

REQUEST FOR BOARD ACTION

HENDERSON COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

MEETING DATE: October 21, 2020

SUBJECT: CDBG Citizen Participation Plan Update

PRESENTER: Megan Powell, Budget Manager/Internal Auditor

ATTACHMENTS: Yes:
1. Citizen Participation Plan

SUMMARY OF REQUEST:

As part of the Community Development Block Grant process, local governments must adopt citizen participation plans. The Board of Commissioners is requested to consider the approval of the attached compliance plan that must be updated prior to the upcoming application of Community Development Block Grant-CV funds. This plan is an update from past Community Development Block Grant citizen participation plans.

BOARD ACTION REQUESTED:

Staff requests that the Board of Commissioners approve the citizen participation plan as presented, which is required for the County to apply for the CDBG-CV grant.

Suggested Motion:

I move that the board approve the attached Citizen Participation plan for Community Development Block Grant projects.

CITIZEN PARTICIPATION PLAN

This plan describes how the Henderson County will involve citizens in the planning, implementation and assessment of the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program. The plan provides for, and encourages, citizen participation and which emphasizes participation by persons of low- or moderate-income, particularly residents of predominantly low- and moderate-income neighborhoods, slum or blighted areas, and areas in which the grantee proposes to use CDBG funds. The regulations give ultimate responsibility for the design and implementation of the program to local elected officials and also requires that citizens be given an opportunity to serve in a key advisory role to these elected officials.

SCOPE OF CITIZEN PARTICIPATION

Citizens will be involved in all stages of the CDBG program, including program implementation, assessment of performance and design of changes in the Citizen Participation Plan. There will be two (2) general mechanisms for their involvement:

1. To attend or hold public hearings or community meetings; and
2. To provide individual citizen efforts in the form of comments, complaints or inquiries submitted directly to the Program Administrators or designated County official.

PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION

Citizen participation in program implementation will occur primarily through consultation with the County. The County will be asked to review and comment on specific guidelines for approved project. They will also meet to review any program amendments, budget revisions and program modifications. All such changes will be discussed with the County and their comments considered prior to taking action. If program amendments require approval from the North Carolina Department of Commerce, a public hearing shall be held specifically on the amendment.

PROGRAM ASSESSMENT

As a part of the orientation to the program offered at the public hearing, citizens will be invited to submit comments on all aspects of program performance through the program year. Comments should be submitted in writing to County Manager, Historic Courthouse, 1 Historic Courthouse Square, Suite 1, Hendersonville, NC 28792. He will respond in writing within ten (10) days. If the response is unsatisfactory, the complainant should write directly to Chairman of the Board of Commissioners, Henderson County. He shall respond within ten (10) days.

If the citizen is still dissatisfied, he/she should write to North Carolina Department of Commerce, Commerce Finance Center, 4318 Mail Service Center, Raleigh, North Carolina 27699-4318, Attention: Program Representative, requesting an investigation of the problem. Program staff will also be available during normal business hours to respond to any citizen inquiries or complaints.

The Citizen Participation Plan will be subject to annual review and proposed revision, to occur in the period between the performance hearing and the public hearing on the subsequent year's application.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Technical Assistance will be provided to citizen organizations and groups of low/moderate income persons or target area residents upon request to County Henderson. Such assistance will support citizen efforts to develop proposals, define policy and organize for the implementation of the program. It is expected that such assistance will be provided directly to the County in response to their request. Assistance could be provided in the form of local presentations, informational handouts, research of a specific issue or other short-term efforts.

PUBLIC INFORMATION

The Henderson County will also undertake public information efforts to promote citizen participation. These efforts will include the following:

1. Public Notice of all Public Hearings will be published in the non-legal section of the local newspaper at least ten (10) days before the scheduled hearing. These notices will indicate the date, time, location and topics to be considered.
2. Orientation Information will be provided at the first public hearing. The Program Administrator(s) will make a presentation which covers: (a) the total amount of CDBG funds available and the competitive basis for award; (b) the range of eligible activities; (c) the planning process and the schedule of meetings and hearings; (d) the role of citizens in the program and (e) a summary of other program requirements, such as the environmental policies, fair housing provisions and contracting procedures.
3. A Public File containing program documentation will be available for review at the Henderson County Planning Department, during normal business hours. Included will be copies of the Application, Environmental Review Record, the Citizen Participation Plan and the Annual Performance Report. Other program documents are also available for citizen review on request at the Henderson County Planning Department consistent with applicable State and local laws regarding personal privacy and obligations of confidentiality.
4. Public Hearings an interpreter will be provided for all non-English speaking individuals and/or deaf individuals.

ADOPTED, this the _____ day of October 2020

Grady Hawkins
Henderson County Chief Elected Official

Henderson County, Chairman CEO