

Citizen Participation Plan

Introduction

The City of Corpus Christi (the “City”) is required by law to have a Citizen Participation Plan which contains the City’s policies and procedures for public involvement in the Consolidated Plan, the Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Report (CAPER) and the Assessment to Fair Housing (AFH) process as well as the use of Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) and HOME Investment Partnerships Program (HOME) funds per 24 CFR 91 Subpart B. This Citizen Participation Process Plan must be available to the public.

Encouraging Public Participation. This Citizen Participation Plan provides for and encourages public participation, emphasizing involvement by low and moderate-income neighborhoods in the development of the Consolidated Action Plan, Annual Action Plan, Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Report (CAPER), and the Assessment to Fair Housing and any revisions to the AFH, the Consolidated Plan, and any substantial amendment to the Consolidated Plan. Also, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) expects the City of Corpus Christi to take whatever actions are appropriate to encourage participation of minorities, people who do not speak English, and people with disabilities.

In addition, the City of Corpus Christi will take steps to encourage the participation of local and regional organizations, Continuums of Care, businesses, developers, nonprofit organizations, philanthropic, community-based and faith-based organizations. In collaboration with the Corpus Christi Housing Authority, the City of Corpus Christi will encourage the participation of residents of public and assisted housing developments, resident advisory boards, resident councils, and resident management corporations.

The City of Corpus Christi will explore diverse public involvement techniques to encourage citizen participation including the use of focus groups and internet surveys.

Copies of this Citizen Participation Plan, as well as summaries of basic information about CDBG, ESG and HOME funds, the AFH process and the Consolidated Plan process, will be made available upon request in the languages of residents who comprise a significant portion of the low- and moderate- income population. Public notices will be published and or posted in both Spanish and English.

The City of Corpus Christi is prepared to provide documents in a format accessible to persons with disabilities upon request (e.g. providing oral, electronic or large print copies for the visually impaired, and delivering copies to the homebound). In addition, any documents made available online will be formatted to be compatible with web readers for the visually impaired.

Focusing on Low- to Moderate-Income Residents. The law declares that the primary purpose of the programs covered by this Citizen Participation Plan is to improve communities by providing decent housing, a suitable living environment and growing economic opportunities – all principally for low-to moderate-income people, particularly those living in slum and blighted areas and in areas where CDBG funds are proposed to be used and by residents of predominantly low and moderate income neighborhoods.

The Program Year. A Program Year is a twelve-month period during which the City administers CDBG, ESG and HOME programs. The program year will start on October 1 and end twelve months later on September 30 of the following calendar year.

Consolidated Plan and Annual Action Plans

The City of Corpus Christi develops a Consolidated Plan on a five-year basis, as required by HUD, that assesses community characteristics and needs, identifies priorities in addressing community needs, and establishes specific objectives that the City intends to initiate or complete during the following five-year period.

Annual Action Plans cover a single year within a Consolidated Plan setting forth specific projects and initiatives that will be funded with CDBG, ESG and HOME funds during that year.

The city engages residents and stakeholders in the strategic planning process for the Consolidated Plan in order to create a shared vision and to focus funding priorities for CDBG, HOME, and ESG funds.

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

Needs Assessment Public Hearings. The City will conduct two Needs Assessment Public Hearings during each Program Year. The purpose of each Needs Assessment Public Hearing is to obtain citizens' views, and respond to proposals and questions, regarding housing and community development needs and proposed activities. All proposals and questions must be submitted in writing at least five working days prior to the Needs Assessment Public Hearing. The first Needs Assessment Public Hearing will be held during the development of the Consolidated Plan, prior to the publication of the Consolidated Plan. The second Needs Assessment Public Hearing will be held at least ninety days after the publication of the Consolidated Plan but before the end of the Program Year. Ongoing Needs Assessment Public Hearings will be held two times each program year to inform the Annual Action Plan.

Technical Assistance. The City will provide technical assistance to organizations providing services to persons of low- and moderate-income in developing proposals for funding assistance under programs covered by the Consolidated Plan.

Draft Plans. Prior to the adoption of a Consolidated Plan or Annual Action Plan, the City shall make available to the public, public agencies, and other interested parties, an estimate of the amount of CDBG, ESG and HOME funds the City expects to receive, along with a description of the range of types of activities that can be funded with these resources and an estimate of the amount of these funds which will be used in ways that will benefit low and moderate-income people. This information will be sent in writing to local institutions providing services to low to moderate income people. The proposed Consolidated Plan, once drafted, will be available for public comment and local review in Corpus Christi. Means for providing comments will be provided to residents and stakeholders. The review period will last no less than 30 days, unless otherwise indicated and approved through waivers by HUD. All comments received in writing or orally at public hearings will be considered.

A summary of comments received will be published with the final Consolidated Plan including a summary of any comments not accepted and the reasons why.

Evaluation. After a Program Year is complete, a consolidated annual performance and evaluation report (“CAPER”) must be drafted for public review and comment and then sent to HUD. A comment period of not less than 15 days will be provided for each CAPER with public notice given according to the procedures laid out in the Public Notice section. A summary of comments received will be published with the CAPER.

Complaints. The City will provide a substantive written response to every written resident complaint and/or question within 15 days of receipt.

Substantial Amendment. On occasion during the year, it might be necessary to change the use of the money already budgeted in an Annual Action Plan, or to change the priorities established in the Consolidated Plan. In that case, a Substantial Amendment, as defined below, will be proposed, considered and acted upon.

The City will conduct a substantial amendment to the Consolidated plan or Annual Action Plan when any one of the following is triggered:

- a) A change in its allocation proprieties.
- b) A change in its method of distribution of funds.
- c) A new activity using funds from any program covered by the Consolidated Plan not previously described in the Action Plan.
- d) A change in the purpose, substantial scope change, location, or beneficiaries of an activity.

Minor Amendments. Minor Amendments (Administrative Transfers) represent any action that changes an activity budget in an Annual Action Plan by less than twenty-five percent (25%).

Publication. At any time following the first Needs Assessment Public Hearing in a Program Year, the City will publish either the full text or a summary of the proposed Consolidated Plan describing the content and purpose of the Consolidated Plan and publicize a list of the locations where copies of the entire proposed document may be examined. In addition, the City will provide a reasonable number of free copies of the plan to residents and groups that request it.

Public Notices

There shall be public notice of all public hearings and all public meetings relating to the funds or planning process covered by this Citizen Participation Plan. Any and all notices required by this Citizen Participation Plan, except as may be otherwise specified herein, shall be given in conformance with this Public Notice section.

Adequate Public Notice. Public notices pursuant to this Citizen Participation Plan shall be given with enough lead time for the public to take informed action as required by law and as set forth in this Citizen

Participation Plan. The public will be given a substantial 15-day notice of a public hearing, unless otherwise indicated and approved through waivers by HUD. The content of notices will give residents a clear understanding of the event being announced. Public notices will be provided in both English and Spanish.

Forms of Public Notice.

1. Public notices will be published in the Corpus Christi Caller-Times as display advertisements in a non-legal section of the newspaper.
2. Notices will also be placed in the Corpus Christi Public Library and City Hall.
3. Notifications and documents will also be posted on the City's internet web page.

Public Hearings

The City will conduct various public hearings in order to obtain the public's views and to provide the public with the City's responses to public questions and proposals.

Access to Public Hearings. Public hearings will be held only after there has been adequate notice as described in the Public Notice part of this Citizen Participation Plan. Public hearings will be held at a time and location convenient to potential and actual beneficiaries. The City will accept and consider comments regarding the time and location of a hearing provided that such comments are received by the City at least ten days prior to a hearing.

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 requests are made at least five working days prior to a hearing.

In the event that a significant number of non-English speaking residents may be reasonably expected to participate in a public hearing, translators will be provided for people who do not speak English when requests are made at least ten working days prior to a hearing.

Audio/Video Public Hearings. Public hearings, if necessary, may be held in audio/video form, through software which supports audio/video functions.

Public Access to Information

The City of Corpus Christi will provide the public, public agencies, and other interested parties with reasonable and timely access to information and records relating to the Consolidated Plan as well as the City's use of CDBG, ESG and HOME funds assistance during the preceding five years. Such information and records shall be provided in accordance with the Texas Public Information Act. The current Consolidated Plan, Annual Action Plans, the Assessment to Fair Housing study and any Substantial Amendments thereto, and the most recent CAPER shall be made available to the public at the Corpus Christi Public Library, the Housing and Community Development Department, and the City's website. This includes the use of funds covered by the Consolidated Plan over the last five years. Such documents shall be provided in a form accessible to persons with disabilities upon request.