



ONE PLANET
CITY CHALLENGE

TRANSFORMING CITIES TOGETHER

A PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT GUIDE FOR CITIES

WWF



Our aim at WWF is to support the creation of One Planet Cities around the globe – cities that enable all people to thrive and prosper while respecting the ecological limits of our one and only planet.

The One Planet City Challenge (OPCC) is our invitation to cities to join us on this mission. In this friendly competition, we celebrate national and global frontrunners that demonstrate great ambition in their efforts to reduce and adapt to the effects of climate change. Several of those cities have been interviewed for this guide.

Since its inception in 2011, OPCC has seen the participation of 600 cities from 53 countries on five continents. Based on our evaluations of reported data and interactions with cities across the globe, it is clear that public support is crucial if local governments are to succeed in achieving the goals stated in their climate strategies and action plans.

Many of the world's leading cities have long understood the value of partnerships with key stakeholders, such as local businesses and influential organizations. Some have also recognized the benefits of an informed and engaged public and have made concerted efforts to include citizens in various phases of decision-making – where and when appropriate. Unfortunately, too many have yet to gain this insight, or tend to consult the public on a symbolic, ad hoc basis rather than strategically and meaningfully.

WWF's goal with this guide is to raise awareness for the importance of public engagement and to then guide cities on their journey to becoming inclusive and sustainable, One Planet Cities.

CIVOCRACY



At Civocracy, we believe that change begins in your community. Since 2015, we empower local governments to better connect and work with their constituents. How? By providing them with tools for impactful citizen participation.

Cities across Europe rely on Civocracy's digital platform and consulting services to build public engagement. Our online participation modules were designed to harness the first-hand knowledge of citizens and channel it into impactful community action. At the same time, we work closely with public servants, providing them with a strategy that fits local needs, and assisting them in engaging their stakeholders. With time, public administrations become participation experts themselves.

At Civocracy, we see the power of an engaged community every day. Together with WWF, we designed this guide to help cities build meaningful collaboration within their local community, and to strengthen the international network of peers.

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WWF is one of the world's largest and most experienced independent conservation organizations, with over 5 million supporters and a global network active in more than 100 countries. WWF's mission is to stop the degradation of the planet's natural environment and to build a future in which humans live in harmony with nature, by conserving the world's biological diversity, ensuring that the use of renewable natural resources is sustainable, and promoting the reduction of pollution and wasteful consumption.

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WHAT IS THIS GUIDE ABOUT?

Together, WWF and Civocracy are delighted to offer you this guide with the hope of providing useful tools to increase public engagement in your city. This guide is designed for city planners like you who recognise, and are interested in reaping, the benefits of an active and consulted public. An engaged public can assist policy-makers in the creation and implementation of effective and sorely needed strategies for sustainable, thriving cities.

WWF conducted a sample survey to highlight the experiences and ideas of cities that have used public engagement to achieve their climate and sustainability goals. Through sharing the results of these surveys – as well as follow-up interviews and input of WWF and Civocracy’s expertise – our aim is to offer city planners a springboard from which to begin their own public engagement efforts.

However, it is important to note that meaningful public engagement doesn’t necessarily happen on the first try; this guide is written in the full knowledge that the path to successful public engagement may be paved with a number of bumpy patches along the way. Success means failing, and then trying again, multiple times.

THIS GUIDE IS STRUCTURED IN THREE MAIN SECTIONS:

- **5 Factors for success** – these tips will help guide your individual and organizational approach to public engagement.
- **Examples from WWF’s One Planet City Challenge partners and others** – these examples will show you how other cities engaged their public.
- **Questions to consider** – these questions will help you start planning for your own public engagement.

Additional material is also provided in the annexes which we hope will act as further inspiration when planning your public engagement strategy.

WHAT IS PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT AND WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

Public engagement is an essential ingredient in successful public policy and interest in this area of work is growing steadily in cities around the globe. In 2020, a year that turned public life on its head, communities came together in support and solidarity. The citizen-led initiatives that emerged served as a powerful reminder of how essential public engagement is to our present and our future.

Citizens sprang into action to deal with the global health crisis collectively: in Sao Paolo, Brazil, community leaders called ‘presidents’ delivered masks and visited vulnerable residents; in Bangkok community-gathered parcels of food made their way to citizens in need, while in Leipzig, Germany a ‘neighbors for neighbors’ initiative arranged for volunteers to do shopping for elderly residents. Meanwhile in Madrid, Santiago de Chile, and in numerous Italian cities, nightly musical serenades helped people stay connected.

While citizen feedback in a negative form can be intimidating, public engagement is a way of translating citizens’ critique and feedback into a positive force. Dissent, disagreement, and activism reflect an interest in and passion for a city itself, and can all be channelled into action towards improvements. Citizens’ readiness to take initiative presents a huge opportunity for governments. Tapping into citizens’ resourcefulness and creativity enables cities to overcome a number of pressing challenges which would be impossible without





citizen participation. After all, managing the demands of city life is a complex task that calls for active involvement of all concerned parties.

The vast majority of urban dwellers have a stake in developing future-proof solutions to their cities' challenges, and are often an invaluable source of information on everyday residential needs. Actively fostering public engagement increases citizens' sense of shared ownership over their cities, which can only help boost local governments' efforts. With the challenges that lie ahead of us, not least of which are those posed by climate change, now is the time to tap into the incredible energy of the people living in the cities you manage.

Good public engagement can cover a wide range of efforts. It can, among other things, mean any of the following:

- Getting out on the streets to ask for opinions;
- Planning workshops with your citizens;
- Setting up citizen advisory committees that feed into the different stages of a plan;
- Considering if and how certain aspects of decision making, or implementation might be handed over to the public.

“Public engagement is an essential ingredient in successful public policy.”

Barbara Evaeus, Global Communications Manager, WWF Cities

The most important thing to remember about public engagement is it's only as good as the commitment and longevity you give it. For example, when Reykjavik first tried to engage their public, they received only a handful of responses to outreach efforts. They did not let this deter them. They persisted in, and were consistent and repetitive in their engagement over many years. Their citizens soon realized that the city was genuinely dedicated to public engagement and that these exercises were not one-offs. People understood that city planners were serious about listening to them, and that the city was committed to seeking out and using their input. Reykjavik went from having a handful of respondents to now being a global example of what public engagement success looks like.

WHAT IS PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT?

“ASKING FOR FEEDBACK.”

Vancouver, Canada

**“BEING ABLE TO
CREATE OPPORTUNITIES
TO CONNECT.”**

Park City, USA

**“INCORPORATING
CITIZENS’ OPINIONS AND
COMMENTS INTO PLANS”**

Lima, Peru

**“A CONSTRUCTIVE
DIALOGUE WITH
THE PEOPLE”**

Malmö, Sweden

**“ENRICHING THE
DECISION-MAKING
PROCESS.”**

Lyon, France

**“ENABLING PARTICIPATION
FOR ALL. SEEING CITIZENS
AS A RESOURCE.”**

Turku, Finland

**“[BRINGING
THE] PEOPLE’S
REPRESENTATIVES
CLOSER TO THEIR
CONSTITUENTS.”**

Pune, India

**“THE PUBLIC HAVING THEIR SAY
IN HOW THE CITY DEVELOPS.”**

Umeå, Sweden

**“TAPPING INTO
[PEOPLE’S]
EXPERTISE.”**

*Catbalogan City,
The Philippines*

**“OPENING UP
OPPORTUNITIES FOR
OTHERS TO PARTICIPATE.”**

Phanat Nikhom, Thailand

WHY IS PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT IMPORTANT?

“IT IS A WAY OF TESTING IDEAS & IT HELPS US MAKE BETTER DECISIONS.”

Vancouver, Canada

“BECAUSE PEOPLE MATTER - THE WAY PEOPLE LIVE OR BEHAVE MATTERS AS TO WHETHER WE SUCCEED OR NOT.”

Malmö, Sweden

“IT ENSURES THE LEGITIMACY OF IMPORTANT DECISIONS THAT AFFECT CITIZENS.”

Umeå, Sweden

“IT SAVES COSTS AND INCREASES THE WELL-BEING OF CITIZENS AND WORKERS.”

Turku, Finland

“AN INVOLVED COMMUNITY CAN BE A SPRINGBOARD TO SUCCESSFUL COMMUNITY PROJECTS.”

Park City, USA

“IT’S A WAY OF GETTING CITIZENS TO INVEST IN POLITICAL ISSUES.”

Lyon, France

“IT ENSURES THE PROGRAM IS ACCEPTED BY THE PEOPLE”

*Catbalogan City,
The Philippines*

“BECAUSE IT IS EQUITABLE AND REPRESENTATIVE”

Lima, Peru

“WE CAN ADJUST OUR PROJECT BASED ON PEOPLE’S PRIORITIES.”

Pune, India

“BECAUSE OUR INTERVENTIONS - OUR PROJECTS - MUST MEET THE NEEDS OF THE LOCALS”

Phanat Nikhom, Thailand



ONE PLANET
CITY CHALLENGE

5 FACTORS FOR SUCCESS



1 DEFINE YOUR GOALS AND EXPECTATIONS

What is the goal of your project? You need to be clear about this internally before you launch your participatory project. This will help you communicate effectively and concisely with your target audience.

The act of defining your goals is important, even if you believe that your team already understands them. The exercise of putting your goals onto paper and listing your expectations is useful because:

- It helps solidify details you may have overlooked;
- It highlights minor discrepancies that may exist in team members' perceptions;
- It helps align and focus your team's efforts and ensures that you are all on the same page.

“Think about the goal first and then the tools.”

Jennie Vennenberg, Climate and Communications Officer, Umeå, Sweden

“Be clear on why you are engaging – what are your objectives – who you ask and what do you ask.”

Amanda Mitchell, Public Engagement Specialist, Vancouver, Canada

This alignment and focus provide a better footing from which to engage others. It enables your team members to all communicate the same message when asked about the project goals. This means that all the different groups you engage with, will all be working with the same information.



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Setting down the details of what you want to achieve will also help you identify who your stakeholders and participants should be. Defining these specific goals can be done on the basis of what the public has told you about their needs and concerns.

“Ideally you engage right at the early stage of defining needs and solutions. You would have a mixture of experts from a professional perspective, and experts from a practical perspective, i.e. city inhabitants, coming together and co-designing that process.”

Per-Arne Nilsson, Head of the Strategy Department, the Environmental Administration & Trevor Graham, Sustainable Communities Consultant, Malmö, Sweden

The more detailed you get, the easier it is to start identifying stakeholders. If the goal is “build more bike lanes in the city to help reduce vehicle traffic

“People need really concrete calls to action – then they’re willing to act. If there is any ambiguity it is really easy for people to say, “I don’t know what that means.” It is important to be really specific about what the call to action is and to make it a social goal, among peers.”

Celia Peterson, Environmental Sustainability Project Manager, & Linda Jager, Community Engagement Manager, Park City, USA



and pollution by a level of 10-20%,” it is easier to identify stakeholders to engage with than if the goal is vague. In this example, cycling clubs and the Department of Transport are two key stakeholders that immediately spring to mind.

Defining goals and expectations will enable you to ask the right questions and ensure that you are on track. It also means that your participants will know what goal their engagement is working towards. Be ready to adjust those goals, and adapt your objectives, in response to ongoing feedback you get.



2 BE TRANSPARENT

Transparency is important in creating trust-based relationships. We all know that trust in government organizations is strained in many countries across the world. The impact of a reduced trust in local politics is profound and pervasive. Even with the best intentions in the world, a political body that is not completely transparent can open itself to mistrust in the current climate. It is the processes

“[Transparency] guarantees the availability of information for the citizens and reflects on the work that we’ve been doing. It reflects the work that is being carried out at every step of the process... We don’t have any reason not to share [our] information.”

Pamela Lucia Bravo Ortiz, Deputy Manager of Environmental Strategy and Climate Change & Paola Vela Brandon, Environmental Assistant in Climate Change, Lima, Peru

and decisions that people do not see that can be misconstrued, and foster mistrust.

It is important for local governments to demonstrate clearly how, and why, one plan or project was given priority over another. If your citizens are offered insight into the decision-making process as it happens – as well as being involved in its various stages – their trust in that process, and their local government, solidifies.

“By being transparent we ensure that there is trust and confidence in the government.”

Ador Hurtado, City Tourism, Culture, Arts and Information Officer, Catbalogan City, Philippines

It is therefore essential to be as transparent as you can. It is vital to maintain that engagement with your citizens throughout the process, through successes and failures, from concept to completion. If they



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are only consulted and informed during one of the stages, suspicion can grow as to why they weren't informed about later processes. Transparency builds trust only if it is consistent.

Check in with your public about progress and setbacks. Once the project is concluded, thank them for their participation and useful contributions, as well as how their contributions were used. Keep them in the loop as to how things evolve and communicate when new challenges or projects arise.

“We do outreach conversations both in person and digitally. Once we’ve got that information from the public, and the council has talked about it, we go back and share – ‘Here is what we heard and here is what we are doing.’”

Celia Peterson, Environmental Sustainability Project Manager, & Linda Jager, Community Engagement Manager, Park City, USA

Transparency doesn't just mean keeping people informed about what is happening. Being transparent also means admitting when you're not sure what direction your project needs to take. It's ok if being transparent means expressing uncertainty, it can show that you are open to finding solutions with your partners, with your citizens.

BE CLEAR ON:

- The context
- Your objectives
- Who is involved
- The project's next steps
- Your constraints (if any)

Allowing yourself to be human, and to be perceived as such, can also be a strength if communicated in the right way.

“If we aren't transparent – how can they trust us? ...If we are open regarding our own difficulties, which sometimes inform our choices – then this is a way of showing how complex things are. If we promote transparency even when it's very difficult to explain – [the citizens] can better understand our public actions.”

Marie-Helene Nougarede & Isabelle Niesson, Mission Démocratie Participative, Lyon, France



3 BE INCLUSIVE

What goals you set, what message you communicate, who you reach out to, and how you reach out to them – can all impact how inclusive you are.

*“Everyone belongs to the city.
Everyone is a stakeholder.”*

Mayor Vijai Amaraliki, Phanat Nikhom, Thailand

It is important to consider marginalised voices when planning your public engagement. This can be challenging. Marginalization can be a result of ingrained behaviours that can be hard to identify and adjust. Working with partners, who already have trust-based relationships and have established a strong link with marginalised communities, can help.

Being inclusive also means understanding the barriers you might create with your choice of language, or method of communication. We need to remember that those outside our own bubbles don't

*“Approach people from all walks of life.
Different platforms reach different groups
of people.”*

Mangesh Dighe, Chief Environmental Officer, Pune, India

always have the same level of knowledge, access, vocabulary, or perspective as we do. It's important to be empathetic to that fact, and to strive to be as inclusive as possible in the way you discuss your project. Every voice matters.

*“It needs to be for everyone – not only those
'brave ones' who always speak out. We need
to approach and reach those who might
often be quiet and 'shy'.”*

*Lotte Suveri, Project Specialist & Anri Niskala, Open
Participation Specialist, Climate and Environment Policy
Unit, Turku, Finland*





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Put yourself in your citizens' shoes. Adapt your language to speak to them clearly and simply. Avoid potential barriers to participation – like language differences, literacy, and access. This can mean offering the same information in multiple ways. For instance, while your initial plan may have only used a digital platform, this approach might exclude a group that is not digitally proficient. Given this limitation, you may choose to include a paper format. Or when conducting events online, it may be useful to consider subtitles, or audio descriptions of what is happening on screen, as an option.

“It is important, because this process empowers citizens... Projects, decision-making, or management instruments, that are made in a participatory way, are going to be sustainable over time.”

Pamela Lucia Bravo Ortiz, Deputy Manager of Environmental Strategy and Climate Change & Paola Vela Brandon, Environmental Assistant in Climate Change, Lima, Peru

Try to make sure that you use a flexible range of tools and strategies. Keep in mind the different groups, cultures, and societies that make up your city's population. This may mean actively seeking out under-represented groups in areas where they congregate and bringing the feedback tools to them, e.g., arranging for staff with laptops to set up a pop-up booth.

It might mean parallel approaches tailored to specific groups within the city, e.g., accounting for dialectal or language barriers with translated materials, or combining a general campaign with more technical texts aimed at specialised audiences.

“It is important to know who you're hearing from and who you aren't hearing from.”

Amanda Mitchell, Public Engagement Specialist, Vancouver, Canada



4 SHOW YOUR COMMITMENT

In many places it can feel like people are increasingly disengaged with political processes. Why? Often, because they feel as if their voices are unimportant.

Prove other voices matter. You can help re-engage your citizens and prove that their voices matter simply by showing them that you have seen and registered their contribution. You can highlight the public's particularly constructive ideas and make sure to take action on them. As mentioned previously, there may be minority groups, or under-represented groups, that will require additional effort on your part to reach.

“We focused ... on youth that are not educated. We engaged with them and helped them develop.”

Mangesh Dighe, Chief Environmental Officer, Pune, India

Civic-washing is when the public is consulted simply so that a project can say they did a consultation. The feedback and ideas that come from that consultation are barely used or registered. This sort of engagement can easily damage public trust.

“Do not build questions to get the answers you want. Don't be afraid to provoke, but be ready for reactions and listen.”

Jennie Vennenberg, Climate and Communications Officer, Umeå, Sweden

Even when public engagement is done in earnest it can be easy for a jaded public to think civic-washing is happening. Cities need to keep this in mind when planning their engagement strategies. Prove to the public that you are listening and committed through consistency and consideration.



A key mistake in public participation is assuming your conversation with your citizens only starts with a project and is over the minute the project finishes. Try to see public participation as building an enduring relationship with your citizens.

“Ensure a genuine approach to people – it needs to lead somewhere.”

Lotte Suveri, Project Specialist & Anri Niskala, Open Participation Specialist, Climate and Environment Policy Unit, Turku, Finland

Living collaboration means working with your citizens throughout your plan and its implementation. Public engagement does not mean turning to your public just once. Aim to create a dialogue with them.

“When I started as mayor, I realised that we had to involve our citizens – we could not do [our job] without public engagement. Now – 34 years later – it is easy to manage, and easy to have a relationship with the people, because we have a connection, between the municipality and the people.”

Mayor Vijai Amaraliki, Phanat Nikhom, Thailand

Tell participants how they contributed, and how they made, and can continue to make, a difference. Keep in touch with them even once a project is



done. Otherwise, they may not be as willing to engage next time you consult them. The more invested a community is in your project, the more sustainable, and embedded in your community, your project will be.

“Don’t just use the people and networks – give something back. Ensure a reciprocal relationship.”

*Amanda Mitchell, Public Engagement Specialist,
Vancouver, Canada*

A good way of showing how public participation had an effect is through data. Try to set some metrics that you can track and share with your citizens once your project has finished. Even a simple message can confirm for citizens that they are being listened to, and that their participation matters. For example, “We received feedback from 200 people and we used two ideas that came from the participation process. These ideas were used to change the project methodology.”

As you become more experienced in public engagement, you can become more ambitious about the data and metrics you collect and share. You could use data to highlight public efforts that strengthen your project goals. For example, Turku gathers and shares data from companies as to how they are reducing their carbon emissions in



“Strengthen trust ... Come back to people with results...Show them that their ideas were helpful and appreciated.”

*Marie-Helene Nougarede & Isabelle Niesseron,
Mission Démocratie Participative, Lyon, France*

the city. You could collect quantitative data on how many people participated, and qualitative data as to their perceptions about their engagement during the project.



5 TRUST YOUR CITIZENS

Trusting your citizens means trusting them in a variety of ways: trusting their expertise, trusting their collective judgment, and trusting that if they are informed they will turn that information into participation. It is important to remember that

“You have to be ok with negative feedback. People may confront you but criticism can also be an opportunity. Rather than fearing this feedback, you can see it as people coming to you with genuine concerns. Let them know you are there to help. Sometimes people just need to vent. First they vent, then they need to be heard, and then you can come up with a solution together.”

Per-Arne Nilsson, Head of the Strategy Department, the Environmental Administration & Trevor Graham, Sustainable Communities Consultant, Malmö, Sweden

participation can mean criticism or negative feedback, and that this isn't necessarily a problem.

While it can be hard to see criticism or negative feedback as a positive force, they are a natural part of public engagement. When they happen within the framework of a strong public engagement effort, they can be used to improve your project and build new partnerships with your invested and active citizens.

“We believe that we, in the government, do not have the monopoly on knowledge or expertise... That's why we need to engage the public, to partner with agencies, with civic groups, and with other sectors of the communities. Because they also have expertise.”

Ador Hurtado, City Tourism, Culture, Arts and Information Officer, Catbalogan City, Philippines



© Lize Kraan / Boskalis Beach Cleanup Tour / WWF

If you trust your citizens as wanting to improve the city as much as you do, criticism and negative feedback can be turned into constructive dialogue. Trust instils confidence, it builds relationships. It can be empowering and lead to shared ownership of a project. This, in turn, can lead to ideas being spread and workloads being shared. In other words, you don't always have to pull the cart by yourself, trusting others can transform your work processes and workloads.

“[With something as big as climate change], it has to be social. No one can figure this out in a vacuum. You are coming together with other people in your community; you talk and inspire each other to make a behavior change. The element of trust is so important. If you're already around people you trust, then it's going to make it that much easier to achieve your goals.”

Celia Peterson, Environmental Sustainability Project Manager, & Linda Jager, Community Engagement Manager, Park City, USA

Obviously, no one can know everything about every topic. One of the best ways to create a 'future-proof' project is to harness the expertise of your citizens and stakeholders. These are people who have hands-

on experience generated from their daily interaction with their city.

In gathering – and trusting – a spectrum of knowledge, you'll be able to develop a more comprehensive project. A robust project is one that has been considered from numerous perspectives. For instance, parents, teachers, child psychologists, sports-club owners, and school children would all bring different but important perspectives to a project on education restructuring. Each group

would have interacted with education services in a variety of ways. Citizen engagement and enthusiasm can be an invaluable asset in propelling your city towards sustainable success.

“New buildings that are coming up are climate responsive thanks to public engagement.”

Mangesh Dighe, Chief environmental officer, Pune, India










ONE PLANET
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A woman in a brown top and light-colored pants stands in the center of a room, holding a microphone and speaking to a group of people. Several men are seated around a table in front of her, some looking towards her. The room has a plain wall and some equipment visible in the background.

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT IN PRACTICE

This section brings you interesting, innovative and inspiring examples of public engagement from a wide variety of cities – both OPCC partners and a select group of others. These examples come from interviews conducted with city planners and are presented in their own words.

-  DEFINE YOUR GOALS AND EXPECTATIONS
-  BE TRANSPARENT
-  BE INCLUSIVE
-  SHOW YOUR COMMITMENT
-  TRUST YOUR CITIZENS

VANCOUVER, CANADA

Vancouver aims to be responsive and accessible for all citizens. They have a specific number for people to call where they can ask anything about the city. Vancouver endeavors to take the city hall to the people – engaging in various physical events around their neighborhoods to promote their work and invite citizens to be part of the process.

MALMÖ, SWEDEN

Malmö has developed 'blue-green', or nature-based, solutions. In other words, they aim to build visible ecosystem services with an awareness of the natural ecosystems within the city. An example of this is Augustenborg, where the city aimed to build an eco-city in a pre-existing residential district. The project included a strong public engagement component. Augustenborg now celebrates its 20th anniversary as a neighborhood well-known for its climate adaptation and regeneration initiatives.

UMEÅ, SWEDEN

Umeå has created a “Klimatlöfteskarta” – a map of climate commitments made by local citizens. This allows people to see what their fellow citizens are committing to. The map acts both as an inspiration and as a way of holding people accountable for the promises made.

TURKU, FINLAND

Turku organises a yearly Climate Forum where they examine the city's climate plan. They make sure to have a regular check-in as to where the plans in Turku are and what is still left to do. In one of those forums they used a TV Show format, where they allowed for people to comment online using tools like Facebook.

CATBALOGAN CITY, THE PHILIPPINES

Catbalogan City created a festival – the Manaragat Festival – because they wanted an event that would strengthen the identity of their people and preserve it for future generations. They have two pillars for the festival – one is cultural preservation, and the other is environmental protection. The festival offers contests, celebrates different sectors of the community and raises awareness around these two pillars.

PARK CITY, USA

Park City reaches out to people by going to the places where their citizens congregate. They also invite them to informal events like “Coffee with the Council”, or “Yoga in the Park”. They try to use social, fun and relaxed events, like pub quizzes, as a way to promote collaboration and conversation with citizens. This helps to create a sense of a social, shared commitment to climate change goals within a peer network.

LYON, FRANCE

Lyon implements a widespread project to facilitate gardening in shared municipal gardens. The focus is on the production of fruit and vegetables, as well as sustainable living.

PUNE, INDIA

The city developed a public information system on air quality with 10 monitoring display boards in public places. A website and an app were created specifically for the city. These tools enable citizens to follow air quality with the added advantage of allowing citizens to report back on air-quality issues through these portals.

PHANAT NIKHOM, THAILAND

Phanat Nikhom has created local committees that are elected by communities within the municipality. They meet with the local government to discuss community needs and government plans. One of Phanat Nikhom's projects is the planting of “big” trees to help the municipality become a low carbon city. This is part of a four-pillar strategy that includes the city of trees, no pollution, renewable energy, and sustainable consumption.

PHANAT NIKHOM, THAILAND

An interview with Mayor Vijai Amaralik

“The municipality of Phanat Nikhom is made up of twelve communities. We have about 10 thousand people in our municipality and each of these communities is roughly a thousand people. And it’s impossible for our departments to do everything, or be everywhere in every area. So we brainstormed and together developed an idea to establish a local committee for each community – we did this about 34 years ago. We have now established a local committee – consisting of nine people for each community – head chairman, deputy chairman, secretary, and six other people. The six other people work with our government departments such as



education, public welfare, finance, etc. So it is just like having a small municipality in a big municipality.

We made collaboration a priority so each of these nine committee members work together with us.

We have a meeting every two months. We discuss whether the community wants us to do something or, if there is some project we have to do, we will explain it to the community committee. Then the committee will explain it to the people. They also explain that whatever project the people wanted has been sent to the municipality and put in our budget. We then set up some projects or budget to meet their needs.

We also have public hearings and once the public hearing is done and they have prioritised interventions, these projects and interventions will be presented to the city's committee. If there is any emergency or hot burning issue – then we can do this public hearing at any time. But the normal financial cycle starts around August – so these public hearings are usually in August. The city committee then approves the budget that has been passed through the public hearing. So that procedure will be the foundation for the budget for that year.

We have a project to create low carbon cities. And that project has four pillars or four strategies – green

city/city of trees, no pollution, renewable energy, and sustainable consumption. We realised that if we can do this, it means we can help with combatting climate change.

And now we try to teach the people about the four strategies. We try to educate on the use of LED lights or solar cells and we teach them about energy efficiency. We also try to persuade people to own a bicycle, instead of a car, or to walk when they want to do something in our city.

In the past, we had about 25 tonnes of solid waste, but now we have reduced that to about 14 tonnes. We bought empty land – about 20 acres – to plant “big trees” – everyone donated trees. In the beginning we had about 1000 big trees in our city but now we have about 5000.

We also created a Line group, (Line is a messaging app, widely used in Thailand), so that people can give us feedback online. They can say what is wrong with the traffic light, what is wrong with the street – or anything else – and then we can solve the problem. The director of every department in our office is a member of this group. Anyone can come in – because we want to know the opinion of everyone, complaints or otherwise, we will use that information to develop our city.”



MALMÖ, SWEDEN

An interview with Per-Arne Nilsson, Head of the Strategy Department, the Environmental Administration & Trevor Graham, Sustainable Communities Consultant.

“We worked on the eco-city development of the Augustenborg city district. This area was originally built around the 1950s – it was a vision for a more sustainable, good life for everybody. So it was very well planned and organized - for that time. In the early nineties, this was one of the poorest areas in Sweden. A lot of unemployment, bad health, a lot of empty apartments. And then they had another problem – when it rained, it flooded. It was one of the worst areas for flooding in Malmö.

Then there was a movement to “do something” in Augustenborg – so the water company, the housing company MKB, and the technical department in Malmö, amongst others, decided to transform it into



© Malmö stad / Peter Adamsson



an eco-city district. There was a lot of engagement. There was a lot of desire to do things in a better way. We brought in a consultant to try new methods (at the time) in community engagement.

One of the great things that came out of our community involvement, were unique partnerships that you wouldn't necessarily get in another setting. These kinds of one-offs do exist, it's a matter of being open to identifying where those opportunities are. For instance, because of the flooding – stormwater management was one of the key focuses of the project. At the start of the project, we happened to hear about a guy who lived in the area. Other residents told us he had an interesting approach to the water flooding in his building. It turned out that he had done research into the methods of an Austrian forester back in the 1800s. This

research was all about using water flow to manage the problem. So we connected him with our water engineers. We were open to using his knowledge. We said, "Listen to what this guy's got to say, because he's got some really interesting ideas." He ended up starting his own business and designing and building part of the storm water system.

Another idea that came out of the Augustenborg project was around mobility issues. People were saying, "Car ownership is relatively rare here." We were talking to the community about solutions and somebody came up with the idea of them owning a car together. When we asked them what would that look like, they were describing a car pool. They hadn't heard of them at that time – this was in the nineties, when they weren't so common. There was only one, at that point, in Sweden.

They started a community association to set up a car pool. They decided it was going to be electric. So they set up the first electric car pool – possibly in Europe. And after a few years, they got rid of electric cars and brought in ethanol and biodiesel cars instead. They designed it themselves, with just a bit of help. They defined the problem, they defined an embryonic solution, and then we helped them develop the idea around the solution.

It turned into a functioning community organization which operated for about 12 years. Then they closed it down and entered into a contract with a commercial car pool operator. And this is in a relatively high need community – a community seen as being a problem neighbourhood – and this is the kind of capacity that you can find in communities."

LIMA, PERU

An interview with Pamela Lucia Bravo Ortiz, Deputy Manager of Environmental Strategy and Climate Change & Paola Vela Brandon, Environmental Assistant in Climate Change.

“We recently finished our climate change plan. Throughout all 2020, we had a participatory plan. We had to change it because of Covid – because it was supposed to be face to face, but we couldn’t do that. It helped us to have a broader spectrum of people that we could include in that participatory process.

We worked with children, we worked with youth, we worked with academia, with citizens, with other municipalities – we were able to engage with everyone. The youth and the children were responsible for part of the 2050 vision of this plan – they helped us to create that vision, because they are the future.

We also plan to help the municipality’s districts create their own climate action plans. There are 43



districts, separated into four sectors – South Lima, North Lima, East Lima and Lima Central. Because we've been through this process, we can try to guide them. We are planning to do conferences, so if they need some help or information that we have, we can share it with them.

Working with children and youth was innovative for us – because we had never done that before. There is a Children's Commission that covers a lot of different things, not only the environment or climate change. So, the kids from the commission selected who would be in the Children's Environmental Commission. We have twelve children that are a part of this commission. We also searched for youth organizations and groups that were involved in climate action, and we invited them to be part of this process.

The children and youth had all these ideas that we could incorporate into the plan. The children wanted us to have more material on climate change designed for them. So, we also created a child-friendly version – like a comic-book. We are still in the process of finalising it. They also wanted to be part of the implementation process of the plan. Now, one of the actions in there is that the children and the youth representatives are going to have an audience with the mayor, so they can talk about climate change.

We also had a conference on Facebook live – where we talked about climate change – we had five of those conferences – where we talked about mitigation, adaptation, and the climate change plan.

We were able to engage with the public through this format and interact with them as they asked their questions on Facebook.”



TURKU, FINLAND

An interview with Lotte Suveri, Project Specialist & Anri Niskala, Open Participation Specialist, Climate and Environment Policy Unit.

“Each year we write a climate report to the city council. The report is made public as well. This document is a check-in on the previous year’s climate work and what is currently going on. We have a yearly event called the Turku Climate Forum.

The Climate Forum is an event where we tell everyone in the city of Turku what we are doing. In 2019 it was done as a physical event, in 2020 it was virtual using Facebook live, and then a recording of the event was placed on YouTube. The city council and key stakeholders are invited to present and talk about their climate work. The youth council also take part in this climate forum.



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The youth council is a voluntary youth group with thirty or forty students who work actively under the city administration. They make statements to the city council. For example, they made a climate statement where they told the city council what kind of things they would like to see regarding climate work.

In our public engagement with companies, we have a concept called the ‘climate team’, like a hockey team but for climate mitigation. The face of the team is a former ice hockey player, Saku Koivu. We are ‘borrowing’ his face, and are trying to motivate everyone to join the team.

Companies fill out a form saying what their climate action is, and then we can calculate how much this is reducing their emissions. There are specific questions around their climate action. In total around 80 businesses have signed up.

This year (2021), we got funding from the Ministry of Environment and we are going to start developing this climate team into a network that has educational events for the companies. If they don’t know where to start their climate work, or if they need some more help to calculate their carbon footprint, and plan their actions, we will start doing this with them.”

LYON, FRANCE

An interview with Marie-Helene Nougarede & Isabelle Niessleron, Mission Démocratie Participative

“We have many projects around gardening, in different forms. For instance, shared gardening or ‘under the streets’ gardening. With “under the streets” gardening, we make a hole in the pavement, and bring earth. This encourages people to plant flowers along the streets, we provide seeds and the area and then the locals manage it.

People are more engaged when they have worked on a place. When they come, they maybe take some waste out, or do something festive. When you participate in a project, you feel responsible for it, and, in the future, you try to manage it, in order to maintain it.

We also provide land for community gardens. We make the place safe – for example if the ground is polluted. We can provide some tools, or some money to buy seeds and equipment. The municipality is also responsible for the rules for





the gardens, a contract is signed between the municipality and the garden association – with stipulations like: – we have to respect the place, we have to respect ecological principles, be open to the neighborhood, etc.

Through gardening action, we look after the links between people. We think the real benefits of these actions are not the gardens, the flowers or the trees – the real benefit is people talking together, and

changing their outlook. This is the first win of these types of projects. The people are not alone, they talk with other people, they meet them in the street and it changes their lives and changes their way of thinking, which is good.

It is a question of empowerment, the discussion, and also the defence, of certain things that make people actors in political actions. Before they were just

receiving what the municipality was doing, now they are part of the decisions as well.

We are thinking about doing a participative project workshop. This sort of action will be a way for us to encourage and empower people. It creates a meeting point between the professionals and the people.

Currently people can give some ideas, and they choose and vote and we implement. The call for projects that we currently have will engage people more. They have to implement, not us. There will be some project criteria, like quality, inclusion etc. We don't choose the project – if the project meets the criteria, we will give it some money. The local council pays the vendors, or partners, or enterprises listed in the project document, but it's really the citizens who are doing the work.

We have really seen a change in the people who participate. We used to have older people coming to talk with elected people and now we have more young people. They are coming to do, not to think and to talk. They want to change their neighbourhood and they want to do something on their street. It really is a different way of living, it's not 'I am living in my flat,' it is 'I am living on my street – in my neighbourhood.'"

CATBALOGAN CITY, THE PHILIPPINES

An interview with Ador Hurtado, City Tourism, Culture, Arts and Information Officer

“We have a yearly festival called the Managarat festival. We have two main pillars for the festival – one is cultural preservation, and the other is environmental protection. We wanted a deeper meaning behind the festival – not just a celebration – and wanted to find a deeper purpose.

Prior to it being named Managarat, we called it Mangirisda, from the word *isda* which means fish. However we renamed it to the word Managarat, from the root word *dagat* which means sea.

This was a result of a government study that found out that our cultural identity is connected with the sea.

By popularising the festival we were able to educate a new generation – the young students and communities – in celebrating the identity of our people.

All competitions and all activities have some focus on cultural preservation, or protecting the environment. These pillars were chosen through a consultation, done through the local Culture and Arts Council. The Culture and Arts Council is composed of different members from the government offices, from academia, the religious sector, and civic groups, as well as young people and other sectors of the community.

The national government mandates the creation of a Culture and Arts Council in every city, municipality, and province in the Philippines. They specify who should be members of the council. The local





© Catbalogan City

government has the leeway to add additional members. So on our part we've added several members that are not included in the mandated list, to expand it, so that we have better representation.

I believe that it is important to have multi-sectoral representation, because each member has a different voice or has a different opinion on certain things. So by providing them with membership, or providing them the opportunity to be part of the council, they are given the chance to share, to voice their opinions on the affairs of the government.

Through the multi-sectoral membership of any council, we are given the chance to get the opinions of the people. To consult with them, to partner with them. Through this council, we are able to tap into their expertise as well. Because we are not experts in many fields of the community.

By having them be part of this, we are ensuring the program has acceptance because the people themselves have suggested these types of activities. The ownership and the commitment of these sector representatives gives more impact to the communities because they themselves have shared these programs and activities.”

PARK CITY, USA

**An interview with Celia Peterson,
Environmental Sustainability Project Manager, &
Linda Jager, Community Engagement Manager**

“We really wanted to improve on engaging the public and getting them more involved in everything that we do. We wanted to go to where people are, rather than expect the public to come to us. That’s where a lot of the more laid-back social approaches came from – like ‘coffee with the council’ or the quizzes. You’re social, you’re connecting with your community, while you’re also learning and engaging with a lot of your critical community priorities. Once our interactions went virtual, our participation numbers have gone through the roof.

Virtual events helped families with kids get involved. It’s just convenient for people. They can be home,



© Park City Chamber

making dinner, listening to the meeting in the background. If they want to make a comment, they can raise their hand and they can participate from their kitchen. This couldn't have happened, though, if we hadn't already spent over three years building a relationship with the community, connecting in person.

Nobody is going to be able to figure fighting climate change out in a vacuum. So that's why we organise these events – because bringing people together is a way to build trust and community support, but also a bit of accountability. If people say, amongst peer groups, that they're going to 'put in weather stripping' or 'change their lightbulbs' then they're more likely to do it. It's positive peer pressure – something that can work in a community of our size.

We use the Summit Community Power Works (SCPW) challenge – that's a website that leads people through basic actions that they can do at home to improve their energy efficiency or save water etc. Teams can get organised and compete on environmental goals using that platform. We worked with our high school students to get their

families to form teams that compete around our neighbourhoods. This keeps getting bigger and bigger every year.

The city has been doing a lot of regenerative agriculture work with a restaurateur. We're working together on one of our pieces of open space – a former farm. In October we invited people out there, we sat on haybales and talked about regenerative agriculture and some of the work we are doing in that space.

We do a lot of social media, we do a lot of digital newsletters and emails to public – but also through some of the larger digital events – for instance our mayor does a 'State of Park City' address every year. He'll talk about achievements and how we worked together and where we are now. We kept people's trust because we are making tangible progress and can report back to the community quite quickly. By making consistent major progress and reporting back to the community – it keeps people excited and engaged.

We also make the point that combatting climate change needs to happen in a holistic way. The

“A key message in terms of community engagement for climate related activities is to be really specific about the call to action and to make it social and among peers.”

city and different departments are making infrastructural changes – but it also requires personal change from our citizens. You have to ask them for specific action though. Be really specific about the call to action and make it social and amongst peers, that's a key message in terms of community engagement for climate related activities.”



ONE PLANET
CITY CHALLENGE



QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER WHEN PLANNING A PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT CAMPAIGN

The questions in this section are aimed at cities who have yet to begin their public engagement journey or who are interested in improving their current efforts in this area.

They have been designed to aid you in identifying your starting point. They should help you understand what information you have readily available and what information you may need to gather before moving forward.

The answers to these questions will help you identify:

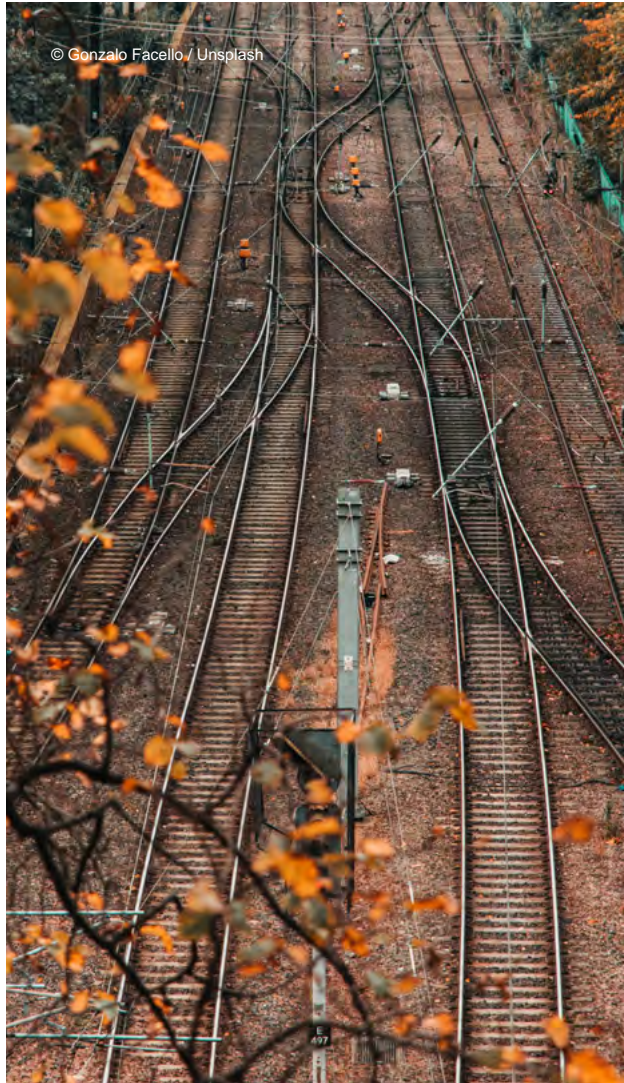
- Necessary resources
- Key target audiences
- Useful data collection
- Potential partners

Ideally, this section will raise awareness for key questions you should ask yourself before forming your public engagement plans. It should also help you identify where you may need to reach out for support in answering them.

The following questions are based on WWF interviews with partner cities, WWF and Civocracy's research and project experience, and a general summary of existing literature on public engagement.

NB You can use the form in Annex 1 to write down some answers to the below questions.





WHAT ARE YOUR GOALS? HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE THEM IN A SIMPLE SENTENCE?

When answering this question, keep in mind that this is something that will help you clarify your goals and expectations for your citizens. It's part of what will help you be transparent about your progress and planning.

Stating your goals clearly is also a way of letting your citizens know why they would want to get involved. You may have many goals that you are trying to achieve in one project, or your project may only be a stepping stone towards a larger set of goals. It will help you engage and motivate your public if you are able to articulate this clearly.

"From the municipal point of view – when the city comes with different public infrastructure projects ... we need people to understand the reason behind them."

Mangesh Dighe, Chief Environmental Officer, Pune, India

KEEP IN MIND:

A useful exercise is sitting down and trying to describe your goal/s in as simple language as possible. Start with descriptions that use as many words as you like, then cut these down to a couple of sentences, then trying to summarise each goal in one sentence.

What are your overall goals as a city? How does your project fit into this goal?

When you define your goals, try to think in terms of where you are now and where you hope to be at some future date. It helps to set a time span and to understand how the goal may evolve depending on what time span you are thinking of, e.g., what is achievable within the year vs. what you hope to achieve within 20 years.

"As part of our climate change goals, our council put a stake in the sand and said we were going to electrify our public transit fleet. Now (2021) we have 13 electric buses and by 2026 every bus that Park City has running will be electric."

Celia Peterson, Environmental Sustainability Project Manager, & Linda Jager, Community Engagement Manager, Park City, USA

WHAT ARE YOUR CITY'S DEMOGRAPHICS?

To ensure that you are inclusive when conducting public engagement activities, it's crucial to have a good understanding of who your citizens are. Datasets are your friends, here. Try to gather as much data on your city's population as possible. Talk to other organizations – especially those that focus on minority voices – to gather data on which groups have been traditionally marginalized.

“We have done a lot of work in outreach to our Latino community, which is 25 percent of our population. We have been going to where that part of our community is comfortable meeting. We partnered with other organizations that were close to the Latino community. We looked at who is already doing work in that space and partnered with them. And then, through that, we grew as a trusted resource in our community.”

Celia Peterson, Environmental Sustainability Project Manager, & Linda Jager, Community Engagement Manager, Park City, USA

Aspects that may impact who you consult and how you plan are:

- Are there groups that may have been marginalized?
- What are the literacy rates in your city? How do they vary by geographic area or group?
- What are the most common age groups?
- What are the unemployment levels?
- How might socio-economic factors influence availability for potential engagement?
- Are there groups that have a pre-existing interest or knowledge base in your project area?

The above list is by no means comprehensive. The more you dig into your city's demographics, the more questions you may need to start asking yourself. Understanding these features of your city's population is part of how you prove other voices matter.

KEEP IN MIND:

Not all groups think alike, not all groups have the same priority. The chance of success for your plan can be improved significantly if you know in advance who that plan will impact and what they are likely to think of it. How you reach out to people and what communication tools you use will depend on core city demographics like mobility, education, literacy, access, and income. City demographic statistics are a very good place to start understanding your citizens and how you may want to tailor your public engagement.



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WHO HAVE YOU PLANNED TO ENGAGE WITH?

Some questions you face in public engagement are:

- What sample of your population are you engaging with?
- How many people?
- How targeted is your sample?
- Why did you pick the sample you chose?

One way to be inclusive is to pay attention to the demographics of your city and to make sure that you reach out to all the different groups impacted by, and invested in, your project.

“It is crucial to determine who is impacted or interested in your project, so you know who to engage.”

Amanda Mitchell, Public Engagement Specialist, Vancouver, Canada

Deciding who you reach out to is one of the trickiest areas of public engagement. While it may make sense to target certain demographics and to rely on those who engage enthusiastically, this can also be a pitfall. The loudest voices will not necessarily

be the most inclusive, nor are they necessarily representative of the majority.

Of course – it is also clear that leveraging the engagement of people already invested in climate action is an effective strategy for stimulating rapid transformation. Rallying support for your climate change policies through well-designed public engagement is a key success factor for many leading cities.

Getting citizens behind your planned projects – and better still, getting them enthusiastic about them – is a major asset in project implementation. Do you know which groups in your city are already engaged in fighting climate change? Have you made deliberate efforts to reach out to them? Recognising their enthusiasm, advocacy and expertise is all part of trusting your citizens.

“We have a participatory budget, where we allocate certain amounts of money and let people decide what this money should be used for. This involves them in this process.”

Mangesh Dighe, Chief Environmental Officer, Pune, India





Ideally you want to find a balance. Make sure that you are consulting everyone who will be impacted by your project and who has a stake in your goals. This is true even if it means making an extra effort to reach out repeatedly and in different ways.

In general, these are some questions you may want to consider:

- Who are the experts?
- Who will be impacted?
- Who has a vested interest in the project area and subject?
- Which groups are already advocates and activists for your goals?
- Are there some diverse opinions or voices that you have not heard from in the past?
- Who is local to your project area?
- Are there any established groups or institutions that fall into the above categories?

KEEP IN MIND:

A useful exercise is making a list of the groups that you usually engage with and a list of the groups you plan to engage. Then make a list of the demographics that are impacted by your project, e.g., what are the social and economic backgrounds of people living in that geographic area, what interest groups work in that project's field, etc.

Compare those lists. Are there gaps? If you look at the gaps, are there any institutions or organizations that work in those areas? Can you partner with them?

“In Malmö, there were local activist groups that sometimes wanted to decide how some of our budget was to be allocated. However, it was important to remember that these groups didn't represent all of the people living in the area.”

Per-Arne Nilsson, Head of the Strategy Department, the Environmental Administration & Trevor Graham, Sustainable Communities Consultant, Malmö, Sweden

WHERE DO PEOPLE IN YOUR CITY GET THEIR INFORMATION?

Consider what communications channels you will use. If you only use certain channels, you may end up consulting the same group over and over again – thereby missing out on hearing from other key stakeholders.

“Go where the people are. Remove the barriers of people having to come to you.”

Amanda Mitchell, Public Engagement Specialist, Vancouver, Canada

In order to reach out, it’s important to understand where different groups turn for their information. Do some groups only consume traditional media – e.g., newspapers, radio, TV? Do the majority of citizens use online platforms – e.g., Twitter and Facebook? Or is it simply social or institutional relationships that are the most trusted? Do people gather in marketplaces or local parks and swap news there? Do they get their information from religious institutions? Where do they congregate? Who do they trust?

Understanding this and designing your communications around different groups is one way – of many – to be inclusive.

KEEP IN MIND:

It’s worth doing some research as to how different segments of your population get their information. Brainstorming this within your organization can be a good place to start. The local and institutional knowledge of your staff is as valuable a resource as any!

One useful exercise is going over a map of your city and identifying the main community spaces where people can connect with the government, as well as key community spaces in general.

“We have an online panel of 15,000 members who signed up to provide feedback to the city, which has greatly increased the number of people taking our surveys. And because we have their postal codes, we can target surveys to specific areas if needed.”

Amanda Mitchell, Public Engagement Specialist, Vancouver, Canada

“We do a lot of social media, we do a lot of digital newsletters and emails to the public and our mayor does a ‘State of Park City’ address every year. He’ll talk about our achievements and how we worked together and where we are now. But we try to communicate our progress in as many formats as we can – because not everyone is on social media. We have great local media resources here, a local newspaper and a radio station so we also share through them.”

Celia Peterson, Environmental Sustainability Project Manager, & Linda Jager, Community Engagement Manager, Park City, USA

WHAT MESSAGING WILL YOU USE? HOW DO DIFFERENT COMMUNICATION STYLES IMPACT WHO YOU REACH?

Once you've set your goals, identified your key stakeholders, and have an idea of how they get their information – you are then in a position to think about what type of messaging you will use and how you will communicate that message.

Remember that the details of your public engagement – i.e., who you invite, how you engage them, and how much time you give them to respond – will impact how seriously your citizens take your efforts.

Knowing your goals and understanding your stakeholders is of great value in this exercise. This knowledge will enable you to target your message to your audience. This will make them more likely to engage with you. Ideally your messaging will clearly state your goals and why stakeholder feedback is so important.

It's the difference between saying:

'We would like to hear back from our citizens about local planning and the environment'

and saying:

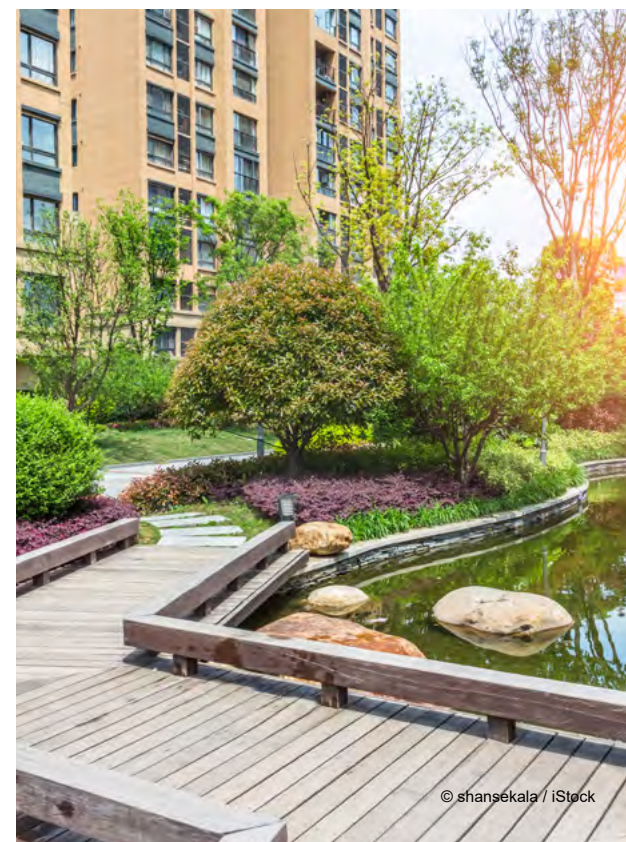
'We are contacting families living in this area because this project aims to improve the local park facilities to be more environmentally friendly and to give better support to families.'

In the first message, there is very little information or explanation as to why engagement is important. In the second, the stakeholder can clearly see where they might fit into the project design and how their feedback might be valuable.

"[We engaged] with two different groups – approaching the city folk and approaching farmers in Park City – we had the same goals but different messaging"

Celia Peterson, Environmental Sustainability Project Manager, & Linda Jager, Community Engagement Manager, Park City, USA

When you have your message, you need to think about how you will communicate it.



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There's no guarantee that reaching out to the largest number of people will yield the best results. The most successful stakeholder communication is often the result of a customized approach based on the demographics of specific target groups.



If, for instance, you are targeting an elderly, less technologically-adept demographic, a paper form of communication may be more appropriate than digital. To be inclusive it is essential to target your communication so that it reaches previously marginalised or neglected voices.

Similarly, you might be more likely to miss the economically-challenged or access-limited sections of your population if you restrict your message to online resources only. The decisions you make about how and where you engage will impact how transparent and inclusive you are. Putting thought and effort into communicating with those harder to reach parts of your population helps prove other voices matter.

“You need to think about when public engagement is appropriate and how far you can go. When do you simply inform people ‘We’re going to be closing your road for the next six weeks for roadworks’ – vs. when do you engage in a more consultative approach, saying ‘We are thinking about making these changes, which of these alternatives do you think would be interesting?’ When do you say ‘We have these problems – do you see any solutions?’ or when do you just react to the people who come to you saying ‘We’d like to do this.’ All of those are perfectly valid – depending on the circumstance and the time – it’s a matter of choosing the right one for the right time, the right community, and the right space.”

Per-Arne Nilsson, Head of the Strategy Department, the Environmental Administration & Trevor Graham, Sustainable Communities Consultant, Malmö, Sweden

KEEP IN MIND:

- One way of looking at this – is thinking about how people respond to invitations of any kind, e.g., a party invitation. How well the invitation is written and addressed – and when you send the invitation – will impact how many people come.
- There are a number of small details that can make all the difference in how people perceive your efforts:
 - Is the font size you’re using suitable for all readers?
 - How accessible is your messaging? Is it only written or is it available as audio and braille as well?
 - What languages will your information be available in?
 - How complex or simple will the language and vocabulary be?

WHO ARE POTENTIAL PARTNERS YOU CAN WORK WITH IN ENGAGING THE PUBLIC?

Usually, good public engagement will mean working with a wide variety of partners. This helps build trust and helps you reach a wider audience.

“[We work with] Lots of NGOs and environmental protection agencies that operate in Pune.”

Mangesh Dighe, Chief Environmental Officer, Pune, India

One place to start is listing organizations, institutions, and people that work with a large variety of groups across your population and that have their trust. This should include various municipal departments as well. These groups, in their turn, may be able to help you identify partners you may have missed. When doing this, it’s important to understand the pros and cons of working with each partner, group, or organization you have listed.

“We held a multi-faith dialogue on climate change, organized by the faith community. At this event, different faith leaders connected climate action to religious teachings. It was very powerful.”

Amanda Mitchell, Public Engagement Specialist, Vancouver, Canada



WHICH PARTNERS WITHIN YOUR ORGANIZATION COULD GET INVOLVED?

Are there partners in local government or communications departments that have vested interests in what you are doing? It is important to consider all stages of a project – down to who may be responsible for its longevity and maintenance. It will help you identify units or specialists from within your organization who may play an important role both during implementation and after your project is complete.

Involve partners from within, as well as outside, your organization from the start. This can help avoid future problems with ownership, or conflicts of interest, and will help ensure that they are as invested in its success as you are.

“When we were reaching out to youth groups and organizations, we had help from the Communications and Sustainability Team. They had worked with these groups before and were able to facilitate contact with them.”

Pamela Lucia Bravo Ortiz, Deputy Manager of Environmental Strategy and Climate Change, Lima, Peru



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WHICH EXTERNAL PARTNERS CAN YOU INVOLVE?

Who can you turn to for support and collaboration? This may include NGOs, local leaders (tribal, religious etc.), unions, chambers of commerce, partner cities, or institutions and businesses that may be interested in civic engagement. Which organizations, groups or individuals can you bring in – or create – to help make your engagement a success?

“34 years ago – when I first became a mayor – I didn’t have any experience managing a town or a city. I just gave orders and more orders. Some problems arose and I eventually realized ‘I should not be doing this by myself, I have to have a partner’. I then understood I had the public to work with.”

Mayor Vijai Amaraliki, Mayor of Phanat Nikhom, Thailand

AT WHAT STAGE IN PLANNING ARE YOU? WHEN DO YOU PLAN TO ENGAGE WITH THE PUBLIC?

When you engage with the public is as important as how you engage with them. If you reach out only once the plan is finalized and about to be implemented, there's a risk that you'll be perceived as not really interested in their involvement or ideas. Your actions may be viewed as simply symbolic.

It's the difference between saying:

'We will consult with you and then that will feed into our project.'

and saying

'We will do a first round of consultations in January, we will publish the feedback in February, then there will be a second round of consultations in March, before the project design will be finalised for approval in April. Our tentative goal for implementing the plans is currently May.'

A larger part of doing this well, is developing a clear timeline for your project implementation. This, as with all other elements of complex planning, may

change as you develop your project. But having a clear timeline that is available to your public, is a key part of your communication with your citizens.

In the first alternative, a citizen could feel like an accessory to an unclear process, in the second, they are trusted with key information and milestones that they can track.

KEEP IN MIND:

Think carefully about when you consult the public, and how often. If you keep improving your public engagement processes so that they are in-built, repetitive, and in-depth – you build trust and improve the results you get, year after year.

"[In our experience it is a big mistake to] pretend that you really want to engage the public even though all decisions on a project are already made and their opinions won't actually matter."

*Marie-Helene Nougarede and Isabelle Niessleron,
Mission Démocratie Participative, Lyon, France*



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WHAT RESOURCES DO YOU HAVE AT YOUR DISPOSAL?

When designing your public engagement, it is important to be realistic about what you are capable of achieving. First consider what resources you have at your disposal. You know what you want to achieve – do you have what you need to achieve it?

“When the city does not have enough money and human resources – it can be done through public engagement.”

*Marie-Helene Nougarede and Isabelle Niesseron,
Mission Démocratie Participative, Lyon, France*

Even for resource-strapped cities there are ways in which to stretch available resources and achieve more than you initially thought possible. There are often institutions – other cities even – that you can partner with to help bridge gaps. Even your own citizens can be a resource you can turn to, fulfilling the principles of a lived collaboration and trusting your citizens.

WHAT MONEY DO YOU HAVE AVAILABLE?

Do you have a dedicated budget for this or will you have to work within your existing budget? Are there other funding sources you can turn to – for instance, grants for working with climate change?

WHAT INFORMATION CHANNELS DO YOU HAVE ACCESS TO?

Do online resources already exist and will you have access to them? For example, is there a city-run Twitter account, Facebook account or an official website? Do you have access to radio networks, TV networks, mobile phone messaging networks, marketplace information channels, notice boards, billboards, etc.? Do you have access to partners' distribution methods?

“Having a presence on social media and having someone who can manage it at a city level is important.”

*Marie-Helene Nougarede and Isabelle Niesseron,
Mission Démocratie Participative, Lyon, France*

WHAT STAFFING DO YOU HAVE AVAILABLE?

Ideally you would be able to allocate specific staff to focus on your public engagement project. In a perfect world, you would be able to have dedicated staff focused on each aspect of your project.

Unfortunately, it's rare that a city will have unlimited resources and staffing with which to run extensive public engagement programs. This is why

it is important to know the limitations of your outreach and engagement. That, in turn, can help you look for support and help from other sources.

KEEP IN MIND:

Questions you might ask yourself are:

- Do you have dedicated staff who can work on public engagement?
- Can you ask existing staff (with the right skillsets and knowledge) to take on an additional workload or will you need to bring in extra staff?
- Is there a government unit dedicated to act as a city liaison – or dedicated to other areas that overlap with your engagement strategy – that you could reach out to for help?
- Can you make use of volunteers or trusted partner organizations to fill staffing gaps?

“[During our public engagement process we met] people who can design their own storm water systems, to people who could create and manage carpools. There's all sorts of possibilities there, if you're able to have that openness and the ability to engage with people.”

*Per-Arne Nilsson, Head of the Strategy Department,
the Environmental Administration & Trevor Graham,
Sustainable Communities Consultant, Malmö, Sweden*

WHAT FACILITIES AND EQUIPMENT DO YOU HAVE AVAILABLE?

What rooms, buildings, or open spaces are at your disposal? Does a communications department already exist within your local government? What equipment can you use or borrow from within your institution?

For example: Do you have vehicles at your disposal? Do you have access to equipment – like printers or sound recording equipment – that you could use to produce and disseminate materials?

“We made use of an air quality public information system with ten monitoring display boards in public places.”

Mangesh Dighe, Chief Environmental Officer Pune, India



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WHAT LEVEL OF ENGAGEMENT ARE YOU AIMING FOR?

There are many different methods of public engagement – they can range from conducting surveys, to holding three-day workshops, to building a park together with a community. Each method out there reflects a different level of citizen participation.

Minimum participation would be a situation where the information is flowing one way – from the planners to the citizens. Maximum participation would be a situation where citizens are in full control of the planning process through to implementing the project.

“In one area you may be limited to gardening with school children and that may be as far as you can go. Elsewhere it may be possible to start new businesses which employ locals...I think it’s a matter of just being open, understanding that public engagement can take many different forms and can work in many different ways.”

Per-Arne Nilsson, Head of the Strategy Department, the Environmental Administration & Trevor Graham, Sustainable Communities Consultant, Malmö, Sweden

KEEP IN MIND:

There is no one size fits all approach. It is not necessarily in the citizens', or city's, best interest to end up in a place where the citizens are running the planning process.

The usefulness of each level of citizen participation will depend on your situation. Where your public engagement falls in this range will depend on a number of different factors. You can read up on this in Annex 2.

FURTHER READING

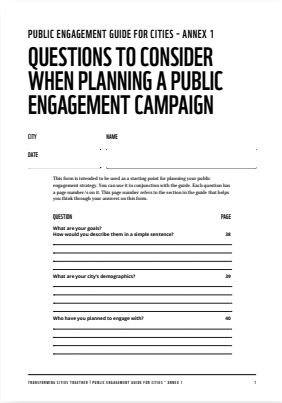
PUBLICATION NAME	ORGANISATION	WEBSITE
100 Great Community Engagement Ideas	MetroQuest, CCOG, & Kimley Horn	https://metroquest.com/wp-content/uploads/Guidebook-100-Great-Community-Engagement-Ideas.pdf
P2 Pillars	IAP2	https://www.iap2.org/mpage/Home
4 Creative Community Engagement Ideas	Smart Density	https://smardensity.com/4-examples-of-the-most-creative-community-engagement-ideas-for-city-planners/
Public Engagement Guide, Toolkit & Plan	Pittsburgh Department of City Planning	https://apps.pittsburghpa.gov/redtail/images/7843_Public_Engagement_Guide.pdf
		https://apps.pittsburghpa.gov/redtail/images/7844_Public_Engagement_Toolkit.pdf
		https://apps.pittsburghpa.gov/redtail/images/7842_PEG_Public_Engagement_Plan.pdf
A Guide to Practical Public Engagement for Local Government	Western City	https://www.westerncity.com/article/guide-practical-public-engagement-local-government
Courses, articles and events offered to public servants	Apolitical	https://apolitical.co/home
UK's public participation charity online resources	Involve UK	https://www.involve.org.uk/resources/knowledge-base
A selection of civic engagement initiatives	European Parliament	https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2020/651970/EPRS_STU(2020)651970_EN.pdf
Book on use of digital tools and social media technologies in public engagement	Springer Publishers	https://link.springer.com/book/10.1007%2F978-3-030-27184-8
KIT: Participation Citoyenne aux Politiques de Solidarites	République Francaise – Ministère des solidarités et de la santé	https://solidarites-sante.gouv.fr/IMG/pdf/kit_participation_citoyenne_hcts.pdf
Online articles	Knight Foundation	https://knightfoundation.org/research/
46 favorite reads on democracy, civic tech and a few other interesting things	Democracy Spot Blog	https://democracyspot-net.cdn.ampproject.org/c/s/democracyspot.net/2021/01/13/46-favorite-reads-on-democracy-civic-tech-and-a-few-other-interesting-things/amp/
Active Citizens	British Council	https://active-citizens.britishcouncil.org/
NEF Ambassadors program	NEF	https://nef.org/nef-ambassadors-programme/
Open platform that uses its community to help generate solutions	OpenIDEO	https://www.openideo.com/



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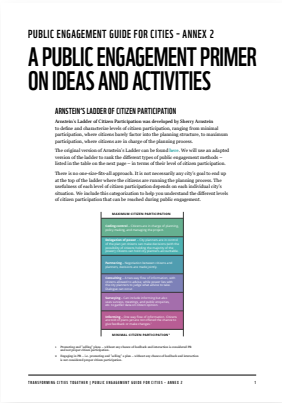
ANNEX 1

Form for the workshops – available as an attachment



ANNEX 2

List of some example public engagement ideas with a simple summary of what they are and how they can help, available as an attachment



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