

City of Oakland Department of Race and Equity

INCLUSIVE PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT PLANNING GUIDE

Use this guide to identify the need for, purpose and level of public engagement for a given issue.

To engage City leadership and key community as needed to finalize a complete plan, program or policy; or to complete a Race and Equity Impact Analysis, including specific strategies for inclusive engagement.

The following four steps are recommended before initiating the planning process and filling in the worksheet:

Step	Description
1	Identify appropriate staff/team to complete the Outreach Plan
2	Review Inclusive Engagement Best Practices and the Public Engagement Matrix. (Appendix I and II)
3	Collect demographic data related to the geographic or policy/program area you will be working on.
4	Identify the future condition that could be impacted by the project, policy/program you will improve for Oakland residents (check all that apply): <ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Housing<input type="checkbox"/> Jobs<input type="checkbox"/> Public Safety/ Criminal Justice<input type="checkbox"/> Access to Key Services<input type="checkbox"/> Other:

1. What is the overall scope and goals of the action under consideration?

2. What is/are the proposed race and equity outcome(s) or results for the process? What disparities could be impacted favorably and for which group(s)? Who will be better off and in what way? What baseline data is available, what else do you need?

3. What is the timeline for completion of this process?

Deadline for project completion: (Include process for any legal requirements (e.g. SEPA), political commitments, and staff goals.)

4. Why should the public get involved in this process/project from their perspective? (It is useful to be able to articulate what participants will gain from taking part in your process.)

5. What is the specific public process purpose? (check all that apply)

Inform (Educate the public about the rationale for the project or decision; how it fits with City goals and policies; issues being considered, areas of choice or where public input is needed.)

Consult (Gather information and ask for advice from citizens to better inform the City's work on the project.)

Collaborate (Create a partnership with the public to work along with the City in developing and implementing the planning process or project.)

Shared Decision-making (Decision-makers delegate decision-making power to stakeholders or give them a formal role in making final decisions to be acted upon.)

6. What are the City's objectives in involving the public in this process/project? (mark all that apply)

To help with policy making:

- Use it to define the problems, to find solutions, or both
- Establish the complexity of an issue
- Develop innovative policy options
- Test out ideas
- Collaborative problem solving to find the most effective solutions
- Identify and understand the risks
- Find the most cost-efficient solutions to problems
- Find the most equitable solutions to problem(s)

To help relations with community:

- Ensure community gets heard on the policy-making process
- Sharing with community the pros and cons of policy options
- Informing the community about steps actions, changes to or new services
- Building relationships with and listening to specific under-represented communities
- Strengthening relationships between constituencies
- Developing alternative methods for public engagement for racial/ethnic communities
- Partnering with community organizations
- Maintaining and deepening relationships within a community.

Please describe:

7. What are the constraints to public influence?

- Previous City commitments
- Funding limitations (amount; how it can be used)
- Legal constraints (laws that constrain scope and/or solutions)
- Other:

Describe any legally mandated public involvement (e.g. SEPA):

8. Who are the decision-makers? (check all that apply)

- Mayoral priority
- Council priority (name(s), if applicable) _____
- Other level of government: _____
- Appointed officials: _____
- Other Decision-makers: _____

9. Who are the stakeholders in the process? (Include all who are affected: client, sponsor, and influencers, end users, “bystanders,” media, others affected by the process/action. Pay attention to identifying those who typically don’t participate or have a voice, but who are affected like Black, Indigenous, People of Color, immigrants, low income households, elderly, youth, etc. – check all that apply and add specifics when available)

- Underserved Racial/Ethnic Groups, i.e.: people of color identified by demographic data.
- Community Based Organizations (advocacy groups, non-profit agencies):
- Private Sector (business community, development community):
- City Department(s):
- Other Public Agencies:
- Other (those also directly affected by the outcome):

10. Project lead check in with Department leadership, communications staff, other key department staff for advice/approval of draft racial equity outcomes, scope and purpose of outreach, stakeholder identification, etc.

11. What public involvement tools/activities are appropriate for the project?

Describe engagement tools/activities: (Refer to the Public Engagement Matrix to determine types of appropriate engagement. e.g. survey, public meeting, etc.):

12. How will you incorporate inclusive engagement practices into activities?

(See Appendixes I and II for more details)

- Identify, and prioritize relationships in/with under-represented communities, trusted community members and respected community leaders** – Activity deepens existing relationships or establishes new relationships.
- Consult with under-represented community members during process design** – Activity informed by community expertise.
- Start early with alternative methods for engagement** – Approach provides multiple ways for contributing input and feedback and direct communication with under-represented communities.
- Maintain contact with the community** – Activity builds-in communication with the community, or establishes an on-going relationship.
- Remove barriers and create a welcoming atmosphere** – Activity takes language issues into account and removes barriers to participation like location accessibility, time, transportation, childcare, language interpretation and ASL and power dynamics. Strives to have activities that reflect the culture of the community.
- Partner with diverse organizations and agencies** – Activity provides opportunity to collaborate with organizations of color and draws upon leadership from communities of color.

13. Interests/concerns to be investigated with stakeholders during consultation, collaboration and engagement processes.

What changes to the proposa/program do they see as needed, if any, and what do they prefer not be changed?

What barriers to positive outcomes, or root causes related to existing disparities have they experience?

How might they be affected by risks or burdens related to the proposal? (Possible harm?)

What ideas to address the risk of harm do they have?

How might they benefit from the policy/project/plan? How could benefits be amplified?

What other ideas for improvements do they have?

Any other issues?

14. Is there a requirement for an advisory group or community partnership?

No – Continue to #15.

Yes - How will this be accomplished? (What is the purpose of the group? Is the group already outlined or codified? Will you use or build on an existing group or need to create a new advisory group? Specify resources needed, timelines, racial, ethnic and language diversity in the group, accessibility, etc.

15. What are the basic communication strategies and issues for the project?

What are the key messages that need to be shared about the project?

What is the strategy for communicating with the media? (Include strategies for working with Ethnic media outlets)

How will social media be employed, if at all? (**Note about social media:** Data suggest that there are differences in the use/preference of social media sites by age, race and ethnicity. About eight-in-ten Latino, black and white adults who are online use at least one of five social media sites – Facebook, Instagram, Pinterest, LinkedIn and Twitter. Do your research before deciding on a social media site for a community.)

What are the translation and interpretation needs of the project?

How would the deaf and hard of hearing and low vision and blind will receive information?

How about people who cannot read and write?

What are the best communications strategies for non-English speaking residents, under represented ethnic/racial, or disAbility groups?

16. What resources and responsibilities are needed to carry out the public involvement activities?

- Staff Responsibilities and roles, project manager, public engagement lead, other staff or consultants:
- Community responsibilities and roles (if applicable):
- Funding needs – communications, public events, consultant services:

Note: this guide should be completed prior to writing an RFP for consulting services to assure that the scope and qualifications requested are consistent with the desired inclusive outreach and inclusion intentions.

17. What is the public involvement schedule?

Develop a timeline and month-by-month calendar of tasks and activities for public involvement. Show how these are connected to project timeline and milestones. In developing these schedules, work back from deadlines to determine what types of involvement is possible given timeframe and deadlines for the project.

Key Dates:

18. What are the reporting mechanisms? Include products that document and report on the outcomes of the public involvement and the timing of those products (mark all that apply).

- Media/communications pieces (press packet, news release)
- Progress report(s)
- Final report
- Formal recommendations
- Briefings and presentations for decision-making bodies (involve community)

Describe:

19. Project Lead circle back with department leadership and communications staff on proposed public involvement strategy/tools, resource needs and responsibilities, and coordination with other projects.

20. Finalize and Share Plan with team and partners.

EVALUATING PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

An evaluation should be completed to document the effectiveness of the public involvement process and its level of inclusion. The following criteria provide a guide to assessing this effectiveness with input from the community, staff, other City and agency.

Criteria:

Public's role is identified in scoping the project

1. Reflects maximum possible influence that can be exerted by the public on the outcome/decisions
2. Fully reflects the diversity of the community
3. Is coordinated with key milestones and phases of the planning project/process
4. Is feasible in terms of time and resources
5. Stakeholders are fully identified, including their interests

Public involvement plan is developed for the entire project

1. Public Involvement plan clearly identifies public's role
2. Public involvement plan includes strategies for inclusive engagement and incorporates alternative approaches for engagement
3. Public Involvement plan is clearly communicated to all stakeholders, including decision-makers, public and private interest groups and staff
4. Public Involvement plan includes specific activities, information, staff resources, and relationship to project milestones, and time line
5. Public Involvement plan includes mechanisms for ongoing communication and feedback with general public and stakeholders throughout the project

Public involvement results are clear and have been incorporated into the project when:

1. Both the process of public involvement and the results are documented (what the public said and how their input, advice or work was used)
2. The diversity of the involvement was documented (e.g. number of people of color participating)
3. Results of public involvement are communicated broadly to people who were involved, to the broader public, and to decision-makers

The public involvement process is successful when:

1. All stakeholders (community participants and their constituencies, affected agencies, decision-makers) are satisfied that the process has been fair, accessible and has been effective in appropriately involving the public, including under-represented communities
2. The process was inclusive and reflective of the community
3. Decision-makers can make decisions based on/informed by the public involvement results and staff recommendations/proposals

Appendix I

Department of Race and Equity

Inclusive Outreach and Engagement Best Practices

Inclusive outreach and civic engagement, in the context of advancing racial equity, is a way of looking at and understanding the obstacles to participation that some individuals and communities face so we can design activities that engage them as equal partners in this process. It is also an internal process to explore our outreach and engagement policies, practices and procedures to figure out how a department can support community efforts to overcome obstacles, eliminate barriers to participation and to build trusting civic relationships to pursue social justice and racial equity to the benefit of all Oakland residents.

Best Practices

- Identify, and prioritize relationships in/with under-represented communities, trusted community members and respected community leaders** – Activities deepen existing relationships or establishes new relationships with key communities. Your work should focus on identifying trusted advocates within these communities as well as organizations with a demonstrable track record serving these communities and setting a process/ working procedure to capture contacts, keep the information up to date and how these new relationships will be sustained. It is also helpful to discuss how this information will be shared with department staff. If your department is not currently connected with community.
- Consult with under-represented community members during process design** – Activities are informed by community expertise. You can improve Oakland’s resident’s wellbeing by ensuring that services meet their needs and aspirations and creating policies that remove barriers or mitigate harm. Your work should focus on creating ways to collect, analyze and use evidence to shape service priorities and delivery by making sure community input is built into the design process. It also means moving beyond a solely data driven approach to needs assessment, to one that is complemented by the views of those in the communities (y) most impacted by your planned actions.
- Start early with alternative methods for engagement** – Approach provides multiple ways for contributing input and feedback and direct communication with under-represented communities. Informal engagement events can help you reach out to busy community members in a way that enables them to contribute and have an enjoyable experience. Your work focuses on coordinated engagement processes and events with partners where appropriate, enable information sharing, collaboration and communications supported through a wider range of community agencies or trusted community advocates that help you to build trust between the city and the local community, improve relationships and create a culture of collaboration between the City of Oakland and the community when appropriate.
- Maintain contact with the community** – External activities build-in communication

with the community, or establish an on-going relationship. Internal activities create a process to maintain internal stakeholders informed on issues as they arise and a clear decision making process to resolve conflicts that may arise. If your project is large and involves several city departments and communities, you should consider creating a formal communications plan. A good communication plan includes a conflict management strategy which is designed to make issues between stakeholders more manageable. Know your audience, practice good communications skills and do what it is sustainable to maintain good relationships with your stakeholders. Ask the community members or organization how they prefer to be contacted. If they welcome emails, send them email updates as appropriate. Establish yourself as a resource and always give them notice if your organization is going to be doing anything public that is in any way, relevant to them – issuing a press release, report, testifying, publishing an op-ed, hosting an event, etc.

Remove barriers and create a welcoming atmosphere – Activities take language and cultural practices into account and remove barriers to participation like location accessibility, time, transportation, childcare, literacy, language interpretation, ASL and power dynamics. Strive to have activities that reflect the culture of the community.

Partner with diverse organizations and agencies – Activity provides opportunity to collaborate with organizations of color and draws upon leadership from communities of color.

Appendix II

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT MATRIX

Type of Engagement	Goal of Participation	Tools/Activities	Inclusive Engagement Techniques	Indicators/Evaluation
INFORM <small>(required for all types of engagement)</small>	Educate the public about the rationale for the project or decision; how it fits with City goals and policies; issues being considered, areas of choice or where public input is needed. Message to the Public: Will keep everyone informed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Fact Sheets</i> - <i>Brochures</i> - <i>Websites and social media</i> - <i>Open Houses</i> - <i>Exhibits/displays (in public areas)</i> - <i>Newsletters (mailed/online)</i> - <i>Newspaper articles and radio ads</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Translation of all key documents and webpage sections Interpretation at events Alternative methods of outreach Collect identity profile info from participants 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attendance Website/social media hits Public comment/feedback Circulation of print material News article comments Radio -compare the number of calls and website hits during the advertising period to a similar time where no advertising occurred.
CONSULT	Gather information and ask for advice from citizens to better inform the City's work on the project. Message to the Public: Will keep everyone informed, listen to and acknowledge concerns and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Focus groups</i> - <i>Surveys, interviews, and questionnaires</i> - <i>Public Meetings</i> - <i>Door-to-door</i> - <i>Workshops and working sessions</i> - <i>Deliberative polling</i> - <i>Internet (interactive techniques)</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Translation of all key documents and webpage sections Interpretation at events Provision of Childcare Culturally appropriate food Individual meetings with community leaders Seek opportunities for contact at regular community events/locations rather than separate "town meeting" Collect identity profile info from participants 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quality of information from focus groups, surveys, interviews, questionnaires – online and door to door Attendance and participation at workshops and in polls Internet /social media response/comments
Type of Engagement	Goal of Participation	Tools/Activities	Inclusive Engagement Techniques	Indicators/Evaluation
COLLABORATE	Create a partnership with the public (key stakeholder groups) to work along with the City in identifying problems, generating solutions, getting reactions to recommendations and proposed direction. Message to the Public: Will work with the public to ensure that their concerns and issues are directly reflected in the alternatives developed and show how public input influenced the decision.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Citizen Advisory Committee/ Liaison Groups /trusted advocates</i> - <i>Visioning</i> - <i>Consensus building</i> - <i>Participatory decision-making</i> - <i>Charrettes</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Translation of all key documents Interpretation at events Provision of Childcare Culturally appropriate food Individual meetings with community leaders on their "turf" on their time. Collect identity profile info from participants 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Veracity of Committee/Liaison Group processes Clarity of shared vision Level of consensus outcomes Adherence to participatory decision making models Participation in Charrettes
SHARED DECISION-MAKING	Decision-makers delegate decision-making power to stakeholders or give them a formal role in making final recommendations to be acted upon. Message to the Public: Will implement what the public decides.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Citizen juries</i> - <i>Ballots</i> - <i>Delegated decisions to specific representative citizen body or to voters</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Translation of all key documents Interpretation at events Provision of Childcare Culturally appropriate food Individual meetings with community leaders on their "turf" Collect identity profile info from participants 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Measure collective impact: Track progress toward a shared goal using a short list of community indicators. Assess progress and improve program based on community feedback Quality of shared information from focus groups, surveys, interviews, questionnaires – online and door to door