

Township of Cherry Hill Citizen Participation Plan Community Development Block Grant Program

In accordance with guidelines established by the US Department of Housing & Urban Development (HUD) in 24 CFR 91.105 and 91.505, the Township of Cherry Hill is revising the Citizen Participation Plan for the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program.

The Citizen Participation Plan establishes procedures for obtaining the views of citizens, public agencies and other interested parties regarding the use of CDBG funds. Of particular importance are the views of persons of low and moderate income, who are intended to be the principal beneficiaries of the CDBG program, and residents of areas where activities are expected to take place. The participation of all Township of Cherry Hill residents will be encouraged, including minorities, non-English speaking persons, and persons with disabilities, and the Township will take the appropriate actions to encourage this participation.

Citizen input is essential in the following areas of the CDBG process:

1. Identification of housing and community development needs;
2. Development of the Consolidated Plan;
3. Development of the Annual Action Plan;
4. Development of the Citizen Participation Plan;
5. Substantial amendments to the Consolidated Plan or the Annual Action Plan; and
6. Annual performance report.

Citizen participation will be accomplished through public meetings, public hearings, public comment periods, and through contacts with Township officials.

Documents Available for Public Review & Comment

When documents are available for public review and comment, notice of the availability of the document will be published in the *Courier Post*, posted on the Township website, and sent to public agencies including the Cherry Hill Housing Agency and other interested parties upon request. The document will be available for review at the Municipal Clerk's office, Cherry Hill Public Library, Cherry Hill Department of Community Development, and online on the Township website. All comments and views will be considered, and a summary of these comments or views, and a summary of any comments or views not accepted and the reasons therefore, will be included in the final document submitted to HUD.

Public Hearings

Public hearings will be held in order to address housing and community development needs, the development of proposed activities, and the review of program performance. Notice of the time, date and place of each public hearing will be published in the *Courier Post* at least 15 days prior to the scheduled public hearing.

Notices announcing the public hearing will be posted on the Township website and sent to public agencies and other interested parties, including the Cherry Hill Housing Agency.

Public hearings will be scheduled at times and locations convenient to potential and actual beneficiaries, and with accommodation for persons with disabilities. The public hearing notice will state that non-

English speaking persons and others needing special assistance to participate in the public hearing process should contact the Township to make the necessary accommodations.

A minimum of two public hearings will be held each program year, during two different stages of the program year. One public hearing (program planning hearing) will be held during the development of the consolidated or annual plan and before the proposed consolidated or annual plan is published for comment in order to obtain the

views of citizens, public agencies and other interested parties on housing and community development needs, including priority non-housing community development needs. In addition to addressing housing and community development needs, this public hearing will address the development of proposed activities and review of program performance. A second public hearing (plan or program review hearing) will be held either during the comment period for the consolidated or annual plan, or during the comment period for the annual performance report. Depending on its timing, this public hearing will address the development of proposed activities and/or review of program performance. All public hearings will seek to obtain the view of citizens, public agencies and other interested parties, and will respond to proposals and questions.

Program Planning Hearing

The public hearing addressing housing and community development needs will also address the development of proposed activities and will include a review of program performance. The following points will be included:

1. Total amount of CDBG funds expected to be available for community development and housing activities.
2. Activities that may be undertaken with these funds and the estimated amount that will benefit persons of low and moderate income.
3. Discussion of CDBG program requirements.
4. Processes to be followed in applying for CDBG funds.
5. Comments, suggestions and input for the development of the consolidated or annual plan, particularly from persons of low and moderate income and neighborhood residents living in areas where CDBG funds are proposed to be used.

Plan or Program Review Hearing

The plan or program review hearing will include the following:

1. Review of CDBG program requirements.
2. Review of citizen proposals and comments from the program planning public hearing.
3. Proposed community development and housing objectives and activities or review of previous program year CDBG objectives and activities.
4. Proposed use of CDBG funds or review of previous program year use of CDBG funds.
5. Comments, suggestions and input in response to the proposed plan or in response to the performance report.

Assessment of Performance

At all public hearings, citizens and citizen organizations will be given the opportunity to assess and comment on all aspects of the Township's CDBG performance. This assessment will include a determination as to whether objectives have been achieved. All comments or views of citizens received in writing or orally at public hearings will be considered during the preparation of the annual performance report. A summary of these comments or views, and a summary of any comments or views not accepted and the reasons therefore, will be attached to the final performance report submitted to HUD.

The annual performance report to HUD will include the following:

1. Status, including objectives and goals, of each CDBG activity.
2. Financial report for each CDBG activity.

Notice of the availability of the annual performance report will be published in the *Courier Post*, posted on the Township website, and sent to public agencies and other interested parties, including the Cherry Hill Housing Agency. The document will be available for review at the Municipal Clerk's office, Cherry Hill Public Library, Cherry Hill Department of Community Development, and online on the Township website. The annual performance report will be available for public comment for a minimum of 15 days following the published notice.

Adoption of a Consolidated or Annual Plan

Notice of the availability of the consolidated or annual plan will be published in the *Cherry Hill News*, posted on the Township website, and sent to public agencies and other interested parties, including the Cherry Hill Housing Agency. The document will be available for review at the Municipal Clerk's office, Cherry Hill Public Library, Cherry Hill Department of Community Development, and online on the Township website. The consolidated or annual plan will be available for public comment for a minimum of 30 days following the published notice. All comments or views of citizens received in writing or orally at public hearings and during the public comment period will be considered in the preparation of the consolidated or annual plan. A summary of these comments or views, and a summary of any comments or views not accepted and the reasons therefore, will be included in the final consolidated or annual plan.

Displacement and Relocation

The Township of Cherry Hill shall be committed to the minimization of displacement of persons in the conduct of its redevelopment efforts. If any dislocation takes place through government action, a relocation plan will be prepared to provide the necessary funding for moving, dislocation and rental assistance. Relocation benefits will be paid according to applicable state or federal regulations. If any persons are displaced from their rental property due to housing code violations, they will be assisted by the Township as required under the State of New Jersey Workable Relocation Assistance Program (WRAP) which provides for moving and dislocation costs, and a rental subsidy, if necessary. In the case of code violations, the Township will seek reimbursement of such moving, dislocation and rental assistance costs from the property owner of record. If no reimbursement is forthcoming, a lien will be placed on the subject property.

Complaints & Grievances

Complaints and grievances must be filed in writing with the Director of Community Development, 820 Mercer Street, Room 202, Cherry Hill, NJ 08002. Written answers to properly filed complaints and grievances will be provided within 15 working days, where practicable.

Availability of Information

The Township of Cherry Hill will make available, upon written request for a specific record, copies of program records and information concerning the CDBG program, to any person or organization, to the extent that such requests are consistent with consideration of personal privacy and obligations of confidentiality. Any Open Public Records Request (OPRA) should be submitted during normal working hours to the following office:

Cherry Hill Township
Office of the Municipal Clerk
820 Mercer Street, Room 105
Cherry Hill, NJ 08002

Technical Assistance

The Township will provide technical assistance to groups representative of persons of low and moderate income that request such assistance in developing proposals, subject to a limitation determined by the Township with respect to the resources available to the Township and the overall objectives of the CDBG program.

Requests for technical assistance should be made to:

CDBG Program
Cherry Hill Township
Department of Community Development
820 Mercer Street, Room 202
Cherry Hill, NJ 08002
(856) 488-7870

Amendments to the CDBG Consolidated or Annual Plan

The Housing and Community Development Act of 1974 provides that amendments to the consolidated or annual plan may be made during any program year. Such amendments may include the reallocation of CDBG funds, the allocation of additional CDBG funds, the designation of new activities, changes in the use of CDBG funds from one eligible activity to another, and the designation of new locations for activities.

According to this Citizen Participation Plan, a Substantial Change is a new Program Activity, cancellation of an approved activity or a re-programming of funds greater than 35% of the total current Program Year Allocation **PLUS** the available Program Income. A minor amendment is a budget change less than or equal to 35 percent of the total CDBG budget **PLUS** the available Program Income, or a change in the location of activities already included in the consolidated or annual plan.

Prior to the implementation of a minor amendment to the consolidated or annual plan, the public will be advised by published notice, as outlined previously, and given a minimum of 15 days to comment.

Prior to the implementation of a substantial amendment, a public hearing will be conducted, notice of the amendment will be published as outlined in the Public Hearings section above, and the public will be given a minimum of 30 days to provide comments.

All comments and views will be considered, and a summary of these comments or views, and a summary of any comments or views not accepted and the reasons therefore, will be included in the final document submitted to HUD.