



# **Citizen Participation Plan**

## **CDBG**

**October 2022 (Amended)**

Economic Development Department  
142 East Main Street  
Meriden, CT 06450

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## 1. Introduction

The City of Meriden shall follow this Citizen Participation Plan (CPP) that sets forth the City's policies and procedures for citizen participation in the development of the City's Consolidated Plan, Annual Action Plan (AAP), Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Review (CAPER) and substantial amendments to these documents in accordance with 24 CFR §91.105. The Consolidated Plan and Annual Action Plans are planning documents that the City of Meriden submits to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).

The Consolidated Plan includes Meriden's housing strategy and its community development plan. The Annual Action Plan serves as an annual application for Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding. The CAPER is an annual review that reports on the performance of each AAP towards the overall goals of the Consolidated Plan. This Citizen Participation Plan provides for and encourages citizens to participate in the development of the Consolidated Plan and/or AAP, the review of the CAPER and any substantial amendments to these documents.

## 2. Public Hearings

The City of Meriden will hold at least two (2) public hearings per year to obtain residents' views and to respond to proposals and questions. These two hearings will be conducted at a minimum of two different stages of the program year. Together, the hearings must address housing and community development needs, development of proposed activities, proposed strategies and actions for affirmatively furthering fair housing, and a review of program performance. At these public hearings, the City will also obtain housing and community development needs, including priority non-housing community development needs and discuss the process/timeline for development and requirements/criteria for development of proposed activities to be funded under the Consolidated Plan and/or AAP.

The City of Meriden will provide advance notice of at least 14-days for a public hearing in the *Record Journal Newspaper* and on the City of Meriden website. The notice will provide sufficient information about the subject of the hearing and how citizens can participate.

## 3. Public Comment Period of the Consolidated Plan and Annual Action Plan

A 30-day public comment period will be held after the proposed Consolidated Plan and/or AAP is published for comment. Prior to the public comment period, the City of Meriden will publish a notice of the availability of the Consolidated Plan and/or Annual Action Plan in the *Record Journal Newspaper* and on the City of Meriden website. The notice will describe the contents and purpose of the Consolidated Plan and/or AAP and will include a list of locations where copies are available. At minimum the City will make copies available online on its website and at the Economic and Community Development office. Once approved, copies of the final AAP will also be made available to the public.

#### 4. Citizen Comments

The City of Meriden will consider all comments and/or views of citizens received in writing for the public comment period or orally at public hearings, in preparing the Consolidated Plan and/or AAP. A summary of these comments or views, and a summary of any comments or views not accepted and the reasons therefore, will be attached to, or included as part of, the final Consolidated Plan and/or to the AAP.

#### 5. Citizen Participation Plan

The City of Meriden will provide citizens with a reasonable opportunity to comment on the original citizen participation plan and on substantial amendments to the citizen participation plan, and must make the citizen participation plan public. Upon request, the citizen participation plan can be made in a format accessible to persons with disabilities.

At a minimum, if requested the City shall take reasonable steps to provide language assistance to ensure meaningful access to participation by non-English-speaking residents of the community.

#### 6. Substantial Amendments to the Consolidated Plan

The City of Meriden will provide citizens with the opportunity to review and make comments on substantial amendments to the Consolidated Plan. The City of Meriden will amend its approved Consolidated Plan whenever it makes one of the following decisions:

- to make a change to the Priority Needs identified in the Strategic Plan;
- to make a change to the Goals and Objectives identified in the Strategic Plan;
- to make a change to the Target Geographies/Areas identified in the Strategic Plan
- to make a change in its allocation priorities or a change in the method of distribution of funds;
- to carry out a project using funds from any program covered by the Consolidated Plan (includes program income) not previously described in its Annual Action Plan; or
- to significantly change the scope, location, or beneficiaries of a project.

Prior to implementing any substantial amendment, the City of Meriden will provide citizens with information on any proposed amendment(s) by publishing a public notice of the proposed amendments as a display advertisement in the *Record Journal Newspaper* and by posting a description of the proposed amendment(s) to the City of Meriden website at least 14-days prior to a public hearing. The City will also provide at least 30 days for citizens to submit written or oral comments or views on the proposed amendment(s). The City will consider these comments or views of citizens in preparing the substantial amendment of the Consolidated Plan. A summary of these comments or views, and a summary of any comments or views not accepted and the reasons therefore, will be attached to the substantial amendment of the Consolidated Plan. The City will also comply with any additional actions required by local law.

## 7. Substantial Amendments to the Annual Action Plan

The City of Meriden will amend its approved Annual Action Plan (AAP) whenever it makes one of the following decisions:

- to make a change to the Annual Goals and Objectives identified in the AAP;
- to make a change to the Target Geographies/Areas identified in the AAP;
- when a Project previously described in the AAP is canceled;
- to create a new Project not previously described in the AAP;
- to increase or decrease by transfer/reallocation of funds in excess of 20% of the original allocation between existing projects; and
- to make a revision to an existing project which changes the purpose, scope, location, or beneficiaries of a project.

If such an amendment is required, a notice stating the reason, amounts and projects to be effected will be published at least 14-days prior to a public hearing to receive comments on the proposed amendment. The City will also provide at least 30 days for citizens to submit written or oral comments or views on the proposed amendment. The City will consider these comments or views of citizens in preparing the substantial amendment of the AAP. A summary of these comments or views, and a summary of any comments or views not accepted and the reasons therefore, will be attached to the substantial amendment of the AAP. The City will consider these comments or views of citizens in preparing the substantial amendment of the AAP. The City will also comply with any additional actions required by local law.

## 8. Expedited Processes Related to Flexibility Provided by the CARES Act

The Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES Act) has provided additional CDBG-CV funds and other program waivers/flexibilities to allow for the City of Meriden to prevent, prepare for and respond (PPR) to the Coronavirus in Fiscal Years 2019 and 2020. Specifically, it has allowed for waivers to statutory and regulatory comment periods, in-person public hearings, and other Citizen Participation requirements as they relate to drafting, proposing, or amending Consolidated Plans and Annual Action Plans. In line with these waivers, the City of Meriden will follow these processes outlined below.

### *CARES Substantial Amendments to the Consolidated Plan*

The City of Meriden will provide citizens with the opportunity to comment on substantial amendments to the Consolidated Plan under the provision of the CARES Act. A substantial change to the allocation of funds in the Consolidated Plan requiring an amendment will be defined in accordance with the guidance provided above in the section “Substantial Amendments to the Consolidated Plan”. Further, prior to implementing any substantial amendment, the City of Meriden will publish a public notice of the availability of the proposed amendment as a display advertisement in the *Record Journal Newspaper* and by posting the substantial amendment to the City of Meriden website. The City will provide at least a five (5) day comment period for citizens

to submit written comments or views on the proposed amendment(s). The City will also hold a virtual public hearing for the substantial amendment, and an advance notice of at least 5-days will be given for the hearing.

#### *CARES Substantial Amendments to the Annual Action Plan*

The City of Meriden will provide citizens with the opportunity to comment on substantial amendments to the AAP under the provision of the CARES Act. A substantial change to the allocation of funds in the AAP requiring an amendment will be defined in accordance with the guidance provided above in the section “Substantial Amendments to the Annual Action Plan”. If such an amendment is required, a notice stating the reason, amounts and projects to be effected will be published in the *Record Journal Newspaper* and on the City website for a five (5) day comment period prior to submitting to HUD. The City will also hold a virtual public hearing for the substantial amendment, and an advance notice of at least 5-days will be given for the hearing.

National, State, or Local Health authorities recommend social distancing and limiting of public gatherings for public health reasons, therefore public hearings under the provision of the CARES Act will be held virtually. Information related to accessing the virtual hearing and how the public can participate will be placed on the City’s website as well.

#### *Citizen Comments for CARES Substantial Amendments*

The City of Meriden will consider all comments and/or views of citizens received in writing or orally during the comment period or at virtual public hearings, in preparing the substantial amendments to the Consolidated Plan and AAP. The preferred method of submitting written comments will be electronically at the email address listed at the end of this Citizen Participation Plan. A summary of comments or views, and a summary of any comments or views not accepted and the reasons therefore, will be attached to, or included as part of, the Consolidated Plan, AAP, or amended version thereof.

## 9. Performance Reports (CAPER)

The City of Meriden must submit to HUD an annual performance report on the progress it has made in carrying out its Annual Action Plan. This document is the Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Report (CAPER). The City will submit its CAPER to HUD no later than ninety (90) days after the end of each program year. Availability of the CAPER for public review and comment will be noticed via an advertisement in the *Record Journal Newspaper* and will be made available to view for at least fifteen (15) days before it is submitted to HUD. A copy of the CAPER will be available for review in the Community Development Office and online at the Economic Development Department or City website. A summary of comments or views accepted or not accepted and the reasons therefore, will be attached to the CAPER upon submission to HUD. A copy of the final approved CAPER will also be made available to the public.

## 10. Annual Proposals for Funding

The City will accept written proposals for CDBG funding in the manner prescribed by the City of Meriden in the Request for Proposal and Public Information Document. The City will consider funding eligible activities that are consistent with the City's housing and community development objectives. Proposals must be submitted on the City of Meriden CDBG Proposal Forms. Only complete proposals will be considered. The City will publish information on how applicants and apply for funding.

A Notice of Funding Availability and access the City's Request for Proposals and Application Form will be located at the Economic and Community Development webpage at:

<https://www.meridenct.gov/government/departments/economic-development/>

## 11. Technical Assistance

The City will provide technical assistance to groups and representatives of persons of low and moderate income that request such assistance in developing proposals for funding assistance under programs covered by the Consolidated Plan.

## 12. Access to Records

The City will provide residents of the community, public agencies, and other interested parties with reasonable and timely access to information and records relating to the Consolidated Plan, Annual Action Plan, CAPER, and any substantial amendment to these documents. The City has published plans and reports from the past 5 years on its webpage.

## 13. Complaints

The City of Meriden will respond to all written complaints or grievances regarding the CDBG program. The City will provide a timely, substantive written response to every written citizen complaint within 15 working days of receipt of the complaint, where practicable. Written complaints or grievances must be sent to the Grants Administrator via standard mail or email, at the contact information provided below.

## 14. Contact Information

All correspondence, comments, complaints, questions or requests for information regarding the Consolidated Plan and/or the CDBG programs should be directed to:

Lucy Diaz, Community Development Manager & Grants Administrator  
City of Meriden  
142 East Main Street, Meriden, CT 06450  
Phone: (203) 630-4105  
[ldiaz@meridenct.gov](mailto:ldiaz@meridenct.gov)