



**BEFORE THE CITY COMMISSION
CITY OF STUART, FLORIDA**

RESOLUTION NUMBER 14-2021

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY OF STUART CITY COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF STUART, FLORIDA ADOPTING A COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT CITIZEN PARTICIPATION PLAN; REPEALING ALL PRIOR RESOLUTIONS IN CONFLICT HEREWITH; PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

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WHEREAS, the City of Stuart City Commission of Stuart, Florida wishes to undertake a Community Development Block Grant Program (CDBG) project pursuant to the requirements established by the State of Florida, Department of Economic Opportunity; and

WHEREAS, the City of Stuart, if awarded, understands it shall be contractually required to adopt a CDBG compliant Citizens Participation Plan and Grievance Policy;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, BY THE CITY COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF STUART, FLORIDA, that:

The City of Stuart City Commission of Stuart, Florida hereby adopts the following CDBG Citizen Participation Plan. This Policy shall become effective immediately upon adoption of this resolution by the City Commission of the City of Stuart, Florida.

In keeping with the provisions of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974 as amended. 24 CFR 570.431 and Florida Department of Economic Opportunity (FDEO) Rule 73C-23, the City of Stuart, Florida hereby establishes a Citizen Participation Plan.

SECTION 1: OVERALL GOAL

The purpose of this plan is to provide the citizens of the City of Stuart with an adequate opportunity for meaningful involvement on a continuing basis and for participation in the planning, development, implementation, and assessment of the City of Stuart's Community Development Block Grant (C D B G) Program.

SECTION 2: OBJECTIVES

- A. To increase interchange of information between CDBG Staff and the local citizens concerning community development and related concerns.
- B. To heighten public awareness as to the purpose and function of the CDBG Program and the types of assistance available, especially among low/moderate income residents of CDBG target areas.
- C. To increase community participation in program planning and implementation and thereby create local support for CDBG goals.
- D. To allow affected or potentially affected citizens to directly assist in shaping and guiding the program's impact upon their neighborhood as well as the community at large.

SECTION 3: CONSISTENCY

This Citizen Participation Plan is consistent with the requirements Section 508 of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1987 which amends Section 104(a) of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974, 24 CFR, 570.4312 and FDEO Rule 73C-23. This Plan supersedes all other Citizen Participation Plans utilized by the City of Stuart, Florida. This Plan sets forth the procedures for Citizen Participation that shall be utilized during each stage of the Community Development Block Grant process and upon its adoption by the City Commission of the City of Stuart and shall remain in effect until otherwise amended.

SECTION 4: OVERVIEW

- A. Citizen participation is a vital element in the preparation of a method by which community involvement will be solicited and maintained throughout the entire Community Development Block Grant process. The City of Stuart, Florida shall strive to ensure such participation by utilizing the public hearing process and by appointing a Citizens Advisory Committee.
- B. It shall be the policy of the City of Stuart that the effectiveness of citizen participation in the planning, development, implementation, and assessment of the Community Development Block Grant process be analyzed during the public hearings and other called meetings and amendments to the Plan made when necessary.

SECTION 5: CITIZEN PARTICIPATION TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS

Since the purpose of this plan is to provide the citizens of the City of Stuart, Florida with an adequate opportunity for meaningful involvement in the planning, implementation, and evaluation of the City's Community Development Block Grant process. It shall be the City's policy to solicit and respond in a timely manner to the views and proposals of all citizens, particularly low and moderate income persons, members of minority groups, and residents of blighted areas where the potential exists for the undertaking of CDBG eligible activities. Upon adoption of this Plan, the following technical requirements shall govern this process:

A. Public Hearings

1. To ensure adequate notice of public hearings, all notices shall be printed in the non-legal section of the (local newspaper) no less than five (5) days and no more than twenty (20) days prior to each public hearing held at any stage of the Community Development Block Grant process.
2. When deemed appropriate, the City may also post notices of such hearings in not less than two (2) public places. The posting of notices may only supplement publication of public hearing notices. A news article located in a conspicuous place in the newspaper may be considered as sufficient printed notice to fulfill this requirement. The City may also utilize additional means (personal contact, radio, etc.) to the maximum extent possible to reach target groups identified above when this is necessary. A minimum of two (2) public hearings will be held before the City Commission to provide the greatest access for citizen participation in developing CDBG applications.
3. Because of the size of the City, and the centrality of the City Hall, this requirement will generally be satisfied by holding the hearings at the City of Stuart City Hall.
4. The City of Stuart has a known concentration of non-English speaking residents; therefore, the services of a translator will be obtained in the event a significant number of residents of a target area do not speak English and request such services. Notices shall include information concerning the handicapped.

B. Citizens Advisory Task Force

1. The City shall establish a Citizens Advisory Task Force (CATF) for all CDBG projects other than economic development projects, which shall consist of no less than three (3), not more than seven (7) members appointed by the City Commission in a manner, which will ensure substantial representation of low-and-moderate income persons and minorities. Committee members shall serve two (2) year terms.

2. The Citizens Advisory Task Force shall serve as a focal point or liaison between the City and its constituents in regard to CDBG project development and implementation. The Committee shall have the following duties and responsibilities:
 - a. Disseminate information concerning eligible activities, proposed projects, and the status of current projects.
 - b. Coordinate various groups which choose to participate in the implementation of community development activities.
 - c. Review written comments assessing the implementation of the CDBG program.
 - d. Monitor the overall implementation of the CDBG program and review program status with administrative personnel on a quarterly basis or more frequently if deemed necessary.
 - e. Monitor the overall implementation of the CDBG program and review program status with administrative personnel on a quarterly basis or more frequently if deemed necessary.
 - f. Monitor the citizen participation process and propose such amendments as may be necessary to this Participation Plan.
3. The Citizen Advisory Task Force shall be a tool through which program progress can be analyzed and proposed amendments discussed, if applicable.

C. Access to Records

1. The City of Stuart shall maintain a complete project file on its Community Development Block Grant program(s) which shall be available for public inspection during regular office hours in the City Clerk's office. This file shall include but not be limited to the following:
 - a. Citizens Participation Plan
 - b. Community Development Plan
 - c. Community Development Block Grant Application
 - d. Program Amendments
 - e. Environmental Review Record
 - f. Financial Status
 - g. Fair Housing Ordinance
 - h. Equal Opportunity Requirements
 - i. Policies and Procedures Governing Beneficiary Eligibility
 - j. Performance Assessment Report
 - k. Written Comments and City's Response
2. Generally, the project file is available for review by any citizen or group; however, in no case will disclosure be made of any program participant's financial status.

D. Technical Assistance

The program staff shall provide technical assistance to citizen committees and groups and interested persons in the citizen participation process. This technical assistance shall focus on increasing public access to participating in the Community Development Block Grant decision making process through the Citizens Advisory Committee and ensuring that this participation is meaningful. Technical assistance will also be utilized to foster an understanding of program requirements, i.e., equal opportunity, relocation, environmental policies, beneficiary eligibility, etc.

E. Grievances

All grievances regarding individual decisions made as a part of the implementation of the Community Development Block Grant program shall be submitted, in writing to the Program Administrator. If a person feels that his/her complaint has not been sufficiently addressed by the Program Administrator's response, an appeal may be made to the Citizens Advisory Task Force.

1. If a response satisfactory to the aggrieved is not issued by the Committee, an appeal may be made to the City Commission. At any point, the aggrieved may register a written complaint with the State of Florida agency responsible for administering the Small Cities CDBG program. All written complaints registered at the local level shall have a written response from the Administrator, Committee, or the City Commission within fifteen (15) working days of the lodging of said complaint. A file of all grievances and responses shall be maintained and available for public inspection. In the event the aggrieved has exhausted all appeals without a decision satisfactory to himself/herself, he/she may pursue other legal channels in an attempt to achieve satisfaction.

F. Amendment

The amendment of this Plan shall follow all citizen participation requirements delineated in the Section Post Approval Requirements and applicable technical provisions. Such amendments shall require adoption by the City Commission prior to becoming effective.

G. Authority

No part of this Participation Plan shall be construed to restrict the responsibility and authority of the elected officials of the City of Stuart, Florida, in the development and implementation of any Community Development Block Grant program. Rather it is a vehicle through which the elected officials of the City of Stuart can assure citizen input prior to their decision-making process.

CITIZEN PARTICIPATION IN EACH STAGE OF THE CDBG PROGRAM

SECTION 6: Application Stage

The objective of citizen participation at this stage is to provide meaningful community-wide citizen input into the decision-making process during the consideration of priorities and of options associated with the development and submission of the application. The following requirements will be met during the application stage and certified to in the body of the application:

A. Review of the Citizen Participation Plan

B. Presentation of the City's Community Development Plan.

Title I of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974, as revised, has as its primary objective, the development of viable urban communities by providing decent housing, suitable living environment, and expanding economic opportunities, principally for persons of low and moderate incomes. Consistent with these objectives, the City of Stuart will develop a Community Development Plan that identifies the community development and housing needs and specifies both short- and long-term community development objectives to meet the established needs.

C. Public Hearings

A minimum of two (2) public hearings will be held before the City Commission during this stage. The purpose of the first public hearing is to assess community needs and problems in an effort to determine the most pressing needs of the community and to solicit citizen input as to the ranking of said needs. The purpose of the second hearing is to present for public comment and review the program of activities that the City has selected for the application as best suited to meet these needs. The City may determine that more than two (2) public hearings during the application stage are desirable and thus hold extra hearings. All such hearings shall be governed by the requirements as set forth herein. The following information will be presented to the public at each public

hearing during this stage:

1. The range of activities that may be undertaken with CDBG funds, the kinds of activities previously funded: if any, and the progress made with respect to those activities.
2. An overview of the CDBG program to include analysis of FDEO rating process and discussion of applicable grant ceilings.
3. Discussion of the competitive nature of the CDBG process and the likelihood that more applications will be submitted to FDEO than can be funded.
4. The process to be followed in soliciting and responding to the views and proposals of citizens in a timely manner.
5. Discussion of the role of the Citizen Advisory Task Force.

SECTION 6: POST APPROVAL STAGE

- A. The City shall assure continuing citizen participation throughout the life of the Community Development Block Grant program, particularly when considering amendments to the program that significantly alter the project. The City shall conduct at least one (1) public hearing, in accordance with the requirements of such hearings, during the grant amendment process for substantial amendments to the program.
- B. The involvement of citizens in the amendment process is felt to be essential. To ensure adequate citizen participation during the conduct of the program, the following requirements for amendments will be met:
 1. A minimum of one (1) public hearing will be held prior to the submission of any substantial amendment to the project requiring formal approval by FDEO according to the provisions of this Plan.
 2. Citizens will be involved in amendments not requiring final FDEO approval, budget revisions, and local changes in the CDBG Program. Such changes will be presented for review to the Citizen's Advisory Committee in a meeting of such Committee which shall be open to the public.
 3. The City shall attempt to involve citizens residing in the target area(s) affected by any amendment or revision in the development of such amendment or revision. This shall be accomplished through the dissemination of information on such program changes to the affected residents.

SECTION 7: ASSESSMENT OF PERFORMANCE

Citizens of the City of Stuart will be provided opportunities to comment on the implementation of the City's CDBG program and to assess the performance of the City in meeting its community development goals and objectives. Continual community

assessment of the effectiveness of the program is considered essential to the success of a CDBG program. In order to ensure this involvement, the City will utilize the following approaches:

1. The Citizen Advisory Task Force, established in accordance with this Plan, will function as the focal point of the evaluation and assessment process. This group will continually provide the City and its staff with feedback on the effectiveness of the program and suggest changes, if applicable.
2. The public hearing process will be used to ensure community-wide participation in the evaluation of the program.
3. Written comments on the program will be received at any time during the life of the program. All written comments will be presented to the Citizen Advisory Task Force for their review and responses by the appropriate party within fifteen (15) working days.

SECTION 8: CITIZEN COMMENT TO FDEO

Persons may comment to FDEO at any time concerning the City of Stuart's failure to comply with the citizen participation requirements as set forth in this Plan.

SECTION 9: This resolution shall take effect upon adoption.

Commissioner _____ offered the foregoing resolution and moved its adoption. The motion was seconded by Commissioner _____ and upon being put to a roll call vote, the vote was as follows:

EULA R. CLARKE, MAYOR
 MERRITT MATHESON, VICE MAYOR
 BECKY BRUNER, COMMISSIONER
 TROY MCDONALD, COMMISSIONER
 MIKE MEIER, COMMISSIONER

YES	NO	ABSENT	ABSTAIN

ADOPTED this ____ day of _____, 2021.

ATTEST:

MARY R. KINDEL
CITY CLERK

EULA R. CLARKE
MAYOR

APPROVED AS TO FORM
AND CORRECTNESS:

MICHAEL J. MORTELL, ESQ.
CITY ATTORNEY