



## CITIZEN PARTICIPATION PLAN

The City of Massillon shall provide citizens with an adequate opportunity to participate in the development of the application and in implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program and other Federal and State housing and community development programs, including the Section 108 Loan Guarantee Program, especially those who are low and moderate income and/or are residents of slum or blighted areas. The City shall provide adequate information to citizens, hold public hearings to obtain the views of citizens, and provide citizens an opportunity to comment on the various programs being carried out by the City. The City shall provide information regarding Assessment of Fair Housing (AFH) to all residents and organizations of the community.

### **CDBG Application**

Prior to submission to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) for its annual entitlement under the CDBG Program, or for an application for guaranteed loan funds under the Section 108 Program, the City shall comply with the following:

1. The City shall furnish residents with information concerning:
  - a. The amount of CDBG funds, or guaranteed loan funds, expected to be available during the program year.
  - b. The range of activities that may be undertaken with CDBG funds, or guaranteed loan funds, in accordance with Federal regulations.
  - c. The estimated amount of those funds proposed to be used for activities that will benefit low and moderate income (very low and low) income persons.

### **Public Awareness/Citizen Participation**

1. The City shall hold public meetings as part of its CDBG application process to obtain the views of residents on the City's housing and community development needs. As part of these meetings, the City will provide assistance to individuals, groups, or organizations representing low and moderate (very low and low) income persons in the development of project proposals. These hearings will address the City's housing and community development needs, the development of proposed activities, and a review of project performance.
2. The City shall publish community-wide its proposed Statement of Community Development Objectives and Projected Use of Funds (or One-Year Action Plan), and/or its Section 108 Loan Guarantee Application, to afford affected citizens a minimum time period of at least thirty (30) days to examine the Statements contents, and to provide comments on the proposed Statement and/or Loan Guarantee Application, and on the City's community development performance. This Statement or Action Plan shall include the proposed amount of CDBG funds, and/or Loan Guarantee Funds, to be used for activities

benefiting low and moderate income persons. The 30-day period may be expedited under urgent circumstances, such as declared disasters or emergencies, but never less than a 5-day period.

3. The City shall consider any such citizen comments and views received, and if deemed appropriate, modify the proposed Statement or Action Plan. The City shall make the final statement available to the public.

4. The City shall publish notices for public hearings and other required notices in the non-legal section of the local newspaper of general circulation, the city's website [www.massillonohio.gov](http://www.massillonohio.gov), the Massillon Public Library, and access to records at the Community Development Office. The City shall provide a minimum of fourteen (14) days' notice regarding such public hearings. The notification period may be expedited under urgent circumstances, such as declared disasters or emergencies, but never less than a 5-day period. Notifications sent during this expedited 5-day period will be via the website **only** at [www.massillonohio.gov](http://www.massillonohio.gov).

5. The City shall encourage residents to participate in the development and process of Assessment of Fair Housing especially persons living in areas designated as a revitalization area and areas designated as a slum and blighted area.

6. The City shall provide technical assistance to persons and/or groups representative of persons of low and moderate income that request such assistance in commenting on the AFH and in developing proposals for funding assistance under any of the programs covered by the Consolidated Plan, with the level and type of assistance as determined by the City.

7. In the event of a declared disaster or emergency the Community Development Department will operate using virtual hearings. If virtual hearings are used, real-time responses and accommodation for persons with disabilities and/or with limited English proficiency will be made available to the greatest extent possible. A virtual hearing method will only be used in lieu of in-person hearings under urgent circumstances, such as declared disasters or emergencies

### **Submission and Evaluation of Project Proposals**

Project proposals for the CDBG Program and/or the Section 108 Loan Guarantee Program will be accepted by the City any time after October 1 prior to the start of the City's next program year. Proposals will be handled in the following manner:

1. Proposals for funding must be submitted in writing to either the Mayor's Office or the Community Development Department. The City has application forms for this purpose. All applications must be complete and shall contain a brief description of the project, the purpose of the project and if applicable, its intended beneficiaries, the amount of funding being requested, and the name and address of the agency which will be responsible for undertaking the project. The Development Committee will score every application received. CDBG funding is then allocated to projects receiving the highest scores. It must be kept in mind that even though a public services project may score very high, the City may only allocate up to fifteen percent (15%) of its CDBG funds to these types of activities and therefore they may not receive funding.

2. The Development Committee shall review all project proposals for eligibility under the CDBG or applicable program regulations. All proposals will be reviewed by the Mayor. The Development Committee will prepare a proposed budget for submission to City Council.

3. Prior to formal adoption of the proposed Statement of Action Plan, City Council shall hold a public hearing, with notice given as previously described in the preceding section. At this hearing, City Council will receive public comments, either verbal or written, concerning the activities proposed to be funded and/or undertaken by the City.

4. City Council will adopt the proposed Statement or Action Plan after review of any comments received after publication of the proposed Statement and after the final public hearing has been held.

### **Program Amendments – Citizen Participation**

The City may, from time to time, elect to amend its Final Statement or Action Plan by revising the amount projected in the Final Statement to be expended for an activity by more than fifty percent (50%), by changing the location of any activity, or by adding an activity not described. In the case of substantive program amendments, the City shall meet the following citizen participation requirements:

1. The City shall provide residents with a thirty (30) day notice, to be published in the local newspaper of general circulation, of such a proposed change in the use of its CDBG funds in order to provide residents with an opportunity to comment on the proposed change. The notification period may be expedited under urgent circumstances, such as declared disasters or emergencies, but never less than a 5-day period.
2. The City shall hold one public hearing, where practical or deemed appropriate, in order to receive residents' comments on the proposed amendment. The City shall consider any such citizen comments, and if deemed appropriate, shall modify the proposed change.
3. The City shall make the modified Final Statement or Action Plan available to the public as previously described in the preceding sections and shall submit a copy of the modification or amendment to HUD.

### **Limited English Proficiency Residents**

1. The City of Massillon will undertake reasonable actions to facilitate the participation of persons with Limited English Proficiency in the community development process. Such actions may include the provision of an interpreter and/or the provision of materials in the appropriate language or format for persons with Limited English Proficiency.

### **Other Citizen Participation Requirements**

1. In the planning and implementation of CDBG and/or Loan Guarantee projects that will affect low and moderate (very low and low) income persons residing within a particular designated target area neighborhood, the City will hold public informational meetings to explain the program activity as well as provide a forum for resident's comments, questions, or views concerning the proposed activity. Community Development Department will respond to any and all questions within 15 business days.
2. Any comments or views of residents of the City received in writing or orally shall be attached to the final AFA or the final Consolidated Plan or Action Plan (as applicable). Direct questions, concerns, or comments to:

Samantha Walters  
Community Development Director  
City of Massillon  
151 Lincoln Way East  
Massillon OH 44646  
330.830.1721  
[swalters@massillonohio.gov](mailto:swalters@massillonohio.gov)