

CDBG Citizen Participation Plan

City of Long Branch, New Jersey

Submitted by Abel Gomez,
OCED Director

Applicability and Adoption of the Citizen Participation Plan

As a recipient of Community Development Block Grant Funds the City of Long Branch is required to adopt a citizen participation plan that sets forth the City's policies and procedures for citizen participation in the CDBG Program. The citizen plan should be updated to comply with any new provisions.

Citizens are encouraged by the administrators of the CDBG Program to participate in the planning and implementation of the program. The plan must offer citizens an opportunity to participate in the development of the Consolidated Plan and subsequent Annual Plans. The citizens must also participate in any revisions to the Consolidated Plan or any substantial amendments to the Consolidated Plan as well as the performance report (CAPER).

These requirements are designed especially to encourage participation by very low, low and moderate-income persons, particularly those persons living in areas designated by the City of Long Branch as a revitalization area, an area in need of redevelopment, rehabilitation, slum or blighted area where CDBG funds are proposed to be used. These requirements also refer to those residents living in predominantly low and moderate-income neighborhoods as defined by the City.

The City of Long Branch must take the appropriate actions to encourage the participation of all its citizens, including minorities, non-English-speaking persons and persons with disabilities. The City shall encourage the participation of local and regional institutions, Continuums of Care and other organizations (including businesses, developers, non-profits, philanthropic organizations, community and faith-based organizations) in the process of developing and implementing the Consolidated Plan.

The City shall encourage technical service providers and State agencies such as DEP (when possible) to participate in developing the Consolidated Plan. The City shall encourage residents of public and assisted housing, their boards and consultants to participate in the development of the Consolidated Plan. The City shall make an effort to provide information to the local public housing about the strategies and activities of the Consolidated Plan so that the local public housing can make the information available at its required and annual public meetings and PHA Plan.

The City of Long Branch should explore alternative public involvement techniques and quantitative ways to measure efforts that encourage citizen participation in a shared vision for change in communities and neighborhoods and the review of program performance, for example, use of focus groups and social media.

Citizen Comment on the Citizen Participation Plan and Amendments

The City of Long Branch must provide citizens with a reasonable opportunity to comment on the original citizen participation plan and on substantial amendments to the citizen participation plan, and must make the citizen participation plan public. The citizen

participation plan must be in a format accessible to persons with disabilities, upon request. Should any member of the general public who does not speak English require interpretation of the information in the Consolidated Plan, the City will provide an interpreter, where and when possible to facilitate the request(s).

Development of the Consolidated Plan

The City will as soon as possible, make the HUD-provided data and supplemental information to be incorporated in the plan, available to residents, public agencies and other interested parties. If or when necessary, the City may make the HUD-provided data available to the public by cross-referencing to the data on the HUD website.

The City will make available to residents, public agencies and others, information that includes the amount of assistance the City expects to receive and the range of activities that may be undertaken, including the estimated amount that will benefit persons of very low, low and moderate-income.

The City will publish the proposed Consolidated Plan in a manner that affords its residents, public agencies and other interested parties a reasonable opportunity to examine its content and to submit comments. A draft copy of the Consolidated Plan will be available in the Office of the City Clerk, the free public library, the Office of Community and Economic Development and the administrative office of the local public housing authority.

Comment Period

The Five-Year Consolidated Plan was made available for public comment for a period no less than thirty (30) days. All comments were welcomed and were considered. After the comment period, the Consolidated Plan was forwarded to the Monmouth County Office of Community Development where it was added to the Consortium's submission to the HUD Field Office in Newark, New Jersey for review.

Public Hearing

A public hearing for the Consolidated Plan took place in early May of 2020 and was announced in the local newspaper as required by federal regulations.

CAPER

The Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Report required by HUD annually, 90 days after the end of the CDBG Program Year, was made available in June of 2020 (the FY for Long Branch is July 1 through June 30). As with the Consolidated Plan, the public is invited to review this document and was given a fifteen (15) days comment period prior to the final copy being sent to the HUD Field Office in Newark, New Jersey. The CAPER was also made available in the Office of the City Clerk, the free public library, the Office of Community and Economic Development and the local public housing authority's administrative office.

Future CAPERS will also be made available and conducted via the same process.

Citizens Participation Outreach Efforts 2023/2024

The Office of Community and Economic Development conducted a public meeting during the 2024 PY year and expounded on the Five-Year Consolidated Plan, the Annual Action Work Plan, The CARES Act Amendment (first cycle), the CARES Act Amendment (third cycle) and the Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Report. A public announcement was published and the general public was given more than the federally required time to comment on all reports. The affidavits of publications are attached to this notice.

The staff of the OCED did meet with various groups, agencies, individuals, church organizations, the County of Monmouth, PHA, business groups and others and obtained information and suggestions that were incorporated into the reports. The OCED, during normal times, periodically and regularly meets with such groups throughout the course of the fiscal year to gain input and to improve on the delivery of benefits and services to those who are in need. The Director and Assistant Director met with various agencies and partners as the Annual Action Plan was prepared and solicited information that could improve citizens' participation. The OCED will have announcements and other materials printed in Spanish and Portuguese and offer translation service to individuals and groups to better communicate CDBG benefits.

Digital Posting and Accessibility Provisions

The City of Long Branch will publish the proposed Consolidated Plan, Annual Action Plan, and any substantial amendments on its official website (<https://www.longbranch.org/494/Community-Development-Block-Grant-CDBG-P>). Copies will also be made available at the City Clerk's Office, the public library, and the Office of Community and Economic Development.