

**CITY OF AURORA
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DIVISION
CITIZEN PARTICIPATION PLAN**

**Adopted September 14, 2010
Revised June 24, 2019**

INTRODUCTION

The City of Aurora is committed to providing citizens and other interested parties with opportunities to participate in an advisory role in the planning, implementation and evaluation of the City's Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), HOME Investment Partnership (HOME), Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG), and Section 108 Programs. The primary purpose of these programs is to create viable communities by providing decent housing, a suitable living environment and expanding economic opportunities principally for low- and moderate-income people. The Aurora City Council takes final action regarding these grant programs (currently including the Community Development Block Grant program, the HOME Investment Partnerships program, the Emergency Shelter Grant program, and the Section 108 Program), but it is the Community Development Division (CDD) that establishes and implements policies relating to the use of these funds and recommends action to City Council.

As the administrator of these funds for the City of Aurora, the CDD presents this Citizen Participation Plan to outline the process that will be followed. A complete copy of the regulatory citations can be found in Appendix Item 1.

The Citizen Participation Plan is designed especially to encourage participation by low and moderate income persons, particularly:

- Low and moderate income persons
- Residents of slums, blighted areas, and low and moderate income neighborhoods
- Non-English speaking persons
- Those living in areas where federal funds are proposed to be used
- Persons with disabilities and other special populations
- Residents of public and assisted housing developments
- Residents of targeted revitalization areas in which the developments are located

The following stakeholders, to the greatest extent feasible, will also be encouraged to participate:

- For-profit and non-profit developers and agencies
- Neighborhood associations
- Community development organizations
- City departments who manage flood control, public land, and water resources
- Housing Authorities
- Kane County Continuum of Care
- Fox Valley Park District
- Workforce and economic development agencies
- Chambers of Commerce

- Foundations
- Organizations engaged in narrowing the digital divide
- Emergency management agencies
- Agencies working to reduce lead based paint hazards
- Other agencies as deemed appropriate

PROGRAM YEAR

Aurora’s program year begins January 1st and ends December 31st.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF PLANS AND REPORTS

The City of Aurora encourages participation at all stages of the process. This includes citizen involvement to identify needs; set priorities among these needs; decide how much in funding should be allocated to each high-priority need; suggest the types of programs to meet high-priority needs; and oversee the way in which programs are carried out. The law particularly requires that this CPP both provide for and encourage public participation in the development of the following documents:

1. Consolidated Plan (Con Plan) and substantial amendments to the Con Plan
2. Annual Action Plan (AAP) and substantial amendments to the AAP
3. Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Report (CAPER)

PLAN AMENDMENTS

In the course of administering federally-funded programs, the City may need to amend the *Consolidated Plan* or an *Annual Action Plan*. All minor and substantial amendments will be subject to the more stringent of the City’s or HUD’s program requirements, including, but not limited to, funding approval. When the amendment is considered substantial and meets the criteria set forth below, the change will be considered a substantial amendment and the City will undertake additional actions to ensure citizens have an opportunity to comment. Records of all amendments will be maintained by the City for public review and will be fully described in the annual performance report submitted to HUD.

Criteria for Amendments

A substantial amendment that will require a public hearing and a 30 day public comment period in the following circumstances below. Substantial amendments will still be reflected in Integrated Disbursement and Information System (IDIS), reported to HUD accordingly, and approved by City Council where required.

A **substantial** amendment will be undertaken in the following circumstances:

- A change in the City’s allocation priorities, including establishing new activities
- A change in the use of federal funds from one eligible activity to another in excess of 25% of a single activity budget
- A new activity or program not previously described in the Annual Action or ConPlan

A **minor** amendment that will not require a public hearing or public comment period will be undertaken in the following circumstances below. Minor amendments will still be reflected in IDIS, reported to HUD accordingly, and approved by City Council where required.

- A change in the method of distribution of funds
- Carrying out an approved activity using funds from any program covered by the Consolidated Plan (including program income) not previously described in the action plan
- A change in the purpose, scope, location, or beneficiaries of an approved activity
- An increase, or decrease of funds for a previously approved activity that does not exceed 25% of the total budget of the project
- An increase or decrease of funding for an approved activity that is no more than 10% of the City's total annual grant allocation (sum of CDBG, HOME, and ESG funding)
- A cancellation of a previously approved activity due to unforeseen circumstances that have caused significant delays or unreasonable cost burdens
- The reallocation of funds not expended after an activity is completed as approved to a previously approved activity

ANNUAL ACTION PLAN AND 5-YEAR CON PLAN APPROVAL PROCESS

Public Notice and Publication

In the case of a proposed substantial amendment, the City will publish a public notice in the Beacon News describing the project and the amount to be spent; establishing a 30-day public comment period, unless instruction is provided by HUD that allows a shorter public comment period; and the date, time, and location for public hearing. The public comment period will be scheduled to end any time before the plan is approved by City Council. The public hearing will occur at least 10 days prior to the City Council meeting at which the plan is slated for adoption.

The public notice will list the locations where copies of the proposed amendment may be examined. These locations include all branches of the Aurora Public Library and the Community Development Division office. The amendment will be posted on the City's website, www.aurora-il.org.

The City will publish each plan in a manner that affords citizens, public agencies, and other interested parties a reasonable opportunity to examine its contents and submit comments.

Public Hearing

The City will hold at least one public hearing during the development of the *Consolidated Plan* and *Annual Action Plan* to gather input from citizens and respond to proposals and questions.

In a year in which the *Consolidated Plan* is being developed, an additional public hearing will be held before the proposed *Consolidated Plan* is published for comment.

The hearing(s) will address housing and community development needs, development of proposed activities, and review of program performance. All public hearings will be held at Aurora City Hall, 44 E. Downer Place, Aurora, IL 60507 on the date and time included on the particular public notice.

Upon request, the City will provide reasonable accommodations to meet the needs of non-English speaking residents. The City will also take whatever actions are appropriate to serve the needs of persons with disabilities.

Public Comments

The City of Aurora will provide a period of at least 30 days to receive comments from citizens and other stakeholders on each proposed plan. The City will consider any comments or views of citizens and other stakeholders received in writing, by email, or orally at public hearings, in preparing the final adopted plan. A summary of these comments or views, and a summary of any comments or views not accepted and the reasons for not accepting the latter, shall be attached to the final adopted plan.

PERFORMANCE REPORT APPROVAL PROCESS

Each year the City of Aurora must submit a *Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Report* (CAPER) to HUD. The report is due 90 days after the close of the program year. To ensure public participation in the review of the CAPER, the City will issue public notices, hold a public hearing, and accept public comments. This report does not require City Council approval and may be presented as an informational item.

Public Notice and Publication

The City will publish a public notice in the Beacon News announcing the availability of the CAPER and establishing a 15-day public comment period. The public comment period will be scheduled to end any time before the plan is submitted to HUD. The public notice will include a date, time and location for a public hearing which shall be held before or during the 15-day public comment period. A summary of all comments or views, and a summary of any comments or views not accepted and the reasons therefore, shall be attached to the final CAPER before submittal to HUD.

The public notice will list the locations where copies of the CAPER may be examined. These locations include all branches of the Aurora Public Library and the Community Development Division office. The CAPER will be posted on the City's website, www.aurora-il.org.

Public Hearing

The City will hold a public hearing to gather input from citizens, answer questions, address housing and community development needs, and review program performance.

All public hearings will be held at the Aurora City Hall, 44 E. Downer Place, Aurora, IL 60507 on the date and time stated on the particular public notice.

Upon request, the City will provide for translation services to meet the needs of non-English speaking residents. The City will also take whatever actions are appropriate to serve the needs of persons with disabilities.

Public Comments

The City will provide a period of at least 15 days to receive comments on the CAPER before the report is submitted to HUD. The City will consider any comments or views of citizens and other stakeholders received in writing, or orally at public hearings, if any, in preparing the CAPER. The City will attach a summary of these comments and the City's response to the final CAPER.

ACCESS TO INFORMATION AND RECORDS

Access to Records. In accordance with the Illinois Freedom of Information Act ("FOIA"), all non-exempt records are subject to disclosure in response to a FOIA request. . Any person wishing to view the records associated with the CDBG, HOME, or ESG programs may submit a FOIA request to the City requesting copies of such records.

In addition to providing opportunities for citizen participation in the development of plans and review of the performance report, the City must provide citizens, public agencies, and other interested parties with reasonable and timely access to information and records relating to the *Consolidated Plan* and the use of federal funds. The City will provide access to records for the current program year and preceding five program years. These records include, but are not limited to, the *Citizen Participation Plan*, the *Consolidated Plan* as adopted, annual action plans, performance reports, and substantial amendments. The City will make these records available in a form accessible to persons with disabilities, upon request. Records are maintained in the offices of the Community Development Division.

The City will also provide citizens with reasonable and timely access to local meetings held in regard to the *Consolidated Plan* and the activities undertaken as part of the *Consolidated Plan*.

SPECIAL PARTICIPATION ACTIVITIES

The following are special methods used to obtain the views of citizens and organizations with a stake in the activities of the City.

Consultations with Representative Groups

The CDD encourages organizations involved in meeting housing and community development needs throughout the city limits to arrange for special consultation meetings with the CDD. The purpose of these meetings is to obtain information on specific issues.

Special Public Participation in Neighborhood Revitalization Strategy Area Plans

For neighborhood based projects, the CDD encourages a comprehensive approach to responding to local concerns. Projects and programs in these areas can be given higher priority as long as the activity is eligible under HUD regulations and funding is available.

Technical Assistance

The City is required to provide technical assistance to groups representative of persons of low and moderate income levels that request such assistance to develop proposals for funding assistance under any of the programs covered by the *Consolidated Plan*, with the level and type of assistance determined by the City. The assistance need not include the provision of funds to the groups. To request assistance, contact the Community Development Division at 630-256-3320.

RESPONSES TO COMMENTS AND COMPLAINTS

Responses to Comments

It is the policy of the CDD that all comments received during public hearings, designated comment periods, and consultations directed to the Consolidated Plan, Annual Action Plan, or the Consolidated Annual Performance Evaluation Report shall be responded to in writing within the respective Plan, Report or Amendment. Comments will be summarized in the respective Plan, Report or Amendment followed by responses provided by the CDD within 15 days from the date the public comment was submitted.

All comments received during public hearings held for specific proposed activities shall be summarized in the respective Plan, Report, or Amendment and responses will be provided in writing by the CDD. Likewise, comments received during the Environmental Review Record (ERR) process shall be summarized in the ERR and responses will be provided in writing by the CDD.

Responses to Complaints

All written complaints regarding the Annual Action Plan, Consolidated Plan, CAPER, or individual activities undertaken by the City of Aurora's CDBG, HOME, ESG, and Section 108 Programs shall be provided a written response. It is the policy of the CDD to provide a response within 15 working days of receipt of the complaint or prior to submission for approval, whichever is sooner if no further deliberation is required. If the complaint involves a policy issue that requires deliberation of one or more policy groups, the individual or organization submitting the complaint shall be notified of this fact within 15 days. The issue will be brought to the attention of the appropriate policy group at the next available meeting, and a response will be developed after their consideration.

If There Are Any Comments or Questions

To submit questions, comments, and complaints about the Citizen Participation Plan, or to request information about the City's CDBG, HOME, ESG, or Section 108 programs, write to the City of Aurora – Attention: Community Development Division, City Hall, Fourth Floor, 44 E.

Downer Place, Aurora, IL 60507 or call (630) 256-3320. Email communication can be sent to dnr@aurora-il.org.

DISPLACEMENT

The City must set forth plans to minimize displacement of persons and to assist any person displaced, specifying the types and levels of assistance the City will make available (or require others to make available) to persons displaced, even if the City expects no displacements to occur. Displacement occurs when an individual, family, partnership, association, corporation, or organization moves from their home, business, or farm, or moves their personal property as a direct result of a federally-funded acquisition, demolition, or rehabilitation. Generally, displacement does not include persons displaced temporarily from their dwelling for less than 12 months while it is being rehabilitated. Displaced persons and entities are eligible for relocation assistance under federal law. (Uniform Relocation Act of 1970)

As part of this plan, the City is required to describe its plans to minimize displacement of persons and to specify types and levels of assistance the City will make available to persons who are displaced. To minimize displacement, the City will not acquire or demolish occupied structures unless the structure is owner occupied and a voluntary acquisition takes place. When displacement is unavoidable, the City will offer the following types of assistance:

For residential displacements:

- Provide relocation advisory services to displaced tenants and owner occupants
- Provide a minimum of 90 days written notice to vacate prior to possession
- Provide reimbursement for moving expenses
- Provide payments for the added cost of renting or purchasing comparable replacement housing

For nonresidential displacements (businesses and nonprofit organizations):

- Provide relocation advisory services
- Provide a minimum 90 days written notice to vacate prior to possession
- Provide reimbursement for moving and re-establishment expenses
- Provide payments for the added cost of renting or purchasing comparable commercial space

BLOCK GRANT WORKING COMMITTEE

The Block Grant Working Committee is an advisory body that was created to provide additional input from Aurora citizens regarding the use of federal funds.

The Block Grant Working Committee is comprised of one representative from each City ward and three members-at-large. The members serve two-year terms with no limit on the number of terms any member can serve. The starting date of each member's term coincides with the term of his/her respective Alderman.

Appointment to the Block Grant Working Committee is by recommendation of each Alderman to the Mayor. The Mayor recommends an additional at-large member. All recommendations are approved by the City Council.

The Block Grant Working Committee meets monthly with staff of the Community Development Division and attends public hearings related to the City's *Consolidated Plan, Annual Action Plans, Substantial Amendments*, and the *Comprehensive Annual Performance Evaluation Report*.

CONTACT INFORMATION

The City of Aurora's Community Development Division is the point of contact for all questions, comments, complaints, and requests for technical assistance. Contact information is:

City of Aurora Community Development Division
City Hall
Fourth Floor
44 E. Downer Place
Aurora, IL 60507
630-256-3320
dnr@aurora-il.org