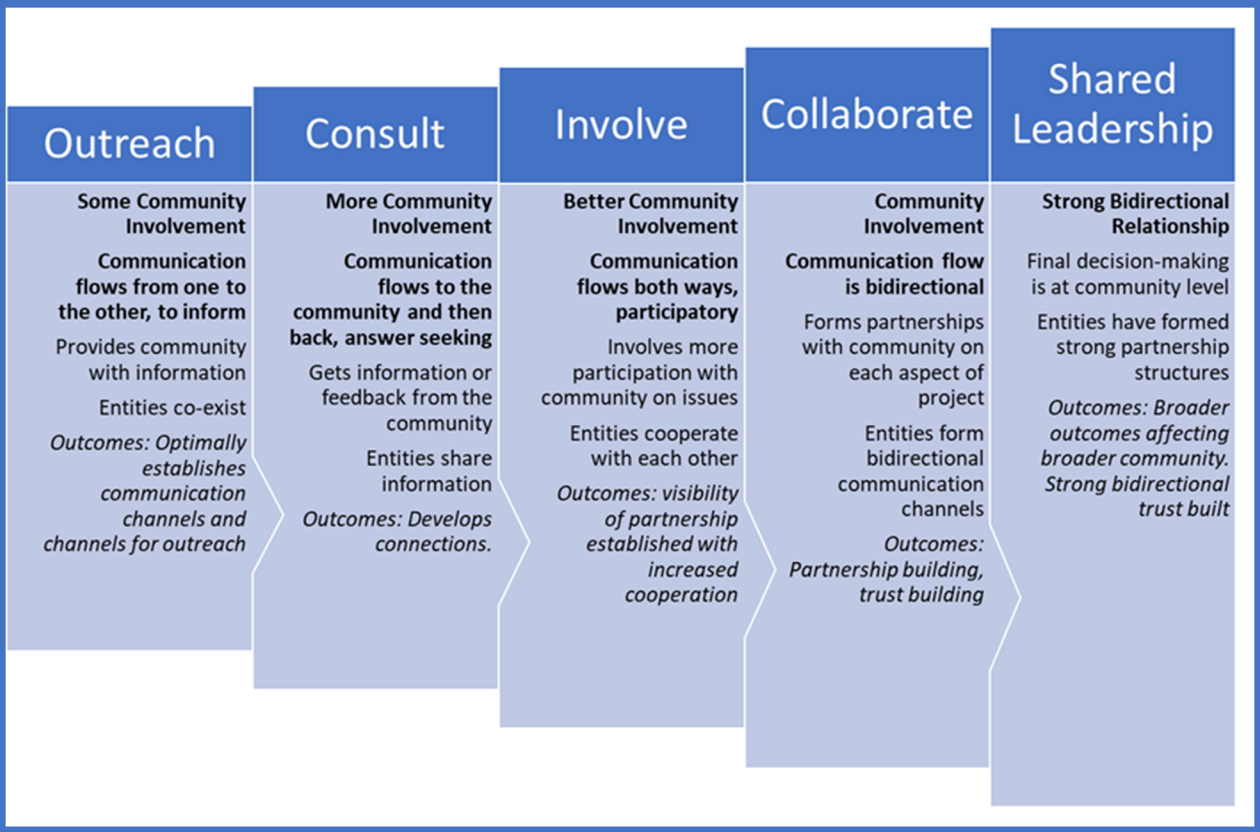
TOWN OF BROOKLINE COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PLAN



October 2020

Community Bill of Rights and Responsibilities

As a Brookline community member, you have a right to:

- Receive information about Town activities in a timely manner, **before** decisions are made
- Participate **during** Town decision-making on activities that affect or interest you
  - Attend meetings held in familiar community spaces, including spaces other than Town Hall
  - Attend meetings that are small enough to make you feel comfortable speaking
  - Share your opinion with Town employees and be listened to and treated with respect
  - Receive clear information about how to follow-up and continue to receive information about Town activities, including answers to questions that were not immediately available
- Receive information about Town decisions in a timely manner, **after** decisions are made
  - See the impact (or lack thereof) of your input in a timely manner
- Easily accessible contact information for you to ask questions or share opinions
- Updated, accurate, user-friendly websites
- Get an answer to your question or comment in a timely fashion
- Expect the town to consider equity and inclusion in its activities
- See progress in the Town's community engagement efforts

As a Brookline community member, you have the responsibility to:

- Participate in decision-making on activities that affect or interest you
- Speak up when you feel your rights, listed above, are being infringed upon. You can speak to:
  - The Town employee with whom you are engaging, and/or
  - The director of the Office of Diversity, Inclusion and Community Relations, which is the office responsible for overseeing the Town's community engagement efforts.

POCKET GUIDELINES FOR SUCCESSFUL COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

1. PURPOSE OF ENGAGEMENT

Consider:

- Why is community input and involvement necessary? Do you need new ideas? Information? Feedback? User perspective? Approval? Is the intent to inform, engage, or empower?
- What does successful engagement look like in the short and long-term?

Being specific when answering these questions will help define an engagement strategy.

2. STAKEHOLDERS

Know the community: Who will be directly or indirectly impacted? Who is missing? Engage the diverse groups and individuals that exist in Brookline.

Make a Specific Stakeholders List: Create an intentional, inclusive engagement strategy.

Things to consider:

- Are the stakeholders already organized?
- Are there language barriers?
- Is there disagreement about the project?
- Is there government mistrust?
- Is there education that needs to be done on a particular topic?

3. RESOURCES AND SCALE OF ENGAGEMENT

List resources for community engagement in the project. Consider funding, staff time, local partners, established community relationships. The engagement strategy should match the available resources.

Scale of Engagement

- Broad: most stakeholder opinions are taken into account
- Moderate: some stakeholder opinions are taken into account
- Limited: minimal public input is needed

4. MESSAGING

- **Appeal to people's self interests.** What is in it for them? Why should they care? Research and modify the messages. Test them out and see what sticks.
- **Tailor the message for each specific community.** Why would [stakeholder X] care about [goals of the project]?
- **Delivering the message.** Who is the best messenger? How can the message be delivered most effectively (flyers, social media, radio, local TV) Do materials need to be translated?

5. APPROACH

Consider diverse stakeholder approaches

To inform

- Fact Sheets/Flyers
- Website/Social Media
- Email/Listserv

To engage

- Focus Groups/Surveys
- Meet in person/Tours
- Visioning workshops

To empower

- Advisory groups
- Advocacy trainings
- Participatory decision- making

Tips for good turnout

- 50% Rule: If 20 people say they are attending, expect 10.
- Face-to-Face: The most effective contact.
- Do 3 Contacts: Face-to-Face, email, phone call.
- Give People Roles: People take commitments more seriously.

Guidelines adapted from the Metropolitan Area Planning Council 2016 Community Engagement Guide

I. Introduction/Preface

At the top of the Town of Brookline's organizational chart are its residents: we are in charge. Therefore, to do its job, Brookline's government must engage with the community: Brookline is strongest when ALL of its residents are full partners in the Town's leadership.

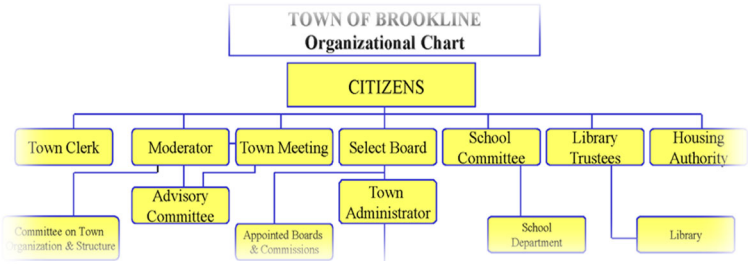


FIGURE 1. RESIDENTS ARE IN CHARGE

To support this partnership, we have developed Brookline's first Community Engagement Plan, prepared following the adoption by Town Meeting of the Community Engagement Bylaw in fall 2019. The goal of this document is to provide a basic structure for a relationship between government and the community that is meaningful, robust, and effective, but also equitable and inclusive.

Why now? For way too long, many community voices have not been heard. The hurdles to getting involved are often too big - lack of childcare and lack of work flexibility are some of the most common reasons, as are disbelief that anything will change by getting involved, not knowing how to get involved, and not feeling comfortable enough to participate. And that's just not okay. **We repeat: Brookline is strongest when ALL of its residents are full partners in the Town's leadership.**

The authors of this plan - members of the Office of Diversity, Inclusion and Community Relations (ODICR), the Commission for Diversity Inclusion and Community Relations (CDICR), and the bylaw co-petitioners - are eager to see the results of this first plan and build upon it going forward, with input and support from the community.

Malcolm Doldron: Member, CDICR

Lloyd Gellineau: Director, ODICR

Joan Lancourt: Chair, CDICR

Mariah Nobrega: Member, CDICR and bylaw co-petitioner

Caitlin Starr: Assistant Director, ODICR

Kea van der Ziel: Member, CDICR

II. Community Bill of Rights and Responsibilities

As a Brookline community member, you have a right to:

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- Get an answer to your question or comment in a timely fashion
- Expect the town to consider equity and inclusion in its activities

- See progress in the Town's community engagement efforts

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- Participate in decision-making on activities that affect or interest you
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    - The Town employee with whom you are engaging, and/or
    - The director of the Office of Diversity, Inclusion and Community Relations, which is the office responsible for overseeing the Town's community engagement efforts.

III. What is Community Engagement?

Community Engagement is an approach to decision-making that prioritizes inclusion of the greater community through information-sharing and relationship-building. From the community member's point of view, community engagement in the Town of Brookline means having greater access to, and involvement in, decisions that affect your life.

The Town of Brookline's government structure is designed to bring together individuals and groups of community members to communicate and work together, often in committees[1], with Town staff who work in departments. Community engagement will work within this structure to open it to more participants and deepen the relationships and trust between the Town and community members, so that all are empowered in helping to achieve positive change.

Successful Community Engagement in Brookline is based on four core principles:

Commitment to actively seeking broad-based input in decision-making deliberations, as demonstrated by active listening, dialogue and empowerment of people. Community Engagement challenges the traditional top-down approach and one-way relationship between the Town and the community. Instead, the Town must proactively seek out knowledge beyond those voices usually heard by going out into the community and developing long-term collaborative working relationships. With this commitment, Town actions will be more responsive to community priorities, as defined by the community. The Town will also benefit from the surfacing of issues and concerns through on-going regular communications, recognizing and addressing consequences that might not have been considered initially.

Respect for the diverse perspectives and lived experience of all community members. Community Engagement intentionally provides an opportunity for those whose voices are not usually heard (e.g., people living on low incomes, people of color, recent immigrants, speakers of English as a second language, etc.) to have identifiable influence. Effective engagement of these people can result in a more equitable distribution of resources, (e.g. where public transit infrastructure is located, where investments in neighborhood parks are made, etc.)

Commitment to leadership development and knowledge sharing at all levels. Community engagement requires that all community members are provided with easily accessible information needed to fully participate in Brookline's government. Town staff and members of committees must be provided with the relevant tools and training needed, and empowered to create conditions that foster mutual trust and understanding between the public and the Town.

Community Engagement is more than a quick fix or a 'one off'. It is not a survey. It is not episodic 'outreach', it is not a couple of meetings with no follow-up, or a 'public comment' period with a hasty 3 or 5-minute time limit, and it is not a 'customer service' or 'customer-facing' department function.

[1] "Committee" is defined in the town bylaws as also including elected or appointed board, commission, council and trustees.

Commitment to ongoing evaluation of community engagement activities. Community engagement can build trust, but there needs to be evidence that it is being adopted and sincerely practiced. The Town must show how community input has been incorporated into Town actions and what steps it is taking to further improve community engagement.

The vision is to move from the left-hand side of the figure below to the right-hand side.

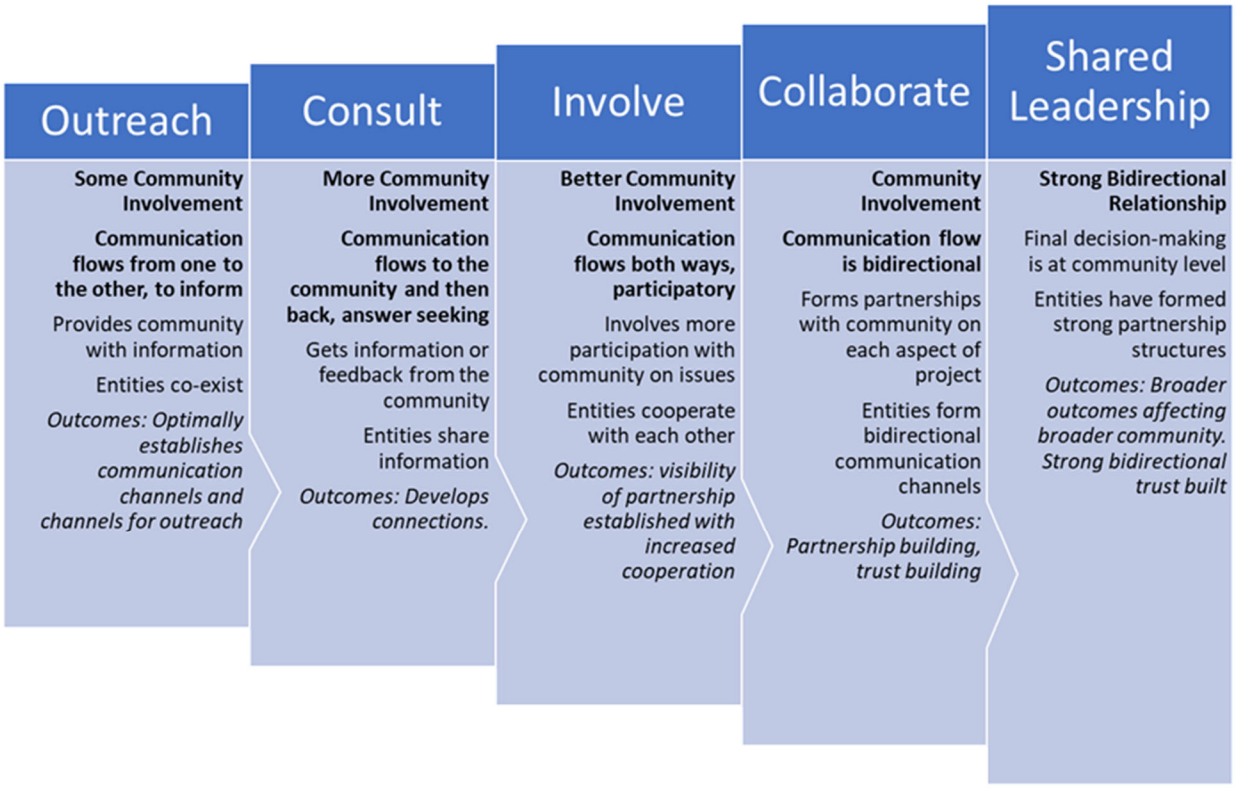


FIGURE 2. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT CONTINUUM, ADAPTED FROM PRINCIPLES OF COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT, SECOND EDITION.

The remainder of the plan is outlined in four appendices:

A. **Guidelines for successful community engagement**
B. **Indicators**
C. **Evaluation**
D. **Process and Timeline**

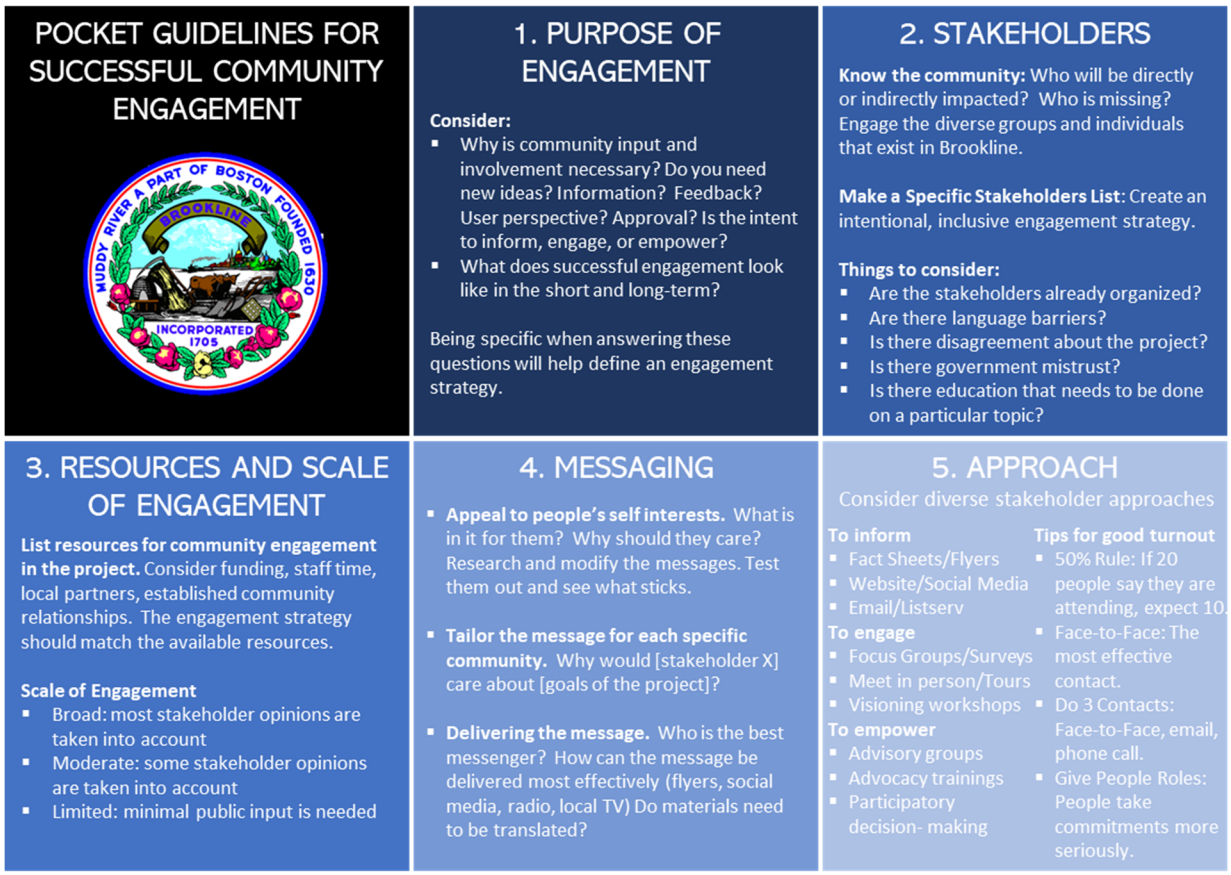
Appendix E includes a detailed community engagement case study.

Appendix A: Guidelines for successful community engagement

These guidelines are adapted from the Metropolitan Area Planning Council 2016 Community Engagement Guide[2] with the expectation that they will need to be tailored to meet the needs of specific departments, programs, projects, community organizations etc, but they can easily be adapted to these needs. However, any adaptation will continue to adhere to the Core Principles of Community Engagement expressed earlier in this document.

There are five steps to creating a Community Engagement strategy:

1. Purpose of Engagement
2. Stakeholders
3. Resources, Opportunities & Scale of Engagement
4. Messaging
5. Approach & Tips



Guidelines adapted from the Metropolitan Area Planning Council 2016 Community Engagement Guide

1. Purpose of Engagement

The very first step is to clearly identify the purpose of community engagement for the project. Basically, why are people's input and involvement necessary to the process? What information/actions are needed from the community to help accomplish the project's goals?

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[2] https://www.mapc.org/resource-library/community-engagement-guide/

It is important to be intentional and transparent in discussing with the community how, when and why decisions will be made (decision-making rules may also be a community effort.) Communicate clearly about what is needed for that decision, to help set expectations.

Questions to consider:

- What needs to be done?? Get new ideas? Obtain feedback? User perspective? Approve? Take ownership?
- What does successful engagement look like in the short and long-term?
- Think about the number of participants and community representation. Consider the quantity and quality of the feedback needed.
- What are the interests of project partners? To what degree will partners welcome community input and/or involvement?
- With community engagement, is the intent to inform, engage, or empower?

Being specific when answering these questions will help define an engagement strategy.

2. Stakeholders

The next step is to identify decision makers, and people who live, work, and visit, or own property or businesses in Brookline. Who will be directly or indirectly impacted by the outcomes of the project? What local leaders, community groups, non-profits, business owners, and Town committees, commissions and boards could influence the project and its implementation?

Types of Stakeholders

There are three main types of stakeholders and each will likely require different communication and outreach strategies.

- Community Stakeholders - these are people who may not have knowledge about the project, but will likely be the most impacted by its outcomes. These are people unknown as of yet, and are the most important to seek out.
- Project Partners – these are people who originally worked to create the scope of the project. In some cases, these people may be considered the "client."
- "Usual Suspects" – these are people who usually participate and show up at most community meetings. This group typically has great interest in the project and are on top of things.

Know the community

To figure out who the project's stakeholders might be, it is important to research and learn about the different communities and groups in Brookline. Consider the following questions:

1. Who in the immediate network could provide contacts to follow up with?
2. Who are the "usual suspects"? Who is already known as a stakeholder?
3. Who else should be invited to participate in this project from the community?
4. Would visiting the neighborhood(s) in question for a walking/windshield tour be possible? If so, going to the site to make some observations, collect information, and ask people questions is ideal. **The more people you interact with, the more stakeholders you're likely to uncover.**

Who is missing?

In the context of the priorities of the project, is anyone being left out of the process? Inevitably, some stakeholders will be overlooked. In order to identify most groups or individuals, think outside the box and step out of the comfort zone. Go beyond "Usual Suspects" and engage the diverse groups and individuals that exist in Brookline. "Diverse individuals and groups" includes all demographics, not just race or ethnicity. Demographics include age, race/ethnicity, religion, disability status, sexual orientation, gender identity, whether one rents or owns the home they live in, language, income, and educational attainment.

Make a Specific Stakeholders List

A list of stakeholders needs to be as specific as possible. Being specific when crafting a stakeholder list can create a very intentional and inclusive engagement strategy.

Common non-specific stakeholders include…

…"residents" – who are they exactly? Are the residents being engaged the ones who live in or on the border of the project area? Or right along a specific transportation corridor? Are they seniors? Perhaps, more specifically, are they seniors that live in a specific housing complex in Brookline? Are they recent immigrants? Is there a language barrier?

…"businesses" – what kind of businesses? Small businesses? Perhaps small businesses that are only located in a particular area of Brookline? Or small businesses that are owned by immigrants, women or people of color?

…"non-profits" – identify the list of non-profits that work with the specific community from which you want to hear.

Use the list available here to identify stakeholder organizations.

Be prepared for people that come into the project on their own or show up at meetings. Do not be caught off guard! Just know that it can happen and be prepared to work with new stakeholders.

Things to consider:

- Are the stakeholders already organized?
- Are there language barriers?
- Is there disagreement about the project?
- Is there government mistrust?
- Is there education that needs to be done on a particular topic?

3. Resources and Scale of Engagement

Resources

Next, conduct an honest assessment of available resources and funding that may be allocated to outreach and engagement activities in the project. Take into account any internal and/or external factors that can limit or strengthen efforts. What are some restrictions, if any? What are some opportunities to take advantage of?

Some examples may be:

- staff time
- local partners
- established relationships in the community
- timing of year
- project timeline
- Stakeholder interest in the project topic

Ultimately, the engagement strategy should match the available resources. In some cases, obtaining different resources or additional funding may be necessary.

Scale of Engagement

There are three levels of engagement to choose from that build upon each other: Limited, Moderate, and Broad.

- Broad: most stakeholder opinions are taken into account for the outcomes of the project
- Moderate: some stakeholder opinions are taken into account
- Limited: minimal public input is needed

Based on the type of project, engagement goals, stakeholders, and resources, a decision needs to be made about the appropriate level, considering the implications of the scale of engagement on the outcomes of the project.

Based on the scale of engagement, estimate how many people need to be reached. For instance, a limited community engagement strategy requires a very targeted list of stakeholders, in comparison with a broad strategy in which the goal is to reach a much wider segment of the community. When in doubt, erring on the side of broader engagement is a better approach.

4. Messaging

After identifying stakeholders and the scale of engagement, craft a message that will engage the relevant communities. The message is extremely important. The wrong message may turn people away.

Have a clear idea of the type of input/actions needed from stakeholders. What message can be used to engage this person or group with empathy toward their situation?

Tips

1. Appeal to people's self interests
    a. What is in it for them?
    b. Why should they care?
    c. Research and modify the messages. Test them out and see what sticks.
2. Tailor the message for each specific community.
    a. Why would [stakeholder X] care about [goals of the project]?
3. Delivering the message.
    a. Who is the best messenger?
    b. How can the message be delivered most effectively (flyers, social media, radio, local TV)
    c. Do materials need to be translated?

5. Approach

Now that the purpose of engagement (to inform, to solicit feedback, etc.,) and the scale (limited, moderate, broad) of engagement has been chosen, and a list of specific stakeholders and messages has been identified, it is time to think through diverse approaches to reach stakeholders.

Consider these questions when deciding how to reach out to the target list of stakeholders:

- How are stakeholders to be contacted?
- Where are stakeholders and where do they congregate?
- How to engage stakeholders in an ongoing manner?

Examples of tactics may include:

To inform

- Fact Sheets
- Project Brochure
- Website
- Flyer
- PowerPoint presentations
- Email/Listserv
- Social Media

To engage

- Call directly, informal conversation
- Meet in person, schedule a meeting (lunch or coffee)
- Focus Groups
- Surveys/Polling
- Walkshops/Tours
- Community mapping
- Visioning workshops
- Open Houses

To empower

- Resident advisory committees
- Advocacy trainings
- Participatory decision-making

Tips for good turnout

- 50% Rule: If 20 people say they are attending, expect 10.
- Face-to-Face: The most effective contact that can be made with people.
- Do 3 Contacts: Face-to-Face, email, phone call.

- Give People Roles: When assigned roles for an event, people take commitments more seriously.

In the end, make sure the approaches chosen fit Brookline's context and make sense to the stakeholders. Also, have fun with it! Be flexible and open to using creative ways to reach people.

Implementation & Modification/Evaluation

Now that the engagement strategy has been chosen, begin to implement the plan and evaluate it! Take some time to reassess progress at various points during the project while paying attention to new or different factors. Make sure to learn from the responses being received and modify as needed.

Questions to consider:

- Are there new stakeholders that were originally unknown? Is the strategy to contact and engage stakeholders working?
- Are people attending meetings, events, forums, etc.?
- Is feedback being received from your various stakeholders? If so, what kind of feedback?

Is the strategy not working? Check these factors:

Messaging

Does the message need to be modified? Are the messages getting people's attention? Ask any strong allies for their opinion on how they would reach out to people, and the types of messages that should be used to engage them.

Mode of Communication

Perhaps the messages are right on target but are not being sent through the proper channels.

Feedback Loops

Are people able to get in contact through email, phone, or a project website? Is someone recording public comments at the meeting, and also gathering comments informally after? Some people are more comfortable sharing their thoughts in person after a meeting or at a public event, rather than speaking in front of a group or writing them down on a feedback form.

Meeting Environment

Are meetings held in locations that are difficult to get to via public transportation? Is it in a setting that people do not often go to or might not be comfortable going to such as Town Hall or municipal offices? Are they able to bring their children or eat if needed? Try changing the location to a school, library, restaurant, or a space where people naturally congregate. Also, think about the layout of the space. Is it conducive for the project's needs and discussions? Offer food, childcare and/or an honorarium if needed.

Finalize Project

Follow Up with Stakeholders Post Project & Capture Relationships in Database

The relationships developed during a project are very important. Capture all contacts in a database or some other fashion, and make sure to enter relevant notes about the person's contributions during the process and what their main interests were. By doing this, if another project happens in the same location, the new contacts may be useful to that project, especially if there is an implementation phase. It enables coworkers to pick up where the project left off, and the contact will still be engaged.

Evaluate

Reflect on what went well during the community engagement process and what did not. Share the outcomes of the community engagement with others in Town government to build a culture of learning and best practices in this area. Use the lessons learned in daily practice. Sometimes more can be learned from a process that does not go as planned than from one that goes exactly as planned.

Case Studies

Changing Brookline Workshops, led by the Economic Development Advisory Board

Beginning in 2015, EDAB sponsored a series of Planning for a Changing Brookline workshops, focus groups, and other public events to discuss the redevelopment criteria for long-term, mixed-use development along commercial corridors in Brookline. The first workshop focused on establishing criteria for successful redevelopment projects from a neighborhood perspective and the second on how the Town can position itself to be more attractive to mixed-use developers while achieving community goals. Both of those workshops were well attended, but mostly by those already involved as volunteers in Town government. EDAB and staff desired broader community participation to propose a vision statement for Brookline's commercial areas.

As a result, the Planning for a Changing Brookline series culminated in 2017 with an MAPC- facilitated PERSPECTIVES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR BROOKLINE'S COMMERCIAL AREAS project. This was a ten-month community engagement and visioning process involving over 900 people, which captured the challenges, desires, and aspirations of those who live, work, play or do business in Brookline's commercial areas. A variety of engagement methods included an on-line community survey, focus groups, an open house and other public events, including a booth at Brookline Day and attendance at school fairs, soccer games, etc. Outreach was furthered by a Boston Globe article, the Town's website, printed materials, and social media. While EDAB members helped with this, the limited use of social media by volunteers was a disadvantage.

The objective of substantially broadening community engagement around a vision was achieved. However, the survey's 658 respondents were generally older and had a higher median household income than average, and a majority were homeowners who had lived in Brookline for more than 10 years. The community engagement, especially in retrospect, was not as successful as the project team hoped in engaging people with diverse perspectives. Note that feedback wasn't tracked by race.

22 people attended focus groups with commercial property owners and large institutions. Of the survey respondents, fewer than 10% were business owners. This underscores that even in good times it is a challenge to get very busy small business owners to engage. Notably, there was a better balance of business and property owners amongst the 84 who attended the interactive open house which concluded the project.

There is a strong intersection between Planning and Community Engagement. Prior to this engagement, MAPC had completed general training with Town staff. Its outside perspective helped EDAB define a broader set of objectives and outreach strategy.

Community Engagement in Minneapolis - A Real-Life Example That Produced Significant Change[3]

Minneapolis 2040 is the city's twenty-year Comprehensive Plan update. It is an outstanding example of effective community engagement - and it rests solidly on a foundation of building a broad network of relationships in neighborhoods and communities across the city. Minneapolis recognized that historically, black and indigenous people of color (BIPOC) communities, renters, and people from low-income backgrounds have been underrepresented in civic processes. They attributed this to many factors: racism, which has disenfranchised and marginalized many BIPOC communities was one; a second was the structures through which traditional civic engagement and planning has been conducted. As a result, the designers of the Minneapolis 2040 Plan intentionally created a process that avoided those traditional pitfalls.

Their first step was to make inclusion of a broad range of marginalized communities an immediate process design priority. During the Phase I Awareness Building phase, dozens of events were co-hosted in partnership with the various marginalized BIPOC, senior, youth, working class, and even homeless communities to explicitly ask participants how they wanted to be engaged, what their existing priorities and

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[3] Adapted from the Plan Website, minneapolis2040.com. For even more specifics of the Community Engagement Activities in each of the five Phases of Minneapolis2040 Plan development, see Appendix E.

initiatives were about, and what their 'big ideas' were for the future of the city. Feedback on how they wanted to be engaged was clear: the City needed to:

- Go to the community in a series of open houses on various topics where residents could engage in small focus group discussions
- Return to the various groups after each Phase of the planning process
- Report back on how the gathered feedback was used to inform the Plan

Throughout the five phases of the planning process, a series of Community Dialogues combined in-person and technological methods as a way to involve and retain residents' engagement in on-going issue dialogues. These community dialogues took place in venues familiar to the communities: parks, street fairs, community centers, and parades. Discussions were held in multiple languages, artists were employed to design compelling graphics and hand-outs to be distributed at various events, and to connect the public to online resources and future engagement activities. In each phase, a second round of Community Dialogues saw staff returning to communities to dig deeper into the initial issues raised: residents could also 'tweet with a planner', or attend a lunch-time session to explore the six Core Values that had been identified: equity, livability, economic competitiveness, growth, sustainability, and governance.

All events were designed to be fun, thought provoking, interactive, and family friendly. Performance artists created a TV game show about Minneapolis 2040, in which community members could see themselves being interviewed live. Feedback was iteratively incorporated during each phase, and as issues emerged, (e.g. lack of affordable and livable housing options, environmental justice issues, support for small businesses, etc.) a series of Learning Labs, a workshop on Planning for Equity, and a hands-on game called Envisioning Housing for All, in which residents could actually redesign their neighborhoods with maps and mini-houses, were initiated. Throughout the process, the City's goal was to build long-term relationships.

Appendix B: Indicators

Indicators that provide qualitative and/or quantitative information that can be used to determine if the Town is implementing community engagement practices improving over time. Indicators shall be:

1. SMART (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, and Time-Bound) at all levels and for each department, board, commission and committee. This includes all levels of management, starting with the Select Board and Town Administrator's Office and continuing to all levels.
2. Monitored on at least a quarterly basis, and reported annually in the budget report for departments, boards, commissions and committees, and posted at least annually on the respective webpage for departments, boards, commissions and committees.

Departments that are newer to community engagement practices may have indicators that demonstrate their focus on attainment of community engagement practices, e.g. training, coordination with other departments/committees, development of specific CE plans for the department/committee, identification of priority projects/activities on which to deploy CE practices, etc.

Departments that are more advanced may have more advanced SMART goals, e.g. relating to specific CE activities and how they contribute to previously developed CE plans. It is reasonable and appropriate to be at different phases, especially as the CE plan is developed. Consultation with ODICR is recommended in the development of indicators.

Examples of initial indicators that have been developed as part of the initial community engagement planning:

Parks & Open Space Division

SMART COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT OUTCOME GOALS SPECIFIC TO COMMUNITY PARK & PLAYGROUND RENOVATION PROJECTS.

I. SMART Outcome: By December 1, 2021 the Park and Open Space Division will increase the number of diverse voices, interests and needs in Community Design Review processes for park and playground renovations by 100% using the last 4 Design Review Processes with in-person public meetings as the baseline.

- SMART Objective 1: By November 1, 2020 Division staff will have identified and engaged all vulnerable populations in the neighborhood-in the Design Review Process.
- SMART Objective 2: By January 1, 2021 the Division will develop a Design Review Equity and Engagement Toolkit** with at least 8 tools of engagement used, as appropriate, for the particular site and neighborhood. (The variety of engagement tools are intended to increase connection points between the community and the park, project and Town.) The Division will assess and revise the tool kit draft with vulnerable populations identified in Smart Objective 1 by December 1, 2020.
- SMART Objective 3: By June 30, 2021, all Design Review participants will have chosen the Toolkit formats most comfortable and accessible to them. The Tools of Engagement *Kit* may include:
    1. In-Person Town Hall Style Public Meetings
    2. Video/Computer/Phone Accessible Public Meetings
    3. In-Park Weekend Meetings & Charette
    4. Vulnerable or Target Population Focus Groups (Aging Populations, Housing Authority, Immigrants, Schools etc.)
    5. Surveys – Can be done on paper, computer or phone w/QR code
    6. Press Releases
    7. Communication, flyers, postings in neighborhood appropriate languages
    8. Neighborhood Postings
    9. Web/Project Pages with Updates
    10. Direct Mail/Letters to Abutters & Town Meeting Members
    11. Communication and connection with existing friends groups or neighborhood associations

II. SMART Outcome: By June 30, 2022, following the renovation of the park, 80% of the people *engaged in the Design Review* will *at least 'agree' that they have been* heard, *that they feel* they *have* contributed, and that they are more connected to their park/playground, *as measured by a Survey on* inclusion, engagement and diversity.

III. SMART Outcome: By June 20, 2023, a park focused Friends/Community/Neighborhood Group will have been formed prior to the completion of construction. Each park Friends Group will hold an event at the park, in partnership with the Parks and Open Space Division, within 6 months of the completion of the construction, and will include more than token participation from one or more of the vulnerable populations identified during the design review process.

IV. SMART Outcome: By June 20, 2023, there will be a 50% increase in equitable access, inclusion and benefit of neighborhood parks by diverse groups of people in the community as measured by a pre-and post-construction assessment of accessibility barriers and inclusive design. The neighborhood will come to see the park as "ours", not "mine" or "theirs"; a place where everyone belongs.

Council on Aging[4]

SMART Outcome 1: By June 2021, COA will increase LGBT older adults' participation in Senior Center programming by XX%, and 80% of LGBT older adult participants will rate COA programs and services at least a 4 on a 5-point satisfaction survey.

- Objective 1: By September of 2020, the Council on Aging will change the language in surveys and assessment forms to include more options for sexual orientation and gender identity (SOGI), pronouns, and honorifics.
- Objective 2: By December of 2020, all staff will correctly use LGBT terms and identities, and have a working understanding of LGBT-specific history and cultural norms.
- Objective 3: By April of 2021, all volunteers and program leaders will correctly use LGBT terms and identities, and have a working understanding of LGBT-specific history and cultural norms.
- Objective 4: By February 2021, Council on Aging will conduct focus groups to identify unmet needs and programming preferences of the LGBT+ older adult community.
- Objective 5: By June 2021, at least 50% of Senior Center programming (e.g. films, advocacy, memory-loss) will include LGBT+ stories and issues.
- Objective 6: By June 2021, The Council on Aging will establish a working relationship with at least one BIPOC-lead and focused LGBT+ older adult organization (such as Flashback Sunday or LGBT Elders of Color), and co-sponsor a program or event centering non-White LGBT+ older adults.

SMART Outcome 2: By June 2021, COA will increase BIPOC older adults' participation in Senior Center programming by XX%, and 80% of BIPOC older adult participants will rate COA programs and services at least a 4 on a 5-point satisfaction survey.

- Objective 1: By September of 2020, the Council on Aging will create a survey for wide distribution to identify the needs and preferences of BIPOC over 60 in Brookline, and recruit at least X participants for BIPOC focus groups.
- Objective 2: By February 2021, COA will conduct X# of focus groups to identify unmet needs and programming preferences of the BIPOC older adult community.
- Objective 3: By June 2021, all staff will demonstrate understanding of institutional and interpersonal racism: how racism creates barriers to social service access and how it damages social service provision and outcomes. Staff will complete anonymous pre-and-post-training assessments, use correct terminology and principles in their daily work, and complete a follow-up assessment six months later.

[4] Note these goals are in progress; some indicators are not finalized, as indicated by an X.

- Objective 4: By June 2021, all volunteers and program leaders will receive training in anti-racist action and cultural humility practices specifically centered on Anti-Black racism. Volunteers and program leaders will demonstrate their understanding of racism and institutional racism by completing pre-and-post-training assessments, applying principles and using correct terminology in their work, and completing a six-month follow-up assessment.
- Objective 5: By June 2021, XX% of Senior Center programming (entertainment, education, advocacy, and cultural celebrations) will center on BIPOC stories and issues.
- Objective 6: By June 2021, The Council on Aging will establish a working relationship with at least one BIPOC-lead older adult organization and co-sponsor programs or events celebrating BIPOC cultures.

SMART Outcome 3: By June 2021, the HELP program will collect XX% more reports of racist micro-aggressions or other racist behavior directed to HELP workers by HELP clients, and address 100% of those reports – reflecting improved communication between HELP workers and HELP staff. By June 2022, there will be a XX% decrease in reports of racist behavior.

- Objective 1: By December 2020, HELP program staff will be trained on issues of racism in the homecare industry, implement a structure/process for HELP workers to report racism in the workplace, and incorporate policies on racism and reporting into HELP worker orientation. By December 2020, all new and existing HELP workers will be informed in writing of new reporting procedures. All related documents will be translated into the languages most commonly spoken by HELP program workers.
- Objective 2: By June 2021, all HELP workers will demonstrate an understanding of how to report racism in the workplace by participating in a role-play/ practicing making a report to HELP staff.
- Objective 3: By June 2021, the Council on Aging will hire a BIPOC homecare worker as a part-time BIPOC Advocate/ Representative to address the needs of BIPOC HELP workers.

SMART Outcome 4: By June 2021, increase the participation of Asian-American and Asian immigrant or refugee older adults in COA programs by X%, with at least 80% of Asian older adult participants rating COA programs and services at least a 4 on a 5-point satisfaction survey.

- Objective 1: By December 2020, hire a part-time Mandarin or Cantonese speaking staff person.
- Objective 2: By December 2020, hold a meeting between Brookline COA and Greater Boston Chinese Golden Age Center (GBCGAC) staff to create strategies and mechanisms for increased communication and collaboration.
- Objective 3: By February 2021, in collaboration with GBCGAC, conduct focus groups to inform the choice of increased Chinese-centric programming.
- Objective 4: By March 2021, provide sheets in English and Chinese describing new Chinese-centric COA programming and other available COA services.
- Objective 5: By April 2021, increase the number of Asian immigrant/refugee and Asian-American volunteers by X%.
- Objective 6: By June 2021, all staff will receive training and support in basic cultural norms of Brookline's diverse Asian populations, and demonstrate their knowledge of Asian cultures (and the differences between them) by supporting culturally appropriate programming and using correct language and culturally sensitive behaviors in daily interaction with Asian participants.
- Objective 7: By June 2021, expand programming to include XX% South Asian, Southeast Asian, and Korean (both American and immigrant-refugee) representation.

SMART Outcome 5: By June 2021, participation of Russian and Russian-speaking older adults in COA programs will increase by X%, with at least 80% of Russian older adult participants rating COA programs and services at least a 4 on a 5-point satisfaction survey.

- Objective 1: By December 2020, establish contact with Russian social service providers and create mechanisms for increased communication and collaboration, generating at least one new ongoing partnership.
- Objective 2: By December 2020, hire a part-time Russian-speaking staff person.
- Objective 3: By December 2020, increase the number of Russian-speaking volunteers by X%.
- Objective 4: By February 2021, conduct X # of focus groups to inform the choice of increased Russian programming.
- Objective 5: By March 2021, distribute Russian language materials describing new Russian COA programming and other COA services.
- Objective 6: By June 2021, all staff will be comfortable engaging with the cultural norms and practices of a variety of Russian and post-Soviet cultures.

SMART Outcome 6: By June 2021, participation of Hispanic and Spanish-speaking older adults in COA programs will increase by X%, with at least 80% of Hispanic and Spanish-speaking older adult participants rating COA programs and services at least a 4 on a 5-point satisfaction survey.

- Objective 1: By December 2020, establish contact with Hispanic and Spanish-speaking social service providers and create mechanisms for increased communication and collaboration, generating at least one new ongoing partnership.
- Objective 2: By December 2020, hire a part-time Spanish-speaking staff person.
- Objective 3: By December 2020, increase the number of Spanish-speaking volunteers by X%.
- Objective 4: By February 2021, conduct X # of focus groups to inform the choice of increased Spanish programming.
- Objective 5: By March 2021, distribute Spanish language materials describing new Spanish COA programming and other COA services.
- Objective 6: By June 2021, all staff will be comfortable engaging with the cultural norms and practices of a variety of Hispanic and Spanish-speaking cultures.

SMART Outcome 7: By June 2021, increase by X% the participation of Brookline Housing Authority (BHA) older adults in COA programs, with at least 80% of BHA older adult participants rating COA programs and services at least a 4 on a 5-point satisfaction survey.

- Objective 1: By September 2020, initiate collaborative relationships with other social service providers to increase BHA older adult residents' access to technology/ ability to participate in remote/virtual Senior Center programming.
- Objective 2: By December 2020, schedule a meeting between COA staff and BHA and other affordable housing in Brookline Resident Service Coordinators and Building Management and create ongoing mechanisms for communication and collaboration.
- Objective 3: By February 2021, conduct X # of focus groups to inform the choice of new programs of particular interest to BHA and other low-income residents.
- Objective 4: By XXX, increase availability of transportation options for BHA participants by X%.
- Objective 5: By June 2021, increase technology access and virtual program participation among BHA residents by XX%

SMART Outcome 8: By June 2021, increase the participation of hearing and visually-impaired older adults in COA programs by XX%, with at least 80% of hearing and visually-impaired COA participants rating COA programs and services at least a 4 on a 5-point satisfaction survey.

- Objective 1: By September 2020, all staff will be able to appropriately assist hearing and visually-impaired older adults, as well as demonstrate basic familiarity with assistive technology and resources.

- Objective 2: By December 2020, collaborate with MA Association for the Blind and MA Commission for the Deaf & Hard of Hearing to identify and address accessibility barriers to full and equitable program participation by older adults with vision or hearing impairments.
- Objective 3: By December 2020, identify staff and volunteer training opportunities to improve service to older adults with disabilities, including Blind/Low-Vision and Deaf/Hearing-Impaired participants.
- Objective 4: By February 2021, conduct 1 focus group each (with all necessary accessibility accommodations) for Blind/Low-Vision and Deaf/Hearing Impaired older adults to identify programs of particular interest to those communities AND get participant feedback on barriers to participation in Senior Center programming.
- Objective 5: By February 2021, identify and obtain funding for new assistive technology to allow people with vision and hearing impairment fair and equitable access to COA programs and services.
- Objective 6: By June 2021, purchase new technology and train staff in its use.

Appendix C: Evaluation Process

On an annual basis, ODICR shall submit to Select Board, Town Meeting Members and the general public an analysis of the previous year's community engagement programming and outcomes and provide recommendations for improving the CEP (this document) itself, as well as the programming. This analysis will include both an overall assessment of progress as well as assessment of each department and committee. The relevant results of said evaluation shall be included in the performance/reappointment review for each municipal officer.[5] The intent is that the Town follow a continuous improvement process for the Community Engagement Plan (Figure 3).

Evaluation shall take the form of a matrix evaluation, evaluating the SMART goals against the levels of community involvement shown in Figure 2, comparing the SMART goals against their results, and providing recommendations for modification/removal/addition of goals to align with the four principles of community engagement outlined previously:

1. Commitment to actively seeking broad-based input in decision-making deliberations, as demonstrated by active listening, dialogue and sharing of power.
2. Respect for the diverse perspectives and lived experience of all community members.
3. Commitment to leadership development and knowledge sharing at all levels.
4. Commitment to ongoing evaluation of community engagement activities.

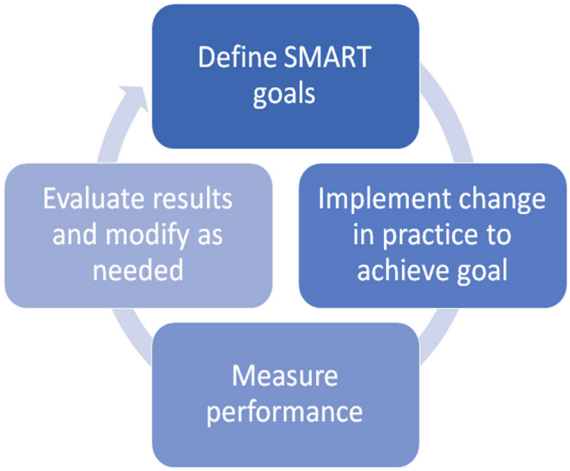

FIGURE 3. CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT PROCESS

[5] Per the town bylaws, "Municipal officer" shall mean an elected or appointed official or member of a committee and a department head but shall not include Town Meeting Members and Town employees.

Appendix D: Process and Timeline

There are two key parts to the timeline: start-up phase and the annual cycle. During the envisioned one-year start-up phase, there are three components: preparation of staffing and training, roll-out of the plan to departments, and roll-out of the plan to committees.

Start-up Phase [FY2021]

Preparation

Step 1: Hire CE Specialist (CES) into ODICR. The CES will actively collaborate and support identifying appropriate community members for a given project, helping prepare appropriate information/messaging, and organizing and facilitating meetings with community members, and evaluating results. The CES may also provide consultation to community organizations, enhanced language translation services, and coordination/arrangement of other improved community participation supports such as childcare and food as needed.

Step 2: CES develops semi-annual training for staff and committee members in CE.

Step 3. ODICR publishes CE plan on town website, distributes notice of CE plan broadly throughout town to stakeholder organizations and the public.

Department Roll-out

Step 1. Town Administrator, with support from ODICR, informs Department Heads of the Community Engagement Plan and provides them with a copy.

Step 2. ODICR convenes a meeting of Department Heads to discuss the plan and its implications and ramifications for the departments' work.

Step 3. The Department Heads, with support from ODICR, inform Town Staff of the Community Engagement Plan and provide them with a copy.

Step 4. Department Heads assign at least one staff person as a departmental coordinator (DC). The role of the DC is to work closely with colleagues in their department and DCs from other units to help figure out how CE will work in their department. They will receive early training in CE concepts to build an understanding of what CE is, and how it can enhance their department's relationship with the public.

Step 5: ODICR convenes regular (at least once a month) meetings of the DCs in a "Community Engagement Core Group". The goal of the Core Group is to learn from each other and to collaborate regarding interfacing with the community. Often community activities/events can be interdepartmental making them more efficient in terms of cost, logistics and time. At these meetings the group may:

- Receive formal training in community engagement best practices from ODICR
- Share information regarding new projects/policies that pertain to or have an impact on the community
- Hear directly from each other on successes and challenges in community engagement
- Coordinate collaborative community engagement activities
- Meet with community groups that can help channel community engagement and provide feedback on community engagement processes to date
- Develop and refine department-specific community engagement plans, including CE SMART goals for the next fiscal year approved by the department head with input from all department staff

Step 6: All staff receive training within first two years of bylaw, or within their first six months of employment if hired after first two years of plan.

Committee Roll-out

Step 1. The Select Board, with support from ODICR, informs Committee Chairs of the Community Engagement Plan and provides them with a copy.

Step 2. The Committee Chairs, with support from ODICR, inform Committee members of the Community Engagement Plan and provide them with a copy.

Step 3. ODICR convenes a meeting of the Committee Chairs to discuss the plan and its implications and ramifications for the committee's work. This includes a discussion about whether to provide committee-specific CE consultation or whether to do group training or both.

Step 4: All committee members receive training within first two years of bylaw, or within their first six months of service if appointed after first two years of plan.

Annual Cycle [from FY2022]

When	Activity	Who
As needed	Reappointment reviews for committee chairs include evaluation of CE SMART Goal results from appointment period	Select Board
Monthly	CE Core Group meetings	DCs, CES
July	Evaluation of CE SMART Goal results from previous FY and modification and/or removal and/or addition of CE goals for current FY	ODICR head
July	ODICR/HR offers CE training	CES, HR
August	Publish Current FY CE Goals to website on each town department and committee page	Department staff or committee liaisons
August	Submission of annual report to Select Board that reviews prior FY CE SMART goals/results and any changes to CE Plan itself	ODICR
September	Informal check of progress against current FY CE SMART goals	Department head or committee chair
November	CE SMART goals/results from previous FY and CE goals for current FY included in budget book	Town Administrator's Office
December	Informal check of progress against current FY CE SMART goals	Department head or committee chair
January	ODICR/HR offers CE training to new staff and committee members	ODICR, HR
March	Informal check of progress against current FY CE SMART goals	Department head or committee chair
March	Department heads include CE SMART goals/results from previous FY in annual performance review	Department head
June	Informal check of progress against current FY CE SMART goals	Department head or committee chair

Appendix E: Minnesota Case Study

Community Engagement in Minneapolis - A Real-Life Example That Worked[6]

Minneapolis 2040 is the city's twenty-year Comprehensive Plan update. It is an outstanding example of effective community engagement - and it rests solidly on a foundation of building a broad network of relationships in neighborhoods and communities across the city. Minneapolis recognized that historically, people of color and indigenous communities, renters, and people from low-income backgrounds have been underrepresented in civic processes. They attributed this to many factors: racism, which has disenfranchised and marginalized many BIPOC communities was one; and a second was the structures through which traditional civic engagement and planning has been conducted. As a result, the designers of the Minneapolis 2040 Plan intentionally created a process that avoided those traditional pitfalls.

How Did They Do This?

Phase 1: First, they made Inclusion of a broad range of marginalized communities an immediate process design priority. During the Phase I Awareness Building phase, dozens of events were co-hosted in partnership with the various marginalized BIPOC, senior, youth, working class, and even homeless communities to explicitly ask participants how they wanted to be engaged, what their existing priorities and initiatives were about, and what their 'big ideas' were for the future of the city. Feedback on how they wanted to be engaged was clear: the City needed to:

- Go to the community in a series of open houses on various topics where residents could engage in small focus group discussions
- Return to the various groups after each Phase of the planning process
- Report back on how the gathered feedback was used to inform the Plan

Throughout the 5 Phases of the Planning Process, a series of Community Dialogues combined in-person and technological methods as a way to involve and retain residents' engagement in on-going issue dialogues. These community dialogues took place in venues familiar to the communities - parks, street fairs, community centers, and parades. Discussions were held in multiple languages, artist were employed to design compelling graphics and hand-outs to be distributed at various events, and to connect the public to online resources and future engagement activities. In each phase, a second round of Community Dialogues saw staff returning to communities to dig deeper into the initial issues raised: residents could also 'tweet with a planner', or attend a lunch-time session to explore the 6 Core Values that had been identified: equity, livability, economic competitiveness, growth, sustainability, and governance.

All events were designed to be fun, thought provoking, interactive, and family friendly. Performance artists created a TV game show about Minneapolis 2040, in which community members could see themselves being interviewed live. Feedback was iteratively incorporated during each phase, and as issues emerged, (e.g. lack of affordable and livable housing options, environmental justice issues, support for small businesses, etc.) a series of Learning Labs, a workshop on Planning for Equity, and a hands-on game called Envisioning Housing for All, in which residents could actually redesign their neighborhoods with maps and mini-houses, were initiated. Throughout the process, the City's goal was to build long-term relationships.

Phase 2 launched a series of Topical Research Teams that began analyzing existing policy – assessing trends, backgrounds, and priority issues. The TRTs had the benefit of public input on "big ideas" gathered during Phase 1. City staff eventually focused on core elements of the plan – transportation, jobs, housing, and the environment as well as community visions for tying all the pieces together. The multiple rounds of engagement questions were designed to surface the communities' perceptions, values, aspirations, and experiences in their daily lives.

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[6] Adapted from the Plan Website, minneapolis2040.com

Throughout the summer, City staff continued to reach out to key audiences at street and cultural festivals. Staff 'tabled' at various event and encouraged the community to share its visions of the future of Minneapolis, using Ernest Hemingway's 'Six Word Story'. Stories were recorded on cards and shared with participants throughout each event. In order to help achieve the engagement goals, the City issued a Call for Artists to help design and engage traditionally underrepresented communities using Social Practice Artists to assist in engaging public meeting attendees. Happenings Projects focused on performances designed to engage the community with thought-provoking questions, and an artist-designed Mobile Engagement Tool called a "crankie" - a scrolling device using long rolls of hand sketched images - enabled people to tell their various stories.

During the early phases, questions included:

- What is your Six-Word Story for the future of Minneapolis?
- Transportation: How do you get around the city today? How do you think your transportation needs will change by 2040?
- Jobs: What opportunities do you need to help you feel financially stable and secure? How will your employment needs change between now and 2040?
- Housing: Are you satisfied with the housing options available to you right now? If not, what's missing? How will your housing needs change between now and 2040?
- Environment: Are we, the people of Minneapolis, doing enough to improve the environment? If not, what's missing? How do you think your life will be different in 2040 as a result of climate change?
- Vision/Tying it Together: What does your ideal Minneapolis look like in 2040? What makes you feel connected to your neighborhood?

On the more visionary questions, poets and graphic artists listened to participants, and represented their responses through poetry or visual art. Participants also had the opportunity to take part of a mini focus group called "Dig Deep with a Planner" a staff led discussions about the participants' choice of topics. Community members unable to attend public meetings had access to the same content, questions, and feedback opportunities via the project website through interactive graphics and comment boxes.

Throughout Phase 2, a common theme emerged: the lack of racial equity in housing, jobs, transportation, the environment, and health. Community members acknowledged that disparities between people of color and indigenous communities compared to white people continued to exist, and that there were few opportunities for economic mobility, or access to healthy, safe homes. This engagement feedback concerning systemic racism influenced the City which formulated an overarching goal for the comprehensive plan based on the core value of 'racial equity'. This focus suggested the need to invest more in areas with the most inequities. "In 2040, Minneapolis will have significantly reduced economic, housing, safety, and health disparities among people of color and indigenous peoples compared with white people." The feedback also helped focus on the need for culturally-specific programming.

Phase 3 incorporated the 2 rounds of feedback from Phase 2 into a Policy Framework which included 14 goals organized around People, Places & Systems - all of which were adopted by the City Council in 2017. To support those goals, the City added two further rounds of engagement in order to increase opportunities for engagement focused on the Policy Framework. Phase 3A gathered feedback on Strategies related to the goals as seen through the lens of racial equity, and included a Mapping Prejudice project, a new mobile engagement tool called Imagining Equity a 'crankie' that enabled people to share their vision for addressing racial disparities, and a new game, "Envisioning Housing for All", in which participants redesign a neighborhood in order to provide housing opportunities. Participants arranged new buildings on a large poster board in relation to streets, parks, and other amenities. Afterwards, artists used the participants' layouts to create 3-D models to share for further discussion.

In **Phase 3B**, the City reported back to the communities on what it had heard in Phase 3A. This model of engagement to collect feedback, incorporation of the feedback, and then returning to the community so they could see the impact of their feedback became standard operating procedure throughout the planning effort.

Engagement feedback collected throughout Phase 3A was transcribed and organized under the 14 comprehensive plan goals, and much of the feedback shared a range of people's experience around access, affordability, and options on various topics around housing, jobs, transportation, and health.

Participants were asked to rate these proposed ideas on a scale ranging from a rating of "It's Effective" to "Let's Rethink".

An integral part of the feedback focused on where to apply these proposed ideas geographically within the city. In online and in-person interactions, the public were provided three different maps to identify opportunities to expand housing, jobs and retail, and improve connectivity. The questions that accompanied these maps were:

- Show us…opportunities to expand housing choice. Please identify locations to expand housing choice and tell us why.
- Show us…opportunities to improve access to retail. Please identify locations to expand retail access and tell us why.
- Show us…opportunities to expand connectivity via walking, biking, and transit. Please identify locations to expand connectivity via walking, biking, and transit.

Many of the questions around engagement were centered on the effectiveness of the proposed ideas in achieving the Comprehensive Plan goals. There was general support for most of the proposed ideas and their effectiveness. Comments from the 'Rate This Action' exercise reaffirmed the need to preserve affordable housing, as well as build more of it throughout all neighborhoods in the city. There was also the recurring theme of increasing housing opportunities for all residents by allowing more 'missing middle' housing, and for specific communities such as seniors, people with disabilities, and low-come households.

Phase 4: The data collected from the mapping exercises were used to develop land use guidance for Minneapolis 2040. Data collected from the connectivity/transportation mapping exercise were forwarded to Minneapolis Public Works Staff for consideration into future capital projects. City staff took the raw data and organized the feedback into the topical areas. Feedback from the 'Rate This Action' exercise affirmed the policy direction of the comprehensive plan, and the comments were used to further refine draft policy that led to the development of the overall draft plan document.

Phase 5 again unfolded in a series of interactive engagement activities to gather public feedback on the Comprehensive Plan document itself, and once those rounds of feedback were incorporated, the Minneapolis2040 Plan was presented and approved by the City Council.