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# COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT CITIZEN PARTICIPATION PLAN

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CITY OF COLONIAL HEIGHTS, VIRGINIA

ADOPTED: JUNE 2020

PREVIOUSLY AMENDED: MAY 2019

Department of Planning & Community Development  
201 James Avenue Colonial Heights, VA 23834

The City of Colonial Heights encourages the public to participate in the development of Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) plans and programs, as well as to comment on the City's past performance in its use of CDBG funds. The following citizen participation plan contains policies to achieve this end and conforms to the Code of Federal Regulations, Title 24, Part 91.105, Citizen Participation Plan - Local Governments.

## POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

The City will provide the opportunity for the public to participate in the following planning developments:

1. Developing Community Development Plans
2. Substantially amending Community Development Plans
3. Evaluating the Implementation of Community Development Plans

The City's Citizen Participation Plan is designed to encourage participation by low to moderate-income persons, particularly those living in slum and blighted areas and in areas where CDBG funds are proposed to be used, and by citizens of predominantly low- and moderate-income neighborhoods. The City encourages the participation of all its citizens, including minorities and non-English speaking persons and people with disabilities.

Predominantly low to moderate-income neighborhoods are defined as those where greater than fifty percent (50%) of citizens have total household incomes which are at or below 80% of the area median income. Data on households and income levels is collected from the U.S. Census by tract and block group.

Low- and moderate-income households (individuals or families residing in one residence) are defined as those which have total household incomes of eighty percent (80%) of median income or below, adjusted according to household size in accordance with the most current Housing Choice Voucher income limit thresholds, as provided by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) (24 CFR 5.609).

## Developing Community Development Plans

### Policies

1. Before the City adopts a Community Development Plan, it will make available to citizens, public agencies, and other interested parties, information that includes the amount of assistance the City expects to receive, including grant funds and program income.
2. This information will include the range of activities that may be undertaken, and the estimated amount that will benefit low to moderate-income persons.
3. This information will be provided on an annual basis.
4. Any comments or views of citizens received in writing or orally, will be considered in preparing the Plan. A summary of these comments or views shall be attached to the Plan.

**Anti-Displacement:** The City will minimize displacement of persons and will assist any persons displaced if necessary as a result of CDBG activities. In the event that displacement is necessary, the City will make information available through public notice. Additional information will be available at the Department of Planning and Community Development.

## Substantially amending Community Development Plans

### Policies

The following is criteria the City will use for determining what changes in the City's planned or actual activities constitute a **substantial amendment** to the Plan. The City will amend its' Plan whenever it makes one of the following decisions:

1. A twenty (20%) fiscal change in allocation priorities or the method of distribution of CDBG funds
2. Carries out an activity using funds from any program covered by the Consolidated Plan (including program income) not previously described in the Action Plan
3. Changes the purpose, scope, location or beneficiaries of an activity
4. Changes in the use of CDBG funds from one HUD eligible activity to a different activity

5. Any comments or views of citizens received in writing or orally, will be considered in preparing the amendment. A summary of these comments or views shall be attached to the amendment in the Plan.

## Evaluating the Implementation of Community Development Plans

### Policies

1. Citizens will be provided with reasonable notice and an opportunity to comment on the Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Report (CAPER).
2. This information will be provided on an annual basis.
3. Any comments or views of citizens received in writing, or orally will be considered in preparing the CAPER. A summary of these comments or views shall be attached to the CAPER.

### Public Notice Procedures

Following preparation of the Plan, the City will ensure citizens, public agencies, and other interested parties have reasonable opportunity to examine its contents and comment. Reasonable notice and an opportunity to comment will be **no less than 30 days**.

1. A notification of the public hearings will be published in the Progress-Index newspaper and the City's website ([colonialheightsva.gov](http://colonialheightsva.gov)). This advertisement will describe the Plan and specify where copies of the full report may be examined.
  - a. The first notice must be published no less than 15 days prior to the public hearing and no more than 21 days prior to the hearing.
  - b. The second notice must be published at least 5 days before the public hearing.
  - c. The two notices must run at least 6 days apart.
  - d. The first notice must be at least 15 days prior to the hearing and the second notice at least 7 days prior to the meeting date.
2. Additional notifications of the public hearings will be posted at the Colonial Heights Public Library (1000 Yacht Basin Drive), Colonial Heights City Hall (201 James Avenue) and the Colonial Heights Community Center (157 Roanoke Avenue).
3. This advertisement will describe the Plan and specify where copies of the full report may be examined.
4. Copies of the report will be available on the City's website ([colonialheightsva.gov](http://colonialheightsva.gov))

and in the Department of Planning and Community Development (City Hall, 201 James Avenue).

### Public Hearing Procedures

The City will conduct public hearings to obtain citizens' views and to respond to proposals and answer questions about the Plan. Public hearings will be held at times and locations convenient to potential and actual beneficiaries and with accommodations for people with disabilities. The needs of Non-English-speaking citizens will be met where a significant number of non-English speaking citizens can be reasonably expected to participate.

There will be a minimum of two (2) hearings at different stages of the program year. Together, these hearings will address housing and community development needs, the development of proposed activities, and the review of program performance.

1. During development and before formal adoption of the Plan, the City will hold public hearings annually to obtain the views of citizens on community development needs.
2. One hearing will be held at City Hall Chambers (201 James Avenue).
3. Another hearing will coincide with one of City Council's regularly scheduled public hearings at the City Hall Chambers.

### Public Comment Procedures

1. A period of not less than 30 days will be given to receive comments from citizens on the Plan.
2. The City will provide citizens with a reasonable opportunity to comment on the Plan or substantial amendments.
3. The City will make the Plan or substantial amendments available in a format accessible to persons with disabilities, upon request.
4. The City will consider any comments or views of citizens received in writing, or orally.
5. The City's procedures to address complaints from citizens related to the Plan or amendments are as follows:
  - a. The City will provide a timely substantive written response to every written citizen complaint, within 15 working days of receipt.

6. Any comments or views of citizens received in writing or orally, will be considered in preparing the Plan.

#### Community Agency and Organization Input

1. When preparing the Plan, the City will consult with other public and private agencies that provide assisted housing, health services, and social services including those focusing on services to children, elderly persons, persons with disabilities, persons with HIV/AIDS and their families, and homeless persons.
2. In addition to the public hearings, the City will contact each predominantly low- to moderate income neighborhood/civic association and neighborhood/civic association where there is a concentration of minority members within the City. An offer will be extended to meet with them directly and solicit public comments at an organization's regularly scheduled meeting.
3. The portion of the Plan concerning lead-based paint hazards, the City will consult with State or local health and child welfare agencies and examine existing data related to lead-based paint hazards and poisonings, including health department data on the addresses of housing units in which children have been identified as lead poisoned.
4. When preparing the description of priority non-housing community development needs, the City will notify adjacent units of general local government, to the extent practicable including local government agencies with metropolitan-wide planning responsibilities where they exist, particularly for issues that go beyond the City's jurisdictional boundaries.

#### Access to Records

Citizens, public agencies, and other interested parties will be provided with reasonable and timely access to information and records relating to the City's Plan. This also includes the City's use of CDBG assistance under the programs covered by this part during the preceding five years.

#### Technical Assistance

1. Technical assistance will be provided to groups that are representative of people of low-and moderate-income who request such assistance in developing proposals for funding assistance. under the programs covered by the Plan with the level and type of assistance determined by the City.
2. Technical assistance provided does not indicate that funds will be provided to such groups.

### Use of Citizen Participation Plan and Responsibility

The City will follow its current Citizen Participation Plan until amended. The requirement for citizen participation does not restrict the responsibility or authority of the City for the development and execution of its Consolidated Plan (Required per 91.505).