

# SRPEDD Project Development: Resources for Scoping a Comprehensive Public Engagement Process

## Guiding Principles that Motivate Public Engagement

In all of our projects, the SRPEDD team recognizes the foundational role that public participation must play in crafting the vision and strategies that our plans embody. We remind ourselves that meaningful public participation is essential in achieving plans that are:

- **Authentic.** The plan will reflect the real views of members of the community rooted in their true experience of place, leading to better decision-making.
- **Legitimate.** The plan is the result of a process that conforms to our norms of participatory government and represents as wide a spectrum of viewpoints as possible, seeking out input from traditionally underrepresented groups.
- **Informative.** The planning process presents data that set a common factual baseline upon which participants can build their conclusions.
- **Collaborative.** The process encourages dialogue across different points of view and treats the public as a partner in defining and refining a future vision for the community.
- **Practicable.** The plan is more likely to be implemented and remain a living document because it was prompted by the needs and aspirations of engaged citizens.

## Common Barriers to Engagement

While our intent is to reach as many local residents and stakeholders as possible in public engagement campaigns, it can be extremely challenging to do so. In our experience, here are some of the more common barriers to participation:



Language Barriers



Transportation  
Access



Limited Incomes



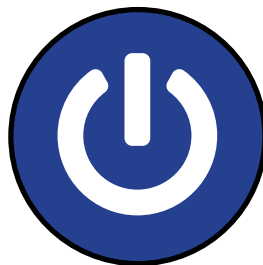
Work Schedules



Childcare  
Responsibilities



Physical Access  
at Event



(Dis)comfort with  
Technology



Safe/Habitual  
Spaces for BIPOC  
Populations

## Proactive Public Engagement Planning to help address Barriers

We have created these resource documents to assist in creating a proactive public engagement plan that aims to reach traditionally under-served groups in planning. We suggest using this resource in the following way:

1. Review the menu of sample public engagement options on pages 3+
2. Reference these options while collaboratively completing the engagement plan matrix on page 2

## Engagement Plan Matrix - fillable pdf

Project Title:			
	Print	Digital	In-Person
Principal Strategies			
Assisting Strategies			
Equitable Engagement Modifiers			
How community feedback will be incorporated into project and shared:			

### Definitions / Examples

The difference between Principal and Assisting Methods is the level of time and effort required (Principal Methods require more time and effort to complete). An Equitable Engagement Modifier is a strategy that is specifically undertaken to overcome barriers to participation that EJ or Climate Vulnerable Populations regularly encounter.

**Example, In-Person Category:** Public meeting series (**principal method**) - Include survey at end of meetings, live-cast meetings on Zoom (**assisting methods**) - Rotate meeting location across three sites within 1/4 mile of transit (**equitable engagement modifier**). Project steering committee will set aside time to review public input at each of their meetings (**how community feedback will be incorporated**).

## Menu of Engagement Options

Barrier Variable	Target Population	In-Person	Virtual
<p style="text-align: center;">Age</p> <p>*Regional average for percent of Older Adults in a census tract is 14.48%</p>	Older Adults (65 or over)	Project information in Councils on Aging materials/newsletters	Facebook
		Project meeting at the Council on Aging center	
		Large-print flyers for large print books checked out of local libraries	
	Young Adults (high school/ college)	Reach out to high school teachers / academic departments	
		Posters for school	
	Youth (below high school)	Materials sent to parents advertising project	
		Coloring book activity during meetings	Family friendly virtual activities
		Build a game activity	
		Attend civics/social studies course to talk about planning and project	
Child Status	Parents	"Families encouraged" tagline on meeting advertisements	
		Self-paced engagement activities that can also serve recreational purpose (signs along a trail, etc)	
		<i>Child care component at meetings (SRPEDD researching this option, not available yet)</i>	

<p>Income</p> <p>*Regional average percent below poverty level by census tract - 12.13%</p>	Low Income Persons / Persons living in Poverty	Provide food and refreshments at meetings	Live broadcasts of meetings, especially on platforms that do not require a computer (e.g. local cable TV)
	Persons without a private vehicle	Meeting locations along transit routes	
		Rotate in-person meeting locations	
<p>ADA Status</p> <p>*Regional average for persons with disabilities by census tract - 13.75%</p>	Visual Difficulty / Hearing Difficulty	Asking ahead of in person meetings for notification if a sign language interpreter is necessary or if materials will be required for those with visual difficulty	Improve accessibility of the website to accommodate persons with vision and hearing difficulty; MassRelay
			Closed Captioning for videos
	Ambulatory Difficulty / Cognitive Difficulty	Hold physical meetings at locations that are accessible	Host virtual meetings that eliminate the barrier to attend physical locations
		Outreach to agencies focused on these specific populations for transportation options, etc.	
	Self-care Difficulty / Independent Living Difficulty		Host virtual meetings that eliminate the barrier to attend physical locations

<p>Underrepresented Groups</p> <p>*Regional average for non-white persons by census tract - 10.98%</p>	<p>BIPOC individuals / communities</p> <p>*BIPOC = black, indigenous, and / or persons of color</p>	Hold meetings in locations that exceed the regional average for BIPOC populations	
		Hold meetings in neighborhood / community spaces	
		Outreach to neighborhood associations	
		Mobile outreach / table at local pop-up events	
		Self-directed engagement activities, such as <a href="#">"Yorktown Chatterbox" (scroll down link page)</a>	Self-directed engagement activities, such as "Meeting in a Box"
<p>Limited English Proficiency</p> <p>*Regional average for LEP persons by census tract - 7.4%</p> <p>For our region: Portuguese, Spanish, and Haitian Creole are top 3</p>	<p>Portuguese / Spanish / Haitian-Creole Speakers, Other languages as needed</p>	Translating Materials	Closed captioning for videos with translations (if possible live)
		Interpreter at meetings if requested (need to ask ahead of time)	
		Tablet with Google Translate ability at meetings	
		Partner with local organizations to carry out presentations and gather information in native language	Self-directed engagement activities, such as "Meeting in a Box," materials translated