

ABOUT LAKEWOOD'S CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The city of Lakewood places great emphasis on the public participation process in the allocation of federal funds and the evaluation of federally funded programs. Lakewood's Citizen Participation Plan sets forth the city's policies and procedures for citizen involvement and enthusiastically encourages the active participation of Lakewood residents and a broad array of community stakeholders in the annual federal funding allocation process. Special emphasis is placed on involving low-moderate-income persons in the CDBG-eligible neighborhoods and target areas where CDBG funds are concentrated.

The city's Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) is the cornerstone of **Lakewood's** citizen participation process. Created by statute, the CAC is comprised of (17) members appointed jointly by the Mayor (9) and city Council (8). Mayoral appointees may serve a maximum of two (2) two-year terms and Council appointees may serve up to three (3) one-year terms.

The CAC is charged with making recommendations to Lakewood City Council regarding the annual allocation the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) funds the city receives directly from HUD and HOME funds received through the Cuyahoga County Housing Consortium.

CAC deliberations are guided by Lakewood's HUD-mandated 5-Year Consolidated Plan and Annual Action Plans and enriched by input from Lakewood's citizens, the Mayor, City Council, municipal departments, the Cuyahoga County Housing Consortium, the Cleveland/Cuyahoga Continuum of Care (CoC), city boards and commissions, not-for-profit organizations, and business leaders, among others.

Lakewood's Department of Planning & Development manages the annual citizen participation and allocation processes and provides staff support for the Committee. The city's Development Officer provides members with the broad array of contemporary and historic information, data, and tools required for the responsible, transparent, effective allocation of federal resources in compliance with all applicable rules and regulations, and in accordance with the needs, goals and priorities established in the city's Five-Year Plan.

The CAC reviews and prioritizes funding requests submitted by city departments and Lakewood-based not-for-profit agencies according to standardized criteria that ensure proposed activities effectively address the housing and non-housing community development needs identified in the city's Five Year Plan.

All funding applicants must submit a written application including a data-based statement of community need, a description of proposed activities, beneficiaries, intended outcomes and how they will be measured, demonstration of organizational experience and capacity to responsibly and transparently administer federal funds in compliance with HUD regulations, and a detailed line-item budget. Applicants must also defend their written proposals during a 15-minute oral presentation before the Committee after which Committee members ask questions and/or request additional information.

CAC allocation recommendations are forwarded to city Council for deliberation and approval by formal resolution. Following Council approval, these recommendations are incorporated into the city's One-Year Action Plan for submission to HUD as the city's official request for CDBG, ESG, and HOME funding for the upcoming fiscal year.