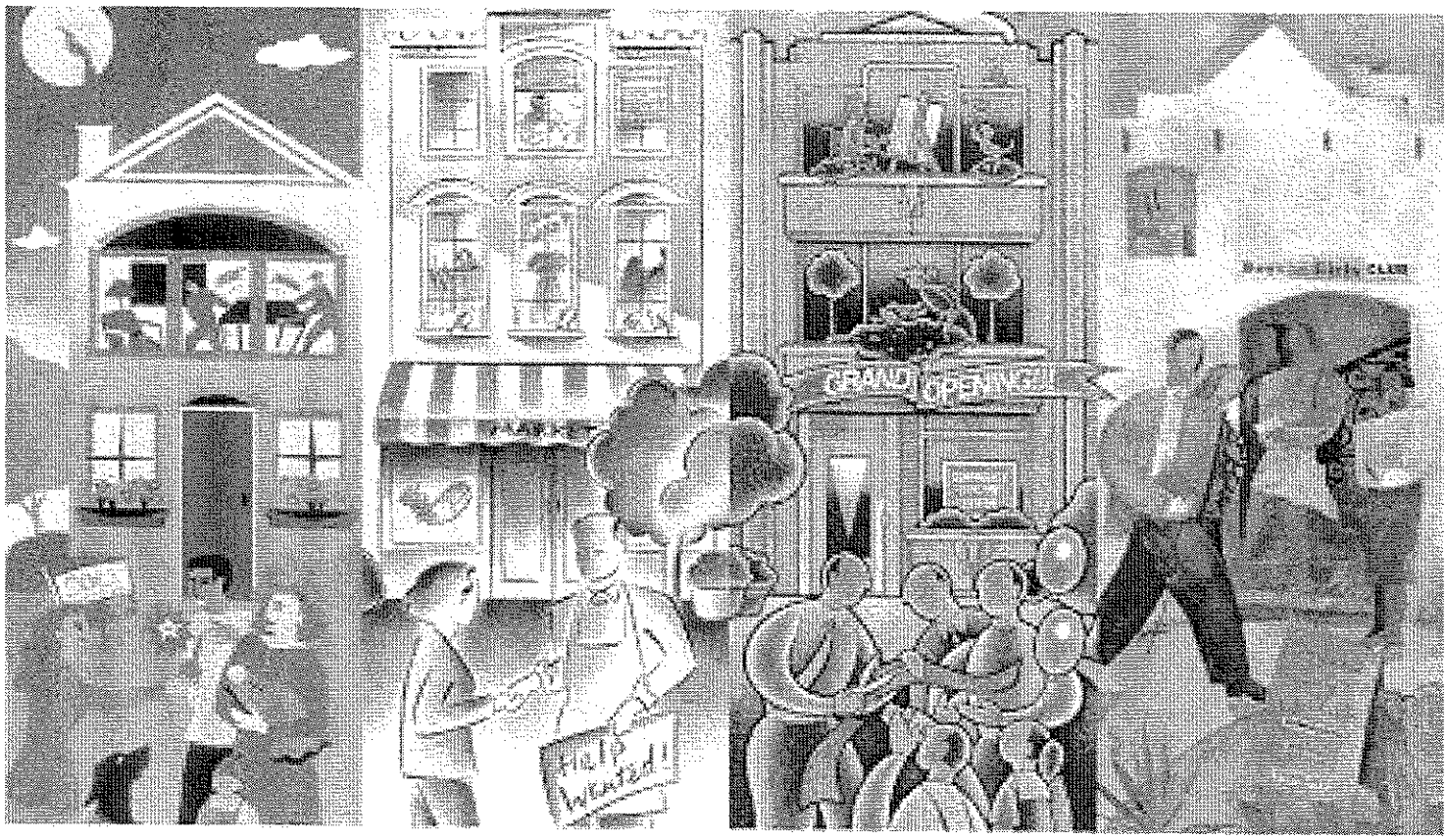

Housing and Community Development
CITIZEN PARTICIPATION PLAN

HAMILTON COUNTY
Community
Development
Department

EQUAL HOUSING
OPPORTUNITY

Housing and Community Development Citizen Participation Plan
Hamilton County Participating Jurisdictions

This proposed Citizen Participation Plan (CPP) provides for and encourages the participation of all the jurisdictions in the Hamilton County Community Development Program.

The CPP will involve from the beginning a broad range of citizens with an emphasis of very low, low, and moderate income residents, where housing and community development funds may be spent.

Citizens, public agencies, and other interested parties, including those most affected, will have the opportunity to receive information, review and submit comments on any proposed action.

All the meetings, including the Public Hearings will be:

- Conveniently timed for people who might or will benefit from program funds
- Accessible to people with disability
- Adequately publicized
- Receptive to views of citizens, public agencies and other interested parties
- Held in a central location to outreach low-income areas in each community

Technical assistance will also be provided to jurisdictions or groups that request assistance in developing proposals under the consolidated plan.

Housing and Community Development Citizen Participation Plan

STAGE ONE

Community Level Assessment

First Public Hearing at the Local Government Level

Needs Assessment

Housing and Community Development (HCD)

1. Identify and outreach to low income areas and encourage their participation and input.

2. Develop a list of Housing and Community Development needs for each Jurisdiction. Discuss and prioritize appropriate projects to meet those needs

Local Public Officials develop proposed Community Development projects.

Second Public Hearing at the Local Government Level.

The purpose of this Second Public Hearing at the local level is for the local Public Officials to present to the citizens the proposed (formulated) community needs and projects for consideration and input.

Local Public Officials approve and submit a list of projects to Hamilton County for funding consideration.

County Level Assessment

Staff outreaches and consults with Public Housing Agencies (PHA) and Public & Private Community Service Organizations to determine needs, coordinate actions and recommend projects for funding consideration.

Staff holds a public meeting concurrently with a meeting of the Community Development Advisory Committee, to consider needs for countywide projects.

STAGE TWO

Preparation of the Consolidated Plan

After receiving applications from the Communities and Agencies, the staff will prepare a proposed Annual Action Plan and 3 Year Plan, taking into consideration comments received at the public meetings.

County-Wide Public Hearing

The purpose of this Public Hearing held by the Board of County Commissioners (BCC) is to present the proposed Hamilton County Consolidated Plan for public comment.

STAGE THREE

Approval Process

The Board of County Commissioners will review the proposed Consolidated Plan and the citizen comments, then direct the staff in their preparation of the final Consolidated Plan.

Approval of the Consolidated Plan by the Board of the County Commissioners.

General Guidelines

This full three stage process will be repeated every three years in conjunction with the CDBG urban county qualification process to develop the Housing and Community Development 3 Year Plan. During the second and third years of that cycle, local governments need only reaffirm projects that were part of the plan. Should a local community wish to change projects scheduled for year two or three of the plan, the stage one, Community Level Assessment process must be followed. Stage two, and Stage three of this Citizen Participation Plan will be followed in developing the annual action plan for years two and three of the three year cycle.

Plan Amendments

Should a substantial change, such as the addition of a new project not included in the annual action plan, be proposed during the program year, the following procedures will be used to amend the Consolidated Plan:

1. A public hearing will be held at either the local or county-wide level, as appropriate, to discuss the proposed amendment and receive public comment on same.

2. The Board of County Commissioners will then review the proposed amendment and the public hearing record prior to taking any formal action to approve or deny the proposed amendment.

Reports and Information

Interested citizens may request information about the Consolidated Plan or the status of any plan activities during the program year. In addition, the County will prepare an annual report which details accomplishments in meeting the goals of the strategic plan and the annual action plan each year. Copies of that report will be available to interested citizens upon request.

Revised: 08/08

HOUSING and COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
CITIZEN PARTICIPATION PLAN
HAMILTON COUNTY PARTICIPATING JURISDICTIONS

STAGE I

Community Level Assessment
First Public Hearing at the Local Government Level to Identify Low Income Areas and Encourage Residents Participation.
Develop HCD Needs.

County Level Assessment
Staff Outreaches and Consults with PHA and Public Community Service Organizations.
Determine County-wide HCD Needs, Coordinate Actions and Recommend Projects for Funding Consideration.

Community Level Assessment
Local Public Officials
Develop Proposed Community Development Projects

Hold Meeting of the Community Development Advisory Committee in Conjunction with a Public Meeting

Community Level Assessment
Second Public Hearing at Local Government Level.
Discuss and Prioritize Projects.

Community Level Assessment
Local Public Officials Approve and Submit a List of Projects to Hamilton County for Funding Consideration

STAGE II

Preparation of the Consolidated HCD Plan
Staff Prepares a Proposed Annual Action Plan and 3 year Plan.

County-Wide Public Hearing
Presentation of the Proposed Plans to the BCC and the Public.

STAGE III

The Board of County Commissioners
Review the Plans. Direct the Staff in Preparation of the Final Plans

The Board of County Commissioners
Approve the Annual Action and 3 Year Plans.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION FOR CITIZEN PARTICIPATION

The Hamilton County Community Development Program provides several opportunities for citizen participation – before, during and after each program year. (March 1 – February 28).

1. **BEFORE, as part of the application process.**

   The County Community Development Department will provide technical assistance to Low-Moderate income citizens who request such assistance in preparing and submitting Community Development Project requests.

   Each participating local community in Hamilton County schedules a public hearing to obtain citizen views on housing and community development needs. Prior notice of this hearing is provided by the community, and Low-Moderate income residents or those who reside in blighted areas are encouraged to attend the meeting and make their needs known.

   After the hearing is held, the local governing body makes a final determination of local priorities and projects for which Community Development funding will be requested. The request is sent to the Community Development Department, and another opportunity for citizen participation is provided, as described below.

   The County reviews these local requests and prepares an annual Action Plan. This is essentially a list of proposed projects. It also includes any "county-wide" projects recommended by the Community Development Department and/or the Board of County Commissioners.

   The Action Plan is published in the newspaper (county-wide circulation). As part of this publication, the County also gives notice of a public hearing to be held by the Board of County Commissioners. The Action Plan will be presented, and citizen views on community development needs can again be heard.

   In the same published notice, citizens are also advised of the availability of information regarding the proposed amount of Community Development funds to be used for activities benefiting low and moderate income persons. In addition, this notice advises of local plans concerning any possible displacement of persons as a result of Community Development funded activities. That information will be available for citizen review at the Community Development Department Office during regular business hours.

   Following the hearing before the County Commissioners, the Community Development Department prepares a final Action Plan. This Action Plan is submitted to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). It is made available for review by interested citizens, and notice of its availability is published in the newspaper (county-wide circulation). The Action Plan can be examined at the Community Development Department Office during business hours.

In summary, three public notices of opportunity for citizen participation are published as part of the application process:

a. local community notice/hearing

b. county-wide publication of Action Plan/Commissioners Hearing

c. county-wide published notice of availability Action Plan, and other information (including notice of public access to records of past use of Community Development funds, and notice that any amended Action Plan will also be available to the public – see Section 2).

After reviews by HUD, the Action Plan is approved and the program year begins – generally expected to occur on or about March 1st.

2. <u>DURING the program year</u>.

The Community Development program also provides opportunity for citizen comment whenever a "substantial change" in the use of funds (as shown in final statement) is proposed during the program year.

<u>A substantial change includes</u>:

A) A proposal to delete a previously approved project or to add a new project.

B) A transfer between existing projects where the transferred amount is greater than 25% of the budget of the larger project and exceeds $10,000.

C) There is a significant change in the character, scope, scale or location of the project that requires an amended environmental review.

When a community proposes a "substantial change", the local governing body must publish a notice describing the proposed change and set a public hearing before the local governing body to receive citizen comments. After citizen comments (if any) have been received and considered, the governing body submits the proposal to the Community Development Department. Formal action to amend the Action Plan is taken by the County. A copy of the amended Action Plan is sent to HUD.

A similar process is followed for substantial changes proposed by the County for any "county wide" projects. In these cases, notice is published by the Community Development Department for a hearing to receive citizen comments on the proposal. The County then formally takes action to amend the Action Plan and send it to HUD. The amended final Action Plan is available for review at the Community Development office during regular business hours.

3. <u>AFTER the program year</u>.

At the completion of each program year, the Community Development Department prepares for submission to HUD a Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Report (CAPER). This summarizes the status of all active projects in the Hamilton County program. Preparation of the CAPER is completed within 60 days of the end of the program year.

The CAPER is then made available for review and comment by interested parties. Notice of its availability is published in a newspaper of general circulation. All written comments concerning the CAPER that are reviewed by the Community Development office within the following 15 days are included with the CAPER submission to the Department of HUD. The CAPER and comments must be submitted to the Federal agency within 90 days of the end of the program year. Other public documents relating to the Community Development program are also available at the Community Development Department.

The County Community Development Department will provide a written response to all written complaints or grievances within 15 working days. If a response can not be given within 15 days, the complainant will be told why the response is delayed and when a response may be expected.