

Engagement Plan Guidelines

The following guidelines are provided to help you in writing your engagement plan. While in general you may modify your document outside of what is recommended in these guidelines, you will find specific criteria (labeled as such) which must be included in order for your engagement plan to be approved by Long Range Planning staff.

1. Statement of Purpose

The statement of purpose should be a broad level explanation of what you are trying to achieve through the engagement plan, and why. How does engagement support your planning process?

2. Goals of Public Engagement

What are the individual items within your purpose that you are hoping to achieve through this engagement plan.

3. Targeted Groups for Public Involvement

All groups should be included in this process. To ensure representation you will need to examine the population of your study area along three different dimensions: demographic, land use, and geographic distribution.

Specific Criteria: Demographic

- ✓ Provide a demographic breakdown displayed in tables and/or graphs. You can use IndyVitals.org to find data for predetermined neighborhood areas, or you can use Savi.org and customize your geographic boundaries.
- ✓ Identify traditionally underserved populations that are present in your demographic analysis including: persons of color, low-income, renter, immigrant, and refugee populations.

Specific Criteria: Land Use

- ✓ You can use the Comprehensive Plan for the City-County to examine land use within your study area - this can help you identify different groups such as property owners, residents, and businesses that you will need to engage with.

Specific Criteria: Geographic Distribution

- ✓ Stakeholders from all throughout the study area should be engaged. For example, if there are different clusters of residential areas care should be taken to reach out to all of them rather than defaulting to one area.

4. Public Engagement Methods

This is the “how” to the previous section’s “who”. This section should explain the different methods of communication and engagement you’ll be using, including meetings and events. Engaging with everyone within your study area is crucial, as you will see in the specific criteria.

Specific Criteria

- ✓ Provide alternative ways for people to provide input and engage other than attending a scheduled event or meeting.

Specific Criteria

- ✓ Specify strategies to engage the different populations identified in your “Targeted Groups for Public Involvement” section.

4a. Meetings

Ideally, there should be different meeting times and locations to increase access to all individuals and organizations within your study area. Keep in mind barriers to meeting attendance including mobility constraints (e.g. unable to drive), and schedule constraints (e.g. can not go to meetings at certain times).

List the following regarding your meetings:

- Location(s).
- Time(s). You can be more general if you don’t have specific dates set yet.
- Frequency.
- Methods of promoting/informing the community of their occurrence.

4b. Events

Events are a great way to promote your community planning efforts, get people excited, and get other, previously uninvolved community members involved.

List the following regarding your events:

- Purpose and brief description.
- Location(s).
- Time(s). You can be more general if you don’t have specific dates set yet.
- Methods of promoting/informing the community of their occurrence.

4c. Alternative methods of engagement

Remember not everyone can or wants to participate in in-person meetings or events, but their voice matters too. Think about other ways people can participate - this can include anything from social media and online surveys to flyers at popular community gathering areas. You can be as creative as you want!

5. Coordination with Other Organizations

This section should be used to explain the who, how, and when of your coordination efforts. Collaboration is a key part of the planning process - planning efforts which exclude major institutions within the study area are unlikely to be successful. You should also consider including organizations which are city-wide that can help you through this process, such as the Indianapolis Neighborhood Resource Center (INRC). Additionally, you may partner with a convening entity (optional, but recommended) who can help you by providing staff, meeting space, and improved legitimacy in the eyes of other potential partners and funders. If you have a convening entity that will be helping you through this process, include them here.

Specific Criteria

- ✓ List the institutions or organizations within your study area, as well as how you plan to engage or collaborate with them.