



Citizen Participation Plan

for the Consolidated Plan

Adopted by Town Council

Town Manager's Office
Christiansburg, VA 24073

CITIZEN PARTICIPATION PLAN **for the Consolidated Plan**

Purpose of the Citizen Participation Plan

The Town of Christiansburg, Virginia is eligible to apply for funds under the federal Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) and the Section 108 Loan Guarantee Program that are provided to the Town through the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). Federal regulations require a Consolidated Plan that details the planning and budgeting aspects of the CDBG program over a 3 or 5 year period. Christiansburg's Consolidated Plan is a five year planning document that is developed with intensive public participation as guided by the Citizen Participation Plan.

The Christiansburg Citizen Participation Plan encourages citizen input in defining housing, community development and public services needs; services to be provided by community-based organizations; the funding priorities for programs and target populations to be served through resources available in the Consolidated Plan. The Participation Plan also sets the public process for the annual performance reports and adopting substantial amendments to either the Citizen Participation Plan or the Consolidated Plan.

Citizen Participation Process

The Town encourages citizen participation from all sectors of the community, with particular emphasis on participation by low and moderate income persons, residents of blighted areas, and areas where federal funds are used or are proposed to be used; and for the participation of minority and non-English speaking residents, as well as persons with mobility, visual, speech or hearing impairments. The Town will provide citizens, public agencies, and other interested parties with reasonable and timely access to information and records relating to the Town's Consolidated Plan, and the use of assistance provided by federal funding sources included in the Plan.

Citizens will have opportunities to comment on housing, community development, public service, and population and program priority needs that are identified in the proposed Consolidated Plan prior to its submission to HUD at public hearings, meetings, or by directly contacting the Town Manager's Office. Information on the Consolidated Plan schedule will be disseminated to local agencies and nonprofit organizations working with minority, non-English speaking, and physically impaired residents to afford as many people as possible the opportunity for full citizen participation.

A range of eligible activities that will benefit very low and low income persons will be funded based on public input. The Town will minimize displacement and assist any persons displaced to the extent possible. Funds may also be made available for temporary housing on a case by case basis.

Technical Assistance

Town staff is available to answer questions concerning the requirements of federal and local funding sources included in the Consolidated Plan, such as available funding amounts, funding priorities, eligible activities, environmental review procedures, equal opportunity requirements, relocation provisions, citizen participation requirements or any other requirements. In cases where staff cannot answer questions pertaining to federal HUD funds, assistance will be requested from HUD.

Town staff will meet with citizen groups in Christiansburg that represent very low, low, and moderate income residents, as well as with citizen groups that express interest in participating in federal and/or local funding sources included in the Consolidated Plan, to explain program and application procedures. These meetings will be held in facilities convenient to the neighborhood or groups requesting the meetings.

Town staff will provide technical assistance, by request, to neighborhood groups, minority groups, community-based organizations, and other residents interested in participating in federal and local funding sources included in the Consolidated Plan. All groups, including the disabled and elderly, and those serving non-English speaking ethnic/minority populations, will be encouraged and assisted in submitting their views and proposals. Town staff will be available to provide assistance in the development and submission of program funding requests and other input.

Any persons requiring assistance should contact the Town Manager's Office at 382-6128.

Public Hearings

The Town will conduct public hearings to obtain the views of citizens on housing, community development and public services needs, and needs for services to be provided by community-based organizations, proposed activities, and program performance. Hearings shall be held after adequate notice (15 days minimum), at times and locations convenient to potential and actual beneficiaries, with accommodation for persons with disabilities and non-English speaking residents. Hearings will be conducted for annual performance reports and substantial amendments to the Consolidated Plan, along with for the Plan itself.

A minimum of two public hearings will be held annually, and prior to the submission of the Consolidated Plan to HUD.

- 1) At least one public hearing will be held by the Town at the beginning of the Consolidated Plan process to solicit citizen comments on housing and community development needs, needs for services to be provided by community-based organizations, proposed activities, and program performance. Testimony received at this hearing will be considered by the Town in preparing the proposed Consolidated Plan.
- 2) Prior to the submission of the Consolidated Plan to HUD, Town Council will hold a public hearing on the proposed Consolidated Plan. This public hearing will be held at a regularly scheduled Council meeting.

Public hearings will be held in the Christiansburg Town Council Chambers (100 East Main Street) or in other locations that are convenient to potential and actual beneficiaries, and that are accessible to persons with disabilities (e.g., the Christiansburg Recreation Center). At public hearings where a significant number of non-English speaking residents are expected to participate, the Town will address their needs by providing an interpreter. Notice of public hearings will include sufficient information about the purpose of the public hearing to permit informed comment from citizens.

Notice of public hearings will be advertised:

- 1) in a newspaper(s) of general circulation at least 15 days prior to the date of the public hearing (i.e. *Roanoke Times* or the *News Messenger*);
- 2) the Town Alert electronic citizen notification system;
- 3) in press releases issued by the Christiansburg Public Relations Department.

Response to Citizen Comments

The Town will append a summary of comments (oral or written) received from citizens through public hearings, focus groups, community meetings and other methods to the final Plan or report when preparing the Consolidated Plan, substantial amendments, or the performance reports.

Comments, complaints, or grievances concerning the Consolidated Plan should be addressed to the Town Manager's Office, 100 East Main Street, Christiansburg, Virginia 24073.

Every effort will be made to respond in writing to written complaints within 15 working days of receipt of the complaint. If additional time is required, written notice will be provided.

Notice of Consolidated Plan Schedule

The Consolidated Plan schedule will be mailed to neighborhood contacts; area associations & nonprofit organizations; ecumenical, business and other community organizations; and interested individuals. The Town will notify all subscribers to the Alert eNews and post notices on social media platforms. Other interested parties will be added to the list upon request to the Town Manager's Office.

Available information will include the amount of funding expected from federal funding sources and programs in the Consolidated Plan including estimated program income, program and application requirements, proposed activities that will benefit very low and low income persons, plans for minimizing displacement caused by proposed activities and assistance opportunities for persons displaced, opportunities for citizen input, submission of project proposals, and schedules for proposed and final applications. This information may be obtained from the Town Manager's Office.

An advertisement of the proposed Consolidated Plan will be published in a newspaper(s) of general circulation and a copy of the Plan will be available to the public for review and comment at least 30 days prior to submission to HUD. The proposed Consolidated Plan will be available for review:

- 1) at the Town Manager's Office;
- 2) on the Town's web site at www.Christiansburg.org; and
- 3) Christiansburg Public Library at 125 Sheltman Street.

The final submission to HUD will also be distributed to these locations.

A public hearing will be held by the Town Council on the proposed Consolidated Plan. Final approval of program priorities and funding recommendations included in the Consolidated Plan will be made by the Town Council.

Amendment of the Consolidated Plan

The Consolidated Plan may be amended with the approval of the Christiansburg Town Council. In addition, Christiansburg Town Council will be notified of all changes, even if they are not substantial and do not require a Council action. The Town will amend the approved Plan whenever it makes one of the following decisions:

- 1) To make a substantial change in its allocation priorities or a substantial change in the method of distribution of funds;
- 2) To carry out an activity or new project, using funds from any program covered by the Consolidated Plan (including program income) not previously described in the action plan in excess of \$50,000; or

A substantial change has been defined as follows:

- 1) Adding more than \$200,000 to an existing project.

In general, any substantial change or adjustment to a Consolidated Plan project budget will be treated as an amendment subject to public notice and a 30-day public review and comment period (minimum). Substantive amendments to the Consolidated Plan will be publicly advertised at least 15 days prior to consideration of the amendments by the Town.

Adoption and Amendment of the Citizen Participation Plan

Proposed changes to the Citizen Participation Plan will be publicly advertised at least 15 days prior to the adoption or amendment of the Citizen Participation Plan by the Town Council to allow time for public comment. Proposed amendments will be made publicly available through the media described herein.