

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT
CITIZEN PARTICIPATION PLAN
CITY OF CONNELLSVILLE, PENNSYLVANIA

2024-2025

The City of Connellsville encourages the public to participate in the development of Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) plans and programs, as well as to comment on the City's past performance in its use of CDBG funds. The following citizen participation plan contains policies to achieve this end and conforms to the Code of Federal Regulations, Title 24, Part 91.105, Citizen Participation Plan - Local Governments.

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

The City of Connellsville will provide the opportunity for the public to participate in the development of the CDBG application. By providing the opportunity to suggest, develop and comment on the proposed activities, the City encourages participation by all citizens, but in particular those of low and moderate income, minority, those who may not speak English and disabled or handicapped persons who reside in slum and blight areas or in other areas where CDBG funds may be proposed for expenditure or are being expended.

The City will provide citizens, public agencies, and other interested parties with reasonable notice and an opportunity to comment when developing CDBG applications.

The City will conduct at least two public hearings per CDBG fiscal year to obtain citizen's views and to respond to proposals and questions.

First Public Hearing

The first scheduled hearing shall be held prior to application submission. This is the time when plans are being developed for the coming program year, but before a final plan is adopted. The purpose of this hearing is to obtain the views of citizens on housing and community development needs (including priority non-housing community development needs) as well as the development of proposed activities.

A public notice will be posted of the first public hearing to obtain citizen's views and comments on how CDBG funds should be used. This posting will take place at least 1 week (7 days) prior to the meeting. The notice will be posted at a minimum in three public areas—City Hall, Community Center, Redevelopment Authority offices. Hearings shall be held in City Hall Council Chambers after 4:30 p.m. This hour is established to allow interested persons to attend. Council Chambers are fully accessible to persons with disabilities and are centrally located to allow all City residents to attend including potential program beneficiaries and low- and moderate-income persons.

The following specific information will be provided in the public notice:

1. The date, time and location of the first public hearing;
2. The amount of CDBG funds expected to be available. Available funds include the annual CDBG grant from the state, program income generated by CDBG activities that is anticipated to be received during the program year, and any program income received during the preceding program year that has not been programmed for use;
3. The range of eligible activities that may be undertaken with CDBG funds;
4. The amount of CDBG funds proposed to be used for activities and the estimated benefit to low and moderate income persons, slums and blight and urgent need.
5. The identification of activities that could result in displacement and the City's plans for minimizing such displacement. The notice will also state that the City is responsible for replacing all low and moderate incoming housing units that may be demolished or converted.
6. A statement that citizens may also comment on the City's prior use of CDBG funds.
7. Information on how persons with disabilities may request and obtain needed special accommodations.

At this first public hearing further detail of the contents of the public notice will be made and the City will obtain citizen comments and questions. The agenda will include the following items:

1. The estimated funds available
2. A summary of eligible activities
3. A review of fundability requirements
4. An identification and discussion of known projects
5. An invitation to identify new projects or discuss them
6. A review of the Anti-displacement Plan:

The City will explain its responsibility to replace all occupied and vacant occupiable low and moderate income dwelling units that may be demolished or converted to another use. The city's explanation will include the following: (a) Replacement must take place within three years of demolition/conversion; (b) Replacement units must be located within the applicant's jurisdiction (within the same municipality where demolition/conversion may occur); (c) The replacement units must be of sufficient size to house at least the same number of occupants that could have been housed in the units demolished/converted; (d) The replacement units must be provided in standard condition; (e) The replacement units must be designed to remain low and moderate income units for at least ten years from the date of initial occupancy.

The City will also explain that prior to obligating or expending funds that will result in the demolition or conversion of low and moderate income housing units, it will publicize and provide opportunity for citizen comment on the following: (a) A description of the proposed demolition/conversion activity; (b) The general location and the number of

units by size that will be demolished/converted; (c) A time schedule for the start and completion of demolition/conversion; (d) The general location and number of units by size that will be provided as replacement units; (e) The source of funding and a time schedule for the provision of replacement units; and (f) The basis for concluding that the replacement units will remain low/mod for at least 10 years from initial occupancy.

7. An invitation for the public to comment on previously funded projects, historical or environmental impacts

At this first public hearing the Fair Housing Notice, Section 3 Preference Statements and Application schedule can be distributed.

Following the first public hearing, the city will consider all comments and views received and develop its proposed use of funds.

Second Public Hearing

Public notices will be provided on the second public hearing to obtain citizen's views and comments on the proposed use of funds. Notice of public hearings will be posted in public buildings at least 1 week (7 days) prior to the hearing. Additional reasonable steps to inform citizens of the hearing will be made as resources permit. Hearings shall be held in City Hall Council Chambers after 4:30 p.m. This hour is established to allow interested persons to attend. Council Chambers are fully accessible to persons with disabilities and are centrally located to allow all City residents to attend including potential program beneficiaries and low and moderate income persons.

This second public notice will contain the following information:

1. The date, time and location of the second public hearing;
2. The amount of funding available
3. The intention to apply for funding
4. Sufficient detail on the proposed use of funds (including activity and dollars allocated to each) to permit meaningful citizen comments at the public hearing;
5. The deadline for public comment prior to the date that the local governing body will meet to consider the application and where and when the proposed application may be inspected prior to the meeting of the local governing body;
6. The date, time and location of the meeting where the local governing body will consider approval of the application. (This meeting must be after the second public hearing and the deadline for public comment.) and
7. Information on how persons with disabilities may request and obtain needed special accommodations.

The second public hearing will be held to discuss the funds available, elaborate on the proposed activities and allocations of funds and to allow for citizen's comments and questions.

Citizen Participation Requirements for Program Modifications

When it is necessary for the City to modify an approved project or projects, the following citizen participation requirements will be met. The criteria for substantial change is defined as a fiscal change that is ten percent (10%) or greater than the total annual CDBG entitlement, involves the addition of any new activity to a CDBG program and/or the deletion of any previously-approved activity. Citizen participation will also be sought in the event that the service area or beneficiaries of an activity are substantially changed from what has been approved by DCED.

Prior to modifying approved project, the City will:

Notice of public hearings will be posted in public buildings at least 1 week (7 days) prior to the hearing. Additional reasonable steps to inform citizens of the hearing will be made as resources permit. Hearings shall be held in City Hall Council Chambers after 4:30 p.m. This hour is established to allow interested persons to attend. Council Chambers are fully accessible to persons with disabilities and are centrally located to allow all City residents to attend including potential program beneficiaries and low and moderate income persons. Public notices will be provided on the Modification public hearing to obtain citizen's views and comments on the proposed change of use of funds.

This Modification public notice will contain the following information:

1. The date, time and location of the Modification public hearing;
2. The amount of funding that is being changed
3. The project that is being added and/or removed
4. Sufficient detail on the proposed use of funds (including activity and dollars allocated to each) to permit meaningful citizen comments at the public hearing;
5. The deadline for public comment prior to the date that the local governing body will meet to consider the application and where and when the proposed application may be inspected prior to the meeting of the local governing body;
6. The date, time and location of the meeting where the local governing body will consider approval of the Modification. and
7. Information on how persons with disabilities may request and obtain needed special accommodations.

The Modification public hearing will be held to discuss the proposed activities and allocations of funds and to allow for citizen's comments and questions.

1. To ensure adequate opportunity for citizen participation during CDBG programs, the City shall hold a public hearing on all formal modifications which require the approval of DCED. For budget revisions (as defined by DCED) input from citizens concerning changes or amendments will be received at regularly

scheduled meetings of the City where such changes or amendments are considered.

2. The City will consider all comments received as a result of the public notice and hearing, and if appropriate, modify the proposed modification.
3. Upon approval of the modification by the City, the modification will be made available for public inspection.

As amended, April 21st 2020:

When a Declaration of an Emergency has been ordered by the President of the United States, or the Governor of Pennsylvania, the City of Connellsville will follow the following process concerning public hearings and public display of plans.

If the City is unable to hold open public hearings in person, the City will be allowed to instead hold virtual public hearings through conference calls or an online video conference call platforms as long as the public is able to provide public comments during the virtual public hearing or within 5 days of the meeting.

If the city is not able to publicly place the plans on public display at the locations referenced in the Citizen Participation Plan, the City will put the plans on the City's website (<https://www.connellsville.us>) and will also email copies of the plans to any person who will request a copy of the plans via email upon request.

If the City Council is unable to conduct an open public forum type meeting, the City then can approve the plans at a City Council meeting through an on-line virtual City Council meeting, if an in-person Council meetings are not happening because of the Emergency. All other sections of the citizen Participation Plan will not be amended at this time and shall remain in full force and effect.

ADDITIONAL PROCEDURES

Documents and Records Available to the Public

All adopted consolidated plans, annual action plans, substantial amendments, and performance reports will be made available to the public. Copies will be provided in the Redevelopment Authority of Connellsville (124 West Crawford Avenue). If necessary, materials will be made available, upon request, in a form accessible to persons with disabilities or in a language that can be understood by non-English speaking persons. Information and records relating to the City's consolidated plan and its use of CDBG funds during the preceding five (5) years shall also be made available to the public. Citizens, public agencies, and interested parties shall be able to obtain timely access to such information at the Redevelopment Authority of Connellsville (124 West Crawford Avenue, Connellsville, PA 15425).

Technical Assistance

The Redevelopment Authority of Connellsville shall provide technical assistance to groups of persons of low and moderate income or their representatives that request such assistance in developing proposals for use of CDBG funds. This technical assistance shall consist of the provision of available and relevant information rather than funds.

Complaint Procedures

Complaints or grievances related to the consolidated plan, amendments, and performance reports should be made to the Redevelopment Authority of Connellsville. The Redevelopment Authority of Connellsville will respond, in writing, to all written complaints, within 15 working days.

If a citizen does not believe his or her complaint has been adequately addressed by the Redevelopment Authority of Connellsville, they shall have the option of taking their complaint to the City Clerk of Connellsville (110 North Arch Street, Connellsville, PA 15425).

If and when it may be necessary to meet the needs of non-English speaking citizens, the Redevelopment Authority of Connellsville will meet those needs as required.

The Redevelopment Authority of Connellsville will maintain citizen participation files which contain documentation that demonstrates compliance with all requirements contain in this Citizen Participation Plan.

CONNELLSVILLE REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

124 West Crawford Avenue
Connellsville, Pennsylvania 15425-3043

Phone: (724) 626-1645

Fax: (724) 626-1649



Connellsville Community Ministries 110 W. Crawford Avenue Connellsville, PA 15425
Carnegie Free Library 299 S. Pittsburgh Street Connellsville, PA 15425
Connellsville Historical Society 299 S. Pittsburgh Street Connellsville, PA 15425
Connellsville Senior Citizen's Center 100 E. Fayette Street Connellsville, PA 15425
Connellsville Community Center 201 E. Fairview Avenue Connellsville, PA 15425
Penn Highlands Hospital 410 E. Murphy Avenue Connellsville, PA 15425

To Whom It May Concern:

The Redevelopment Authority of the City Connellsville will be holding a public hearing on _____ at the Connellsville City Hall 110 N. Arch Street Connellsville, PA 15425 to receive needs of the community for the 20xx CDBG program.

If you need assistance to prepare your request please contact us at 724 626 1645.

Approximately \$ _____ will be available.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

J. Michael Edwards
Executive Director