

City of Thibodaux

Department of Housing and Community Development

Citizen Participation Plan

(Amended for CDBG-CV under the CARES Act – Changes Noted in Red)

General Statement

The City of Thibodaux, Louisiana, adopts this **Citizen Participation Plan (CPP)** to meet the citizen engagement requirements of **Section 508 of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974**, as amended, and the **Consolidated Plan regulations established by HUD**.

The City's **Department of Housing and Community Development** is committed to ensuring full involvement of citizens in all stages of the **CDBG program** and broader **Consolidated Planning process**. This plan fulfills the requirements of **Title I of the National Affordable Housing Act** and prioritizes outreach to **low- and moderate-income (LMI) individuals**, residents of **slum and blighted areas**, and areas where program funds will be used.

A copy of this plan is available to the public upon request.

Purpose and Objectives

The objectives of this Citizen Participation Plan are to:

- **Participation**
Encourage active engagement of all citizens, especially **LMI persons, minorities, non-English speakers, persons with disabilities, and residents of public/assisted housing**.
- **Access to Information**
Provide timely access to information regarding:
 - Local meetings and hearings
 - Amount of assistance expected (grants and program income)
 - Eligible activities and projected LMI benefit
- **Anti-Displacement Policy**
Outline measures to **minimize displacement** and define the **type and level of assistance** offered when displacement occurs. The Housing & Community Development Director will assess needs and determine appropriate aid.

- **Publishing the Plan**
Publish and distribute the proposed Consolidated Plan with sufficient time (30 days) for public review and input.
- **Public Hearings**
Hold at least **two hearings annually** at different stages of the program year to gather public feedback on:
 - Needs and priorities
 - Proposed activities
 - Program performance
- **Language and Accessibility Proficiency**
Provide interpretation services when a **significant number of non-English speakers** are expected. Make accommodations for persons with disabilities upon advance notice.
- **Access to Meetings**
Ensure that meetings are held at convenient locations and times, with reasonable access for all community members.
- **Public Comments**
Allow a **minimum 30-day public comment period** before submission of the Consolidated Plan.
- **Substantial Amendments**
Define and describe procedures for **public notification and comment** on substantial amendments.
- **Performance Reports (CAPER)**
Provide public notice and a **15-day comment period** on annual performance reports.
- **Availability to the Public**
Ensure plans, amendments, and reports are available **in accessible formats**, upon request.
- **Technical Assistance**
Provide assistance to LMI groups requesting help in developing proposals related to housing and community development.
- **Complaints**
Maintain procedures for timely and fair resolution of public complaints.

General Procedures

The City will:

- Publicize the **anticipated CDBG assistance**, eligible activities, and expected benefits.
- Distribute copies of the **Consolidated Plan, Annual Action Plan, and CAPER** at:
 - City Hall
 - Local libraries
 - Online platforms and other accessible locations
- **Public Comment Periods:**
 - **30 days** for Consolidated Plan and Annual Action Plan
 - **15 days** for CAPER

- **Reduced to 5 days for CDBG-CV (CARES Act amendment) [see amendment section]**
 - Conduct **minimum two public hearings** per year:
 - One during development of the Consolidated Plan
 - One before final adoption
 - Addressing needs, proposed activities, and performance
 - **Recordkeeping and Availability:**
 - Maintain official records for five years
 - Summarize citizen comments in submissions to HUD
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Public Hearing Procedures

- Advertise hearings in the **Official Journal** at least **2 weeks in advance**
 - Provide **non-legal, easy-to-understand notices**
 - Hold hearings at **ADA-compliant and accessible locations**
 - Provide:
 - **Translation services** if warranted
 - **Accommodations** upon request (at least 3 business days notice)
 - Clear options for **written or alternative format submissions**
 - Keep **minutes and attendance rosters** on file
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Technical Assistance

When requested, the City will assist **LMI groups** in developing funding proposals. The **Housing & Community Development Director** will determine the type and level of support based on need.

Amendments to the Consolidated Plan

A **substantial amendment** is triggered when:

- A change in allocation of **20% or more** of funding
- A change in the **purpose, scope, location, or beneficiaries** of an activity
- A **new activity** or cancellation of an existing one

Procedures:

- Publicize proposed amendments
- Provide a **30-day public comment period** (or **5 days for CDBG-CV** per HUD waiver)

- Follow public hearing notification procedures
 - Attach hearing minutes and attendance rosters to the amendment file
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Annual Action Plan

Follow the same procedures outlined above for **public review, hearings, and comment.**

Complaint Procedures

- Complaints may be filed using forms provided by the Department
- Complaints must be submitted in writing to:

City of Thibodaux

Department of Housing & Community Development

P.O. Box 5418

Thibodaux, LA 70302

(985) 446-7217

- Process:
 - Director reviews complaint and forwards it to the Mayor within **5 business days**
 - Copy sent to HUD – New Orleans Field Office
 - Mayor will respond to complainant within **15 working days**
 - If unresolved, complaint may be escalated to HUD
 - HUD will consider objections based on:
 - Inconsistent needs/objectives
 - Inappropriate activity selection
 - Non-compliance with HUD regulations
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Responsible Parties

- **City of Thibodaux Department of Housing and Community Development**
 - Maintains complaint records and oversees participation procedures
 - **Mayor Kevin Clement**
 - Final responsibility for citizen participation compliance
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Amendment – COVID-19 CARES Act (CDBG-CV)

In accordance with HUD guidance (April 2, 2020):

“The CARES Act adds additional flexibility for both the CDBG-CV grant and, in some cases, FY2020 CDBG grants. The public comment period is reduced to not less than five (5) days. Grantees may use virtual public hearings when necessary for public health reasons.”

Adopted Change:

- **Reduced comment period** for CDBG-CV to **not less than 5 days**
- **Virtual public hearings** allowed where in-person meetings pose a public health risk

Approved by:

Mayor Kevin Clement

Prepared by:

Janice Landry – Director

Department of Housing and Community Development