

**9.1 CITIZEN PARTICIPATION PLAN
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I INTRODUCTION: POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

The City of Pittsburgh Citizen Participation Plan, as outlined hereafter, reflects the Administration's desire to continue its pro-active approach to involve its citizens, non-profit organizations, community development agencies, developers, foundations, and other local entities in the planning, decision making, and implementation of programmatic and project-oriented activities in the City.

The Administration makes special efforts to solicit input from its low/moderate income residents, particularly those families living in Housing Authority Communities throughout the City. The Housing Authority managers and staff were actively involved in the preparation of the Draft Consolidated Plan and special attention was given to the residents of the Housing Authority City of Pittsburgh communities and their housing economic, and social program needs.

The City believes that the Citizen Participation process provides an excellent opportunity for its residents, especially low-moderate income residents, non-profit groups (neighborhood organizations) City authorities, and other service providers to be actively involved in the preparation and implementation of the Consolidated Plan.

All citizens will have an opportunity to comment on this Citizen Participation Plan, and any amendments made hereafter, during the regular notification period (30 days) of the Draft Consolidated Plan, in which the Citizen Participation Plan will be contained.

The Administration's "Plan for Citizen Participation" proposes to continue the pro-active approach and involve as many citizens and non-profit groups in the development and implementation of the Consolidated Plan, the Capital Budget, and the Six Year Development Plan for the City.

II DEVELOPMENT OF THE CONSOLIDATED PLAN

- A. Prior to the adoption of the Consolidated Plan, the City will make available to its citizens, non-profit groups, and other entities, a draft copy of the Plan that includes the following information:
 - 1. The amount of assistance, including grant funds and program income the City expects to receive; and

2. The type of programs/projects the City proposes to undertake, including the estimated value of these activities that will benefit low and moderate income persons/families.

The City, as always, will make efforts to minimize the displacement of persons, including households, business, non-profit agencies, and others as a result of its proposed activities. Any person displaced by such activities will receive relocation assistance in accordance with the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970. The Central Relocation Agency of the Housing Authority of the City of Pittsburgh is responsible for making relocation assistance information available to any displaced person when project implementation begins. Disbursement of this information will be through written correspondence to the displaced person.

- B. To afford citizens, public agencies, and other interested parties an opportunity to examine and comment on the proposed Consolidated Plan, the City Planning Department will public a summary of the proposed Consolidated Plan in newspapers of general circulation. This summary will describe the contents and purpose of the Consolidated Plan, and will include a list of the locations where copies of the entire Consolidated Plan may be examined. The Department of City Planning will provide a reasonable number of free copies of the Consolidated Plan to citizens and groups who request it. There will be a thirty (30) day review period for citizen comments once the Consolidated Plan is published prior to submitting the Plan to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.
- C. The City will hold at least one (1) public hearing during the development of the Consolidated Plan. Public hearings will be held in accordance with the requirements of Section IV of this Citizen Participation Plan, which outlines the Public Hearing Process.
- D. A second public hearing will be held during the thirty (30) day review and comment period. This public hearing will also be held in accordance with the requirements of Section IV of this Citizen Participation Plan.

III AMENDMENT PROCESS

The City will provide opportunities for citizen participation when amendments to the following Plans are being considered

A. *THE CITIZEN PARTICIPATION PLAN*

1. When changes are made to the Citizen Participation Plan, notice will be placed in one major daily newspaper of general circulation. The notice will contain information on where to obtain a copy of the amended Citizen Participation Plan. Following a thirty (30) day review and comment period, the change will become effective.

B. *THE CONSOLIDATED PLAN*

According to federal regulations (cfr.91.105(c)), when a substantial change occurs in the Consolidated Plan, citizens must be provided with reasonable notice and an opportunity to comment on any substantial amendments.

1. A substantial change is defined as:
After submission and approval of the final statement, any changes to the list of activities to be funded, as well as changes that will substantially alter the purpose, scope, location, amount, or project beneficiaries, will require an amendment. The City will notify residents of such changes to the program through public notice in the local media, and provide the opportunity for comment. The criteria for what constitutes a substantial change which requires an amendment is as follows:
 - a. An activity added or dropped from the funding program.
 - b. A location change in any activity.
 - c. A change in the scope or purpose of an activity so as to affect the persons benefiting by the project.

- d. A 50% change in the project funded amount, if the project is funded at \$24,999 or less.
 - e. A 25% change in the project funded amount if the project is funded at \$25,000 and above.
- 2. Amendments to the Consolidated Plan will be advertised in one (1) major daily newspaper of general circulation. Following a thirty (30) day review and comment period, the amendments will be implemented.

C. *PERFORMANCE REPORTS*

- 1. A display-type ad will be placed in a major daily newspaper of general circulation one time only. The ad will state the locations across the city where and when the consolidated plan performance report will be available for review. The report will be available for public review for a period of no less than fifteen (15) days. Written comments may be received by the City during that time period and these comments and the City's responses to them will be included in the Final Consolidated Plan Performance Report that is submitted to the Department of Housing and urban Development.

D. *EMERGENCY PROJECTS*

- 1. For emergency activities of recent origin, it is the policy of the City to grant a temporary waiver for the thirty (30) day "Citizen Review and Comment Period". The City will advertise the project for citizen comment concurrent with the start of the project.
- 2. In keeping with federal regulations, an emergency project can be defined as "an emergency activity of recent origin in which existing conditions pose a serious and immediate threat to the health, safety, or welfare of the community". The subrecipient must submit certification from a qualified official stating the nature of the emergency and that it poses a serious threat to the community.

IV PUBLIC HEARINGS

- A. The City plans to continue to conduct public hearings in the summer of each year to obtain citizens views, to respond to funding proposals/projects, and address other needs of non-profit agencies, businesses, and other service providers.

The public hearings will be conducted in the fall for the purpose of:

1. Providing citizens an opportunity to examine and comment on the proposed content for the Six Year Development Program, including the Community Development Block Grant Program (CDBG), and the Consolidated Plan;
 2. Receiving testimony on housing and community development needs;
 3. Soliciting and reviewing public comments on program performance;
 4. Obtaining the views of citizens on housing and community development needs, including priority non-housing community development needs.
- B. The City will annually conduct a public hearing during the draft review stage of the Consolidated Plan. The purpose of this hearing will be to receive testimony and public comments on the proposed draft Consolidated Plan. Included in this draft will be a list of proposed projects tentatively selected for funding for all programs covered by the Consolidated Plan.

V PUBLICATIONS/ADVERTISEMENTS

- A. At least two weeks prior to each of the public hearings, display style advertisements will be placed in one (1) major daily newspaper of general circulation and one (1) minority newspaper of general circulation. The advertisements will include the:
1. Purpose of the hearing;
 2. Location of the hearing;

3. Date of the hearing;
 4. Time of the hearing;
 5. Any additional information regarding the hearing.
- B. In addition to the public hearing advertisements in local newspapers, the City will utilize, when possible, City cable TV announcements, and brochures to encourage further citizen participation in the Consolidated Plan process. The City will mail a public hearing notice to all parties on the City Planning's extensive mailing list.
- C. Public hearings will be conducted in neighborhood public facilities (libraries, schools, etc.) to allow for maximum participation by persons wishing to attend. These public facilities are accessible by Port Authority buses from all parts of the City. These facilities will also be handicapped accessible.
- D. In addition, upon request to the Department of City Planning, prior to public hearings, provisions will be made for the following groups of people:
1. Non-English speaking residents of the City (interpreters);
 2. Visually impaired (access to tape recordings of public hearings and special assistance from City staff);
 3. Hearing impaired (sign interpreters).

VI PUBLIC MEETINGS

- A. The purpose of all public meetings will be to obtain citizen input for the development of the Consolidated Plan. In order to gain participation from the largest cross section of the community, public meetings for the Consolidated Plan will be held in a variety of neighborhood public facilities and in areas convenient to public housing residents. Efforts will be made to announce meetings in various ways to ensure that low and very low income residents are aware of the meetings.
- B. Any meetings, other than public hearings, will be advertised once by a display style advertisement placed in one (1) major daily

newspaper of general circulation prior to the meeting. The ad will state the location, time, date and place of the meeting. Provisions will be made so that the site is handicap accessible. An interpreter will be made available provided one is requested at least one (1) week in advance.

VII AVAILABILITY TO PUBLIC/ACCESS TO RECORDS

- A. All programs operated by the City will be conducted in an open manner, with freedom of access to program information and public hearings for all interested parties.

The City will provide for full and timely disclosure of its records. Documents relevant to the City's Programs will be available for citizen inspection between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday at:

Department of City Planning
200 Ross Street
Pittsburgh, PA 15219

On occasion, certain documents will also be available for review at:

Urban Redevelopment Authority
200 Ross Street
Pittsburgh, PA 15219

- B. The public will be notified as to the locations where these documents may be reviewed through display style advertisements placed in one (1) daily major newspaper of general circulation.

Citizens with disabilities that may be prohibited from reviewing these documents at publicized locations should contact the Department of City Planning for specific assistance in obtaining the Plan for review and for assistance in submitting comments. The telephone number for the Department of City Planning is 412-255-2212 and TDD 412-255-2222.

In addition, the City houses the Consolidated Plan on computer software which provides additional access to this document for any interested non-profit groups or citizens.

VIII TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

- A, Upon request to the Department of City Planning, technical assistance will be provided for the explanation of any information related to the programs operated by the City. In addition, technical assistance will be available for the development of proposals for these programs.

IX RESPONSE PROCEDURES

- A. Upon receipt of a written complaint, the City, Department of City Planning, will issue a response, whenever possible, within fifteen (15) working days.

In summary of written and oral comments and complaints will be included in the City's Consolidated Plan. Any comments which are not used in the Plan will be noted and reason for non-inclusion will be stated.

Additionally, a summary of written and oral comments will be included in any Amendments, or Performance Reports, as required. If a response is unacceptable to a concerned citizen or group, the Department of City Planning should again be contacted and, whenever possible, within (15) working days will issue a second written response from the Director of the Department of City Planning or his/her designee.

Further comments can be directed to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's (HUD) Regional Office at:

U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
Pittsburgh Office, Region III
Old Post Office and Courthouse
700 Grant Street
Pittsburgh, PA 15219-1939