

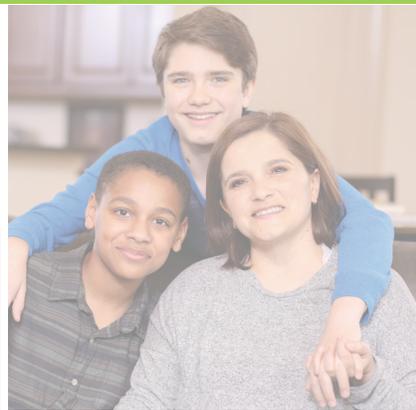


equitable engagement  
CITY OF ANN ARBOR

# Achieving Equitable Engagement in Ann Arbor

A report developed and presented by Ann Arbor's  
Equitable Engagement Steering Committee

**April 24, 2023**



equitable engagement  
CITY OF ANN ARBOR



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# 01.OVERVIEW

The City of Ann Arbor wishes to advance equity. Having meaningful and just engagement processes is critical to achieve that goal. This initiative's aim was to develop a shared understanding of what equity means and what policies, guidelines, and practices could be implemented to help Ann Arbor be the inclusive city it desires to be.

The City of Ann Arbor's Equitable Engagement Initiative was a multi-department, staff generated initiative, which included staff from Communications, Human Resources, Planning, Systems Planning, and the Office of Sustainability and Innovations.

This report is the result of the Equitable Engagement Initiative, and presents a definition of equity and set of recommendations developed by a 30-member citizen Steering Committee to guide City Council and staff on next steps for more equitable engagement.

The definition of equity and overarching recommendations developed by the group are presented on the next page. The remainder of the document provides detail about the initiative's process, information that helped inform the recommendations, and strategies to achieve the recommendations.



## EQUITY DEFINITION

Equity refers to fair and just practices that ensure that all community members can thrive. Equity is different than equality, in that equality implies treating everyone as if their experiences are exactly the same. Being equitable means acknowledging and addressing structural inequities — historic and current — that advantage some and disadvantages others. Equal treatment results in equity only if everyone starts with equal access to opportunities.

## RECOMMENDATION 1:

Demonstrate that the city is committed to advancing equity

## RECOMMENDATION 2:

Provide both ample and targeted invitations to engagement opportunities

## RECOMMENDATION 3:

Develop Community Engagement Plans with care

## RECOMMENDATION 4:

Make engagement events more accessible and attractive

# 02.PROCESS

## PREPARATION & LAUNCH

To help give this project a solid foundation to launching, members of the internal team spent time researching and gaining a deeper understanding of promising practices, existing city practices, and local and regional conditions related to equity.

Additionally, the team used the city's Community Engagement Toolkit, which is designed to help establish a more thoughtful approach through group discussion and deliberation. The toolkit is explained more later in this document.

The project publicly launched in May 2021 with a call for Steering Committee applicants. To help make this a community driven process, city staff facilitated the creation of a Steering Committee comprised of regional community members with insights from various areas of expertise, a broad spectrum of interests, and lived experiences as members of minoritized and marginalized groups.

The call for applicants was disseminated through a variety of channels, including a press release, social media, a broad distribution of flyers that included Meals on Wheels clients, an email announcement, the June 2021 community newsletter, a letter from the Ann Arbor Public Schools Superintendent to student families, direct outreach, and a [public service announcement](#) on CTN (see Appendix A for press release and flyer).

In return, the city received almost 80 applications. The project team heard from an impressive and diverse pool of applicants, but worried that an 80-member group would be a difficult size for an effective committee. Members of the project team reviewed the applications and used a systematic scoring process for selection

and ultimately selected 30 people to serve on the committee. The city offered an optional stipend for Steering Committee members to participate.

The Steering Committee began work in July 2021 and served as community representatives, advising on the development and refinement of meaningful equity-focused community engagement policies, practices, and tools by sharing insights, opinions, ideas, and feedback with city staff. During this initiative, Steering Committee members were invited to play a supporting role in City of Ann Arbor community engagement events and serve as connectors to other community members and organizations. As reflected in the Team Charter (see Appendix B), members of the Steering Committee were asked to:

- Commit to racial and social justice.
- Have experience and knowledge of equity and race issues.
- Be collaborative and willing to engage in shared exploration.
- Have humility and curiosity to continually learn and engage in self-reflection.
- Have resilience to engage in deep, challenging work.

The project team planned a series of small group interviews and shared a survey with those not selected for the Steering Committee. Through the interviews and survey, the project team sought to gain more insight into peoples' experiences with the city and what would help create a more equitable future. In general, participants stated that engagement events needed to be more inviting and accessible. Additional detail on how to do that is covered later in this report.

## STEERING COMMITTEE MEETINGS & ACTIVITY

City staff worked with Steering Committee members to choose a regular meeting schedule, which was the fourth Wednesday of the month at 7:00 p.m. Steering Committee meetings were held online as open public meetings, and announced on the project website, [a2gov.org/A2EquitableEngagement](https://a2gov.org/A2EquitableEngagement), the city's calendar, and Clerk's Office notification.

Each meeting opened with icebreakers to help the group bond. Time for members to express what was on their hearts and minds provided a moment for members to discuss thoughts about current events at the local, national, and global level, especially as these events impacted equity concerns.

In large part, meetings were designed to be shared learning experiences and involved several guest speakers and topics for exploration. Topics included:

- Existing conditions
  - » What the [Opportunity Index](#) tells us about the region and how to use the tool
  - » A review of collected demographic data showing who is engaging with the city.
- Current practices
  - » Overview of the city's Community Engagement Toolkit
  - » Reflections on engagement efforts for the American Rescue Plan Act funding and the Water Treatment Plant project

- » How land use planning works
- » The status and potential future of affordable housing in Ann Arbor
- » City hiring practices and the need for more diversity, especially at the leadership level
- » Sustainability efforts, including the Sustainable Energy Utility
- What the future of engagement at the City of Ann Arbor might look like
  - » Building blocks of meaningful engagement
  - » Engagement core values
  - » Recommendations

In addition to participating in the Steering Committee meetings, several committee members participated in city projects to gain a first-hand perspective on engagement practices and provide guidance on achieving an equitable engagement approach. These projects included the following:

- Urban Forest Management Plan
- Water Treatment Plant Update Plan
- Moving Together Towards Vision Zero Implementation

# 03.SUMMARY OF INPUT

The following sample of comments represent what we heard from the Steering Committee, survey respondents, and people attending community events and their connection to the recommendations that were developed.



## Demonstrate that the city is committed to advancing equity

*“Before you can think about how to involve people, need to come to the realization that you need to involve people of color in the decision-making process.”*

*“When we aren’t inclusive, we are excluding ideas at the table and that can be exclusive to the goal and the problem that we are trying to solve together. We want to include a wide range of ideas and solutions to find the best outcome.”*

*“Don’t want to see confronting racism and bias without knowing the history.”*

*“If the staff doesn’t live in the community and if the staff is white and CIS then they don’t know what the community needs.”*

*“People need to have some basic foundational information. People are making assumptions because they don’t have base level of knowledge. Want to have sessions where people can ask questions and get info.”*

*“Need to educate people about who makes decisions.”*

*“Don’t talk at me, talk to me.”*



## Provide both ample and targeted invitations to engagement opportunities

*“If we want to get input from those who are impacted, need to think about who those folks are, and how can we reach them.”*

*“Think about this in terms of equity, not equality. Reach out to:*

- Barber shops
- Houses of worships
- Alcoholics Anonymous – connect with addicts
- Salvation Army
- Grocery stores
- Food distribution sites”

*“Put things on city buses”*

*“All of the written materials can be written in a certain way so that it is not degrading. Purposefully write it in a plainer and clearer way so not to come across as government jargon with acronyms.”*



## Develop Community Engagement Plans with care

*“Don’t want to see confronting racism and bias without knowing the history.”*

*“Center racial equity, pull together people impacted, familiar with the issues, and let’s plan a project.”*

*“We don’t want to think so much about what the privileged folks want or need to engage.”*

*“Difficult to begin to understand how to engage in the city government for those on the outside. Ordinary citizen day-to-day not sure how city government works.”*

*“People can get intimidated with a formal meeting process.”*

*“Inclusion – feel respected and have a sense of belonging. Inclusiveness is different than being diverse. Can have a group that’s inclusive but not diverse.”*



## Make engagement events more accessible and attractive

*“A lot of disability community has appreciated being able to participate remotely.”*

*“Parking at city hall can be challenging, public transportation can be challenging with times.”*

*“Can get subtitles on zoom, has been easier to participate in conversations.”*

*“Easier to catch up with recordings.”*

*“I have an infant at home so making it to public meetings is often impossible. I appreciate the opportunity for phone calls and virtual data collection like this.”*

*“Meetings at different times to accommodate parents of young children.”*

*“Neighborhood pop-up meetings in cafes/bars/parks!”*

In addition to representative quotes on the previous pages, the following information provides further insight into the community's sentiment on specific community engagement topics.

Since 2019, the city has collected over 1,300 open responses to the question, "what would make it easier for you to engage with the city?" primarily from online surveys. It became clear from the responses that "engagement" is considered by the public to be any interaction with the city: a phone call or email to city staff, attendance at a project-based meeting, talking to staff at an event, and watching a Council meeting online. The public makes little distinction between staff, boards, and commissions. To the public, the city is one entity. Anyone working at the city represents everyone at the city. Their experience with one staff person, board, or commission can influence their perception of the entire organization. An unanswered call may cause them to lose faith in the benefit of participation in another, unrelated feedback session.

Staff thoroughly reviewed each comment and sorted them into categories. If a respondent suggested several ways to engage, the responses were divided into their corresponding category. Staff categorized comments into one of the following 18 focus areas, sub-categorized for finer detail, and coded as a positive, negative, or neutral statement. Categorizing each comment made clear the interconnection of many issues and that to improve the engagement experience, several avenues, across multiple departments, need to be systematically repaired and re-linked. The major focus areas are:

- Accessibility
- Website
- Virtual
- Transportation
- Transparency/Outreach

- Meetings
- Text/Phone
- Responsiveness
- Positive
- Surveys
- Social Media
- Representation
- Newsletter/Newspaper
- Mail
- Impact
- Email
- Events
- Boards/Commissions/Council

## DELIVERY

*Email, mail, text/phone, social media, newsletter/newspaper*

The majority of survey-respondents prefer digital communication over mail for receiving engagement opportunities and city updates. These results are likely biased with representation from people who have access to digital means. Those who requested printed correspondence noted that the digital divide precludes some residents from participating. Under the "text/phone" category, many respondents recommend an A2 App, another digital option, to engage with the city or receive updates.

“Regular targeted communications by text”

Several survey-takers lament the loss of a daily newspaper, and feel that in its absence, there is a gap in media coverage. Moreover, the imposition of a paywall on local news is an equity issue raised by some respondents. There are several recommendations for a regular, city-issued, newsletter (in print or digital) that provides updates on projects, events, and summarized boards/commission decisions. While an alternative exists to subscribe to specific project updates based on interests or location, residents may miss the wider news cycle or feel overwhelmed with the number of subscription options.

## IN PERSON

*Meetings, accessibility, and events*

There is still a desire to meet in person. Generally, survey-takers want regular meetings that are held in the neighborhoods to focus on hyper local issues, to shorten the commute to participate, to connect with neighbors and their representatives, and to avoid City Hall. “Events” refer to city staffed, organized events in the community where they share information or collect feedback at places like U-M campus, coffee shops, block parties, Art Fair, Top of the Park, workshops, etc. “Accessibility,” in this context, is related to in-person engagement. Responses suggest that a variety of times during the day could expand attendance to people with nontraditional working schedules or families.

## REMOTE

*Virtual, website, survey*

In virtual spaces, Ann Arbor found success (because of the pandemic) in holding hybrid meetings and posting recordings online for boards, commissions, and project-based sessions. It seems virtual meetings will remain a post-pandemic feature due to its high level of convenience and accessibility for residents. Requests remain for more virtual interaction in the form of live chats, online forums for discussion, and live streaming meetings (some meetings are already live streamed). The website

“ the city should  
come to its  
residents ”

could be an opportune location for some of these requests, however, many of the responses specific to the city’s website focus on improved navigability and up-to-date content for a more user-friendly experience. Online surveys were almost universally commended as a convenient way to solicit resident input. There were concerns about biased wording and distribution, invasive demographic questions, registration, and access to surveys, but generally they are appreciated as a low-effort way to participate.

## BEING SEEN AND HEARD

*Representation, impact, responsiveness, boards/commissions/Council*

Representation covers a range of people who feel that the city doesn’t look like them or accommodate their needs. For example, families who cannot attend meetings because there is no childcare, disabled people who cannot physically or virtually attend a meeting, lower-income households who feel there should be a greater focus on economic equity, and BIPOC who want to see greater representation in City Hall (not an exhaustive list). In Ann Arbor, a divide among homeowners and renters is commonly expressed as a “pro” or “anti” development sentiment, where each side feels the other has a larger sway over those decisions.

Another reason listed for not engaging with the city is that participants do not feel heard, nor that they have any impact on the decision-making process. This was articulated through surveys when



Some indication  
that my input  
wasn't being  
ignored.



an analysis of the results is not shared, when input is ignored, or when it appears decisions are made prior to asking for the public's perspective. In this sense, even those of the most privileged status do not feel represented and/or fatigued by the engagement process. Respondents also conveyed feeling unheard as evidenced by poor responsiveness from city staff or Council members. Among emails, phone calls, and A2Fixit, some residents feel their questions go unanswered. Further, respondents remarked that a politically charged environment at Council meetings where meetings are uncooperative, and even hostile at times, discourage participation from those other than the well-seasoned "squeaky wheel."

## GETTING TO MEETINGS

### *Transportation*

Fortunately, with wider adoption of virtual meetings, comments about the transportation systems as a barrier to engagement have waned. For meetings at City Hall, transportation accessibility remains an issue. Parking availability and expense, the bus schedule, and unprotected bike lanes were listed as a hindrance to public participation for in person meetings.

## TWO-WAY COMMUNICATION

### *Transparency/Outreach*

This category includes broader statements about having greater access to information. These responses called for a greater understanding of city processes, decision-making, projects, outreach methods, and data. Survey-takers want greater notice and information prior to engagement sessions so that they can plan to participate and come prepared. This can be achieved, according to many of the submitted responses, with greater avenues to learn and share. Some recommendations call for data dashboards, contact information for staff, interactive online portals to lodge comments or complaints, and more widely publicized opportunities for engagement.

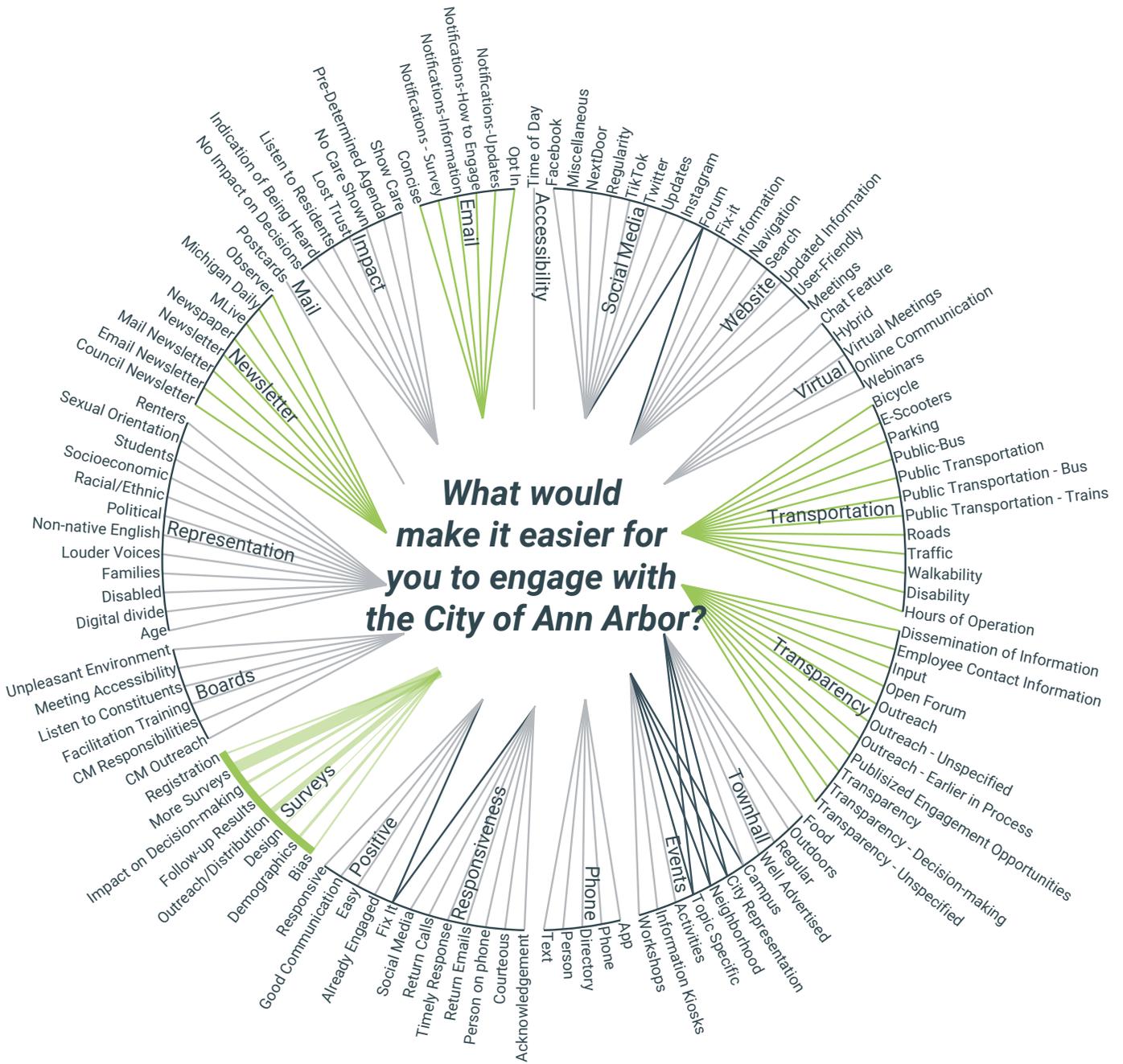
“ ... if there was a newsletter that had information residents felt was meaningful wanted to check and read ”

“ Fewer barriers to communicating with an office in a timely fashion, increased response times. ”

“ Meetings with a video option are often easier to attend, and I hope they continue even after they are no longer necessary for COVID reasons. ”

“ I have difficulty determining what city department does what. The website may be clear to the city employees, but sorting out planning, zoning, city project development is a challenge. ”

# What would make it easier for you to engage with the City of Ann Arbor?



A summary of the tone of each of the comments received:

Positive: 295  
Negative: 1,172  
Neutral: 118

## Legend

-  Main category with the highest number of responses
-  Line thicknesses proportional to number of responses received in the sub-category
-  Above 100 responses in category
-  Single connection
-  Multiple connections
- Text** Main category
- Text** Sub-category

# 04.CURRENT PRACTICES

## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT TOOLKIT

The Community Engagement Toolkit is the city's resource for planning engagement on projects, policies and programs. The toolkit is available to all service areas, but it is not consistently used throughout the city. The following steps are included in the Toolkit:

- 1. Action Plan:** this form incorporates concepts from the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) in the form of questions. The Action Plan helps assign the appropriate level of engagement and an analysis of the appropriate engagement techniques for each step of the initiative.
- 2. Stakeholder Worksheet:** the Stakeholder Worksheet provides a list of potential stakeholders (and contact information) to be considered for each initiative. Stakeholders are continuously added to the worksheet.
- 3. Public Engagement Checklists:** this resource helps support consistency in engagement and public notifications/communications across the organization.

Since the toolkit is not consistently followed, staff is currently revising the toolkit to make it simpler to use. In addition, staff is incorporating input from the Steering Committee and training provided to staff by the International Association for Public Participation.

## DEMOGRAPHIC DATA COLLECTION

Staff collects information to understand who participates and who is reached in engagement activities. Staff has developed a standard demographic questionnaire and is encouraging consistent, organization-wide use (added to the Community Engagement Toolkit in 2019). The intention of collecting demographic data is to help

staff better understand which engagement formats encourage the greatest diversity of participation. However, testing different engagement formats has been limited due to COVID-19 restrictions and precautions for gathering. Regardless, staff has continued to collect data since 2019 and found that those opting to report their demographic (we do not require people to report their information), leans toward wealthy, white, older, homeowner, residents, as shown in the graphs on the following pages.

In addition to the city's demographic questionnaire, the MDOT Title VI Public Involvement Survey is consistently used at public meetings for projects with MDOT funding to gather demographic information from meeting participants.

## STAFF TRAINING

In January – February 2020 and March 2021, Systems Planning and Communications staff scheduled International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) training to support city-wide efforts to increase effective community engagement. IAP2's Foundations in Public Participation Program provided training to staff across the organization in two parts:

Part 1: Planning for Effective Public Participation (48 staff earned certificates of completion)

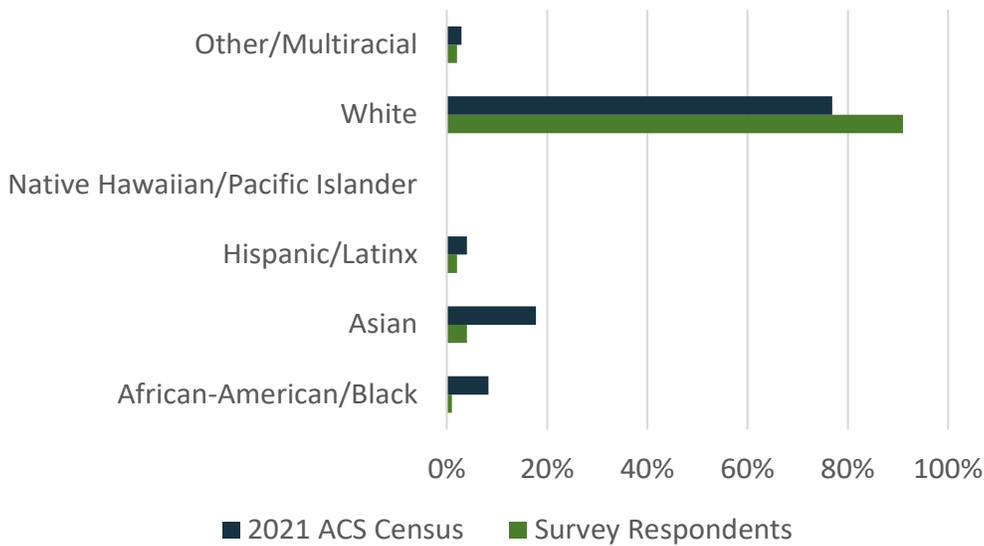
Part 2: Techniques for Effective Public Participation (34 staff earned certificates of completion)

Specific to equity, many staff from across the organization participated in the following trainings:

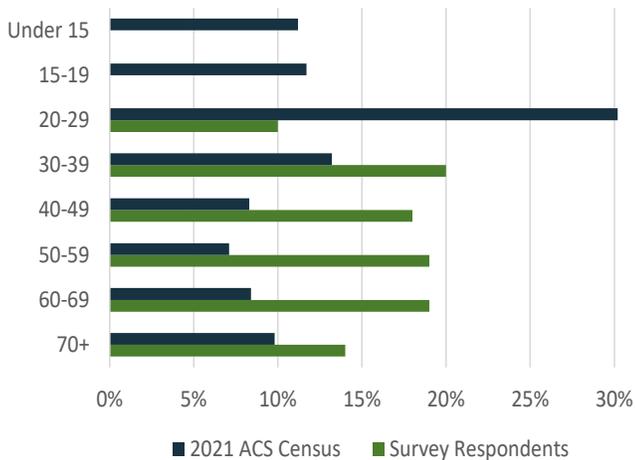
- Government Alliance for Racial Equity
- Diversity Equity and Inclusion through SDS Global

## DEMOGRAPHIC DATA RESULTS - WHO IS ENGAGING WITH THE CITY? Optional & Self-Reported, 2019-2022

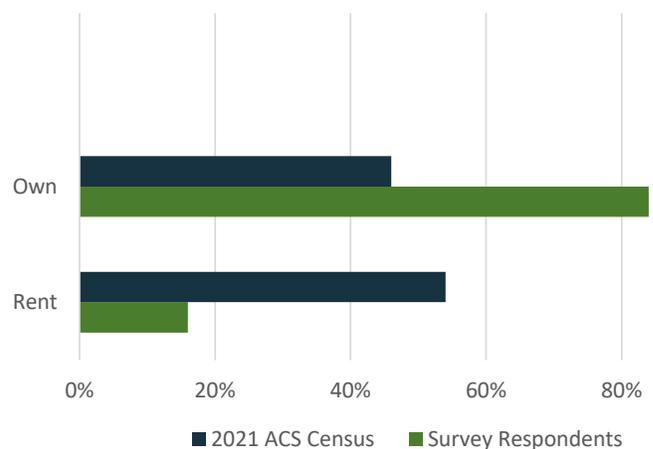
### Which racial/ethnic identifiers do you use?



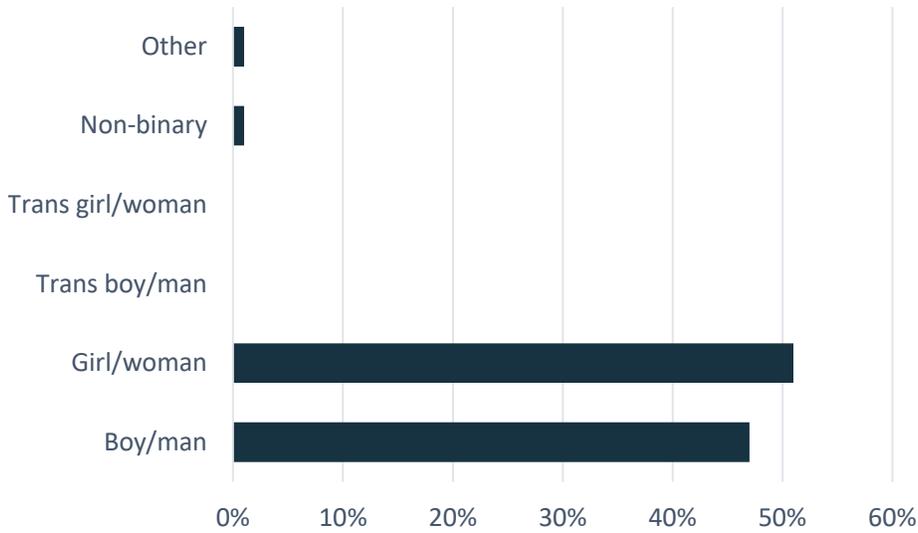
### What is your age group?



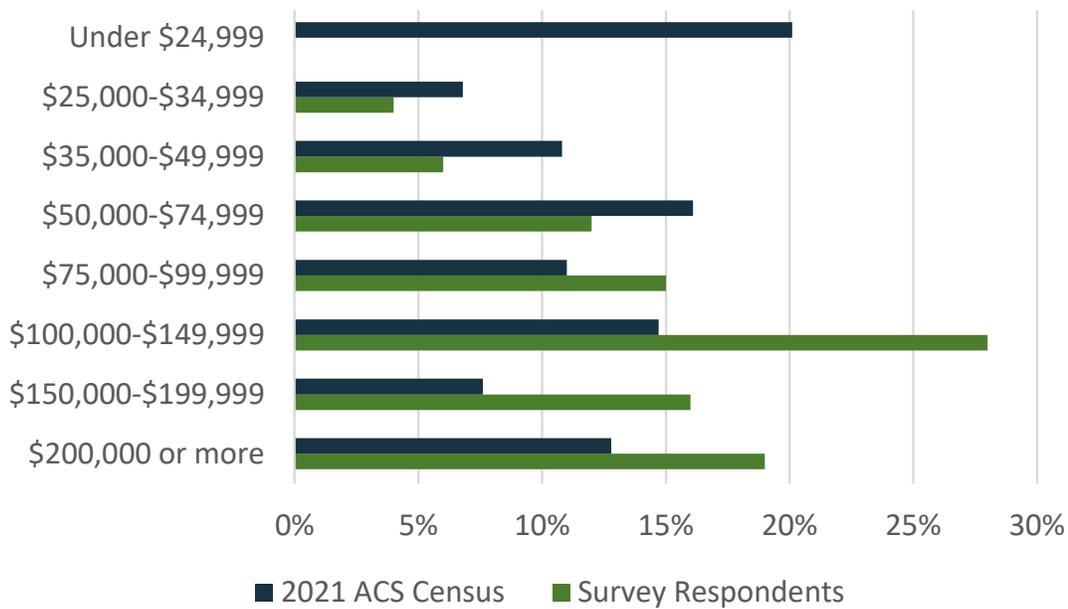
### Do you rent or own?



## What is your gender identity?\*



## What is your household income?



\* Cannot be compared to the Census because it does not provide the same gender identity options.

- Office of Sustainability and Innovation (OSI) participated in racial equity training through Urban Sustainability Directors Network

In addition, members of staff continue to educate themselves on the history and current conditions of the Ann Arbor region as it relates to equity. A list of some City staff also provide current information and updates to each other regarding community engagement through the following:

A2P2 (Ann Arbor Public Participation) Channel in Microsoft Teams: Staff conducting community engagement/public participation for Ann Arbor share resources, news, webinar opportunities, and experiences related to public participation. All IAP2 training participants were added to the A2P2 Channel and are encouraged to share resources, examples, and ideas to learn from each other and grow together.

Staff features regular community engagement updates in the internal staff newsletter, A2 News Notes, and is planning a series of internal training sessions to share information and clarify community engagement expectations, such as the Community Engagement Toolkit, engagement techniques, and demographic data collection.

## YOUTH ENGAGEMENT

Prior to the pandemic, staff developed and led a Community High School course designed to increase civic competency and engagement among local youth. The City received a Planning Excellence Award for Public Outreach from the Michigan Association of Planning for this effort. The syllabus and class materials are included in

Appendix D. Staff hopes to revive and expand this program with classes back in person.

## DEVELOPER PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT REQUIREMENTS

By local ordinance, developers are required to engage residents as they finalize their plans. This is a formalized procedure for surfacing issues related to a project prior to the project's submission to planning staff for review. The required process is can be found Appendix E. During the pandemic, planning services staff enacted a series of temporary modifications to Citizen Participation Guidelines. These modifications provide for virtual citizen participation meetings to be held in advance of any planning petitions, as required by ordinance.

## NOTIFICATIONS

The city provides notifications to the public through various methods. Project managers work with the Communications department to determine the best form of notification for the project in addition to direct outreach to stakeholders. Notification methods can include:

- City website
- Press release
- Posting in city's lobby vestibules (official Clerk's Office notice)
- Social media (Facebook, Twitter, Nextdoor)
- GovDelivery (email listserv)
- A2 Open City Hall (survey listserv)
- City calendar
- Post cards
- Flyers
- Community Newsletter
- Public Service Announcement on CTN
- Website

# 05. PROMISING PRACTICES

## OTHER COMMUNITIES

### *Durham, North Carolina*

EngageDurham is a city-wide pilot initiative for Durham's Neighborhood Improvement Services Department (NIS) to implement equitable engagement using the city's Equitable Community Engagement Blueprint (ECEB). The ECEB was an outgrowth of a 2018 council directive to improve racial equity and engagement for a trail project. Because the city previously had no standardized engagement procedure, the Engagement Team worked to develop the ECEB with input from various departments and community leaders to further equity beyond the initial pilot projects. The structure and key components of the ECEB are the following:

- Defining equitable engagement through data collection and community input
- Identifying components of an equitable engagement plan for use by project teams
- Offering strategies to implement equitable engagement

EngageDurham is currently utilizing the ECEB for several city projects, including the Comprehensive Plan, the County Transit Plan, and a variety of trail projects. Some of the interesting strategies being implemented within these projects include:

- Hosting engagement events targeting residents of low-income housing and specific neighborhoods where the population is historically underrepresented. This is accomplished through Engagement Ambassadors – community members that are part of or have connections to groups that are often excluded from the planning process.
- Making online engagement more robust by procuring the Social PinPoint platform.
- Identifying and refining engagement strategies throughout project phases.

To learn more about Durham's efforts, staff met with

a Community Engagement Specialist from the city and learned the following:

- When working with data, it needs to be disaggregated to understand who is saying what. Coding and survey processes need to account for groups with very different ideas about engagement/city process.
- See where money is already being spent on one-time engagement activities by contractors. Monies can be redirected to fund operations of an engagement department or other centralized mechanism of engagement.
- Community Partners (city-run) – people with a stake in the neighborhood/group are compensated to conduct engagement on their own (a degree of separation from the city, helps build trust). This is different than the Engagement Ambassadors of EngageDurham (which is the 'brand' for engagement) - city staff design the engagement and Engagement Ambassadors disseminate info and gather feedback.
- Post history series on YouTube to share stories of residents of certain neighborhoods/groups
- The biggest regret of the whole process is not sharing their efforts in real time. They could have had more conversations with Council and shared more information through media channels.

### *Minneapolis, Minnesota*

In 2016, Minneapolis' Neighborhood and Community Relations Department (NCR) released their Blueprint for Equitable Engagement. Since adopting the Core Principals of Community Engagement from the International Association for Public Participation in 2007, the city has developed this blueprint along with the overarching goal to achieve participation that is within 80% of citywide demographic benchmarks. With this goal in mind, the city developed various strategies that make up the bulk of the Blueprint:

- **Strategy 1: Expand Community Engagement Strategies** – promote engagement strategies that

- draw participation from diverse voices. One of the main ways the city accomplishes this is through existing committees, memoranda of understanding, and task forces aimed at bridging the gap between marginalized communities and city decision-making.
- **Strategy 2: Support Strong, Vibrant, and Functional Neighborhood Organizations** – ensure various organizations are supported to facilitate engagement of cultural communities.
  - **Strategy 3: Increase the Capacity of NCR's Community Engagement Efforts by Working with Community Partners** – expand partnerships that further larger goals.
  - **Strategy 4: Ensure that City Departments are Well Equipped to Conducts Effective Public Participation** – outline for providing tools and training to city staff.
  - **Strategy 5: Evaluate and Celebrate Progress** – ensure the department's efforts are effective.

To measure outcomes and make data public, Minneapolis has developed a dashboard that compiles community feedback and metrics related to the strategies outlined in the Blueprint. From this dashboard, the city tracks the following metrics:

- Diversity of appointed boards and commissions
- Resident trust and influence; multilingual radio shows
- Fund allocation to NCR and the Community Participation Program
- Diversity of neighborhood boards
- Neighborhood financial audits
- Volunteer hours; board training; households reached
- Community Connections Conference attendance and demographics
- One Minneapolis Fund outcomes (leadership development fund for underrepresented groups)
- Partner Grant outcomes (legal services for immigrants and refugees)
- Language services (interpreting)
- Language line usage (providing city information and services in non-English)

- Resolved ADA complaints
- Community engagement outcomes (participation in city initiatives)
- Effective Engagement Learning Lab Series attendance (training for staff, neighborhood organizations, and community partners)

The Minneapolis metropolitan region has also developed Equitable Development Principles and Scorecard. This document provides a scoring matrix for categories that are affected by or influence development, one of which being community engagement. Stand out features of the scorecard related to engagement include:

- Ensuring the engagement process is enacted early in the development process (within the first 6 months)
- Ensuring resident representation on advisory teams/task forces/committees
- Ensuring significant changes to a plan or project triggers additional engagement

### ***Boston, MA***

Boston has recently published its 2020-2023 Equitable Community Engagement Toolkit. Similar to Ann Arbor's Toolkit, it broadens the survey questions as part of the "Evaluation" section of the toolkit to gauge community response to a given engagement strategy. The feedback establishes five metrics:

- **Accountable** – "did this [engagement event] meet your expectations?"
- **Collaborative** – "How satisfied are you with the diversity of people, organizations, or neighborhoods in the process?"
- **Inclusive** – "How would you rate the (Location, Date, Time, Length, Speakers, Language/ Translation, Accessibility) of the [engagement event]?"
- **Sustainable** – "Were you offered additional information about training, technical assistance, or funding opportunities?"

- Transparent – “How satisfied are you with the information you were provided about the community engagement process?”

### **Cincinnati, OH**

Cincinnati’s Peaslee Neighborhood Center has developed an Equitable Development Rubric that contains a Community Input Section. Developments are scored based on the following criteria:

- Community council meeting plus public meetings that are:
  - » Held during evening/weekend hours
  - » Advance notice given to council and other community anchor institutions
  - » Held at a location within walking distance of the development site
  - » Held at an ADA accessible venue
- Project reflects good-faith effort to incorporate resulting input.
- Alternative input mechanism (e.g. survey) is made easily available.
- Project support from a majority of non-profit organizations in the development neighborhoods (and/or adjacent neighborhoods) that primarily serve a low-income population.
- Local, low-income residents hold at least 20% of positions within the project’s governing board with decision-making power over design, siting, development, and management.

### **Portland, OR**

In 2018, Portland adopted a Comprehensive Plan with several goals to improve its equitable community engagement efforts. The goals were titled the following:

- Community involvement as partnership
- Social justice and equity
- Value community wisdom and participation
- Transparency and accountability
- Meaningful participation

The follow-up implementation document, known as the [Community Engagement Manual](#), contains baseline expectations, a framework for staff to design

engagement, and an evaluation tool. The equitable engagement framework is organized by an overarching strategy, performance measure, and techniques phrased as “what does this look like?”

- **Know the community** - work to understand underrepresented and underserved groups; listen research history and current events, and assess their vulnerabilities, impacts they have endured, and opportunities to collaborate.
- **Be accessible and responsive to diverse communities** - Focus on if the results of the city’s efforts have increased participation for targeted communities. This is a community asset based approach that goes through their hubs and networks to break down barriers in communication.
- **Appropriately support staff and community capacity** - Be intentional about where resources are allocated; it takes time and funding for face-to-face relationship building before and beyond project timelines. Ample resources are needed to overcome a history of neglect and mistrust.
- **Build effective partnerships** - Relationship building requires an acknowledgment of past harm and/or neglect. Partnerships are based on honesty, clear communication, and purposeful roles.
- **Scoping the project with the community** - Ideally, this is when engagement with the potentially impacted community starts to explain the process, clarify roles, and understand the project’s purpose. This entails establishing agreed upon goals and benchmarks with the community.
- **Continuously apply an equity lens** - The onus is on staff to regularly seek out the input of the underserved. This requires an understanding of disproportionate effects on vulnerable groups and scheduling additional time to keep checking in with them throughout the process to ensure they are heard.

## **OTHER RESOURCES**

**Klipfolio** – This article outlines various metrics specific to community engagement within marketing. One interesting metric that could be utilized for equitable engagement is retention, which measures participants

at the start and end of a process, and monitoring for new participants. This could be embedded within the city's demographic questionnaire for specific projects, (i.e. "Is this your first meeting for [engagement]?") and administered at meetings throughout the process. The results could be compiled to report on the depth of engagement; as opposed to tracking only raw numbers increasing, this metric could represent the presence of new voices.

**CitizenLab** - This resource highlights possible measures of success for online engagement.

- Participation distribution amongst pre-defined citizen groups (based on age, gender, area of residence, etc.) - likely derived from census; are meetings representative?
- Number of proposals that have actually contributed to the actual decision(s) - what percentage of ideas are translated to decisions? Will need to keep rigorous data on citizen proposals.
- Cost per engaged citizen, i.e. the sum of monetary resources spent on the whole participation process (amongst staff salary, communication resources, and purchase of technologies) divided by the number of engaged citizens.
- Citizen satisfaction – qualitative data representing participants' level of satisfaction of the engagement process.

**ECO Resources** - The standards or benchmarks used included quantitative measures for the number of people reached, unit costs, the percent of people understanding messages, quantity of effort, and the number of comments received. More qualitative benchmarks and standards included narrative evaluations of success (event summaries), goals based on initial surveys of satisfaction, knowledge, attitude, or understanding, positive or negative comments in the media, and measures of satisfaction with the opportunities to participate in or influence the process.

## COMMON THEMES & LESSONS

**Community liaisons** – Most communities with distinct equitable engagement strategies have developed a form of direct connection to underrepresented

groups. These connections are routinely used to foster more diverse engagement. Ann Arbor has residential associations that can possibly serve as liaisons for projects or to increase representation from certain groups.

**Census data** - It is often used as a base metric for representation. Most of these communities mentioned goals of participation to reflect or go above the census makeup of these cities. For Ann Arbor, it could be beneficial to understand the demographic makeup of impacted areas of projects to have meaningful goals for projects.

**Measuring the level of satisfaction** – For many organizations, measuring satisfaction in the process is a common practice. This could be as simple as adding a satisfaction question to our demographic polls (e.g. 'How satisfied are you with public engagement opportunities offered by the City?'). It would be bolstered by gathering and analyzing comments more rigorously. When doing this, it will be important to disaggregate the data to understand who is saying what.

**Follow-up/Evaluation** – Many communities prioritize following up with impacted groups and communities to understand the effectiveness of the engagement process.

## PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT TECHNIQUES

Based on general feedback and experience, the following engagement techniques may help to support a more inclusive engagement strategy:

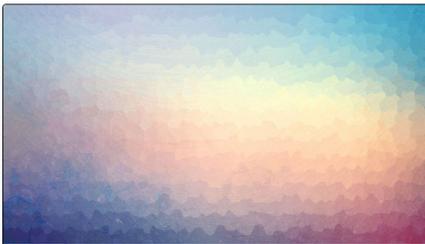
- More **drop-in** style public engagement that allow participants to come and go at their convenience and to speak with staff one-on-one.
- More **pop-up events** to meet people where they are instead of requiring attendance at City Hall or other designated meeting locations. Coordinating with other events at places where people already go for day-to-day activities helps reach people who are not aware of or have the time to attend traditional-style meetings.

- **Electronic meetings** were driven by public health needs to distance during the pandemic. City Boards, Commissions, and project engagement sessions have transitioned to electronic meetings, accessible by web, phone, and in some cases, live broadcast by CTN. Electronic meetings had not been widely used for city business prior to the pandemic. While digital divide concerns remain, the lessons learned through this pandemic have enhanced staff skills in conducting effective online and phone-based, engagement which can encourage participation among those who do not have the schedule flexibility, availability, or desire to attend traditional public meetings. We anticipate hybrid-style engagement are the future.
- **Electronic meeting recordings** have become part of the city's standard engagement process. Video recording links are posted to the project webpage following an engagement activity. Video recording links should help to improve inclusivity by making meeting content accessible, even to those who are not able to attend at the scheduled time.
- **Online surveys** are often used in parallel to other engagement techniques, for those who do not have the flexibility to attend scheduled engagement events. However, as we have heard from Steering Committee members, questions need to be carefully vetted to ensure thoughtful, inclusive language, and effective, non-biased questions.
- **Anonymous real-time polling** is a feature within Zoom to gather real-time, anonymous feedback from meeting participants during public engagement. Anonymous polling allows all participants to contribute feedback on important questions, regardless of whether they are comfortable speaking aloud or submitting written comments.
- Staff is currently exploring the potential for **digital information kiosks** that could provide more equitable access to information within the public rights-of-way. The kiosks could share community engagement opportunities such as meeting advertisements, and links to polls and surveys, thereby helping to achieve responses from people that utilize public spaces but are not on city email lists, social media, or otherwise within our reach. Making the broader community aware of engagement opportunities could increase diversity in the responses received, enrich public engagement, and build interest in city projects.
- City staff worked with a team of University of Michigan Students from the School of Information to explore developing an online **engagement hub**. Through their research, the students developed the following recommendations:
  1. Make existing engagement opportunities more accessible.
  2. Structure the Engagement Hub around specific engagement topics and events.
  3. Send personalized updates about engagement opportunities through users preferred information channels like social media and email.
  4. Show how engagement has an impact.
  5. Clarify what engagement means.
  6. Use high contrast colors and versatile fonts for easy readability and make language and website help accessible.
  7. Include a clear form to add an event/ project or update pages/ admin accounts.
  8. Incorporate existing management process and information systems in Engagement Hub design and management.
  9. Advertise the Engagement Hub on the City website and optimize search results.
  10. Centralize and streamline the engagement process to plan for information dissemination.

A full copy of the report can be accessed [here](#).

I'm looking for projects about All categories in All places or Search for a specific project...

Open



Last updated: 17 Jan, 2023

**South Side Signals Project**

The purpose of the South Side Signals Project is to improve the safety of pedestrians and vehicles at six intersections in the South Sides Flats, Slopes, and Mount Oliver

[Learn more →](#)



Last updated: 17 Jan, 2023

**Frick Environmental Center Sensory Classroom**

The Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy received a grant to design an outdoor sensory classroom for learners with exceptionalities at the Frick Environmental Center

[Learn more →](#)



Last updated: 12 Jan, 2023

**Davis Avenue Bridge**

Design and construction for the new Davis Avenue Bridge between Brighton Heights and Riverview Park.

[Learn more →](#)



Last updated: 11 Jan, 2023

**City Collection Equity Audit**

The City of Pittsburgh is conducting an audit to identify inequity and bias in the City's collection of public art and memorials.

[Learn more →](#)



Last updated: 11 Jan, 2023

**Sheraden Park Phase I**

A community engagement process to inform the design improvements for Phase I Master Plan implementation.

[Learn more →](#)



Last updated: 10 Jan, 2023

**Police Chief Community Survey**

Together we can make Pittsburgh the safest city in America. Please share your voice and priorities as we search for the City of Pittsburgh's next Chief of Police

[Learn more →](#)



Example engagement hub: [engage.pittsburghpa.gov](https://engage.pittsburghpa.gov)

# 06. RECOMMENDATIONS & STRATEGIES



## RECOMMENDATION 1

### Demonstrate that the city is committed to advancing equity

**Why:** People who have been minoritized and marginalized will not engage with the city if the city is not representative or clearly committed to supporting equity.

Strategy 1.1: The city intentionally hires minoritized individuals, especially in higher level positions.

- a) Target recruitment and outreach to racially and ethnically minoritized individuals.
- b) Ensure that applicant reviewers and those responsible for hiring are diverse – top down and bottom up.
- c) Require those hiring to take classes/training of unconscious bias and white supremacy culture.

Strategy 1.2: Create transparent and meaningful pathways for promotion of minoritized individuals.

- a) Require new hires to take classes/training of unconscious bias white supremacy culture.
- b) Identify internal candidate pools.
- c) Develop mentorship programs for internal promotional development (examples include early access to job postings and being exposed to new projects).
- d) Conduct succession planning assessment for critical roles and provide education, experience, and leadership techniques to help prepare those entering those roles.

Strategy 1.3: Appoint racially and ethnically minoritized candidates representing impacted community perspectives to boards and commissions.

- a) Improve recruitment and outreach efforts for community member opportunities.

Strategy 1.4: City Council adopts and enforces policies that help ensure decision-making is equitable. Possible policy statements include:

- a) Those affected by a decision have a right to be involved in the decision-making process.
- b) The decision-making process will acknowledge and address structural inequities and work to



ensure that all community members can thrive. This includes:

- Centering Black, Indigenous, and people of color in decision-making processes.
  - Weighting decisions to benefit the most vulnerable and those with the highest need.
  - Challenging dominant entitlement and privileged narratives and introducing counter narratives.
- c) The community will be provided with the information and opportunities they need to participate in decision-making processes in a meaningful way.
- d) The results of a decision and how the decision was made will be shared with the community.

Strategy 1.5: Be authentic.

- a) Start with authentic, honest conversations about the reality of the situation related to equity within the City of Ann Arbor governmental policies and commitments.
- b) Use straight-forward, actionable language.
- c) Rely on both evidence (fact-based, data-driven) and experience. Advocate for truth.

Strategy 1.6: Build trust and transparency through continuous outreach and relationship-building.



## RECOMMENDATION 2

### Provide both ample and targeted invitations to engagement opportunities

**Why:** People need to be made aware of opportunities in addition to feeling welcome and valued at engagement events.

Strategy 2.1: Translate and transcreate (adapting a message from one language to another, while maintaining its intent, style, tone, and context) meeting notices and content, addressing the most commonly spoken languages first.

- a) Increase translation and transcreation resources.
- b) Maximize use of existing resources (online translators, etc.).
- c) Provide information about translation and transcreation services on the city engagement website.

Strategy 2.2: In addition to social media and email, use non-digital ways of getting the word out, such as flyers, word-of-mouth (phone tree/snowball method), door hangers, etc., including posting at community hubs (e.g. community centers, libraries, schools).

Strategy 2.3: Get the word out through places like religious institutions, barber shops, bus stops, and informal networks.

Strategy 2.4: Actively recruit Black, Indigenous, and people of color to participate in engagement events.

Strategy 2.5: Create an online engagement hub that is easy to find and easy to use.



## RECOMMENDATION 3

### Develop Community Engagement Plans with care

**Why:** Community Engagement Plans are the blueprint for ensuring quality, equitable engagement.

Strategy 3.1 Provide the resources necessary for staff to conduct meaningful engagement.

- a) Ensure a budget is available for community engagement that is scaled appropriately to the issue.
- b) Continue and increase staff training in conducting quality engagement.
- c) Continue to use and evolve the city's Community Engagement Toolkit.
- d) Create suitable measurements and milestones for successful engagement.



## RECOMMENDATION 4

### Make engagement events more accessible and attractive

**Why:** Engagement events that are not easy to access, seem unimportant, or feel hostile deter people from engaging.

Strategy 4.3: Offer hybrid meeting options.

Strategy 4.4: Provide various ways for people to provide their input – ways that avoid dominant people and narratives from taking over meetings.

Strategy 4.5: Hold meetings at various times.

Strategy 4.6: Record meetings and make them easily available and provide input opportunities after watching recorded meetings.

Strategy 4.7: Hold people to “golden-rule” standards – use and enforce ground rules that support honoring the dignity of people.

Strategy 4.8: Understand that the community’s time and energy is valuable, especially for people with limited resources – compensate participants in some way, such as with food, stipends, gift certificates, etc.

Strategy 4.9: Hire trained and continue to train meeting facilitators and moderators in fields such as social work, psychology, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI), public participation, etc.

Strategy 4.10: Create space to listen and heal old wounds using highly trained engagement facilitators.

Strategy 4.11: Take time to celebrate and experience joy as a community.

Strategy 4.12: When a decision is being made, clearly communicate what the decision is, the decision-making process, who ultimately makes the decision, and the level of influence the community can have over the decision.

# APPENDIX



# APPENDIX A

Equitable Engagement Steering  
Committee Flyer and Press Release



The City of Ann Arbor is working to become a more inclusive community, and you can help! An effort is underway to overcome Ann Arbor's history with racism and prejudices incorporating:

- Community engagement policies.
- Community engagement tools.
- Community engagement practices.

Do you want to be a part of the conversations and decision-making processes? Apply today to participate as an ANN ARBOR EQUITABLE ENGAGEMENT STEERING COMMITTEE MEMBER!

The Ann Arbor Equitable Engagement Steering Committee will unite community members and representatives of organizations in the area that are currently working to advance equity. Further, the steering committee will:

- Help shape the approach to equitable engagement.
- Play an active role in developing the city's community engagement strategy.
- Serve as connectors to the community and organizations.
- Ensure quality and delivery of outcomes.
- Meet on a scheduled, regular basis, as agreed upon by committee members.

**Interested?** Please complete the online application, which is due by Monday, June 7, 2021. Some funding is available to compensate committee member(s) for time on this effort, which will be prioritized based on need.



Go [online](#) for the application to participate, for more information and to sign up for initiative updates as they become available at [www.a2gov.org/A2EquitableEngagement](http://www.a2gov.org/A2EquitableEngagement) or call 734.794.6430, ext. 42590.



**Some qualities that we will be looking for in steering committee members are:**

Diversity across race, ethnicity, gender, ability and sexual orientation.

Commitment to racial and social justice.

Experience and knowledge of equity and race issues.

Collaborative and willing to engage in shared exploration.

Humility and curiosity to continually learn and engage in self-reflection.

Resilience to engage in deep, challenging work.

# Ann Arbor launches 30-member committee focused on equity and inclusion

Updated: Aug. 05, 2021, 11:03 a.m. | Published: Aug. 05, 2021, 11:03 a.m.



A flag reading "Black Lives Matter" flies outside Ann Arbor City Hall during a rally for the combined causes of Black Lives Matter, the Free Palestine Movement, LGBTQ rights, Jewish solidarity and awareness of the Armenian genocide outside Ann Arbor Larcom City Hall, 301 E. Huron St. on Saturday, May 29, 2021. Jacob Hamilton | The Ann Arbor News

139  
shares

By [Ryan Stanton | ryanstanton@mlive.com](#)

ANN ARBOR, MI — From a pool of about 80 applicants, the city of Ann Arbor has chosen 30 people to serve on a new committee focused on equity and inclusion.

The city this week announced the Ann Arbor Equitable Engagement Steering Committee, which is intended to help the city function in a more inclusive manner and find ways to bring a greater diversity of voices into local processes — everything from city planning initiatives to consideration of new laws.

The goal of the equity initiative is to develop new community engagement policies and practices “that can be a part of moving the community forward to overcome Ann Arbor’s history with racism and prejudices that have caused important local perspectives to be marginalized from community conversations and decision-making processes,” the city website states.

“The city is aware that not all members of our community are fully represented within the public processes. And that, ultimately, is what the committee will work to change,” Heather Seyfarth, the city’s special projects manager and community engagement specialist, said in a statement.

The 30 committee members have a diverse range of backgrounds and come from various fields, including Ann Arbor Public Schools and University of Michigan employees and people involved in religious and nonprofit work.

They include antiracism and LGBTQ advocates, an immigrant from Kenya, a former director of the Arab American National Museum, a member of the NAACP, an outreach support coordinator for Avalon Housing, a pastor, executive director of an advocacy group for people with disabilities, a youth advocate for people experiencing homelessness and a former senior nutrition program manager, among others.

[See a list of all 30 members and their bios.](#)

The steering committee will work to unite community members and representatives of local organizations committed to advancing equity, the city stated in a news release, noting members are going through orientation this month and will be developing a regular meeting schedule.

“The committee will help shape the city’s approach to equitable engagement, play an active part in developing the community engagement strategy, serve as connectors to the community and organizations, and help ensure the quality and delivery of outcomes,” the news release stated.

All people will be welcome to attend the committee meetings, which will include opportunities for public comment, officials said. Community members can stay informed and watch for ways to participate in the initiative by subscribing to updates at [www.a2gov.org/A2EquitableEngagement](http://www.a2gov.org/A2EquitableEngagement).

# APPENDIX B

Equitable Engagement Steering  
Committee Team Charter



## EQUITABLE ENGAGEMENT STEERING COMMITTEE

### *DRAFT CHARTER*

#### **Introduction**

The City of Ann Arbor's Equitable Engagement Initiative is a multi-department, staff generated initiative. As part of this initiative, city staff selected interested community members to be part of a Steering Committee. The information that follows describes what is expected of the initiative and how the Equitable Engagement Steering Committee (EESC) will function.

#### **Purpose of Project**

This initiative aims to develop a deeper understanding our community's history with racism and biases that have caused important perspectives to be marginalized from community conversations and decision-making processes and move the City of Ann Arbor forward with community engagement policies, tools, and practices that help Ann Arbor become the inclusive and just community it desires to be. Project goals are to develop:

1. A deeper understanding of what equity and equitable engagement means and could look like in Ann Arbor.
2. Policy recommendations for Council consideration and adoption.
3. Staff guidelines based on the policy recommendations.
4. A set of tools that helps ensure the city's Community Engagement Toolkit is equity-focused and city staff is practicing equitable engagement.

#### **Roles**

The Steering Committee serves as representatives of the community and advises on the development and refinement of meaningful equity-focused community engagement policies, practices, and tools by sharing insights, opinions, ideas, and feedback with city staff. During this initiative, Steering Committee members are also invited to play a role in supporting City of Ann Arbor community engagement events and serving as connectors to other community members and organizations.

City staff are managers of this project.

City Council and/or city administration are the final decision-makers.

#### **Membership**

The Steering Committee consists of up to 30 individuals with a broad spectrum of interests related to equitable engagement. The Steering Committee must be diverse across race, ethnicity, gender, ability, age, and sexual orientation. Each member is expected to:

- Commit to racial and social justice.
- Have experience and knowledge of equity and race issues.
- Be collaborative and willing to engage in shared exploration.
- Have humility and curiosity to continually learn and engage in self-reflection.
- Have resilience to engage in deep, challenging work.

Views of Steering Committee members will not necessarily reflect views of groups and organizations from which they are affiliated unless specifically expressed.

### **Operating Principles**

- City staff facilitate meetings and prepare meeting materials.
- City staff will provide materials in a timely manner, so the Steering Committee has a reasonable time to review.
- Steering Committee members come prepared to each meeting to engage in substantive discussion of the agenda topics.
- Attendance at EESC meetings by the general public or non-members is welcome - meetings are conducted as open meetings, including time designated for public comment.
- The public and other city officials (including elected officials and staff) are able to access Steering Committee materials, including documents and correspondence.
- There will be multiple opportunities and formats for input, including written formats for input.

### **Schedule**

The Steering Committee serves for the duration of the project, concluding when project deliverables are finalized. The Steering Committee generally meets monthly but can decide to add or remove meetings as deemed appropriate by the group. Steering Committee meetings are typically scheduled to run for two hours and are held online, unless otherwise determined by the group.

### **Code of Conduct**

Steering Committee and city staff members will:

- Plan to start on time
- Respect others - remember the dignity of each individual
- Critique ideas, not individuals
- Commit to learning and suspend judgement
- Look for solutions and ways to support the work of other team members
- Actively listen and listen respectfully without interrupting
- Make space for all voices to be heard – make sure that all have an opportunity to provide input
- Be prepared to actively participate
- Engage in self-reflection and examine our own biases
- Avoid defensiveness
- Pause before you speak to be thoughtful about what you are saying
- Be present – avoid phone use and other unnecessary interruptions as much as possible, however, please feel comfortable taking care of needs
- Come prepared to meetings to respect other members’ time and help ensure the success of this effort
- Be positive



# APPENDIX C

Regional Equity Information



## WHERE ARE WE NOW, HOW DID WE GET HERE, & WHERE DO WE GO NEXT?

The information in the links below provides a sense of where inequities existed and continue to exist in the county and city. We use this information to help shape a shared understanding of equity, what it means for the community, and what we should do about it.

### **Census**

Washtenaw County:

<https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/dashboard/washtenawcountymichigan/PST045219>

City of Ann Arbor:

<https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/dashboard/annarborcitymichigan,washtenawcountymichigan/PST045219>

### **Washtenaw County Opportunity Index**

The Opportunity Index measures access to opportunity by combining 16 indicators into five categories: health, job access, economic well-being, education and training, and community engagement and stability.

<http://www.opportunitywashtenaw.org/>

### **United Way Alice Report**

This body of research provides a framework, language, and tools to measure and understand the struggles of a population called ALICE – an acronym for Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed. Alice represents the growing number of households in our communities that do not earn enough to afford household necessities.

2021 Report: <http://www.michiganalice.org/>

2019 Washtenaw County information:

<https://www.uwwashtenaw.org/sites/uwwashtenaw.org/files/2019%20ALICE%20report-Washtenaw%20County%202-pager.pdf>

## Housing

Washtenaw County Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing (AFFH)

<https://www.washtenaw.org/affh>

Washtenaw County Affordable Housing Toolkit:

<https://www.washtenaw.org/DocumentCenter/View/12500/Affordable-Housing-Toolkit>

Example Neighborhood Profile:

<https://www.washtenaw.org/DocumentCenter/View/2358/Waterhill-and-Kerrytown-PDF>

Washtenaw County Housing Affordability and Economic Equity Study (2015)

The goal of this analysis is to provide a snapshot of housing market conditions and corresponding goals to improve affordability across a wide spectrum of households in Washtenaw County's urban core communities. In support of these goals, the report identifies tools intended to guide the allocation of resources and policy decisions toward a regionally balanced housing market in order to maximize opportunity for lower and middle class households.

<https://www.washtenaw.org/DocumentCenter/View/2313/Housing-Affordability-and-Economic-Equity-Analysis-PDF?bidId=>

Racial Covenant Mapping: <https://www.justiceindeedmi.org/>

## History

Ypsilanti S. Adams Street: <https://southadamstreet1900.wordpress.com/>

African-American Historical & Cultural Museum of Washtenaw County:

<https://www.aachm.org/local-history>

Racially Restrictive Covenants (also related to housing): <https://www.michigandaily.com/ann-arbor/u-m-professors-reveal-racially-restrictive-covenants-ann-arbor-housing/>

<https://www.justiceindeedmi.org/>

NEW Center's Champion's for Change Self-Guided Tour: [https://padlet-uploads.storage.googleapis.com/705511294/f0b1344486a5081f4ed19cc2012b413d/Pre\\_work\\_Champions\\_for\\_Change\\_Session\\_2.pdf](https://padlet-uploads.storage.googleapis.com/705511294/f0b1344486a5081f4ed19cc2012b413d/Pre_work_Champions_for_Change_Session_2.pdf)

Library Archives on City Planning and Policies: <https://aadl.org/node/71925>

Racial Covenant Mapping: <https://www.justiceindeedmi.org/>

## Equity Policy Example

Washtenaw Equity Policy: <https://employee.washtenaw.org/DocumentCenter/View/2038/Equity-Policy?bidId=>

# APPENDIX D

Youth Engagement

# IMPACTING YOUR CITY

## *Engaging Youth Through Learning & Action*

### PUBLIC OUTREACH AWARD APPLICATION



Students at Zingerman's  
Deli discussing  
solid waste



*“The solution to  
adult problems  
tomorrow  
depends on large  
measure upon  
how our children  
grow up today.”*

*— Margaret  
Mead*

## SUMMARY

The City of Ann Arbor is committed to extensive and effective community engagement. As part of that commitment, the city piloted a youth engagement initiative called *Impacting Your City*. *Impacting Your City* is a semester long high school course designed to enable meaningful youth influence over city planning and to encourage lifelong participation in the democratic process.

The course uses the “community as a classroom,” with classes taking place at a number of locations in the community, including City Hall, other city facilities, local businesses, and in the downtown. As described in the American Planning Association’s report titled, *Youth Participation in Community Planning*, “by using the community as a classroom, young people have an opportunity to make sense of a complex world, to become competent decision makers capable of accessing and processing information, and to make informed choices that will affect their lives and the future of their communities.”

Throughout the course, *Impacting Your City* students are educated on various city services, policies, and planning efforts. Specific topics for the pilot class include local government basics, solid waste services, water resources, urban form and planning, and leadership. As students are educated on these topics they are also asked to provide their perspective to city staff and policy makers on what would best serve both youth and the community as whole. Using this approach, the students have already had an impact on the city.

## NARRATIVE

### *A unique experience with transferable components*

For this effort, the City of Ann Arbor partnered with Community High School, which is a local public magnet school located just blocks away from City Hall that encourages students to use the entire community as a resource for study. As part of this approach to learning, students at Community High School are allowed to take a Community Resource (CR) credit, which is meant to utilize local experts for learning in the classroom as well as in the community. Because of the CR credit offering, the city is able to work with students in City Hall and other relevant locations to provide a firsthand experience rather than learning theoretical concepts in classroom.

While other communities may not have something similar to a CR credit available to them, there is still opportunity to use the *Impacting Your City* curriculum as a non-credit program offered by a city or parts of the curriculum can be used by a teacher in the classroom. For example, one assignment used online tools to research the history of a decision that resulted in a local policy or program, which could easily be done in a school setting. Other assignments that involve youth exploring the community could be done as homework assignments.

### *In just the second month of the course the students were already making an impact on the city*

Because *Impacting Your City* immerses students in City Hall life and connects youth directly with decisions makers there is a real opportunity for the students to have influence. This produced some immediate results in the pilot class. During the solid waste segment alone, a topic that is not typically known to generate excitement, the students:

1. Developed and implemented a school outreach

program to educate other students on waste reduction.

2. Initiated a collaborative soft plastics (e.g. plastic sandwich and shopping bags) recycling program with the deli that neighbors their high school.
3. Proposed a waste reduction incentive program for businesses, which is now being explored by the city through a community-wide survey for Ann Arbor's Solid Waste Resources Management Plan.
4. Worked with local cafes and restaurants near their school to allow students to bring their own reusable mugs instead of purchasing disposable cups.

### *Pairing planning's public engagement values with educational theory*

*Impacting Your City* is organized and taught by a certified planner who is an employee of the City of Ann Arbor. Staying conscious of Dorothy



Students learning about the City's water infrastructure

Stoneman’s notion of “adultism,” which “refers to the attitudes and attendant behaviors that result when adults presume they are better than young people and that young people, because they lack life experience, are, therefore, inferior to adults,” the instructor placed importance on addressing youth with respect and a sense that they were adding value to decision-making processes. Other city staff supported this by meeting with the students, hearing their ideas, and incorporating suggestions where appropriate. The city also worked to make the “adult realm” more inviting by establishing a space at City Hall for this effort and assuring the students that they belonged.

The class curriculum also integrates Howard Gardner’s theory of multiple intelligences and includes assignment and activities that address various learning styles, such as visual-spatial, linguistic, logical-mathematical, bodily-kinesthetic, interpersonal, and intrapersonal. As one example, a mindfulness educator from another school district is engaging the students in a bodily-kinesthetic exercise to help educate on thoughtfulness and compassion in the Leadership and Public Service segment of

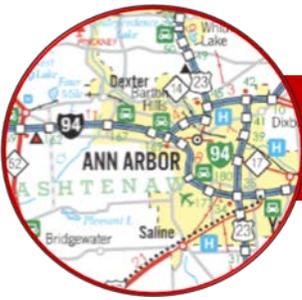
the class. In another example, students are choosing from a variety of art mediums to present their thoughts on what makes up Ann Arbor’s character to City Council and staff in a visual-spatial way.

### ***Supporting planning and meaningful engagement***

Because this initiative is working with youth through focused and meaningful engagement, it has built support for planning and increased an understanding of the planning process at an early age. The City of Ann Arbor initiated this effort because the city believes it is critical to actively involve the opinions and experiences of young people, keeping in mind that as youth transition into adults so will the fulfillment of the city’s long-range plans. Involving young people in an engagement effort like the *Impacting Your City* course, the youth of today and the adults of tomorrow learn to be informed participants in solving local issues and helping shape the future of their community.

Students touring the waste-water treatment plant





# IMPACTING YOUR CITY

## CLASS CHARTER

### CLASS PURPOSE

The Impacting Your City CR Credit Class has been developed for the purpose of engaging local youth in City processes and decision-making, while helping students gain knowledge of how the City of Ann Arbor operates and ways to become more civically engaged.

### SCOPE

Our class will cover a variety of local government based topics and run the length of the semester.

### MEMBERS

- City of Ann Arbor Staff
- Community High School Students
- Community High School Staff

### OPERATIONS

- Classes will be organized and facilitated by the City with input from class members
- There may be occasional guest speakers, videos, or other outside resources shared at classes to support shared learning and understanding
- The classes will primarily take place at City Hall
- Class members will adhere to ground rules, which include:
  1. Plan to start on time
  2. Respect others - remember the dignity of each individual
    - Critique ideas, not individuals
    - Listen respectfully, without interrupting
    - Don't share information or experiences that are not yours to share
  3. Be accountable – If you make a mistake, own it and work to correct it
  4. Commit to learning and suspend judgement
  5. Look for solutions and ways to support the work of other class members
  6. Be present – avoid phone use and other interruptions as much as possible
  7. Ask for what you need and allow others to ask for what they need without judgement.

### MEASURES OF SUCCESS

All members of the class have:

1. Been inspired to become more civically engaged
2. A clearer understanding of how the City operates
3. Completed projects and assignments that they are proud of



# IMPACTING YOUR CITY

## Impacting your City CR Syllabus

*Note: This schedule is subject to change depending on the availability of guest speakers, facility tours, and needs of the class.*

### I. Course Information

- **Course Title:** Impacting your City
- **Location of CR:** Ann Arbor City Hall, 301 E. Huron St., Ann Arbor, MI 48107, First Floor South Conference Room – We will typically meet here, but may arrange for offsite lessons and tours at various locations.
- **Days and times that the CR Instructor and student meet:** Tuesdays at 9:30
- **Days and times that the student works on course independently. Note if the location is different from above location:** Thursdays at 9:30 – there will be a space reserved at City Hall for students to work.

### II. Instructor Information

- **Full name:** Heather Seyfarth
- **Contact Information - email and phone:** [hseyfarth@a2gov.org](mailto:hseyfarth@a2gov.org), (734) 794-6430 x42590
- **Qualifications for instructor teaching this CR, e.g. degrees, coursework, and/or experience:** Masters in Urban Planning and certified planner (AICP), Masters in Social Work, and Masters in Sociology.

### III. Course Description and Objectives.

- **Briefly describe the course:** The purpose of this course is to educate students about and receive their input on various City services, policies, and planning efforts. Specific topics for this semester include local government basics, solid waste services, water resources, urban form and planning, and leadership. In addition, this course is also designed to help teach “civic competence” so students are better enabled to become lifelong participants in the democratic process.
- **List the content expectations that students must successfully demonstrate. If the course will be used to fulfill a graduation requirement, then the State of Michigan high school course content expectations must be used. See a CR Monitor for a list or go to the Michigan Department of Education website** (<http://www.michigan.gov/mde>) **for links to all high school content expectations:** This course will not be used to fulfill a graduation requirement, however, students will be expected to demonstrate an understanding of local government structure, basic municipal budgeting, government decision-making processes, local solid waste services,

municipal water systems, how communities plan for the future, and the importance of public service leadership.

#### IV. Week By Week Description

- **A week-by-week description of what the student will be doing. List the topics to be covered, activities, assignments, quizzes, and/or tests, If the course is a graduation requirement, note which content expectations will be addressed each week.**

##### Segment 1: Basics of Ann Arbor City Government

1.1: Setting the class foundation and the structure of local government – anticipated guest class speakers include Mayor Taylor and the City Administrator, Howard Lazarus.

1.2: Class orientation

1.3: Municipal finances – anticipated class guest speaker includes Marti Praschan, Chief of Staff for Public Services

Assignment 1: *Who's Who Profiles*, students will develop profiles (similar to role playing character sheets) for council members.

Assignment 2: *Decision-Making Research*, students will use online tools to research the history of a decision that resulted in a local policy, program, or project.

##### Segment 2: Solid Waste

2.1: Thought exchange with Zingerman's – anticipated guest class speaker includes Miriam Flagler, Facilities Manager, Zingerman's (class to be held at Zingerman's)

2.2: Solid waste basics, circular economy and zero waste concepts – anticipated guest class speaker includes Jennifer Petoskey, Solid Waste Outreach & Compliance Specialist

2.3: Domicology – anticipated guest speaker includes Dr. Rex Lamore from Michigan State University who will talk about the concept of domicology (waste related to the built environment).

2.4: Student presentations on youth education project

Assignment 3: *Solid Waste Youth Education Project*, students will develop their own education and outreach effort for fellow Community High students and staff – this will be the main assignment for this segment

##### Segment 3: Water Resources

3.1: Water system basics – anticipated guest class speakers include Jen Lawson, Water Quality Manager.

3.2: Tour Drinking Water Facility

3.3: Tour Wastewater Facility

Assignment 4: *Water Resources Video Letter*, students will produce short videos sharing thoughts on the importance of water

## Segment 4: Planning for the Future

4.1: Planning basics

4.2: Re-examining the alleys

4.3: Public engagement

4.4: Student photo/art-journaling presentation to Council and/or relevant City Staff

Assignment 5: Read *No Small Plans*

Assignment 6: *Photo/Art Journaling*, students will be answering questions like "what makes Ann Arbor interesting" through the lens of a camera or other art mediums– this will be the main project for this segment

## Segment 5: Leadership and Public Service

5.1: Daring leadership concepts

5.2: Giving to self and others (why self-care is an important part of leadership) – anticipated guest class speaker includes Laura Gourlay, Social Worker and mindfulness educator in the Mt. Pleasant school district.

5.3: Social equity initiatives – anticipated guest class speaker includes Emily Drennen, Sustainability Specialist

5.4: Student presentation on social equity to Sustainability and Social Equity Office

Assignment 7: Watch Brene Brown video and read materials from her book *Dare to Lead*

Assignment 8: *Advancing Social Equity*, students will put together a presentation on their thoughts about how to get more marginalized groups involved in City processes and how to generally make Ann Arbor a more equitable place.

Assignment 9: *Response to Resident*, students will practice responding to frustration and anger in a compassionate by drafting an email in a scenario simulation

## V. Texts, Books, Readings, Materials

- **The name of the books used for this course, author, date, and edition.**
  - *No Small Plans: A Graphic Novel Adventure through Chicago* (I'm working on getting copies)
  - Excerpts from *Dare to Lead*, Brene Brown, 2018 (I will be using material that she freely provides online)
- **Materials: any additional materials required. (e.g., art supplies, computer)**  
Computer might be necessary. The City may be able to provide some if necessary.

## VI. Grading / Evaluation

- **If you have chosen a pass / fail option, you must include the criteria for receiving a passing grade:** Criteria for a passing grade includes engagement in class and accomplishing assignments

## VII. Documentation of Work

- **All students must submit evidence of their work to the CR Monitor several times over the course of the semester.**
- **Explain what the student will be showing to the CR Monitor and how they will get it to the CR Monitor.**

The student will be showing:

- Who's Who Profiles
- Decision-making results
- CIP Assessment
- Solid-Waste Youth Education Project
- Water Resources Video
- Planning Photo/Art-Journaling Project
- Response to Resident
- Advancing Social Equity Presentation

### **Optional Forums to Attend (hosted by City):**

*February 19, 2019: Adapting to a Changing Climate*

The City of Ann Arbor is already experiencing impacts from climate change. More severe storms, increased precipitation, rising temperatures and extended heat waves all pose challenges to how we live, work, and play in our community. Join a conversation on how the Ann Arbor community is taking steps to address climate impacts and what more we could be doing at the city, neighborhood and individual level. Climate adaptation experts will share the soup to nuts on climate change for Ann Arbor and what we can do to thrive in a changing future.

Speakers: **Beth Gibbons** (Executive Director, The American Society of Adaptation Professionals), **Missy Stults** (Manager, Office of Sustainability and Innovations, City of Ann Arbor), **Jen Lawson** (Water Quality Manager, City of Ann Arbor).

*March 21, 2019: Climate Change 201*

Join the conversation as UM professors and other speakers dig deeper into the latest thinking about the science and impacts of climate change, both locally and globally.

Speakers: **Jonathan Overpeck** (Dean of the School for Environment and Sustainability, University of Michigan); **Emily Drennen** (Sustainability Analyst, City of Ann Arbor)

*April 18, 2019: Race and Class Equity in Washtenaw County*

Ann Arbor is the [eighth most socioeconomically segregated](#) metro area in the U.S.; the second most segregated city in the nation in service class segregation; and the fifth in working class segregation. In 2010, [Census data](#) shows white residents accounted for 73% of Ann Arbor's population, just under Michigan's average of 79%, while African American residents accounted for just 8% of residents—nearly half of the state average of 14%. [Ypsilanti](#), on the other hand, is made up of 62% white residents and 29% African American residents: a dramatic imbalance for two closely tied cities. Housing is a social determinant of health so where you live matters. Join

local experts as we delve into the issues and opportunities surrounding race and class equity throughout Ann Arbor and Washtenaw County.

Speakers: **Tony Reames** (Assistant Professor, School for Environment and Sustainability, University of Michigan), **Jen Hall** (Executive Director, Housing Commission, City of Ann Arbor)

# APPENDIX E

Developer's Guide to Citizen  
Participation Requirements



# Developer's Guide

## to the Citizen Participation Requirements

This serves as a tool for developers to fulfill the Citizen Participation Requirements, a formalized procedure for surfacing issues related to a project prior to the project's submission. Requiring developers to meet with Planning Staff and communicate with residents early in the process is intended to alleviate complications from receiving comments and concerns from residents for the first time at a public hearing.

Based on the development size, type, and impact, a project is considered either a Type 1 or Type 2 project. The requirements for each project can be found on pages two and three of this guide.

### Type 1 Projects

*A Site Plan containing over 80 residential units, exceeding 65 feet in height, containing over 50,000 square feet of non-residential usable floor area.*

*or*

*A Planned Project, Rezoning, Special Exception Use, or Planned Unit Development (PUD).*

*or*

*As determined by Planning Manager*

### Type 2 Projects

*A Site Plan containing fewer than 80 residential units, is less than 65 feet in height, and that proposes less than 50,000 square feet of non-residential usable floor area.*

## First— Ask Us!

Make sure you know and understand the responsibilities and requirements. Contact Planning Services at 734-794-6265 or [planning@a2gov.org](mailto:planning@a2gov.org) to schedule an appointment well before you anticipate submitting a project application.

### Helpful Documents

[Step-by-Step Guide to the Development Review Process](#)

[Petitioner Checklist](#)

[Petition Application Form](#)

[Unified Development Code \(UDC\)](#)

## Type 1 Projects

Plan, hold, notice, and report on your Resident Participation Meeting.

**1. Plan your Meeting** Your meeting must take place no fewer than 10 business days before you submit your application. Your meeting location should have accessible parking, seating, and restrooms, be on a bus line, a logical location for the meeting based on the proposed project area, and a generally recognized “public” gathering place. Religious holidays, mornings, early afternoons, Fridays, Saturdays, or Sundays are not appropriate for meetings. *Sample Meeting Locations: Ann Arbor Public Schools, UofM Facilities, Libraries, and City Parks & Recreation Facilities.*

### Your meeting may need the following items:

- Writing Utensils
- [Sign-In Sheet\(s\)](#)
- Handouts/Business Cards
- Directional Signs
- Seating
- Projection Equipment
- Easels for Boards
- Microphone
- Speakers

**2. Request Labels & Draft Meeting Notice** Per the ordinance, you are responsible for the cost of mailing the notices. The City provides a [postcard template](#) for use. To request your address labels, send an email to [planning@a2gov.org](mailto:planning@a2gov.org) that contains your project address/location and your project type. You will then be provided with address labels in Word and Excel formats for commercial and residential neighborhood associations within the City and for property owners and residents within 1,000 feet of your project site. Send notices to all addresses provided.

### Your notice must include:

**A statement explaining the resident participation requirements, including an explanation of why and to whom the information is being sent, and how the information gathered through the resident participation process will be used by the developer.**

**A written description of the proposal including but not limited to: the proposed use(s), buildings that will be constructed or demolished, streetscape modifications, brownfield incentives requested, and proposed zoning changes.**

**A map of the project location and a conceptual rendering of the development.**

**How individuals who receive notices will be provided an opportunity to discuss the application with the developer and express any concerns or questions they may have about the proposed project.**

**Contact name, phone number and email.**

**Meeting logistics: date, time, place.**

**3. Review & Mail your Notices** Provide a final PDF copy of the mailing so that Planning Staff can post the meeting information to the City's website and notify subscribers of GovDelivery. Drop your notices in the mail at least 10 business days before the meeting date.

**4. Hold your Meeting** Meeting attendees are permitted to audio or video record meetings. If your meeting must be cancelled, post a notice at the meeting location and inform Planning Staff as soon as possible. [Continued on next page](#)

**5. Prepare Meeting Report** Your final report should be mailed or emailed to meeting attendees prior to submitting your application.

**Your report must include:**

**Date(s) and location(s) of meeting(s), copies of all written materials prepared and provided to the public (letters, meeting notices, emails, newsletters, etc.).**

**Number of residents sent notices by mail, email or other; number of residents attending; and copies of attendance or [sign-in sheets](#).**

**Summary of comments, concerns, issues, or problems expressed by residents; statement of how you have addressed or intend to address those concerns, issues or problems, or why a concern, issue or problem cannot or will not be addressed.**

**6. Submit Application** After your meeting has taken place, you can submit your project application with the meeting report.

## 1. Request Labels & Draft Notice

Per the ordinance, you are responsible for the cost of mailing the notices. The City provides a [postcard template](#) for use. To request your address labels, send an email to [planning@a2gov.org](mailto:planning@a2gov.org) that contains your project address/location and your project type. You will then be provided with address labels in Word and Excel formats for commercial and residential neighborhood associations within the City and for property owners and residents within 500 feet of your project site.

**Your notice must include:**

**A statement explaining the resident participation requirements, including and explanation of why and to whom such information is being sent, and how the information gathered through the resident participation process will be used by the developer.**

**A written description of the proposal including but not limited to: the proposed use(s), buildings that will be constructed or demolished, and streetscape modifications.**

**A map of the project location and a conceptual rendering of the development.**

**How individuals who receive notices will be provided an opportunity to discuss the application with the developer and express any concerns or questions they may have about the proposed project.**

## Type 2 Projects

Submit your project, notify residents, and report on resident communication.

**2. Submit Application** In conjunction with your address list request, submit your project application.

**3. Review & Mail your Notices** Inform Planning Staff that your notice has been mailed and upload a final PDF of your mailing to your project file.

**4. Document Communication** Provide Planning Staff with a report of all resident communications. If no communication has occurred, be sure to specify in your report. Your report must be provided to Planning Staff no later than 10 business days before your public hearing.