

Citizen Participation Plan

St. Charles County, Missouri

Version: 1-12-2015

Purpose of the Citizen Participation Plan - Introduction

As an Urban County, St. Charles County, Missouri is eligible to apply for funds under the federal Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), HOME Investment Partnerships Program (HOME), which are provided to the County through the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). Federal regulations were revised in 1994 to provide for the consolidated submission of documents (the Consolidated Plan) which cover the planning and application aspects of the CDBG, and HOME, programs (federal funding sources). The County at this time only intends on applying for CDBG funds directly and will be continuing its membership on the St. Louis HOME Consortium related to receiving HOME funds.

The St. Charles County Department of Community Development, is responsible for preparing a Consolidated Plan for St. Charles County, an urban county, which provides programming for the Community Development Block Grant Programs. The St. Charles Urban County includes participating jurisdictions in St. Charles County, which have signed cooperation agreements with St. Charles County to participate in the County's CDBG and HOME programs. The participating jurisdictions include Dardenne Prairie, Cottleville, Lake St. Louis, St. Paul, St. Peters, Weldon Spring and Wentzville.

St. Charles County is responsible for developing and monitoring a citizen participation plan that covers all of the members of the urban county. The St. Charles County Citizen Participation Plan provides a guide for public input and participation in the Consolidated Plan process. The purpose of the Citizen Participation Plan is to encourage citizen participation in the definition of housing, community development and public services needs; the funding priorities for programs and target populations to be served through resources available in the Consolidated Plan, and in any amendments, as well as the annual performance report.

The Citizen Participation Plan provides for and encourages citizen participation in the development of the consolidated plan, any substantial amendments to the consolidated plan and the performance report. The objectives of the Citizen Participation Plan are to:

- Encourage citizen participation by providing citizens with adequate information concerning the amount of funds expected to be available for community development, housing activities, and public services through federal and local funding sources, the proposed range of activities that may be undertaken with those funds, including the amount that will benefit very low and low income and the plans to minimize displacement and to assist any persons displaced, other important program requirements, and proposed and approved uses of funds;
- Provide for and encourage citizen participation from all sectors of the community, with particular emphasis on participation by low- and moderate-income persons, low and moderate income residents of blighted areas and in areas in which federal funds under federal funding sources are used or are proposed to be used; and for the participation of minority and non-English speaking residents, as well as persons with mobility, visual, speech or hearing

impairments, and in-conjunction with public housing agencies the participation of residents of public and assisted housing developments;

- Provide opportunities for participation of local and regional institutions and other organizations including businesses, developers, and community and faith-based organizations.
- Provide citizens, public agencies, and all other interested parties with reasonable and timely access to information and records relating to the County's Consolidated Plan, and the use of assistance provided by federal funding sources included in the Plan for the preceding five (5) years;
- Provide technical assistance to groups representing very low and low income persons and to interested residents that request such assistance in developing proposals for funding assistance under federal and local funding sources covered by the Consolidated Plan, with the level and type of assistance to be determined by the County;
- Conduct public hearings to obtain the views of citizens on housing, community development and public services needs, proposed activities, and program performance, which hearings shall be held after adequate notice, at times and locations convenient to potential and actual beneficiaries, with accommodation for persons with disabilities and non-English speaking residents;
- Prepare a summary of comments or views received from citizens in writing or orally through public hearings, focus groups, community meetings and other methods when preparing the final Consolidated Plan, and any amendments to the Plan or the performance report and attach the summary to the final Plan or report. In addition, provide for a timely response to such comments and views within fifteen (15) working days, where practicable; and
- Provide criteria for determining what constitutes a substantial change in the planned or actual activities described in the approved Consolidated Plan which would require an amendment to the Plan.

Adoption and Amendment of the Citizen Participation Plan

A 15-day public comment period will be established to provide opportunities to comment on the original Citizen Participation Plan to be included within the Consolidated Plan submission to HUD. Notice of such comment period will be posted in the County's Executive Office Building and the Administration Building. Various agencies involved in housing, community development and public service needs will be notified of such Citizen Participation Plan review period and where such participation plan may be reviewed. Such notification of these various agencies will utilize the Community Council's membership list.

Proposed changes to the Citizen Participation Plan will be posted at least 15-days prior to the adoption of amendments to the Citizen Participation Plan by the Governing Body of St. Charles County. In addition, various agencies involved in housing, community development and public service needs will be notified as specified above. The proposed revisions to the St. Charles County Citizen Participation Plan for the Consolidated Plan will become effective upon the date of the Governing Body's approval.

Consultation

(1) In preparation for the Consolidated Plan, the Department of Community Development will consult with other public and private agencies that provide assisted housing, health services and social services including those focusing on services to children, elderly persons, persons with

disabilities, persons with HIV/AIDS and Homeless persons. The public and private agencies to be contacted include, but are not limited to, the St. Charles County Department of Community Health and the Environment, the Mid-East Area on Aging, the Community Council of St. Charles and the Missouri Department of Social Services Division of Family Services.

(2) In preparation for the annual Consolidated Plan and the portion of the Consolidated Plan dealing with lead-based paint hazards, the Department of Community Development will consult with the St. Charles County Department of Community Health and the Environment and any child welfare agencies to examine existing data related to lead-based paint hazards and poisonings, including data on the addresses of housing units in which children have been identified as lead poisoned.

(3) In preparation for the County's annual Consolidated Plan, the Department of Community Development will notify participating and adjacent units of local government of any non-housing priority needs.

(4) The Department of Community Development will consult with adjacent units of general local government as well as the East-West Gateway Council of Governments to identify any problems that go beyond a single jurisdiction. Such agencies or jurisdictions will be consulted with respect to finding solutions to any identified problems of a regional nature.

(5) The Department of Community Development will consult with the St. Charles County Housing Authority and the St. Charles Local Housing Authority concerning consideration of public housing needs and any planned grant program activities. This consultation will ensure and provide a better basis for the certification by the St. Charles County Executive that the Consolidated Plan is consistent with the County's assessment of low-income housing needs. This type of consultation will also help insure that any proposed activities that are directed towards local drug elimination, neighborhood improvement and or any resident programs and or services funded under or by the County Housing Authority and the St. Charles Local Housing Authority and those funded under any programs covered by the Consolidated Plan are fully coordinated to achieve comprehensive community development goals.

Development of the Consolidated Plan

The County encourages citizen participation by providing citizens with adequate information concerning the amount of funds expected to be available for community development and housing activities, and public services through federal and local funding sources, the proposed range of activities that may be undertaken with those funds, including the amount that will benefit very low and low income persons and the plans to minimize displacement and to assist any persons displaced. Such plans related to displacement and assistance to those displaced will be prepared and considered in the review and approval of the annual action plan.

A notice regarding the Proposed Consolidated Plan will be published on the St. Charles County Department of Community Development's web site at <http://www.sccmo.org/203/Community-Development> and a copy of the Proposed Consolidated Plan will be available to the public for review and comment at least 30 days prior to submission to HUD. The notice advising of the

opportunity for public comment and the notice of its availability will also be emailed to neighborhoods, groups, associations, nonprofit, ecumenical, business and other community organizations and other interested individuals which have been involved in past funding cycles for each program or have expressed an interest in being notified of such hearings or plan availability. The proposed Consolidated Plan will be available for review 1) at the Department of Community Development at 201 N. Second Street, Suite 420, St. Charles, Missouri 63301, and 2) St. Peters City Hall, 1 City Centre blvd., St. Peters, Missouri 63376, and 3) on the web at <http://cd.sccmo.org/commdev/> .

The final Consolidated Plan will be available online at <http://www.sccmo.org/203/Community-Development> and notice of its availability will be emailed to neighborhoods, groups, associations, nonprofit, ecumenical, business and other community organizations and other interested individuals which have been involved in past funding cycles for each program. Other neighborhoods, groups, associations, organizations, and individuals will be added to the email list upon request to the Department of Community Development. Printed versions of the plan will also be available to those who cannot otherwise access the plan or those that request the printed version. Printed versions of the plan will be available at the Department of Community Development at 201 North Second Street – Suite 420, St. Charles, MO 63301.

Citizen Participation Process

Public Hearings

The County will conduct public hearings to obtain the views of citizens on housing, community development and public services needs, proposed activities, and program performance, which hearings shall be held after adequate notice, at times and locations convenient to potential and actual beneficiaries, with accommodation for persons with disabilities and non-English speaking residents. A minimum of two public hearings will be held.

One public hearing will be held by the Community Development Department at the beginning of the Consolidated Plan process or program year to solicit citizen comments on housing and community development needs, and proposed activities. This hearing will discuss the programs that the County administers and will be held to obtain the views of citizens on housing and community development needs, including priority non-housing community needs and housing needs. The first public hearing shall also be held to allow interested groups and or agencies the opportunity to discuss their programs, and make presentations in seeking funding. Testimony received at this hearing will be considered by the Community Development Department in preparing the Proposed Consolidated Plan. In addition, the Community Development Department may gather community input through a variety of means, such as forums and focus groups, in the development of funding priorities and criteria.

Upon the development of a proposed Consolidated Plan and posting a notice thereof, the Department will accept comments for 30 days and include such comments along with those from the public hearing within the Consolidated Plan. Prior to approval and the submission of the Consolidated Plan to HUD, the County Governing Body will consider public comments on the Proposed Consolidated Plan as recommended by the Department of Community Development.

The second public hearing will be held once the Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Report has been drafted and made available for public comment. This second hearing shall be held approximately 60 days after the end of the county's program year. This second public hearing shall be held to gather citizen input regarding County's performance with respect to its implementation of the programs it administers.

All public hearings will be held in the St. Charles County Administration building, located at 201 N. Second Street, St. Charles, Missouri 63301 or other centralized locations as noted in the hearing announcement. All Public hearings will be advertised at least 15 days in advance on the St. Charles County Department of Community Development's web site at <http://www.sccmo.org/203/Community-Development> and all public hearing notices will be posted in the County's Executive Office Building and Administration building and in city halls of participating jurisdictions. The notice advising the public hearing will also be emailed to neighborhoods, groups, associations, nonprofit, ecumenical, business and other community organizations and other interested individuals which have been involved in past funding cycles for each program or have expressed an interest in being notified of such hearings.

All meetings will be held at convenient times in order to accommodate potential or actual beneficiaries. These meetings shall be conducted during the evening hours in order to accommodate citizen participation. Persons with disabilities may request that the county provide them with necessary and reasonable accommodations. Callers should make these requests for arrangements at least 48 hours in advance of any public hearing by calling the Department of Community Development at 636-949-7335. Any and all citizens have the opportunity to comment orally or in writing on any matter(s) relating to the public hearing. All comments will be incorporated into the Consolidated Plan or the performance report and be made a permanent part of the citizen participation process for each program year.

Response to Citizen Comments

Written or oral comments received from citizens as a result of public hearings or other activities to gather community input held on the Consolidated Plan will be given serious consideration in the preparation of the final Plan document, amendments to the Plan, or the performance report. A summary of the comments received from citizens, both accepted and not accepted, will be attached to the final Consolidated Plan, Plan amendments, or performance report. Comments, concerning the Consolidated Plan should be addressed to the Department of Community Development, Consolidated Plan, 201 North Second Street – Suite 420, St. Charles, Missouri 63301.

Amendment of the Consolidated Plan [and Annual Action Plan]

St. Charles County may from time to time amend the activities in its Consolidated Plan **or Annual Action Plan**.

Amendments that are not substantial in nature will not require any public notice or comment. A *Substantial Amendment* will be considered to occur if the Consolidated Plan or Annual Action Plan needs to be amended whereby more than 50% of any category of activity decreased in dollars allocated towards that type of activity or a new activity is created.

In the event that the County finds it necessary to amend its Consolidated Plan or Annual Action Plan to conform to the requirements for a *Substantial Amendment*, public notice will be given by

placing a notice on the St. Charles County Department of Community Development's web site at <http://www.sccmo.org/203/Community-Development> notifying the public that a public hearing will be conducted to discuss the *Substantial Amendment* and solicit input from concerned citizens. The notice announcing the public hearing will also be emailed to neighborhoods, groups, associations, nonprofit, ecumenical, business and other community organizations and other interested individuals which have been involved in past funding cycles for each program or have expressed an interest in being notified of such hearings. A period of thirty days will be allowed for the public to submit comments. After the comment period has expired any *Substantial Amendment* to the Consolidated Plan will be forwarded to the County Council for approval prior to being sent to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

Any and all oral and written comments from the public will be reviewed and considered by St. Charles County prior to the approval of any *Substantial Amendment*. A summary of all comments or views and a summary of any comments or views not accepted and the reasons therefore, will be attached to the *Substantial Amendment* and submitted to the Department of Housing and Urban Development.

Performance Reports

The St. Charles County Department of Community Development prepares and disseminates an annual Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Report. This report is due to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development on or about March 31st of each fiscal year. This report will be made available for public review and comment each year on or about March 1st. A public hearing will be conducted by the Department of Community Development with a notice of such public hearing posted on the St. Charles County Department of Community Development's web site at <http://www.sccmo.org/203/Community-Development> fifteen (15) days prior to the hearing.

The performance report will be available 1) at the Department of Community Development at 201 N. Second Street, Suite 420, St. Charles, Missouri 63301, and 2) St. Peters City Hall, 1 City Centre blvd., St. Peters, Missouri 63376, and 3) on the web at <http://cd.sccmo.org/commdev/>.

Citizens will be allowed a period of at least 15 days following the public hearing to comment on this Report. Comments, suggestions and or complaints regarding this report may be forwarded to the Department of Community Development, Performance Report, 201 N. Second Street, Suite 420, St. Charles, Missouri 63301. All public input will be made a part of the performance report and forwarded to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

Access to Records

St. Charles County will make available to all citizens, groups, and jurisdictions, access to all information and any records that relate to the County's Consolidated Plan. Such information will be available for a period that covers the preceding five years from the date from which any request for information is made. Access to all information will be made in a reasonable and timely manner as may be required by the County to retrieve documents.

Technical Assistance

The County will provide technical assistance to groups representing very low and low income persons, as well as interested residents that request such assistance in developing proposals for funding assistance under any of federal or local funding sources covered by the Consolidated Plan, with the level and type of assistance to be determined by the County. County staff will be available upon request to answer any questions concerning the requirements of federal and local funding sources included in the Consolidated Plan, such as available funding amounts, funding priorities, eligible activities, environmental review procedures, equal opportunity requirements, relocation provisions, citizen participation requirements and any other requirements of federal and local funding sources. In cases where staff cannot answer questions pertaining to federal HUD funds, assistance will be requested from HUD.

As part of the on-going citizen participation effort, County staff will meet with citizen groups in St. Charles County which represent very low, low, and moderate income residents and with citizen groups which express interest in participating in federal and/or local funding sources included in the Consolidated Plan, to explain program and application procedures. County staff will provide technical assistance when requested by neighborhood groups, minority groups, community-based organizations, and other residents interested in participating in federal and local funding sources included in the Consolidated Plan. All such groups, including the disabled and elderly, and those serving non-English speaking ethnic/minority populations, will be encouraged and assisted in submitting their views and proposals. County staff will be available to provide assistance in the development and submission of program funding requests and other input. Any persons requiring assistance should contact the Department of Community Development at 636-949-7335 or the TTY number 1-800-735-2966.

Complaints

Citizens, activity participants, funded jurisdictions and non-profits in St. Charles County are afforded the opportunity to issue and or register complaints related to the Consolidated Plan, Consolidated Plan Amendments and Annual Consolidated Performance Reports. St. Charles County will respond to any and all complaints within 15 working days, where practicable, of the receipt of such complaints. All citizen complaints will be recorded and responded to in writing. All written responses shall address the nature of the complaint and be substantive. Complaints and correspondence shall be addressed to the St. Charles Department of Community Development, Consolidated Plan Complaint, 201 North Second St., Suite 420, St. Charles, MO 63301.