

DEKALB COUNTY, GEORGIA

**AMENDED PLAN FOR CITIZEN
PARTICIPATION AND CONSULTATION**

**CONSOLIDATED SUBMISSION FOR COMMUNITY
PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS**

DeKalb County Community Development Department

**750 Commerce Drive, Suite 401
Decatur, Georgia 30032**

**Office Hours: 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
Telephone: (404) 371-2727**

**For more information contact
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This document describes the citizen participation process for the DeKalb County HUD funded programs. For more information about the programs, please call the DeKalb County Community Development Department at (404) 371-2727.

Address

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COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT APPROVAL PROCESS

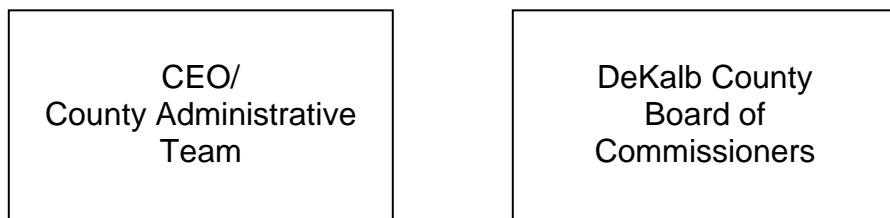
I. Identification of Needs/Input from Citizens



II. Development of Proposed Funding Recommendations for Community Development projects for review and approval by CEO and County Administrative team.



III. Final Approval



The Community Development approval process identifies the relationship between the citizens and government entities. The diagram demonstrates the involvement of residents, County departments, Community Development Department staff, and elected officials.

The Citizen's Participation is designed to assure citizen involvement in the DeKalb County Consolidated Submission for Community Planning and Development Programs, CDBG and ESG. DeKalb County complies with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) citizen participation requirements listed in the federal regulations 24CFR91.105.

1. Encouragement of Citizen Participation

Encourage citizen participation in the development of the Consolidated Plan or the Annual Action Plan, amendments to the plan and the performance report by very low- and low-income persons, particularly those living in slum and blighted areas and in areas where CDBG funds are proposed to be used; encourage participation of all citizens, including minorities and non-English speaking persons, as well as persons with mobility, visual, or hearing impairments. Consult with public and assisted housing developments.

- Place at least one ad in the newspaper that is a newspaper of general circulation and in newspapers that target minorities.
- Place the notice on the Community Development Department website under Public Notices.
- Send information of all public notices to the agencies listed in “Consultation” section.
- Attend community meetings on an ongoing basis to explain the programs to citizens and familiarize them with the process.
- Develop an ongoing relationship with organizations and/or persons who work with minorities, non-English speaking persons, as well as persons with mobility, visual or hearing impairments. Ensure that these organizations are included on the consultation list.
- Provide an opportunity and encourage citizens and public and private agencies to submit written and verbal proposals during the annual process.
- Review and consider all citizens' comments received, written or verbal and if applicable, incorporate such comments into the proposed and final Consolidated Plan.
- Consult with each Housing Authority and identify the best method(s) to share information with public housing residents. This should be done prior to the beginning of the process so that information can be shared in a timely manner. If possible, attend meetings to explain the process so that residents will better understand how the process will work. Residents will be encouraged to attend meetings with the border community.
- Consult with each Housing Authority to determine if it receives a Comprehensive Grant Program. If so, identifying the date, location, and time of the required annual public hearing and arrange to be included on the agenda to provide information about community development plan activities. This will be done prior

to the beginning of the process so that these dates can be incorporated into the Master Planning Schedule for the Consolidated Plan.

- Consult with homeless or formerly homeless individuals in consideration and making policies and decisions regarding any ESG-funded facilities, services, or other assistance.

2. Information to be Provided

Provides citizens and units of general local government with reasonable and timely access to local meetings, information and records relating to the grantee's proposed use of funds, the range of activities to be undertaken, the expected amount of funds and the actual use of funds to benefit low- and very low-income persons; and the plan to minimize displacement of persons and to assist any persons displaced.

- Once the location of proposed projects is known, special efforts should be made to ensure that residents of those areas are aware of the projects and potential impact. These efforts shall include mailing the proposed list of projects and related information to groups and residents that reside in the areas, publishing appropriate information in the local newspaper or other publications, and placing the information in the local libraries.
- Publish a summary of proposed Consolidated Plan or the Annual Action Plan in the newspaper of general circulation and in newspapers that target minorities.
- Notify citizens, units of general local government public and private agencies and public housing authorities of the availability of the proposed Consolidated Plan, the adopted plan, any amendments, related to CDBG, HOME, and ESG the performance reports as these documents are developed to afford citizens reasonable opportunity to examine their contents and provide comments.
- Distribute the copies of the annual Projects Reports of Community Development activities at community meetings, public hearings or upon request.
- Place copies of the Consolidated Plan or the Annual Action Plan and Performance Report in local libraries, government buildings as appropriate, public housing authorities, nonprofit agencies convenient to the general public, and units of general local government as appropriate.
- Prior to the adoption of the Consolidated Plan or the Annual Action Plan, information will be made available to citizens that includes the amount of assistance the jurisdiction expects to receive; the range of activities that may be undertaken, including the amounts that will benefit persons of very low- and low-income; and the plans to minimize displacement of persons and to assist any persons displaced.

- In response to the COVID-19 pandemic the Community Development Department will follow HUD guidance outlined in the CARES ACT passed into law, March 27, 2020 for the FY 2020 CDBG Program funding:
 - a. Provides that grantees may amend citizen participation plans to establish procedures to draft, propose, or amend consolidated plans. Expedite procedures must include notice and reasonable opportunity to comment of no less than 5 days. The 5-day period can run concurrently for comments on the action plan amendment and the amended citizen participation plans.
 - b. In person public hearings are not required. Grantees may meet public hearing requirements with virtual public hearings if: 1) national/local health authorities recommend social distancing and limiting public gatherings for public health reasons; and 2) virtual hearings provide reasonable notification and access for citizens in accordance with the grantee's certifications, timely responses from local officials to all citizen questions and issues, and public access to all questions and responses.
- If the potential for relocation exists within the geographic location of a project, the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) and HOME programs will be responsible for benefits required under the federal Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970, as amended, and for the CDBG and HOME programs, residential anti-displacement and relocation assistance under Section 104(d) of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974, as amended.

3. Access to Records

- For a period of five years, citizens, public agencies, and other interested parties shall be provided reasonable and timely access to information and records relating to the DeKalb County's use of assistance under the programs covered by this part.

4. Technical Assistance

- Technical assistance shall be provided to group representative of persons with very low- and low-income that request such assistance in developing proposals for funding assistance under any of the programs covered by the Consolidated Plan, with the level and type of assistance determined by the County.

5. Public Hearings

- A minimum of two public hearings will be held per year to obtain citizens views, to be conducted at a minimum of two different stages of the program year. Together the hearings shall address housing and community development

needs, including priority non-housing community development needs and program performance.

- Notice of the public hearings shall be published in the legal organ of the County and on the Community Development website in advance of the hearings. The notice shall contain sufficient information about the subject to permit informed comment.
- Other efforts may include placing the notice in other newspapers or publications that target minorities and/or persons with disabilities, utilizing other forms of media, sending notices to the entities identified on the Consultation list of this document, attending meetings in the target areas, and other means deemed appropriate by the Community Development Department.
- All public hearings will be held at times and locations convenient to potential and actual beneficiaries, and with accommodation for persons with disabilities.
- The needs of non-English speaking residents will be met by having translators available at the hearings when a significant number of non-English speaking residents are expected to participate. We will seek resources through the Employee Language Bank or other agencies. If non-English speaking residents attend the hearings and there are no translators, the staff will follow up with them the next business day to ensure that their comments are recorded.

6. Comments and Complaints

- We shall consider all written or verbal comments or views of citizens or units of local government that are received during the public hearings in preparing the final Consolidated Plan or the Annual Action Plan.
- We shall provide a substantive written response to every written citizen complaint received that is related to the Consolidated Plan or the Annual Action Plan, amendments, and performance report. Where practical, the response shall be made within 15 working days.
- The Community Development Department has developed the following complaint mechanism to respond to citizens:
 - Once a written complaint is received, it is forwarded to the appropriate staff person (Housing, Public Services or Planning) for investigation, if needed, complete the form and contact the implementing department, if necessary;
 - After a response is received from the implementing department, a written response will be returned to the citizen within 15 working days, where practicable;

- If the complaint can be handled within the department, the same process is followed. Each follow-up will be documented on the complaint form or attached to the written complaint received and filed;
- When the complaint is resolved and no further follow-up is required, the date of resolution will be documented.

7. Criteria for Amendment to Plan

In compliance with the Federal Regulation 24CFR 91.505, the DeKalb County Community Development Department shall use the following criteria to determine what constitutes a substantial change:

- The original intent and purpose of the activity no longer applies.
- The cost associated with a change in the scope of an activity increases or decreases by sixty percent.
- The location of an activity changes the extent that it does not serve the area population as described in the final statement.
- The number of beneficiaries of an activity is reduced by seventy-five percent (75%).
- Adoption of Citizen Participation Plan
 - The original Citizen Participation Plan, the final plan and all amendments thereto shall be at the Community Development Department for review during normal working days and hours. The Plan and amendments shall be in a format accessible to persons with disabilities.
- Use of the Citizen Participation Plan
 - The Department responsible for developing the Consolidated Plan or the Annual Action Plan shall have the responsibility of monitoring compliance with this Plan for Citizen Participation and Consultation.

Plan for Citizen Participation and Consultation

We will make the efforts to consult with public and private agencies listed below for the development of the Consolidated Plan.

1. Decatur Housing Authority
2. DeKalb Housing Authority
3. Lithonia Housing Authority
4. Georgia Department of Community Affairs
5. Department of Family & Children Services
6. DeKalb County Board of Health
7. DeKalb County Continuum of Care
8. DeKalb Community Service Board
9. DeKalb County Human Services Department
10. Greater Atlanta Homebuilders Association
11. Partnership for Community Action
12. All Municipalities
13. Latin American Association
14. Metro Fair Housing Services
15. DeKalb Metro Housing Counseling Center, Inc.
16. Decide DeKalb
17. Decatur Cooperative Ministry
18. DeKalb Prevention Alliance Members
19. DeKalb Chamber of Commerce
20. Jerusalem House, Inc.
21. Fannie Mae
22. Freddie Mac
23. DeKalb County School System
24. Atlanta School System
25. DeKalb County Planning Department
26. DeKalb County Public Works Department
27. Center for Pan Asian Community Services
28. DeKalb County Commission Office
29. Workforce Development Center
30. DeKalb County Parks and Recreation Department
31. DeKalb County Public Safety Department
32. DeKalb County Board of Commissioners
33. United Way of Metropolitan Atlanta
34. Habitat for Humanity DeKalb, Inc.

(Develop letters, identify information needs, send correspondence to entities as early as possible in the process encouraging their involvement and asking for information.)

DEKALB COUNTY GOVERNMENT

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All correspondence to members of the Board of Commissioners may be mailed to the Manuel J. Maloof Center for DeKalb County Government Administration, 1300 Commerce Drive, Decatur, Georgia 30030. Individual mailing addresses and telephone numbers may be obtained by contacting the Commission Office at (404) 371-2886.

Revised 5/04/2020