CITY OF CHARLOTTE

Meaningful public participation is achieved with intention.

Great engagement doesn't happen by accident.
It is intentionally designed before participation begins.

Charlotte's Standard Operating Procedure for Engagement (SOP-E) provides a consistent framework for designing public participation that is purposeful, transparent, and aligned with project decisions.

The result: meaningful participation that informs decisions, better-informed decisions, and demonstrated accountability.

BEFORE ENGAGEMENT BEGINS, WE ASK:

1. **WHAT DECISION IS BEING MADE?**
   Clarify the decision and what matters.
2. **WHO ARE THE IMPACTED STAKEHOLDERS?**
   Identify the people and communities affected.
3. **WHAT ROLE WILL THE PUBLIC HAVE IN DECISION-MAKING?**
   Define the level of influence and how input will be used.
4. **WHAT BARRIERS COULD PREVENT PARTICIPATION?**
   Identify potential barriers and plan to remove them.
5. **HOW WILL SUCCESS BE MEASURED?**
   Establish indicators for engagement and impact.
6. **HOW WILL WE DEMONSTRATE THAT PARTICIPATION MATTERED?**
   Plan how we will show what we heard and what changed.

MEANINGFUL PARTICIPATION THAT INFORMS DECISIONS. BETTER-INFORMED DECISIONS. DEMONSTRATED ACCOUNTABILITY.

THE ENGAGEMENT PLANNING PROCESS

1. **DEFINE THE DECISION**
   Clarify the decision, objectives, and context.
2. **DESIGN PARTICIPATION**
   Determine participation needs and design stakeholder-centered participation.
3. **IMPLEMENT**
   Use the right tools and approaches to engage the right people.
4. **EVALUATE & ADAPT**
   Measure what matters, learn, and make course corrections.
5. **CLOSE THE LOOP**
   Share what we learned and how it influenced decisions.

ENGAGEMENT PLANNING IS RISK MANAGEMENT.
Plan intentionally. Engage purposefully.
Reduce project risk and strengthen outcomes.

EVERY ENGAGEMENT PLAN INCLUDES

1. Engagement Objectives
2. Public Participation Role
3. Stakeholder Analysis
4. Success Measures
5. Aligned Tools & Techniques
6. Engagement Timeline
7. Evaluation & Adjustment
8. Public Feedback Loop

When applicable, every City project develops an Engagement Plan **before** engagement begins.

OUR ORGANIZATIONAL FOUNDATION

PUBLIC EXPERIENCE
The desired experience people have when interacting with government.

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SOP-E
The standard for designing meaningful public participation.

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ENGAGEMENT PLAN
The tailored plan that guides implementation and delivers results.

Good design leads to meaningful participation.
Meaningful participation leads to better public decisions.

BLUEPRINT THINKING

Start with the decision, the public's role, and the people it affects— then choose the right tools and approaches.

Intentional design. Purposeful participation. Stronger outcomes.

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