

## Community Participation Process

1. Describe outreach activities undertaken to encourage and broaden meaningful community participation in the AFH process, including the types of outreach activities and dates of public hearings or meetings. Identify media outlets used and include a description of efforts made to reach the public, including those representing populations that are typically underrepresented in the planning process such as persons who reside in areas identified as R/ECAPs, persons who are limited English proficient (LEP), and persons with disabilities. Briefly explain how these communications were designed to reach the broadest audience possible. For PHAs, identify your meetings with the Resident Advisory Board.

The City has adopted a Citizen Participation Plan (CPP) that outlines the City's policies and procedures for obtaining public input in the planning and decision-making processes associated with the HUD grants and the Fair Housing Assessment. To view a copy of the City's adopted Citizen Participation Plan, please visit:

[http://www.gohammond.com/wp-content/uploads/Departments/Community\\_Development/pdf/Proposed\\_Hammond\\_Citizens\\_Participation\\_Plan-English.pdf](http://www.gohammond.com/wp-content/uploads/Departments/Community_Development/pdf/Proposed_Hammond_Citizens_Participation_Plan-English.pdf)

### **Publication of Data**

The City's main method for the dissemination of information is publication to its website at:

<http://www.gohammond.com/departments/planning-and-development/community-development/affirmatively-furthering-fair-housing-data-information/>

Publication to the City website allows for quick and efficient distribution of large amounts of information to the broadest possible audience. In May 2016, the City posted a number of resources to its fair housing site, including its last fair housing study, the 2012-2016 Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Choice (AI), data and maps provided by HUD for the current study, and a presentation used in public meetings. The web site included a form for interested parties to submit comments to the City in relation to the data presented.

### **Interested Parties Mailing List**

In addition to publishing notice on the City website, the City maintains an Interested Parties List. To be included on the Interested Parties List, please call the City's Community Development Department at 219-853-6358. Persons on the Interested Parties List will be contacted regarding all public participation opportunities related to the covered grant programs and fair housing planning.

### **Focus Group Consultations with Community Groups**

The City held two small group sessions to facilitate input from community organizations and fair housing advocates involved in affordable housing and community development programs in the area. The first focus group was held at City Hall in May, 2016 and the second focus group was held in July, 2016 at Greater Hammond Community Services. Participants included fair housing agencies, including Hammond Human Relations and South Suburban Housing Center, assisted housing providers, social service providers, and an area lender. A summary of all comments received at the public hearings are included as an Appendix to this plan

### **Public Hearings**

The City will hold two public hearings to facilitate input from residents in the community. The first hearing was held at 6 PM on August 23<sup>rd</sup> at City Council chambers, located at 5925 Calumet Ave. The first hearing was well attended and generated a number of comments from residents, including advocates for persons with disabilities. A summary of all comments received at the public hearings are included as an Appendix to this plan. The hearing received media coverage by the Northwest Indiana Times. The Times published articles both before the hearing and afterward which helped call attention to the planning process.

The second meeting will be at 1 PM, September 1st in the community room of the Hammond Public Library, located at 564 State Street. The two locations were selected for their accessibility and their proximity to the City's identified Racially/Ethnically Concentrated Area of Poverty (RECAP).

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**Public Comment Period**

The City will hold a public comment period commencing September 1<sup>st</sup> and ending September 30<sup>th</sup>. All comments received by the City will be summarized in an attachment to the draft plan. Written comments received during the formal comment period and those received orally at public hearings will receive a written response and will be included in the documents submitted to HUD. The City will accept comments throughout the year outside of the public comment periods, but the City cannot guarantee that these comments will be included in the submitted versions to HUD.

Comments may be emailed to [millero@gohammond.com](mailto:millero@gohammond.com) or submitted in writing to:

City of Hammond Community Development  
ATTN: Ms. Owana Miller  
5925 Calumet Avenue  
Hammond IN 46320

**Habla Espanol?**

Para la versión en Español, llamar el (219) 853-6501 o visitor  
[www.gohammond.com](http://www.gohammond.com)

**Outreach to Persons of Limited English Proficiency (LEP)**

In regard to non-English speaking persons, the City has conducted a Four-Factor Analysis to identify Limited English Speaking Persons (LEP). According to the 2013 5 Year ACS Estimates prepared by the U.S. Census, Spanish speakers account for 89% of LEP persons in the City and were the only group of LEP persons of significant size. Based on this analysis, the City will ensure that outreach materials are available in Spanish and that translators are made available during public meeting and hearings.

**Outreach to Persons with Disabilities**

The City will work with the Hammond Disabilities Commission and other local agencies to outreach directly to persons with disabilities within the community.

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2. Provide a list of organizations consulted during the community participation process.

- City Departments and Commissions
  - Hammond Human Relations Commission
  - Hammond Board of Zoning Appeals
  - Hammond Redevelopment Commission
  - Hammond Planning Commission
  - Hammond Disabilities Commission
  - Hammond Building Division
  
- Other Local Public/Quasi-public Agencies
  - School City of Hammond
  - Work One Northwest Indiana Workforce Board - *planned*
  - North Township Trustee
  - Lake County, Indiana - *planned*
  - East Chicago, Indiana - *planned*
  - City of Gary, Indiana - *planned*
  - Eviction Court - *planned*
  
- Local Service Providers
  - Member of Homeless Continuum of Care
  - Northwest Indiana Community Action Corporation - *planned*
  - NAACP - *planned*
  - We Care From the Heart
  - Parents as Teachers
  - CR Works
  
- Affordable Housing Providers
  - Public Housing Authority of Hammond
  - United Neighborhoods, Inc.
  - Hammond Elderly Apartments (Section 8) - *planned*
  - Renaissance Towers (Section 8) - *planned*
  - Mount Zion Pleasant View Manor (Section 8) - *planned*
  
- Local Fair Housing Agencies / Advocacy Groups
  - South Suburban Housing Center
  - Northwest Indiana Reinvestment Alliance
  - State of Indiana Civil Rights Commission

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- Hammond Human Relations Commission
  - Everybody Counts, Inc. (Disability Advocacy)
  
  - Others
    - Hammond Hispanic Community Committee
    - Greater Northwest Indiana Association of Realtors
    - Chamber of Commerce
    - Local Banks
    - NWI Bankers Community Council - *planned*
    - Lake County Housing Taskforce- *planned*
3. How successful were the efforts at eliciting meaningful community participation? If there was low participation, provide the reasons.

To date, the City has received meaningful participation from community organizations and fair housing advocates at the focus group meetings and the first public hearing. The City also received a number of constructive comments from residents at the first public hearing.

4. Summarize all comments obtained in the community participation process. Include a summary of any comments or views not accepted and the reasons why.

The City has accepted all comments and views received to date through the planning process. The comments below have been summarized into three broad categories of “Issues”, “Recommendations”, and “Other Comments/Remarks”. In addition, the City received a written statement from the South Suburban Housing Center which will be included as an attachment to the plan.

**Issues – Housing General**

- Children who grow up in Hammond and go to college do not return
- Housing stock is not attractive
- Greater Hammond sees large amounts of overcrowding – 3 or 4 families sharing one unit
- High rates of predatory lending
- How is foreclosures affecting renters?

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- There are concerns about administration of Code Enforcement. Many of those cited cannot afford to make repairs, cannot afford fines. Is there a connection between code enforcement and rehabilitation programs offered?
- Feels that non-residents (Illinois residents) are benefitting from city services

**Issues – Fair Housing**

- South Suburban feels that all forms of discrimination are under-reported. Possible solution is to promote fair housing resources
- Greater Hammond feels there is a high level of NIMBYism to new affordable housing unless its senior housing
- Northwest Indiana Reinvestment Alliance has a list of properties to do fair housing outreach but encounters a lot of resistance from management companies.
- Renaissance residents call Hammond Human Relations Commission with anonymous tips. Afraid of retribution

**Issues – Persons with Disabilities / Seniors**

- Persons with disabilities experience disparate treatment in housing search/application process. Need emergency housing for persons with disabilities. Persons with disabilities (especially those coming out of shelter system) have extremely hard time finding housing
- Lack of accessible housing exists. Forces people into nursing homes. Existing ADA plan to does not adequately speak of needs in community (access to housing and community facilities)

**Issues – Public / Assisted Housing**

- Issue with Section 8 voucher holders finding housing within Hammond. Hammond rent standards are based on Gary rents instead of Chicago. Voucher holders have issues finding available housing in both City and County programs.
- Voucher program should not be permanent for persons who are able to work. Would prefer if it was a self-sufficiency program
- Public housing is shutting down two developments (continued redevelopment of Columbia Center). Is concerned about the relocation of these residents

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**Issues – Access to Transportation**

- When public transit funding decisions were made (transfer of bus service to regional provider)? How was impact on protected classes analyzed when transit funding decisions were made? What steps has the City made to recoup assets invested in the bus service? How will people access the South Shore extension?
- Need to support aging in place for seniors. Older housing stock is not accessible to persons with disabilities. Seniors complain about lack of loans and grants. Seniors have to leave their homes when they cannot afford repairs. Need to publicize the availability of any programs and funding available to help seniors age in place

**Issues – Access to Education**

- Education index provided by HUD is a concern. Families will not want to move to Hammond if these statistics are correct. Can HUD provide funding for education / improvements to educational system? Feels there is a need to supplement data
- Need to address the school system. Is Private Schools or more charter schools the answer? What needs to happen to fix?

**Recommendations**

- What makes people want to invest in Hammond? Sees a difference in how properties are cared for in Hammond vs other communities, specifically cited NIPSCO. Everyone needs to pull together to solve problems of this magnitude
- Need to work with local banks to ensure access to credit
- Talk to eviction court
- for education and marketing: use social media; use outside parties
- More data/discussion regarding employment centers would help. More data/discussion regarding housing needs in terms of tenure
- Look into Miller Trust programs
- South Suburban would like to see similar indexes for subsidized housing
- South Suburban recommends looking at race & income index and exposure index
- NWIRA thinks study should focus on Lake County

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- Look at trends in Robertsdale
- South Suburban feels there is a lack of counseling availability
- In regard to poor school rankings, Maywood school had effective program that was discontinued.

**Other Comments / Remarks**

- Availability of rent to own programs in Hammond
- We Care has prevented a lot of preventions in E Chicago.
- South Suburban feels that there should be more RECAPs in Hammond. Columbia Center?
- Hessville has changed to a “Hispanic” neighborhood
- Hammond is a destination for Hispanic immigrants because of family who have moved to Hammond
- Poor folks are immobilized; HUD stands for Helping You Die
- Charter schools are anti-union; calls for a light form of Islamic justice
- Concerns over the data quality of ACS data/high margins of error