

# Civic Engagement Framework

## PROJECT OR ISSUE

City Department:

Project Lead:

Goal:

Scope:

Decision-making benchmarks / calendar:

Overall project timeline:

## INFORMATION (ORGANIZING, GATHERING, UNDERSTANDING)

### RELEVANT PRINCIPLES

ACCESSIBLE AND INFORMED PARTICIPATION	MEANINGFUL ENGAGEMENT
CIVILITY	MUTUAL ACCOUNTABILITY
EARLY INVOLVEMENT	SUSTAINED COOPERATION
INCLUSIVENESS AND EQUITY	TRANSPARENCY

#### ACTIONS:

- Define the issue to be explored
  - o Develop consensus on what the problem/issue/project is (scope)
  - o Identify: issue/cost/benefits/reasons/define process
  - o Set project expectations for the community and City
- Identify and engage stakeholders
  - o Determine who cares about and/or is affected by the issue (groups and individuals)
  - o Get people involved in the engagement process early
  - o Educate all
- Establish a clear process/framework for exploring the issue
  - o People need to know how issues/projects/plans are developed
  - o Develop timeline/outreach framework – what are the major milestones and where can the community have input throughout this process?
  - o Clarity - make the process clear and simple
  - o Design an outreach strategy that will effectively involve identified stakeholders in exploring the issue.
  - o Establish mechanism for mediation around issues
  - o Establish mechanism, standards, expectations for answering community questions, responding to input
  - o Set standards for moving on to the next phase of the project/issue
- Gather all relevant information
  - o Determine relevant facts
  - o Involve neutral experts in information gathering
  - o Engage community in fact-gathering, in identifying issues, opportunities and concerns, and in identifying vision, goals and objectives, and needs
  - o [this idea belongs in the next phase]
- Document completion of information-gathering phase
  - o Definition of issue
  - o Identity of stakeholders
  - o Planning and engagement process and how/why it was selected
  - o Compendium of verbatim input from all sources
  - o Summary of facts, issues, community vision and goals clearly linked
- Schedule work session or other public event to discuss/mark movement to next phase

**ENGAGEMENT TOOLS:** Tools that (1) get the word out about the project or issue to stakeholder groups and individuals and (2) are designed to gather facts, information, perspectives, vision and goals.

- Community Meetings: one or more meetings focused on this issue, typically small group discussions with emphasis on information gathering from participants
- Participation in other community-wide events: booths, tables or announcements at events that are primarily for other purposes (such as Earth Day or farmer's market).
- Surveys: mail or online, self-selected or statistically valid, to understand perspectives of stakeholders (in languages of stakeholder groups)
- Online engagement: crowdsourcing activities
- Social networking: emails, bulletin boards and listservs, online videos, to get the word out to stakeholder groups and individuals
- Door-to-door: flyers, door knocking & face-to-face discussions
- Phone calls
- Expert panels, community focus groups and studies
- Status reports
- News media

**Minimum/maximum # of meetings:** Up to 3 community meetings. The phase may conclude with a report to Council or relevant board or commission (such as Parks and Recreation Commission, Planning Commission, etc) marking transition from this phase to next.

*Review project specific indicators for moving to the next phase. Ensure that phase has adhered to community engagement principles*

## DEVELOP AND EVALUATE OPTIONS

### RELEVANT PRINCIPLES

ACCESSIBLE AND INFORMED PARTICIPATION	MEANINGFUL ENGAGEMENT
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#### ACTIONS:

- Develop options
  - o Continued discussion
  - o Distill realistic options - be transparent about this step
  - o Stakeholders develop options and THEN bring to City
  - o Present best practices (perhaps have a public call for other options)
- Evaluate options
  - o Make sure that there is broad outreach in understanding of community options
  - o Continue education about the issues
  - o Establish decision-making criteria
  - o Provide 'impacts' of different proposals, including budgetary impacts
  - o Provide in-person and online mechanism for stakeholders to participate in evaluating options
- Document completion of "develop and evaluate options" phase
  - o Define options
  - o Document how options were developed
  - o Describe evaluation criteria and process
  - o Document results of community evaluation of options
  - o Publish report for public review and comment; work with local news media and social media to publicize
- Schedule work session or other public event to discuss/mark movement to next phase

#### ENGAGEMENT TOOLS:

- Community Meetings: featuring activities to facilitate community evaluation of options, such as small group discussion and clicker voting
- Online engagement: activities to facilitate community understanding and evaluation of options such as Q&A comment board
- Social networking: to get the word out about the options and the opportunities to evaluate them
- News media
- [if used, belongs in previous phase]Expert analysis
- Status reports

#### OFFICIAL PUBLIC TOOLS:

- Public hearings
- Q&A Forums

**Minimum/maximum # of meetings:** Up to 3 community meetings. The phase may conclude with a report to Council or relevant board or commission (such as Parks and Recreation Commission, Planning Commission, etc) marking transition from this phase to next.

*Review project specific indicators for moving to the next phase. Ensure that phase has adhered to community engagement principles*

## RECOMMENDATIONS

### RELEVANT PRINCIPLES

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#### ACTIONS:

- Development of initial recommendations
  - o Staff prepares initial recommendations based upon options, evaluation criteria, and results of community evaluations in previous phase.
  - o Staff publishes and publicizes initial recommendations report, including "How we got here..."
- Public engages in discussion, modification of recommendations
  - o Open discussion of staff recommendations, public should be involved in making recommendations
  - o Open decision-making
  - o Have a dialog/allow community to take part in recommendation selection: opportunity for questions and answers, modifications to recommendations based upon community feedback, consideration of alternative recommendations suggested by community
  - o Online and in-person activities
  - o Documentation of all questions, answers, feedback
  - o Follow up if there are delays
- Consideration of final recommendations
  - o Staff prepares and releases final draft plan/report/set of recommendations for the formal approval process
  - o Have a dialog with community about recommendations: opportunity for questions and answers, feedback, modifications to recommendations based upon community feedback,
  - o Documentation of all questions, answers, feedback
  - o Public hearing, discussion and vote by relevant board or commission(s)
  - o Public hearing, discussion and vote by City Council.

#### ENGAGEMENT TOOLS:

- Community Meetings: featuring activities to facilitate community understanding of recommendation(s) and community evaluation of recommendation(s), such as small group discussion and clicker voting
- Online engagement: activities to facilitate community understanding and evaluation of recommendations, such as Q&A comment board
- Social media and news media: to get the word out about recommendations and schedule/process of final consideration by public officials

#### OFFICIAL PUBLIC TOOLS:

- Public hearings
- Q&A Forums

**Minimum/maximum # of meetings:** Up to 3 community meetings, plus public hearings

*Review project specific indicators for moving to the next phase. Ensure that phase has adhered to community engagement principles*

## IMPLEMENTATION & MAINTENANCE

### RELEVANT PRINCIPLES

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#### ACTIONS:

- Continued discussion
  - o Establish interagency/intergovernmental implementation team
  - o Establish schedule and process for implementation, including timeline of milestones and outreach framework
  - o Conduct site visits and provide other opportunities for the public to interact in implementation process
- Designate a "point person"
  - o Agency/government department single point of contact
  - o Create web page or portal to facilitate communication about next steps and progress
- Monitor and report progress
  - o Evaluate implementation, make adjustments, and notify the public
  - o Follow up if there are delays
  - o At regular intervals, communicate progress

#### ENGAGEMENT TOOLS:

- Progress reports
- Timeline to completion

**Minimum/maximum # of meetings:**