

City of Dover, NH

Community Development Block Grant

Citizen Participation Plan



Proposed Amendment

## Dover CDBG Citizen Participation Plan

### Proposed Amendment

#### Overview

The City of Dover has an adopted 5-year Citizen Participation Plan (CPP) that provides Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program requirements such as citizen engagement, public review periods and plan amendment procedures that are to be followed when implementing the CDBG program. The current CPP was adopted in 2020.

#### Proposed Amendment

The CPP includes procedures for making amendments to approved plans during a “Crisis Event”. Specifically, *Section: XI-Procedures During Crisis Events – Substantial Amendment* lists the steps to follow for public notices and comment periods for a Substantial Amendment to the Comprehensive Plan or Action Plan during a “Crisis Event”. The proposed amendment clarifies the public comment period after the City Council’s final decision.

Note: Proposed amendment to Citizen Participation Plan identified below in underlined grey highlighted italics

#### SECTION XI PROCEDURES DURING CRISIS EVENTS – SUBSTANTIAL AMENDMENT

During crisis event periods, the required public engagement and notice procedures provided elsewhere in this document shall be superseded as provided below. Crisis event periods include natural disasters and significant local, regional, national or global events. For purposes of this section, examples of significant events include, but are not limited to, impacts resulting from:

- Disease outbreaks
- Health related events, scenarios or clusters
- Human actions such as acts of terrorism or arson
- Disruptions in critical supply chain.

During crisis event periods, the following applies:

- Publication on the City’s website
- Notice of publication in a local paper
- A public review and comment period for 5 days before each public hearing
- *A 5-day public review and comment period after the final local decision has been posted. Posting shall be by public notice in a local paper and on the City Website. The notice shall include a description of the action taken, where the amendment can be viewed, how comment can be provided and by what date comments must be received in order for the comments to be included with information sent to HUD for their review.*
- Virtual public hearings, in lieu of traditional public hearings, may be held by the Planning Board and City Council.

#### Citizen Participation Plan

Following is the adopted Citizen Participation Plan with the proposed amendment identified on the final page.

## City of Dover, NH Citizen Participation Plan - FFY20-24

Approved City Council: June 24, 2020

Note: Proposed amendment to Citizen Participation Plan identified in grey highlighted italics

### I. INTRODUCTION

The Regulations governing administration of the Community Development Program require preparation and publication of a local citizen's participation plan. This plan must indicate how the community is going to pass on information about the program to its citizens, public agencies, and other interested parties; when public hearings will be held; how citizens will have an opportunity to participate in the development of the Consolidated Plan; how technical assistance will be provided; and how citizens will be involved in future amendments and/or future applications for block grants by the community. It is in conformance with the aforementioned requirements, and with an understanding of the importance of realistic and meaningful citizen participation, that the following plan is set forth and adopted by the Dover City Council.

### II. ORGANIZATION:

One of the most important elements of any successful citizen participation process is that it have clear and direct linkage with the legislative decision makers. This linkage will be achieved in Dover by having the Planning Board act as the entry point for citizen participation in the Community Development Program.

The Planning Board will hear citizens, organizations and interested parties comments on the Performance Report, Proposed Consolidated Plan and Substantial Program Amendments. The recommendations of the Board for the Proposed Plan and Program Amendments will be passed on to the City Council for consideration and the final decision.

Planning and Community Development staff are responsible for disseminating information to citizens, organizations and interested parties, including amounts available, the range of activities that may be undertaken, including amounts that will benefit low and moderate income persons and preparation of the Proposed and Final Consolidated Plan for the City.

### III. FUNCTION:

One of the duties of the Planning Board is to function as the prime vehicle for citizen input concerning Dover's application for, and participation in the Community Development Program as authorized by the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974.

The Planning Board will serve as the initial clearing house for all requests for Community Development Funds, whether those requests originate from citizens, municipal departments, or other groups and organizations. The Board will receive all such requests and would formulate a one (1) year Action Plan based upon the City's Consolidated Plan, their perception of the community's needs, and the public hearing process. The recommendations of the Board will be forwarded to the City Council for consideration and final decision.

#### IV. OPERATION:

a. In adequate time prior to application deadlines, the Planning Board will meet to familiarize themselves with the provisions of the Housing and Community Development Program and the Consolidated Plan process. This meeting will include a workshop style meeting, during which the staff will remind Board members of the goals of the program and Consolidated Plan.

Technical assistance in this process and any related research desired by the Board or other groups will be provided by the staff of the Planning and Community Development Department. When the Board is familiar with the Act and its application, it will hold a minimum of one (1) public hearing to obtain the opinions from and learn the desires of their respective constituents. At these meetings, the Board shall also receive testimony from representatives of other public and semi-public groups and organizations in the City, municipal departments and the general public. Planning Board meetings shall be conducted in an open manner with freedom of access for all interested persons.

Furthermore, the Planning Board will allow comment on the Action and Consolidated Plans at any time during a regularly scheduled "Citizen's Forum" agenda item on each Planning Board meeting agenda.

b. Planning and Community Development staff will consult with the Dover Housing Authority, Public and assisted housing developments, and other residents around the developments in the process of developing and implementing the Consolidated Plan. Notices will be placed on the bulletin board at the DHA concerning the plan and public hearings to be held. Notices will also be placed in City Hall and the Dover Public Library.

c. Involvement shall be encouraged on the part of low and moderate income persons, members of minority groups, residents of areas where a significant amount of activity is proposed or ongoing, the elderly, the handicapped, the business community, and civic groups who are concerned about the program.

d. All Public Service grant applications will be rated for priority by the Planning Department before being forwarded to the Planning Board for a recommendation to the City Council.

#### V. TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE:

As stated in Article IV (1) of this document, technical assistance in securing and maintaining full citizen participation will be provided by the staff of the Planning and Community Development Department. Assistance shall be provided to both the Planning Board, as described in Article IV, and to groups, representative of low and moderate income persons and groups of residents of blighted neighborhoods which request assistance in developing proposals and statements of views. A notice for low to moderate income groups or organizations requiring technical assistance for preparing a proposal will be placed in the newspaper before the Consolidated Plan is started.

In addition to those activities enumerated in Article IV, technical assistance shall include, but not be limited to:

a. The provision of program information, at the time the City begins planning for the next program year including:

i. The total amount of funds available for community development and housing activities,

ii. The range of eligible activities that may be undertaken with these funds and the kinds of activities previously funded in the City,

- iii. The processes to be followed in preparing and approving the application and the schedule of meetings and hearings.
- iv. A summary of other program requirements.
- v. A summary of how the total amount of funds was calculated.

## VI. PROGRAM INFORMATION

Access to Records: Citizens, public agencies and interested parties shall have access to information and records relating to the Consolidated Plan and Dover's use of assistance for the preceding five (5) years. Documents relevant to the program shall be available at the Planning office in the Municipal Building during normal working hours for citizen review upon request. A copy of the proposed Consolidate Plan, when completed, will be available in the Dover Public Library.

Documents shall include:

- a. all mailings and promotional material,
- b. records of hearings,
- c. key documents, including all prior applications, letters of approval, grant agreements, the Citizen Participation Plan, performance reports, Proposed and Final Consolidated Plans, other reports required by HUD, and Program Amendments.
- d. copies of the regulations and issuance's governing the program,
- e. documents regarding other important program requirements, such as contracting procedures, environmental policies, displacement information, etc.

Special arrangements will be made to provide the above stated information to persons with disabilities by the Planning Office, upon request. All current information shall be accessible 24 hours a day on the City of Dover website.

## VII. SUBSTANTIAL PROGRAM AMENDMENTS:

The following criteria will require will constitute a Substantial Amendment and will require public engagement and notices pursuant to Articles I-X of this Citizen Participation Program:

- A change in allocation priorities or a change in the method of distribution of funds from one eligible activity to another.
- Funding an Activity not previously described in the an action plan.
- A change in the purpose, scope, location, or beneficiaries of an activity.
- An increase in allocation to an Activity that is greater than 25% off the total amount of the current year's regular CDBG allocation.

## VIII. PUBLIC NOTICES AND COMMENT PERIODS:

The scheduling of sufficient public hearings to obtain citizens views and to respond to citizen proposals and questions at various stages of the program shall be held by the Planning Board. The hearings shall be held at convenient times and locations to encourage the broadest range of citizen participation. Hearings shall include:

- a. Pre-submission hearings. One hearing prior to development of the Consolidated Plan to obtain views on Community Development and housing needs, and past program performance; The second for specific grant requests; The third hearing will be held before the City Council to obtain views of citizens on the proposed application prior to submission of the application to HUD.
- b. Notification: Two (2) weeks prior to each public hearing, the City of Dover shall publish a notice in easily readable type in the non-legal section of a local newspaper of general circulation. This notice shall indicate the date, time, place, and procedures of the hearing and topics to be considered.
- c. Comment Period: Upon completion of the Proposed Consolidated Plan, citizen's will have thirty (30) days in which to comment in writing on the Proposed Plan. All comments in writing will be considered in preparing the Final Consolidated Plan.
- d. Substantial Program Amendments: Citizens will be given up to thirty (30) days to respond in writing after notification of a Program Amendment, before such amendment takes place. The City of Dover shall publish a notice of the Program Amendment in easily readable type in the non-legal section of a local newspaper of general circulation. All comments in writing will be considered before preparing the Program Amendment. All comments not accepted shall be attached & submitted with the Program Amendment along with an explanation of why they were not accepted.
- e. Performance Report: Citizens will be given up to fifteen (15) days to respond in writing after the completion of the Annual Performance Report. The City of Dover shall publish a notice of the completion of the Annual Performance Report in easily readable type in the non-legal section of a local newspaper of general circulation.  
  
All comments in writing will be considered before preparing the Performance Report. All comments not accepted shall be attached and submitted with the Program Amendment along with an explanation of why they were not accepted.
- f. Citizens will be given up to thirty (30) days to respond in writing after notification of the Final Consolidated Plan completion before it is submitted to HUD. The City of Dover shall publish a notice of the completion of the Final Consolidate Plan in easily readable type in the non-legal section of a local newspaper of general circulation.

IX. PROGRAM COMPLAINTS:

Complaints: Any written complaints concerning the Consolidated Plan, Program amendments or the Performance Report shall be addressed to Director of Planning and Community Development, 288 Central Avenue Dover, NH 03820. All written complaints shall receive a response within fifteen (15) working days.

X. DISPLACEMENT:

The City will try to minimize displacement of persons brought about by projects funded through the Community Development Program. Any persons temporarily or permanently displaced by a project funded through the C.D. program will be provided assistance as outlined in the "City of Dover Community Development Tenant Assistance Policy" and HUD's Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act. (49 CFR Part 24)

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