



St. Johns County Board of County Commissioners

Housing & Community Development

Public Notice

**Public Notice of Intent to Use Waivers of
Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program Requirements
to Prevent the Spread of COVID-19,
Mitigate Economic Impacts Caused by COVID-19,
and the Extension of the CDBG Application Deadline**

St. Johns County hereby gives public notice that it reserves the right to use waivers approved by the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) regarding the administration of the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG). Public Notice is also given that the due date for the submission of the 2020-2021 CDBG application has been extended.

The waivers approved by HUD were made available to entitlement communities, such as St. Johns County, for the purpose of preventing the spread of COVID-19 and to pursue options to mitigate the economic impacts caused by COVID-19.

The CDBG program is administered through HUD, for the benefit of low-to-moderate income residents. The development and approval of a Consolidated Plan and Annual Action Plans are requirements of receiving CDBG funds.

In accordance with the County's Citizen Participation Plan, citizens are encouraged to participate in the planning, implementation, and evaluation of the CDBG program. The Citizens Participation Plan also states that the County will provide a thirty-day public notice prior to making a substantial amendment to the Consolidated Plan.

One approved waiver the County reserves the right to use is limiting public meetings held for the purpose of informing citizens about the planning, implementation, and evaluation of all aspects of the CDBG program and soliciting questions and comments from the public. Suspending public meetings is intended to reduce the spread of COVID-19 during gatherings of people. The public is encouraged to continue to ask questions and provide comments on all facets of the CDBG program via US mail, email, and phone calls.

All questions and comments related to the CDBG program may be mailed to 200 San Sebastian View, Suite 2300, St. Augustine, FL 32084, or emailed to glulkoski@sjcfl.us, or given by calling 904-827-6890.

Another approved waiver the County reserves the right to use is reducing the Public Comment period for substantial amendments to the Consolidated Plan from 30 days to 5 days. This waiver

is intended to make the County more agile in implementing activities in response to the COVID-19 crisis.

At this time, the County is preparing for the 2020-2021 Annual Action Plan. Through the application process, the County makes a portion of CDBG funds available to the community. On January 28, 2020, the County announced a process for soliciting CDBG applications and a process for scoring and selection of applications to be funded.

The due date for CDBG applications has now been extended to 4 PM on May 1, 2020. As stated in the application instructions, in order for an organization to be eligible to submit an application, a representative of that organization must attend a scheduled technical assistance workshop. All technical assistance workshops for 2020 have been concluded. The County reserves the right to make additional modifications to this deadline in response to COVID-19.

Applications received by the deadline will be evaluated and scored by a committee. The meeting to evaluate applications has been postponed to 3 PM on May 15. Typically, this type of evaluation meeting is a public meeting. However, the County reserves the right to utilize the waiver mentioned above to suspend the public meeting, in an effort to reduce the spread of communicable disease. All documents related to the evaluation and scoring meeting are public records available to the public, upon request. The County also reserves the right to make additional modifications to this deadline and requirements associated with this deadline in response to COVID-19.

As stated in the public notice issued on January 28, 2020, the County is not obligated to award all funds available during a particular grant cycle. The County also reserves the right to reject any and all applications submitted and may use its discretion to determine the amount of funds to be made available to respond to the COVID-19 crisis. At this time, no decisions have been made about the use of CDBG funds and/or the use of applicable waivers to mitigate the impact of COVID-19. By the methods described above, the community is encouraged to ask questions and provide comments on this and all actions related to the CDBG program.

In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, persons needing a special accommodation to participate in the CDBG program should contact the ADA Coordinator at 904-209-0650. Deaf and/or hard-of hearing individuals may use Telecommunications Device for the Deaf (TDD): 904-209-0650, or the Florida Relay Service: 800-955-8770. CDBG information is provided in English. If you require a translator, please call 904-209-0650. To request services, please notify the County at least five business days prior to need for services.

