PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT & EQUITY

Increasing Access & Building Trust

Wednesday, September 22, 2021
About this Session

Public Engagement is even more complicated since COVID with compounded concerns around transparency, digital divide and participatory access needs.

• How can cities rise above the fray to position their under-engaged communities for constructive dialogue that improves public trust while also accomplishing local priorities?

• How can cities integrate equity into their planning and engagement processes that elevates collaboration and foster foundational partnerships in the community?

This session will provide practical tips for incorporating equity into public engagement activities. We will explore a range of options to help local leaders build community relationships, increase public participation and find common ground.
PANELISTS

Megan MacPherson Scheid
Deputy City Manager
City of Roseville

Debra Oto-Kent
Founder & Executive Director
Health Education Council

Jose Arreola
Community Safety Administrator,
City of Salinas
Director, Community Alliance for Safety and Peace
NON-PROFIT, NON-PARTISAN & COMMITTED TO SUPPORTING LOCAL GOVERNMENT

• The Institute for Local Government is the non-profit training and education affiliate of three statewide local government associations

• Together with our affiliates, we serve over 2,500 local agencies – cities, counties and special districts

• We provide practical and easy-to-use resources so local agencies can effectively implement policies on the ground
Our mission is to help local government leaders **navigate complexity, increase capacity & build trust** in their communities.
A WIDESPREAD NETWORK OF LOCAL GOV’T LEADERS

- 58 Counties
- 482 Cities
- 2,500+ Special Districts
- 20,000+ Local Agency Leaders
California’s local government leaders face a myriad of complex and evolving leadership challenges.

• Elected leaders and staff cannot effectively address these challenges without a strong foundation of good government - trust, accountability, responsiveness, equity and transparency.

• ILG’s Public Engagement pillar is focused on imbedding authentic, effective and inclusive public engagement practices that encourage greater public trust and confidence in local government, while also helping local jurisdictions achieve their goals.

https://www.ca-ilg.org
ADVANCING EQUITY THROUGH PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

• To achieve equitable outcomes, **equity should be considered early** in the development of government programs, policies and services.

• The goal is to prevent or **mitigate adverse impacts or unintended consequences** on communities of color and other vulnerable groups.

• The approach should be to learn **what factors might be affecting** communities of color and/or other vulnerable populations differently.

Public Engagement allows us to better understand the **needs and nuances** of the diverse populations we serve so that we can create the most effective and most equitable policies, programs, and services.
# EQUITY-RELATED QUESTIONS TO ASK IN POLICY & PROGRAM DESIGN

**Community Input:** What, if any, input from communities of color and/or other vulnerable populations, especially those most affected, has already been considered?

**Stakeholders:** Who should be consulted in design and implementation to ensure success and equitable program outcomes?

**Barriers:** What are anticipated barriers for communities of color and/or other vulnerable populations and ways to design the program and structure its implementation to reduce those barriers?

**Burdens:** What are potential disproportionate impacts on communities of color and/or other vulnerable populations. How could these be eliminated or mitigated?

**Assets:** What assets in the community can we build on to achieve successful outcomes through our program or policy?
A Commitment to Racial Equity & Public Engagement

League of California Cities Conference
September 22, 2021
Inside Outside
Race Equity Strategy

Work together with community leaders and organizations to set race equity goals and strategy.

Set agreements for communication. This work can be hard.

Have the Racial Equity Plan vetted with community input and support by City leadership and eventually council.
Race Equity Training 2015
50 Community Leader + 50 City Staff Leaders
Challenges of the Inside Outside Strategy

Communication

We Will Not Always Agree
(and that is okay)

Forgiveness
Protesters clash with police over officer involved shootings
Lessons Learned
(and learning)

• Community activism is a critical component of change in institutional systems.

• Rather than avoid, dodge or actively defy community activist it is important to listen, developing working relationships and foster community engagement and leadership.
Towards a Racially Equitable Monterey County

- A Regional Approach
- Includes City and County Government, Education, CBO’s and Philanthropies
- Historic year long cohort launches in two weeks with over 150 participants from around Monterey County
Recommended Resource

• The short documentary is on YouTube
• The report is available online search “Building the We”
Renewed Commitment to Community Engagement
The Alisal Vibrancy Plan completed in 2019 set out to defer to community!

Spectrum of Community Engagement

1. INFORM
   Provide the community with relevant information

2. CONSULT
   Gather input from the community

3. INVOLVE
   Ensure community needs and assets are integrated into process and inform planning

4. COLLABORATE
   Ensure community capacity to play a leadership role in implementation of decisions

5. DEFER TO
   Foster democratic participation and equity by bridging the divide between community and governance, through community-driven decision-making
Equity
- Access/Ease of Participation
- Meeting time and location
- Meetings and materials in Spanish
- Food and Childcare

Consensus versus Majority rule

Building Capacity
- Facilitation Training
- Planning Concepts
- Developed Agendas

Empowerment
- Residents as experts
- Facilitated meetings

Working Group topic matrices
Community Engagement Best Practices

- Small-group discussions and engaging activities
- Quick visual surveys for pop-ups
- Folklórico or other hooks to increase draw to workshops
- Enlarged text documents for group commenting
Community Engagement Best Practices

- Accessible time and location
- Dinner Provided
- Child Care Provided
- Marketed with community partners
Lessons Learned

Under estimated staffing resources and time commitment to effectively implement community engagement strategy

Would integrate more “technical” representatives with residents on Steering Committee.

Challenge of balancing resident desire for short term impact/results with a longer term planning effort and capacity building objective
An Ecosystem Approach
José A. Arreola
Community Safety Administrator

jose.arreola@ci.salinas.ca.us

Office: (831) 758-7396
Equity & Public Engagement: Increasing Access and Building Trust

League of California Cities Annual Conference
September 22, 2021

Debra S. Oto-Kent, MPH
Founder & Executive Director
Objectives:

- Discuss HEC role as a partner with local government to expand and enhance resident engagement and empowerment.

- Share specific examples of expanded resident engagement strategies implemented as part of Invest Health Roseville and outcomes to date.

- Discuss lesson learned, how to measure engagement and why prioritizing public engagement of historically excluded residents is critical.
The mission of the Health Education Council is to cultivate health and well-being in under-served communities by leveraging the power of collaboration.
Key strategies of all HEC Initiatives:

- Cross-sector collaboration/collective impact
- Resident Engagement – asset based; historically, excluded
Resident Engagement – asset based; belonging/connection

- Variety of approaches: asset based; social networks; focus groups; key informant interviews; resident outreach activities; multi-cultural/lingual; meeting people where they are; kitchen table discussions; backyard barbeques; after school parent groups, etc.
Roseville, California

- Population – 135,868
- 11th Healthiest city
- 6th Best city in CA for young families
- 21st Safest city
- 24th Best place to retire
- Healthcare ‘Hub’
Roseville is home to the largest railyard west of the Mississippi and the three neighborhoods are adjacent to the railyard in downtown Roseville.
Invest Health Roseville: Vision

Invest Health Roseville

To improve the quality of life and community well-being in Downtown Roseville's core neighborhoods of Roseville Heights, Cherry Glenn, and Thieles Manor, through projects that will result in positive health outcomes for residents of the neighborhoods. The projects developed address issues and concerns expressed by residents and others during stakeholder meetings.
Invest Health Home Advisory Committee

- Kaiser Permanente
- Adventist Health
- Sutter Health
- Dignity Health
- Schools
- Business
- Faith Community
- City Government
- Community Service Providers
- Residents
Invest Health Roseville: Outcomes
Average Household Income
- City of Roseville: $75,867
- Roseville Heights: $32,615

Families in Poverty
- City of Roseville: 8.78%
- Roseville Heights: 25.26%

Unemployment
- City of Roseville: 4.7%
- Roseville Heights: 12.75%

Education High School Diploma
- City of Roseville: 94.5%
- Roseville Heights: 19.68%

Diversity
- City of Roseville: 15%
- Roseville Heights: 58.3%

Roseville Demographics

HEALTH EDUCATION COUNCIL
Invest Health: Program Overview

**ACCOMPLISHMENTS ALONG THE WAY**

- Formed high functioning Invest Health lead ‘traveling’ team;
- Expanded our knowledge; formed an Invest Health Advisory committee;
- Gather data and hear voices of neighborhoods: 30 Stakeholder meetings;
  Community focus groups- English and Spanish; follow up resident survey 225+
  responses to date;
- Invest Health Breakfast Forums;
- Elementary school outreach and health education events for families
- Sidewalks/ multiple park and street clean ups;
- Weber Park Re-Imagination
- Building partnerships: RPAL; Police; Parks and Rec and Libraries; Roseville City
  School District; service providers;
- Brought nearly 100 business leaders to the city to learn about Invest Health;
- Johnson Pool upgrades;
- Upgraded all street lighting in the Core Neighborhoods.
- **Built new relationships, leveraged resources**
Family Meal
Roseville Food Delivery Program

Over 16,000 meals served May 2020
Equitable decision-making must include the voices of those most impacted by decisions and provide structures and spaces for people to have the power to make the collective and civic decisions that shape their future. Decision-making power is far too often held by a few people, and belonging and civic muscle efforts should grow to engage people as equals, collectively, to make change.
Debra Oto-Kent, MPH
Founder and Executive Director
dotokent@healthedcouncil.org
Equity & Public Engagement
Megan MacPherson Scheid, Deputy City Manager
Advisory Council, Davenport Institute at Pepperdine’s School of Public Policy
Inclusivity

- Educate about inclusivity and its benefits
- Has to be intentionality behind or it’s not going to happen
- Can be a lonely job
- Start with policy is it’s not already part of the culture
Integrating inclusivity into policy

Making the case

Presentation to Council in 2020

- Research performed by the Brookings Institute
- An economically prosperous region must tackle both growth and inclusion
- Inclusion must be an essential input to any decision making, instead of a separate policy consideration.
Community inclusion

A process by which efforts are made to

- Ensure equal opportunities for all, regardless of background, to achieve their full potential in life

- Create conditions which enable full and active participation of every member of the society in all aspects of life, including civic, social, economic, and political activities, as well as participation in decision-making processes.

---United Nations
Highlights of City’s current inclusivity approach

- Age-Friendly City by World Health Organization
- 10% affordable units in new planning areas
- Invest Health partnership in core neighborhoods
- EngageRoseville broad input
- Small-business loans
- Recreation and library programs: Literacy, census,
- $5-6 million annually to prevent homelessness
- Non profit grants: Citizen Benefit Trust/REACH
- Disability access on transit and for pedestrians
- Veterans outreach
Highlights of City’s inclusivity approach

- Conducted staff-facilitated *Appreciating Differences* training with employees throughout the City, reaching nearly all employees in 2016-2017
- Focus on inclusivity in recruitment materials and career fairs with Inclusion Committee
- Holds Police Citizen Academy each year, including a virtual one during this pandemic
- Joined the Government Alliance on Race and Equity in August 2020
Aspects of Diversity

- Cultural/Ethnic
- Racial
  - Religious
  - Age
  - Gender
  - Sexual orientation
  - Disability
  - Socio-economic
  - Political
Top 50 Places to Live in the US

- Money Magazine ranked Roseville 34th in 2020
- Only California city on list
- Initial screen eliminated cities without diversity
- Ranking based on 115 data points in 9 areas:
  - Economy and income
  - Housing market
  - Cost of living
  - Diversity
  - Education
  - Health and safety
  - Health and safety amenities
  - Entertainment amenities
  - Weather and lifestyle
National trends

- The U.S. Census estimates that within a couple of decades over half of all Americans will be members of a racial or ethnic minority group.
Racially and ethnically

More ethnically diverse than the data show

Roseville: Increasingly diverse

Source: US Census Bureau
Increasingly diverse

- 2020 Census: more data on ethnic diversity
Hispanic/Latino Ethnicity

Is this person of Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin?

- ☐ No, not of Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin
- ☐ Yes, Mexican, Mexican Am., Chicano
- ☐ Yes, Puerto Rican
- ☐ Yes, Cuban
- ☐ Yes, another Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin – Print, for example, Salvadoran, Dominican, Colombian, Guatemalan, Spaniard, Ecuadorian, etc.

[Blank lines for additional information]
UN Inclusive Cities indicators

- Accessible built environment
  - Degree of a positive social environment
- Affordability
- Geographical availability
  - Quality Information; services
  - Meaningful participation
  - Transparency and good governance
Policy direction: Add a fourth strategy to the City council’s four-year strategic plan under **Goal C: Maintain a Safe and Healthy Community.**

Council decided on the following:

- *Strengthen inclusiveness, equality, and justice efforts in partnership with the community for all*
Inclusive Model of Engagement

- Values differences within the community
- Cooperates with, and contributes to, its surrounding community
- Dual focus acknowledges responsibility to community
  - Intrinsic focus on success of project or initiative
    - How can we (agency/department) make this successful?
  - Extrinsic focus on what is best for the community
    - How can we make this a good fit for the community?
- Collaborates with individuals, groups, organizations across boundaries
  - Partnerships with diverse community leaders
  - Inviting all voices to the table
Exclusive Model of Engagement

- Based on perception that community has one, conformed voice
  - Determined by the most outspoken (mainstream) voice
- Misses connection between project success and community buy in
  - May focus solely on checking the boxes (intrinsic goals)
- Disregards the value brought forward by diverse groups and how that contributes to the full voice of the community
- Collaboration limited to majority community groups
  - Note, if there is collaboration with the community at all
- Informs only in one language or modality, disregarding various community needs
Why people don’t show up

- Lack of knowledge of the political system
- Previous negative community engagement experience
- Historical patterns of municipal decisions not reflecting community input, broken promises made by political candidates, or both, resulting in reinforced distrust of government and institutions
- Economic barriers; needing to focus on basic needs of self and family
- Not seeing one’s own culture or identity reflected in meeting format or content
- Fear of being judged, unsafe, or unwelcome
- Transportation barriers
- Childcare needs
- Spiritual beliefs and practices
- Immigration status
- Meeting time or date does not consider work schedules, religious holidays, meal times, or other family needs

--GroundworkUSA
Engaging historically underrepresented populations

- Identify who is underrepresented at your meeting or event.
- Put yourself in other people’s shoes
- Listen more than you speak
- Gather input and buy-in on your project, its aims, and its marketing materials
- Address language barriers
- Be thoughtful about location of meetings and events
- Get creative in defining what “engagement” looks and feels like

--Groundwork USA
Engaging historically underrepresented populations

- Tap existing networks to spread the word
- Consider providing food and childcare at events
- Verbally and publicly acknowledge citizen distrust and historical patterns of decision making that is not reflective of previously gathered public input
- Manage expectations by being upfront and honest
- Take time to establish “rules of engagement,” sourced from stakeholders in the room
- Ensure team’s manner and practice reflect core principles

--Groundwork USA
## Dialogue vs. Debate

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Collaborative: Working toward common understanding.</th>
<th>Oppositional: Attempting to prove each other wrong.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Goal: Finding common ground</td>
<td>Goal: Winning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Listen to understand, find meaning and find agreement</td>
<td>Listens to find flaws and to counter the arguments.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expands and possibly changes a participant’s point of view.</td>
<td>Affirms a participant’s own point of view.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reveals assumptions for reevaluation.</td>
<td>Defends assumptions as truth.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Causes introspection</td>
<td>Causes critique</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assumes that many people have pieces of the answer and that together they can put them into a workable solution.</td>
<td>Assumes that there is a right answer and that someone has it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Remains open-ended.</td>
<td>Implies a conclusion.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

-Racial Healing Dialogue handout, adapted from *Educators for Social Responsibility*
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>One Size Does Not Fit All</th>
<th>Define targeted groups</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Use culturally and demographic appropriate outreach methods and materials</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Account for translation/ASL/close captioning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Host formal or informal focus groups to test messaging &amp; visuals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Budget for traditional, digital, cultural and ethnic media outreach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Increase tailored outreach to under-engaged populations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Partner with CBOs and ethnic media</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CREATE MEANINGFUL PARTICIPATION FOR MARGINALIZED POPULATIONS

Frame your agency’s project in reference to **their needs** and experiences and how their engagement will **benefit them**.

Build trust through more intimate engagement formats.

Give space to hear people’s voices, to share their stories and experiences. **Give people a chance to vent.**

Remember that people are coming to the table with a history of discriminatory policies by government. **Learn what they are.**

Respect their time. Coordinate engagement with other regional entities on the front-end. Prevent engagement fatigue.

Government is perceived as one entity to people – **be willing to connect them to other government agencies and resources.**

Ensure your engagement is not solely extractive – provide resources, stipends, thank you gift cards.

Acknowledge and apologize for past and current grievances.

Government is perceived as one entity to people – **be willing to connect them to other government agencies and resources.**

Ensure your engagement is not solely extractive – provide resources, stipends, thank you gift cards.

Acknowledge and apologize for past and current grievances.
LANGUAGE ACCESS TIPS

- Develop policies that clarify your local agency’s responsibilities and commitment related to access
- Partner w/ CBOs & Ethnic Media
- Translate print & online materials
- Create easy to navigate webpages in language
- Use bilingual employees effectively & appropriately
- Provide printed materials whenever possible
- Enlist community members to ensure messages are appropriate
LANGUAGE ACCESS TIPS FOR SMOOTH MEETINGS

- Identify a co-facilitator who speaks the language and dialect.
- Conduct meetings in the native language of participants with interpretation for English speakers.
- Plan out the time it takes for simultaneous translation – slowly, pause as needed.
- Arrange language-specific break-out groups or ensure interpreter in each group.
WAYS TO MAKE YOUR VIRTUAL MEETING MORE ACCESSIBLE

Think About

- Using ADA-accessible formatting for visibility and readability, etc.
- Using talk-to-text transcription – Live Captions
- Using the simultaneous translation line on Zoom
- Activating a call-in interpretation line, if available
- Translating agendas and all other English materials
- Weighing the pros and cons of live streaming on social media feeds – don’t forget public comments
- Mailing any required printed materials at least 72 hours before meeting date
EQUITY CONSIDERATIONS FOR MEETING DESIGN

Consider what methods will best engage the marginalized populations that have been historically excluded…

Always consider who you are leaving out through virtual engagement, e.g. seniors, people without access to the internet, etc.

Think about who will be using digital tools and what challenges they may face or accommodations they may need to fully participate.

Consider who is left behind through digital engagement and how you will engage them differently.
**FREE PE RESOURCES FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENTS**

**TIERS Framework**

TIERS is a step-by-step approach to public engagement at any level.

**Translation Equipment**

Free interpretation equipment can be loaned out and used for simultaneous and consecutive translation with a live translator.

**Tip Sheets & Resources**

Dozens of tip sheets about effective, inclusive and ethical public engagement, describing successful public engagement processes and strategies.

www.ca-ilg.org/inclusive-public-engagement
ILG’S PE TRAINING IS NOW VIRTUAL!

NEXT TRAINING on 11/18

- Updated to include post-COVID resources
- New emphasis on virtual engagement strategies and equity considerations
- Customized for individual contributors in local government
DISCUSSION AND Q&A
STAY CONNECTED & STAY INFORMED

Facebook
Like us on Facebook
@InstituteForLocalGovt

Twitter
Follow us on Twitter
@instlocgov

LinkedIn
Connect with us on LinkedIn
Institute for Local Government

Newsletter
Sign up for our e-newsletter
www.ca-ilg.org/stayinformed
CONTACT THE PANELISTS

Megan MacPherson Scheid  
Deputy City Manager  
City of Roseville  
MScheid@roseville.ca.us

Debra Oto-Kent  
Founder & Executive Director  
Health Education Council  
dotokent@healthedcouncil.org

Jose Arreola  
Community Safety Administrator  
City of Salinas  
jose.arreola@ci.salinas.ca.us
THANK YOU FOR JOINING US!