

Citizen Participation Plan

Section 91.105 of the Consolidated Plan Final Rule (24 CFR Part 91) requires each participating jurisdiction (**PJ**) to adopt a **Citizen Participation Plan** that sets forth its policies and procedures for citizen participation. The Citizen Participation Plan must provide for and encourage citizens to participate in the development of the consolidated plan, any substantial amendments to the consolidated plan, and the performance report. It is designed specifically to encourage participation by the residents of predominantly low- and moderate-income neighborhoods, minorities and non-English speaking persons, as well as persons with disabilities, local and regional institutions and other organizations, and residents of public and assisted housing developments. The Citizen Participation Plan and any substantial amendments must be made public and available for citizen comment. Accordingly, the City of Decatur has hereby established the following Citizen Participation Plan.

1. General Provisions

The City of Decatur will provide for and encourage citizen participation in an advisory role in planning, implementing and assessing each aspect of its program (the Program) for utilizing funds received through the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's (HUD) office of Community Planning and Development; namely, the development of the Five-year Consolidated Plan, any substantial amendments to the Consolidated Plan, the Annual Action Plan, Environmental Review Record (ERR) and the Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Report (CAPER). None of the provisions for citizen participation listed below will be construed to restrict the responsibility and authority of the City of Decatur for the development of application for funding through this Program.

The following written Citizen Participation Plan sets forth the procedures that implement each of the requirements as set forth in Section 91.105 of the Consolidated Plan Final Rule, 24 CFR Part 91, of January 5, 1995 as updated through February 6, 2006.

2. Standards of Participation

The City of Decatur will provide a process of citizen participation at both the community-wide and neighborhood levels. The process will meet the following standards: All aspects of citizen participation will be conducted in an open manner, with freedom of access for all interested persons;

- a. The City of Decatur will encourage participation by low and very low-income persons, members of minority groups and non-English speaking persons, residents of areas where a significant amount of funds are proposed to be used, persons with disabilities, residents of public and assisted housing developments and targeted revitalization areas, and other local regional institutions and organizations;
- b. The City of Decatur will make reasonable effort to ensure continuity of involvement of citizens and citizen organizations throughout all stages of the program; and
- c. The City will utilize a variety of techniques to solicit community involvement and provide citizens with a reasonable opportunity to submit comments.

3. Adequate Information

The City of Decatur will provide full public access to program information and make affirmative efforts to provide adequate information to citizens, particularly those of low and very

low-income and those residing in areas where a significant fund amounts are proposed to be used.

The following program information will be provided to citizens in the Consolidated Plan and Annual Action Plan:

- a. Total amount of Community Development Block Grant funds and HOME funds available to the City of Decatur for community development and housing activities, when available;
- b. The range of activities that is planned to be undertaken with these federal funds;
- c. Notice of opportunity to provide input in drafting and approving the funding application, as well as a schedule of meetings and hearings;
- d. The role of citizens in the program, in conformity with federal rules and regulations (24 CFR 91.105); and
- e. A summary of important program requirements.

The City of Decatur will provide full and timely disclosure of its Program records and information consistent with applicable state and local laws regarding personal privacy and obligations of confidentiality. Documents relevant to the Program, and to the City's use of assistance under programs it covers during the past five years, will be made available in the Neighborhood Services Division during normal working hours for review upon request.

The City of Decatur will make available copies of the Citizen Participation Plan, the Consolidated Plan and any substantial amendments, the Annual Action Plan (including the amount of funding the jurisdiction expects to receive), and the Comprehensive Annual Performance and Evaluation Report (CAPER) at places conveniently located for persons affected by the program and accessible to persons with physical disabilities. It is the general practice of the City of Decatur to make available this information at three common sites:

Decatur Housing Authority (Lobby Area) located at 1808 E. Locust Street, Decatur, IL; Decatur Public Library (Reference Area) located at 247 E. North Street, Decatur, IL; and City of Decatur, Development Services Department, 3rd Floor, Decatur Civic Center, #1 Gary K. Anderson Plaza, Decatur, IL.

4. Public Hearings/Meetings

The City will hold at least two official public hearings annually, one to present and receive comments on the draft Consolidated Plan and/or Annual Action Plan, and one to present and receive comments on the CAPER. Additional public hearings, meetings or workshops on either document may be held during its development process. Hearings will be held at times and locations which permit broad participation, particularly by low and very low-income persons and by residents of areas where a significant amount of funds are proposed to be used. Hearings will be held at times and locations accessible by public transportation, and at locations accessible to persons with physical disabilities. Upon request, at least one week prior to the hearing, accommodation will be made for persons with a hearing disability. If notified at least one week in advance that at least five (5) non-English speaking residents will attend a public hearing, the City will make its best effort to have a translator available at the hearing or to have a summary of the document translated.

5. Notices of Public Hearings

The City of Decatur, at least fifteen (15) days to a public hearing on any aspect of the Program, will publish notice in easily-readable type in the classified section of the *Decatur Tribune* and send a press release to the *Decatur Herald & Review*. In addition, the City of Decatur will make reasonable effort to provide notices, in the form of press releases, to neighborhood organizations and local agencies serving low- and very low-income persons. The City of Decatur will make reasonable effort to publicize widely these hearings, through means such as public service radio and television announcements, mass mailings, the City's government access channel, and on the City's website, www.decaturl.gov.

6. Submission of Comments

The City of Decatur will provide for and encourage the submission of views and proposals regarding the Program by its citizens. Such views and comments may be submitted at any time during the year. However, to be included with submission of a particular document to HUD, the comments must be received by the date published in the official public notice for the final public hearing on the draft of that document. This includes submission of written comments generated before or during neighborhood and community-wide meetings, formal public hearings, or orally at official public hearings.

7. Comment period on Draft Documents

A final draft of the Consolidated Plan, Citizen Participation Plan, and Annual Action Plan will be available for public comment for not less than thirty (30) days following the final official public hearing on the document before submission to HUD. A final draft of the annual CAPER will be available for public comment for not less than fifteen (15) days following the final official public hearing on the document before submission to HUD. These draft documents will be available for examination at the three locations specified in Item 3. above, on the City of Decatur's website (www.decaturl.gov), and upon request from the Neighborhood Services Division. In preparing the final document, the City will consider any comments or views of citizens received orally at the public hearing, or in writing during the comment period. 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 document.

8. Complaints

The City of Decatur will respond to complaints related to the Consolidated Plan, Annual Action Plan, and CAPER in a timely and responsive manner. The City will provide a written response within fifteen (15) working days. Complaints should be addressed to:

City of Decatur Neighborhood Services Division
Attention: Neighborhood Services Manager
#1 Gary K. Anderson Plaza
Decatur, IL 62523

9. Consideration of Objections to Applications

Persons wishing to object to approval of an application by HUD may make such objections known to the HUD Chicago Area Office. HUD will consider objections made on the following grounds:

- a. The City of Decatur's description of needs and objectives is plainly inconsistent with available facts and data.
- b. The activities to be undertaken are plainly inappropriate to meet the needs and objectives identified by the City of Decatur.
- c. The application does not comply with the requirements set forth in the Federal Register or other applicable law.
- d. The application proposed activities which are otherwise ineligible under federal rules and regulations. Objections should include both identification of the requirements not met and in the case of objections made on the grounds that the description of needs and objectives is plainly inconsistent with significant, generally reliable facts and data, the data upon which the persons rely. Although HUD will consider objections submitted at any time, such objections should be submitted within thirty days of the publication of the notice that the application has been made to HUD. To ensure that objections submitted will be considered during the review process, HUD will not approve an application until at least forty-five (45) days after receipt of the application.

The HUD Chicago Area office is located at the following address:
Office of Community Planning and Development
U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
77 West Jackson Boulevard
Chicago, Illinois 60604-3507

10. Substantial Amendments to the Consolidated Plan

The City of Decatur will amend the Consolidated Plan in the event of a substantial change. The following constitutes a substantial change:

- a. Changes in the allocation of priorities.
- b. Changes in the method of distribution of funds, including:
 - Changes in the use of CDBG funds from one Consolidated Plan Objective to another.
 - A 38% increase or decrease for reprogramming of funds to any eligible funded activity.
- c. Changes to carry out an activity, using funds from any program covered by the Consolidated Plan, not previously described in the Action Plan.
- d. Changes of the purpose, scope, location, or beneficiaries of an activity.

A public hearing will be held on a Substantial Amendment with notification of the hearing as set forth under the "Notice" section of the Citizen Participation Plan. A thirty-day opportunity period for comments on the substantial amendment will be provided. A summary of all comments and views received during this period, and a summary of any comments or views not accepted and the reasons therefore, will be attached to the substantial amendment of the Consolidated Plan.

11. Major Disaster Declaration/Urgent Need

In the event of a major disaster declaration, the of Decatur will provide the public notice of potential changes to Action Plan and/or Consolidated priorities due to urgent need, changes in the distribution of funds, addition or deletion of activities to meet the community's need, changes in environmental reviews, and reports. Regarding a major disaster declaration/urgent need, the City of Decatur will make reasonable effort to publicize widely hearings and notices, through

means such as public service radio and television announcements, Decatur Tribune and/or Decatur Herald, e-mail to community agencies, the City's government access channel 18, City of Decatur Facebook page, and on the City's website, www.decaturl.gov. Due to urgent need or a major disaster, no one will be present for the meeting in the council chambers at the Decatur Civic Center. Public Hearing will be live-streamed on the City's cable access-channel 18 with a recording of the meeting posted at www.decaturl.gov. Comments and questions may be e-mailed to ActionPlan@decaturl.gov or calls may be made to (217) 424-2864 or (217) 424-2777. Written comments should be submitted to: City of Decatur, c/o Neighborhood Services Division, 1 Gary K. Anderson Plaza, Decatur, IL 62523. Public comment periods regarding the proposed changes may be reduced from 30 days for the Action Plans and Consolidated Plan to a minimum of 5 days.

12. Bilingual Communication

a. If notified at least one week in advance that at least ten (10) non-English speaking residents will attend a public hearing, the City will make its best effort to have a translator available at the hearing or to have a summary of the document translated. If the hearing is held in, or funding proposed to be used in, a neighborhood where at least ten percent (10%) of the residents speak and read a primary language other than English, then all notices of the public hearing and a summary of basic proposal components will be produced in such language.

b. Technical Assistance

The City of Decatur will provide technical assistance to the degree, level and type determined appropriate by the Neighborhood Services Division after discussion with the organization requesting assistance. Technical assistance shall be provided to:

- a. Neighborhood and area-wide organizations, enabling them to participate in planning, implementing and assessing the programs offered by the Division in their area.
- b. Groups of very low and low-income persons and groups of residents of low-income neighborhoods which request assistance in developing for funding assistance under any of the programs covered by the Consolidated Plan.

The Neighborhood Services Division will provide technical assistance either directly or through arrangements with public and private agencies. Requests for technical assistance should be made in writing to the Manager of the Neighborhood Services Division.