

CITY OF MORGANTON CITIZEN PARTICIPATION PLAN

The City of Morganton provides for and encourages citizen participation in the development and implementation of the consolidated plan, any substantial amendments and performance reports. Particular emphasis is placed on participation by persons of low and moderate income who are residents of low and moderate income neighborhoods and/or slum and blighted areas.

The City of Morganton provides citizens with reasonable and timely access to local information and records relating to the grantee's proposed use of funds. This is done through public meetings of the City which are advertised in the local newspaper, The Morganton News Herald. Meetings will be held within the City limits in or near areas identified as slum and blighted areas and areas of predominately low and moderate income residents.

The City of Morganton Community Development Office provides technical assistance to groups representative of persons of low and moderate income that request such assistance. This assistance includes speaking at community meetings to inform persons of available grants and assistance. The Community Development Office works closely with and encourages the participation of residents of public and assisted housing developments. Notices encouraging participation from residents of public and assisted housing are placed in public housing offices and in public buildings located in identified low-income areas. The City of Morganton provides information and applications to local citizens interested in these programs.

The City of Morganton provides for public hearings to obtain citizens' views and to respond to proposals and questions at all stages of the citizen participation plan, including the development of the consolidated plan and any substantial amendments and review of program performance. Adequate notice is given for these meetings at times and locations convenient to potential or actual beneficiaries, with accommodation for persons with disabilities. Every published advertisement issued by the City of Morganton has the HUD, EEO and Fair Housing logos included. Public hearings for the Action Plan and Consolidated Plan will be advertised in The Morganton News Herald no earlier than 30 days prior to the public hearings. Other public hearing will be advertised no earlier than fifteen days prior to the public hearing. *In emergency situations such as the global COVID-19 pandemic, an expedited procedure may be enacted. The expedited procedure must include notice and reasonable opportunity to comment of no less than 5 days. The 5-day period can run concurrently for comments on the annual action plan amendment and amended citizen participation plan. Also public hearings in emergency situations will not be required to amend plans substantially.*

Copies of the consolidated plan will be made available at libraries, government offices and public housing authority offices within the City. Copies of the plan and the summary will be available upon request to citizens and groups upon request. A period of 30 days will be provided to receive comments from citizens on the consolidated plan. The City of Morganton will consider any comments or views in writing, or orally, received at the public hearing in preparing the consolidated plan, and such comments will be attached to the final consolidated plan. Timely

access will be provided to citizens, public agencies and other interested parties to information relating to the consolidated plan.

Prior to adoption of the Consolidated Plan or amendments, the City will make available to citizens, public agencies and other interested parties 1) the amount of assistance available, 2) the range of activities that may be undertaken, 3) the estimated amount that will benefit low and moderate income persons, 4) plans to minimize displacement of persons, 5) the plan to assist any person displaced with types and levels of assistance, and 6) how and when this information will be made available.

In order to comply with the requirements of Section 104(d) of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974, the City of Morganton intends to minimize any displacement resulting from any HUD activities. However, should any displacement occur as a result of a HUD activity, the City intends to follow the regulations for displacement and relocation as described in 24 CFR 570.606. Should any real property acquisition result because of a HUD assisted activity, the guidelines of 49 CFR part 24 subpart b will be followed.

The City of Morganton will provide a translator for non-English speaking residents in the case of public hearings when the City is notified that any non-English speaking resident will attend the public hearing. An interpreter will be provided for hearing-impaired residents.

An annual audit will be performed to examine the use of CDBG funds by the City. This audit report will be available for public inspection.

Amendments to the Consolidated Plan. A public hearing will be conducted whenever amendments are proposed which add, delete or substantially change the adopted consolidated plan. Proposed amendments to the plan will be advertised in the Morganton News Herald, setting the time, date and place of the public hearing. A period of 30 days will be provided to receive public comments. A change to the consolidated plan of 25% or more of the total budget is considered substantial. *In emergency situations such as the global COVID-19 pandemic, an expedited procedure may be enacted. The expedited procedure must include notice and reasonable opportunity to comment of no less than 5 days. The 5-day period can run concurrently for comments on the annual action plan amendment and amended citizen participation plan. Also public hearings in emergency situations will not be required to amend plans substantially.*

Annual Performance Reports. A public hearing will be conducted prior to submission of the annual performance report. This public hearing will be advertised in the Morganton News Herald, setting the time, date and place of the public hearing. A period of 15 days will be provided to receive public comments. A change to the consolidated plan is considered substantial whenever a budget line item is changed by 25% or more. *In emergency situations such as the global COVID-19 pandemic, an expedited procedure may be enacted. The expedited procedure must include notice and reasonable opportunity to comment of no less than 5 days. The 5-day period can run concurrently for comments on the annual action plan amendment and amended citizen*

participation plan. Also public hearings in emergency situations will not be required to amend plans substantially.

Public Hearings. The City will provide a minimum of two public hearings and or public meetings per program year to address housing, community development needs, development of proposed activities and review of program performance. One will be held prior to adoption of the Consolidated Plan or Action Plan. *In emergency situations such as the global COVID-19 pandemic, an expedited procedure may be enacted. The expedited procedure must include notice and reasonable opportunity to comment of no less than 5 days. The 5-day period can run concurrently for comments on the annual action plan amendment and amended citizen participation plan. Also public hearings in emergency situations will not be required to amend plans substantially.*

Complaints. The City will be responsible for receiving and responding in writing to written complaints and grievances related to the consolidated plan activities. City staff shall respond to written complaints and grievances in writing within 15 days where practicable.

Access to Records. Records regarding the Consolidated Plan and subsequent Action Plans and use of funds shall be maintained on file at the City of Morganton Community Development Office for a period of not less than five years. This records are available for public inspection upon request during regular City business hours.

Record of Public Comments. The City will maintain on file an accurate record of comments made in reference to any stage of consolidated plan development, amendment and annual performance review.

Fair Housing Plan Activities

The City of Morganton is committed to affirmatively further fair housing, increasing awareness of Fair Housing laws. The City has developed an Analysis of Impediments, which the City updates every five years. The City is committed to addressing the issues identified in that analysis and will continue to implement its plan to affirmatively further Fair Housing opportunities. Since education and awareness of Fair Housing laws were identified as the primary impediment to fair housing, education and awareness efforts are at the core of the Fair Housing activities as identified in the Fair Housing Plan activities listed below.

The City of Morganton Community Development Department has determined a list of actions that will assist in affirmatively furthering fair housing in its jurisdiction. The City will take an active role through the following activities as it strives to meet its Consolidated Plan and Annual Action Plan goals:

- Distribution of posters and flyers concerning fair housing rights and laws
- Rental Registration Program makes renters aware of their rights as renters through this city enforced program.
- Public service announcements on local radio and local cable access and mail outs in billings.
- Advertising in the local newspaper, The News Herald
- Providing local banking institutions and realtors with fair housing information and laws to share with their customers.
- Participating in the Unifour Consortium HOME Program, which assists low and moderate-income persons with down payment assistance.
- Continued involvement in the Redevelopment Area, which has created new housing opportunities for low and moderate-income persons.
- Education of housing rights and housing responsibilities through flyers translated into Spanish for our Hispanic population.
- Assisting with the development of a men's homeless shelter to provide housing opportunities for the homeless.
- Actively encouraging handicap accessible along sidewalks to provide equal access to the city for the handicap and disabled persons of Morganton.
- Promoting and installing new pedestrian access to schools and shopping from low and moderate-income neighborhood.
- Encourage small and minority low and moderate businesses through the new CDBG Small Business Loan Program.
- Promoting the mixed use of residential and commercial residential through the East Union Block Project Redevelopment Area.
- Conducting Fair Housing information meetings.

Distribution of posters and flyers serve several purposes. It allows the City staff the opportunity to speak with individual concerning housing rights and also the opportunity to meet the people involved with the housing market. This media was created to educate and to inform residents about their rights and what they can do if they feel they have been discriminated against.

Public service announcements and advertisements give more residents the opportunity to find out about fair housing law and resources in the event of discrimination. Similarly, the contacts made with lenders and realtors afford the staff the opportunity to meet these individuals and create communication. This communication allows for a better understanding on everyone's part of the importance of furthering fair housing through the actions that are taken on a personal level. For every one on one meeting there is a better chance that fair housing will be a greater possibility for one more person. The City's commitment to furthering fair housing has lead to the Renter's Registration Program that ensures quality housing for all renters in the city. This commitment has also aided in the creation of the Unifour Consortium HOME Program that provides down payment assistance to low and moderate-income persons and families.

The City of Morganton's efforts to affirmatively further fair housing and to provide affordable housing work together. Every effort is made to adopt and follow policies, which will achieve both goals. The staff is always ready to investigate complaints as well as suggestions in regard to housing opportunities. It is a goal of the City to make housing a free and meaningful choice for all residents of Morganton.

The Small Business Loan Program encourages low and moderate-income businesses to create or expand through the availability of funding through this program. The increases of income and employment opportunities will aid in the fair housing of lower income persons.

The City of Morganton will affirmatively further fair housing through a quarterly activity that involves fair housing in one way or another. Education concerning fair housing is the best tool in breaking the barriers of fair housing.

The Fair Housing Information Meetings provides information to realtors, banks and the public concerning Fair Housing Laws and the Rights of people.

Mayor, City of Morganton

Date