Appendix C. Community-Engagement-Plan Template

NOTE: See Step 4 in *A Handbook for Historic Resilience Community Planning* for guidance on completing this worksheet.

Community engagement is a process of involving and empowering community members and organizations so that they can inform the historic resilience planning process. This worksheet will help you gather the necessary information to develop a customized strategy for engaging your community in the planning process. The process was adapted from the Community Engagement Plan prepared for the School of Government in the UNC Department of City and Regional Planning 2021 Spring Workshop by masters students Austin Amandolia, Qing Cheng, Katie Koffman, Cheng Ma, Amy Sechrist, Shane Sweeney, Lauren Turner, Ellery Walker, Carly Wang, and Maggie Wiener under the guidance of Lecturer John Tallmadge. The original worksheet was included in the School’s *PlanNC Guidebook: A Practitioner’s Guide to Preparing Streamlined Community Plans*.

### Part 1. Identifying Key Elements and Players

Sit down with local planning officials and work through the following questions together.

1. Identify Goals
2. What are your goals for community engagement in the historic resilience community planning process?

1. Identify Stakeholders

A stakeholder is a person or group who has an interest or concern in something, or who will be impacted by the decision or plan. Examples include business owners, community groups, local organizations, churches, schools, families with children, retirees, other residents, elected officials, local staff, etc.

1. Who are the key groups that will be affected by a historic resilience community plan? Identify at least one key community leader or member from each group who could provide input on the community-engagement process. Try to think outside the box.

| Historic Resilience Community Plan’s Stakeholders | | |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Group | Unique Contributions It Can Make? | Key Contact |
| Ex: business owners | speak to the needs and desires of the commercial sector | John Doe john@doe.org |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |

1. Which groups listed above are not usually involved or are under-represented in local decisions? Are there any groups missing?

1. Identify Resources
2. Do you have a budget for community engagement?
3. Which local staff and volunteers could help with the community-engagement process? Some possible activities include participating in staffing events, presenting to community groups, and performing administrative tasks.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Staff and Volunteers for Community Engagement | | |
| Staff/Volunteer Name | Time to Contribute (Hours/Week) | Role |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |

1. Identify Existing Opportunities
2. What are some community hubs and events where people congregate? For each event, include the date. Examples include parades, festivals, farmers’ markets, schools, libraries, churches, popular downtown businesses, and post offices.

1. What communication resources do you currently use to engage or inform your residents? Some examples include listservs, newsletters, a local website, social media, a newspaper.

1. What other communication resources might be helpful?

1. Identify Challenges and Limitations
2. Have you undertaken a community-engagement process in the past? What made it successful or challenging? For example, public works projects and grant applications.

1. What constituencies are most likely to participate? Are there others that might be less able or willing to participate?

1. What concerns might people have about getting involved? What barriers might they face?

1. How can these barriers be overcome?

1. Are there any sensitive subjects, taboos, or controversial topics in the community that may need special treatment or consideration?

1. How could more community engagement be encouraged or incentivized?

### Part 2. Opportunities and Limitations

Based on the information gathered in your interview with local planning staff, list some of the opportunities and limitations for engagement in this community in the table below.

| Opportunities and Limitations for Community Engagement | |
| --- | --- |
| Opportunities | Limitations |
|  |  |
|  |  |
|  |  |
|  |  |

### Part 3. Engagement Techniques

The table below lists a number of different techniques that might be employed to obtain additional public input. Consider which of these methods might be best for the community with which you are working.

| Methods of Engaging the Community | | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Method | Benefit(s) | Cost  ($–$$$) | Time Commitment |
| **Public meetings** | Reaches large numbers of residents | $$–$$$ | High |
| **Open house** | Flexible space for informing and gathering input | $$–$$$ | High |
| **Community workshop** | Structured space for topic-specific community brainstorming | $$–$$$ | High |
| **Stakeholder interviews** | Reaches key community representatives; flexible location | $$ | Moderate |
| **Focus groups** | Facilitates conversation and exchange between community stakeholders | $$ | Moderate |
| **Surveys** | Wide reach; doesn’t require attendance; quantitative data | $$$ | Moderate |
| **Paper/mail** | Accessibility for those without Internet; older generations; doesn’t require tech resources | $$–$$$ | High |
| **Digital** | Younger generations; faster response time | $$ | Moderate |
| **Online engagement** | Wide reach; no time, location, or cost restraints for residents | $–$$ | Flexible |
| **Social media** | Ability to bring community engagement into everyday life; sharing of recorded content; ease of dissemination | $ | Low |
| **Website** | Central location; can hold multiple forms of engagement | $$ | Moderate |
| **Email listservs** | Direct communication prevents misinformation | $ | Low |
| **Tabling** | Integration into important existing community hubs and events | $$ | Moderate |

1. Identify Techniques
2. Given the identified opportunities and challenges, use the table above to determine which community-engagement techniques would be most feasible and effective for involving the community in the historic resilience planning process.