CDBG funding applications.

ANNAPOLIS CITIZEN PARTICIPATION AND CONSULTATION PROCESS

The citizen participation and consultation process is an essential component in the development of Annapolis' Consolidated Plan. It is a process designed to solicit maximum participation from public agencies, nonprofit organizations, financial institutions and the public. The purpose of the citizens' participation plan is to ensure that those most affected by the City's community planning and development programs will be involved in the consolidated planning process.

Annapolis will solicit ideas from many groups during the consolidated planning process. These groups include but are not limited to advocacy groups for the disabled, the homeless, and the elderly, nonprofit housing developers and community housing development organizations; public agencies; banks and other lending institutions; nonprofit public service providers; advocacy groups for affordable and supportive housing; and the public.

The primary goals of the public participation process are:

1. Provide for and encourage citizens to participate in the Consolidated Plan development emphasizing participation by persons of low and moderate-income residents of areas where the City may use CDBG program funds.
2. Give citizens reasonable and timely access to local meetings, information, and records relating to the City's proposed use of funds, as required by regulations of the program, for the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) and the Section 108 Loan Guarantee Program.
3. Furnish citizens information that includes but is not limited to:
 - a. The anticipated amount of CDBG and Section 108 Loan Guarantee Program funds available for the current fiscal year (including the grant and anticipated program income).
 - b. The range of activities that the City may undertake with the CDBG and Section 108 Loan Guarantee Program funds.
 - c. The estimated amount of CDBG and Section 108 Loan Guarantee Program funds proposed for activities that will meet the national objective of benefit to low-and moderate-income persons.
 - d. The proposed CDBG and Section 108 Loan Guarantee Program activities likely to result in displacement and the City's anti-displacement and relocation plans required according to 24 CFR Part 570.488.
4. Provide for technical assistance to groups representing low-and moderate-income persons that request such assistance in developing proposals according to procedures outlined in the City's Consolidated Plan.
5. Provide for public hearings for obtaining citizens' views responding to proposals and questions. The hearings will cover community development and housing needs, development of proposed activities and a review of program performance. HCDC will hold the public hearings at times and locations convenient to potential or actual beneficiaries. Additionally, HCDC will make accommodations for persons with disabilities, and non-English speaking residents where a significant number can reasonably be expected to participate.
6. Give citizens reasonable advance notice of, and opportunity to comment on, proposed activities and, for grants already made, activities that the City proposes to add, delete or change substantially from the City's application to HUD. Substantially changed means changes made in purpose, scope, location or beneficiaries as defined by criteria established by the City.

7. Give citizens the address, phone number, and times for submitting complaints and grievances, and provide timely written responses to written complaints and grievances, within fifteen working days, where practical.

FEDERAL REQUIREMENTS FOR THE CITIZEN'S PARTICIPATION PLAN

According to Section 91.105 of HUD's proposed rule for the consolidated plan for community planning and development programs, the City must design the citizen participation plan to incorporate the following required elements:

A. Applicability to The City of Annapolis

- (1) HUD requires that Annapolis adopt a citizen participation plan outlining the manner in which it will encourage citizen involvement in the development of the City's Consolidated Plan because it receives funds under HUD's Community Planning and Development programs, which include the CDBG and the Section 108 Loan Guarantee Programs. In addition, Annapolis must have a HUD-approved Consolidated Plan as a prerequisite to receiving HUD funding under most programs.
- (2) Annapolis will encourage citizen participation, emphasizing the involvement of low and moderate-income persons, particularly those living in areas where the City proposes to use CDBG Program funds. The City intends to take whatever actions are appropriate to encourage participation of all its citizens, including minorities and non-English speaking persons, and persons with mobility, visual or hearing impairments.

B. Required Elements of Citizen Participation Plan

(1) Encouragement of Citizen Participation.

Annapolis will encourage its citizens to participate in the development of the Consolidated Plan, any amendments to the plan, and the performance report. The City will afford interested citizens, nonprofit organizations and other interested parties the opportunity to provide written and oral comments during the development of the Consolidated Plan. Also, the City will afford interested citizens, nonprofit organizations and other interested parties the opportunity to submit written comments to any amendments to the plan and the performance report. The City will afford citizens, nonprofit organizations and other interested parties the opportunity to participate in focus groups, small discussion groups, and forums, and public hearings. The City will provide adequate advance notice of meetings, forums and public hearings through notices in community newspapers.

(2) Information to be Provided

(a) Amount of Assistance

Before Annapolis adopts a Consolidated Plan, it will make available to citizens, public agencies and other interested parties information that includes: (1) the estimated amount of funds the City expects to receive, (2) the range of community development and affordable housing activities that may be undertaken, including the amount that will benefit low and moderate-income persons, and (3) the City's plans to minimize displacement of persons and to help any person(s) displaced. The City will include this information in the proposed Consolidated Plan.

(b) Consolidated Plan Publication

Annapolis will publish a summary of the proposed Consolidated Plan for public comment in The Capital newspaper. This summary will describe the contents and purpose of the Consolidated Plan. Citizens may examine the entire plan at:

Department of Planning and Zoning
Community Development Office
145 Gorman Street, Third Floor
Annapolis, MD 21401

Advertisements will be placed in The Capital newspaper notifying organizations and persons that the plan is available for public comment.

(c) Notification of Citizens

Annapolis will notify citizens of the availability of the final Consolidated Plan, as adopted, any amendments to the Plan, and the Consolidated Plan Performance Report by placing newspaper advertisements in The Capital newspaper. The entire Consolidated Plan, any amendments to the Plan, and the Performance Report will be available to afford citizens a reasonable opportunity to examine the contents. Citizens may examine these documents at the Department of Planning and Zoning, Community Development Office.

(d) Public Comment Period

Annapolis will provide a thirty (30) day period to receive comments from citizens on the Consolidated Plan or amendments, and a fifteen (15) day period to receive comments on the annual performance reports before their submission to HUD. Copies of the Consolidated Plan, amendments,

or performance reports will be available in the Department of Planning and Zoning, Community Development Office and to any person or organization submitting a written request to the Community Development Administrator, Department of Planning and Zoning, Community Development Office, 145 Gorman Street, Annapolis, MD 21401.

(3) Access to Records

Annapolis will provide citizens, public agencies, and other interested parties with reasonable and timely access to information and records relating to the City's Consolidated Plan and the City's use of assistance under the CDBG and the Section 108 Loan Guarantee Programs.

(4) Technical Assistance

Annapolis will provide technical assistance to groups representative of persons of low-and-moderate-income that request such assistance to develop proposals for funding under any of the programs covered by the Consolidated Plan. Annapolis will determine the level and type of technical assistance deemed appropriate. Groups may seek technical assistance by submitting a written request to the Community Development Administrator, Department of Planning and Zoning, Community Development Office, 145 Gorman Street, Annapolis, MD 21401.

(5) Requests for Funding

The City will solicit grant proposals annually by a notice in The Capital newspaper and a direct mail solicitation to organizations and agencies serving or representing low/moderate income persons. These organizations include, but are not limited to advocacy groups for the disabled, homeless, and the elderly; nonprofit housing developers and community housing development organizations; public agencies; nonprofit public service providers; advocacy groups for affordable and supportive housing; resident managers and tenant council presidents of public housing communities; and the public. This mailing will include information about how much money the City expects to be available for the program year, the range of activities that may be undertaken with the money, blank proposal forms and guidelines used to select proposals for funding.

The solicitation for proposals will give the dates of all deadlines and public hearings pertinent to the application process. Proposal forms will be available at the City's Department of Planning and Zoning, Community Development (CD) office, at 145 Gorman Street in Annapolis, on the Internet at www.annapolis.gov, or by calling the CD office at 410-263-7961.

(6) Public Hearings

(a) Number of Hearings to be Conducted

Annapolis will conduct two (2) public hearings per year to obtain citizens' views on community development and affordable housing needs, the development and progress of proposed activities, and to review program performance. To obtain the views of citizens on housing and community development needs, including priority non-housing community development needs, HCDC will hold one (1) hearing before the submission of the Consolidated Plan to HUD.

(b) Advance Notice of Public Hearings

Annapolis will publish notices of the hearings in The Capital newspaper that will give the public at least two weeks notice of the hearing date, time and location. The City will publish sufficient information about the subject of the hearing to permit informed comment.

(c) Hearing Time and Location

The City will advertise the hearing date, time and location in The Capital newspaper. HCDC will hold the hearings at a handicap-accessible site. In addition, TTY phone numbers will be placed in all advertisements so that hearing impaired individuals may call and request interpreters for the public hearing(s) they wish to attend.

(d) Needs of Non-English Speaking Residents

If HCDC expects that a significant number participated, the City will attempt to provide an interpreter for the non-English language expected to be most prevalent among people at the hearing.

(7) Comments and Complaints

Annapolis will consider any comments or views of its citizens received in writing, or orally at the public hearings, in preparing the City's Consolidated Plan, amendments to the plan, or performance report. Annapolis will attach to the final submission of the Consolidated Plan, amendments or performance report a summary of these comments or views, and a summary of any comments or views not accepted and the reasons why. Annapolis will provide a timely written response to every written citizen complaint within fifteen working days, where practicable.

(8) Criteria for Amendment to Plan

Annapolis may amend its Consolidated Plan as the need arises. Any amendments to the Consolidated Plan will provide for a 30-day public comment period. The City will give citizens reasonable notice and an opportunity to comment on the proposed amendment.

Notice of the proposed amendment, a summary of its contents, and instructions on how to receive a copy and the final date for submission of written comments will be published in The Capital newspaper. City staff will make copies of the proposed amendment available at the Department of Planning and Zoning, Community Development Office, 145 Gorman Street, Annapolis, MD 21401. Annapolis will consider all comments received and make them available to the public at the time it submits the amendment to HUD. The City will submit the amended plan to HUD before Annapolis carries out the changes contained therein.

The HCDC will use the following criteria to decide whether a change is substantial enough to warrant an amendment to the Consolidated Plan:

The purpose of a CDBG activity is the eligible activity. A change in the purpose is considered “substantial” when the eligible activity changes, e.g., from rehabilitation to demolition.

The scope of a CDBG-funded activity means the type of action within the eligible activity changes. A “substantial change” in scope occurs when the effect within the eligible activity changes.

The location of a CDBG-funded activity is the site where the funded activity takes place. A change in location is considered “substantial” when the service area of the activity changes.

The beneficiaries of a CDBG-funded activity are the persons or groups targeted to receive the benefits of that activity. A change in beneficiaries is considered substantial when the sponsor or the City cancels the project or the category of the people served changes.

A change in budget will be deemed “substantial” if the budget revision is proposed resulting in a transfer between approved projects and activities of a cumulative amount more than 10% of the City’s grant award.

C. Adoption of Citizen Participation Plan

Annapolis will make the proposed Citizen Participation plan available for public comment for thirty (30) days. Copies of the Citizen Participation plan will be available at the Department of Planning and Zoning, Community Development Office, 159 Duke of Gloucester Street, Annapolis, MD 21401. Copies will also be provided to any interested

citizen or organization by contacting the Chief of Community Development, Department of Planning and Zoning, Community Development Office, 145 Gorman Street, Annapolis, MD 21401. Upon completion of the thirty (30) day public comment period and review of all comments made during this time, the Citizen Participation plan will be amended, where applicable, adopted, and made public.

D. Use of the Citizen Participation Plan

Annapolis will comply with and follow its adopted Citizen Participation plan to the fullest extent possible.

