



**City of Benton Harbor**

**Department of Community & Economic Development**

**2019 Action Plan Amendments and**

**Citizen Participation Plan**

**In Response to COVID19**

City of Benton Harbor  
Ellis Mitchell, City Manager

**The following information address the areas of the Citizen Participation Plan and 2019 Action Plan amended in response to the Coronavirus Pandemic (COVID19)**

In compliance with HUD Memo, issued April 9, 2020, amendments to the approved Citizen Participation Plan and Action Plan were limited to the following sections:

**CITIZEN PARTICIPATION PLAN**

**Citizen Participation narrative addition:** Citizen Participation Reasonable Notice and Opportunity to Comment. HUD recognizes the efforts to contain COVID19 require limiting public gatherings, such as those often used to obtain citizen participation, and that there is a need to respond quickly to the growing spread and effects of COVID19. Therefore, HUD waives 24CFR 91.105(c)(2) and (k), 24 CFR 91.115(c)(2) and (i) and 24 CFR 91.401 to allow these grantees to determine what constitutes reasonable notice and opportunity to comment given their circumstances. The city constitutes a public meeting as a public hearing that may take place in a physical location, virtual web meeting or teleconference. This authority is in effect through the end of the 2020 program year.

Availability of waivers of Community & Economic Development Department Grant Program and Consolidated Plan Requirements to prevent the spread of COVID19 and mitigate economic impacts caused by COVID19. This 30 day minimum is for the required public comment period is waived for substantial amendments, provided that no fewer than 5 days are provided for public comments on each substantial amendment. The waiver is available through the end of the recipients 2020 program year and is amended throughout the Citizen Participation Plan.

Any comments received, either at the virtual public hearing or during the public comment period will be considered by the City before the final amended action plan is submitted to HUD. A summary of the comments and agency's responses will be an attachment to the final amended action plan.

This amended Citizen Participation Plan will itself be made available to the public for a 5 day public comment period prior to implementation and any interest groups may review and comment accordingly.

**Reprogrammed Funds - \$155,000**

The City is reprogramming \$155,000 of PY 2019 prior year's CDBG funds; \$55,000 from Code Enforcement and \$100,000 from Armory repairs. \$130,000 will assigned to The Home Rehabilitation Program and \$25,000 will be assigned to The Benton Harbor Rehousing Program.

**City of Benton Harbor Home Rehabilitation Program - \$130,000**

The City of Benton Harbor will provide six (6) Emergency Loans up to \$5,000 and four (4) Whole House Rehabilitation Loans up to \$25,000 to eligible homeowners to make eligible repairs to their homes. This figure includes administrative funds to sub-recipient Southwest Michigan Community Action Agency to partially administer the loan program.

**City of Benton Harbor Rehousing Program - \$25,000**

Housing relocation and stabilization services and/or short and/or medium term rental assistance as necessary to help individuals or families living in shelters or in places not meant for human habitation move as quickly as possible into permanent housing in Benton Harbor City limits and achieve stability in that housing. This activity will be administered by the Housing Assistance Resource Agency (HARA).

**CDBG-CV Funds**

The City of Benton Harbor has been allocated \$250,905 in CDBG-CV funding through the CARES Act. CDBG-CV must be used for the prevention of, preparation for and responding to the coronavirus pandemic. Activities must also comply with an eligible CDBG National Objective. Staff recommends that the CDBG-CV funds be programmed as follows and discussed in detail below:

<b>Activity Name</b>	<b>CARES Act Substantial Amendment CDBG-CV</b>	<b>Reprogrammed Funds</b>	<b>Goal Outcomes</b>
City of Benton Harbor Rehousing Program from reprogrammed funds		\$25,000	10 Households
Home Rehab Program from reprogrammed funds		\$130,000	10 Households
Program Administration	\$50,181		
Senior Nutrition Services, Inc.	\$15,000		
Rent and Utility Assistance Program	\$50,000		50-100 Households
Personal Protective Equipment	\$15,000		
Shelter Operations	\$60,000		
Small Business Support	\$30,000		10 Businesses
Foodbank (SMCAA & Abundant Life)	\$30,724		
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>\$250,905</b>	<b>\$155,000</b>	

**Program Administration - \$50,181 CDBG-CV**

Up to twenty (20) percent of a recipient's allocation can be used for administrative activities. These include general management, oversight, and coordination; reporting on the program; the costs of providing training on CDBG-CV requirements and attending HUD-sponsored trainings; the costs of preparing and amending the Annual Action Plan, and CAPER; and the costs of carrying out environmental review responsibilities. This activity will be administered by City of Benton Harbor Community and Economic Development Department.

**Senior Nutrition Services, Inc. - \$15,000 CDBG-CV**

The City is programming \$ 15,000 of CDBG-CV funding to respond to the COVID-19 Pandemic by providing Meals on Wheels to quarantined individuals or individuals that need to maintain social distancing due to medical vulnerabilities. The purpose of the program is to aid in the form of meals for City of Benton Harbor senior residents for up to three months. Funding will be made directly Meals on Wheels on behalf of the qualified resident. Eligible residents include those living in households with incomes at or below 80% AMI, can provide documentation of need and the applicable impact of COVID19, etc.

**Rent and Utility Assistance Program \$50,000 - CDBG-CV (Gas and Electric only)**

A new program that will provide rental and/or utility assistance to low to moderate-income households located within the City of Benton Harbor. The assistance will be available for up to three (3) consecutive months and the payments will go directly to the landlord and/or utility provider. This activity will be administered by The Housing Assistance Resource Agency (HARA).

**Personal Protective Equipment \$15,000 – CDBG-CV**

The City is programming \$15,000 of CDBG-CV funding to respond to the COVID-19 Pandemic by providing hand sanitizer, N95 masks, and gloves to every resident in the City of Benton Harbor.

**Shelter Operations \$60,000 – CDBG-CV**

Assistance will include maintenance, rent, repair, security, fuel equipment, insurance, utilities, food furnishings, and supplies necessary for the operation of the Emergency Safe Shelter, Men's Salvation Army and CORA Lamping Center. Where no appropriate emergency shelter is available for a homeless family or individual, eligible costs may also include a hotel or motel voucher for that family or individual. Funding for this activity will be administered by the Emergency Safe Shelter, Men's Salvation Army and The Cora Lamping Center.

**Small Business Relief \$30,000-CDBG-CV**

The City will be working with small businesses to purchase supplies and materials that will assist their business in re-opening to the public and maintaining clean and sanitized social distance environments.

**Food Bank (SMCAA & Abundant Life) \$30,724 – CDBG-CV**

A new program implemented will provide funds to Southwest Michigan Community Action Agency (SMCAA) and Abundant Life Ministries to assist with the purchase of meat products, personal hygiene products. Eligible residents include those living in households with incomes at or below 80% AMI.