



City of Muncie

Community Development Block Grant

Citizen Participation Plan

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INTRODUCTION

Title 1 of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974 authorized Community Development Block Grant entitlement funds to qualifying cities. Subsequently, Title 1 of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1977 and the Cranston-Gonzalez National Affordable Housing Act of 1990 have amended this act. The overall goal of the community planning and development programs authorized under Title 1 is to develop and maintain viable urban communities by providing decent housing and a suitable living environment and expanding economic opportunities primarily for low- and moderate-income persons.

The City of Muncie has been classified as an entitlement city, one of 23 cities in Indiana, which is defined as a principal city within a Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSAs) with a population over 50,000. HUD determines the amount of each annual entitlement grant by a statutory dual formula which uses several objective measures of community needs, including the extent of poverty, population, housing overcrowding, age of housing, and population growth lag in relationship to other metropolitan areas.

By implementation of this Citizen Participation Plan, the City of Muncie intends to encourage and facilitate the participation of Muncie residents in the formation of the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) priorities, strategies and funding allocations in the Consolidated Plan and the Annual Action Plan. Community input is also encouraged for substantial amendments thereto and to review the Consolidated Annual Performance Evaluation Report (CAPER).

Use of the Citizen Participation Plan

The City of Muncie must implement a viable Citizen Participation Plan in order to receive annual funding. This plan will identify the required activities to effectively administer the CDBG program. It will also provide guidance to the methods and practices used to develop and implement such activities. The Citizen Participation Plan provides for and encourages citizen participation in developing and amending its Consolidated Plan, the Annual Action plan and the CAPER. Particular emphasis is placed on ensuring participation by low- and moderate-income persons who reside in slum and blighted areas where funds are proposed to be used.

The plan also provides for participation by residents in low- and moderate-income neighborhoods, as well as minorities, non-English speaking persons, and persons with disabilities. In addition, this plan outlines the City's policies regarding written complaints and grievances, and displacement.

Revisions to the Citizen Participation Plan

The Citizen Participation Plan sets forth the City of Muncie's policies and procedures for citizen participation. All Muncie residents are encouraged to participate in the development of this plan, especially, low and moderate-income households and those receiving federal rental assistance. This plan must address the availability of materials and documents. It must also allow provisions for adequate timelines for public review and comment.

The following activities must be conducted:

- A Public Notice
- At least one Public Hearing
- A 30-day public comment period*

The final Annual Action Plan considers all comments received in writing or verbally. A summary of these comments or views and a summary of the comments or views not accepted and the reasons therefore, will be attached to the document.

*In the event of an emergency, as declared by the president, governor or mayor, and as permitted by a waiver from HUD, Community Development may adopt a five day public comment period for reviewing for changes the Consolidated or Annual Action Plan.

Cost of the Plan

This plan is available at no cost from the City of Muncie, Community Development Department, 300 N. High St., Muncie, IN 47305, and is accessible from the City of Muncie Website www.cityofmuncie.com. Hard copies are also available in the Office of the Mayor and the Muncie Public Libraries.

Definitions

Consolidated Plan – As an entitlement city recipient of Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding, the City of Muncie is required by HUD to develop a Consolidated Plan that evaluates the needs of our low- and moderate-income residents. This assessment includes a review of Muncie's housing, homeless, and community development needs, provides a housing market analysis, and creates a strategy to address the needs identified. This plan is revised every 5 years. The current Consolidated Plan is in effect from June 1 to May 31.

Annual Action Plan – The Annual Action Plan, which is submitted to HUD annually, details the expenditure of the annual CDBG grant and ensures that the funds are directed towards activities addressed in the Consolidated Plan. HUD requires the City to maintain a significant correlation between the goals identified in the Consolidated Plan with the use of CDBG funds. The Annual Plan is due to HUD April 15, which is 45 days before the start of our new fiscal year on June 1.

Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Report (CAPER) – This report is a self-assessment of the implementation of the Consolidated Plan and the Annual Action Plan. Activity outcomes and outputs are reported showing the effectiveness of the CDBG funds. This

report includes details of the number and the demographics of the community served. The CAPER is due to HUD by August 30, which is 90 days from the end of the fiscal year.

RESPONSIBILITIES AND OBLIGATIONS

This section offers guidance to the various stakeholders in the activities required to develop and implement the Consolidated Plan, the Annual Action Plan and the review of the Consolidated Annual Performance Evaluation Report. These guidelines are in place to be inclusive and protect the fairness and integrity of the Community Development Block Grant program. They are not intended, in any manner, to exclude or limit access to the process.

Assignments

This plan describes the role of Community Development Department staff and others in developing and evaluating progress toward implementation of the Consolidated Plan.

Community Development department Staff is responsible for preparing the Consolidated Plan, Annual Action Plan, and Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Report (CAPER).

Other interested **Citizens** are encouraged to participate in the process via Public Input. The City and HUD recognize community input as an important element in identifying high priority needs in the community and ensuring that CDBG funds are used for activities that address those issues and concerns.

Public Meetings

All meetings related to the Community Development Block Grant program are considered public meetings. Information concerning CDBG public meetings will be published once in the local paper at least **10 days in advance** of the meeting date. The published information will include:

- Description of the activity;
- What entity is conducting the meeting;
- Amount and source of funds;
- Where and how information may be obtained;
- The date, time and location of the public meeting(s);
- Timeframe for the public to submit public comments;
- How and what format comments will be accepted;
- Contact person for additional information.

Meeting Times and Locations

Meetings will be held at times and locations convenient to potential and actual beneficiaries of CDBG funding. Meetings will be held in facilities accessible to persons with mobility impairments. Other accommodations will be made upon request.

Reasonable Accommodation

Reasonable Accommodations will be made for persons with disabilities when requested at least 48 hours in advance of the meeting. Materials provided at the meeting will be available in a format accessible to persons with disabilities upon request.

Translations and Interpretation Services

Anticipated significant turn-out

The City will endeavor to provide translators upon request or when it can be reasonably expected that a significant number of non-English persons will participate in the meeting.

Individual request

The City will endeavor to provide translations services if a request is made 48 hours before the meeting date and time.

PUBLIC NOTICES

Public Notices will be published once as a legal ad in the local paper. When published, the notice may also be posted on the City of Muncie's Website and as a direct mailing to interested citizens upon request.

Documents that require a Public Comment period will be available for review at the following locations:

- Community Development Department, City Hall, 300 N. High St., Muncie, IN
- Office of the Mayor, City Hall, 300 N. High St., Muncie, IN
- Maring-Hunt Library, 2005 South High St., Muncie, IN 47302
- Kennedy Library, 1700 West McGalliard Rd, Muncie, IN

Community Outreach

As time and funds allow, Community Development staff may utilize the following:

- Use larger and more attractive advertising to advertise and promote the CDBG program.
- Announce the new CDBG funding cycle at a Public, Community or City Council Meeting.
- Promote the activities of the CDBG program whenever possible. This includes the local newspaper and other online media that highlight the contribution and success of the program.
- The City will endeavor to directly notify interested parties of scheduled public hearings. A list of persons and community groups interested in receiving such notices will be maintained by CD staff.

Access to Records

The City will provide access to public records as related to the Consolidated Plan and the Annual Action Plan and the use of assistance under the programs covered by the plans during the proceeding five years through written request. The City may charge a fee for copies in the amount of \$.10 per black and white copy and \$.25 per color copy.

CONSOLIDATED PLAN

The Consolidated Plan outlines the City's process for community inclusion in the development of the multi-year Consolidated Plan. This plan defines the City's local objectives for the CDBG program. It includes an assessment of Muncie's housing, homeless, and community development requirements and provides a housing market analysis and creates a viable strategy to address the needs identified. This plan reflects HUD's emphasis on outcomes as opposed to outputs when addressing community needs.

The City will make every effort to involve the community in determining appropriate CDBG activities. Approved activities must provide services that principally benefit low- and moderate-income persons or is located in a low and moderate census tract and serves the surrounding community.

The following activities must be conducted:

- One Public Notice, 10 days prior to hearing date
- At least one Public Hearing
- A 30-day public comment period

All citizen comments, both oral and written, received during public hearings and during the 30 days comment period will be considered in preparing the final plan. A summary of comments, stating whether or not they were used in preparation of the final plan and the reason(s) why, will be attached to the final plan.

Substantial Amendment to the Consolidated Plan

A substantial amendment to the Consolidated Plan is defined as a change in any CDBG funding allocation of more than 20 percent of the total annual allocation of CDBG funds. This includes any change in funding from one CDBG eligible activity to another. To make a substantial amendment to the Consolidated Plan, the following activities must be conducted:

- Public notification
- At least one Public Hearing
- A 30-day public comment period

The City will consider any comments or views of citizens received in writing, or orally, before adopting a substantial amendment to the Consolidated Plan. A summary of the comments or views, and a summary of any comments or views not accepted and reasons will be attached to the substantial amendment to the Consolidated Plan.

Cancellation of a Project, New Project, or Change of Project Location

Community Development staff in conjunction with the Mayor may reprogram less than 20 percent of the total allocation of CDBG funds to an approved CDBG project if necessary. The following activities must be conducted:

- NEPA review
- Documentation must be provided to support the need for funding
- Public notification
- At least one Public Hearing
- Provide 30-day public comment period

- Funding available at end of 30-day public comment period

The City will consider any comments or views of citizens received in writing, or orally, before adopting a substantial amendment to the Consolidated Plan. A summary of the comments or views, and a summary of any comments or views not accepted and reasons will be attached to the substantial amendment to the Consolidated Plan.

Reprogramming Funds up to \$10,000

Community Development staff is authorized to reprogram up to \$10,000 of program funds to an approved CDBG project if funding is available. The request for funds must be directly related to the original project activity. The following activities must be conducted:

- Request in writing for additional funding
- Provide documentation of need with request
- Conduct NEPA review if substantial changes to the scope of the project

If funding is available, Community Development staff can make available to the Housing Division up to \$500 of CDBG administrative funds to conduct and facilitate Fair Housing Activities. These activities include seminars and landlord workshops offered community wide.

Reprogramming Funds over \$10,000

The request to reprogram funds must be submitted in writing to the Community Development staff.

Public Service Funds

Community Development staff in conjunction with the Mayor must approve requests to reprogram Public Service funds over \$10,000. Funds cannot be reprogrammed to any project that did not apply during the last application process.

Non-Public Service Funds

Reprogramming Non-Public Service funds over \$10,000 is subject to the Community Development staff and Mayor's approval. Funds can be reprogrammed to any CDBG eligible Non-Public Service project.

Displacement Policy

The City does not anticipate any displacement of individuals under the Consolidated Plan. In the event temporary displacement should occur, such persons will be provided with relocation assistance in accordance with the City's General Relocation Plan, which complies with HUD regulations, 24 CFR Part 42. A copy of this plan is available for review at the City's Community Development Department.

ANNUAL ACTION PLAN

The Annual Action Plan, which is submitted to HUD annually, details the expenditure of the annual CDBG grant and ensures the funds are directed towards activities addressed in the Consolidated Plan. HUD requires the City to maintain a significant correlation between the goals identified in the Consolidated Plan with the use of CDBG funds.

The following activities must be conducted:

- Public notification
- At least one Public Hearing/Meeting
- A 30-day public comment period

All comments received in writing or verbally will be considered when preparing the final Annual Action Plan. A Summary of these comments or views and a summary of the comments or views not accepted and the reasons therefore, will be attached to the document.

CONSOLIDATED ANNUAL PERFORMANCE AND EVALUATION REPORT (CAPER)

The Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Report (CAPER) is a detailed report of the CDBG activities during the prior fiscal year. This report includes information on the activities conducted, the populations served and an analysis of the expected outcomes and the results.

The following activities must be conducted:

- Public notification
- At least one public hearing
- A 15-day public comment period

All comments received in writing or verbally will be considered when preparing the final CAPER. A summary of these comments or views and a summary of the comments or views not accepted and the reasons therefore will be attached to the document.

CDBG APPLICATION PROCESS

The City utilizes two types of CDBG application procedures.

1. Public Service Applications

Using a formal application process, Community Development staff reviews and ranks all applications with the help of a Citizen Advisory Committee, then makes funding recommendations to the Mayor.

2. Non Public Service Applications

Through an internal process, Community Development staff review viable Non-Public Service projects, then makes funding recommendations to the Mayor.

APPLICATION ACTIVITIES

Outreach

Community Development staff will utilize various methods of Community Outreach to notify the public of the availability of CDBG applications which will include, direct mail to those who requested their name be added to the CDBG interest list, e-mail to the past and current CDBG sub-recipients, a posting on the city's website, public notice in the local newspaper and by press release from the Mayor's office.

Technical Assistance

Community Development staff is available during the application period to offer assistance in the process as requested. Community Development staff will advise applicants on all technical questions, such as determining the eligibility of a request.

PUBLIC SERVICE APPLICATION PROCESS

Activities in this funding category are limited by HUD to no more than 15% of the Annual CDBG entitlement grant.

Historically, the majority of Public Service applications come from community groups and non-profit agencies that provide services to low- and moderate-income clients (e.g., homeless services, domestic violence counseling, or youth recreational activities).

Application Review & Allocation of Funds

Using a formal application process, Public Service applications are made available during defined periods at a variety of locations that are listed in published announcements.

There will be a specific due date to return applications

- Applications submitted after the due date will not be considered for funding.
- Postmarks will be accepted.

Public Service applications will be accepted, reviewed and funded on an annual basis.

- Applications will be accepted in the Community Development office, City Hall, 300 N. High St., Muncie. (Note: Applications are now submitted online.)
- Public Service applicants may be invited to present their project to Community Development staff, at which point CD staff may comment and ask questions of the applicant to ensure they have the necessary information to judge the merits of the project.
- Applications are reviewed by Community Development staff and recommendations are given to the Mayor who has final approval of funding.

NON-PUBLIC SERVICE APPLICATIONS

Activities funded in this category account for the majority of the total CDBG entitlement grant. The types of projects generally funded include economic development, housing rehabilitation, community facilities and public infrastructure. Due to the nature of the work, non-public service activities are most often administered or facilitate by the Community Development Department.

- Non-Public service funding is available to outside organizations with the sponsorship of the Community Development Department.

Allocating Non-Public Service Funds

There will be an internal process involving the Community Development Department, Directors of other City Departments, and the Mayor to determine viable project priorities.

- The funding commitment for Non-Public Service projects will be determined by the type, size and scope of the project.

- The Director of Community Development will make the final recommendations for the Mayor's approval.

COMMUNITY REVIEW AND COMMENT

When recommendations are determined by Community Development staff for Public Service and Non-Public Service projects, CD staff will prepare the CDBG Annual Action Plan.

- As required by HUD, staff will prepare an Annual Action Plan for each year the City receives CDBG funding.
- The Annual action Plan will be available for review during a 30 day Public Comment period.

GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES

Community Development staff is open to review and improvement of the CDBG application and funding process. While it is important to protect the integrity of the existing procedures, it is equally important to include a fair grievance process for all parties to address valid complaints and grievances.

Proper grounds for grievance include, but are not limited to:

- Improper or biased actions by Community Development staff.
- Community Development staff denied funding without proper grounds.

The CDBG program uses a competitive application process; therefore, the following issues are not grounds to file a grievance:

- The application was submitted after the deadline.
- The request did not meet the requirements stated in the Guidelines.
- The application was incomplete.
- The desire to add additional information to the application or presentation.
- The application contained inaccurate information.

Filing a Grievance

Note: All grievances must be received in writing within 10 days of the alleged offense.

To file a grievance, the following steps must be conducted in the order listed:

- Step 1. Request in writing a meeting with the Community Development Director to address the problem
 - CD Director will review the concerns and reply in writing within 10 days of the meeting.
- Step 2. Submit a written complaint to the Community Development Director regarding the Problem
 - CD Director will review the concerns with the Mayor and reply in writing within 10 days of the postmark.
- Step 3. Request to address the Mayor
 - The Mayor will hear and review the concerns.
 - The Mayor will make a final decision and provide it in writing within 14 days of the meeting date.

FORFEITURE OF THE CDBG AWARD

Upon final approval of the CDBG awards, the recipient must meet with CD Staff and return the CDBG Funding Agreement or Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) fully completed and signed to CDBG staff.

If there are extenuating circumstances, a recipient may request an extension in writing one month before the deadline date for consideration and approval by CD staff.

If the completed contract (including all current insurance documents, revised budget, and other required supplemental materials) is not received in the allotted time (three months or the approved extended deadline), the grant allocation will be forfeited.