

CITY OF CHATTANOOGA

CITIZEN PARTICIPATION PLAN

2015 – 2019 CONSOLIDATED PLAN

24 CFR Part 91.105

101 EAST 11TH STREET, SUITE 200

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I. INTRODUCTION

The following Citizen Participation Plan (CPP) provides a framework and process by which the City's consolidated planning efforts comply with the citizen participation requirements of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). This Citizen Participation Plan is prepared and implemented in accordance with the guidance provided in HUD Regulations *24 CFR Part 91.105*.

The City of Chattanooga receives annual grant funding from HUD for the CDBG, HOME, and ESG programs. The Citizen Participation Plan is a component of the Five-Year Consolidated Plan, each subsequent Annual Action Plan, each year's Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Report, and any Substantial Amendments to the Consolidated Plan or its five Annual Action Plans.

The Citizen Participation Plan sets forth the City's policies and procedures for citizen participation in developing the Consolidated Plan, any substantial amendments to the Consolidated Plan, and the performance reports. It is the City's policy to ensure citizen involvement throughout all of these processes.

The (CPP) outlines how citizens will participate in the:

1. Development of the Consolidated Plan and Annual Action Plan,
2. Review of performance, and
3. Development of any substantial amendments to the plan.

The Plan is designed to:

- Gather input from persons with low and moderate incomes, persons living in slum and blighted areas, and in areas where funds are being used or are proposed to be used, and from residents of primarily low and moderate income neighborhoods, where at least 51% of the residents are low and moderate income persons. The CPP also seeks input from persons who are homeless, members of minority groups, non-English speaking persons, persons with disabilities, residents of public housing, elderly, local and regional organizations and institutions, as well as the Continuum of Care;
- Provide citizens with reasonable and timely access to meetings, information, and records relating to the grantee's proposed use of funds, and contents and purpose of the Consolidated Plan;
- Provide for technical assistance to groups representative of citizens of low and moderate income that request such assistance in developing proposals;
- Provide for public hearings to obtain citizen input and to respond to proposals and questions at all stages of the Community Development Program, including at least the development of needs, review of proposed activities, and review of program performance standards. These hearings will be held after adequate notice, a minimum of fourteen (14) calendar days, at times and locations

convenient to potential and actual beneficiaries, with accommodations for persons with disabilities;

- Where applicable, identify how the needs on non-English speaking residents will be met in the case of public meetings and,
- Provide for a formal written procedure which will accommodate a timely written response, within fifteen (15) calendar days where practicable, to written complaints and grievances.

II. PARTICIPATION

Program regulations establish the primary purposes of the programs covered by this Citizen Participation Plan to be to improve communities by providing: decent housing, a suitable living environment, and growing economic opportunities – all principally for low and moderate income people. The primary purpose of the participation will be in needs identification, priority setting, funding allocations, and program recommendations related to the consolidated planning process.

In order to encourage and support public participation, the City will provide information, hold public hearings, and give citizens the opportunity to participate and comment. All phases of citizen participation will be conducted in an open and transparent manner, with freedom of access to all interested citizens. Public hearings will be advertised and pertinent information will be available to the public. Citizens will be provided with reasonable and timely access to these public meetings.

The City will also consult with focus groups (i.e. for profit and nonprofit organizations, businesses, developers, community and faith based organizations, philanthropic organizations, local and regional institutions and the Continuum of Care) that represent and/or serve these populations.

To further encourage and provide citizens opportunities to participate in an advisory role in the covered programs, the CCP establishes a Community Development Advisory Committee (CDAC). As outlined in Section XV the role of the CDAC is to provide citizen participation, in funding/program recommendations and the review and evaluation program of the City's Community Development Program. The CDAC also assists in the assessment of community needs, informs other citizens of CDBG, ESG, HOME and other programs, and provides citizen input in the development of the City's Consolidated Plan Process.

To the greatest extent feasible, CDAC members will either themselves be or represent neighborhoods, census tracts, agencies, or government departments whose interests and/or expertise relate to community development objectives to address the needs of:

- Low and moderate-income persons
- Residents of slums, blighted areas, and predominately low and moderate-income areas

- Non-English speaking persons
- Persons with disabilities
- Public housing residents and other low-income residents of targeted revitalization areas
- Individuals served by private agencies that provide assisted housing, health services, and fair housing services for children, veterans, youth, elderly, persons with disabilities, persons living with HIV/AIDS and their families, focus groups (i.e. for profit and nonprofit organizations, businesses, developers, community and faith based organizations, philanthropic organizations, local and regional institutions and the Continuum of Care)

The CDAC will consist of nineteen (19) individuals; nine (9) Council Districts representative, chosen by the City Council Member from that district and ten (10) citizens at-large, chosen by the Mayor.

III. PUBLIC HEARINGS/MEETINGS

The City will hold at least two (2) public hearings per year to obtain the views and comments of residents, service providers, government agencies, and other stakeholders regarding the City's CPD-funded programs. The hearings generally address housing, social, and community development needs, proposed activities, and the review of program performance.

The hearings will be conducted at a minimum of two (2) different stages in the program year; at least one of these hearings will be held prior to the adoption of the proposed Consolidated Plan and/or annual One-Year Action Plan (March-April). The second public hearing is usually conducted later in the year and focuses upon the results reported to HUD in the Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Report (CAPER). On the day of the public hearing, comments may be submitted in writing or made orally at the hearing.

Every five years, in preparation for the Consolidated Plan, the City will hold additional public meetings before the proposed Consolidated Plan is published for review. The purpose of the meetings will be to obtain input on housing and community development needs.

The hearings and meetings will be held at times and locations convenient to potential and actual beneficiaries, with reasonable accommodations for persons with disabilities. The City will make reasonable efforts to accommodate persons with special needs who notify the City at least three (3) business days prior to the public meeting. Upon request from non-English speaking citizens, efforts will be made to have a person fluent in the respective language present at these meetings.

Public Notices

Notices informing citizens of any public hearings/meetings related to the Consolidated Plan, Annual Plan, substantial amendments to the Consolidated Plan and Annual Plan, and CAPER activities will be provided a minimum of fourteen (14) calendar days before the public hearing date. The notices will provide details concerning the nature of the public hearing, applicable HUD regulations, date and time of the hearings, and other pertinent information.

The City posts English and Spanish versions of meeting notices on the City's website at <http://www.chattanooga.gov/economic-community-development/community-development> and publishes notices, in both languages, in the local newspaper of general circulation – Chattanooga Times Free Press. Whenever feasible, the City also utilizes other mediums of communication targeted to non-English speaking citizens and minority groups like: newspapers, newsletters, radio, community bulletin boards, and websites in order to announce the schedule of meetings.

Additionally, citizens can be notified via e-mail, posted fliers, brochures, news releases, public service announcements, feature stories, and posts in various places such as departments within the City of Chattanooga, offices of subrecipients, program partners, public health facilities that have MOU's with the City of Chattanooga, and at local events/workshops/meetings attended by staff.

Notices announcing the availability of the draft Five-Year Consolidated Plan, draft Annual Action Plan or Annual Performance Report for review and public comment will include: the public meeting date, a summary of the proposed plan/report, information on where copies of the particular plan/report will be available and length of time. Copies will always be available on the Community Development Division website and at the following locations for the required fifteen (15) or thirty (30) calendar days for review and comment:

City of Chattanooga
Community Development Division
101 E. 11th Street, Suite 200
Chattanooga, TN 37402

Chattanooga Housing Authority
801 N. Holtzclaw Avenue
Chattanooga, TN 37404

Chattanooga Public Library
1001 Broad Street
Chattanooga, TN 37402

The City will also follow the above public noticing process for other “non-public hearing” CPD related actions to be taken. These actions include Substantial Amendments to the Consolidated Plan or Action Plans.

Meeting the Needs of Non-English Speaking Persons

The City makes every effort to ensure that Limited English Proficient (LEP) persons have meaningful access to federally funded programs and services as is required under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

For local Citizen Participation (CP) meetings and other program-related public events, language translators can be provided for non-English speaking populations with a minimum three (3) business days notice. Meeting materials can be made available in other languages upon request.

Throughout the City of Chattanooga, there are significant populations of Spanish-speaking persons residing in the very low, low, and moderate-income neighborhoods. The City posts English and Spanish versions of meeting notices on the City’s website at <http://www.chattanooga.gov/economic-community-development/community-development> and publishes notices, in both languages, in the local newspaper of general circulation – Chattanooga Times Free Press. Whenever feasible, the City also utilizes other mediums of communication targeted to non-English speaking citizens and minority groups like newspapers, newsletters, radio, community bulletin boards, and websites in order to announce the schedule of meetings.

Spanish translations of this Citizen Participation Plan, summaries from the Consolidated Plan, Action Plan, CAPER, and substantial amendments will be available on the City’s website and in the Community Development Division for citizen review.

Access for Persons with Disabilities

The City is committed to providing equal access in its programs, services, and activities for persons with disabilities. Special accommodations or materials in alternative format, under the Americans with Disabilities Act, are available upon request. In addition, accommodations will be made, upon request, for attendees who are visually and/or hearing impaired. Requests must be made at least three (3) business days prior to meeting. Later requests will be accommodated to the extent feasible.

It is the policy of the City of Chattanooga that there shall be no discrimination against persons because of race, religion, age, creed, color, sex, disability, national origin, marital status, and that equal opportunity and access to facilities shall be available to all.

V. AVAILABILITY/ACCESS TO INFORMATION

The City will provide opportunities for residents, public agencies, and other interested parties, including those most affected, with reasonable and timely access to information and records relating to the use of these funds. Information and records for the past five (5) years are on file at the Community Development division.

Standard documents will be available for public review on the City's website at all times, and at the Department of Economic and Community Development at the following location, Monday through Friday, from 8:30 a.m. until 4:00p.m (EST). Standard program documents that shall be made accessible for public review include the current Consolidated Plan and related Action Plan, Consolidated Annual Performance Report (CAPER), Substantial Amendments, and this Citizen Participation Plan. A reasonable number of free copies (three (3)) will be available to citizens. Upon request, these materials will also be available in a form accessible to persons with disabilities.

Department of Economic and Community Development
101 East 11th Street, Suite 200
Chattanooga, TN 37402
(423)643-7300

City of Chattanooga's website: www.chattanooga.gov

Copies may be requested in person, by mail, email or by telephone. Program records maintained on file, or requiring research and compilation, shall be provided within a reasonable time period upon receipt of a written request, which specifically states the information desired.

This paragraph is not intended to supersede the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act of 1966, as amended, which covers all programs and activities in the Consolidated Plan.

VI. PUBLIC COMMENTS

It is the policy of the City to provide residents, service providers, government agencies, and other stakeholders a sufficient time period to review and comment on proposed Consolidated Plan, Annual Action Plans, and Substantial Amendments.

When any draft plan or report is complete or Substantial Amendment is proposed, the availability for public review and comment will be publicly announced along with date(s) of public meeting(s). Notification(s) will be provided as outlined under the "Public Notices" section.

All public notices advise interested persons of the process to submit comments and obtain additional information regarding the proposed action(s). A summary of all comments or views of citizens received in writing, or orally at public hearings and a

summary of any comments not accepted and the reasons thereof, will be attached and made a part of the corresponding document.

The City provides citizens timely opportunities to review and submit comments on the Consolidated Plan, Action Plans, Substantial Amendments, and performance reports as follows:

Consolidated Plan & Annual Action Plans	30 days
Substantial Amendments	30 days
Annual Performance Reports	15 days

VII. DEVELOPMENT OF THE CONSOLIDATED PLAN

The Consolidated Plan is a five-year strategic plan. This document serves as the planning document of the City in order to apply for funding under the CDBG, HOME, and ESG programs. Through this document, the City identifies needs and goals for community planning development, and housing programs during the designated five-year period. The plan is submitted to HUD on or before May 15th, prior to the start of the first year of the new five-year period.

In order to ensure citizen participation, the City of Chattanooga will host various focus groups prior to the development of the Five-Year Consolidated Plan. The City will also conduct at least one (1) public hearing before the proposed Consolidated Plan is published for comment. Before the City adopts the proposed Consolidated Plan, the City will provide citizens, public agencies and other interested parties with the following:

1. A forum for citizens and groups to provide the City with information on housing and community development needs as part of the preparation of the Consolidated Plan;
2. The amount of funds the City expects to receive from the U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development for the implementation of the CDBG, HOME, and ESG Programs, including program income received through activities under these programs;
3. The range of activities that may be undertaken under each of these programs and the estimated amount of funds that will benefit low and moderate income residents;
4. The City's plans to minimize displacement of persons and to assist any persons displaced, along with the types and levels of assistance that will be made available (or require others to make available) to persons displaced, even if the City expects no displacement to occur.

The City will publish notification of the availability of the proposed Consolidated Plan in accordance with the "Public Notices" section above. The notification will include a

summary of the proposed Consolidated Plan. Citizens will be given the opportunity to comment on the proposed Consolidated Plan for a period of not less than thirty (30) calendar days before the Consolidated Plan is approved by City Council and submitted to HUD.

Annual Action Plan

Prior to submitting the Annual Action Plan outlining specific projects and the use of funds to HUD, the City follows the process described below:

- Hold public meeting(s) to provide the public information on the estimated amount of CDBG, HOME, and ESG funds to be received in the upcoming year, along with a description of the range of types of activities that may be undertaken and receive input on activities/proposed activities to address community needs;
- Identify activities consistent with achieving outcomes established in Consolidated Plan;
- Publish draft plan to provide opportunity for public review and comment (the City may modify the Action Plan after considering public comment, as appropriate);
- Present to Mayor and City Council for approval.

VIII. ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORT (CAPER)

Within ninety (90) calendar days after the close of the City's fiscal year (September 30th), HUD regulations require the City to submit a performance report, the Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Report (CAPER). Principally, the CAPER provides information on how the federal funds were spent and the extent to which they were used for activities that benefited low and moderated income citizens. The CAPER also provides HUD with information to assess whether the City carried out its programs in compliance with applicable regulations and requirements, as stated in that year's plan. Additionally, the CAPER is a vehicle through which the City can describe its program achievements to local citizens.

As outlined in the "Public Comments" section above, at least fifteen (15) calendar days prior to submission to HUD, the CAPER is made available to the public for review and comment. Notice and availability of the CAPER for review and comment is published.

IX. AMENDMENTS

From time-to-time, it may be necessary for the City to process a "Substantial Amendment" to the Five-Year Consolidated Plan or the One-Year Action Plans to allow for new CDBG, ESG, or HOME-funded activities, modification of existing activities, or other CPD program administrative actions.

Substantial Amendment

Any proposed amendment that is considered a “Substantial Amendment” is subject to the Citizen Participation process, requires formal action by City Council and approval by HUD. A thirty (30) day public notice is published to provide the opportunity for the public to review and comment on the proposed substantial amendment(s).

Federal regulations at 24 CFR 91.105(c)(1), require the inclusion of specific criteria in the Citizen Participation Plan for determining what constitutes a change in programming activities significant enough to be classified as a “Substantial Amendment” to the Consolidated Plan. A change in federal rules or regulations that mandates an alteration in current programming operations would not be considered a Substantial Amendment, but a conforming regulatory requirement.

The City’s criteria for substantial change include a change in the use of CDBG funds from one eligible activity to another. The City will consider all comments or views received from the public concerning proposed Substantial Amendments in accordance with 24 CFR 91.105 (c)(3). A summary of these comments and views, including those not accepted (and the reason why) shall be attached to the Substantial Amendment. The City will submit Substantial Amendments to HUD on an annual basis.

Non-Substantial/Standard Amendments

In addition to Substantial Amendments, federal regulations require the City to amend the Consolidated Plan when any of the following amendments are made:

1. A change in the priorities for spending CPD money which the City set in the Consolidated Plan;
2. A change in the purpose, scope, location, or beneficiaries of an activity;
3. A decision to carry out an activity not previously described in the Consolidated Plan or Annual Action Plan.

Non-substantial/standard amendments will be approved on an administrative basis by the City Administrator responsible for oversight management of the City’s CPD funds. Standard amendments and administrative updates are not formally noticed to the public, nor submitted to HUD. However, documentation describing general changes and/or identifying specific changes will be included in the Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Report (CAPER), which is made available to the public.

In an effort to efficiently utilize CDBG/HOME/ESG funds, the City will consider the reprogramming of unspent CDBG/HOME/ESG balances from completed and cancelled CDBG/HOME/ESG-funded activities to other eligible activities. In the event that any of these “administrative” reprogramming actions fall under the “Substantial Amendment” criteria, the proposed actions are subject to the Citizen Participation process, requires formal action by City Council and approval by HUD.

Substantial and non-substantial amendments, over \$25,000.00, increasing, decreasing, creating new budget line items through funding of new or deleting of previously funded activities, require City Council approval through the formal, public, council process.

X. ANTI-DISPLACEMENT

As part of the implementation steps of the Consolidated Plan, the City will review all projects recommended for funding to identify those activities that will result in the displacement of residents. The City of Chattanooga will comply with all requirements of the Uniform Relocation Assistance Act. This act, passed by Congress in 1970, is a federal law that establishes minimum standards for federally funded programs and projects that require the acquisition of real property (real estate) or displacement of persons from their homes, businesses, or farms. The Uniform Act's protections and assistance apply to the acquisition, rehabilitation, or demolition of real property for federal or federally funded projects. The City of Chattanooga will take the needed steps to assure that the objectives of the URA are achieved where displacement activities are required. The URA objectives are:

- To provide uniform, fair and equitable treatment of persons whose real property is acquired or who are displaced in connection with federally funded projects;
- To ensure relocation assistance is provided to displaced persons to lessen the emotional and financial impact of displacement;
- To ensure that no individual or family is displaced unless decent, safe, and sanitary (DSS) housing is available within the displaced person's financial means;
- To help improve the housing conditions of displaced persons living in substandard housing, and
- To encourage and expedite acquisition by agreement and without coercion.

XI. TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

The City's Office of Community Development staff will work with organizations or individuals representative of low and moderate-income people who are interested in submitting a proposal to obtain funding for an activity. All potential applicants for funding are encouraged to contact City staff for technical assistance in developing proposals for any program covered under the Consolidated Plan.

Workshops are offered during the solicitation for applications and technical assistance is provided on an individual basis, upon request. A statement of the availability of the technical assistance service and scheduled work sessions is included in solicitations for proposals.

XII. COMPLAINTS

Citizens with complaints concerning the Community Development Programs, Consolidated Plan, Performance Reports, or amendments should contact the

Community Development Division of the Department of Economic and Community Development by calling (423) 643-3700 or in writing at:

City of Chattanooga
Department of Economic and Community Development
101 E. 11th Street, Suite 200
Chattanooga, TN 37402

City staff will provide a written response within fifteen (15) calendar days (when practical) of the receipt of the complaint or grievance. If the complaint is unresolved at the local level, citizens will be provided information and instructions on their right to contact the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. A record will be maintained of all complaints receive that will include the nature of the complaint, referrals made, and the final disposition.

XIII. USE & CHANGING THE CITIZEN PARTICIPATION PLAN

This Citizen Participation Plan will be made public and followed by the City as presented. Upon request, the plan will also be available in a form accessible to persons with disabilities.

The Citizen Participation Plan can be changed only after the Citizen Advisory Committee has been notified and has had a reasonable opportunity to review and comment on the proposed changes.

When substantial changes are made to the plan, a summary of the changes will be provided with the Consolidated Plan summary notice, allowing citizens a reasonable opportunity to comment. The entire document will be available with the Consolidated Plan. Substantial changes consist of changes to comply with federal amendments.

Non-substantial changes to the plan take effect when passed by majority vote of the Citizen Advisory Committee.

XIV. CITY'S RESPONSIBILITY

The Citizens Participation Plan does not restrict the responsibility or the authority of City officials in the development of annual applications for funding from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development or in the execution of the Community Development Program. While citizen participation is essential for a viable program, the final authority for decision-making rests with the Mayor and City Council. The Mayor is the grantee recipient and the Department of Economic and Community Development serves as administrator of the programs.

The exchange of information among citizens, City staff, and elected officials provides for a stronger, more responsive housing and community development effort in the City of

Chattanooga. The Community Development Division, in partnership with the Economic and Community Development Department, will continue to build capacity in neighborhoods for participation in the Community Development process through neighborhood capacity-building initiatives.

This Citizens Participation Plan supersedes and replaces all previous plans adopted or amended for the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), Home Investment Partnerships (HOME), and the Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) programs.

XV. ROLE OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The role of the Community Development Advisory Committee (CDAC) is to facilitate citizen participation, especially by citizens of low and moderate-income who live in areas where community development funds are to be used, and representation in the planning and evaluation of the City's Community Development programs. The CDAC assists in the assessment of community needs, informs other citizens of the CDBG, ESG, HOME and other programs, and provides citizen input in the development of the City's Consolidated Plan Process. Additionally, the CDAC will:

- On an as-needed basis, assist ECD staff in assessing requests and recommendations for funding under the CD programs. Committee members' input will be included when recommendations are presented to Mayor and City Council for approval;
- Attend public meetings/forums to stay informed about CD operations;
- Be available on an as-needed basis when a sub-committee is necessary for funding decisions (selected members may vary depending upon the proposed activity);
- Provide in-put on possible uses of Community Development funds;
- Comment on the City's Consolidated Plan, Annual Performance Report, and amendments, as appropriate;
- Assist staff in marketing Community Development Programs to the community; and
- Review the performance and effectiveness of the Community Development Programs.

The membership of the CDAC will be representatives of the City's nine (9) Council Districts, CDBG-eligible neighborhoods, as well as agencies and departments whose interests and/or expertise relate to community development objectives. There will be a total of nineteen (19) members chosen in the following manner:

Council Representatives (9)

One (1) representative from each of the nine (9) City Council Districts selected by the Council Member from that district. This individual must be a resident of the district from which he or she is chosen.

Community Representatives (10)

The Mayor will select a total of ten (10) members from the community. The Mayor is encouraged to provide persons or representation from those whose interests and/or expertise relate to the following community development objectives:

- Minorities,
- Low and moderate-income income persons,
- Low and moderate-income persons living in slum and blighted areas where funds are proposed to be used,
- Residents of predominately low and moderate-income neighborhoods,
- Non-English speaking persons,
- Persons with disabilities,
- Elderly,
- Residents of public and assisted housing developments,
- Local and regional institutions,
- Continuum of Care, and
- Other organizations (businesses, developers, nonprofit organizations, philanthropic organizations, or community-based and faith-based organizations)

CDAC members may serve a maximum of two (2) consecutive terms consisting of three (3) years per term. A rotation system based upon appointment date to the CDAC ensures membership of new and experienced members whether appointed by the Mayor or Council Member.

Committee members are replaced on the CDAC, at the member's request, for absence from at least three (3) consecutive meetings and by member rotation.

When a new Council Member is elected, the previous Council person's representative serves on the Committee until their term expires; at that time, a new representative may be selected.

When a new Mayor is elected, the Mayor may only select the neighborhood representatives as the existing members' terms expire which may include re-appointments or new appointees.

The Advisory Committee will meet no less than two (2) times each year public meetings for Action Plan and CAPER count as a meeting). Additional meetings may be called if certain program changes occur, and the Advisory Committee will meet to discuss and approve those changes. Committee members will be given at least ten (10) calendar day's written notice of all meetings. Decisions will be made by majority vote of those in attendance.