

City of Middletown

Citizen Participation Plan
Revised May 2024

The City Manager and City Council of the City of Middletown wish to provide for maximum citizen participation in the development and implementation of the Consolidated Plan and the Annual Action Plan in accordance with the objectives of the Housing and Community Development Action of 1974.

Accordingly, the City of Middletown will take affirmative actions to provide adequate opportunity for citizens to participate in the development of the Consolidated Plan and the Annual Action Plans. These actions will include placing advertisement in the local newspapers and a public hearing at the televised city council meeting. The City Council, however, will have the full responsibility and authority for the application and execution of its Community Development Block Grant program.

The City will not only run legal notices, but distribute copies of the Plan to the library and the Robert 'Sonny' Hill Jr. Community Center. All information will be posted on the City's website in the Community & Economic Development pages of the site. Public meetings will be held at the city building. The city building is considered "neutral" in terms of ward affiliation and because the council meetings are televised they can reach a large number of residents.

The Citizen Participation Plan describes the following with respect to the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG):

1. Recognition of existing citizen committees. Groups and organizations represented could include local and county governments, social service agencies, recipients of social services, private businesses representatives, community service organizations, and public housing representatives;
2. When and how information will be disseminated concerning the amount of funds available for projects that may be undertaken, along with other important program requirements;
3. When, during the various stages of the planning process, public meetings/hearings will be held;
4. When and how citizens will have the opportunity to participate in the development of the Community Development Application prior to submission;
5. When and how technical assistance will be provided to assist citizen participants to understand program requirements; and
6. The continuing nature of citizen participation in the development of any future community development program amendments, including the reallocation of funds and designation of new activities or locations; and
7. The role of the citizen committees with respect to program implementation, monitoring and evaluation.

Statement of Applicability of the Citizen Participation Plan

The City of Middletown will encourage citizen participation in the following manner:

1. Citizens of Middletown will be encouraged to participate in the development of the Consolidated Plan, any substantial amendments to the Consolidated Plan, the Annual Action Plans, the Citizen Participation Plan and the Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Report (CAPER). The stakeholder groups that convened for the preparation of the Consolidated Plan will be contacted at least annually for input in the development of the Action Plans.
2. Participation will be especially encouraged in regards to the low- and moderate-income residents, particularly those living in slum and blighted areas, non-English-speaking persons and persons with disabilities. Information will be placed at strategic locations that include the City Building, Robert "Sonny" Hill Jr Community Center, and the local library.
3. The City of Middletown will make every effort to provide information to the Warren County and Butler County Metropolitan Housing Authorities about Consolidated Plan initiatives and activities related its development and surrounding communities.

Development of Consolidated Plan

1. The City of Middletown or its agent will seek input from stakeholder groups including residents for input in the development of the Consolidated Plan. Groups and organizations represented could include local and county governments, social service agencies, recipients of social services, private businesses representatives, community service organizations, and public housing representatives.

Before the adoption of the Consolidated Plan, the City of Middletown will make available to citizens, public agencies, and other interested parties information that includes the amount of assistance the jurisdiction expects to receive (including grants 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. The City of Middletown or its agent will also make available HUD-provided data and other supplemental information the jurisdiction plans to incorporate into its Consolidated Plan available to its residents, public agencies, and other interested parties.

The City of Middletown will take steps to choose projects that minimize displacement through reviewing the Consolidated Plan to ensure activities will not create any displacement that is unnecessary. Families and individuals displaced by the community development program will be provided the full opportunity of occupying housing that is decent, safe, and sanitary, is within their financial means, is in reasonably convenient locations and available on a non-discriminatory basis. Relocation payments will be made on an individual basis in accordance with Federal Regulations.

2. The Consolidated Plan provides for a public hearing to obtain citizens views and respond to citizen proposals and questions prior to submission of the application to HUD. The public hearing will be during the City Council meeting at the City building, which permits broad participation, particularly by low and moderate-income persons and by residents of blighted neighborhoods, and disabled citizens. The City of Middletown will publish notice of the public hearing in the legal ad section of the local paper, the Journal News, a minimum of 14 days prior to the public hearing. The public hearing will occur before the Consolidated Plan is published for public comment.
3. During the comment period, the plan will also be made available through the City of Middletown public website and the Community & Economic Development Department office in the City building. The publication will include the contents and purpose of the Consolidated Plan, and will also include a list of the locations where copies of the entire plan may be examined. The City of Middletown will provide a reasonable number of free copies of the plan to citizens and groups that request it.
4. The City of Middletown will publish in the local paper, the Journal News, details of where and how to review the Consolidated Plan during the 30-day comment period prior to submission. These ads will be in the legal ad sections.
5. The City of Middletown will consider any comments or views of citizens received in writing, or orally at the public hearings, in preparing the final Consolidated Plan. A summary of these comments or views, and a summary of any comments or views not accepted and the reasons therefore, shall be attached to the final Consolidated Plan.

Development of Annual Action Plans

1. The stakeholder groups that convened for the preparation of the Consolidated Plan will be contacted at least annually for input in the development of the Action Plans. Other groups and organizations represented could include local and county governments, social service agencies, recipients of social services, private businesses representatives, community service organizations, and public housing representatives.

Before the adoption of the Action Plan, the City of Middletown will make available to citizens, public agencies, and other interested parties information that includes the amount of assistance the jurisdiction expects to receive (including grants 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.

The City of Middletown will take steps to choose projects that minimize displacement through reviewing the Annual Action Plans to ensure activities will not create any displacement that is unnecessary. Families and individuals displaced by the community development program will be provided the full opportunity of occupying housing that is decent, safe, and sanitary, is within their financial means, is in reasonably convenient locations and available on a non-discriminatory basis.

Relocation payments will be made on an individual basis in accordance with Federal Regulations.

2. The Annual Action Plans provide for a public hearing to obtain citizens views and respond to citizen proposals and questions prior to submission of the application to HUD. The public hearing will be during the City Council meeting at the City building, which permits broad participation, particularly by low and moderate-income persons and by residents of blighted neighborhoods, and disabled citizens. The City of Middletown will publish notice of the public hearing in the legal ad section of the local paper, the Journal News, a minimum of 14 days prior to the public hearing.
3. During the comment period, the plan will also be made available through the City of Middletown public website and the Community & Economic Development Department office in the City building. The publication will include the contents and purpose of the Action Plan, and will also include a list of the locations where copies of the entire plan may be examined. The City of Middletown will provide a reasonable number of free copies of the plan to citizens and groups that request it.
4. The City of Middletown will publish in the local paper, the Journal News, details of where and how to review the Annual Action Plan during the 30-day comment period prior to submission. These ads will be in the legal ad sections.
5. The City of Middletown will consider any comments or views of citizens received in writing, or orally at the public hearings, in preparing the final Action Plan. A summary of these comments or views, and a summary of any comments or views not accepted and the reasons therefore, shall be attached to the final Action Plan.

Policy Regarding Amendments to the Consolidated Plan or Annual Action Plans

1. A Substantial Amendment will be prepared and submitted to HUD when a substantial change has been made to the Consolidated or Annual Action Plan. A substantial change is defined as a substantial increase or decrease equal to or greater than 50% over or under the allocated project cost or a change in the general activity or national objective of an activity.
2. In accordance with 24 CFR 91.505, other amendments to the plan shall include:
 - a. Making changes in allocation priorities or change in method of distribution of funds;
 - b. Carrying out an activity, using funds from any program covered by the Consolidated Plan, including program income, not previously described in the action plan; or
 - c. Changing the purpose, scope, location or beneficiaries of an activity.
3. There will be a 30-day period to receive comments on a substantial amendment to the Consolidated Plan or the Annual Action Plan prior to the amendment being implemented. The notice of the 30-day comment period will be issued as a legal notice of the activity printed in the Journal News.
4. All comments and views of citizens received in writing will be considered. A summary

of these comments or views, and a summary of any comments or views not accepted and the reasons therefore, shall be attached to the substantial amendment of the consolidated plan.

Policy Regarding Performance Reports

1. The City of Middletown will provide a period of 15 days to accept comments on Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Report (CAPER) before submittal to HUD. Reasonable notice will be given through the local paper, the Journal News. The City will accept written comments and oral comments made during the public meeting during the comment period.
2. The City will consider any comments or views of citizens received in writing in preparing the CAPER. A summary of these comments or views will be attached to the performance report.
3. A public meeting will be held before the submission of the CAPER to obtain citizens views and respond to citizen questions prior to submission of the report to HUD. The public meeting will be held at the City building, which permits broad participation, particularly by low and moderate- income persons and by residents of blighted neighborhoods, and disabled citizens. The City of Middletown will publish notice of the public meeting in the legal ad section of the local paper, the Journal News, a minimum of 14 days prior to the meeting.

Policy Regarding Public Meetings

1. There will be at least two public meetings per year (one of which will be a public hearing before council) to obtain citizens' views and to respond to proposals and questions. The public hearing will be held prior to the submission of the annual action plan.
2. Adequate advance notice will be given to citizens of each meeting, with a publication in the local paper at least two weeks prior to the meeting. In addition, sufficient information will be published about the subject of the meeting to permit informed comment. This will include the topic of discussion and the amount of funding as applicable.
3. Meetings will be held at times and locations convenient to potential and actual beneficiaries, and with accommodation for persons with disabilities. Any public hearings will be held, and televised, at the City Council meetings. The City Council Chambers are handicapped accessible.
4. The City of Middletown will have access to a translator in the case of public meetings where a significant number of non-English speaking residents can reasonably be expected to participate.

Availability to the Public

The Consolidated Plan as adopted, Annual Action Plans, Substantial Amendments, Citizen Participation Plan and the CAPER will be available to the public, including the availability of materials in a form accessible to persons with disabilities or persons needing materials translated into a different language, upon request. These documents

will be available at the Community & Economic Development Department. Drafts and/or final versions of all documents will also be posted on the City's public website.

Access to Records

This plan provides for full and timely disclosure of program records and information consistent with applicable State and local laws regarding personal privacy and obligations of confidentiality. Documents relevant to the program during the preceding 5 years shall be made available at the City Building, in the Community & Economic Development Department, One Donham Plaza, Middletown, Ohio, during normal working hours for citizen review upon proper submission and receipt of a proper public records request.

Technical Assistance

Technical Assistance will be made available to citizens seeking to further understand the community development requirements. Information will be available at public meetings and at the office of Community & Economic Development for the duration of the program and planning period. In addition, the Community & Economic Development staff will be able to answer any questions concerning the program during normal working hours. All appropriate program regulations will be on file in the Community & Economic Development Department office.

This plan provides for technical assistance to 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. The assistance will not necessarily include the provision of funds to the groups.

Complaints

The citizen participation process includes answering complaints in a timely manner, during program implementation and application processing. Persons will be requested to submit project proposals and/or complaints in writing to the Community & Economic Development office. Every reasonable effort to provide written responses to written proposals and complaints will be processed and answered within 15 days.

A file will be available in the Community & Economic Development office to record receipt and response to any complaints received.