

City of Boulder
Public Participation Working Group

Wednesday, April 19, 2017

4:00 pm – 7: 00 pm

Municipal Service Center, 5050 East Pearl St., MSC Large Conference Room

Agenda

Meeting Purpose: To discuss components of the Report including 1) the Identified Issues and City Council Questions and 2) Recommendations and Steps. Outline next steps and determine whether and how to include examples in the Report.

Time	Agenda Topic
4:00 pm – 4:10 pm	Welcome, Introductions and Agenda Review
4:10 pm – 4:20 pm	Public Comment
4:20 pm – 5:20 pm	Briefing and Discussion: Identified Issues Section in the Report Desired Outcome: PPWG is briefed by the SubCommittee responsible for outlining the Issues to be addressed or the “Case for Change” and a ways to respond to the Council Questions.
5:20 pm – 5:30 pm	Break
5:30 – 6:30	Briefing and Discussion: Integration of Recommendations and Process Steps Desired Outcome: PPWG is briefed by the SubCommittee responsible for integrating recommendations and incorporating “steps”; determination of direction forward.
6:30 pm – 6:50 pm	Next Steps and Assignments
6:50 pm – 7:00 pm	Public Comment

MEETING SUMMARY

Attendees

PPWG Members: Sean Collins, DeAnne Buttefield, Kristi Russell, Carol Cogswell, Claire Riley, Bill Shrum, Anne Cooper, Sandra Diaz

City Staff: Jean Gatza

Facilitators: Jonathan Bartsch, Taber Ward

Members of the Public: Lydia Reinig, Susan Balint

Agenda suggestions:

- We need to discuss next steps and what is our strategy for producing the report

Issue and Problem Statement Review

See modified DRAFT FRAMEWORK attached with edits and comments from the PPWG – edits in **RED**.

The next steps will be to integrate problems and solutions

The group discussed how to include Case Study examples without presenting a biased opinion that could detract from the overall message. For example, if the reader agreed with the outcome of the Co-op Housing issue, they might disagree with it being used as an example of poor public process.

It was suggested that the Case Studies be re-written as lessons learned and integrated in a way that was neither negative or positive.

Susan Balint, member of the public, asked to comment to the group re: issues/problem statements:

- Personal agendas driving staff and Council decisions
- Need to use a more diverse use of communication tools – mail, surveys, etc
- Need data and cumulative impacts –people never look at consequences of decisions in the long-term or large scale.

Integration of Recommendations and Process Steps

Marjorie and DeAnne presented their Steps and Tools Documents to the group. They stressed that these were NOT the Recommendations, but a way for the PPWG to look at best practices.

The group discussed how prescriptive the Report should be. E.g. Does the PPWG want to recommend specific tools -- initiate more Town Halls -- or does the group want to tackle bigger problems with the culture of public engagement in Boulder, include the public early and often in decision-making.

There was not a conclusion on this discussion.

There was also group discussion around how to apply the STEPS to programs, policies or projects. The STEPS are not linear, there is a circular nature to the STEPS and they will be used at different times in the process and may be used over and over again.

Another discussion were the “58 tools” – should this list be edited and prioritized? Or should the long list of tools remain because they are all important.

It was agreed that the group would work together to organize the STEPS into “**culture**” versus “**tools**” with the hope that this would help prioritize the “58 tools” into Recommendations. The group would do this by Friday, April 28.

Kristi Russell volunteered to create a Google Spreadsheet where the PPWG could all put their thoughts on separating the “Illustrative Tools” from Deanne and Marjorie’s document (the “How” document.)

The group would organize the 58 tools into **Culture** (if they thought that the entry is associated with the ‘bigger picture’ Culture of Boulder Public Engagement), **Steps** (if they thought that the entry is more closely associated with one of the specific Steps to Public Engagement that are to be taken for a project/program/policy), or **Other** (if they felt it should go elsewhere.)

Next Steps Drafting the Report

Phase #1

1. Kristie will create spreadsheet re: Culture and Steps, Step #1, Other, Why – put in 58 items – April 27
2. Create a blurb about culture change – DeAnne – May 1
3. Revised Problem Statement - Sean, Taber and Marjorie (editor) – May 1
4. Introduction – Jean Gatza - May 1
5. Next Meeting is May 8
6. Taber to send Doodle Poll for a meeting the week of May 15 *Tuesday or Friday*

Phase #2

7. Draft Report by May 15 – Bill, Marjorie
8. Finalize Report on May 22

Public Comment

Susan Balint

- The STEPS seems like they should be organized into a “Flowchart of best practices”
- The 58 Tools are a toolbox of “how” to implement the Steps.
- Suggestion that the 58 tools be narrowed and prioritized to help Council identify the strongest points to be implemented
- The audience is Council
- Be clear and pointed. This is a ROADMAP for Council.
- In the Appendix of the Report – include “who you received correspondence from”
 - list of bullet points of areas that need to be addressed.
 - Put these ideas in and put in bullet points that people have addressed.

PPWG

DRAFT REPORT OUTLINE_v5

4/26/17 Update

I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

II. INTRODUCTION – **Jean Gatzka to start writing**

- Purpose of the PPWG Committee
- Charge of the PPWG
- PPWG Members
- PPWG Decision-Making Process
- Methodology

III. MAKING THE CASE FOR CHANGE -

- A definitive and bold statement of the overall problem [STILL TO DO]
- The need to change the culture
- Outline issues to be address by Recommended Strategies [DONE]
- Identify specific projects/case studies to demonstrate an issue and identify the problems (undecided how this fits in – want to be careful not to alienate the reader by creating biased perspective).
- List City Council Questions here to help make the case [DONE]

Outline of the Problems:

1. **Community members do not understand the process of public engagement including the WHO, WHAT, WHERE, HOW and WHEN:**

A. WHO

1. Who is responsible for policy and program changes (e.g. Staff, Council, Boards and Commissions, private parties, advocacy groups);
2. Who proposes and approves new projects;
3. Who defines the project goals and outcomes;
4. Who is the advocate/point person for public engagement, i.e. Neighborhood Liaison.

B. WHAT

1. What methods of engagement are available (public comment, email, attending open meetings, reaching out directly to staff and council members, town halls, forming/participating in advocacy groups);
2. What level of engagement is appropriate and effective at certain points in the process;
3. What language and level of clarity is used to communicate to the public (e.g. acronyms, jargon, non-English speaking populations);

4. What metrics, if any, are used to evaluate the costs and benefits to the community.

C. WHERE

1. Where public input is received (online, CC, email, boards and commissions, etc.);
2. Where to find accurate and updated information around public meetings, projects, policies and programs.

D. HOW

1. How to initiate changes to City policies and programs;
2. How proposed plans, policies and programs integrate with existing plans, frameworks and decision-making bodies (e.g. Chautauqua parking plan is related to historic, planning, transportation, open space, etc. . .);
3. How public input is used during the decision-making process;
4. How are projects, programs and policies evaluated and modified after implementation.

E. WHEN

1. When public input is impactful and effective in each circumstance;
2. When to provide input from big-picture policies (e.g. Comprehensive Plan and Transportation Master Plan) to more detailed input (e.g. Recreation Center Pool Hours).

Example from Case Study on Co-op Ordinance Revision:

Providing opportunities for community members to engage early on in City decision-making processes is crucial to good public engagement.

Ideas forwarded from the City Council Retreat:

- “Information should be shared in easily accessible locations that encourage passive and active participation.”
- “The community needs better information about meetings, such as what is on the agenda and what will be decided. This includes dividing the packet, so it is easier to pick and choose information.”
- “Town hall meetings could improve two-way communication.”
- “Information for the public should be shared in easily accessible locations that encourage passive and active participation.”
- “Each issue should have a defined problem.”
- “Each issue should have a defined decision space.”
- “The CAC calendar should be updated after every meeting.”
- “For certain controversial issues, one or two city council members should synthesize and summarize the feedback from the community to date. CAC will pilot this effort.”
- “The council calendar should be pushed out to the community and easily accessible.”

- “Council members should share their rationale for making their decision, how they came to that decision, and what feedback they heard on all major issues.”

2. The public lacks confidence and trust in the City’s decision-making process.
 - A. There is a public perspective that outcomes have already been determined behind closed doors before public input is sought.
 - B. Community members are not informed and engaged at the early concept stage of project, policy, or program development.
 - C. There is not enough communication around how public input impacts related decisions. The feedback loop connecting decisions to input is incomplete.
 - D. Sometimes, city decision-making does not represent or reflect community members’ public input.

Example from Case Study on Affordable Housing Linkage Fees: There needs to be a deliberate effort to connect objective data, recommendations and public testimony to final decisions made.

Example from Case Study on Housing Boulder Working Groups If public input is solicited in the decision-making process, it is essential that outcomes are not predetermined or the City loses credibility and community members feel disenfranchised.

Idea forwarded from the City Council Retreat:

- “Boards and commissions should help with public feedback, process and outreach as a strategy to provide more information and increase communication with city council.”
- “Town hall meetings could improve two-way communication.”
- “Synthesize feedback that has been received by numbers, themes and other necessary breakdowns.”
- “Video clips of deliberations and final decisions should be posted online and on social media.” **The City is implementing this**
- “Synthesize different feedback that has been received by numbers, themes, and other necessary breakdowns.”
- “The Op-Ed page in the Boulder Daily Camera could be utilized more to explain rationale.”
- “Town hall meetings could improve two-way communication.”

3. **The people who participate in public engagement do not reflect the overall community.**
 - A. There is a disconnect in the demographics of people who participate in public engagement and the community as a whole.
 - B. There is a lack of transparency in the selection of boards, commissions and working group members.
 - C. There is a lack of data on public participation demographics and input.
 - D. The City does not specifically reach out to underrepresented community members and groups to solicit public input.

Example from Case Study on Housing Boulder Working Groups: Transparency needs to be a criteria in the selection process for working groups, boards and commissions.

City Council Ideas

- “Synthesize different feedback that has been received by numbers, themes, and other necessary breakdowns.”
- “Information for the public should be shared in easily accessible locations that encourage passive and active participation.”
- “Regular, randomized surveys could be used on key issues to gauge community values.
- “Survey Monkey could be used to gather perspectives on small issues, but not those political in nature.”

4. Community members are not adequately informed. There are problems with the way information is being shared between the City and the community, including:

- A. Information needs to be clear, relevant, accessible and timely.
- B. Public engagement and information sharing need to be prioritized and sufficiently resourced in order to be successful.
- C. The City does not provide ample opportunities for two-way communication to improve the experience and active participation of community members.
- D. Information-sharing systems do not reach enough people.

Example from Case Study on North Trail Study Area: Resources, time and flexibility are critical components of an information sharing systems to ensure that residents are adequately informed on City processes, policy-making and projects.

Ideas forwarded from the City Council Retreat:

- “Town hall meetings could improve two-way communication.”
- “The Op-Ed page in the Camera could be utilized more to explain rationale.”
- “Information for the public should be shared in easily accessible locations that encourage passive and active participation.”
- “Boards and commissions should help with public feedback, processed, and outreach as a strategy to provide more information and increase communication with city council.”
- “Synthesize feedback on topics that have already been addressed and where all this information is available.”
- “Synthesize different feedback that has been received by numbers, themes, and other necessary breakdowns.”

5. Public participation and communication skills could be improved. Participants need expectations for appropriate (and respectful) “rules of engagement.” Effective roles and responsibilities for all parties in public engagement need to be clearly defined and communicated.

- A. There are not sufficient ground rules for public participation in forums while allowing for full public expression without ‘policing.’
- B. There is a lack of training for City staff, council, boards/commissions and community members on public input skills and communication.

- C. There is lack of spaces/forums where community members with divergent perspectives can engage in a productive manner.
- D. There is lack of public input facilitation to increase effectiveness of public engagement.

Example from Case Study on “Right sizing”—the Living Lab: Rules of engagement and communication skills are essential or both the public participation process and the subsequent project can degrade into a disrespectful and harmful outcome.

Ideas forwarded from the City Council Retreat:

- “All emails should be responded to by council.”
- “There needs to be a way to correct misinformation that is shared in public comments, emails, and letters to the editor.” **The city is correcting information via emails, but not op-ed or public comment.**

IV. CORE PRICIPLES OF PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

- The work is defined
- Public engagement is thoughtfully planned
- All **interested stakeholders and diverse perspectives** are included
- Public contribution, Civil participation
- The process is trustworthy and transparent

V. STEPS TO PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT – Marjorie and DeAnne

Defining the Work

1. Define the Issues/Work
2. Determine Who is Affected
3. Create a Public Engagement Plan and **Incorporate Levels of Engagement**
4. Define Data and Information Needs

Problem Solving

5. Identify and Develop Options
6. Evaluate Options
7. Make Transparent Decisions

Implementation and Solutions

8. Communicate Decision and Rationale
9. Reflect and Evaluate
10. Responsiveness to failure

VI. Recommendations/ Strategies

- For each of the recommendations need a description of **how** to do this, **why** it is important, the **desired outcomes** and possible **examples** for consideration or discussion of tools.
 - **Office of Citizen Involvement or Office of Engagement and Communication**
 - i. How:

- ii. Why: To coordinate citizen involvement, community engagement and communication; apply resources, attention and time.
 - iii. Desired Outcome: Streamline the process, ensure public engagement consistent, transparent and resourced, etc.
 - iv. Examples: other municipalities
 - Austin, TX or Portland, OR?
 - <https://www.austintexas.gov/communityengagement>
 - <http://www.oregonmetro.gov/regional-leadership/diversity-equity-and-inclusion/office-public-engagement>
- **Build skills of residents, interest groups, neighborhoods, staff, boards, council**
 - i. How
 - Define data and information needs: example- zoning laws, real and personal face on those impacted; consider environmental impact of ‘in-commuting.’ Explore, evaluate and communicate options (pro’s and con’s)
 - Connected issues—context
 - Misinformation corrected—Snopes type site for the city
 - Context—what decisions build on or relate to already in place
 - How to be Heard: Guidelines, Processes and ‘ways’ for effective two way communications as well as one way communication of information
 - Community organizing approach: work with non-profit partners who have the relationships with harder to reach underrepresented populations, roundtables.
 - Partnerships with: local scientists, other professionals such as mediators, PR, research, engage groups such as Youth Opportunities advisory board to leverage their expertise, local ad and tech agencies to develop more innovative and technologically appropriate messaging, multiple channels for communication
 - ii. Why: Project and proposal related neighborhood meetings should have a higher level of staff involvement, perhaps even organized and managed by staff to ensure the provision of objective info, back ground and roles,
 - iii. Desired Outcome: Inform and educate in early stages for well grounded understanding of issues rather than opportunity for hardened and polarized positions
 - iv. Examples
- **Continue to develop Neighborhood Summit Model**
 - i. How
 - ii. Why
 - iii. Desired Outcome

iv. Examples

- **Create consistency around communicating key elements of projects**
 - **How:**
 - Describe process for input and decision making that will be used: Define the issue and Identify Level(s) of participation and engagement for each decision and each step of that decision (aware/inform; consult; involve; collaborate)
 - Neighbors are engaged in conversation if not planning well before any projects are proposed or planned (BHP)
 - Community Impact/social impact Statements
 - Timing: Early in process so influence and inform
 - Who makes final decision: when is it made.
 - Guidelines/codes for conduct to be heard and effective
 - Check-in during process if following principles and structure
 - Calendar/schedule
 - Transparent process and criteria for selection of members of Boards, Commissions, Work Groups. Consider access to process from stakeholders in community.
 - Innovation: Opportunities where staff and council can try new solutions that may be mistakes from which we can learn and innovate
 - i. **Why:** People need to know how to engage and participate: Transparent, Systematized and Standardized Structures So People Know What To Expect And How/When To Engage
 - ii. **Desired Outcome**
 - iii. **Examples:**
 - iv. **Tools:**
- **Employ ways to make it easier for people to pay attention to the numerous issues and projects underway**
 - i. How
 - ii. Why
 - iii. Desired Outcome
 - iv. Examples
- **Process Monitoring: Communicate Decisions and Debrief Process Post-Decision**
 - i. How
 - Publish dissenting views alongside decisions
 - Look at process with a set of questions such as: who participated? How did they participate? Etc.
 - ii. **Why:**

- iii. Desired Outcome: Provide reasons for decisions—what opinions, information, impacts were considered-- How relate to Comp Plan Core Values and Sustainability Framework (eg Social Impact Statement
 - iv. Examples
- **Employ ways to engage those not usually involved**
 - i. How
 - Determine who is affected. Transparent criteria and process to identify who is a stakeholder and whose voices are included in different ways. (is the ecology of the area a stakeholder in Boulder beyond human interests?)
 - Develop habits of listening, strive for understanding, identify common good, seek convergence; from Move from win/lose to expand the pie, balance interests and needs, from political lobbying, personal advocacy—move to common good/vision
 - Identify Explicit Roles and Responsibilities: this includes transparent selection process for panels and commissions.
 - Summarize what has come from public input at council meetings and public hearings
 - Uniformity of materials and formats
 - Public notices: Formal notices to all, more detailed info in public notices, timely notification of city actions, description and info on project signage
 - Work with Daily Camera to create an opportunity for regular contributions from Council in op-ed pages,
 - Written: Websites, newsletters with info on issues so it is gathered in one format not only many separate emails, meetings; Social Media: video clips, surveys online and other; see Seattle planning website
 - Language: Spanish language access to written and oral (acknowledge there are other language families in our city as well; consider non-jargon English
 - Venues (consider times people can participate): Open Houses where citizens can interact with early design concepts, parks, churches, monthly Town Halls, community facilities, Farmer's Market , kiosks, coffees, meetings, neighborhood summits, Host monthly "workshops" where city, staff, and / or professionals provide information, clarity, answers, assistance, etc. for citizens. A monthly "advocacy" type of event, in a new location each month, neighborhood liaisons or staffer assigned to each neighborhood, childcare
 - From Water Resources Advisory Board To Council

- Format to enable public to better participate in meetings
- Focused discussion on most important items; Council members keep comments succinct
- Engage with advisory boards and their members; One or two council assigned to Boards or commissions to attend yearly public coffee
- ii. Why
- iii. Desired Outcome: **Include Multiple Voices/Stakeholders In The Process: Formats To Reach Out And Provide Access Across The Community, Particularly For All Those Impacted.**
- iv. Examples
- **Produce a Public Engagement Annual Report**
 - i. How
 - ii. Why: An annual report covering public engagement review and notable public involvement activities
 - iii. Desired Outcome
 - iv. Examples: Portland, OR:
http://www.oregonmetro.gov/sites/default/files/Public_engagement_annual%20report_20150201.pdf

VII. DEFINITIONS

- Use the word “community members” not stakeholders.
- Define what we mean by the “City” to include council, boards and commissions, working groups and staff.
- Define “equitable”
- Two-way communication/engagement
- Define process
- Define public engagement

VIII. Appendices?