

Community Engagement

12/22/2020

Where we have been...

1. RVA Green 2050 Overview/Climate Change (1st Session)
2. Racial Equity Centered (2nd Session)
3. Developing a Vision & Equity Framework (3rd Session)
4. Create a Racial Equity Vision & Framework
5. Equitable Community Engagement Overview

Where we are going next...

- **Develop Principles of Equitable Community Engagement**
- Develop a community/equity focused engagement strategy for the planning process.
- Engagement Implementation
- Help craft strategies to meet climate change goals

Working Groups Recap / Updates

Roundtable Meeting 12/22/2020

DRAFT Vision Statement

The vision for an equitable, healthy, and resilient Richmond is one where carbon emissions are net-zero and a person's race, identity, socio-economic status, or zip code does not determine life expectancy, quality of life, or economic opportunity.

- Everyone has equitable access across the entire city to resources that are clean, sustainable, and affordable, including air, water, energy, housing, transportation, and green infrastructure.
- Everyone has the capacity and resources to take ownership of equitable climate action and community resilience planning.
- “Identity” includes but is not limited to: race, ethnicity, age, ability, gender, sexual orientation, and religion. We lead with race in our work to transform systems impacting all marginalized groups.*

**See City of Seattle, [Why Lead with Race?](#)*

Main Takeaways - Vision Statement (All Groups)

- Like that we are leading with race
- Like the definition of “identity”
- Like the connection to health, equity, and climate
- Simplify
- Define net-zero/carbon emissions
- Define green infrastructure
- Include other pollutants
- Include food justice
- Overly focused on humans
 - Animals
 - Ecosystems

Discussion: Thoughts on this feedback?

Working Groups Feedback (Logistics)

What we heard:

- *Specific to Environment Working Group:* It was too rushed to try to do the vision **and** equity tool activities in one meeting.
- In general, we are covering a lot of content in a small amount of time.

Changes:

- The rest of the groups only discussed the vision last week. All groups will discuss the equity tool at the next meeting.
- Extend meetings from 90 minutes to 2 hours.
- Add additional meetings in March to allow for more time now to set foundation.

Questions for discussion:

- **How have the working group meetings been going for you?**
- **Do you have any additional feedback or suggestions?**

Principles of Equitable & Inclusive Community Engagement

From what you just heard,
What principles resonate most with you?

Examples of Principles from other localities...

Portland, Oregon

❖ **Partnership**

Community members have a right to be involved in decisions that affect them. Participants can influence decision-making and receive feedback on how their input was used. The public has the opportunity to recommend projects and issues for government consideration.

❖ **Early Involvement**

Public involvement is an early and integral part of issue and opportunity identification, concept development, design, and implementation of city policies, programs, and projects.

❖ **Building Relationships and Community Capacity**

Public involvement processes invest in and develop long-term, collaborative working relationships and learning opportunities with community partners and stakeholders.

❖ **Inclusiveness and Equity**

Public dialogue and decision-making processes identify, reach out to, and encourage participation of the community in its full diversity. Processes respect a range of values and interests and the knowledge of those involved. Historically excluded individuals and groups are included authentically in processes, activities, and decision and policy making. Impacts, including costs and benefits, are identified and distributed fairly.

❖ **Good Quality Process Design and Implementation**

Public involvement processes and techniques are well-designed to appropriately fit the scope, character, and impact of a policy or project. Processes adapt to changing needs and issues as they move forward.

❖ **Transparency**

Public decision-making processes are accessible, open, honest, and understandable. Members of the public receive the information they need, and with enough lead time, to participate effectively.

❖ **Accountability**

City leaders and staff are accountable for ensuring meaningful public involvement in the work of city government.



Examples of Principles from other localities...

Alexandria, Virginia (part 1)



- **RESPECT:** Alexandria values a process of engagement where participants demonstrate respect in words and actions and approach decisions with open-mindedness so that everyone feels comfortable expressing their opinion regardless of differences.
- **INCLUSIVENESS AND EQUITY:** Alexandria reaches out to and encourages the participation of all members of the community in dialogue and decision-making processes, including those who will be affected by the issue as well as those who have not historically been engaged. All members of the community are informed and empowered to participate; all views are equally heard and inform the outcome; and all impacts and benefits are fairly distributed.
- **EARLY INVOLVEMENT:** Alexandria identifies and involves stakeholders early in decision-making processes. Community members are involved in framing issues before any conclusions have been drawn, requiring early and ongoing communication with participants through each phase in the process.
- **EASY PARTICIPATION:** Alexandria promotes open and readily accessible government. Communications and information are timely, easy to understand, and offered in a variety of formats, appropriate to a given process. The City will provide clarity about the public decision making process, including milestones and a defined endpoint. Participants will have the flexibility to participate in a variety of ways, including online and in person.

Examples of Principles from other localities...

Alexandria, Virginia (part 2)



- **MEANINGFUL ENGAGEMENT:** Alexandria provides opportunities for all community members to participate in an open and unbiased process, free of predetermined outcomes, to consider and deliberate feasible options. The City authentically solicits, acknowledges, incorporates, and responds to community input.
- **MUTUAL ACCOUNTABILITY:** The City and community are mutually accountable for a fair process, honest and respectful participation, informed and fact-based discussion, outcomes that reflect citizen input, and acceptance of the result. City processes will include meaningful assessments to measure progress, implementation of improvements as needed, and effective communication of both.
- **TRANSPARENCY:** City government will act with integrity in an open process, and will provide timely access to clear, trustworthy information, presented and employed by all parties from the beginning to the end of the process, including the reasoning that leads to and supports the policy conclusion.
- **SUSTAINED COLLABORATION:** Alexandria promotes a culture of community engagement that enhances public decision making processes and invests in long-term working relationships, learning opportunities and ongoing, open collaboration between community members, community groups, City leaders and staff.
- **EVALUATION:** The City will work in partnership with the community to periodically assess the application of civic engagement principles. The evaluation will quantify participant feedback, document lessons learned, and identify strategies for refinement.

Examples of Principles from other localities...



Austin, Texas

- **Accessibility and Inclusion:** We are committed to provide a variety of options for participation, along with supportive resources and accommodations that enable underrepresented segments of our community to participate in a meaningful way.
- **Accountability:** We will provide complete and easy-to understand information on the issues, and make a complete record of feedback available to both participants and decision-makers.
- **Collaboration:** We will work in partnership with the community to develop engagement processes that are appropriate to the needs and preferences of the participants, and that result in recommendations that are informed by the history and the shared knowledge of the communities we serve.
- **Consistency:** In every engagement, we will provide advance notice of opportunities, meeting agendas, discussion agreements, timelines and clear information about how participation will be used in the decision-making process.
- **Respect:** We will maintain a mutually respectful environment that cultivates and supports inclusive public engagement and honest dialogue between and among participants and City representatives.
- **Stewardship:** We will conduct ourselves as stewards of the public's resources, respecting and recognizing that the community has a voice in how those resources are used.