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**STAMFORD COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
CITIZEN PARTICIPATION PLAN and
PUBLIC HEARING/APPLICATION SCHEDULE
for
PROGRAM YEAR FORTY-NINE
July 1, 2023 - June 30, 2024**

MAYOR CAROLINE SIMMONS

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STAMFORD COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT OFFICE

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ATTACHMENTS:

A) Community Development Plan

B) Proposal Form

C) Consolidated Plan for 2020-2024 by reference available on line at:
<https://www.stamfordct.gov/government/operations/land-use-bureau-planning-zoning-zoning-enforcement/community-development>
or the main branch of Stamford Ferguson Public Library, or the
Stamford Community Development Office.

INTRODUCTION

Compliance with Federal Regulations

The Stamford Community Development Office has developed this Citizen Participation Plan in accordance with Federal regulations 24 CFR Part 91.100 and Part 95.105 governing citizen participation for the Consolidated Plan. These regulations govern how the City of Stamford prepares the Consolidated Plan and the Annual Action Plan in consultation with public and private agencies that provide housing, health services, and social services, including those focusing on service to children, elderly, persons with disabilities, persons with HIV/AIDS and their families, homeless persons. In 2020 the City of Stamford adopted a five-year Consolidated Plan for the strategic use of federal funds that it receives from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).

HUD funds have been provided to the City of Stamford for the past 48 years. For Year 49 which begins July 1, 2023, the City must prepare an Annual Action Plan for the use of HUD funds that are anticipated to be received in 2023-2024, which implements the City of Stamford's 2020-2024 Consolidated Plan.

The Consolidated Plan and Annual Action Plan provide for and encourage citizens to participate in its development, any substantial amendments to the Consolidated Plan, and the Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Report (CAPER). The Stamford Community Development Office especially encourages participation by low income persons, particularly those living in neighborhoods where CDBG funds are proposed to be used. The Stamford Community Development Office will also take actions to encourage the participation of all citizens including minorities and non-English speaking persons and persons with disabilities.

The City of Stamford, in conjunction with the Housing Authority of the City of Stamford, known as Charter Oak Communities (COC), encourages participation of residents of public and assisted housing developments, in developing the Annual Action Plan and implementing the Consolidated Plan. This participation will also include low income residents of targeted revitalization areas in which the developments are located. The City will provide information to the COC about the Annual Action Plan activities related to its housing developments and surrounding communities so that the COC will make this information available to its tenants at the COC's public hearings.

The City will make the Citizen Participation Plan available to the public. The Citizen Participation Plan will be in a format accessible to persons with disabilities, upon request. The purpose of this document is to inform Stamford citizens how to participate in planning and implementing Federal Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds and HOME Investment Partnerships Program (HOME) funds. The Stamford Community Development Office has integrated the comments and suggestions of Stamford residents and organizations in developing this plan

The City of Stamford annually receives approximately \$1,371,165 in Federal entitlement funds for housing and community development activities provided by the U.S. Department of Housing and Community Development (HUD) under the CDBG and HOME Programs. The Stamford Community Development Office uses this funding to leverage other public and private funds to carry-out housing and community development activities. We encourage applicants to use creativity and all available public and private resources to make HUD's housing and community development programs work in our neighborhoods. Since the success of neighborhood revitalization depends upon the residents and business people of Stamford, it is important that you work with the City to identify Stamford's needs and suggest the best way to use HUD funds in Stamford to best meet our needs.

We encourage you to participate in the planning process, and work with community groups to submit proposals for funding allocations for projects and programs relating to Stamford's Consolidated Plan goals. We encourage you to comment on proposals that are presented for consideration for funding.

The Stamford Community Development Office requests that all applicants submit their proposals by the deadline indicated in the enclosed schedule that contains hearings and meetings. The Community Development Block Grant funding proposal form is available at the Stamford Community Development Office and the Ferguson Library (Main Branch).

The Citizen Participation Plan has been developed in accordance with applicable federal regulations. The purpose of this document is to inform Stamford Citizens on how to participate in planning and allocation of federal housing and community development funds. Citizen's comments and suggestions have been utilized in the development of this plan.

If you should have any comments or suggestions, please address them to:

Emily M. Gordon
Director of Housing and Community Development
Community Development Office
888 Washington Boulevard
Stamford, Connecticut 06904-2152
Phone (203) 977-5650
e-mail: egordon@stamfordct.gov

I. PROGRAM EMPHASIS

Within the context of concern of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) for the development of viable urban communities, the City of Stamford and its Stamford Community Development Office have established the following overall goal:

To provide expanded housing and economic opportunities for low income individuals residing in target areas, and to improve public services and community facilities serving this target population.

In order to address the above goal, Stamford Community Development Office funds or provides services in the following primary functional areas utilizing HUD funds that are made available to the City of Stamford:

Primary Functional Areas:

- o Housing
- o Public Improvements
- o Economic Development
- o Administration/Planning/Fair Housing

The complete explanation of the emphasis on these Primary Functional Areas can be found in the Community Development Plan, the Federal Regulations, and the Consolidated Plan.

The following locations have copies of this Citizen Participation Plan:

- o Stamford Community Development Office
- o Ferguson Library
- o Town Clerk's Office
- o Mayor's Office
- o Board of Representatives' Office

Additional copies and further information regarding this Citizen Participation Plan may be obtained by contacting the Stamford Community Development Office.

II. CITIZENS PARTICIPATION

A. Standards of Participation:

(1) The Stamford Community Development Office, through this Citizen Participation Plan, provides opportunities for the people of Stamford to become actively involved in the planning and implementation of housing and community development activities. The City encourages the participation of all residents, particularly low income persons, members of minority groups, residents of low income neighborhoods, the elderly, the disabled, and other persons directly affected by activities funded with the HUD funds. We welcome your comments concerning all aspects of the program, including: the Consolidated Plan, Annual Action Plan and the CAPER.

(2) The Stamford Community Development staff is available throughout the program year to work with agencies, committees, and individuals interested in initiating housing and community development activities. All applicants seeking funding are encouraged to meet with the Stamford Community Development Office prior to submission to discuss their proposals and receive advice on eligibility and efficient program design. Citizens are encouraged to call for an appointment or write for assistance.

(3) The Stamford Community Development Office provides information to the public regarding the past performance of HUD funded activities and will consider suggestions by citizens on how to improve the use of HUD funds in Stamford. Comments may be submitted verbally or in writing at the annual public hearings for the Annual Action Plan. Written comments can be submitted throughout the year to the Stamford Community Development Office. You can also make an appointment with the Community Development Director to discuss your ideas or concerns. The Stamford Community Development Office is open during normal business days/hours of the Government Center.

(4) The Mayor is available to assist Stamford citizens with problems, suggestions or complaints that cannot otherwise be resolved by the Community Development Director. Citizens may call the Mayor's office for an appointment.

(5) The Housing and Community Development/Social Services (HCD/SS) Committee of the Board of Representatives will meet on any issue pertaining to housing and community development. The Committee meets monthly. Anyone interested in meeting with HCD/SS Committee may contact the Community Development Director or the Chairperson of HCD/SS in care of the Board of Representatives Office in the Government Center.

(6) As in the past, any community-wide and/or neighborhood advisory committee that is established by the City of Stamford will have adequate representation of low income persons, members of minority groups and other persons directly affected by the program.

B. Public Hearing

The Stamford Community Development Office conducts at least two public hearings each year to obtain citizen views on the community development programs. The date, time, place and subject matter of public hearings are publicized and are held at times and locations within the City, convenient to persons of low and moderate income residents and accessible to disabled persons.

The public hearing enables citizens to comment on the City of Stamford's Consolidated Plan, Annual Action Plan, the City's housing and community development needs and the CAPER. At one annual public hearing, Community Development Block Grant legislation will be reviewed, comments received on the use and performance of HUD funding investments, and funding proposals from the public will be heard. One public hearing will be held to hear comments on the proposed Annual Action Plan and may be held as a community forum or a workshop on housing and community development issues.

The Stamford Community Development Office will arrange for an interpreter for non-English speaking residents at the Public Hearings when it receives advanced notice that a significant number of non-English speaking residents are expected to participate.

C. Consolidated Plan

- (1) The Stamford Community Development Office published its proposed Consolidated Plan community-wide, which includes a description of activities in sufficient detail, including locations, to allow the public to determine the degree to which they may be affected.
- (2) The Stamford Community Development Office, the Mayor and HCD/SS Committee will consider citizen comments, and; if deemed appropriate, will modify the Consolidated Plan and/or Annual Action Plan.
- (3) The Stamford Community Development Office makes the final Consolidated Plan available to the public.
- (4) If substantial changes in the use of Community Development Block Grant funds are anticipated, the City of Stamford will provide citizens with reasonable notice of and opportunity to comment on any proposed substantial change of use of funds in any primary functional area as identified above.

- (5) A substantial change is the addition of a new Community Development Block Grant activity that is not described in the Annual Action Plan of the Consolidated Plan or an increase or decrease in the aggregate funding allocation in any primary functional area that exceeds twenty-five (25%) percent of the allocation indicated in the Annual Action Plan.
- (6) Whenever a substantial change in the use of Community Development Block Grant funds is planned, the City of Stamford will consider citizen comments, make the modified use of funds available to the public, and submit a copy of the modified plan to HUD.

D. Proposals:

The Stamford Community Development Office will publicize the availability of CDBG funds and solicit proposals.

- (1) Proposals will be logged on the Stamford Community Development Office's master list.
- (2) Proposals will be reviewed for completeness and to determine whether each proposal is eligible according to federal regulations.
- (3) The Mayor and HCD/SS Committee of the Board of Representatives will develop funding recommendations.
- (4) A written response concerning the status of submitted funding proposals will be sent to applicants within thirty (30) days of approval of the Community Development Block Grant budget.

E. Public Hearing Notification:

In order to give adequate notice of a public hearing:

- (1) The Stamford Community Development Office will publish a notice in standard type in the Stamford Advocate at least seven (7) days prior to each public hearing.
- (2) Each notice will indicate the date, time, place and topics to be considered.
- (3) The Stamford Community Development Office will notify community organizations and CDBG funded project sponsors.
- (4) Minutes or recordings will be taken for all public hearings and are kept on file in the Stamford Community Development Office.

Federal housing and community development entitlement funds under the CDBG and HOME Programs are limited and amount to approximately \$1,371,165 to Stamford annually. They are best utilized as a funding leverage source to stimulate other funds and actions. Since the beneficiaries of neighborhood revitalization are citizens of Stamford, it is appropriate that agencies and residents work with the City to determine the community's needs and suggest the best way to utilize HUD funds to meet those needs.

Residents and agencies are encouraged to submit proposals requesting funding allocations for projects and programs relating to Community Development goals and objectives and to participate in the implementation of those funded activities. The Stamford Community Development Office requests that all citizens submit their proposals by the deadline indicated in the enclosed Community Development Plan which contains a detailed schedule of hearings and meetings. The Community Development Block Grant funding proposal form is enclosed as Attachment C to this Citizen Participation Plan.

III. CONSIDERATION OF OBJECTIONS AND/OR COMPLAINTS:

A. Objections:

Persons wishing to object to approval of City of Stamford's certification by HUD may make such objection known to the HUD Area Office (20 Church Street, 10th Floor, Hartford, Connecticut 06103-3220). HUD will consider objections made only on the following grounds.

- (1) The applicant's description of needs and objectives is plainly inconsistent with available facts and data;
- (2) The activities to be undertaken are plainly inappropriate to meeting the needs and objectives identified by the applicant;
- (3) The application does not comply with the federal requirements of the Community Development Block Grant, HOME Program and/or the Consolidated Plan.

B. Complaints:

The Stamford Community Development Office will acknowledge complaints in a timely and responsive manner. The Stamford Community Development Office will make every reasonable effort to provide written responses within 15 working days.

STAMFORD COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
ANNUAL ACTION PLAN
CITIZEN PARTICIPATION & BUDGET SCHEDULE
PROGRAM YEAR FORTY-NINE (JULY 1, 2022 - JUNE 30, 2023)

By Sat., December 31, 2022 Advertisement: The Advocate

Purpose:

1) Inform the public that the Stamford Community Development Office's Citizen Participation Plan, the 2022-2023 Application Schedule, and Stamford Community Development Year 49 Proposal Form are available for review on the Community Development Website.

2) Inform citizens that the recent Community Development Block Grant Consolidated Annual Performance Evaluation Report (CAPER) and HUD approval letter will be available for review.

3) Advise the public of the deadline for submitting Program Year 49 Proposals. *All applicants are encouraged to meet with the Stamford Community Development staff for technical assistance prior to submittal of proposals.*

4) Announce date of Community Development Block Grant Public Hearing, hosted by the Mayor and the Housing, Community Development and Social Services Committee of the Board of Representatives (HCD/SS). Inform citizens that the Stamford Community Development Office at the public hearing will briefly review HUD legislation and CDBG/HOME performance, as reported in its most current CAPER, discuss the City of Stamford housing and community development needs and solicit citizen comments on CDBG performance.

5) Advertise the availability of HUD Entitlement Funds for the next program year (commencing July 1, 2023) and invite community organizations and the general public to submit written proposals for the use of HUD funds and comments on developing an Annual Action Plan for the use of HUD funds.

All pertinent information will be on file at the Ferguson

Library, Town Clerk's Office, Stamford Community Development Office, Board of Representatives Office and the Mayor's Office.

Fri., January 20, 2023	<u>PROPOSAL DEADLINE.</u> Proposals for Year 49 funding and current audit are due to the Stamford Community Development Office at egordon@stamfordct.gov on or prior to this date.
By Wed., January 25, 2023	Stamford Community Development Office provides Year 49 Proposals to the Mayor and HCD/SS Committee.
Tues., January 31, 2023	<u>PUBLIC HEARING.</u> Jointly held by the Mayor and the HCD/SS Committee via remote zoom meeting, 6:30 p.m. Stamford Community Development's Year 49 proposals will be presented and citizen comments on HUD Program performance will be heard.
Date to be determined	HCD/SS Sub-Committee Proposal Review (Optional).
By Tues., February 28, 2023	HCD/SS Committee, Mayor's Office and Stamford Community Development Office to develop recommendations for Year 49 and the Annual Action Plan/budget via remote zoom meeting. Stamford Community Development Office submits the proposed Annual Action Plan/budget as formulated by HCD/SS to the Mayor for approval.
By Wed., March 15, 2023	The Mayor submits the proposed Annual Action Plan/budget and resolution to the Board of Finance and to the Board of Representatives' Steering Committee where it shall be assigned to the HCD/SS Committee for review, comment and modifications.
By Mon., March 27, 2023	<u>ADVERTISEMENT.</u> Publicize proposed Annual Action Plan/budget for 30 day comment period and announce date and time of second public hearing/workshop. Applicants are notified of proposed Annual Action Plan.
Date to be determined	Board of Finance to vote on Year 49 proposed Annual Action Plan/budget.
Tues., April 25, 2023	<u>PUBLIC HEARING.</u> Held by the HCD/SS Committee via remote zoom meeting at 6:30 p.m. to discuss and receive comments on the proposed Annual Action Plan. Vote to recommend the Year 49 Annual Action Plan for approval

by the Board of Representatives.

Mon, May 1, 2023	Regular meeting of the Board of Representatives. Vote on the Year 49 Annual Action Plan and budget.
By Mon., May 15, 2023	Stamford Community Development Office prepares the Annual Action Plan for the Mayor to submit to HUD.
By Fri., June 2, 2023	<u>PUBLISH</u> the Environmental Release of Funds legal notice of the "Finding of No Significant Impact on the Environment" anticipated from planned CDBG and HOME activities. Citizen responses are invited.
Fri., July 1, 2023	Start of CDBG Year 49 Program.
By Fri., Aug 4, 2023	<u>ADVERTISEMENT</u> . Publicize draft CAPER for 15 day comment period
Thurs., Sept. 28, 2023	Year 49 CAPER deadline

NOTE: If by April 24, 2023, Congress has not acted upon the Federal Fiscal Year 2024 budget and if HUD has not notified the City of Stamford of the actual amount of its CDBG and HOME entitlement grants, then the HCD/SS Committee will be forced to delay finalizing the proposed Annual Action Plan.