



Citizen Participation Plan

(Adopted by the Steering Committee to the Dane County Housing and Development Partnership – February 23, 1999
and amended by the Dane County CDBG Commission, May 22, 2008)

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Introduction

This Citizen Participation Plan contains Dane County's policies and procedures for public involvement in the Consolidated Plan process and the use of Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) and HOME Investment Partnership (HOME), including American Dream Downpayment Assistance (ADDI) monies. These guidelines are in conformance with Section 103(a)(3) of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974, as well as, 24 CFR 91.105, the federal regulations governing public participation in the Consolidated Planning process. The Plan provides for and encourages public participation in the development of the Consolidated Plan, any substantial amendments to the Consolidated Plan, and the performance report.

The Plan provides for and encourages public participation, emphasizing involvement by low and moderate-income people. Dane County encourage the participation of all its residents, including minorities, limited English speaking persons, and persons with disabilities.

The primary purpose of the programs covered by the Citizen Participation Plan is to improve communities by providing: decent housing, a suitable living environment, and expanded economic opportunities – principally for low and moderate-income people.

Objective 1: Provide timely advance public notices about availability of required documents and public hearings.

Strategy

1. There shall be advance public notices once a federally required document is available, such as the proposed Annual Action Plan or five-year Strategic Plan, herein called the "Consolidated Plan," any proposed substantial amendment to the Action Plan or Consolidated Plan, and the Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Report (CAPER). All meetings and public hearings relating to the funds or planning process covered by this Citizen Participation Plan will be held in conformance with the Wisconsin Open Meeting Law, Section 19.81 et. Seq. Stats.

Implementation

1. Public notice will be given in the following forms:
 - a. Posted with the County Clerk and published in the *Wisconsin State Journal* as an official notice to the newspaper and as display advertisements in the non-legal section of the paper.
 - b. Notice will be given to organizations and agencies providing services and/or publishing newspapers and newsletters to lower income people and to any other news media or organization having filed a written request with Dane County for such notice.
 - c. Notices will also be posted on the Dane County web site: <http://www.countyofdane.com/> .
2. The notice will state the time, date, place, and subject matter of the meeting. An agenda of items to be considered will also be included.

Objective 2: Provide reasonable and timely access to information and records.

Strategy

1. Dane County will provide the public with reasonable and timely access to information and records relating to the data or content of the draft and final Consolidated Plan, Annual Action Plan, and CAPER. The public will be given reasonable access to records about any uses of CDBG, HOME, and ADDI dollars. All requests for open records will be answered in conformance with Wisconsin Public Records Law, Section 19.31-19.39.

Implementation

1. Standard documents to be made available include:
 - a. The proposed and final Annual Action Plans.
 - b. The proposed and final Consolidated Plan.
 - c. Proposed and final substantial amendments to either an Annual Action Plan or the Consolidated Plan.
 - d. Consolidated Annual Performance Evaluation Reports (CAPER)
2. Copies of standard documents will be provided to the public at no cost and as soon as practical without delay.

3. Standard documents will be available on the Dane County web site: http://www.danecountyhumanservices.org/cdbg_reports.htm
4. Materials will be in a form accessible to persons with disabilities when requested.
5. Materials will be available in a format to assist limited English speaking persons.
6. All other documents related to the Consolidated Plan process and the use of program funds will be available to the public at the Dane County Department of Human Services, Planning and Evaluation Unit.

Objective 3: Hold public meetings and public hearings to obtain and respond to citizen views.

Strategies

1. Public hearings will be used as an official forum for obtaining the public's views and will address housing and community development needs, development of proposed activities, review of program performance and other items required by 24 CFR 91.105. The hearings will be held as required by the regulations. Any pertinent documents will be available from the Dane County Department of Human Services, Planning and Evaluation Unit, as well as, on the Dane County web site (http://www.danecountyhumanservices.org/cdbg_reports.htm) at the time of the first published notice.
2. Public information meetings may be held at various locations in Dane County during the development of the Consolidated Plan and Annual Action Plan. The purpose of the meetings will be to inform community residents – especially low and moderate-income residents – of the stages of the planning process and to solicit ideas, input, and feedback.

Meetings and hearings will be noticed and conducted in conformance with the Wisconsin Open Meeting Law, Section 19.81 et. Seq. Stats.

Implementation

1. Public hearings and public information meetings will be held at locations accessible to and times convenient for low and moderate-income residents.
2. Notice of public hearings and public information meetings will be given in accordance with implementation guidelines under Objective 1. For public hearings, the display advertisement in the non-legal section of the *Wisconsin State Journal* shall be published at least 14 days prior to the public hearing.
3. A reasonable attempt will be made to notify organizations representing low and moderate-income people and request that they provide their members and constituents with meeting notices and information.
4. Special arrangements to accommodate persons with disabilities and people who are limited English speaking will be made upon request. All public hearings will be held at locations accessible to people with disabilities.

Objective 4: Provide opportunities for citizen participation in all stages of the process.

Strategies

1. Incorporate citizen participation and input into the following stages of the process:
 - a. Identification of housing and economic/community development needs.
 - b. Preparation of the Consolidated Plan and use of funds for the upcoming year.
 - c. Formal approval by the County Executive and Dane County Board of Supervisors of the final Consolidated Plan, Annual Action Plan, and CAPER.
 - d. If it becomes necessary to change the use of the money already budgeted in an Annual Action Plan or change the priorities in the Consolidated Plan, a formal Substantial Amendment will be proposed, considered, and acted upon by the CDBG Commission and the County Board of Supervisors.

Implementation

1. Identifying Community Challenges, Needs, and Strategic Objectives
 - a. Community challenges, needs, and strategic objectives will be developed in consultation with citizens and organizations representing citizens (especially low and moderate-income people) through local meetings, opportunity for written comment, and posting on the County web site. Input will also be solicited from participating municipalities.
 - b. Public hearings focusing on needs will occur annually before the draft Annual Action Plan is published for comment, so that the needs identified can be considered by the County and addressed in the draft Annual Action Plan.
2. The Consolidated Plan and Annual Action Plan
 - a. Annually, Dane County will provide the public with an estimate of the amount of CDBG funds it expects to receive in the upcoming year, along with a description of the types of activities that can be funded with these resources based on the objectives outlined in the Consolidated Plan. A standard application will be used to solicit applications for these resources.
 - b. Dane County will work to minimize the extent to which low and moderate-income people will be displaced from their homes as a result of the use of these federal dollars. If displacement occurs when utilizing funds governed by this Plan, the County will comply with the federal regulations of the Uniform Relocation Act and Section 104 (d) regarding displacement and relocation.
 - c. All potential applicants for funding are encouraged to contact County staff for technical assistance before completing an application.
 - d. County staff will assist any organizations and individuals representative of low and moderate-income people who are interested in submitting a proposal to obtain funding for an eligible activity.

- e. Dane County will notify the public when the proposed Consolidated Plan and Annual Action Plan are available and copies will be made available to the public as soon as practicable. In addition, copies will be available at the locations specified above in Objective 2.
 - f. Efforts will be made to provide complete copies of the proposed Consolidated Plan and Annual Action Plan to low and moderate-income persons.
 - g. A public hearing on the proposed Annual Action Plan will be conducted and careful consideration will be given to all comments and views expressed by the public, whether given as oral testimony at the public hearing or submitted in writing during the review and comment period. The final Annual Action Plan will have a section that presents all comments and explains why any comments were not accepted.
 - h. Copies of the final Annual Action Plan and a summary of it will be made available to the public.
3. Amendments to the Consolidated Plan and Annual Action Plan
- a. The Consolidated Plan and Annual Action Plan will be amended any time there is: a change in one of the priorities presented on the HUD-required Priority Table; a change in the use of money to an activity not mentioned in the final Annual Action Plan; or a substantial change in the purpose, location, scope, or beneficiaries of an activity. The public will be notified whenever there is an amendment.
 - b. The following will be considered “substantial” amendments:”
 - i. A change in the amount of program money from one activity to another such that the funding level of either activity would change by more than 10 percent.
 - ii. The elimination of an activity originally described in the Annual Action Plan.
 - iii. The addition of an activity not originally described in the Annual Action Plan.
 - iv. A change in the purpose of an activity, such as a change in the type of activity or its ultimate objective, for example, a change in a construction project from housing to commercial.
 - v. A meaningful change in the location of an activity.
 - vi. A 50 percent or greater change in the type of characteristics of people benefiting from an activity, including:
 - (1) The HUD-recognized income levels.
 - (2) Race or ethnicity
 - (3) Renter or homeowner
 - (4) Single households, small ones (2-4 persons), large ones (5 or more persons)
 - vii. A 20 percent decrease in the number of low or moderate-income people benefiting from an activity.
 - viii. A change in the scope of an activity such that there is a 20 percent increase or decrease in the amount of money allocated to an activity.
 - c. There will be reasonable notice of a proposed substantial amendment so that residents will have an opportunity to review and comment on it. Notice will be

made according to the procedures described earlier with the addition of the following procedures specifically for substantial amendments:

- i. A detailed written description of the proposed substantial amendment will be made available to the public.
- ii. The public has 30 days to review the proposed substantial amendment.
- iii. In preparing a final substantial amendment, careful consideration will be given to all comments and views expressed by the public, whether given as oral testimony at the public hearing or submitted in writing during the review and comment period. The final substantial amendment will have a section that presents comments and explains why any comments were not accepted.

Objective 5: Coordinate with groups and individuals serving low-income populations to obtain input on the Consolidated Planning process.

Strategy and Implementation

Dane County will seek input on priorities, goals, and objectives from a variety of organizations, committees, and commissions, including, but not limited to: Joining Forces for Families (JFF), Dane County Housing Authority, area nonprofit agencies, and federal and state housing and community development agencies.

The County will make a special effort to include input from limited English speaking populations.

Objective 6: Ensure that the Dane County Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Commission provides oversight for the CDBG program.

Implementation

1. The CDBG Commission is a 13-member body appointed by the County Executive to two year terms. Membership of the Commission will consist of:
 - a. 2 Dane County Board Supervisors representing districts wholly outside the City of Madison;
 - b. 9 members representing Dane County Consortium participating communities; and
 - c. 2 at-large citizen members.
2. The responsibilities of the Commission are to:
 - a. Advise on and approve the Citizen Participation Plan;
 - b. Provide input on the Consolidated Plan, Annual Action Plan, and CAPER, and any proposed amendments;
 - c. Advise the County Executive and Dane County Board of Supervisors on the types of programs and projects to be funded consistent with the goals, objectives, and priorities set forth in the Consolidated Plan;

- d. Oversee the process in which contracts for CDBG and HOME services are awarded on a competitive basis;
 - e. Evaluate performance of contractors performing funded activities;
 - f. Oversee cooperation agreements between Dane County and participating local jurisdictions;
 - g. Provide input and evaluation on the implementation of the CDBG and HOME programs; and
 - h. Evaluate housing and community development policy related to CDBG and HOME.
3. The Commission will meet on a regular basis. The time and place of meetings can be obtained by contacting the Dane County Department of Human Services, Planning and Evaluation Unit or at: <http://co.dane.wi.us/committees/agendas.asp?CommitteeID=111&startDate=&endDate=&sortButton=Search>
4. Support of the Commission will be provided by staff of the Dane County Department of Human Services, Planning and Evaluation Unit.

Objective 7: Establish complaint procedures.

Strategy and Implementation

Written complaints from the public related to the Consolidated Plan and its associated funding sources should be sent to the Dane County Department of Human Services, Planning and Evaluation Unit and will receive a substantive, written reply from the Unit within 15 working days where practical.

Objective 8: Establish procedures for changing the Citizen Participation Plan

Strategy and Implementation

This Citizen Participation Plan can be changed only after the public has been notified of an intent to modify it, and only after the public has had 30 days to review and comment on proposed substantive changes to it.