

City of Meriden Citizen Participation Plan
Citizen Participation Plan

ANNUAL HUD CDBG ALLOCATION

1. Introduction

The City of Meriden shall follow this Citizen Participation Plan that sets forth the City's policies and procedures for citizen participation in the development of Meriden's Consolidated Plan and Annual Plan documents in accordance with 24 CFR §91.105. The Annual Plan and Consolidated Plan are planning documents that the City of Meriden submits to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). The Consolidated Plan includes Meriden's housing strategy and its community development plan. The Annual Plan serves as an application for Community Development Block Grant funding. This Citizen Participation Plan provides for and encourages citizens to participate in the development of any substantial amendments to the Annual Plan and/or Consolidated Plan and review of performance reports.

2. Public Hearings

The City of Meriden will hold three (3) public hearings annually to obtain citizens' views and to respond to proposals and questions. These public hearings will be held in locations convenient to residents of low/moderate income areas where program funds are proposed to be used. Two (2) public hearings will be held before the proposed Annual Plan and/or Consolidated Plan is published for comment. At these public hearings, the City will:

- review program performance
- obtain citizen views on housing and community development needs, including priority non-housing community development needs
- discuss the process/timeline for development of the Consolidated and/or Annual Plan
- discuss requirements/criteria for development of proposed activities to be funded under the Annual and/or Consolidated Plan

The City will also provide the following information to citizens, public agencies, and other interested parties:

- the amount of annual assistance the City expects to receive (including grant funds and program income)
- the range of activities that may be undertaken
- the estimated amount of funds that will benefit persons of low and moderate income

One (1) public hearing and a 30-day public comment period will be held after the proposed Annual Plan and/or Consolidated Plan is published for comment.

3. Annual Proposals for Funding

The City will accept written proposals for CDBG funding in the manner prescribed by the City of Meriden in the Request for Proposal and Public Information Document. The City will consider funding eligible activities that are consistent with the City's housing and community development objectives. Proposals must be submitted on the City of Meriden CDBG Proposal Forms. Only complete proposals will be considered.

4. Technical Assistance

The City will provide technical assistance to groups and representatives of persons of low and moderate income that request such assistance in developing proposals for funding assistance under programs covered by the Consolidated Plan.

5. Public Comment

One public hearing and a 30-day public comment period will be held after the proposed Annual Plan and/or Consolidated Plan is published for comment. Prior to the public comment period, the City of Meriden will publish a summary of its Proposed Consolidated Plan and Annual Plan in the Record Journal Newspaper and on the City of Meriden website. The summary will describe the contents and purpose of the Consolidated Plan and/or Annual Plan and will include a list of locations where copies are available. Once approved, copies of the final allocation of funds and annual plan will be made available to the public.

6. Citizen Comments

The City of Meriden will consider all comments and/or views of citizens received in writing or orally at public hearings, in preparing the Final Consolidated Plan and/or Annual Plan. A summary of these comments or views, and a summary of any comments or views not accepted and the reasons therefore, will be attached to, or included as part of, the Final Consolidated Plan and/or to the Annual Action Plan.

7. Substantial Amendments to the Consolidated Plan

The City of Meriden will provide citizens with the opportunity to comment on substantial amendments to the Consolidated Plan. The City of Meriden will amend its approved Consolidated Plan whenever it makes one of the following decisions:

- to make a change in its allocation priorities or a change in the method of distribution of funds
- to carry out an activity using funds from any program covered by the Consolidated Plan (includes program income) not previously described in its Annual Action Plan, or
- to significantly change the scope, location, or beneficiaries of an activity

Prior to implementing any substantial change, the City of Meriden will provide citizens with information on any proposed amendment(s) by publishing a public notice of the proposed amendments as a display

advertisement in the *Record Journal* and by posting a description of the proposed amendment(s) to the City of Meriden website. The City will provide at least 30 days for citizens to submit written or oral comments or views on the proposed amendment(s) and will hold a public hearing during the comment period. The City will consider these comments or views of citizens in preparing the substantial amendment of the Consolidated Plan. A summary of these comments or views, and a summary of any comments or views not accepted and the reasons therefore, will be attached to the substantial amendment of the Consolidated Plan.

8. Substantial Amendments to the Annual Plan

A substantial change to the allocation of funds in the Annual Plan requiring an amendment will be defined as the use of funds for an activity not previously identified, or the increase/ decrease by transfer/reallocation of funds in excess of 20% of the original allocation between existing projects and programs. If such an amendment is required, a notice stating the reason, amounts and projects to be effected will be published in the *Record Journal* for a fifteen (15) day comment period prior to submitting to HUD. A public hearing will be held during the comment period.

9. Expedited Processes Related to Flexibility Provided by the CARES Act

The Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES Act) has provided additional CDBG-CV funds and other program waivers/flexibilities to allow for the City of Meriden to prevent, prepare for and respond to the Coronavirus in Fiscal Years 2019 and 2020. Specifically, it has allowed for waivers to statutory and regulatory comment periods, in-person public hearings, and other Citizen Participation requirements as they relate to drafting, proposing, or amending Consolidated Plans and Annual Plans. In line with these waivers, the City of Meriden will follow these processes outlined below.

Public Hearings & Comment Period

The City of Meriden will hold three (3) public hearings annually to obtain citizens' views and to respond to proposals and questions. Two (2) public hearings will be held before the proposed Annual Plan and/or Consolidated Plan is published for comment and one (1) public will be held after it is published for comment. The Public Comment period will be thirty (30) days in length and will be held after the proposed Annual Plan and/or Consolidated Plan is published for comment. Prior to the public comment period, the City of Meriden will publish a summary of its Proposed Consolidated Plan and Annual Plan in the *Record Journal* and on the City of Meriden website. The summary will describe the contents and purpose of the Consolidated Plan and/or Annual Plan and will include a list of locations where copies are available. Once approved, copies of the final allocation of funds and annual plan will be made available to the public.

While National, State, or Local Health authorities recommend social distancing and limiting of public gatherings for public health reasons, these public hearings will be held virtually. Notification of the date of the virtual hearing will be placed in the *Record Journal* and on the City's website. Information related to accessing the virtual hearing and how the public can participate will be placed on the City's website as well.

Citizen Comments

The City of Meriden will consider all comments and/or views of citizens received in writing or orally during the comment period or at virtual public hearings, in preparing the Final Consolidated Plan, Annual Plan, or substantial amendments thereto. The preferred method of submitting written comments will be electronically at the email address listed in Section 12 of this Plan. A summary of comments or views, and a summary of any comments or views not accepted and the reasons therefore, will be attached to, or included as part of, the Final Consolidated Plan, Annual Action Plan, or amended various thereof.

Substantial Amendments to the Consolidated Plan

The City of Meriden will provide citizens with the opportunity to comment on substantial amendments to the Consolidated Plan. Actions that will be deemed a substantial amendment are detailed in Section 7 of this Plan. Prior to implementing any substantial amendment, the City of Meriden will publish a public notice of the proposed amendments as a display advertisement in the *Record Journal* and by posting a description of the proposed amendment(s) to the City of Meriden website. The City will provide at least a five (5) day comment period for citizens to submit written comments or views on the proposed amendment(s) and will also hold a virtual public hearing. Notification of the date of the virtual hearing will be placed in the *Record Journal* and on the City's website.

Substantial Amendments to the Annual Plan

A substantial change to the allocation of funds in the Annual Plan requiring an amendment will be defined in accordance with Section 8 of this Plan. If such an amendment is required, a notice stating the reason, amounts and projects to be effected will be published in the *Record Journal* and on the City website for a five (5) day comment period prior to submitting to HUD. The City will also hold a virtual public hearing during the comment period. Notification of the date of the virtual hearing will be placed in the *Record Journal* and on the City's website.

10. Performance Reports

The City of Meriden must submit to HUD an annual performance report on the progress it has made in carrying out its Consolidated Plan and Annual Action Plan. This document is the Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Report (CAPER). The City will submit its CAPER to HUD no later than ninety (90) days after the end of each program year. Availability of the CAPER for public review and comment will be made via a display advertisement in the *Record Journal* at least fifteen (15) days before it is submitted to HUD. A copy of the CAPER will be available for review in the Community Development Office and online at the City's website. A summary of comments or views and a summary of any comments or views not accepted and the reasons therefore, will be attached to the CAPER upon submission to HUD.

11. Complaints

The City of Meriden will respond to all written complaints or grievances regarding the CDBG program. The City of Meriden will provide a timely, substantive written response to every written citizen complaint within 15 working days of receipt of the complaint, where practicable. Written complaints or grievances must be sent to the Grants Administrator via standard mail or email, at the contact information provided below.

12. Contact Information

All correspondence, comments, complaints, questions or requests for information regarding the Consolidated Plan and/or the CDBG programs should be directed to:

Matthew Sarcione, Grants Administrator
City of Meriden
142 East Main Street, Meriden, CT 06450
P. 203 630 4105 | F. 203 630 4274
msarcione@meridenct.gov

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