

Citizen Participation Plan Community Development

Revised: January 9, 2020

Introduction

As a U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Entitlement recipient, the City of Jacksonville is required to have and actively implement a Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Citizen Participation Plan. This plan sets forth the policies and procedures for citizen involvement in the development of the Five-Year Consolidated Plan, Annual Action Plans, substantial amendments to the plan and the Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Report (CAPER) as required by the HUD 24 Code of Federal Regulation (CFR) Part 91, Subpart B.

The City of Jacksonville seeks to exceed the minimum federal requirements and make citizen participation a reality at all stages of the planning, implementation and evaluation of the Consolidated Plan. The Community Development Department staff will act as the agent for the City of Jacksonville to implement all aspects of the Citizen Participation Plan.

Encouragement of Public Participation

The law requires that our Citizen Participation Plan both provide for and encourage public participation in the development of the Consolidated Plan and substantial amendments to the Consolidated Plan or the CAPER. An emphasis is placed on the involvement of low and moderate income people – particularly those living in low to moderate income neighborhoods, areas where CDBG funds are proposed to be used and residents of public and assisted housing developments. The City of Jacksonville especially encourages the participation of minorities, non-English speaking persons and persons with disabilities.

The Role of Low Income People

The law states that the primary purpose of the programs covered by this Citizen Participation Plan is to create viable communities by providing decent housing, a suitable living environment and expanding economic opportunities principally for low and moderate income people.

Genuine involvement by low income people must take place at all stages of the process including: identifying needs; setting priorities among these needs; deciding how much money should be allocated to each high-priority need and suggesting the types of programs to meet high-priority needs; as well as overseeing the way in which programs are carried out.

Stages of the Consolidated Plan Process

The policies and procedures in this Citizen Participation Plan relate to several stages of action mentioned in law or regulation. In general, these stages or events include:

1. Identification of housing and community development needs.
2. Preparation of a draft use of funds for the upcoming year called the proposed Annual Action Plan. Every five years there will be the development of a new Five-Year Consolidated Plan.
3. Formal approval by the City Council of a final Annual Action Plan or Five-Year Consolidated Plan.
4. It might be necessary to change the use of funds already budgeted in an Annual Action Plan or change the priorities established in the Five-Year Consolidated Plan. In that case a formal Substantial Amendment will be proposed, considered and acted upon.
5. After a program year is completed, a Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Report (CAPER) must be drafted for public review and comment.

The Program Year

The City of Jacksonville's program year begins January 1 and ends December 31.

Public Notice

Items Covered by the Public Notice Requirement

There shall be advance public notice of all public hearings, and public meetings related to the funds or planning process covered by this Citizen Participation Plan.

Adequate Public Notice

Adequate advance notice is "timely"; that is, it is given with enough lead time for the public to take informed action. The amount of lead time varies depending on the event, and specific amounts of time are outlined later in the "Stages of the Process" section of the Citizen Participation Plan. The content of notices will give residents a clear understanding of the event being announced.

Forms of Public Notice for Formal Public Hearings

1. Public notices will be published in The Leader, local newspaper of general circulation serving the Jacksonville residents. Notices will be posted on the City's website (www.cityofjacksonville.net).
2. Notices will be posted in the Jacksonville Community Development office.
3. Notices will be given to any person or organization requesting such notice either in person, email or by regular postal mail.

Public Notice for Public/Community Meetings

1. Notice of community meetings will be given in a manner designed to maximize public participation.

Public Access to Information

As required by law, the City of Jacksonville will provide the public with reasonable and timely access to information and records relating to the data or content of the Consolidated Plan, as well as the proposed, actual, and past use of funds covered by this Citizen Participation Plan. Regarding the past use of funds, the law requires reasonable public access to records about any uses of these funds during the previous five years.

Housing and community development records belonging to the City of Jacksonville are considered public information. Exceptions are records that contain confidential information about individuals participating in or benefiting from the CDBG program.

Also, as required by law, the City of Jacksonville will provide the public with reasonable and timely access to local meetings relating to the proposed or actual use of funds.

Standard Documents

Standard documents include: the proposed and final Annual Action Plans, the proposed and final Five-Year Consolidated Plan, proposed and final Substantial Amendments to the Annual Action Plan or Five-Year Consolidated Plan, Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Reports and the Citizen Participation Plan.

Availability of Standard Documents

One to two copies of these standard documents will be made available to the public at no cost and within three working days of request; three or more copies are available for a nominal fee. Since older records may be in storage, an additional one day may be necessary while the information is retrieved. In all cases, persons wishing to view

records or documents must set up an appointment at least 24 hours in advance with Community Development so that the requested information may be gathered together. These materials will be available in a form accessible to persons with disabilities, (e.g. providing an oral, electronic or large print copy for the visually impaired when possible or hand delivering a copy to a homebound person) when requested, by calling 982-0026.

Places where Standard Documents are Available

Standard documents will be available for pickup at the City of Jacksonville Community Development office located at 109 South Second Street, Jacksonville, Arkansas, between the hours of 8:30 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. Additionally, copies of the proposed documents will be available for review at the Ester D. Nixon Library currently located at 703 West Main and the Mayor's Office located at City Hall, #1 Municipal Drive, Jacksonville, Arkansas.

Public Hearings

Public hearings are required by law in order to obtain the public's views and to provide the public with the City's responses to public questions and proposals. The law requires at least two public hearings for the public to provide input on community needs, to review proposed uses of funds, and to assess how funds were spent during the previous program year. These hearings are described more fully in the section on "Stages of the Process".

Access to Public Hearings

Public hearings will be held only after there has been adequate notice as described in the "Public Notice" section of the Citizen Participation Plan, including a display advertisement in the non-legal section of the newspaper approximately 10 days prior to the public hearing.

Public hearings normally will be held in the evenings for the convenience of working people; at locations in various parts of the city to allow input from all geographical areas. Exceptions will be made for Senior Resident Housing complexes that will allow early hours for the meetings.

Public Hearings and Populations with Unique Needs

All public hearings will be held at locations accessible to people with disabilities, and provisions will be made for people with disabilities when request are made at least four working days prior to the hearing.

Translators will be provided for people who do not speak English when requests are made at least five working days prior to the hearing.

The Conduct of Public Hearings

Public hearings will generally be conducted by the Director of Community Development or their appointee. All public hearings held in conjunction with City Council meeting will be conducted by the City Council.

The Stages of the Process

A. Identifying Needs

The laws and regulations require a public hearing each year to obtain residents' opinions about needs and what priority those needs have. The City of Jacksonville generally conducts a minimum of four public hearings for this process.

In the development of the Five-Year Strategy, the City of Jacksonville may hold community meetings/planning sessions to determine the specific needs and priorities identified by low and moderate income people. The City may also consult with various boards and commissions, agencies, organizations to further solicit information on the housing and community development needs of low and moderate income people.

B. The Draft Annual Action Plan (and/or Five-Year Consolidated Plan)

The law providing the funds covered by this Citizen Participation Plan, calls for improved accountability of jurisdictions to the public. In that spirit and in compliance with the terms of the law, the City of Jacksonville will use the following procedures.

Technical Assistance

It is the policy of the City of Jacksonville to take reasonable steps to provide technical assistance to groups/individuals representative of persons of low and moderate-income that request assistance in developing proposals. Groups/individuals representing persons of low and moderate income who are interested in receiving technical assistance may write or call the City of Jacksonville, Community Development Department, 109 South Second Street, Jacksonville, Arkansas, 72076 (501) 982-0026.

An assessment of the type and extent of technical assistance needed by the representative group/individual will be made by Community Development staff upon request and in a timely manner. The staff will make a good faith effort to see that reasonable requests for technical assistance are responded to in a timely manner.

Availability of a Proposed Action Plan

The City of Jacksonville will notify the public that a Proposed Action Plan is available

for review each year and will allow 30 days for public comment before the Final Action Plan is submitted to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).

At this time, the City will provide the public with an estimate of the amount of CDBG funds it expects to receive in the upcoming year, along with a description of the range of types of activities that can be funded with these resources.

Copies of the Proposed Annual Action Plan will be made available to the public free of charge and without delay. In addition, copies will be available at the locations specified above in the “Public Access to Information” section.

So that low and moderate income people can determine the degree that they might be affected, the Proposed Annual Action Plan will be complete containing: the amount of federal grant funds that will be made available, and a written description of all proposed uses of CDBG funds. The plan will also describe specific activities and projects to be undertaken during the fiscal year, as well as other actions to be undertaken in public policy, institutional structure, public housing improvements, public housing resident initiatives, lead based paint hazard reduction, coordination efforts and anti-poverty strategies.

Public Hearing on Proposed Annual Action Plan

In preparing a Final Annual Action Plan, careful consideration will be given to all comments and views expressed by the public, whether given as verbal testimony at the public hearing or submitted in writing during the review and comment period. The Final Annual Action Plan will have a section at the end that presents all comments, plus explanation why any comments were not accepted.

C. The Final Annual Action Plan (and/or Five-Year Consolidated Plan)

Copies of the Final Annual Action Plan will be made available to the public free of charge and within two working days of a request.

D. Amendments to the Annual Action Plan (and/or Five-Year Consolidated Plan)

1. The Final Annual Action Plan will be amended anytime there is a change in one of the Priorities presented on the HUD-required Priority Table; a change in the use of funding for an activity not included in the Final Annual Action Plan; or a change in the purpose, location, scope or beneficiaries of an activity. The public will be notified whenever there is a Substantial Amendment.

Public Notice and Public Hearing for Substantial Amendments

There will be reasonable notice of a proposed Substantial Amendment so that residents

have the opportunity to review and comment on it. Notice will be made according to the procedures described earlier in this Plan, with the addition of the following procedures specifically for Substantial Amendments:

1. A detailed description of the proposed Substantial Amendment will be made available to the public at no charge within two working days of a request.
2. There will be a public hearing regarding the Substantial Amendment conducted by the City Council. A public notice will be published at least 14 days prior to the public hearing. The public will have a 30-day public comment period to review and respond to the Proposed Amendment.
3. In preparing the Final Substantial Amendment, careful consideration will be given to all comments and views expressed by the public, whether given as verbal testimony at the public hearing or submitted in writing during the review and comment period. The Final Substantial Amendment will include a discussion that presents all comments, plus explanation why any comments were not accepted.

E. The Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Report (CAPER)

The City must send HUD a Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Report (CAPER) by March 31st or within 90 days of the close of the program year. The CAPER describes how funds were actually used, outlines the program year accomplishments and shows the extent to which these funds were used for activities that benefited low and moderate income people.

Public Notice and Comment for the CAPER

There must be reasonable notice that the CAPER is available so that residents have an opportunity to review it and comment. Notice will be made according to the procedures described earlier in this Plan with the following procedures specifically for the Annual Performance Report:

1. The City will publish a public notice of the availability of the CAPER consistent with the public notice procedures described above.
2. A complete copy of the draft CAPER will be made available to the public at no cost within two working days of a request. Copies will also be available for viewing at the locations indicated earlier under the “Public Access to Information” section.
3. The City will provide at least 15 days from the date of publication of the CAPER for the public to comment on the proposed CAPER.

4. In preparing the CAPER submission to HUD, consideration will be given to all comments and views expressed by the public, whether given as verbal testimony at the public hearing or submitted in writing. The CAPER sent to HUD will have a section that presents all public comments, plus explanations why any comments were not accepted.

Content of the Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Report

The CAPER presented to the public will contain information regarding the amount of federal grant funds made available during the past year, and any other funds that were leveraged with the federal grant funds. The CAPER will provide a narrative on progress towards meeting the goals set forth in the Five Year Consolidated Plan and Annual Action Plan, comparing actual accomplishments to planned actions, and an assessment of the City's overall performance.

For CDBG-funded activities, the CAPER will provide at least as much detail as required by HUD for Grantee Performance Reports. The CAPER will include an accounting of each activity in the Action Plan, until the activity is officially finished. For each activity the details presented will include, but are not limited to

1. Name of the activity
2. A description of the activity
3. The location of the activity, which includes a street address or some other information showing specifically where the activity was or is being carried out, and/or the census tract where the activity is located.
4. The status of the activity (cancelled, underway, completed).
5. The date the activity was initially funded.
6. The amount of funding authorized and disbursed in and through the program year.
7. The accomplishments of the activity, including numerical measures, where appropriate.
8. For activities that provide a direct benefit to individuals or households, the activity will show the number of individuals or households served by: income level (low/moderate, low or extremely low income); race; and the number that were female head of household.

Public Hearing on CAPER

1. This public hearing will be conducted by the City Council at one of its regularly scheduled meetings in March

Complaint Procedures

The City of Jacksonville will investigate and provide a timely, substantive written response to every written complaint received from the public. The City will reply within 15 working days of receipt of the complaint.

Changing the Citizen Participation Plan

This Citizen Participation Plan can be changed only after the public has been notified of an intent to modify it, and only after the public has had a reasonable chance to review and comment on proposed substantial changes to it.

APPENDIX A DEFINITIONS

Annual Action Plan: The document that describes the needs, resources, priorities and proposed activities to be undertaken over a one-year period with respect to HUD programs, including the CDBG program, and is part of the Consolidated Plan.

Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Report (CAPER): The document that provides HUD with the necessary information to assess each grantee's ability to carry out its programs in compliance with applicable regulations and requirements and describes the grantee's program achievements to its citizens.

Consolidated Housing and Community Development Plan (or "Consolidated Plan"): The document that is submitted to HUD that serves as the planning document (comprehensive housing affordability strategy and community development plan) of the jurisdiction and an application for funding under any of the Community Planning and Development formula grant programs (CDBG, ESG, HOME or HOPWA), which is prepared in accordance with the process prescribed in 24 CFR Part 91. The plan describes needs, resources, priorities and proposed activities to be undertaken over a five-year period with respect to HUD programs, including the CDBG program.

Entitlement: The designation of a metropolitan city that is entitled to receive funds under the Entitlement grant program as determined by formula set forth in Section 106.

Substantial Amendment: An amendment to the Consolidated Plan or Annual Action Plan and is one which includes the addition of a new activity or priority; a change in the nature of an activity, its location, or its target population such that different citizens will be impacted by it; or a change of more than 50 percent in the amount of funds allocated to an activity.

Predominantly Low to Moderate Income Neighborhoods: Those neighborhoods that contain at least 51% low to moderate income residents according to the most recent census and designated by Census Tracts and Block Groups.