

**CITIZEN PARTICIPATION PLAN 2025  
OFFICE OF PLANNING AND ECONOMIC  
DEVELOPMENT CITY OF SPRINGFIELD, ILLINOIS**

**Purpose**

The City of Springfield receives annual entitlement funding from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). The City is required by law to adopt a detailed Citizen Participation Plan containing policies and procedures for stakeholder consultation and public involvement in the Consolidated Plan process and the use of Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds. The City of Springfield herein after referred to as the Entitlement Community, is committed to increasing public participation and the empowerment of residents—especially those of low- and moderate-income—to shape the future of the region. The Citizen Participation Plan will be made available to the public via the Entitlement Community’s website and physical office locations.

**Program Year**

July 1 through June 30

**Funding Source**

The Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Entitlement Program provides annual grants on a formula basis to entitled cities and counties to develop viable urban communities by providing decent housing and a suitable living environment, and by expanding economic opportunities, principally for low- and moderate income persons. The program is authorized under Title 1 of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974, Public Law 93-383, as amended; 42 U.S.C.-530.1 et seq.1

**Regulatory Requirements**

This Citizen Participation Plan has been developed in accordance with the applicable federal regulation of 24 CFR Part 91.05: Citizen Participation Plan; Local Governments.

**Outreach and Citizen Engagement Strategy**

This Citizen Participation Plan defines a process for meaningful public input regarding CDBG-funded activities and priorities. Two common threads run through this public outreach approach, 1) to move the Entitlement Community’s work into the places and spaces where people gather, work and learn, and

2) To cooperate with our participants and partners in development of a network of contacts that can substantially expand our outreach capabilities. The Entitlement Community will provide for and encourage genuine involvement by low- and moderate income residents, people who do not speak English and people with disabilities 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; suggesting the types of programs to meet high-priority needs; and overseeing the way in which the programs are carried out.

## Objectives for Engagement

1 Understand the demographics of the Entitlement Community's low and moderate-income population and determine what cultural, economic, language-based or accessibility barriers exist to public participation.

2 Seek broad citizen input with specific emphasis on participation by low- and moderate- income persons and by those living in areas where federal funds are proposed to be used, and/or on low- and moderate-income neighborhoods. Low and moderate-income neighborhoods are areas where at least 51% of households have incomes at or below 80% of the area median income (AMI).

3 Hold public meetings, events, or activities in locations that are accessible to all area stakeholders and members of the community, including but not limited to members of ethnic, racial, or faith-based minority groups, people with limited economic resources, people with disabilities, people of any age or educational attainment, and people with limited proficiency in understanding or speaking English.

4 Consult with local and regional institutions including Continuums of Care, businesses, nonprofit organizations, philanthropic organizations, and community- and faith-based organizations. Consultations will also include broadband internet service providers, organizations engaged in narrowing the digital divide, agencies whose primary responsibilities include the management of flood prone areas, public land or water resources, and emergency management agencies.

5 Provide methods for two-way communication, information and input from populations and persons who are less likely to attend meetings.

6 Convey the information in various formats to reach all stakeholder groups to the extent possible, using direct and network-based means of communication

## Opportunities for Participation

Each of the Entitlement Communities will solicit input from residents and stakeholders at public hearings annually on programming and operations. In addition to the public hearings, the following outreach/engagement processes may be utilized:

- Public meetings
- Open houses
- Focus groups
- Surveys
- Innovative tools and technologies to gather input from various demographic groups
- Personal outreach by staff
- Services for persons with disabilities\*

\* Notices of opportunities for public involvement include contact information for people needing any form of accommodations.

## Strategic Plans

**There shall be advanced public notice and reasonable opportunity to comment on the proposed Annual Action Plan, Five-Year Consolidated Plan, Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing and any Substantial Amendments as applicable.**

## **Public Comment/Public Hearing Process**

The entitlement community shall utilize public comment periods and public hearings to solicit meaningful citizen involvement in the development of the aforementioned strategic plans. The published comment period pertaining to the Annual Action Plan and Consolidated Plan shall be a minimum of 30 days. During this time, the public will have the opportunity to submit comments orally, in writing or via electronic methods as directed in the notice. Draft copies of the documents will be available at the Entitlement Community's website. In addition, a hard copy of the draft documents will be maintained at the Entitlement Community's office and made available for public review as requested. A reasonable number of free copies of the draft documents will also be provided to those residents and groups upon request. The draft documents will be made available in a form accessible to persons with disabilities, upon request. The Entitlement Community will also make available the amount of assistance they are expected to receive (including grant funds and program income) and the range of activities that may be undertaken, including the estimated amount that will benefit persons of low and moderate income, prior to the hearing for the Consolidated Plan and Annual Action Plans. Prior to the public comment period for a Consolidated Plan and/or Annual Action Plan, at least one public hearing will occur. A formal notice of a public hearing will be published in at least one local newspaper with general daily circulation at least two (2) weeks in advance. The same notice will be published to the Entitlement Community's website, newsletters and social media. The notice will also be sent to known stakeholder groups and partner organizations to further publicize via linkage to their respective websites, newsletters and social media.

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. Translators will be provided for people who do not speak English or are hearing disabled, when requests are made at least five working days prior to a hearing. Public hearings will be held at locations and times that are convenient and accessible to potential or actual beneficiaries. (Meeting times are generally held after 5:00 pm.; however, times may be varied, dependent upon the "targeted" audience.) A summary of comments received, identifying the comment source and content, as well as the Entitlement Community's responses (including those comments or views not accepted and the reasons therefor) will be included in the final document submittal to HUD as required.

### **Virtual public hearings are allowed under the following circumstances:**

- National/local health authorities recommend social distancing and limiting public gatherings for public health reasons;
- Virtual hearings provide reasonable notification and access for citizens in accordance with the grantee's certifications, timely responses from local officials to all citizen questions and issues, and public access to all questions and responses.

A formal notice of the public hearing will be published in at least one local newspaper with general circulation no less than five days prior to the hearing. The same notice will be published to the Entitlement Community's website, newsletters, and social media. The notice will also be sent to known stakeholder groups and partner organizations to further publicize via linkage to their respective websites, newsletters, and social media.

## **Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Report (CAPER)**

Within 90 days of the close of each program year, the Entitlement Communities must send to the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) a Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Report (CAPER). Each CAPER will include the amount of assistance the Entitlement Community actually received (including grant funds and program income) and the range of activities that were undertaken, including the actual amount that benefited persons of low- and moderate-income where applicable. The Entitlement Communities will give reasonable notice that a CAPER is available for public review and comment. The published comment period for the CAPER shall be a minimum of 15 days. There will be a public hearing regarding the Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Report. A formal notice of a public hearing will be published in at least one local newspaper with general daily circulation at least two (2) weeks in advance. The same notice will be published to the Entitlement Community's website, newsletters and social media. The notice will also be sent to known stakeholder groups and partner organizations to further publicize via linkage to their respective websites, newsletters and social media. In preparing a Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Report for submission to HUD, 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. The CAPER sent to HUD will have a section that presents all comments, plus explanations why any comments were not accepted.

## **Amendments**

The Entitlement Communities will make all Substantial Amendments available for public review and comment. A Substantial Amendment shall be required if any one of the following criteria applies:

1. A change in the use of CDBG money from one activity to another, in excess of \$100,000.00.
2. Activities proposed to be added or deleted from the plan.
3. A change in the purpose, scope, location, or type of beneficiaries of an activity.
4. A change in priorities for allocating funds

## **Substantial Amendment**

In the case of a substantial amendment, a public notice summarizing the proposed amendment will be published in a newspaper of general circulation and posted on the City's website. The draft substantial amendment will be available for public view and comment for 30 days. The public notice encourage all interested parties to participate and provide their comments and input on the proposed substantial amendment. The City will consider all comments received. The City will also provide a summary of any comments or views that are accepted, as well as any comments or views that were not accepted. The summary will be attached to the substantial amendment and submitted to HUD through IDIS for approval.

**Minor Amendments**

A Minor Amendment is a change in CDBG funds in an amount less than \$100,000

Minor Amendments do not require public notice, however, these amendments must be submitted through IDIS and reviewed by HUD prior to the completion of the CAPER. Regardless of its type, an amendment should first be incorporated into the Consolidated Plan and subsequently, into the Annual Action Plan.

**Citizen Participation**

The published comment period pertaining to amendments to the Citizen Participation Plan, Consolidated Plan, Annual Action Plan(s) and Substantial Amendment(s), as they relate to CDBG-CV, shall be a minimum of 5 days. During this time, the public will have an opportunity to submit comments orally, in writing, or via electronic methods, as directed in the notice. Comment periods for more than one of the above documents may run concurrently.