

Citizen Participation

Harris County has always considered citizen participation to be vital to the development of successful planning and community revitalization efforts for low- and moderate-income communities.

Harris County makes certain that HUD entitlement related public meetings and newspaper ads provide citizens with information about the use of funds available for community development projects as well as the amount of funds expected to be used for activities that benefit persons of very-low and low-income. These actions ensure that low- and moderate-income persons have access to information pertaining to all HUD related community development activities.

Actions to Solicit Citizens Input

Harris County HUD entitlement programs provided several opportunities for public comment on the Consolidated Planning process during the 2010 program year. These opportunities included public hearings for the Annual Action Plan (AAP), previous year CAPER and other HUD funding sources such as NSP and Hurricane Ike Disaster Recovery TxCDBG funding. Notices for opportunities for public comment were published in local newspapers prior to each event.

The public was given a 15-day review and comment period for the Harris County PY 2010 CAPER prior to its submittal to the U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). A legal notice was published in the *Houston Chronicle* advising the public of the CAPER's availability between May 3-18, 2011. A public hearing on the CAPER was held May 16, 2011 and there were no public comments.

Harris County is committed to citizen participation as a crucial element in promoting community-based solutions. The county continues to create new and innovative ways to gain public response to initiatives and projects for community revitalization. Despite the significant effort made by Harris County in the area of citizen participation it is anticipated that future program years will include even more opportunities for active citizen participation in the revitalization process.

Other Efforts

In addition to a broad based citizen participation effort, HCCSD annually conducts an extensive public outreach effort in the Request for Proposal (RFP) Process that is used to determine the projects to be funded with CDBG and ESG funds. This action further ensures that the RFP process is a fair, open, and competitive process in which participation by organizations throughout the community is essential. The RFP process includes a number of opportunities for public interaction, including a proposal information workshop in which potential applicants are informed of the guidelines for the application and review process.