



COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
BLOCK GRANT – DISASTER
RECOVERY (CDBG-DR)

Engagement Recap

November 14, 2023



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SECTION 1.

Background

In September of 2021, the remnants of Hurricane Ida hit Philadelphia. This resulted in major property damage and extensive flooding. In response to Ida, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) allocated \$163,204,000 in Community Development Block Grant – Disaster Recovery funding to support long-term recovery and hazard mitigation efforts.

In order to design Hurricane Ida Recovery programs and activities that meaningfully benefit vulnerable and impacted residents, the City engaged community members in a variety of ways to ensure effective outreach. The City published the [CDBG-DR Action Plan](#) and held a 30-day public comment period from July 14, 2023 to August 15, 2023. Two public hearings (one in-person and one virtual) were also held on August 8, 2023, to encourage resident feedback.

The City will continue outreach and engagement throughout the six-year life of the CDBG- DR program. Below is a snapshot of the engagement efforts we have used so far.

CDBG-DR funds are primarily intended to support vulnerable Philadelphia residents most impacted by Hurricane Ida. The City's CDBG-DR Action Plan details how funding will be allocated to various programs, including:

- Housing
- Infrastructure
- Mitigation
- Planning
- Economic revitalization
- Public services

SECTION 2.

Outreach Efforts

CDBG-DR engagement has consisted of multiple forms of outreach and has led to feedback from over 900 Philadelphia residents so far. Our outreach has included a City-wide survey, small-group discussion sessions, print and social media advertisements, as well as meetings and communications with relevant stakeholders.

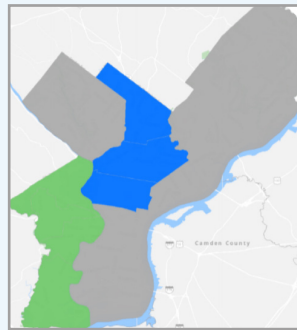
These efforts (that can be seen in more detail below) create a robust and holistic outreach process that will continue as we work towards implementing CDBG-DR activities.

2.1 Philadelphia Voices Survey

The Philadelphia Voices Survey was a city-wide survey conducted by the Mayor's Policy Office in June 2023 in order to gain input from Philadelphia residents on various issues, including Hurricane Ida impacts. The survey yielded a sample size of 801 respondents and has a margin of error of +/- 2.45%. Results of the survey are shown below.

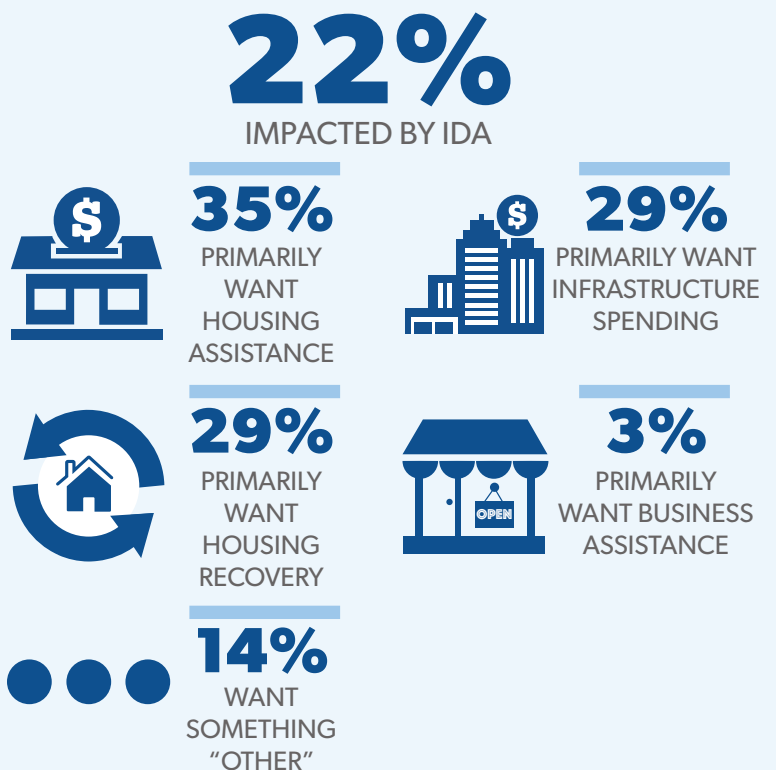
Figure 1: Philadelphia Voices Survey Results

WHO WE REACHED



WEST AND NORTH PHILADELPHIA
RESIDENTS MOST LIKELY TO BE AFFECTED BY IDA

WHAT WE HEARD



2.2 Neighborhood Advisory Committees (NACs)

The City analyzed verified property loss data from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to determine which zip-codes were most impacted by Hurricane Ida. As part of our effective outreach strategy, the City engaged NACs serving five of the most impacted Philadelphia zip codes (as measured by number of FEMA Individual Assistance claims) to obtain feedback, better understand community needs, and begin collaborating with residents. In collaboration with these five NACs, the City conducted small-group meetings that were attended by NAC staff, Neighborhood Advisory Subcommittee (NAS) members, and interested community residents. The Participating NACs included:

- [Hispanic Association of Contractors & Enterprises \(HACE\)](#)
- [Hunting Park Neighborhood Advisory Committee](#)
- [Strawberry Mansion Neighborhood Action Center, Inc.](#)
- [Greater Philadelphia Social Service Center \(GPASS\)](#)
- [The Enterprise Center CDC](#)

A map of the most impacted Philadelphia Zip Codes according to FEMA Verified loss data is included below for reference:

Figure 2: Map of Most Ida Impacted Zip Codes in Philadelphia

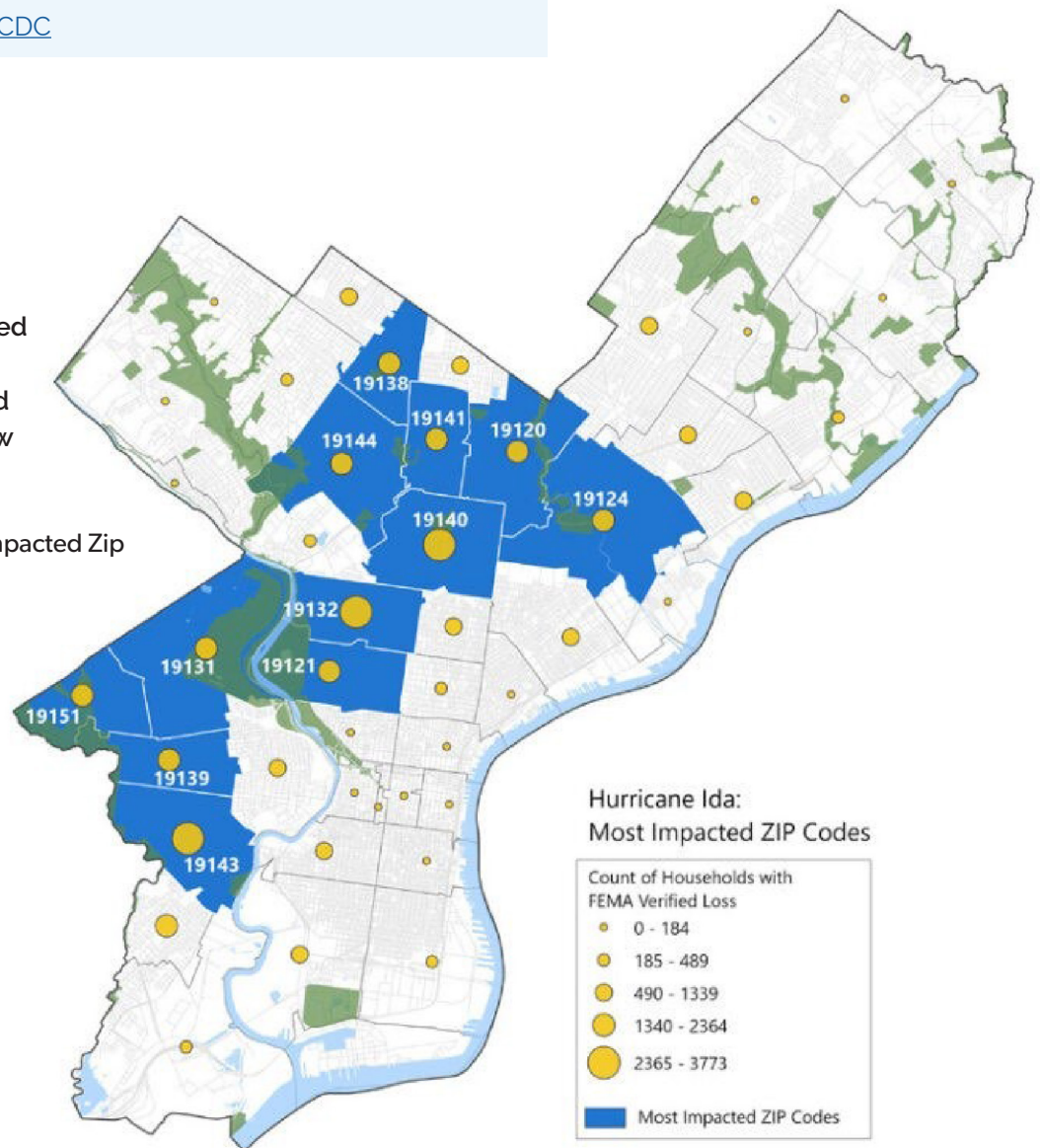


Figure 3: Word Cloud of Small Group NAC Themes. Most commonly expressed words/phrases are larger in size



Key Themes:

When analyzing feedback from the 70+ residents who participated in NAC small group meetings, key themes emerged. The impacts of Hurricane Ida were profound. Many residents experienced flooded basements that affected their daily lives and voiced the need for assistance. Other residents were affected by fallen trees during the storm and called for better city maintenance via 311 to ensure reduced impacts going forward. Residents also recognized that having an older home can compound the negative impacts of storm events – worsening direct impacts and reducing future resilience. Issues with older housing stock can further compound the cost burden of recovery for economically insecure residents.

In the storm response realm, residents identified key areas of concern. Many residents encountered problems with obtaining insurance or raising premiums in the aftermath of Ida, impacting their ability to repair damages and feel secure in the face of future storm events. Additionally, there was widespread frustration with the aid/disaster recovery process amongst small group meeting participants. Individuals expressed disappointment with the amount of aid provided from the City and federal partners, as well as confusion about how aid was dispersed. These concerns overlap with calls for more transparency and effective engagement of community members in the aid process.

Participants also discussed issues for renters in Philadelphia – specifically related to landlord retaliation. Renters were concerned that landlords may retaliate against tenants who seek out aid by raising rents or even kicking tenants out of properties. Multiple residents floated the idea of not providing aid to landlords with histories of L&I violations/past abuses.

For next steps, residents asked for more information on FEMA applicants who did not receive assistance. A variety of factors influence which applicants receive FEMA assistance, so residents voiced the need for transparency and follow-up with applicants. Residents also expressed dissatisfaction with current city resources and voiced interest in a greater level of community involvement in CDBG-DR programming. Some residents called for a larger role of NACs and Community Development Corporations (CDCs) in CDBG-DR project intake and monitoring. One resident detailed a “Resident Task Force” model that would consist of community members (block captains, community leaders, etc.) from the most impacted areas of Philadelphia. These NAC/CDC funded Task Force Groups would be on the ground to address issues in CDBG-DR programming and focus on community education. This model could empower community members and better ensure effective design and implementation of CDBG-DR programs going forward.



Figure 4: Eastwick Community Day (Source is FEMA)

2.3 Stakeholder Meetings and Consultations

In addition to engaging with community members, consultations with organizations and City departments are also vital to ensuring CDBG-DR programming reflects the unique needs of vulnerable Philadelphians. So far, the City has introduced and explained the CDBG-DR Action Plan to 21 Community Based Organizations. These organizations include volunteer organizations, various CDCs and NACs, university partners, and many more. When analyzing outreach done to public sector partners, 47 entities have been engaged – including but not limited to transportation agencies, offices for elected officials, utilities departments, public health offices, and disaster recovery partners.

These organizations and affiliates will continue to be a vital part of how we best connect Hurricane Ida Recovery programming with the lived experience and needs of Philadelphia residents. A full list of stakeholder meetings and consultations is included in the Appendix.

2.3.1 Eastwick Engagement

Eastwick is an environmental justice community in Southwest Philadelphia facing multiple environmental burdens including a federally designated Superfund site (Clearview Landfill), the largest oil refinery on the Eastern Seaboard (now closed), and noise and air pollution from major highways (I-95 and I-76) and the Philadelphia International Airport.

One of the most significant environmental challenges in Eastwick is flooding; Eastwick is the lowest lying neighborhood in Philadelphia and has historically experienced severe riverine flooding but is vulnerable to multiple sources of flooding due to climate change. Flooding of both Cobbs and Darby Creeks on the west side of the community is of greatest concern, but during coastal storms like Hurricane Ida, water levels in the Delaware and Schuylkill Rivers rise as well. Sea level rise will make it harder for water to drain and may eventually cause water to pond in some areas, even on sunny days.

In 2022, the City initiated a place-based program called "[Eastwick: from Recovery to Resilience](#)" to align City, State, and Federal efforts to improve community well-being in Eastwick through actions informed by Eastwick's history, present context, and residents' vision for a resilient future. Through this initiative and with deep collaboration with Eastwick community leaders and agency partners, the City has identified priority areas for short- and long-term investment and action. These priorities were further verified in a May 2023 focus group around unmet needs. Based on ongoing engagement, priorities include prevention of flood damage through resilience measures, preparedness for future disasters via planning, and recovery from storm impacts.



Figure 5: Hurricane Ida caused property damage and extensive flooding in Philadelphia.

2.3.2 Economic Revitalization Engagement:

Of its total \$163M CDBG-DR allocation, the City will spend \$5M on economic recovery and long-term resilience activities. This includes grants for businesses who incurred business losses or structural damage after Ida.

The CDBG-DR Program Team held a series of engagement events in collaboration with the Commerce Department in Manayunk and East Falls in Fall 2023 and Winter 2024. According to Small Business Administration data, those two neighborhoods had the highest dollar amounts of Total Verified Losses in the City after Ida.

The purpose of the events was to inform business owners about future CDBG-DR assistance and to learn more about business recovery and resilience Unmet Needs. Additionally, business owners provided feedback on Economic Revitalization program proposed by the CDBG-DR Program Team and the Commerce Department. The events were hosted and supported by Manayunk Development Corporation and East Falls Development Corporation.

2.4 Public Comment Period and Hearings

In line with HUD standards and City of Philadelphia best practices, a 30-day public comment period was open and advertised in order to allow public feedback on the CDBG- DR Action Plan. The public comment period was open from July 14, 2023, to August 15, 2023. Philadelphians were able to email CDBG-DR@phila.gov with comments or send physical mail with comments to the City's CDBG-DR office. **83 written comments were received during the public comment period.**

In addition to the 30-day comment period, two public hearings were held on August 8, 2023 –one remote over zoom and one in person at 1234 Market Street. Across these 2 public hearings, **14 oral comments from community members were given. In total, the public comment period and hearings yielded 97 comments from Philadelphia residents.** These 97 comments were analyzed and coded for key themes – the most common of which are included below:

1. Housing
2. Mitigation
3. High Cost Burden of Ida Recovery
4. Infrastructure
5. Eligibility Questions
6. Disaster Preparedness
7. Sanitation Issues
8. Renter's Issues

Outreach to advertise the comment period and public hearing was done through email blasts, word of mouth, newspaper advertisements, and social media. Screenshots of the public comment coding are included below:

Figure 6: Public Comment Theme Coding 1

Code	Comment
Public Services, Eligibility Questions	Public Services – How much money is going to CDCs? And would they have to apply?
Housing, Renter's Issues	How does the proposed Homeowner Repair Program and Rental Assistance Program tie back to Ida?
Housing	Housing Repair Program - How does that address tangled title?
Planning, Housing	Planning – Is there intention to examine expiration of HUD requirements for renters (affordability, senior housing, tax credits, etc.)?
Renter's Issues	
Eligibility Questions	Why is the \$163 M available? Where did it come from? How will the DR Program address needs that aren't managed by CDCs?
Economic Revitalization	Economic Revitalization – Can a business owner apply for support without having relation to SBA Merchants Fund?
Eligibility Questions	
Housing, Eligibility Questions	Is it necessary to have estimates of damage (experienced by homeowner)?
Planning, Disaster Preparedness	Planning – Does it cover preparedness (e.g. evacuation, transport seniors etc.)?
Effective Engagement	Elaborate on public engagement and outreach? Does this include local community organizations (e.g. Friends of...)

Figure 7: Public Comment Theme Coding 2

Code	Comment
Green Infrastructure, Infrastructure, Mitigation, Housing	Please make home repair funds allocated in the City of Philadelphia's Community Development Block Grant Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR) program available to residents living in the 100-year flood plain.
Renter's Issues, Frustration with Recovery Process	The City is proposing two necessary housing rehabilitation programs.
Frustration with Recovery Process, Housing - Basement, Housing, Economic Revitalization	I am a resident of the Eastwick Community in the city of Philadelphia. I have resided in this community for more than twenty years and been the victim of the aftermath of two major flooding events since living here. The first was hurricane Floyd September 1, 1999 the most recent hurricane Isaias August 4, 2020. During both of these floods I received
High Cost Burden, Mitigation, Disaster Preparedness	
Housing, Renter's Issues	Community Legal Services official statement - Here
Mitigation, Public Services, Infrastructure, High Cost Burden	https://drive.google.com/file/d/1GjybpxdXcefKDK1Vg_db1hmfk7SjyQ/vi ew?usp=drive_link
Mitigation	Good evening. I am comment on the grant and for 7800 block of Saturn place. I feel like this area should be taking in serious consideration because us as a community lose so much when the floods occur.
Infrastructure, Planning	I am writing to submit a comment about the current draft of the CDBG-DR Action Plan. My comment relates to funding allocation for managing combined sewer overflow in the Schuylkill River.

2.5 Social Media

Social media outreach is a crucial component of reaching a diverse audience of impacted Philadelphia residents. As part of our goal of effective outreach, the City designed a Hurricane Ida Recovery social media toolkit, including adverting materials for the 30-day public comment period and the August 8 public hearings. Facebook, Instagram, and Next Door were used to maximize visibility.

Figure 8: Social Media Snapshot



SECTION 3. Next Steps

Outreach and engagement will continue throughout the lifetime of the grant which will be implemented over a six-year period. It is a priority to remain active in community outreach while conducting inclusive and equitable engagement that will inform and help create programs for the whole community, with a special emphasis on historically vulnerable and underserved areas.

Looking ahead, we hope to ramp up engagement once program details have been finalized and projects start applying for funding. Recapping engagement on a rolling basis will be a City priority, so stay tuned for updates on the residents we have collaborated with throughout the process!

In the meantime, stay in touch in touch by reaching out to CDBG-DR@phila.gov for more information.

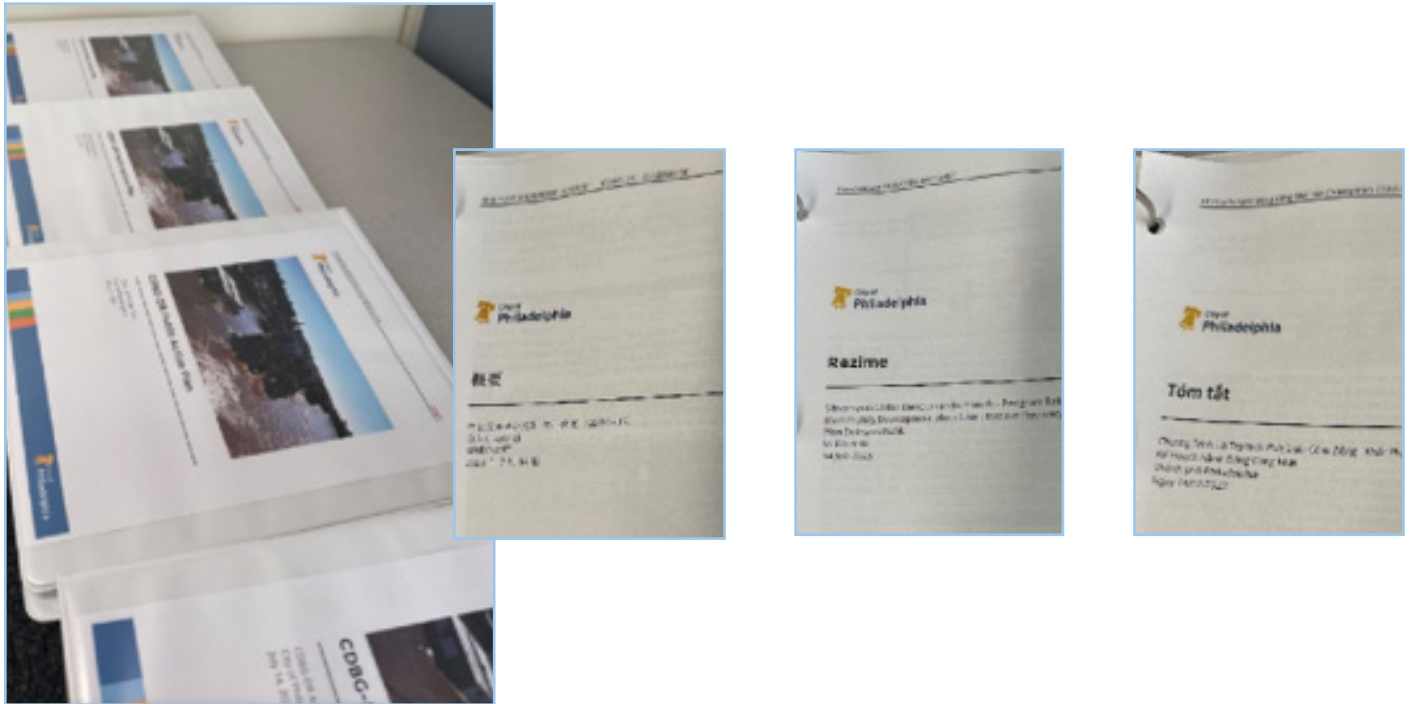
3.1 Appendix

The section below includes documentation of our outreach process so far, including advertisements, outreach materials, and consultations with stakeholders.

3.1.1 Social Media Materials



3.1.5 Free Library of Philadelphia



3.1.6 City Website Blog Post:

City of Philadelphia

Share Your Thoughts on the City's Hurricane Ida Recovery Plan

July 21, 2023 | Patrick Clark
Office of the Director of Finance

In 2021, Hurricane Ida caused property damage and extensive flooding in Philadelphia. To help the City recover, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) allocated Philadelphia over \$163 million through the **Community Block Grant Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR) Program**. You can read about what the City plans to do with the funding in the **CDBG-DR Action Plan**. HUD allows CDBG-DR recipients to spend money in four main project areas: Housing Recovery, Planning, Infrastructure, and Economic Revitalization.

The City of Philadelphia is accepting comments on the proposed CDBG-DR Action Plan now through August 15, 2023. The City of Philadelphia will accept written comments and conduct hearings so residents can comment on the proposed use of funds.

Written Comments

You can email written comments by August 15, 2023 to CDRG-DR@phila.gov or mail them to:

- City of Philadelphia
Grants Office
Office of the Director of Finance
1401 John F. Kennedy Blvd, SU 02 1430
Philadelphia, PA 19102
RE: CDBG-DR Hearings

Public Hearings

The City will hold an in-person meeting and a virtual meeting.

Register to attend by emailing miria.duprey@phila.gov. Please specify which hearing you will attend (in-person or virtual). You will receive instructions for joining either hearing upon registration.

The in-person CDBG-DR hearing will be held on:

- DATE: Tuesday, August 8th, 2023
- TIME: 10am-12pm
- LOCATION: 1234 Market St., 17th Floor Philadelphia, PA 19107
- Attendees will need to show an ID at the Security Desk to enter the building.

The virtual CDBG-DR hearing will be held on:

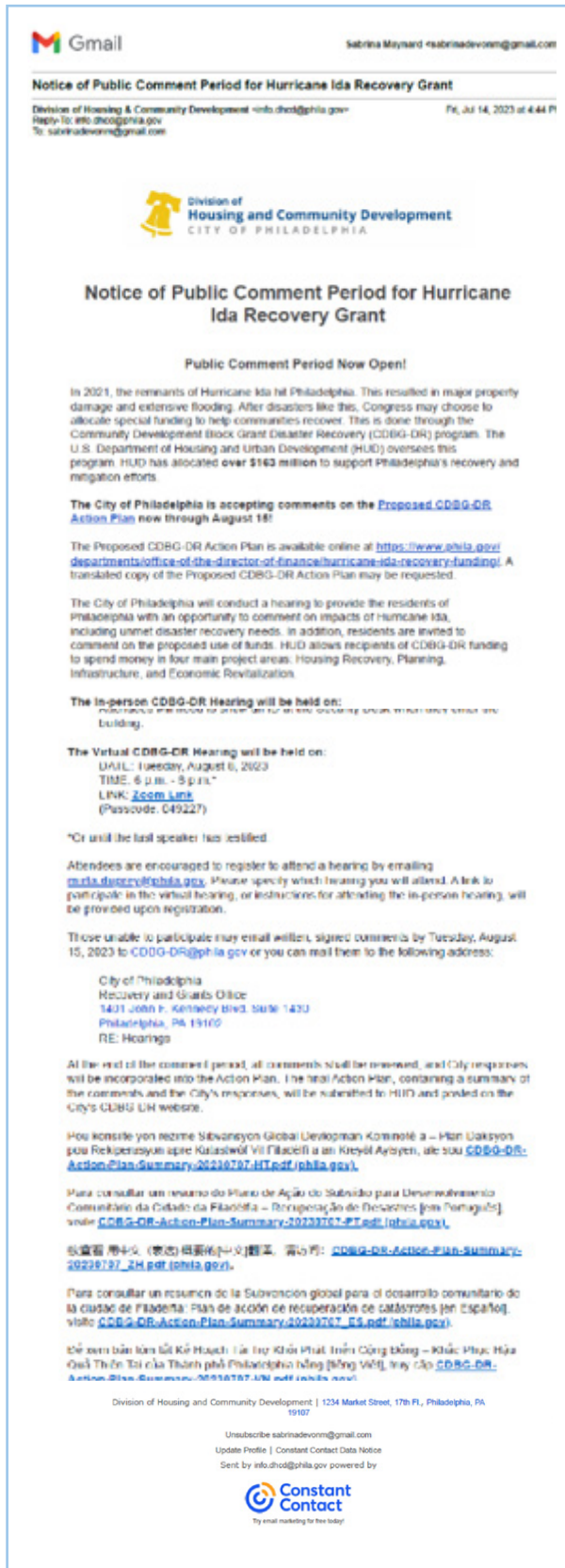
- DATE: Tuesday, August 8th, 2023
- TIME: 5pm-8pm
- LOGIN: [Zoom Link](#) (Passcode: 196222)

Additional Information

The City will review and incorporate all feedback at the end of the comment period and post the final CDBG-DR Action Plan on the City's website.

To arrange for a hard copy or a translated copy of the proposed CDBG-DR Action Plan, please email CDRG-DR@phila.gov.

3.1.7 Mass Email to DHCD Contact List



3.1.8 Meetings and Consultations

Outreach to Federal, State, and Local Public Agencies/Stakeholders

City CDBG-DR Steering Committee

Budget Office
 Division of Housing and Community Development (DHCD)

Managing Directors Office (MDO)

- Office of Emergency Management (OEM)
- Office of Sustainability (OOS)
- Philadelphia Water Department (PWD)
- Office of Transportation, Infrastructure, and Sustainability (OTIS)

Philadelphia Parks and Recreation

Philadelphia City Planning Commission (PCPC)

Mayor's Office

Department of Commerce

Philadelphia City Council, Office of the Council President

Ongoing
04/05/2023

04/19/2023

05/03/2023

05/17/2023

06/14/2023

07/12/2023

08/16/2023

Philadelphia Flood Risk Management Task Force, including but not limited to:

- OOS
- OEM
- PWD
- PCPC

Department of Licenses and Inspections (L&I)

Department of Public Property (DPP)

Department of Public Health (DPH)

Department of Aviation (DOA)

Office of Risk Management

Ongoing
03/23/2023

06/13/2023

07/17/2023

Eastwick Intergovernmental and Interagency Meetings, including but not limited to:

OOS	<p>Ongoing 03/17/2023</p> <p>06/02/2023</p> <p>07/28/2023</p> <p>06/30/2023</p>
OEM	
PWD	
OTIS	
PCPC	
Philadelphia Housing and Community Development Corporation(PHDC)	
Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency (PEMA)	
FEMA, Region 3	
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Philadelphia District	
Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)	
U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)	
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	
Office of Congresswoman Scanlon	
Office of State Senator Anthony H. Williams	

Hazard Mitigation Steering Committee, including but not limited to:

OEM	<p>Ongoing 04/17/2023</p> <p>07/28/2023</p>
OOS	
PCPC	
OTIS	
Department of Commerce	
PDPH	
Philadelphia Fire Department (PFD)	
Philadelphia Police Department (PPD)	

Hazard Mitigation Plan 2023 Annual Review Workshop, including but not limited to:

OEM	<p>03/30/2023</p>
OOS	
PWD	
Department of Streets	
PPD	
PFD	
PCPC	
DOA	
PDPH	
FEMA	
Mayor's Office for People with Disabilities	
School District of Philadelphia	
Philadelphia Industrial Development Corporation (PIDC)	
Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC)	

Department of Public Property	5/8/2023
Division of Aviation (DOA)	5/8/2023
MDO - Office of Homeless Services (OHS)	4/24/2023
Department of Streets	4/14/2023
PA Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED)	3/22/2023
PennDOT	5/1/2023
SEPTA	4/25/2023
FHWA	5/2/2023
John Heinz National Wildlife Refuge	4/21/2023 and Ongoing
Amtrak	05/10/2023

Outreach to Community Based Organizations

Enterprise Center CDC	8/21/2023
GPASS Neighborhood Advisory Committee	8/16/2023
Strawberry Mansion CDC	8/10/2023
Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing Stakeholder Group	8/7/2023 & 8/14/2023
Hunting Park Neighborhood Advisory Committee	7/27/2023
Hispanic Alliance for Career Enhancement HACE CDC	7/26/2023
Housing Security Working Group	7/11/2023
Eastwick United	5/11/2023
Philanthropy Network Greater Philadelphia	5/2/2023
PA Voluntary Organizations Active After Disasters (VOAD)	4/20/2023 and Ongoing
Philadelphia Association of Community Development Corporations (PACDC)	7/14/2023
Community Legal Services (CLS)	08/14/2023
Manayunk Development Corporation	08/07/2023
Fairmount Park Conservancy	03/30/2023
University of Pennsylvania – Public Health Program	03/30/2023
The Nature Conservancy	03/30/2023
Southeast Healthcare Coalition	03/30/2023
Temple University	03/30/2023
The Arc of Philadelphia	03/30/2023
Children's Hospital of Philadelphia (CHOP)	03/30/2023
PECO	03/30/2023