



The City Of Charlotte

Housing & Neighborhood Services

Citizen Participation Plan



STATUTORY OVERVIEW

The City of Charlotte's Housing & Neighborhood Services is an open and publicly accountable entity. All business is conducted in accordance with the State of North Carolina's Open Meeting Law (G.S. 143-318.10/Article 33 C) as amended, 1994 and requires, generally, that all meeting of public bodies be open to the public except under specific circumstance. Further Housing & Neighborhood Services, as a recipient of federal funding from the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), is subject to federal guideline governing those funds.

The Housing and Community Development Act of 1974 (as amended) and the Stewart B. McKinney Homeless Assistance Act of 1986 (as amended) gives local governments the authority to develop and conduct Community Development, HOME, Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) and Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS (HOWPA) programs in accordance with applicable laws and regulations. Citizen participation is vital to the effectiveness of the Housing & Neighborhood Services policies and activities have a voice in the planning, implementation and assessment of such activities.

The Citizen Participation Plan will outline procedures by which each of the requirements set forth in section 104 (a)(3) of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974 will be carried out. The City of Charlotte recognizes as one of its highest priorities to be the use of federal funds/or aid in the prevention of slum and blight. Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds will be used to meet other needs having particular urgency to protect the health and the welfare of the community. Revised March 2018, this plan shall remain in effect unless superseded by a new plan.

THE GOAL OF CITIZEN PARTICIPATION

The primary goal of this Citizen Participation Plan is to provide all citizens of our community with adequate opportunities to participate in an advisory role in the planning, implementation, and assessment of the City's Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) HOME Investment Partnership Program (HOME), Emergency Shelter Grant (ESG) and the Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS (HOPWA) programs.

Citizen participation is a critical part of the Annual Action Plan, Consolidated Plan and Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation reporting process. It is the City's desire to encourage all residents, especially those living in low - and moderate - income neighborhoods, public and/or assisted housing to participate in its planning process. Non-profit organizations, other government agencies, and interested parties have an opportunity to participate in the planning process as well.

Citizens are encouraged to participate in all phases of the CDBG, HOME, ESG & HOPWA programs and will be provided full access to program information. However, final responsibility and authority for the development and implementation of the programs will lie with the City of Charlotte.

CITIZEN PARTICIPATION POLICY

It is the policy of the City of Charlotte and Housing & Neighborhood Services that residents will have ongoing access to CDBG, HOME, ESG & HOPWA program information and timely notification of program activities and identification of projects which could result in the displacement of area residences or businesses, and the actions that would be undertaken if such displacement were necessary.

Housing & Neighborhood Services will provide opportunities for residents to access CDBG, HOME, ESG & HOPWA program information through:

- Newspaper and web notices containing the times, location, and dates of public hearings regarding the Consolidated Plan, Annual Action Plan, Assessment of Fair Housing and the Consolidated Annual Performance & Evaluation Report (CAPER).
- Public hearings to discuss housing and community development needs, activities for which funding is proposed, and program performance.
- Posting of request for proposals
- www.charlottenc.gov/housing

OPPORTUNITIES TO PARTICIPATE

Public Forums

Housing & Neighborhood Services conducts public forums during the year for the purpose of providing information on community development programs to city residents and to receive comments from citizens regarding program activities. The number of public forums conducted during the year depends in part on the needs of City residents and the nature of the proposed activities. At a minimum, public forums are conducted for the following purposes:

- To obtain citizens views on community development needs, prior to developing funding policies.
- To receive citizen's comments on proposed activities, prior to final funding decisions being made.

Public forums may be conducted at locations other than the City Council meeting or Housing & Neighborhood Services, to make them more convenient to resident and are generally held in the evening to encourage greater public attendance.

Public Hearings

Public hearings are held in accordance with the City of Charlotte's policy and procedures and regulations of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. Public hearing will be scheduled during the evening session of regular City Council meetings.

Participation Accessibility

Accessibility of public information is a key factor in the ability of citizens to contribute to the public programs. Information pertinent to the activities of the Housing & Neighborhood Services will be available for public review at Housing & Neighborhood Services, 600 East Trade Street, during normal City of Charlotte business hours (8:00am – 5:00pm). Questions and comments may also be addressed there. Access to all documents is open except where prohibited by law. Accommodations for the visually, or hearing impaired, as well as non-English speaking citizens, are available upon request. Information requested from the Housing & Neighborhood Services shall be provided within 72 hours of request.

Request for information or explanations regarding the Annual Action Plan, Consolidated Plan, CAPER or other HUD funded proposals or programs from affected residents of blighted neighborhood who speak and read a primary language other than English shall be accommodated. When necessary, summaries shall be produced in translated for and/or interpreter services will be made available at public forums and hearings.

Publication of Notices

Notice of public hearings shall be published in the local English and Spanish speaking newspapers no less than 14 calendar days prior to the hearing. The notice will state the following as applicable:

- a) Programming requirements, contents and purpose
- b) The amount of funds received by the City (*including program income*)
- c) The estimated amount that will benefit low/moderate income resident
- d) Plans to minimize resident displacement
- e) Plans to assist displaced persons, according to type and level of assistance
- f) What projects may or may not be undertaken
- g) Announcement of the date, time, and place of public hearing; and
- h) Other program information as required.

ACTIVITIES & PERFORMANCE REPORTS

Consolidated Plan & One Year Action Plan

The Consolidated Plan is the City's five-year comprehensive plan addressing housing, homelessness, and recommendations for eliminating homelessness, increasing homeownership, and non-housing community development needs. The Consolidated Plan recommends creative approaches to housing, economic, and quality of life – HUD's national objectives.

Steps to developing the Consolidated Plan:

1. A public hearing is held to announce and seek input from the community regarding the upcoming Consolidated Planning process.
2. Housing & Neighborhood Services conducts neighborhood needs assessment with the neighborhood residents. Notices are placed in accordance with Opportunities to Participate, Publication of Notices.
3. Consultations are facilitated with existing and potential partners to identify strategies to address needs identified by residents.
4. The proposed activities and budget are presented to the Housing and Neighborhood Development Committee for review.
5. A draft of the Consolidated Plan will be made available thirty(30) days for review at the following locations:
 - Housing & Neighborhood Services, 600 East Trade Street Charlotte, NC
 - Charlotte Housing Authority, 400 East Boulevard, Charlotte, NC
 - Matthews Regional Library, 230 Matthews Station St., Matthews, NC
 - North County Regional Library, 16500 Holly Crest Lane, Huntersville, NC
 - South County Regional Library, 5801 Rea Rd., Charlotte, NC
 - University City Regional, 301 East WT Harris Boulevard, Charlotte, NC
 - www.charlottenc.gov/housing
 - Mailed to citizen upon request

The public hearing is held prior to final submittal to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's Greensboro Office. The 30 day comment period gives the residents opportunity to submit their comments in writing to: Housing & Neighborhood Services, 600 East Trade Street, Charlotte, NC 28202. The comments from the meeting minutes are summarized in the final document along with the sign-in sheets. All written comments are included.

Annual Action Plan (Years 2 – 5)

The Annual Action Plan is a one year strategy for accomplishing the Consolidated Plan. Although the Action Plan mirrors the Consolidated Plan, it is flexible to adapt to community changes and needs. The Annual Action Plan Review Committee and City Council review and evaluate the proposed activities and budget in the Annual Action Plan before adoption. A draft of the Annual Action Plan is made available for review at the following locations:

- Housing & Neighborhood Services, 600 East Trade Street Charlotte, NC
- Charlotte Housing Authority, 400 East Boulevard, Charlotte, NC
- www.charlottenc.gov/housing
- Mailed to citizen upon request

Similar to the Consolidated Plan, there is a 30 day or more comment period. Citizens are encouraged to submit comments to: Housing & Neighborhood Services, 600 East Trade Street, Charlotte, NC 28202. A public hearing is held also held prior to submission of the Plan to HUD.

Consolidated Annual Performance Evaluation Report (CAPER)

The Consolidated Annual Performance Evaluation Report (CAPER) is an evolution tool or report card. This document is a progress report on how the City has administered its CDBG, HOME, ESG, and HOPWA allocations. The CAPER compares the program year's accomplishments to the proposed activities stated in the Annual Action Plan. The plan highlights Housing & Neighborhood Services' accomplishments as well as conducts self evaluation of our internal programs and service delivery. It is also a critical part of the planning process.

The CAPER draft is published 15 days or more before final submittal to HUD's Greensboro (NC) office. There is a 15 day comment period. A draft of the CAPER is made available for review at the following locations:

- Housing & Neighborhood Services, 600 East Trade Street Charlotte, NC
- Charlotte Housing Authority, 400 East Boulevard, Charlotte, NC
- www.charlottenc.gov/housing
- Mailed to citizen upon request

Written responses to all questions and comments, including complaints and grievances and/or proposals submitted in the citizen's participation process will be provided no more than 15-working days, unless there are unusual and extraordinary circumstances.

Assessment of Fair Housing (AFH)

The Assessment of Fair Housing is designed to improve community planning in order to overcome fair housing issues. The AFH process will begin with inclusive community participation and will result in the setting of fair housing goals to increase fair housing choice and provide equal access to opportunity for all community members. HUD's program participants will then use the fair housing goals and priorities established in their AFH to inform the investments and other decisions made in their local planning processes.

At the beginning of the AFH development process, the city shall make available HUD provided data and other supplemental documentation the City plans to reference in the development of the assessment.

The Steps to completing the Assessment of Fair Housing include:

1. Consultations are facilitated with existing and potential partners to identify current barriers to affordable housing in the community.
2. The proposed Assessment is presented to the Housing and Neighborhood Development Committee for review.

3. A draft of the AFH will be made available thirty (30) days for review at the following locations:

- Housing & Neighborhood Services, 600 East Trade Street Charlotte, NC
- Charlotte Housing Authority, 400 East Boulevard, Charlotte, NC
- Matthews Regional Library, 230 Matthews Station St., Matthews, NC
- North County Regional Library, 16500 Holly Crest Lane, Huntersville, NC
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A public hearing is held prior to final submittal to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's Greensboro Office. The 30 day comment period gives the residents opportunity to submit their comments in writing to: Housing & Neighborhood Services, 600 East Trade Street, Charlotte, NC 28202. The comments from the meeting minutes are summarized in the final document along with the sign-in sheets. All written comments are included.

Amendments and Revisions

A. Criteria for determining when a Substantial Amendment is needed:

1. A Substantial Amendment is required in order to make substantial change to the purpose, scope, location or beneficiaries of an activity.
2. "Substantial change" is defined by the City of Charlotte as any budgetary change(s) exceeding 20% of that Fiscal Year budget, including all resources (e.g. new grant, program income, fund balance, etc.) listed in the Consolidated Plan for that year.
3. Amendments not meeting the above definition are considered minor amendments are processed administratively. These types of amendments typically include clerical corrections, updates to income or program limits, and other minor changes that do not have a significant impact on the overall plan.

B. Criteria for AFH Revisions

1. A revision to the AFH will occur if the city experiences a material change. A material change is a change in circumstances in the jurisdiction that affects the information on which the AFH is based to the extent that the analysis, the fair housing contributing factors, or the priorities and goals of the AFH no longer reflect actual circumstances. Examples include disaster declarations, significant demographic changes or civil rights findings related to a class covered by the AFH.

C. Citizen Participation and Input into Substantial Amendments and Revisions

1. Notice of Amendment

- A notice will be published in the local English and Spanish speaking newspapers to announce the adoption and implementation of the amended Consolidated Plan. Citizens will have ten (10) days to respond to the amended Consolidated Plan.

2. Public display of Information

The amended Consolidated Plan, Action Plan and AHFs will be on display in the following locations:

- Housing & Neighborhood Services, 600 East Trade Street Charlotte, NC
- www.charlottenc.gov/housing
- Mailed to citizen upon request

3. Responding to Citizen Input

Following receipt of citizens' written comments, citizen input will be considered and changes made to the plans noted in the Activities and Performance Report Section of proposed amendment. The City will respond in writing within 15 days after the receipt of the response.

4. Submission to U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development

Amendments and revisions will be submitted to HUD (by mail, email, or through the Integrated Disbursements and Information System, along with a transmittal letter signed by Housing & Neighborhood Services Director or his/her designee.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

For additional information on the Citizen Participation Plan, please contact:

Warren Wooten, Operations Manager – Housing & Neighborhood Services
600 East Trade Street, Charlotte, NC 28202-2859
(704) 336-2489 (voice)
E-mail: twooten@charlottenc.gov

Or refer to:

- G.S. 143-318 is generally intended to govern meetings of public (read: elected) bodies and establishes exceptions to those meeting guidelines. The statute also outlines reasonable notice for meetings and meeting times that allow public participation to the fullest extent possible. Housing & Neighborhood Services, as a governmental body, will follow the guidance of the statute as appropriate. A copy of the statute will be on file with the Citizen Participation Plan for reference.
- CFR 24 91.105 – Federal Code of Regulations related to required public participation related to HUD entitlement funding.