



CITIZEN PARTICIPATION PLAN

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT PROGRAM DISASTER RECOVERY

Prepared for:

**City of Minot
P.O. Box 5006
10 3rd Avenue SW
Minot, ND 58702-5006
(701)857-4784**

Prepared by:

City of Minot



Revised July 2023

CITIZEN PARTICIPATION PLAN
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT PROGRAM
DISASTER RECOVERY

Table of Contents

SECTION 1. INTRODUCTION 3
SECTION 2. SCOPE OF PARTICIPATION 3
SECTION 3. PUBLIC HEARINGS, ACTION PLANS, AND AMENDMENTS 4
SECTION 4. WEBSITE/ALTERNATE ACCESSIBILITY 7
SECTION 5. COMMENTARY PERIODS 7
SECTION 6. CITIZEN PARTICIPATION CONTACT PERSON 8
SECTION 7. CITIZEN PARTICIPATION PLAN AMENDMENTS 9
SECTION 8. TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE 9
SECTION 9. PROGRAM INFORMATION 9
SECTION 10. PROCEDURES FOR COMMENTS, OBJECTIONS AND COMPLAINTS 10
SECTION 11. AUTHORITY 11

SECTION 1. INTRODUCTION

The City of Minot has designed this community-wide Citizen Participation Plan to provide for and encourage citizen participation in the Community Development Block Grant Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR) program and the follow-on National Disaster Resilience competition (NDR). This plan is an essential element of the City of Minot's present and future community development process and has been developed to comply with federal regulations and requirements, including applicable waivers and alternative requirements. The CDBG-DR and NDR programs are administered by the City of Minot.

The city may also explore alternative public involvement techniques to encourage and measure citizen participation in a shared vision for change in communities and neighborhoods. These alternative techniques could involve focus groups, use of the Internet, or others.

The primary goal of this Citizen Participation Plan is to provide all citizens of the community with an opportunity to participate in the planning, implementation, and assessment of the city's CDBG-DR and NDR programs. The plan sets forth policies and procedures for citizen participation which are designed to maximize involvement in the community development process. Attempts will be made to reach all citizens, with special emphasis placed on encouraging participation by persons of low to moderate incomes, local and regional institutions (businesses, developers, non-profits, etc), public and assisted housing residents, and residents of areas where community development funds have been or are proposed to be used.

Citizens are encouraged to participate in all phases of the CDBG-DR and NDR programs and will be provided full access to program information. However, final responsibility and authority for the development and implementation of CDBG-DR and NDR programs lies with the city.

SECTION 2. SCOPE OF PARTICIPATION

As part of the plan requirements and to maximize citizen interaction, the City of Minot shall:

1. Provide citizens with reasonable and timely access to local meetings, information and records relating to the City's proposed method of distribution.
2. Provide public hearings to gather citizen viewpoints and respond to questions during the community development program.
 - a. Topics such as proposed activities, action plan amendments, and performance review may be addressed.
 - b. Hearings will be held after adequate notice (seven calendar days) in the official newspaper, at times and locations convenient to potential beneficiaries - with accommodations for disabled persons.
3. Provide a period for citizen comment following meetings and document publication.
4. Provide for and encourage citizen participation with particular emphasis on persons of low to moderate income who are residents of slum or blighted areas, and residents of areas where funds are proposed to be used - including minorities and non-English speaking persons, as well as persons with disabilities.

City of Minot, ND

5. Provide technical assistance to groups representative of persons noted above, that request such assistance in developing proposals.
6. When needed, incorporate the City of Minot Limited English Proficiency Plan to address communication services for non-English speaking residents at public hearings.
7. Provide a written procedure which will accommodate a timely written response, within fifteen days, where able, to written complaints and grievances.
8. Encourage the participation of citywide institutions and other organizations, including businesses, developers, residents of public and assisted housing developments, and community and faith-based organizations, involved with or affected by programs or activities covered within the CDBG-DR or NDR process.
9. Written minutes of the hearings will be maintained by the City Clerk's Office.

SECTION 3. PUBLIC HEARINGS, ACTION PLANS, AND AMENDMENTS

This Citizen Participation Plan establishes public hearings as the primary mechanism for involving citizens in the community development and resilience projects, along with potential changes to those applications/action plans. The city's disaster recovery website plays a key role as well, and is discussed later in this document. Citizen participation will be conducted on a community-wide basis and will actively involve the views and proposals of all citizens, especially low and moderate income persons and residents of areas where CDBG-DR activities are proposed or on-going.

Public hearings are held to allow citizens to voice opinions and offer proposals concerning the development, progress, and performance of CDBG-DR and NDR programs. The public hearing notice shall be published in the official newspaper and on the city website no less than seven days prior to the hearing date. Citizen comments will be addressed to the best extent possible by city officials and consultants at the hearing, proceedings will be transcribed in the meeting minutes, and follow-up actions will be scheduled as needed with appropriate city agencies to resolve citizen comments or concerns. Citizens may also express comments and views concerning the community development process or any specific CDBG-DR/NDR project to the City Council of Minot at any regularly scheduled meeting held the first and third Monday of each month at 5:30pm in City Hall.

The City of Minot may review multiple HUD project funding request(s) at one hearing when more than one amendment to the action plan is to be submitted during the same fiscal year. Each such hearing shall be held prior to the City Council of Minot approval.

City of Minot, ND

3.1 Public Hearing Topics

Since there are several public laws covering CDBG-DR and NDR fund usage, there are multiple mandatory requirements. CDBG-DR grants awarded prior to June 9, 2014 have no public hearing requirement. Awards following June 9, 2014 (including NDR) require one public hearing prior to substantial amendment submission - *however*, CDBG-DR grants awarded after Oct 21, 2014 that seek substantial amendment (only) due to the \$1 million threshold are not subject to the meeting requirement.

Application/Action Plan

Since all current applications have been submitted and accepted, no further public hearings will be conducted regarding grant applications until a new opportunity arises. At that point, new grant requirements will be published in a Federal Register and the Citizen Participation Plan will be tailored accordingly.

Substantial Amendments

CDBG-DR and NDR grant Action Plans may need to be changed during the course of a grant agreement. Those changes are categorized as substantial or non-substantial, and only substantial amendments follow the public hearing requirements outlined above (one or none).

- *CDBG-DR substantial amendments are defined as:* a change in program benefit or eligibility criteria; the allocation or re-allocation of more than \$1 million; or the addition or deletion of an activity.

- *NDR substantial amendments are defined as:* any change to the funded portions of Phase 1 or Phase 2 application that would result in a change of more than 5 points in the score for Capacity or Soundness of Approach factors; any change to the Most Impacted and Distressed target area(s); any change in program benefit, beneficiaries or eligibility criteria; the allocation or reallocation of more than \$1 million; or the addition/deletion of an eligible activity.

- Amendments to the action plan that do not fall within the definitions above are considered non-substantial amendments and no public hearing is required; however an effective date of five business days following amendment submission to HUD shall be established.

These public hearings are intended to provide citizens and other interested parties a reasonable opportunity to examine the proposed amendment's contents, and afford an opportunity to make comments/ask questions.

For NDR grant only, concurrently with the public meeting, the city shall publish the proposed substantial amendment, including a section that identifies exactly what content is being added, deleted, or changed, and whether the city believes the change would affect the (HUD NDR competition) scoring under the rating factors, and thus, potentially trigger a substantial amendment; a chart or table that clearly illustrates where funds are coming from and to where they are moving; and a revised budget allocation table that reflects the entirety of all funds, as amended.

City of Minot, ND

Notice of hearings will be made via the official newspaper at least seven calendar days prior to the event, and also on the city's CDBG website. The notice shall inform citizens of:

- a. Proposed submission date for the substantial amendment
- b. Topic of proposed substantial amendment
- c. Location(s) where proposed substantial amendment details can be viewed or obtained

Those unable to attend will have reasonable access to the proposed amendment via the city website, and an appropriate period for comment following the hearing date.

3.2 Additional Hearings

Other public hearings may be held, as deemed necessary, by the City of Minot in order to inform citizens of community development or resilience project(s) and activities, and to solicit citizen opinions and comments.

3.3 Public Hearing Times and Locations

Hearings will be held at times and locations convenient to potential or actual beneficiaries, with accommodations made for individuals identified with disabilities and non-English speakers.

Hearings will normally be held at the City Hall – Council Chambers- Main Floor, 10 2nd Ave SW, Minot, ND 58701 because this site is centrally located and generally accessible to all citizens, including persons with disabilities. However, the city has the option to hold hearings at alternate locations, which shall be specified in the public hearing notice(s).

3.4 Accessibility to Persons with Disabilities and Non-English Speaking Individuals

The City of Minot has followed HUD's regulations to determine reasonable actions to facilitate participation of persons with disabilities and non-English speaking individuals. The city's Limited English Proficiency Plan outlines the communication plan, and disability consideration is incorporated into event planning. Local officials will undertake reasonable actions necessary to allow such persons to participate in the community development process.

Requests for disability accommodations must be made *five days prior to any public meeting*.

Non-English speaking persons, individuals with disabilities, those needing sign language services, or others who require auxiliary aids or services necessary for participation may contact the City Manager Executive Secretary, at PO Box 5006, Minot, ND 58702-5006; (701) 857-4750. Alternatively, they may access the State of North Dakota assistance at the following numbers:

800-366-6888 or 711:TTY

Sprint-Relay

800-435-8590 or 711:Spanish

CapTel

800-366-6889 or 711:Voice

877-366-3709:900 Services

877-366-3709:Speech to Speech

City of Minot, ND

3.5 Public Hearing Notice

Notice of public hearings will be published in the *Minot Daily News*, the official newspaper, and at <http://cdbg.minotnd.org> at least seven days prior to the hearing date. Each hearing notice shall typically include the time, date, place, and topics/procedures to be discussed. Notices for public hearings may be run or posted, separately or together, as may be deemed necessary by the Mayor of the City of Minot.

3.6 Accessibility to Low and Moderate Income Persons

The public hearing procedures outlined herein are designed to promote participation by low and moderate income citizens, as well as residents of blighted neighborhoods and CDBG-DR or NDR project areas.

Local officials may take additional steps to further promote participation by such groups, or to target program information to these persons, if there is concern these citizens may otherwise be excluded.

Activities to promote additional participation may include: posting of notices in places frequented by low and moderate income persons. The city may also hold public hearings in low and moderate income neighborhoods or areas of existing or proposed project activities for CDBG-DR or NDR.

SECTION 4. WEBSITE/ALTERNATE ACCESSIBILITY

The City of Minot has a dedicated website at <http://cdbg.minotnd.org> used to promote understanding and make materials available to the public, relating to CDBG-DR and NDR grants. Action Plans, Substantial Amendments, and Performance Reports, along with other useful information will be posted there. Notifications to citizens regarding public hearings, and means to receive public comments will be displayed prominently.

For ease of understanding, every amendment (substantial or not) to an Action Plan (CDBG-DR or NDR) will be sequentially numbered and posted to the website.

Materials available on the website shall also be made available upon request for timely access, in an accessible format to persons with disabilities and/or limited English proficiency.

SECTION 5. COMMENTARY PERIODS

Following a public hearing and/or publication of a proposed action plan/substantial amendment to the website, in all cases there is a period for public review and commentary before the proposal becomes final. Due to several applicable laws, the periods vary depending on grant award date. If the CDBG-DR grant was awarded before June 9, 2014, the public comment period is seven days following the hearing/website publication date. CDBG-DR grants awarded after June 9, 2014 must have 30 days for public comment - *however*, CDBG-DR grants awarded after Oct 21, 2014 that seek substantial amendment (only) due to the \$1 million threshold are

City of Minot, ND

only required a seven day comment period. All NDR grant substantial amendment proposals shall have a 15 day comment period following the public meeting/website publication date.

Comments will be directed to the Public Information Officer for aggregation. Citizen comments or views received in writing (and/or orally at public hearings) will be considered by the city before a final determination is made. They will then be summarized by topic, any city response(s) noted, and submitted with the proposed Action Plan or Substantial Amendment for approval by the city council. *NDR substantial amendments also require a listing of commenters by name or organization.* If approved, the package will be forwarded with a transmittal letter signed by the Mayor, to the US Department of Housing and Urban Development for review.

SECTION 6. CITIZEN PARTICIPATION CONTACT PERSON

The Mayor of the City of Minot has designated the Public Information Officer to serve as the contact person for all matters concerning citizen participation activities. This individual shall be responsible for overseeing citizen participation throughout the community development/resilience project process, and implementation of all citizen participation activities and functions, except those which may be specifically delegated to other parties by this plan.

The specific duties and responsibilities of the Public Information Officer relating to CDBG-DR and NDR grants shall include, but not necessarily be limited to:

1. Disseminating information concerning proposed projects and status of current project activities;
2. Acting as liaison for various groups which may be participating in the community development process;
3. Receiving written comments;
4. Serving as a liaison by which ideas, comments, and proposals from local residents may be transmitted to local officials and/or program staff; and,
5. Monitoring the citizen participation process and proposing modifications as needed.

The Public Information Officer may be contacted at (701) 857-4727 during regular business hours. All questions concerning citizen participation should be addressed to:

***Attention: Public Information Officer
City of Minot
PO Box 5006
Minot, ND 58702-5006***

Information from the city's project files shall be made available for examination and duplication, on request, during regular business hours. CDBG-DR and NDR program information and materials concerning specific projects will be available and distributed at public hearings as outlined in this plan. Furthermore, information concerning any CDBG-DR or NDR project will be available at regularly scheduled city council meetings where the program is discussed.

SECTION 7. CITIZEN PARTICIPATION PLAN AMENDMENTS

The City of Minot may, from time to time, modify the provisions outlined herein through amendment to this Citizen Participation Plan. Changes are primarily driven by regulatory requirements and are mandatory. However, performance or effectiveness concerns by citizens may be discussed at public hearings held in conjunction with the disaster recovery/resilience program, or submitted online. The most current version of the Citizen Participation Plan will always be available for review on the CDBG-DR website.

SECTION 8. TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

The staff of the City of Minot and any consultant hired by the City in this capacity shall provide technical assistance to individual citizens and citizen groups, especially those groups representative of persons of low or moderate income, residents of blighted neighborhoods and minorities, as may be required to adequately provide for citizen participation in the planning implementation and assessment of CDBG-DR and NDR programs. Such technical assistance is intended to increase citizen participation in the community development decision making process and to ensure that such participation is meaningful. Technical assistance shall also be utilized to foster public understanding of CDBG-DR and NDR program requirements.

Technical assistance shall be provided on request and may include, but not necessarily limited to:

1. Interpreting the CDBG-DR and NDR programs, their rules, regulations, procedures and/or requirements;
2. Providing information and/or materials concerning the CDBG-DR program; and,
3. Assisting low and moderate income citizens, and any individual requiring extra assistance, to develop statements of views, identify their needs, and develop activities and proposals for projects which, when implemented, will resolve those needs

Technical assistance may be obtained by contacting the Public Information Officer.

SECTION 9. PROGRAM INFORMATION

Citizens will be provided full access to the CDBG-DR and NDR program information during all phases of projects. City of Minot officials shall make reasonable efforts to ensure program information availability to all citizens, especially those of low and moderate incomes and those residing in blighted or Limited English Proficiency neighborhoods and/or CDBG-DR & NDR project areas via posting on the City of Minot CDBG website.

To facilitate citizen access to CDBG-DR and NDR program information, the Public Information Officer will be a focal point for all document-related requests of files located at:

*City of Minot
10 3rd Ave SW
Minot, ND 58701
(701) 857-4727*

City of Minot, ND

Information from the city's project files shall be made available for examination and duplication, on request, during regular business hours. CDBG-DR and NDR program information, along with materials concerning specific projects will be available and distributed to the public at the regularly scheduled public hearings as outlined in this plan. Additionally, information concerning a specific CDBG-DR or NDR project will be available at regularly scheduled council meetings where the program is discussed.

Materials to be made available for comment shall include, but are not necessarily limited to, the Citizen Participation Plan, records of public hearings, mailing and promotional materials, prior CDBG-DR or NDR program applications, letters of approval, grant agreements, the environmental review records, financial and procurement records, project design and construction specification, labor standards materials, performance and evaluation reports, other reports required by HUD, proposed and approved CDBG-DR and NDR program application(s) for the current year or project, written comments or complaints received concerning the community development/resilience program, written responses from the City of Minot, and copies of the applicable federal and state rules, regulations, policies, requirements and procedures governing the CDBG-DR and NDR program.

In no case shall the City of Minot disclose any information concerning personally identifiable information of any program participant(s) which may be required to document program eligibility or benefit. Furthermore, the City of Minot shall not disclose any information which may, in the opinion of the Mayor, be deemed of a confidential nature.

SECTION 10. PROCEDURES FOR COMMENTS, OBJECTIONS AND COMPLAINTS

The public hearings scheduled, as described in this Citizen Participation Plan, are designed to facilitate public participation in all phases of the community development process.

Citizens are encouraged to submit their views and proposals on all aspects of community development and/or resilience programs at the public hearings. However, to ensure citizens are given the opportunity to assess and comment on all aspects of the community development program on a continuous basis, citizens may, at any time, submit written comments or complaints to the City of Minot.

Additionally, citizens are encouraged to comment on this Citizen Participation Plan and/or any substantial amendments to it. Comments may be brought to a public hearing or sent directly to the City of Minot using contact information below.

Any citizen or citizen's group desiring to comment or object to any phase of the planning, development or approval of the application for CDBG-DR funds, or implementation of any CDBG-DR program, should submit such comments or objections in writing to the Public Information Officer. Should, after a reasonable period, a party believe that his/her comment or

City of Minot, ND

complaint has not been properly addressed or considered, then the aggrieved may appeal his/her case to higher authority such as the City Manager, Mayor, and/or City Council.

*City of Minot
Citizen Participation Plan Coordinator
PO Box 5006
Minot, ND 58702*

The Public Information Officer shall make every effort to provide written responses to citizen proposals or complaints within fifteen working days of receipt, if possible.

Citizens may, at any time, contact the Mayor or City Council directly to register comments, objections or complaints concerning the City of Minot CDBG-DR and/or NDR programs. Citizens are encouraged, however, to attempt to resolve any complaints at the City Manager's office, as outlined above, prior to contacting the Mayor or City Council.

All comments or complaints submitted to the Mayor, City Council, and/or HUD shall be addressed in writing to:

*City of Minot
Office of the Mayor
PO Box 5006
Minot, ND 58702*

Records of all comments, objections and/or complaints by citizens concerning the City of Minot CDBG-DR and NDR programs, and subsequent action taken in response to those comments, shall be maintained on file at the CDBG Clerk's Office, City of Minot, 10 3rd Avenue SW, Minot, ND 58702, and shall be made available for public inspection upon request.

SECTION 11. AUTHORITY

No portion of this Citizen Participation Plan shall be construed to restrict the responsibility and authority of the elected officials of the City of Minot in the development, implementation and execution of any Community Development Block Grant program.

APPROVED this the 17th day of July, 2023.



(Chief Elected Official)