

CITY OF CORRY

Resolution

20-04

Present by: Mayor Mitchell

RESOLUTION ADOPTING A MODIFICATION TO THE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT (CDBG) PROGRAM CITIZEN PARTICIPATION PLAN FOR THE CITY OF CORRY.

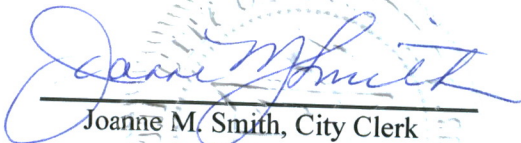
**WHEREAS**, THE City of Corry is an “entitlement” City under the provisions of PA Act 179 of 1984 which entitles it to receive an annual allocation of Community Development Block Grant funds from the PA Department of Community and Economic Development (PA DCED) with said funds to be used to undertake housing and community development activities which principally benefit persons of low-to- moderate income; and

**WHEREAS**, as the recipient of CDBG funds the City of Corry is to have in place a Citizen Participation Plan which provides for, and encourages, citizen participation and which emphasizes participation by persons of low and moderate income, particularly residents of predominantly low and moderate-income neighborhoods, slum or blighted areas, and areas in which the grantee proposes to use CDBG funds; and

**WHEREAS**, the City of Corry, acting through the Erie County Housing Authority has modified their CDBG Citizen Participation Plan which said plan shall supersede all other CDBG Citizen Participation plans which may have been adopted by City of Corry and

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the City of Corry officially adopt the modification to the CDBG Citizen Participation Plan this 18<sup>th</sup> day of May, 2020.

ATTEST:

  
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Joanne M. Smith, City Clerk

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
David E. Mitchell, Mayor

**COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT (CDBG) PROGRAM  
CITIZEN PARTICIPATION PLAN**

**FOR  
CITY OF CORRY**

**Administered by  
Erie County Housing Authority  
120 South Center Street  
P.O. Box 38  
Corry, PA 16407**

**Adopted by City of Corry Council on  
May 18, 2020**

# COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT (CDBG) PROGRAM CITIZEN PARTICIPATION PLAN

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**CITIZEN PARTICIPATION PLAN  
CITY OF CORRY  
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT (CDBG) PROGRAM**

**SECTION 1 – BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

In 1984 the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania enacted Act 179 establishing the State Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program the purpose of which was to provide certain counties and municipalities with an annual allocation of grant funding to help develop viable communities through the provision of decent housing, a suitable living environment, and expanded economic opportunities for persons primarily of low-to-moderate income. The Commonwealth receives its CDBG funds from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) pursuant to Title 1 of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974, as amended.

The Commonwealth's CDBG program is administered by the PA Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED) and the funds are distributed according to the following state formula:

- *38% to eligible counties*
- *38 to eligible boroughs, incorporated towns and townships*
- *24% to eligible cities*
- *13% for discretionary (competitive) projects*
- *2% for state administrative costs*

The City of Corry is an *eligible* municipality which is entitled to receive an annual allocation of CDBG funds. The City of Corry has obtained entitlement status as a result of having a population of 4,000 or more according to the latest Decennial Census and meeting the minimum standard of physical and economic distress.

The City of Corry, acting through the Erie County Housing Authority has been designated as the local entity responsible for the administration of the City of Corry's CDBG program.

**SECTION 2 – POLICY STATEMENT**

It is the public policy of the City of Corry to provide for and encourage citizen participation in the planning, implementation and assessment of the City's CDBG program.

To facilitate this policy, the City has developed and adopted this "CDBG Citizen Participation Plan" which sets forth policies and procedures to maximize opportunity for citizen participation in the community development process. This Plan supersedes all other CDBG Citizen Participation Plans which may have been adopted by the City of Corry.

In undertaking its CDBG program the City of Corry strongly encourages participation by persons of low and moderate income, residents of blighted areas, and residents of areas where community development funds are utilized. Additionally, participation is strongly encouraged from minorities and persons with disabilities.

### **SECTION 3 – SCOPE OF PARTICIPATION**

The City of Corry will make reasonable efforts to provide for citizen participation during the community development process and throughout the planning, implementation and assessment of all CDBG programs undertaken by the City, including, but not limited to, the following phases:

1. Identification and assessment of housing and community development needs;
2. Determination of CDBG project(s) and the development of CDBG application(s);
3. Revisions and/or modifications to approved CDBG programs/projects; and,
4. Assessment of CDBG program performance.

### **SECTION 4 – CONTACT AGENCY/PERSON**

The Erie County Housing Authority (ECHA) is responsible for the development, publication, and implementation of citizen participation of the CDBG program. The ECHA will disseminate information concerning proposed projects and status of current project activities; coordinate applicable groups participating in the community development process; receive written comments; serve as a conduit by which ideas, comments, and proposals from local residents may be transmitted to local officials; and monitor citizen participation process and proposing such amendments to the CDBG Citizen Participation Plan as necessary.

All questions concerning the CDBG program including citizen participation in the community development process should be directed to the CDBG Administrator whose office is located at the Erie County Housing Authority, 120 South Center Street, P.O. Box 38, Corry, PA 16407. The CDBG Administrator may be contacted by mail; phone: (814) 665-5161; fax: (814) 664-7230; or email: [bweaver@eriecountyha.org](mailto:bweaver@eriecountyha.org).

### **SECTION 5 – TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE**

The ECHA will be responsible for providing technical assistance to individual citizens and citizen groups, especially those groups representative of persons of low and moderate income, as may be required to adequately provide for citizen participation in the planning, implementation and assessment of the CDBG program.

Technical assistance shall be provided on request and may include, but not necessarily be limited to: interpreting the CDBG program and its rules, regulations, procedures and/or requirements; providing information and/or materials concerning the CDBG program; and, assisting low and moderate income citizens, and residents of blighted neighborhoods to develop statements of view, identify their needs, and to develop activities and proposals for projects which, when implemented, will resolve those needs.

### **SECTION 6 – PUBLIC HEARINGS**

Public hearings will be the primary means of obtaining citizen views and responding to proposals and questions related to community development and housing needs, proposed CDBG activities and past CDBG performance.

A minimum of two (2) public hearings will be held each fiscal year. Both hearings are held prior to the submission of the funding application to DCED. The CDBG Administrator will be responsible for conducting the public hearings.

The primary purpose of Public Hearing #1 is to assess community needs and problems in an effort to determine the most critical needs to be addressed by the CDBG program. Public Hearing #2 will identify the activities proposed to be undertaken with CDBG funds to address the needs. The time period between the hearings may be several weeks or months depending on several factors including when DCED indicates the date for submission of the application and the amount of grant funds available.

Information to be conveyed and program areas to be discussed at **Public Hearing #1** will include:

- Purpose of hearing and background information including reason for entitlement status and the amount of CDBG funding obtained over the years.
- Amount of funds anticipated for the upcoming fiscal year.
- Anticipated date when application will be submitted to DCED.
- Range of activities which may be undertaken with CDBG funds. Also, examples of ineligible activities.
- Identify the National Objectives of the CDBG program with particular emphasis on the *primary objective of benefiting low-to-moderate (LMI) persons*. At least 70% of funds must go towards meeting this objective.
- Explanation of what is a LMI person – 80% of median income. Provide current income limits.
- Explanation of “primarily benefiting” – at least 51% LMI. Also, indicate that some groups of persons like the elderly and adults with disabilities are “presumed” by HUD to be LMI.
- How concentrations of LMI persons are determined – HUD census information or income surveys.
- Identification of the types and levels of assistance the City would make available to persons displaced by CDBG funded activities if such relocation was necessary.
- Review prior use of CDBG funds – usually previous 3 years.
- Review/revise prior Three Year CDBG Plan which assesses the jurisdiction’s needs and objectives related to housing; public facilities/improvement; public services; and economic development.
- Take comment on potential projects. Discuss the need for income surveys.
- Discuss remaining schedule of events for the program/fiscal year including anticipated date of Public Hearing #2.

Information to be conveyed at **Public Hearing #2** will include:

- Identification of the activities proposed to be undertaken with CDBG funds.
- The amount of CDBG and other funds allocated for each activity.
- The National Objective which is being met.
- In addition to identifying the proposed activity/project for the current fiscal year, identify likely activities for year 2 and 3 of the Three Year Plan.
- Solicit citizen views and comments.
- Discuss remaining schedule of events including when the governing body will pass a resolution and when the application will be submitted to DCED.

All attendees at the hearings will be asked to sign-in and provide contact information. Minutes of the hearing will be taken by the secretary of the City of Corry and maintained in the Housing Authority's citizen participation file. Any individual unable to attend the public hearings may contact the CDBG Administrator and request a copy of any and all documents that were distributed at the hearing, including a copy of the minutes.

### **SECTION 6.1 – PUBLIC HEARING LOCATION/ACCESSIBILITY**

Public Hearing #1 and Public Hearing #2 for the City's CDBG program will normally be held before Corry City Council in Council Chambers, located at 100 South Center Street, Corry, PA. These hearings are usually conducted ½ hour before a regularly scheduled City Council meeting which is held twice a month on Mondays. Typically, at the regularly scheduled Council meeting to following Public Hearing #2 Council will pass a resolution approving submission of the CDBG application to DCED.

The facility noted above is accessible to persons with disabilities. If hearing-impaired or non-English speaking residents request assistance to participate in a public hearing, the ECHA and City of Corry officials will seek to retain appropriate interpreter services to allow such residents to participate. The ECHA and City of Corry officials will consider it mandatory only in instances where it is expected that a significant number of hearing impaired or non-English speaking residents will be in attendance. Persons needing special accommodations or translators should make their requests at least 5 days before the meeting to assure that special needs are met.

### **SECTION 6.2 – PUBLIC NOTICES**

The public shall be provided advance notice of the public hearings. A notice shall be published in the Classified Section of the Corry Journal under "Public Notices", posted at the City Building, posted on the ECHA Website and the City's Website, at least five (5) calendar days prior to the hearing.

The Notice of Public Hearing #1 will contain the following information:

- The date, time and location of Public Hearing #1.
- A Statement that the City of Corry intends to make application to DCED for CDBG funds for which it is entitled to under the provisions of PA Act 179 of 1984.
- The amount of CDBG funds available or anticipated to be made available.
- The range of activities which can be undertaken with CDBG funds.
- Indicate that eligible activities must meet one of three (3) National Objectives and that the primary objective of the CDBG program is to benefit low-to-moderate income persons and that at least 70% of the CDBG monies must go towards meeting this Objective.
- A statement that citizens may comment/provide input on potential projects as well as comment on the prior use of CDBG funds.
- A statement that the City has a Residential Anti-Displacement and Relocation Assistance Plan in place to address the possibility of the displacement of persons resulting from the undertaking of a CDBG funded activity.
- A statement that those unable to attend the hearing may comment on any of the topics to be discussed at the hearing by contacting the City of Corry or the ECHA.
- A statement that the City of Corry and ECHA will make every effort to provide reasonable accommodations for those with a disability if requested.

The Notice of Public Hearing #2 will contain the following information:

- The date, time and location of Public Hearing #2.
- Sufficient detail on the proposed use of funds to permit meaningful citizen comments at the public hearing.
- The deadline for comment prior to the date that City Council will meet to consider the application and where and when the proposed application may be inspected prior to the meeting of City Council.
- The date, time and location of the meeting where City Council body will consider approval of the application. (This meeting must be after the second public hearing and the deadline for public comment).
- A statement that the ECHA and City of Corry will make every effort to provide reasonable accommodations for those with a disability if requested.

## **SECTION 7 – PROGRAM INFORMATION**

Citizens will be provided full access to CDBG program information during all phases of the community development process. To facilitate citizen access, the CDBG administrator will keep all documents related to the CDBG program on file at the Erie County Housing Authority. Information from program/project files shall be made available for examination and duplication, on request, during regular business hours. CDBG program information and materials will be available and distributed to the public at the scheduled public hearing as outlined in the Plan.

Materials to be made available shall include, but are not necessarily limited to: the CDBG Citizen Participation Plan; minutes of public hearing, mailings' CDBG program applications; letters of approval; grant agreements; environmental review records; procurement and financial records; project design and construction specifications; labor standards documentation; performance and evaluation reports; annual and semi-annual reports required by DCED; written comments or complaints concerning the CDBG program and written responses from the CDBG Administrator; and copies of the applicable Federal and State rules, regulations, policies, requirements and procedures governing the CDBG program.

In no case shall the ECHA disclose any information concerning the financial status of any program participant which may be required to document program eligibility or benefit. Furthermore, the ECHA shall not disclose any information which may, in the opinion of the City of Corry's Solicitor, be deemed of a confidential nature.

## **SECTION 8 – PROCEDURES FOR COMMENTS, OBJECTIONS AND COMPLAINTS**

The Public Hearings described in this Citizen Participation Plan are designed to facilitate public participation in all phases of the CDBG process. Citizens are encouraged to submit their views and proposals at the public hearings. However, to ensure that citizens are given the opportunity to assess and comment on all aspects of the program on a continuous bases, citizens may, at any time, submit written comments or complaints to the CDBG Administrator who shall make every effort to provide written responses to citizen proposals or complaints within fifteen (15) working days of the receipt of such comments or complaints where practicable.



Records of all comments, objections and/or complaints by citizens concerning the CDBG program and subsequent action taken in response to those comments shall be maintained on file at the ECHA and shall be made available for public inspection upon request.

## **SECTION 9 – MODIFICATION TO CITY OF CORRY CDBG PROGRAM**

The City of Corry may at times need to make a “modification” to a fiscal year CDBG program. Modifications to any CDBG program that triggers citizen participation requirements include: (1) A new activity is proposed or an existing activity is to be deleted, and/or (2) the service area and or beneficiaries of an approved activity are to be changed from what was approved by DCED.

Before the modification request can be submitted to DCED, a public hearing must be held before the applicable governing body to provide citizens with an opportunity to review and comment on the proposed changes. Items to be discussed at the hearing include a brief description of the existing project and reason for the changes and how the new activity meets the eligibility and fundability requirements of the CDBG program.

As with Public Hearings #1 and #2, the public shall be provided advance notice of the public hearing to modify the CDBG program. A notice shall be published in the Classified Section of the Corry Journal under “Public Notices”, posted at the City Building, posted on the ECHA Website and the City’s Website, at least five (5) calendar days prior to the hearing.

## **SECTION 10 – MODIFICATION TO CITIZEN PARTICIPATION PLAN**

The CDBG Citizen Participation Plan may be modified when necessary provided such modifications are consistent with Federal/State law, regulations and administrative requirements covering citizen participation. Prior to any modification, the ECHA will publish a Notice of Modification to the Citizen Participation Plan in the Classified Section of the Corry Journal under “Public Notices”, posted at the City Building, posted on the ECHA Website and the City’s Website, at least fourteen (14) calendar days prior to the acceptance of the modification by Corry City Council.

## **SECTION 11 – NO RESTRICTION OF AUTHORITY PROVISION**

No section or portion of this CDBG Citizen Participation Plan shall be construed to restrict the authority and responsibility of the City of Corry acting through the Erie County Housing Authority (ECHA) in the development, implementation and execution of the City of Corry Community Development Block Grant Program.

## **SECTION 12 – OTHER SPECIAL PROJECT GRANTS OR EMERGENCY**

### **DECLARATION:**

In the event that other federal special programs are awarded to the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania or an emergency declaration is made that affects the administration of the existing federal programs, that are authorized under the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974, as amended and

Administered by DCED, the citizen participation requirements will be followed in accordance with either the statute or regulations set forth for the program or provide HUD with a request for waivers to the citizen participation process in accordance with information provided by HUD. Once the waiver is granted by HUD to the Commonwealth, the special conditions will be passed to its grantees, if necessary, to streamline the citizen participation process in accordance with the regulations in place.

The City of Corry must amend their Citizen Participation Plan if the required action is not already covered in their Citizen Participation Plan.

**Amendment – 4/2020** – CARES ACT Authorization:

Emergency Declaration Citizen Participation and Expedited Modification Process:  
Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES Act) allows for a grantee to adopt and use expedited procedures to prepare, propose, modify, or amend its statement of activities to the FY 2019 and FY 2020 grant and new CARES funding related to the use of funding to address emerging COVID-19 response.

As long as national or local health authorities recommend social distancing and limiting public gatherings for public health reasons, Grantees do not need to hold in-person public hearing but “shall provide citizens with notice and a reasonable opportunity to comment of no less than 5 calendar days. A “grantee may create virtual public hearings to fulfill applicable hearing requirements for all grants from funds made available under this law”. Any virtual hearing “shall provide reasonable notification and access for citizens in accordance with the grantee’s certifications, timely responses from local officials to all citizen questions and issues, and public access to all questions and responses”.