

STEP 1: DEFINE THE PROJECT'S SCOPE AND STAKEHOLDERS

Successful public engagement builds community capacity and improves relationships between decision-makers and the public, and among the stakeholders themselves. Define the type of public engagement appropriate for this project by outlining the scope, and identifying points where public engagement might build community capacity. This is particularly important to evaluate in larger regional projects that benefit the community outside of the immediate neighborhood. Identify where you can build relationships by involving the community, which can also become a mutually beneficial process to provide transparency in the decision-making process. Define the scope at the beginning of this process, and evaluate components where the public can influence the design and decision making. Identify stakeholders and how the project may be influenced by stakeholders and evaluate the impact this may have on the project, and if there are unintended equity consequences of leveraging stakeholder concerns.

STEP 1: DEFINE THE PROJECT'S SCOPE AND STAKEHOLDERS

CONSIDERATIONS

What are the project components where public participation can make decisions on the project?

Will public participation help the project achieve equitable outcomes for all community members?

Have community members voiced interest, concerns or opposition to the project?

How much is this project part of a larger project and long term goals that have already undergone a public engagement process?

EXAMPLES

Terrace raingardens, parking, pervious materials, street use or with, vegetation in general, bike path location

A path that connects school properties to the surrounding community may benefit different types of communities, but input from the immediately adjacent property owners may identify concerns about the project.

A storm event that caused significant damage may have generated concerns amongst residents and a form of distrust if the issue was particularly impactful.

The first phase of implementing an adopted regional plan or policy may re-ignite past voiced concerns and opposition.



DEEPER DIVE

Are there different viewpoints if you are immediately impact or adjacent compared to regionally impacted?

Are there ways to engage the larger community of folks who will benefit from the project? Are there ways to help communities understand large issues of equitable access and elevate voices of marginalized communities not typically represented through standard engagement methods?

Are there ways to make a specific effort to hear voices from those specifically impacted and identify shared values on how to move forward and next steps and how they would like to be informed?

Are there ways to communicate the previous effort, how decisions were determined, and where people can provide input on specifics not previously addressed?

STEP 2: THINGS TO CONSIDER

What are the necessary conditions for successful participation?

Are there sufficient resources, capacity to engage, participate capacity among staff and participants?

Making Promises:

Promise only what you can believe you can deliver. Deliver what you have promised. Demonstrate what you deliver. - EPA Public Participation Guide

Understand the community context:

Evaluate whether this project is likely to be controversial and evaluate whether or not existing systems for public engagement will unintentionally create disparate inequities, specifically to underrepresented communities. Evaluate if this project is part of a larger plan or goal that has already been adopted. If the project is part of a larger planning process with a separate public engagement process, implementing the design phase may require less engagement, depending on past efforts. When considering public engagement, consider opportunities in the design that could be adjusted based on public feedback, and the type of public feedback that's important for this project.

STEP 2: SELECT THE RIGHT LEVEL OF PUBLIC PARTICIPATION - THINGS TO CONSIDER

CONSIDERATIONS

EXAMPLES

DEEPER DIVE

Does this impact a broader community? How will their opinions be considered?	Are we trying to implement something with larger regional benefits?	→	Are there different viewpoints if you are immediately impact or adjacent compared to regionally impacted?
Is this implementing solutions already identified in a different planning process?	Complete Green Streets, Neighborhood Development Plans, Imagine Madison, Park Master Plans	→	Can the public engagement from a former process leverage implementation?
Are there existing racial and social justice inequities that this project addresses? What communities are disproportionately impacted by this decision? What are the characteristics of these communities?	Transportation, Flooding, Infrastructure	→	
Where are there opportunities for residents to voice options in the design process?	Project phasing, cross section design, tree removals, vegetation selection	→	Does implementing or not implementing contribute to inequities?
What is the context of the surrounding community?	Surrounding land uses, history, within an NRT area	→	For example options with the Monroe Street Design, Robin Greenway
Where is the city not willing to compromise, and how does that impact engagement?		→	Are there concerns or opportunities to consider related to surrounding land uses
Are there existing barriers to engagement?		→	

STEP 2: SELECT THE RIGHT LEVEL OF PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

LEVEL	GOALS	PROMISE TO THE PUBLIC	TOOLS
Inform	To provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problems, alternatives, and opportunities and/or solutions.	We will keep you informed.	
Consult	To obtain public feedback and analysis, alternatives and/or decisions.	We will keep you informed, listen to and acknowledge concerns and aspirations, and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.	
Involve	To work directly with the public throughout the process to ensure that public concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered.	We will work with you to ensure that your concerns and aspirations are directly reflected in the alternatives developed and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.	
Collaborate	To partner with the public in each aspect of the decisions including the development of alternatives and the identification of the preferred solution.	We will look to you for advice and innovation in formulating solutions and incorporate your advice and recommendations into the decisions to the maximum extent possible.	
Empower	To place final decision making in the hands of the public.	We will implement what you decide	

STEP 2: SELECT THE RIGHT LEVEL OF PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

LEVEL	EXAMPLE TOOLS	EXAMPLE APPROACH
Inform	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Podcasts Recorded Presentation Information Kiosk Project Sign Postcards/Letters Social Media Emails Press Releases Department Newsletters 	<p>Social Media Post informing of Road Closure</p> <p>Project website with timeline of construction activities.</p>
Consult	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Site Tours Pop-up Events Interviews 	<p>Have booth about project and neighborhood event. (E.g. Eken Fest and Watershed Study).</p> <p>Meet with people from YWCA, Access to Independence, Youth After School Programs to get specific input on design impacts. (e.g. James Madison Park Master Plan).</p>
Involve	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Paper/Online Surveys Photo Mapping Interactive/Online Plan Commenting Interactive Public Workshops <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In-Meeting Polling, Charettes, Breakout Rooms, etc. 	<p>Hip Hop Architecture Camps to involve youth in place-making and planning. (e.g. Imagine Madison and City of Madison Park and Open Space Plan). Discussions on larger broader goals for communities and identify shared values. (Park and Open Space Plan, Warner Lagoon Water Quality Plan, Imagine Madison Resident Panels)</p> <p>Post online plan, work with IT to develop online commenting for plan. (e.g. West Side Area Plan)</p>
Collaborate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Focus Groups Resident Panel/Community Liaisons Study Circles Public Hearings/Meetings Advisory or steering committees 	<p>Interactive Public Workshops using Zoom Polls, iClickers, and Design Charettes (Robin Greenway). Work with community on design alternatives (Monroe Street Reconstruction).</p>
Empower	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participatory budgeting Referendums 	<p>Advisory referendum on to establish staggered two-year terms for members of the Common Council.</p>

STEP 3: DEVELOP & IMPLEMENT

BACKGROUND

Develop your Public Involvement Plan (PIP) based on how you have defined the public's role in steps 1 & 2. Make sure you are transparent in the public roles, where they are able to provide input in how the decisions are made, and how their input will inform the design/process. Be transparent about City committee's roles in the process. Your plan should document how you plan to keep the community up-to-date throughout implementation, and how you will organize information to share back to boards and committees.

- 1. DEVELOP YOUR PIP**
- 2. INCLUDE PLAN FOR DOCUMENTATION**
- 3. SET GOALS**
- 4. IMPLEMENT**

STEP 3: DEVELOP & IMPLEMENT

DOCUMENTATION

With each step of your PIP, you should be documenting the feedback you are receiving. What information you collect, and how it is organized, are important in clearly sharing that information. If you are conducting focus groups, or receiving feedback from a BIPOC or low-income group, it may be useful to separate that feedback and share independently. Simply tallying “votes” often doesn’t tell the complete story.

QUESTIONS

EXAMPLES

How will you share back feedback as it’s received?



- Post Q&A or FAQ on webpage
- Aggregate data based on where/how it was received
- Tally responses by general sentiment

How do you plan to share feedback with Boards and Committees?



- Separate by source, note repeat comments, note comments by people with differing levels of impact?
- EX: Flood projects-separate comments by people who flood

Is it important to understand demographics or physical location of people impacted or commenting on the project?



- Request demographic data and/or addresses in meeting registrations, sign-ins or online surveys?

Do you need to ask additional information to understand the stakeholder POV?



- Have they flooded?
- What form of transportation do they use etc?

STEP 3: DEVELOP & IMPLEMENT

SET GOALS

Set goals for public participation. Think about:

- What are the specific goals and objectives of your outreach and public participation efforts?
- How will you embed racial equity in this process?
- What indicators can you measure to determine if you've achieved your goals?

STEP 3: DEVELOP & IMPLEMENT

IMPLEMENT

Implement your PIP. Remember to center the 5 R's–

- RESPECTFUL
- RELATIONAL
- RECEPTIVE
- RESPONSIVE
- REAL
- +RELEVANT (when possible)

STEP 4: FOLLOW-UP

BACKGROUND

Often times as designers, how we hear from people is reflective of our existing structures and policies and systemic discrepancies between people who know how to use the system and don't. Folks that participate in PIMs, and send multiple emails often are given a greater weight and consideration. As City staff it is important to understand who we are hearing from and value their input equitably.

“It is our responsibility, as employees and policy-makers for the City of Madison, to be the guardians of the process and to value the feedback provided by historically marginalized communities.” – Public Participation Resource Guide

STEP 4: FOLLOW-UP

CHECK-IN QUESTIONS	TOOLS	EXAMPLES
Are you hearing consistently from one group or person?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Track feedback from different outreach methods (include name, address, comments, how received comment, etc.) 	Imagine Madison
Are you hearing from voices outside the impacted community?		
Are you hearing from locally and regionally impacted users?		POSP
How can you modify your outreach to be more accessible and inclusive to reach groups you aren't hearing from?	Refer back to Step 2: Level of Engagement	
Are you meeting your participation goals from step 3?		
How are you making sure that voices of marginalized communities are heard to policy makers?		Vilas Park Engagement Summary James Madison Imagine Madison

STEP 5: EVALUATE

BACKGROUND

We should always be looking to improve our engagement. At the end of each project, think critically about what went well, and what could be improved.

POST PROJECT EVALUATION:

Look at your goals from step 3—ask yourself:

- Which goals did you meet, and which did you not meet?
- What strategies helped to advance racial equity and engage with marginalized residents?
- For the goals you met, what helped you accomplish them?
- For the goals not met, what could you have done better and how?