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# CITY OF AUBURN NEW YORK



## CITIZEN PARTICIPATION PLAN

*Community Development Block Grant  
HUD Funding*

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*Office of Planning & Economic Development  
Memorial City Hall  
24 South Street  
Auburn, NY 13021  
315-255-4115  
[www.auburnny.gov](http://www.auburnny.gov)*

**CITY OF AUBURN  
CITIZEN PARTICIPATION PLAN**

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## **Citizen Participation Plan Overview**

### **Introduction**

This Citizen Participation Plan has been developed to provide citizens and other interested parties with opportunities to participate, review, and comment in the planning, implementation and evaluation of the HUD funded Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) programs that primarily benefit The City of Auburn's low- and moderate-income residents and areas in the City of Auburn. The Citizen Participation Plan is available to the public.

### **Promoting Public Participation**

The Citizen Participation plan serves as a guide for how the City of Auburn will involve citizens in the process of developing the Five-Year Strategic Plan (Consolidated Plan) and Annual Action Plans. The City of Auburn is required by law to follow a detailed Citizen Participation Plan that describes the City's policies and procedures for public involvement in the Consolidated Plan process and the use of Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), funds.

This plan is designed to promote citizen participation, especially those living in low and moderate income neighborhoods. The City of Auburn encourages participation of minorities, non- English speaking persons, and people with mobility, visual or hearing impairments. The City of Auburn also encourages the participation of residents of public and assisted housing developments and recipients of tenant based assistance in the process of developing and implementing the consolidated plan, along with other low income residents of targeted revitalization areas in which the developments are located.

Copies of the Citizen Participation Plan, as well as the Consolidated Planning process and Action Plan process are available on the City of Auburn Office of Planning and Economic Development website and will be made available, upon request to the City of Auburn Office of Planning and Economic Development, in a format to be understood by persons with visual impairments and by non-English speaking persons.

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## **The Five-Year Strategic Plan and Annual Action Plan Process**

The primary purpose of the programs covered by this Citizen Participation Plan is to improve communities by providing decent housing, a suitable living environment, and increasing economic development opportunities, principally for low and moderate income people. The City of Auburn encourages participation of all citizens in the Five-Year Strategic Consolidated Plan process and Annual Action Plan process.

- Five-Year Strategic Consolidated Plan – a five-year plan that documents the City of Auburn’s housing and community development needs, outlines strategies to address those needs, and identifies proposed program accomplishments
- Annual Action Plan – an annual plan that describes specific CDBG funded projects that will be undertaken over the course of the upcoming fiscal year
- Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Report (CAPER) – an annual report that evaluates the use of CDBG funds

### Stages of the Consolidated Plan and Annual Action Plan Process:

1. Identification of housing and community development needs through current Census data, The City of Auburn’s Comprehensive Plan, and completed neighborhood plans.
2. The process for the draft Consolidated and/or Annual Action Plan, begins in October.
3. In October/November a public meeting is held by the Office of Planning and Economic Development to promote and encourage public input on the Consolidated Plan and Annual Action Plan.
4. In December, the CDBG request for proposals for Human Service Agency Programs are posted on the City of Auburn’s website, distributed to agencies, organizations, individuals/agencies/organizations that have requested via email or postal mail and advertised in the local newspaper *The Citizen*.
5. CDBG Human Service Agency Program applications are reviewed by an Application Review Committee, which is comprised of individuals of the community including local government, public housing, local foundations and

active community members. Funding recommendations are presented in the Consolidated and/or Annual Action Plans to City of Auburn Council members.

6. The City of Auburn holds two Public Hearings to gather further community input. The first Public Hearing is held in November at the City of Auburn Planning Board meeting and the second Public Hearing is in January at a City of Auburn Council Meeting.

7. In January, a 30-day comment period provides opportunity for the public to review and comment on the draft Consolidated and/or Annual Action Plan. The start and end of the public comment period is advertised in the local newspaper *The Citizen*.

8. City of Auburn City Council formally approves the final Annual Action Plan and Five Year Consolidated Plan. Once approval has been received from City Council, the Consolidated or Annual Action Plan is submitted to HUD for review and approval.

9. The implementation of the programs outlined in the Annual Action Plan follows the City of Auburn's Program Year July 1<sup>st</sup> through June 30<sup>th</sup>.

10. The Office of Planning and Economic Development reviews and evaluates funded programs and agencies, including onsite monitoring visits, throughout the year.

11. On occasion it may be necessary to change the use of the funding budgeted in an Annual Action Plan, or to change the priorities established in the Consolidated Plan. In that case, a formal substantial amendment will be proposed by the Office of Planning and Economic Development then reviewed and acted upon by City of Auburn Council. Description of a substantial amendment and necessary procedures is outlined further in the Citizen Participation Plan.

12. After a program year is complete, a Consolidated Performance and Evaluation Report (CAPER) will be drafted by the Office of Planning and Economic Development. A 15-day public review and comment period is required prior to a public hearing. A public hearing is held prior to the CAPER being submitted to HUD which must occur prior to the June 30<sup>th</sup> submission of the CAPER to HUD.

## **General Citizen Participation Requirements**

### **Public Notice**

There shall be advanced public notice once a federally required document is available, such as the draft Annual Action Plan or Five Year Consolidated Plan; any proposed Substantial Amendments to the Action Plan or Consolidated Plan, and the Annual Performance Report. In addition, there shall be advanced public notice of all public meetings or hearings relating to the funds or planning process covered by this Citizen Participation Plan.

#### Adequate Public Notice

Adequate advance notice is timely; it is given with enough lead-time for the public to take informed action. Although the amount of lead time can vary, depending on the event, a standard of 5 business days' notice will be provided for all public meetings or hearings, unless otherwise specified. Specific amounts of time are given for different events later in this Citizen Participation Plan. The content of notices will give residents a clear understanding of the event being announced as well as a summary of the contents, purpose and location of availability of a document being discussed.

#### Forms of Public Notice

1. Public meeting notices will be published in the local newspaper *The Citizen* as display ads in a non-legal section of the newspaper. Public Hearings will be published in the legal section of *The Citizen*.

In addition, press releases may be sent to other publications and/or public broadcasters tailoring to special needs populations or minority individuals within the city.

2. Notice of public meetings will also be announced through flyers to neighborhood organizations, public housing agencies, religious organizations, Homeless Task Force members and agencies providing services to lower income people.

3. Notice of public meetings and hearings will be provided via the City of Auburn website and emailed to interested parties.

In addition, media outlets including but not limited to the City of Auburn's Facebook page and twitter account will announce public meetings and public hearings. When available, the City will provide information to local public radio and television stations.

Citizens, public agencies, and other interested parties, including those most affected, must have the opportunity to receive information, review and submit comments on any proposed submission concerning the proposed activities, including the amount of assistance the jurisdiction expects to receive, 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 Auburn will provide the public with reasonable and timely access to information and records relating to the data or content of the Consolidated Plan, as well as the proposed, actual, and past use of funds covered by this Citizen Participation Plan. Reasonable public access will be given to records about any uses of these funds during the previous five years.

#### Standard Documents

Standard documents include the draft and final Annual Action Plans, the draft and final Five Year Consolidated Plan, draft and final Substantial Amendments to an Annual Plan or Consolidated Plan, CAPER, and the Citizen Participation Plan.

#### Availability of Standard Documents

In the spirit of encouraging public participation, copies of standard documents will be provided to the public at no cost and within five working days of a request.

Upon request, these materials will be available in a form accessible to persons with disabilities, visual impairments or in a format to be understood by persons with and by non-English speaking persons.

#### Places Where Standard Documents are Available

Standard documents will also be available at the City of Auburn Office of Planning and Economic Development, other City government offices, Seymour Library and the City of Auburn official website.

### **Public Meetings/Hearings**

The City of Auburn must provide for at least one public meeting and one public hearing per year in order to obtain public input, and to provide the public with the City's responses to public questions and proposals. Public meetings and hearings are held by the Office of Planning and Economic Development.

Public meetings and hearings are held to address community development needs, review the proposed uses of funds, and review how funds were spent

during the previous program year. The City of Auburn will hold a public meeting as well as distribute CDBG surveys in addition to the 30-day comment period of the draft Consolidated Plan to obtain the views of citizens on housing and community development needs, including priority non-housing community development needs. A public hearing will be held after the 30 day public comment period of the draft consolidated plan to discuss the proposed activities seeking funding. A final public hearing will be held after the 15-day comment period has ended and prior to the submission of the CAPER to HUD.

#### Access to Public Meetings and Hearings

Public meetings and hearings will be held only after there has been adequate notice, as described in the section titled Public Notice of this Citizen Participation Plan. Public meetings and hearings will be held at a time convenient to most people in the community, such as after normal working hours. Public meetings and hearings will be held at places not only accessible by bus and otherwise convenient to most people who may benefit from the use of funds, but also accessible by persons with disabilities.

#### Public Meetings/Hearings and Populations with Unique Needs

All public meetings and hearings will be held at locations accessible to people with disabilities, and provisions will be made for people with hearing or sight disabilities when requests are made at least five working days prior to a hearing. Also, translators will be provided for people who do not speak English when requests are made at least five working days prior to a hearing. The City will collaborate and facilitate this process through the help of organizations that serve these residents such as the Empire Interpreting Center and Aurora of CNY both located in Syracuse, NY.

#### The Conduct of Public Hearings

Each resident choosing to speak will be allowed a maximum of three (3) minutes to make a verbal presentation in order to allow everyone who wishes to speak a chance to do so. Written letters may also be for individuals interested in contributing comments, but not verbal presentations.

Please submit written comments to:

City of Auburn  
Office of Planning and Economic Development  
Memorial City Hall  
24 South Street  
Auburn, NY 13021  
e-mail: [jhaines@auburnny.gov](mailto:jhaines@auburnny.gov)



## Public Comment Period and Public Hearings during a Pandemic, Disaster or State of Emergency

In the case of a Pandemic, Disaster, or State of Emergency the public comment period will be expedited to a five (5) day comment period for Five Year Strategic Consolidated Plans, Annual Action Plans, Amendments to Consolidated Plans or Annual Actions, as well as Environmental Reviews so that funds can be made available in a timely manner to respond to the urgent need.

The five day comment period and public hearing will be advertised in the local newspaper and the City website at least five days prior to the comment period commencing.

In the case that public gatherings are limited due to a pandemic, disaster, or state of emergency, The City of Auburn will provide a public hearing through video communication, such as WebEx, where meeting attendees can discuss and provide comments in real time.

Each public attendee choosing to speak via video communication will be allowed a maximum of three (3) minutes to make a verbal presentation in order to allow everyone who wishes to speak a chance to do so. Written letters may also be for individuals interested in contributing comments, but not verbal presentations.

## **The Stages in the Process**

### **A. Identifying Needs**

Because the housing and community development needs of low and moderate income people are diverse, priorities must be set in order to decide how resources will be allocated. This is the basic reason for the Consolidated Plan. In order to determine what the needs of the community are, the City of Auburn Planning Department will hold a public meeting as well as distribute surveys among community members to obtain and discuss community needs of low to moderate income individuals and low to moderate income areas. The needs will be prioritized according to public input.

The determination and prioritization of needs are included in the draft Annual Action Plan. The draft Action Plan will be published for comment so that the needs identified can be considered by the City and addressed in the Annual Action Plan.

## **B. Proposed Consolidated Plan and Annual Action Plan Programs**

The City of Auburn implements the following procedures regarding programs funded in the proposed draft Consolidated Plan and/or Annual Action Plan:

### Request for Proposals

The Office of Planning and Economic Development will provide human service organizations/agencies with a Request For Proposal (RFP) for funding through the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG). Applications will be distributed by mail, email and notification given to the public through the manner described in the Public Notice section of this Citizen Participation Plan. Applicants will be given four weeks to complete the RFP and return it to the Office of Planning and Economic Development.

### General Information

In the RFP, the City of Auburn will provide an estimate of the amount of CDBG funding it expects to receive in the upcoming year, along with a description of the range of types of activities that can be funded with these resources.

### Technical Assistance

City of Auburn Office of Planning and Economic Development staff will work with organizations representative of low and moderate income people who are interested in submitting a RFP to obtain funding for an activity. All potential applicants for funding are encouraged to contact City of Auburn Office of Planning and Economic Development staff for technical assistance before completing a RFP.

### Availability of the Draft Annual Action Plan

The City of Auburn will notify the public that a Draft Annual Action Plan is available as described the Public Notice section of the Citizen Participation Plan.

The Draft Annual Action Plan is available to the public at least 30 days prior to the date a Final Annual Action Plan is submitted to the City Council for their action. This will provide community members, including low- and moderate-income individuals a reasonable amount of time to review the plan and submit comments. After the 30-day review and comment period has ended the Consolidated Plan or Annual Action Plan is presented to City Council for their review and consideration. A public hearing is held at a City Council meeting, located in Memorial City Hall, City Council Chambers prior to City Council's authorization of the submission of the Consolidated Plan or

Annual Action Plan to HUD. This action also authorizes the Mayor to enter into a contract with HUD for the fiscal year entitlement funds.

The Draft Annual Action Plan will contain:

- HUD required sections
- HUD required Priorities Tables
- Written description of all proposed uses of CDBG Funds
- The written description will include the type of activity, its location, the amount of federal money to be allocated for the activity, and the amount of money allocated to benefit low and moderate income individuals
- All comments and views expressed by the public, whether given as verbal testimony at a public meeting or submitted in writing during the 30 day review and comment period. The Final Consolidated Plan and Annual Action Plan will have a section that presents all public comments

Copies of the Draft Consolidated Plan and Annual Action Plan will be made available to the public at no charge from the City of Auburn Office of Planning and Economic Development within five days of the request. In addition, copies will be available at the locations specified above in the section, Public Notice.

### **C. Amendments to the Consolidated Plan or Annual Action Plan**

The Final Annual Action Plan will be amended anytime there is:

- A change in one of the Priorities presented on the HUD required Priority Table
- A change in the purpose, location, scope, or recipients of an activity. The public will be notified whenever there is an amendment as per the Public Notice section of this Citizen Participation Plan

#### Substantial Amendments

The following will be considered substantial amendments:

- A change in the use of CDBG funds from one category activity to another category activity such that there is a 20% increase or decrease in the amount of funding allocated to the activity
- A change in the scope of an activity, such that there is a 20% increase or decrease in the amount of money allocated to the activity

- The elimination of an activity described in the Annual Action Plan
- The addition of an activity not described in the Annual Action Plan
- A change in the purpose of an activity, such as a change in the type of activity or its objective
- A change in the location or audience of an activity

## **Public Notice and Public Meeting/Hearing for Substantial Amendments**

There must be reasonable notice of a proposed Substantial Amendment so that residents will have an opportunity to review it and comment on it. Notice will be made according to the procedures described earlier in this Citizen Participation Plan, with the addition of the following specifically for Substantial Amendments:

1. Citizens will be provided with reasonable notice of any Substantial Amendment to the Annual Action Plan; a 30 day comment period will begin.
2. A detailed written description of the proposed Substantial Amendment will be made available to the public at no cost within five working days of a request. Also, copies will be available at the locations indicated earlier in this Citizen Participation Plan under Public Notice.
3. There will be a public hearing regarding the proposed Substantial Amendment conducted by the City of Auburn Office of Planning and Economic Development.
4. In preparing a Final Substantial Amendment, all comments and views expressed by the public, whether given as verbal testimony at the public hearing or submitted in writing during the review and comment period. The Final Substantial Amendment will have a section that presents all comments.

## **D. The Consolidated Performance and Evaluation Report (CAPER)**

Every year, City of Auburn must submit to HUD a CAPER, also known as an annual performance report, within 90 days of the close of the program year. The CAPER describes how funds were used and the extent to which these funds were used for activities that benefited low and moderate-income people.

### Contents of the CAPER

The CAPER will contain program performance detail required by HUD for Grantee Performance Reports. The CAPER will account for each activity in any Action Plan, until an activity is officially “closed out” or “reprogrammed”, with HUD’s permission, by the City of Auburn. For each activity the information will include, but not limited to:

- Activity from the Action Plan
- Name of the Activity and HUD eligibility with regulation reference
- A detailed description of the activity
- The name of the entity carrying out the activity
- The location of the activity (ie. street address or information showing specifically where the activity was or is being carried out.)
- For activities that provide a direct benefit to individuals or households, show: the number of individuals or households served; the number which were moderate income; the number which were low income; and ethnic demographics
- For public facility activities such as street reconstruction, location includes a street address providing beginning and ending points
- For activities meeting an area wide benefit will include the location, census tracts and/or block groups making up the service area of the activity, and the percentage of low/mod persons in the service area
- Economic development activities will include the amount of the loan, and the number of permanent, full time jobs created and/or retained
- The date the activity was initially funded
- The national objective the activity claims to meet
- The status of an activity: completed, underway or canceled
- The amount of monies budgeted and spent

The above mentioned items reported each year in the Integrated Disbursement and Information System (IDIS) including:

PR 03: CDBG Activity Summary Report (GPR)  
 PR 06: Summary of Consolidated Plan Projects  
 PR 23: Summary of Accomplishments Report  
 PR 26: CDBG Financial Summary Report

#### Public Notice and Public Hearing for CAPER

Reasonable notice will be given that the CAPER is available for residents to have an opportunity to review it and comment on it. Notice will be made according to the procedures described earlier in this Citizen Participation Plan, with the addition of the following procedures specifically for the CAPER:

- Once citizens have been provided with reasonable notice of the CAPER, a 15 day public comment and review period will begin
- A public hearing will take place after the 15-day comment period

- A complete copy of the CAPER will be made available to the public at no cost within five working days of a request. Also, copies will be available at the locations indicated earlier in this Citizen Participation Plan under Public Notice
- There will be a public hearing conducted by the City of Auburn Office of Planning and Economic Development regarding the CAPER
- In preparing the CAPER, all comments submitted or expressed by the public, whether given as verbal testimony at the public hearing or submitted in writing during the 15 day review and comment period will be included in a section of the CAPER that presents all comments

### **E. Amendments to the Citizen Participation Plan**

There must be reasonable notice of a proposed amendment to this Citizen Participation Plan so that residents will have an opportunity to review and comment. Notice will be made according to the procedures described earlier in this Citizen Participation Plan, with the addition of the following regarding amendments to the Citizen Participation Plan:

1. Once citizens have been provided notice of amendment(s) to the Citizen Participation Plan, a 30 day comment period will begin. This notice will be published in the local newspaper *The Citizen*.
2. A written description of the proposed Amendment will be made available to the public at no cost within five working days of a request. Also, copies will be available at the locations indicated earlier in this Citizen Participation Plan under "Public Access to Information".
3. There will be a public hearing regarding the proposed Amendment to the Citizen Participation Plan conducted by the City of Auburn Office of Planning and Economic Development.
4. In preparing a final Citizen Participation Plan, all comments and view expressed by the public, whether given as verbal testimony at the public hearing or submitted in writing during the review and comment period. The final Citizen Participation Plan will have a section that presents all comments received during the comment period.
5. Amending the plan may also be done in conjunction with the preparation of the Annual Action Plan or Five Year Consolidated Plan, although both will require a separate public hearing.
6. Approval by HUD is the final step.

### **F. Complaint Procedures**

Written comments regarding the Consolidated/Annual Plan, Amendments to the Plan, or the CAPER can be sent to the City of Auburn, Office of Planning and Economic Development, Memorial City Hall, 24 South Street, Auburn NY 13021. Written complaints from the public will receive reply within fifteen working days upon receipt.