

County of Cook, Illinois



Citizen Participation Plan

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Prepared by:

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SUMMARY

PURPOSE

Cook County receives annual entitlement funding from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). As a Federal formula funding recipient, Cook County is required to prepare and adopt a citizen participation plan that sets forth its policies and procedures for resident participation and stakeholder consultation.

Cook County is committed to a transparent participatory process that engages and sustains the involvement of residents, stakeholders, and other interested parties effectively in planning and decision-making processes through the consistent and timely public release of complete and accurate information.

REGULATORY REQUIREMENTS

This Citizen Participation Plan has been developed in accordance with the applicable Federal regulation of 24 CFR Part 91.105: Citizen Participation Plan; Local Governments.

ADMINISTERING AGENCY

The Department of Planning and Development within the newly formed Bureau of Economic Development (formerly known as the Bureau of Community Development) is the designated agency administering HUD funds on behalf of Cook County.

The mission of the Bureau is to: “foster economic development and job growth within Cook County to promote sustainable community investment, business growth, attraction, and retention, affordable housing, regional planning, and workforce development”. In addition to the Department of Planning and Development, the Bureau includes the following departments: Capital Planning and Policy, Real Estate Management, Building and Zoning, and Chicago Cook Workforce Partnership, a newly formed private not-for-profit County affiliate.

The mission of the Department of Planning and Development is to develop sustainable and vibrant urban communities by: “fostering economic opportunities and business development, preserving and expanding the supply of decent, affordable housing, promoting fair housing, and supporting programs that address the problems of homelessness.”

GOVERNING BODY

Proposed Federally-funded programs and projects are presented to an advisory council, currently known as the Community Development Advisory Council (CDAC), and/or the Cook County Board of Commissioners for review and approval prior to HUD submission as appropriate.

The Cook County Board of Commissioners is the governing board and legislative body of the county. It is comprised of 17 Commissioners, each serving a four-year term who are elected from single member districts. Each district represents approximately 300,000 residents. The President of the Cook County Board is the chief executive officer of the County and presides

over the meetings of the County Board and directly supervises departments which provide a variety of direct and support services. The President is elected to a four-year term by the voters of the entire County.

The advisory council consists of 10 members who represent community interests, with particular emphasis upon the needs of low- and moderate-income households. The members are appointed by the President of the Cook County Board and serve at the will of the President. The Director of the Department of Planning and Development chairs the advisory council.

APPLICABLE FUNDING SOURCES

Cook County currently receives Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), Emergency Solutions Grant (formerly known as the Emergency Shelters Grant) (ESG), and HOME Investment Partnerships Program (HOME) funding on an annual entitlement basis from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).

Cook County continues to explore and apply for additional Federal funding on a competitive basis. As funding sources change over time, this Citizen Participation Plan will apply to all Federally-funded programs of the Department of Planning and Development, as appropriate.

GEOGRAPHIC SCOPE

Applicability of this Citizen Participation Plan is restricted to the current suburban community membership of the Cook County Urban County and/or Cook County HOME Consortium. Current non-members include communities that receive CDBG, ESG, and/or HOME funding directly from HUD as well as those that have specifically opted out of the Urban County and/or Consortium.

STRATEGY NARRATIVE

GENERAL OUTREACH AND ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY

This Citizen Participation Plan aims to encourage public participation in the development, implementation, and evaluation of Federally-funded programming. The resident participation and stakeholder consultation processes outlined in this Plan also apply to Federally-required strategy plans and performance reports including but not limited to:

- Consolidated Plan (Con Plan);
- Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Choice (AIFHC);
- Annual Action Plan;
- Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Report (CAPER);
- Citizen Participation Plan; and
- Substantial Amendments (where applicable)

In accordance with this Citizen Participation Plan, Cook County will:

- Seek broad public input with specific emphasis upon participation by low- and moderate-income persons, particularly those living in areas where Federal funds are proposed to be used, and by residents of predominantly low- and moderate-income neighborhoods, as defined by Cook County;
- Take appropriate actions to encourage the participation of all its residents, including minorities, persons with limited English proficiency, persons with disabilities, and vulnerable populations (i.e. persons or households who are homeless or at-risk of becoming homeless, victims of domestic violence or persons who are HIV/AIDS positive);
- Solicit the participation of local and regional institutions including civic organizations, councils of government (COG), Continuum of Care leadership and membership, planning agencies, philanthropic institutions, financial intermediaries, businesses, developers, non-profit organizations, and other community-based organizations;
- Encourage, in conjunction with consultation with public housing agencies (PHA), the participation of residents of public and assisted housing developments along with other low-income residents of targeted revitalization areas in which the developments are located;
- Make an effort to provide information to public housing agencies (PHA) about programs and projects related to its developments and surrounding communities so that the PHA can make this information available at the annual public hearing required for the PHA Plan; and
- Explore alternative public involvement techniques and quantitative ways to measure efforts that encourage citizen participation in a shared vision for change in communities and neighborhoods, and the review of program performance including but not limited to electronic surveys and requests for input.

SPECIFIC PARTICIPATORY OPPORTUNITIES

Programming and Operations

Cook County will solicit input from residents and stakeholders at least twice annually on programming and operations via electronic newsletter and ongoing website postings.

In addition, Cook County may coordinate stakeholder discussions on an as needed basis to provide input related to processes and documentation, which supplement the standard grant cycle (i.e. funding applications for Section 108, etc.). These consultations will help to facilitate more meaningful discussion and input as well as ensure better program design.

Strategic Plans

Cook County will make all strategic plans (including but not limited to the Consolidated Plan, Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Choice (AIFHC), Annual Action Plan, and Citizen Participation Plan) available for public review and comment.

A formal notice of the related public review and comment opportunities will be published in at least one local newspaper with general daily circulation at least two (2) weeks in advance. The same notice will also be published to Cook County's website and distributed via electronic newsletter along with a request to known stakeholder groups to further publicize via linkage to their respective websites. This notice will be posted in both English and Spanish and will include a brief description of the purpose and contents of the related plan as well as a summary of locations and methods for access and review.

Strategic plans will include the amount of assistance Cook County expects to receive (including grant funds and program income) and the range of activities that may be undertaken, including the estimated amount that will benefit persons of low- and moderate-income where applicable.

Draft documents will be published to Cook County's website and distributed via electronic newsletter along with a request to known stakeholder groups to further publicize via linkage to their respective websites. In addition, a hard copy of the draft documents will be maintained at Cook County's offices and made available for public review as requested. A reasonable number of free copies of the draft documents will also be provided to those residents and groups that request it. The draft documents will be made available in a form accessible to persons with disabilities, upon request.

A public review and comment period of no less than thirty (30) days will apply unless otherwise specified under the pertinent Federal regulation. A summary of comments received orally or in writing, identifying the comment source and content, as well as Cook County responses (including those comments or views not accepted and the reasons therefor) will be included in the final document submittal to HUD or other agency as required.

At least one public hearing will be conducted in relation to all draft documents unless otherwise specified under the pertinent Federal regulation. The hearing will be held at times and locations convenient to potential and actual beneficiaries, and with accommodation for persons with disabilities. Translation will be providing during the public hearing where a significant number of persons with limited English proficiency are reasonably expected to participate and as specifically requested.

This hearing will serve as one of two Federally-required public hearings annually to obtain public input. Together, these public hearings will address an assessment of housing, community, and economic development needs, development and implementation of proposed programs/projects, and analysis of performance. At a minimum, this particular hearing will cover the Draft Annual Action Plan. These public hearings will be conducted by the advisory council and/or Cook County Board as appropriate. Specific program/project approval will be

solicited from one or both governing bodies as required under the applicable Federal regulation.

Performance Reporting

Cook County will make all performance reports (including but not limited to the Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Report) available for public review and comment.

A formal notice of the related public review and comment opportunities will be published in at least one local newspaper with general daily circulation at least two (2) weeks in advance. The same notice will also be published to Cook County's website and distributed via electronic newsletter along with a request to known stakeholder groups to further publicize via linkage to their respective websites. This notice will be posted in both English and Spanish and will include a brief description of the purpose and contents of the related report as well as a summary of locations and methods for access and review.

Performance reports will include the amount of assistance Cook County actually received (including grant funds and program income) and the range of activities that were undertaken, including the actual amount that benefited persons of low- and moderate-income where applicable.

Draft documents will be published to Cook County's website and distributed via electronic newsletter along with a request to known stakeholder groups to further publicize via linkage to their respective websites. In addition, a hard copy of the draft documents will be maintained at Cook County's offices and made available for public review as requested. A reasonable number of free copies of the draft documents will also be provided to those citizens and groups that request it. The draft documents will be made available in a form accessible to persons with disabilities, upon request.

A public review and comment period of no less than fifteen (15) days will apply unless otherwise specified under the pertinent Federal regulation. A summary of comments received orally or in writing, identifying the comment source and content, as well as Cook County responses (including those comments or views not accepted and the reasons therefor) will be included in the final document submittal to HUD or other agency as required.

At least one public hearing will be conducted in relation to all draft documents unless otherwise specified under the pertinent Federal regulation. The hearing will be held at times and locations convenient to potential and actual beneficiaries, and with accommodation for persons with disabilities. Translation will be providing during the public hearing where a significant number of persons with limited English proficiency are reasonably expected to participate and as specifically requested.

This hearing will serve as one of two Federally-required public hearings annually to obtain public input. Together, these public hearings will address an assessment of housing, community, and economic development needs, development and implementation of proposed

programs/projects, and analysis of performance. At a minimum, this particular hearing will cover the Draft CAPER. These public hearings will be conducted by the advisory council and/or Cook County Board as appropriate.

Amendments

Cook County will make all Substantial Amendments, as applicable, available for public review and comment.

A Substantial Amendment shall be required if any one of the following criteria applies:

- Making a change in its allocation priorities or in the method of distribution of funds;
- Carrying out an activity, using funds from any program covered by the Consolidated Plan (including program income), not previously described in the Annual Action Plan; or
- Changing the purpose, scope, location, or beneficiaries of an activity

Please note - the following changes *are not classified* as Substantial Amendments and will be modified internally at the discretion of Cook County:

- Changes to a project budget that are less than 25%;
- Modifications to a program or project based upon changing applicable income, rent, subsidy, after-rehabilitation value, and/or purchase price limits and/or utility allowances;
- Changes to a project location when the purpose, scope, and beneficiaries remain essentially the same; and/or
- Transfer of a portion of funds within a project from one approved budget line item to another approved budget line item

In case of Substantial Amendment, a formal notice of the related public review and comment opportunities will be published in at least one local newspaper with general daily circulation at least two (2) weeks in advance. The same notice will also be published to Cook County's website and distributed via electronic newsletter along with a request to known stakeholder groups to further publicize via linkage to their respective websites. This notice will be posted in both English and Spanish and will include a brief description of the purpose and contents of the related plan as well as a summary of locations and methods for access and review.

Substantial Amendments will detail proposed program and/or project modifications as applicable.

Draft documents will be published to Cook County's website and distributed via electronic newsletter along with a request to known stakeholder groups to further publicize via linkage to their respective websites. In addition, a hard copy of the draft documents will be maintained at Cook County's offices and made available for public review as requested. A reasonable number of free copies of the draft documents will also be provided to those citizens and groups that

request it. The draft documents will be made available in a form accessible to persons with disabilities, upon request.

A public review and comment period of no less than thirty (30) days will apply unless otherwise specified under the pertinent Federal regulation. A summary of comments received orally or in writing, identifying the comment source and content, as well as Cook County responses (including those comments or views not accepted and the reasons therefor) will be included in the final document submittal to HUD or other agency as required.

At least one public hearing will be conducted in relation to all draft documents unless otherwise specified under the pertinent Federal regulation. The hearing will be held at times and locations convenient to potential and actual beneficiaries, and with accommodation for persons with disabilities. Translation will be providing during the public hearing where a significant number of persons with limited English proficiency are reasonably expected to participate and as specifically requested.

This public hearing will be conducted by the advisory council and/or Cook County Board as appropriate. Specific program/project approval will be solicited from one or both governing bodies as required under the applicable Federal regulation.

MINIMIZING DISPLACEMENT

Cook County will work to minimize all displacement of persons and businesses where feasible. In instances where temporary or permanent displacement is necessary, Cook County will provide technical and monetary assistance for relocation purposes as required and cost eligible under the applicable Federal regulations. Specific efforts to minimize displacement and provide relocation assistance as needed are outlined in Cook County’s Relocation and Anti-Displacement Plan.

ACCESS TO RECORDS

As outlined above, Cook County will strive to provide residents, stakeholders, and other interested parties with reasonable and timely access to information and records relating to the Cook County’s Consolidated Plan and the use of assistance under the programs covered during the applicable plan period.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Cook County will provide technical assistance to individuals and groups representative of persons of low- and moderate-income that request such assistance in developing proposals for funding assistance under any of the programs covered by the Consolidated Plan. This technical assistance does not include the provision of funding but rather consultation and advisement provided on a one-on-one or group basis as deemed reasonable by Cook County.

COMPLAINTS

Cook County will provide a timely, substantive written response to every written complaint, within fifteen (15) business days.

Community Development Advisory Council (CDAC) Public Hearing

Notices

See attached.

Transcript
See attached.

Public Comments and Cook County Responses

No public comments were received.