

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT TRAINING

MEANINGFUL + EQUITABLE + EFFECTIVE =
BEST POSSIBLE POLICY DECISIONS



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PROCESS

- The City of Longmont's community engagement process invites individuals, neighbors, public and private institutions affected by City decisions to come together to think collectively and act cooperatively to identify issues and to find solutions.
- Building relationships between City officials and community members is an important part of community engagement as it leads to sustained, shared responsibility for solutions that are developed and implemented.

KEY INGREDIENTS: Community Engagement, Interests, and Stakeholders



Designing an Effective Community Involvement Process

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1. Define Project Purpose

- ⇒ Purpose, Issues/Concerns, Community
- ⇒ Process & Outcome goals
- ⇒ Decision maker

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2. Determine the Appropriate Level of Involvement

- ⇒ What will help you to know from the community?

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3. Develop a Program Plan

- ⇒ Decision Process, Stakeholders, Accessible Community Involvement Plan

Determining the level of community engagement:

- What are the project's major goals regarding input and engagement?
- Who are the stakeholders and what is their level of interest?
- What will you need for an inclusive and equitable understanding of their interest and impact of your project?
- What previous methods of communication and engagement have been successful?
- What gaps or barriers in communications have you experienced in these types of projects or with stakeholders?
- Do you have some ideas on how to improve communication and engagement with new or existing stakeholders?
- How will you explain how the input influences the decision making?

Identify the decision-maker

- Clearly define who has what decision-making **authority** before you begin your public process.
- There may be different decision makers at different points in the process.
- What information do they need to make their decision.



Understanding the interests and values of the community is key to using their energy, time, and focus wisely.



Questions to determine community interest:

- What decision is being made? (Suggest)
- Has a decision already been made? Who is the decision-maker?
- What input or type of input would be most meaningful?
- What is the impact of their input?
- How can you make the process equitable and inclusive?
- What are the resources you need to have an authentic and inclusive process?
- What are the biggest issues expected to come up?
- How will you sustain relationships that can help in future engagement efforts?

Who might be your stakeholders?

***Anyone who will be affected by
any plans or decisions that are made***



Are the right stakeholders at the table?

- Diverse audience reached
- City demographics proportionately represented in focus groups
- Cultural brokers are partners appropriately
- Data collection method is easily accessible to a wide variety of the city or appropriate focused segment of the community
- Consulted internal teams: community engagement, communication, community and neighborhood resources

Examples of stakeholders:

- Individual neighbors/community members
- Neighborhoods
- Citizen interest groups
- Ethnic, racial, and LGBTQ+ communities
- Political leaders
- Neighborhood group leaders
- Individual businesses and associations
- Community group leaders
- Religious groups and associations
- Owners of a particular type of business
- Nearby schools



COMMITMENT TO EQUITY

The City believes that community engagement should be accessible, inclusive, diverse, and representative of our community.



KEY CONSIDERATIONS

- Adaptability, cultural competency, appropriate level of community engagement, different types of techniques, culturally appropriate approaches, ADA accessibility issues and resources and engaging in meaningful relationship building.
- Use of translators, assisted listening devices, offering childcare, transportation or remote participation options can be helpful in equitable engagement. Think of it as what people will need to fully participate (human-centered design).

Equity is a fundamental value, and we seek to build a community where outcomes are independent of one's identity.



PHILOSOPHY OF EQUITY

The City of Longmont's Equity Team affirms equity as a fundamental value and seeks to build a community where outcomes are independent of one's identity.

We recognize the social, economic and political forces that have historically and systemically shaped and limited access to opportunities and resources, and we commit to transforming systems to support equitable access to opportunities, resources, and power. We will engage in the continual reevaluation and iterative transformation that is the foundation of an equitable community.

MEETING AND CONVERSATION NORMS

(considerations – adapt as needed)

The Equity Team encourages you to practice this set of norms. At the City, we would like to promote brave and compassionate spaces where we can accept uncomfortable conversations and be considerate of different mindsets and feelings.



» To learn more, visit longmontcolorado.gov/equityteam

- Recommended meeting and conversation norms
- City of Longmont Land Acknowledgement



CITY OF LONGMONT LAND ACKNOWLEDGMENT

(Adopted by the Longmont City Council, July 13, 2021)

We acknowledge that Longmont sits on the traditional territory of the Cheyenne, Arapaho, Ute and other Indigenous peoples. We honor the history and the living and spiritual connection that the first peoples have with this land. It is our commitment to face the injustices that happened when the land was taken, and to educate our communities, ourselves and our children to ensure that these injustices do not happen again.

LEVELS OF COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

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PARTNER

“We will work with you as equal partners.”

- This level is designed to partner with the public in each aspect of the decision, including the development of alternatives and the identification of the preferred solution. All participants' input is equally valued and decision making is shared.

PARTNER

Partnership techniques:

- Appreciative inquiry
- Deliberative dialog
- “Eager Beaver”
- Community partnering



INVOLVE

“We will work to see that your issues and concerns are consistently understood, and community input is reflected in the decision-making process.”

- Think about what information will help your project/process and plan how input and feedback will be reflected in the decision-making process

INVOLVE

How to Involve:

- Boards/commissions
- Civic education
- Design charrette
- Leaderless collaboration
- Leadership activities
- Negotiation
- Task force
- Volunteerism



CONSULT

“We will consider your comments in the decision-making process. Get feedback from the community. City is decision maker and comments are considered in decision making.”

- Obtain feedback from the community

CONSULT

Consulting Examples:

- Advisory boards/commissions
- Blue ribbon panel
- Brainstorming session
- Briefings with key individuals
- Cultural brokers
- Conference retreat
- Coffee klatch
- Critics committee
- Responsive publication/ comment cards



- Feedback panel
- Focus group
- Games and contests
- Interactive display/kiosks
- Polling
- Public hearing
- Site visit
- Survey/questionnaire

INFORM

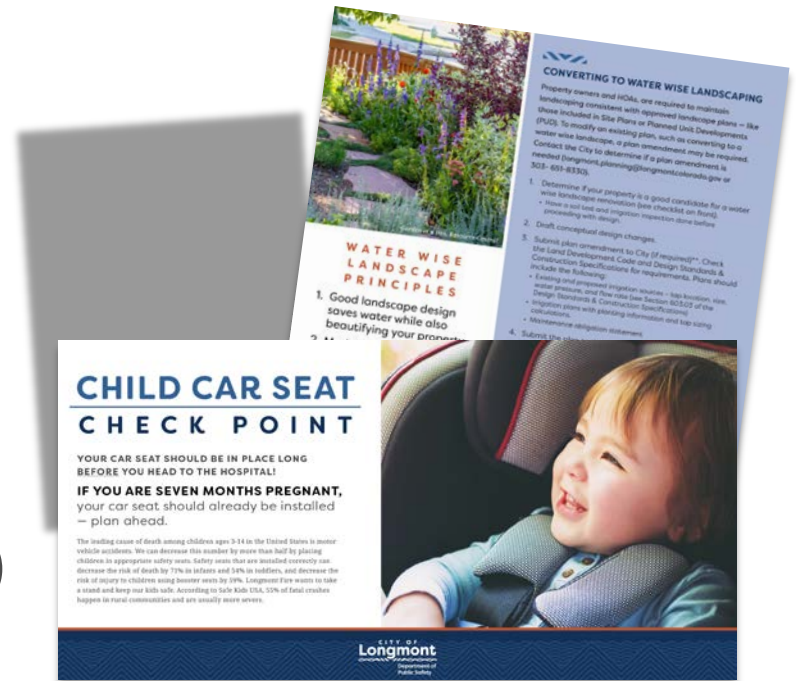
“We will provide you with accurate, balanced and objective information.”

- Give information to the community
- Equity point: Does the information need to be in another language and culturally relevant?

INFORM

How to inform the community:

- Advertisements
- Blog
- Email
- Flyers/brochure
- Newsletters
- Podcasts/RSS feeds
- Public service announcements (PSAs)
- Public meetings
- Website



When choosing engagement levels, consider:

- How many people are impacted?
- How long is the impact?
- Level of impact?
- Direction of information flow?
- Length of project?
- Level of interest?
- Objective?
- Who is the decision maker?

What's an appropriate level of involvement for each?

- A street crew will be working on a residential street, requiring temporary closure.
- A new recreation center is being built.
- You've been charged with ending homelessness in Longmont.
- The City wants to change the name of a park which has a neighborhood named after it.
- You're updating the City's comprehensive plan.
- You've been charged with making education a City-wide value.



CITY COMMUNICATIONS RESOURCES

Find resources at:
bit.ly/citywidecomms
Bookmark this link
and click on “Tell Us
What You Need” to
submit a marketing
or comms request.



Tell us what you need! We have an expert team to help you get your message out – and make it shine. This is your one-stop-shop for communications, marketing, public information, graphic design, and more. Click the button below to see what our team can do for yours!

[Tell Us What You Need!](#)

Just a few of the many things we can help you with:

- Crafting a message for the public or member of the press
- Developing a communications plan to support your program goals
- General communications or marketing consultation
- Integrated, cross-organizational initiatives
- Community involvement processes and guidance
- Translation needs

[Brand Materials*](#)

Get branded templates, logos, division logos, graphic elements, and more at our [Digital Asset Management platform](#). Be sure to consult the [brand guidelines](#)!

[FAQs](#)

Get answers to commonly asked questions or [submit your own question](#) to the team.

[Deadlines](#)

Don't miss a CityTalk, Employee Connection, or City deadline! Make sure you can publicize your content on any of our owned channels.

WORKING TOWARD EQUITY

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

- Discrimination against individuals with disabilities is strictly prohibited. All meetings may require information to be shared in accessible ways.
- The following are general guidelines for providing accessibility in meetings and events. Ask what individuals may need.
- The Risk Manager is the ADA coordinator for the City of Longmont.



STEP 1: PLAN FOR ACCESSIBILITY

- Designate one person as disability coordinator
- Budget for accommodations (such as interpreters, stage lifts, ramps, and signage or materials in alternative formats)
- Strive to include people with disabilities in planning

STEP 2: CHOOSE AN ACCESSIBLE LOCATION

- Assess potential facilities in person and check all areas for accessibility.
- Ensure accessible parking, pathways, entrances and elevators.
- Plan out access to registration areas, stages, seating, and restrooms.

STEP 3: CREATE ACCESSIBLE ANNOUNCEMENTS

- All notices and announcements for the event or meeting **MUST** include a contact person to request accommodations. Include how much advance notice is required for an accommodation request to be guaranteed.
- Include detailed accessible meeting information; meeting agendas, emails, announcements and website postings.

STEP 4: CREATE ACCESSIBLE ANNOUNCEMENTS

- The stage or speaker's platform must be at grade or accessible by elevator, ramp, or lift.
- Reserve seating with signage of international disability symbols.
- Provide assistive listening devices or translation and notify participants.

Collection of Demographic Data

- Collecting demographic data can tell you whether you have reached the intended audience with your engagement and measure the success of subsequent programs.
- Think about:
 - What to ask
 - How to ask
 - What you will do with the information once you have it



Collection of Demographic Data

General guidance:

- Only ask relevant questions
- Explain why each question is important
- Ask demographic questions at the end of a survey
- List the responses in alphabetical order
- Let respondents know how the information will be used, stored, protected and the level of influence it will have (if any)
- Close the loop: provide respondents with information about survey outcomes and the results of their feedback
- Taking time to inform respondents is key and can encourage future participation



Collection of Demographic Data

How do you know if your engagement is considering race?
Consider the GARE Race Equity Tool to help.



GARE Equity Tool: Step 1

What is your proposal and what are the desired results and outcomes?

1. Describe the policy, program, practice or budget decision (a.k.a. “proposal”)
2. What are the intended results (in the community) and outcomes (within your own organization)?
3. What does this proposal have an ability to impact?
 - Children and youth
 - Community engagement
 - Contracting equity
 - Criminal justice
 - Economic development
 - Education
 - Environment
 - Food access and affordability
 - Government practices
 - Other

GARE Equity Tool: Step 2

What's the data? What does the data tell us?

1. Will the proposal have impacts in specific geographic areas (neighborhoods, areas, or regions)? What are the racial demographics of those living in the area?
2. What does population level data, including quantitative and qualitative data, tell you about existing racial inequities? What does it tell you about root causes or factors influencing racial inequities?
3. What performance level data do you have available for your proposal? This should include data associated with existing programs or policies.
4. Are there data gaps? What additional data would be helpful in analyzing the proposal? If so, how can you obtain better data?

GARE Equity Tool: Step 3

**How have
communities
been engaged?
Are there
opportunities
to expand
engagement?**

1. Who are the most affected community members who are concerned with or have experience related to this proposal? How have you involved these community members in the development of this proposal?
2. What has your engagement process told you about the burdens or benefits for different groups?
3. What has your engagement process told you about the factors that produce or perpetuate racial inequity related to this proposal?

GARE Equity Tool: Step 4

What are your strategies for advancing racial equity?

1. Given what you have learned from research and stakeholder involvement, how will the proposal increase or decrease racial equity? Who would benefit from or be burdened by your proposal?
2. What are potential unintended consequences? What are the ways in which your proposal could be modified to enhance positive impacts or reduce negative impacts?
3. Are there complementary strategies that you can implement? What are ways in which existing partnerships could be strengthened to maximize impact in the community? How will you partner with stakeholders for long-term positive change?
4. Are the impacts aligned with your community outcomes defined in Step 1?

GARE Equity Tool: Step 5

**What is your plan
for
implementation?**

Describe your plan for implementation.

- Is your plan:
 - Realistic?
 - Adequately funded?
 - Adequately resourced with personnel?
 - Adequately resourced with mechanisms to ensure successful implementation and enforcement?
 - Adequately resourced to ensure on-going data collection, public reporting, and community engagement?
- If the answer to any of these questions is no, what resources or actions are needed?

GARE Equity Tool: Step 6

How will you ensure accountability, communication and evaluation of results?

1. How will impact(s) be documented and evaluated? Are you achieving the anticipated outcomes? Are you having impact in the community?
2. What are your messages and communication strategies that will help advance racial equity?
3. How will you continue to partner and deepen relationships with communities to make sure your work to advance racial equity is working and sustainable for the long-haul?

Who can I call for help?

- **Community Involvement team:** <http://insidelongmont.longmontcolorado.gov/our-organization/committees/community-involvement-steering-team/community-involvement-members>
- Community and Neighborhood Resources – 303-651-8445
- City Manager’s Office – 303-651-8601

Other Resources

- **American Planning Association:** planning.org
- **America Speaks - Engaging Residents in Governance:** youtube.com/@americaspeaksdotorg
- **Everyday Democracy:** everyday-democracy.org
- **International Association for Public Participation:** iap2.org
- **Center for New Democratic Processes:** cndp.us
- **Municipal Research and Services Center:** mrsc.org
- **National Civic League - Civic Index:** nationalcivicleague.org



Thank you