

A grant to a locality under the Texas Community Development Program may be awarded only if the locality certifies that it is following a detailed Citizen Participation Plan that provides for and encourages citizen participation at all stages of the Community Development Program. Texas Community Development Program applicants and funded localities are required to carry out citizen participation in accordance with the following Citizen Participation Plan adopted by the Texas Department of Agriculture for the Texas Community Development Program.

CITIZEN PARTICIPATION PLAN

THE COUNTY OF POLK, TEXAS

DATE: APRIL 14, 2015

The County of Polk, Texas shall comply with the following citizen participation plan requirements:

- (1) provide for and encourage citizen participation, emphasizing participation by persons of low and moderate income residing in slum and blight areas and in areas in which TCDP funds are proposed to be used;
- (2) provide citizens with reasonable and timely access to local meetings, information and records concerning the proposed and actual use of TCDP funds;
- (3) provide for technical assistance to groups representative of persons of low and moderate income that request such assistance in developing TCDP proposals with the level and type of assistance to be determined by the applicant/recipient;
- (4) provide for public hearings to obtain citizen views and to respond to questions and proposals at all stages of the Community Development Program, including at least the development of needs, the review of proposed activities, and a review of program performance, with hearings shall be held after adequate notice, at times and locations convenient to potential or actual beneficiaries, and with accommodations for handicapped persons;
- (5) provide for a timely written response to written complaints and grievances, within 15 working days where practicable; and
- (6) identify how the needs of non-English speaking residents will be met in the case of public hearings where a significant number of non-English speaking residents can be reasonably expected to participate.

PUBLIC HEARING PROVISIONS

For each public hearing scheduled and conducted by a TCDP applicant or recipient, the following public hearing provisions shall be observed:

1. Public notice of all hearings must be published at least **seventy-two (72) hours** prior to the scheduled hearing. The public notice must be published in a local newspaper. Each public notice **MUST** include the **DATE, TIME, LOCATION** and **TOPICS** to be considered at the public hearing. A published newspaper article can also be used to meet this requirement so long as it meets all content and timing requirements. Notices should also be prominently posted in public buildings and distributed to interested community groups.
2. Each public hearing shall be held at a time and location convenient to potential or actual beneficiaries and will include accommodation for persons with disabilities. The required public hearings must be held after 5:00 p.m. on a weekday or at a convenient time on a Saturday.
3. When a significant number of non- English speaking residents can be reasonably expected to participate in a public hearing, and interpreter will be present to accommodate the needs of the non-English speaking residents.

COMPLAINT PROCEDURES

The applicant/recipient must have written citizen complaint procedures that provides a timely written response to complaints and grievances. The complaint procedures must comply with the requirement of the Office of Rural Community Affairs Complaint System, 10 T.A.C. Sec. 1.11 and 1.13. Citizens must be made aware of the location and hours that they may obtain a copy of these written procedures. (See Attachment A)

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

When requested, the applicant/recipient shall provide technical assistance to groups representative of persons of low and moderate income in developing proposals for the use of TCDP funds. The level and type of assistance shall be determined by the applicant/recipient based upon the specific needs of the community's residents.

The applicant must comply with the following citizen participation requirements for the preparation and submission of an application to the Texas Community Development Program:

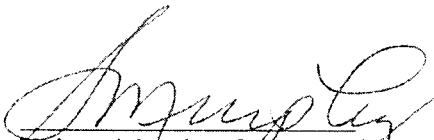
1. At a minimum, the applicant must hold at least one public hearing prior to developing the application and a public notice published prior to submission of the application.

2. The public hearings must be held at least 7 days apart.
3. The locality must retain documentation of the hearing notices, attendance lists, minutes of the hearings, and any other records concerning the proposed use of funds for a period of one year or until the project, if funded, is closed out. Such records must be made available to the public in accordance with TEX. GOV'T. CODE ANN. Chapter 552.
4. The first public hearing must include a discussion with citizens on the development of housing and community development needs, the amount of funding available, all eligible activities under the Texas Community Development Program, and the use of past TCDP contract funds, if applicable. Citizens, with particular emphasis on persons of low and moderate income who are residents of slum and blight areas, shall be encouraged to submit their views and proposals regarding community development and housing needs. Citizens shall be made aware of the location where they may submit their views and proposals should they be unable to attend the public hearing.
5. At least five (5) days prior to submission of an application for TCDP funds, the applicant must publish a public notice in a local newspaper that includes the following information: The TCDP fund categories for which applications will be submitted, the amount of the TCDP funds requested in each application, a short description of the proposed project activities in each application, the location of the project activities included in each application, the location and hours when the application will be available for public review.
6. While more than one application can be discussed at a single public hearing (e.g., if the applicant is considering both a Community Development Fund and a Texas Capital Fund application), a hearing held for the previous program year's submittal of the same application (under either fund) is not acceptable for meeting the requirements for any subsequent competition.

The applicant must comply with the following citizen participation requirements in the event that the applicant/recipient receives funding from the Texas Community Development Program:

1. The locality must hold a public hearing concerning any substantial change, as determined by the TCDP, proposed to be made in the use of TCDP funds from one eligible activity to another.
2. Upon completion of the TCDP activities, the locality shall hold a public hearing and review its program performance including the actual use of the TCDP funds.
3. The locality must retain documentation of the hearing notices, attendance lists, minutes of the hearings, and any other records concerning the actual use of funds for a period of three years after the project is closed out. Such records must be made available to the public in accordance with TEX. GOV'T. CODE ANN. CHAPTER 552.

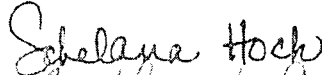

SIGNED:


Sydney Murphy, County Judge

DATE:

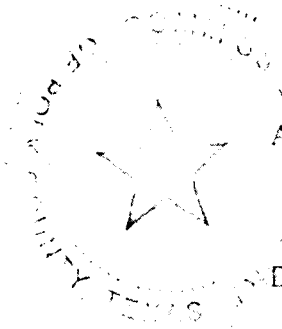
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ATTEST:



Schelana Hock,
County Clerk

DATE:

4-14-15



ATTACHMENT A
CITIZEN COMPLAINT PROCEDURE

SECTION 1

It is the policy of the County of Polk to review all complaints received by the County .

SECTION 2

The following procedures will be followed on all complaints received by the County of Polk.

- 1) The complainant shall notify the County Judge of the complaint. The initial complaint may be expressed orally or by written correspondence.
- 2) The County will notify the complainant of the findings of the Mayor or designated representative in writing or by telephone within 15 working days.
- 3) If the complainant is aggrieved by the decision, he must forward the complaint in writing (if previously submitted orally) to the County Judge who will forward the complaint along with actions taken by the Mayor or designated representative to the appropriate Commissioners Court committee for their review. This will be accomplished within 20 working days of receipt of the written complaint.
- 4) The reviewing Commissioners Court committee will have 15 working days to review the complaint and forward their decision to the complainant in writing.
- 5) If the complainant is aggrieved with the decision of the Commissioners Court committee, he must notify the County Judge in writing that he desires to be afforded a hearing by the County Commissioners Court. The complainant will be placed on the next regularly scheduled Commissioners Court meeting agenda. The County Judge will notify the complainant in writing of the date of the hearing.
- 6) The complainant must bring all relevant data, witnessed, etc. to the hearing. The County Commissioners Court, at the hearing, will review the complaint and forward within 10 days a certified copy of the minutes of the meeting at which the hearing was conducted and a decision was rendered. If a decision is not reached at the hearing, the County Commissioners Court will inform complainant of an appropriate date to expect a response. Within ten working days of reaching a decision, the complainant will be notified in writing of the decision.

Complaints concerning the general administration of the Texas Community Development Program may be submitted in writing directly to the:

TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
Office of Rural Affairs
Texas Community Development Program
P.O. Box 12847
Austin, Texas 78711

SECTION 3

All citizen complaints relative to Fair Housing/Equal Opportunity violations alleging discrimination shall be forwarded for disposition to the:

Department of Housing and Urban Development
Regional Office
Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity Division
Post Office Box 2905
Fort Worth, Texas 76113-2905

The Complainant will be notified in writing within 10 days that, due to the nature of the complaint, it has been forwarded to HUD for resolution.

or

Complainant may contact the HUD FH/EO Division directly at the Toll Free Telephone # 1-800-669-9777 or TDD# 1-800-927-9275

SECTION 4

The County will maintain a file for the purpose of keeping reports of complaints.

SECTION 5

This policy does not invalidate nor supersede the personnel or other policies of the County which are currently adopted, but is intended to service as a guide for complaints.

SECTION 6

The policy may be amended by a majority vote at any of the County Commissioners Court regularly scheduled meetings.

ATTACHMENT B
TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Technical assistance may be provided directly by the County of Polk to any citizen, particularly to low and moderate income persons, residents of blighted neighborhoods and minorities, who request assistance in the development of proposals and statement of views concerning the Texas Community Development Program. The local officials, Judge and engineer will conduct informational meetings with the residents of the low to moderate income areas if a written request is received by the County Commissioners Court with at least a one week notification. The persons who conduct the technical assistance meetings will disseminate information on the program and answer all pertinent questions.

ATTACHMENT C
TIMELY ACCESS AND ADEQUATE INFORMATION

The County of Polk shall provide timely disclosure of records, information and documents related to the Texas Community Development Program activities. Documents will be made available for copying upon request at the County Courthouse, Monday thru Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Such documents may include the following:

- 1) All meetings and promotional materials.
- 2) Records of hearings and meetings.
- 3) All key documents, including prior applications, letters, grant agreements, citizen participation plans, and proposed applications.
- 4) Copies of the regulations (final statements) concerning the program.
- 5) Document regarding other important requirements, such as Procurement Procedures, Fair Housing, Equal Employment Opportunity, Uniform Act, Labor Provisions and Environmental Procedures.

ATTACHMENT D
BILINGUAL

Whenever a significant number of persons and/or residents of blighted neighborhoods communicate with a primary language other than English and attend public hearings the County of Polk will provide a interpreter for dissemination of information to them providing the County is given sufficient notification of 4 days.