







COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT PROGRAM

Citizen Participation Plan 2025-2029

Prepared by the Community Services Department

AUBURN

CITIZEN PARTICIPATION PLAN 2025-2029

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Citizen Participation Plan

A. Overview

An essential component of determining need for government action is to obtain input from the local public. Citizen involvement in program planning and development is recognized as essential, not simply because of State and Federal requirements, but because 1) to better inform the public about community needs and resources available; 2) to learn more about hidden community needs; and 3) it allow citizens to bring forward ideas on how to address community needs.

The City of Auburn (City) has developed the following Citizen Participation Plan to comply with various citizen participation provisions of the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program sponsored by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). The Citizen Participation Plan details the strategy used by the City in determining community development needs of Auburn residents. Its purpose is to solicit citizen input that is both representative and significant which includes diverse elements of the population and actually has an impact on what is proposed.

The goal of the Housing and Community Development Act and the Community Development Block Grant Program (CDBG) is the development of viable urban communities. These viable communities are achieved by providing the following:

1. Provide decent, safe, and sanitary housing;
2. Provide a suitable living environment; and to
3. Expand economic opportunities.

The program's primary beneficiaries are low to moderate-income (LMI) households, defined as having incomes within 80% of the Area Median, adjusted for family size, and established by HUD.

Each CDBG activity will meet one of the three HUD National Objectives:

1. Provide a benefit to low and moderate-income persons;
2. Prevent or eliminate slum and blight; or
3. Meet an urgent community need that threatens the health or welfare of residents.

B. Consultation Process

Citizen participation is integral to the development of the Consolidated Plan. The City will consult with the following during preparation:

1. The City will consult with other public and private agencies that provide assisted housing, health services, and social services.

2. The City will consult with local health and child welfare agencies to obtain data on lead-based paint to gather information on locations of units where lead poisoned children live.

3. The City will consult with adjacent units of local government to identify and discuss non-housing community development needs.

C. Citizen Participation Process

The City of Auburn invites citizen participation throughout the planning, implementation and assessment of the CDBG program. Citizens will be encouraged to voice their views, specifically low and moderate persons, minorities, residents in areas where activities are planned or ongoing, elderly, disabled, and business and civic groups concerned about community development. The City will encourage, in conjunction with consultation with Auburn Housing Authority, the participation of residents of public and assisted housing developments. Every effort will be made to involve citizens in the following areas of the CDBG program:

1. Development of the Consolidated Plan and Action Plan;
2. Any substantial amendments to the Consolidated Plan and Action Plan; and
3. The Comprehensive Annual Performance and Evaluation Report (CAPER).

All meetings related to the Citizen Participation Plan will be public and advertised in advance in the non-legal section of the local newspapers and notices will be posted in various City facilities and in digital formats. The City of Auburn will allow citizens 15 days to comment on the CAPER and 30 days on the adoption of the Con Plan and Action Plan and on substantial amendments to the plans. A copy of the original plan will be available on the City's website, City Hall, the Public Library, the Community Services Office, and digitally. The plan will be in a format accessible to persons with disabilities and all accommodations are considered.

D. Public Meetings

The City of Auburn will hold at least two public hearings to obtain citizen views on the proposed use of funds, to respond to any grant proposals that may be forwarded, and to answer any questions that may arise during any phase of developing the Consolidated Plan and Action Plan. A hearing will be held as the plans are being developed to obtain citizen input on housing and community development needs and an additional hearing will be held to receive comments regarding proposed activities prior to filing the application and to review accomplishments. A public hearing will also be held to consider any substantial amendments.

The following guidelines have been formulated for holding public hearings:

1. Public hearings will be prominently advertised at least ten (10) calendar days prior to the date of the hearing in one of the local newspapers (in the non-legal section), with sufficient information published about the subject of the meeting, times and location. Notices will also be posted in City buildings at least ten (10) days prior to the hearing.

2. Public hearings will be held at either a City building or a location that is conducive to the intended program beneficiaries. All sites will be handicap accessible.

3. Minutes will be kept of all public hearings. The minutes will be kept on file at the Community Services Office to provide documentation of the hearing. A summary of the hearing, including alternatives discussed levels of opposition to the proposed plan and the source of opposition will be included in the minutes.

4. A roster of citizens who attended the meeting will be kept. This record will include the name, address or organization of each person present.

5. The following information will be furnished to citizens attending public hearing:

   (a) Summary of proposed project;

   (b) Amount of funds available for proposed community development;

   (c) Range of activities that may be undertaken including the estimated amount of funds proposed to be used for activities benefiting low and moderate income persons;

   (d) Actual use of funds by grantee. When practicable, outreach public meetings will be held. The time and place of the meeting will be posted – or announced in public places frequented by citizens residing in the service area.

The City of Auburn will use the most current Census to determine the number of residents of Limited English Proficiency. The following procedures will be followed to meet the needs of citizens of Limited English Proficiency.

1. Where past history of public hearings has shown no participation and involvement of Limited English Proficiency residents, and where the Census shows no significant number (less than 5 percent) of Limited English Proficiency residents, no special measures will be taken.

2. Where past history of public hearings has shown participation and involvement of Limited English Proficiency residents, and the Census shows a significant number (more than 5 percent), the following measures will be taken to overcome any language barriers that may exist so that the informational needs of these residents will be met:

   (a) The hearing will be held as schedule with a translator/interpreter in attendance for translation.

Notices of public hearings will be placed in local specialty newspapers (when available) and posted in appropriate places.

E. Public Records

All program records will be kept at the Community Services Office located at 400 Boykin Street, for convenient inspection by the public, between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. Records will also be available at the Public Library located at 749 E. Thach, and City Hall located at 144 Tichenor Avenue. Program records will include but not be limited to the following:

1. The adopted Consolidated Plan and Action Plan;
2. Substantial amendments to the Consolidated Plan and Action Plans;
3. The Comprehensive Annual Performance and Evaluation Report; and
4. Environmental Review Records.

Free copies and digital copies will be made available upon request.

F. Publications

Before the adoption of the Consolidated Plan and Action Plan, the City of Auburn will make available to citizens the amount of assistance (including grant funds and program income), and the range of proposed activities. A summary of the adopted Consolidated Plan and Action Plan will be published in one or more newspapers of general circulation.

All comments and suggestions to the plans are to be received in writing, or orally at public hearings. Citizens and other interested groups will have not less than 30 days to submit comments on the Consolidated Plan and Action Plan before the plans are submitted to HUD and a 15-day comment period will be available for the CAPER. The plan should include a summary of comments received and reasons the comments and/or suggestions were not incorporated.

G. Performance Report

The CAPER will be published and the citizens will have 15 days to comment on the report before it's submitted to HUD. Comments or suggestions from citizens will be considered if received in writing. A summary of these comments or suggestions will be attached to the performance report.

H. Technical Assistance

The City of Auburn will provide the following technical assistance to organizations or groups desiring to develop proposals on behalf of low and moderate-income persons residing in the City:

1. Staff availability to answer questions concerning the CDBG program, including the application process and program management and implementation.

2. Staff assistance in developing the written proposal. Staff will explain how the proposal should be organized and presented.

3. Staff assistance in interpreting program data collected by the City.

Technical assistance should not be construed to infer that the City is required to subsidize the operating expense of those developing proposals.

All requests for technical assistance must be submitted in writing to the Director of Community Development. If a request for assistance lies outside the areas of expertise of the City staff, the requesting person/organization will be notified and referred, when possible, to an appropriate agency.

I. Grievance Process

Any citizen/organization (hereafter referred to as the "complainant") who is aggrieved as a result of any aspect of the local community development program and wished to file a complaint or grievance must follow these procedures:

1. The complainant will first present the grievance in writing to the Community Services Director who will make careful inquiries into the facts and circumstances of the complaint. The Community Services Director will attempt to resolve the problem promptly and give a reply to the complainant within fifteen (15) working days from the date the grievance is submitted.

2. A complainant who is dissatisfied with the decision of the Community Services Director may submit his grievance in writing to the Development Services Executive Director. The Development Services Executive Director will attempt to resolve the problem promptly and give a reply to the complainant within fifteen (15) working days from the date the grievance is submitted to the Community Services Director.

3. A complainant who is dissatisfied with the decision of the Development Services Director may submit his grievance in writing to the City Manager. The City Manager will make a separate inquiry and inform the complainant of his decision and reasons therefore within 15 days where practicable.

4. If the complainant is still aggrieved, his or her authorized representative may request in writing to the Mayor, within 30 days, a review of the grievance by the Auburn City Council. Such request will be accompanied by all the facts of the nature of the grievance and all written answers given thereto. The Mayor will introduce the complaint or grievance at the first regular Council meeting. Following receipt of the grievance all affected parties will be asked to attend the meeting for the purpose of reviewing the grievance. The Auburn City Council will give their decision in writing to the complainant within 15 working days of the date of the meeting.

5. If the complainant is still aggrieved he may submit the grievance in writing to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, for review and further information.

6. If the Community Services Director, Development Services Executive, City Manager or City Council does not act on the grievance within the specified time, the complainant may submit it to the next higher level, following the applicable procedures.

J. Method of Amendment

Substantial amendments to the Consolidated Plan will be considered if the modifications are justifiable and the changes meet one of the following criteria:

1. To make a change in its allocation priorities or a change in the method of distribution of funds in excess of thirty-five percent (35%) of the CDBG annual award plus program income;

2. To carry out an activity, using funds from any program covered by the consolidated plan (including program income), not previously described in the action plan; or

3. To change the purpose, scope, location, or beneficiaries of an activity.

Substantial amendments will be published and citizens will have 30 days to comment before the amendments are implemented. Comments or views of citizens received in writing, or orally at public hearings will be considered. A summary of the comments, accepted or denied, shall be attached to the substantial amendment of the Con Plan.

Amendments to the City of Auburn's Citizen Participation Plan will be made as Federal/State regulations require, and the City of Auburn deems necessary. Citizens will have 15 days to comment on CPP amendments.

K. Minimize Displacement

There are no planned public projects or private development activities that would result in displacement. Should such a displacement occur, the City will assist such individuals to acquire replacement housing and will be done in accordance with all applicable federal statutes and regulations governing relocation assistance.