

**SHELBY COUNTY
CITIZEN PARTICIPATION PLAN
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
BLOCK GRANT PROGRAM**

**ORIGINAL PLAN
ADOPTED BY RESOLUTION 2023-11-27-03B**

**SUBSTANTIAL AMENDMENT
ADOPTED BY RESOLUTION 2026-01-12-04**

**SHELBY COUNTY CITIZEN PARTICIPATION PLAN
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT PROGRAM**

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<u>PAGE</u>
Section 1 Overview	2
Section 2 Citizen Participation	2
Section 3 Public Hearings	3
Section 4 Public Hearing Notices	4
Section 5 Policy Board & Other Public Meetings	4
Section 6 Public Meeting Notices	5
Section 7 Public Notice Locations	5
Section 8 Public Comment Period	5
Section 9 Consolidated Annual Performance & Evaluation Report	6
Section 10 Substantial Amendments	6
Section 11 Non-English Speaking and Handicapped Residents	7
Section 12 Consultations	7
Section 13 Technical Assistance	8
Section 14 Access to Information and Records	8
Section 15 Comments and Complaints	9
Section 16 Anti-Displacement	10

Section 1 Overview

In September 2023, Shelby County was designated as an Urban County by the United States Department of Housing & Urban Development (HUD). With that designation, Shelby County has qualified as an entitlement jurisdiction for Fiscal Years 2024-2026 and eligible to receive Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding. The Urban County Program Year runs from October 1 through September 30 and will be managed by the Shelby County Department of Development Services.

Shelby County executed cooperation agreements with thirteen (13) municipalities to create the Shelby Urban County. These municipalities are Alabaster, Calera, Chelsea, Columbiana, Harpersville, Helena, Indian Springs Village, Montevallo, Pelham, Vincent, Westover, Wilsonville, and Wilton. The geographic area of the Shelby Urban County covers the unincorporated areas of Shelby County and the full corporate boundaries of these municipalities. As a result, the geographic area of the Shelby Urban County includes portions of Chilton County (Calera), Jefferson County (Helena), St. Clair County (Vincent), and Talladega County (Vincent). A Policy Board comprised of fourteen (14) representatives (County and each municipality) has been created to guide the development of the planning process and recommend actions to the Shelby County Commission. Final responsibility and authority lie with the Shelby County Commission.

HUD requires its CDBG Program entitlement grantees to create and maintain Five-Year Consolidated Plans, Annual Action Plans, and Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Reports (CAPER) that have specific citizen participation requirements.

In accordance with the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Title 24-Subtitle A-Part 91-Subpart B-Section 91.105, as amended, local governments are required to adopt a citizen participation plan that sets forth the jurisdiction's policies and procedures for citizen participation.

The Policy Board adopts an Application Handbook annually following review of the prior program year to maintain or change application requirements to better the application process for all. Every program year, the Policy Board evaluates and adopts criteria factors as part of the evaluation and scoring process. Applications are submitted online. County staff reviews the applications for correctness and calculates the scoring of each application. The Policy Board sets a minimum score required to present one's application to the Policy Board prior to project(s) selection. The Policy Board recommends project(s) as part of the Annual Action Plan to the County Commission. A Public Hearing will be held, followed by a public comment period. The County Commission will consider adoption of the Annual Action Plan following the public comment period.

Section 2 Citizen Participation

The primary goal of this Citizen Participation Plan (CPP) is to provide an opportunity for all citizens of the community to participate in the planning, implementation, and

assessment of this CDBG program. The CPP sets forth policies and procedures for citizen participation, which are designed to maximize the opportunity for citizen participation in the community development process. Special emphasis is placed on encouraging participation by persons of low and moderate incomes, residents of predominantly low- and moderate-income neighborhoods, and residents of public and assisted housing developments.

All citizens of Shelby County, are encouraged to participate in all phases of the CDBG program and will be provided full access to program information. Local and regional institutions, Continuums of Care, businesses, developers, nonprofit organizations, philanthropic organizations, community-based organizations, and faith-based organizations are also encouraged to participate. Citizen participation outreach shall include, but not necessarily be limited to: disseminating information concerning proposed projects and the status of current project activities; coordinating various groups which may be participating in the community development process; receiving written comments; serving as a vehicle by which ideas, comments, and proposals from local residents may be transmitted to local officials and / or program staff; and, monitoring the citizen participation process and proposing amendments to the CPP as may be necessary.

The Shelby County Department of Development Services will serve as staff for all matters concerning citizen participation activities for the Shelby Urban County Program. They shall be responsible for overseeing citizen participation throughout the community development process and the implementation of all citizen participation activities and functions, except those that may be specifically delegated to other parties by this plan. All questions concerning citizen participation in the community development process should be addressed to the Shelby County Department of Development Services during regular business hours at 205-620-6650 (8:00 AM to 4:30 PM Monday-Friday) or cdbg@shelbyal.com. If there are changes because of executive orders, legislative authority, or HUD causes changes in rules, regulations, and guidelines which impact the CDBG Program, said changes will supersede any and all of the provisions herein.

The Shelby County Commission may, from time to time, modify the provisions outlined herein through amendment. It is the policy to periodically review and discuss the effectiveness of this CPP in allowing citizen participation in the community development process and in helping to meet the community development needs and goals identified by the citizens of the county. Potential amendments to the CPP will be reviewed annually and amendments will be made as necessary. See Section 10 for descriptions of potential amendments.

Section 3 Public Hearings

At least two public hearings shall be held each year. One of which must be held as part of the Consolidated Plan and / or Annual Action Plan, and a second public hearing shall be held to provide information related to the CAPER, which details the County's performance towards meeting annual goals and objectives for the CDBG program as described in Section 9. Public hearings will also be held for the approval of amendments

to the Citizen Participation Plan, and any Substantial Amendment to the Consolidated Plan or Annual Action Plan as described in Section 10. Public hearings are typically held in Room 104 of the County Administration Building located at 200 West College Street in Columbiana. Public hearing notices will confirm the location of the public hearing.

Section 4 Public Hearing Notices

Public hearing notices will be posted at least fourteen (14) days prior to a public hearing in a newspaper of general circulation, on the County website (shelbyal.com), and at the County buildings noted in Section 7. The notices shall include a summary of the contents and purpose of the documents and where the documents may be examined. In addition, these notices will be sent to Policy Board members to post within their communities.

During Federally or State declared emergency situations such as pandemics or natural disasters, the requirement to publish the notice and summary in a newspaper of general circulation described herein may be suspended. The Shelby County Commission shall at a minimum publish public notices on its website (shelbyal.com) and at the County buildings noted in Section 7. Furthermore, a shorter time period for notification may be allowable by HUD waivers. The timelines adopted will be established by HUD during that time.

To further encourage the participation of persons of low- and moderate-income, public notices will also be sent to Public Housing Authorities (PHAs) and the Hispanic and Immigrant Center of Alabama (HICA), that serves Latinos and immigrants within Shelby County. A list of interested parties will be maintained for those wishing to be notified of public hearings and public meetings.

Section 5 Policy Board & Other Public Meetings

The Shelby Urban County Policy Board meets throughout each program year to select projects and create a draft Annual Action Plan to recommend to the Shelby County Commission for adoption. Each program year the Policy Board adopts the Application Handbook which includes the application process and the steps required to apply for CDBG funding. The Policy Board develops and adopts project application guidelines and establishes a competitive scoring and ranking process for project applications, as needed. Every four years as part of the Consolidated Plan process, the Policy Board formulates strategies and establishes goals, objectives, and priorities to address the needs as determined from the needs assessment process. The meetings are open to the public and will follow the Citizen Participation Plan. Policy Board meetings are typically held in Room 104 of the County Administration Building located at 200 West College Street in Columbiana, unless otherwise noted in the Policy Board meeting notice.

During development of Consolidated Plans, special public meetings will occur throughout the county with the intent to gather information from the low- and moderate-income person and special needs communities. These community meetings will be used to solicit assessment of needs and explain the CDBG program intimately with the public in a less

formal setting. Such meetings allow for survey completion, round table type group discussions, and longer time periods with an open house setting.

Section 6 Public Meeting Notices

A public notice will be posted at least fourteen (14) days prior to a public hearing or public meeting on the County website (shelbyal.com), and at the County buildings noted below in Section 7. This will also serve as the required reasonable notice for the public comment period. In addition, these notices will be sent to Policy Board members to post within their communities.

Section 7 Public Notice Locations

Shelby County Administration Building	200 West College Street Columbiana, AL 35051	Public Notice Cabinet Lobby
Shelby County Courthouse	112 Main Street Columbiana, AL 35051	Public Notice Cabinet 1st Floor
County Services Building (Pelham)	1123 County Services Drive Pelham, AL 35124	Public Notice Cabinet 2nd Floor
County Services Building (Pelham)	1018 County Services Drive Pelham, AL 35124	Digital Screen License Office
County Services Building (US 280)	19220 Hwy 280 Birmingham, AL 35242	Digital Screen License Office
County Services Building (Columbiana)	104 Depot Street, Columbiana, AL 35051	Digital Screen License Office

Section 8 Public Comment Period

The public may comment on any proposed document by attending a public hearing or submitting written comments within the public comment period. Public comment periods begin the day after the public hearing and end after the minimal HUD required number of days for each document according to the following chart.

DOCUMENT	PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD
Citizen Participation Plan	15 Days
Consolidated Plan	30 Days
Annual Action Plan	30 Days
CAPER	15 Days
Substantial Amendment to a Plan	30 Days

Note: Comment periods exclude County observed holidays.

The Shelby County Commission will consider all comments received at the public hearing and during the public comment period in preparing the Consolidated Plan, an Annual Action Plan, the CPP, the CAPER, and any Substantial Amendments. The Shelby County Commission will include these comments and its responses to such comments in the final plans and reports. A summary of these comments, and any comments not accepted with the reasons why, shall be attached to the final plans.

Copies of the proposed documents will be made available to the public to view or download either online via the County website (shelbyal.com) or in person at the Shelby County Department of Development Services. Reasonable accommodations will be made for non-English speaking persons and people with disabilities.

Written comments may be submitted by mail or email to:

Community Development Programs Specialist
Shelby County Department of Development Services
1123 County Services Drive
Pelham, AL 35124
cdbg@shelbyal.com

Section 9 Consolidated Annual Performance & Evaluation Report

Within ninety (90) days of the close of the program year, the Shelby County Commission is required to submit a Consolidated Annual Performance & Evaluation Report (CAPER) to HUD. The CAPER describes how funds were used, outlines the program year accomplishments, and shows the extent to which funds were used for activities that benefited low- and moderate-income people.

Section 10 Substantial Amendments

A Substantial Amendment is any deviation from a Consolidated / Annual Action Plan resulting in a significant change regarding the specific goals, objectives, outputs, and outcomes as referenced in either plan. Any Substantial Amendment to any portion of a Consolidated / Annual Action Plan will follow HUD's prescribed notice and comment period requirements. Prior to the submission of any substantial change in the proposed use of funds, citizens will have reasonable notice of, and the opportunity to comment on, the proposed amendment using participation methods outlined herein.

The following requires a Substantial Amendment to the Consolidated Plan:

- a. A change to the Priority Needs identified in the plan;
- b. A change to the Goals and Objectives identified in the plan;
- c. A change to the Target Geographies or Areas identified in the plan;
- d. New entitlement grants like HOME or ESG are awarded to Shelby County.

The following requires a Substantial Amendment to an Annual Action Plan:

- a. A change to the Annual Goals and Objectives identified in an Action Plan;
- b. A change to the Target Geographies or Areas identified in an Action Plan;
- c. A project previously described in an Action Plan is canceled;
- d. Creation of a new project not previously described in an Action Plan;
- e. HUD funding allocated to an existing project is adjusted by twenty (20) percent or more of the initial funding amount;

- f. Revision to an existing project which changes the purpose, scope, location, or beneficiaries of the program.

All other changes, not requiring citizen participation, will be considered minor amendments and will be administratively prepared by Shelby County. Such minor amendments include:

- a. Budget revisions that do not significantly impact project beneficiaries or scope;
- b. Changes in project timelines or delivery methods that do not affect purpose, scope, or beneficiaries;
- c. HUD annual funding amount adjustments.

Section 11 Non-English Speaking and Handicapped Residents

The Shelby County Commission will follow its adopted Language Access Plan for Limited English Proficiency (LEP) persons. A Four-Factor Analysis was conducted which identified Spanish as a language where assistance is to be provided on an as-needed basis. Shelby County met the thousand (1,000) person threshold for the Spanish language group and will ensure meaningful access to the CDBG program. The Shelby County Commission will provide oral language services using bilingual staff, local volunteers, and organizations at public hearings and meetings, if needed. Public notices will include a written statement in Spanish indicating that translation services will be provided upon request. The Shelby County website uses Google Translate that translates site content into multiple languages.

The Shelby County website has links to download supportive assistive technology such as JAWS, NVDA, and Voice Over to access vital documents and outreach materials for those residents who are blind or vision impaired. With reasonable advanced notice to the Community Development Programs Specialist, a translator and / or a sign language interpreter will be provided at public hearings and meetings. All public hearings and meetings will be held in buildings that are accessible to people with disabilities. Hearing impaired devices and a one-way communication iPad are available if reasonable advanced notice is given as such devices require proper setup.

Section 12 Consultations

Under 24 CFR.91.100 (a) (1) as part of the Consolidated Plan process, County staff shall consult with other public and private agencies that provide assisted housing, health services, and social services, including those focusing on services to children, elderly persons, persons with disabilities, persons with HIV / AIDS and their families, and homeless persons. County staff shall also consult with community-based and regionally-based organizations that represent protected class members and organizations that enforce fair housing laws when preparing the Consolidated Plan. The consultation process will include consultation with regional government agencies and local municipalities. This includes local government agencies with metropolitan-wide planning and transportation

responsibilities, partially for problems and solutions that go beyond the County's jurisdiction.

Under 24 CFR.91.100 (c) (1) as part of the Consolidated Plan development process, County staff shall also consult with PHAs operating within the jurisdiction. This consultation will continue to consider public housing needs, planned programs and activities under the Consolidated Plan as well as strategies for affirmatively furthering fair housing specifically to address any fair housing issues in the public housing and Housing Choice Voucher programs. The consultation process requires County staff to document the needs of public housing.

Section 13 Technical Assistance

County staff, upon request, shall provide technical assistance to organizations and / or groups to develop an application. Such technical assistance may include an explanation of program rules and regulations; requirements for implementing and managing projects; project eligibility and national objectives requirements; Consolidated Plan goals and objectives; and the evaluation process to score projects used by the Policy Board to recommend projects to the County Commission. Technical assistance does not include the preparation of grant applications for organizations or groups. All questions related to technical assistance should be addressed to the Community Development Programs Specialist at 205-620-6650 during regular business hours (8:00 AM to 4:30 PM Monday-Friday) or cdbg@shelbyal.com.

Section 14 Access to Information and Records

Citizens will be provided full access to CDBG program information during all phases of a CDBG project. County staff shall make reasonable effort to assure that CDBG program information is available to all citizens, especially those of low- and moderate-incomes and those residing in blighted neighborhoods and / or CDBG project areas. The Shelby County Commission will provide, on its website (shelbyal.com), information including the amount of assistance it expects to receive annually (dependent on notification by HUD) and the range of eligible activities that may be undertaken as well as the range of ineligible activities that may not be undertaken.

County staff will utilize HUD provided data sets and mapping tools. County staff will reference these data sets in plans and reports as well as provide a link to such data sources within the draft documents. Citizens and community stakeholders will have the opportunity to review the data utilized to establish priority needs, goals and objectives.

To facilitate citizen access to CDBG program information, all documents related to the CDBG program will be kept at the Shelby County Department of Development Services in the County Services Building, located at 1123 County Services Drive in Pelham. Information from the project files shall be made available for examination and duplication, on request, during regular business hours (8:00 AM to 4:30 PM Monday-Friday). CDBG program information and materials, concerning specific CDBG projects

will be available and distributed to the public at regularly scheduled public hearings as outlined in this plan.

Materials to be made available shall include, but are not necessarily limited to: records of public hearing; mailings and promotional materials; the environmental review record; financial and procurement records; project design and construction specifications; labor standards materials; written comments or complaints received concerning the community development program, and written responses from the county; and, copies of the applicable Federal and State rules, regulations, policies, requirements and procedures governing the CDBG program.

Adopted Consolidated Plans, Annual Action Plans, CAPERS, CPP, and Substantial Amendments may be found on the County website (shelbyal.com). A hard copy of each of these documents will be available for review at the Shelby County Department of Development Services in the County Services Building located at 1123 County Services Drive in Pelham. Records of the CDBG program including plans and reports shall be available for the preceding five (5) years of its creation or adoption.

In no case shall County staff disclose any information concerning the financial status of any program participant(s) which may be required to document program eligibility or benefit. Furthermore, County staff shall not disclose any information which may, in the opinion of the Shelby County Commission, be deemed of a confidential nature.

Section 15 Comments and Complaints

The scheduled public comment periods and public hearings per specific plans and reports are required to occur by law to facilitate public participation; however, citizens are encouraged to submit their views and proposals on all aspects of a community development program, not only during public comment periods or at public hearings, but year-round. Citizens may, at any time, submit written comments or complaints to the Shelby County Commission.

Written comments or complaints may be submitted by mail or email to:

**Community Development Programs Specialist
Shelby County Department of Development Services
1123 County Services Drive
Pelham, AL 35124
cdbg@shelbyal.com**

Responses will be either mailed or emailed within fifteen (15) business days of its receipt.

While citizens may contact HUD directly to register comments, objections, or complaints concerning Shelby County's CDBG program, they are encouraged, to attempt to resolve any complaints at the local level as outlined above prior to contacting HUD. If the

complainant feels that the County has not sufficiently resolved a complaint, a written complaint may be submitted by mail or email to the HUD Regional Office at:

Karen A. Morris, HDFP | Director
Office of Community Planning and Development
U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
The Plaza | 417 20th Street North Suite 700 | Birmingham, AL 35203
Karen.A.Morris@hud.gov

Records of all comments and complaints concerning the CDBG program and subsequent action taken in response to such shall be maintained at the Shelby County Department of Development Services and made available for public inspection upon request.

Section 16 Anti-Displacement

The Shelby County Commission does not anticipate funding any activities that will displace any residents or businesses. If displacement does occur, the residents or businesses displaced would be entitled to compensation and / or assistance under applicable Federal laws. Should the need for displacement ever arise, the Shelby County Commission will officially notify the residents or businesses expected to be displaced as soon as practicable following approval of the activity. The notice will include a description of the proposed action, a discussion of how the resident or business owner might be affected, and information concerning their rights and benefits.