

CITYWIDE COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT POLICY

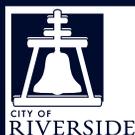


CITY OF RIVERSIDE

COMMUNITY & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT
NEIGHBORHOOD ENGAGEMENT DIVISION

3900 MAIN STREET
RIVERSIDE, CA 92522

ADOPTED _____, 2021



INTRODUCTION

Geographic locations only become places when people assign meaning and importance to them.

Riverside means a lot to many people – it is special to those who live here and to those who serve the community. Riverside residents and Riverside public servants care a lot about how the community is maintained and how it evolves, grows and changes – thus, the role of meaningful community engagement is essential to Riverside's future and to strengthening the connection between people and people and people and place. Meaningful community engagement depends on high levels of public trust and organizational competence. When quality community input occurs, community voices are heard, captured, and shared with the Riverside City Council, as well as Boards and Commissions, which results in more well-informed recommendations and decision-making on important matters affecting the community.

Communities work best when residents, organizations, and institutions, are engaged and working together for the greater good of all. The City of Riverside is no exception. The promise and potential of Riverside is strengthened by accommodating different perspectives and encouraging more residents to be informed and involved in shaping recommendations and decisions. Recognizing there's no single way to conduct effective community engagement, this Citywide Community Engagement Policy (Policy), and its accompanied Community Engagement Toolkit (Toolkit), are intended to assist the City of Riverside in the development of customized engagement plans that serve the Riverside community. The Policy provides a consistent approach to future community engagement efforts and the Toolkit provides guidance to City staff in creating inclusive community engagement plans for the benefit of the Riverside community and Riverside elected and appointed officials. Depending on the issue/topic, intended audience and available timeframe, the Toolkit allows the City of Riverside to scale engagement efforts to fit the community's needs and interests.

In addition, the Policy and Toolkit set a common language among Riverside community members, City departments, Riverside elected and appointed leaders, and others, for the development of effective community engagement processes. The Policy and Toolkit also level-set expectations for community engagement related to a range of projects and programs.

The City of Riverside is responsible and responsive to all residents. The Policy explains the City of Riverside's approach and commitment to the community. Through the Riverside City Council's **Envision Riverside 2025 Strategic Plan**, the City of Riverside is committed to building community and trust through information, education, and engagement. The public servants comprising the City of Riverside Team are committed to excellent customer service that strives to provide a high quality of life for all who live and work here – the Policy and Toolkit will further contribute to these ends.

Further, the Policy and Toolkit will expand the range of contributions by the Riverside community that will reinforce **Envision Riverside 2025** Cross Cutting Threads¹ of:

- **Community Trust** – Riverside is transparent and makes decisions based on sound policy, inclusive community engagement, involvement of City Boards & Commissions, and timely and reliable information. Activities and actions by the City serve the public interest, benefit the City's diverse populations, and result in greater public good.
- **Equity** – Riverside is supportive of the City's racial, ethnic, religious, sexual orientation, identity, geographic, and other attributes of diversity and is committed to advancing the fairness of treatment, recognition of rights, and equitable distribution of services to ensure every member of the community has equal access to share in the benefits of community progress.

¹ Cross cutting threads are major themes that exist within the *Envision Riverside 2025 Strategic Plan* and should be reflected in all outcomes.

- **Fiscal Responsibility** – Riverside is a prudent steward of public funds and ensures responsible management of the City's financial resources while providing quality public services to all.
- **Innovation** – Riverside is inventive and timely in meeting the community's changing needs and prepares for the future through collaborative partnerships and adaptive processes.
- **Sustainability and Resiliency** – Riverside is committed to meeting the needs of the present without compromising the needs of the future and ensuring the City's capacity to persevere, adapt and grow during good and difficult times alike.

Additionally, the Policy and Toolkit will be instrumental in advancing the indicators, goals and workplan at the foundation of the six Strategic Priorities framing **Envision Riverside 2025**:

- **Arts, Culture and Recreation** – Provide diverse community experiences and personal enrichment opportunities for people of all ages.
- **Community Well-Being** – Ensure safe and inclusive neighborhoods where everyone can thrive.
- **Economic Opportunity** – Champion a thriving, enduring economy that provides opportunity for all.
- **Environmental Stewardship** – Champion proactive and equitable climate solutions based in science to ensure clean air, safe water, a vibrant natural world, and a resilient green new economy for current and future generations.
- **High Performing Government** – Provide world class public service.
- **Infrastructure, Mobility & Connectivity** – Ensure safe, reliable infrastructure that benefits the community and facilitates connection between people, place and information.

The demand by the Riverside community – and communities across the United States – for genuine and open community engagement is on the rise and the City of Riverside has created this Policy and Toolkit to provide a more structured and consistent approach to meet this demand. The Policy and Toolkit have been developed through an engagement process that involved the community in understanding needs and incorporating relevant provisions in the Policy and Toolkit. This process has opened the hearts and minds of all regarding how interactions between the City of Riverside and the Riverside community can improve– these expanded and enlightened mindsets resulted in these two practical and responsive documents.

By utilizing the Policy and Toolkit in service to the Riverside community, the benefits of good community engagement will be made apparent over time through quantifiable improvements to the Riverside community's quality of life and advancement of the Cross Cutting Threads and Strategic Priorities embodied in the **Envision Riverside 2025 Strategic Plan**.



Al Zelinka, FAICP
City Manager, City of Riverside





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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

This work has been a collaboration between Riverside community members, City of Riverside leaders, and City of Riverside staff, and would not have been possible without the time, knowledge, and energy of those listed below. The community engagement policy working group meetings were held virtually in 2021 during the COVID-19 pandemic. The feedback and information collected highlighted key themes which helped us develop our approach to community engagement as outlined in this Policy.

Along with 12 staff members, this project benefited from 24 community members, collaborating to form a Working Group. The group, comprised of residents, neighborhood group members, nonprofits, major institutions, businesses, and government agencies represents many neighborhoods and most Council Wards within the City of Riverside. The Working Group met throughout the project development to review best practices and examples of other policies and toolkits, gave feedback on what was important to include in Riverside's Policy & Toolkit, and worked with staff to co-create the content of the documents.

RIVERSIDE COMMUNITY MEMBERS

Riverside community members raised the need for a community engagement policy and the following members, listed alphabetically, dedicated their time, ideas, and passion towards bringing meaningful opportunities for community engagement to the City of Riverside.

- **Dean Ayer**, Casa Blanca Neighborhood. Group Affiliations: PTA, March of Dimes, Riverside County Office of Education
- **Janice Bielman**, Magnolia Center Neighborhood. Group Affiliations: Magnolia Area Neighborhood Alliance, Neighbors Better Together, Beatty Drive Neighbors
- **Julie Carman**, Orangecrest Neighborhood. Group Affiliations: Asian Pacific Counseling and Treatment Center
- **Stephanie Campbell**, Ramona Neighborhood
- **Aurora Chavez**, Arlington Neighborhood. Group Affiliations: Neighbors Better Together, Friday Morning Group, RTA Customer Advocate, Community Advocate Senior Transportation-City
- **Kevin Dawson**, University Neighborhood. Group Affiliations: Friends of Riverside's Hills, Reform Riverside, University Neighborhood Association
- **Tom Donahue**, Downtown Neighborhood. Group Affiliations: Riverside Neighborhood Partnership
- **Tinka Friend**, La Sierra South Neighborhood. Group Affiliations: Riverside Neighborhood Partnership, Riverside Woman's Club, Neighbors Better Together, Residents for Responsible Representation, Social and Environmental Justice Committee of the Unitarian Universalist Church of Riverside

- **Steve Fuji**, Magnolia Center Neighborhood. Group Affiliations: Universalist Unitarian Church of Riverside, Riverside Mutual Aid Network, Family Promise of Riverside, the SouthWest Intentional Communities Alliance, BIPOC (Asian-American), senior, LGBTIQ, disabled and low-income populations
- **Jennifer Gamble**, Magnolia Center Neighborhood. Group Affiliations: Riverside Historical Society, Old Riverside Foundation, Cultural Heritage Board
- **Lynn Heatley**, Victoria Neighborhood. Group Affiliations: Love Riverside, Community Food Pantry Partner
- **Jason Hunter**, Wood Streets Neighborhood. Group Affiliations: Neighbors of the Wood Streets, Neighbors Better Together
- **Gurumantra Khalsa**, University Neighborhood. Group Affiliations: University Neighborhood Alliance
- **Nanci Larsen**, Downtown Neighborhood. Group Affiliations: Chair of DANA, Board member of Old Riverside Foundation Second Vice President of the Riverside Woman's Club, Board of Directors Riverside Downtown Partnership, RDP Safety Committee
- **Linda Lawyer**, Grand Neighborhood. Group Affiliations: Riverside Community Sailing Group, Keep Riverside Clean and Beautiful, The Friends of Fairmount Park
- **Clarissa Manges**, Victoria Neighborhood
- **Sharon Mateja**, La Sierra Neighborhood. Group Affiliations: Residents for Responsible Representation (RRR), Neighbors Better Together (NBT), La Sierra University Music Advisory Board
- **Carol McDoniel**, Wood Streets Neighborhood. Group Affiliations: Historic Wood Streets Association, Old Riverside Foundation
- **Lorna Seitz**, Mission Grove Neighborhood. Group Affiliations: UCR, ExCite
- **Justin Scott-Coe**, Wood Streets Neighborhood
- **Greta Valenti**, Downtown Neighborhood
- **Richard Vandenberg**, Canyon Crest Neighborhood
- **Mimi Velazquez**, Ramona Neighborhood. Group Affiliation: Anti-Racist Riverside
- **Betty Vu**, Orangecrest Neighborhood. Group Affiliations: Inland Chinese American Alliance, Inland Empire Elite Mutual Association

Additionally, gratitude goes to the many Riverside residents who attended various community workshops and public meetings associated with this work.

CITY OF RIVERSIDE LEADERS

Appreciation is expressed for the **Envision Riverside 2025 Strategic Plan**, which provides significant insight of the Mayor and City Council's commitment to community engagement. For example, the vision statement guiding **Envision Riverside 2025** states: "Riverside is a city where every person is respected and cherished, where equity is essential to community well-being, where residents support one another, and where opportunities exist for all to prosper. In Riverside, everyone comes together to help the community, economy and environment reach their fullest potential for the public good." Additionally, the Mayor and City Council's cross cutting threads and priorities, as well as the operational workplan, as conveyed in **Envision Riverside 2025** provide specific policy direction and actions:

- **Community Trust** cross-cutting thread reads: "Riverside is transparent and makes decisions based on sound policy, **inclusive community engagement**, involvement of City Boards & Commissions, and timely and reliable information. Activities and actions by the City serve the public interest, benefit the City's diverse populations, and result in greater public good."
- Goal 2.4 of the **Community Well-Being** priority reads: "Support programs and innovations that enhance community safety, **encourage neighborhood engagement**, and build public trust."
- Action 5.3.1 under the **High Performing Government** priority reads: "Establish an organizational strategy centered on effective **community engagement** through a variety of mediums; and develop **community engagement methods** that use innovative and creative tools that create an open, respectful, and intentional dialogue regarding inclusion, diversity and equity."

Importantly, Riverside's elected officials understand and appreciate the need for a community engagement policy and, through their leadership and policy direction, the Riverside community and City of Riverside staff will have the tools in place to uphold and carryout **Envision Riverside 2025**. Gratitude goes to:

- Mayor Patricia Lock Dawson
- Councilmember Erin Edwards, Ward 1
- Councilmember Clarissa Cervantes, Ward 2
- Councilmember Ronaldo Fierro, Ward 3
- Councilmember Chuck Conder, Ward 4
- Councilwoman Gaby Plascencia, Ward 5
- Councilmember Jim Perry, Ward 6
- Councilmember Steve Hemenway, Ward 7

CITY OF RIVERSIDE STAFF

Working alongside the Riverside community, and under the direction of the Riverside City Council, were a team of City staff who were invested in developing a first-of-its-kind community engagement policy applicable citywide. Much appreciation goes to:

- **Yvette Sennewald:** Project Manager, Community & Economic Development, Neighborhood Engagement Division
- **Eva Arseo:** Deputy City Clerk, City Clerk's Office
- **Erin Christmas:** Director, Riverside Public Library
- **Ceri Dowsett:** Utilities Public Benefits/Customer Relations Manager, Riverside Public Utilities
- **George Khalil:** Chief Innovation Officer
- **Ed Lara:** Principal Civil Engineer, Public Works
- **Randy McDaniel:** Deputy Director, Parks, Recreation & Community Services Department
- **Nathan Mustafa:** Deputy Director, Public Works Department
- **Carlie Myers:** Assistant General Manager, Riverside Public Utilities
- **Robyn Peterson:** Director, Museum of Riverside
- **Gema Ramirez:** Project Manager, Community & Economic Development, Arts & Cultural Affairs Division
- **Matthew Taylor:** Senior Planner, Community & Economic Development, Planning Division

Additionally, appreciation abounds for the many other City of Riverside employees who provided support at the meetings and feedback on the development of this work.

Thank you for making a difference.



Al Zelinka, FAICP

City Manager

April 5, 2022



POLICY PURPOSE

This document aims to create a clear, streamlined, and predictable public participation process. Effective community engagement requires a shared understanding between community members and City staff. The Citywide Community Engagement Policy (Policy) and accompanying Community Engagement Toolkit (Toolkit) are both a resource guide for the City and an overview of the engagement process for community members. These documents increase accountability on both ends – City staff have an agreed-upon path to follow, and the community has a standard to expect from the City.

The Policy is a formal expression of City Council and staff's commitment to engaging Riverside's community using appropriate, effective, and inclusive practices. The City is committed to engaging effectively with its community in a meaningful, accountable, responsive, and equitable way. This Policy outlines the City's position, role, and commitments to ensure that community engagement is integrated into the decision-making process and will assist in building relationships, strengthening the community, and increasing resident involvement.

The Envision Riverside 2025 Strategic Plan notes cross-cutting threads that are to be reflected in all outcomes. The cross-cutting threads are: Community Trust, Equity, Fiscal Responsibility, Innovation, as well as Sustainability and Resiliency. While community engagement is important in each cross-cutting thread, providing a Citywide Community Engagement Policy that outlines a standardized approach to community engagement is most aligned with:

Community Trust: Riverside is transparent and makes decisions based on sound policy, inclusive community engagement, involvement of City Boards & Commissions, and timely, reliable information. Activities and actions by the City serve the public interest, benefit the City's diverse populations, and result in greater public good.

Equity: Riverside is supportive of the City's racial, ethnic, religious, sexual orientation, identity, geographic, and other attributes of diversity and is committed to advancing fairness of treatment, recognition of rights, and equitable distribution of services to ensure every member of the community has equal access to share in the benefits of community progress.



The Policy seeks to improve the City's community engagement processes and outcomes through encouraging a consistent approach and continual learning through evaluation, and through expanding the range of engagement methods used.

There are many reasons to engage the public. Examples include, but are not limited to:

- The City has a legal obligation to consult with the public
- A new policy is being developed
- A new program is being designed or implemented
- There is a significant change to the City's Charter, Riverside Municipal Code, or other State/County law, policy, process, procedure, and/or program
- Public expertise is required to inform and develop solutions to a problem
- The City requires resident input to ensure the end "product" has relevance or meets the identified need

This Policy will be applied at the planning stage of a project. Community engagement may be required at multiple stages within a project, program, initiative, or development. Community engagement is the responsibility of all City employees with public-facing roles. To ensure the effective application of community engagement principles and consistent processes, a Community Engagement Toolkit will be developed to provide guidance for City staff.

To ensure that the City can deliver on its commitment to community engagement as outlined in this Policy, additional support may require:

- Access to a suite of resources to support the design, delivery, reporting, and evaluation of community engagement, including process guides, templates, and checklists;
- Access to training and professional development opportunities; and
- Access to subject matter expert staff members to give advice on matters relating to project planning, resource allocation, communications, and best practice community engagement methods.



VISION

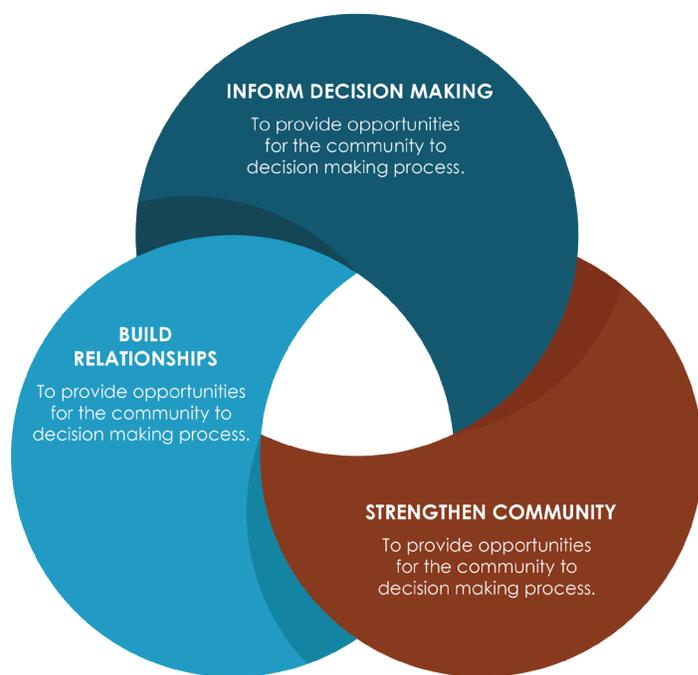
A City where community engagement is valued as an important part of the decision-making process and is inclusive, meaningful, accountable, and responsive to the public's perspectives and needs.

WHAT IS COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT?

Community engagement is defined as the range of opportunities for public involvement in the decision-making process, relationship building, and community strengthening. Community engagement is achieved when the community is and feels a part of a process.

Some community engagement processes are undertaken to support decision making, some are about relationship building, while others are focused on community strengthening (or capacity building). Often, the community engagement process supports more than one of these objectives.

The City engages with stakeholders and the community at large at different levels along a spectrum of increasing involvement. The process of community engagement is a dynamic one, which means there is likely to be movement back and forth through different levels as a community engagement process is implemented.



The International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) has developed the Public Participation Spectrum to demonstrate the possible types of community engagement with stakeholders and community members.

The Spectrum below shows the increasing level of community involvement from the “inform” end of the spectrum through the “empower” end of the spectrum.

The table identifies each of these five levels of community engagement and clearly outlines the amount of involvement from both the City and stakeholders/community members within each level. The table also identifies the role of community members and stakeholders.



	INFORM	CONSULT	INVOLVE	COLLABORATE	EMPOWER
GOAL	One-way communication to provide balanced and objective information to assist in understanding about something that is going to happen or has already happened.	Two-way communication process aimed at obtaining feedback on ideas, alternatives, and proposals to inform decision-making process.	Participatory process designed to help identify issues and views to ensure that concerns and aspirations are understood and considered.	Working Together to develop an understanding of all issues and interests to work out alternatives and identify preferred collective solutions.	To build the capacity of the community to lead their own plans for change.
ROLE OF COMMUNITY AND/OR STAKEHOLDERS	Listen	Contribute	Participate	Partner	Lead
PROMISE TO THE PUBLIC	We will keep you informed.	We will keep you informed, listen to and acknowledge concerns, and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.	We will work with you to ensure that your concerns and issues are directly reflected in the alternatives developed and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.	We will look to you for direct advice and innovating in formulating solutions and incorporate your advice and recommendations into the decisions to the maximum extent possible.	We will implement what you decide.
EXAMPLES WHEN THIS ENGAGEMENT LEVEL MAY BE APPROPRIATE	In the event of an emergency.	Undertaking a surgery on playground redevelopment.	Seeking input from an Advisory Committee on sustainability initiatives and plans.	Stakeholder led discussions on developing community visions.	Building capacity skills of small business employees through skills-based training.
POSSIBLE METHODS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advertisements • Fact sheets • Newsletter • Public Notices • Social Media • Websites • Open Houses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public Comment • Focus groups • Public Meetings • Surveys 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advisory Committees • Deliberate Polling • Workshops 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consensus Building • Participatory Decision Making • Advisory Committees 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training Events • Practical Skills Workshops • Ballots



OUR COMMITMENT TO THE COMMUNITY

The City of Riverside's Community Engagement Policy is built upon a set of commitments that guide the planning, development, implementation, evaluation, and continuous improvement of community engagement processes undertaken for City projects.

When engaging the community, City staff will be open and accountable in the decision-making process. The commitments to the Riverside community are as follows:

1. To ensure that the purpose of community engagement is clear, relevant, and the methods used are well suited to generate highly effective community engagement.
2. To provide information that is clear, easy to understand, and accessible to all people.
3. To proactively engage with our community in an ethical manner using a range of methods and enable everyone to have a voice on matters of importance to them. We will provide engagement opportunities that are mutually respectful, undertaken in reasonable time frames, and with a shared understanding of how the input will inform decision-making processes.
4. To value all participants' knowledge, expertise, and experiences, acknowledging that everyone has different views and needs.
5. To undertake evaluation processes to continually improve our approach to community engagement.
6. To report back to our community in a timely manner about how their input was considered and influenced the outcome.
7. To use information provided by community engagement to advocate on behalf of our community to relevant parties.

These commitments are built upon the core values identified by the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2).



WHY WE ENGAGE

Community engagement is a collaborative process that connects City Staff with the community in a mutually beneficial way by the sharing of new ideas, skills, knowledge, expertise, and experience.

Effective community engagement benefits both the City and community members. Better identifying the priorities, needs, and aspirations of the community will assist City Council and Staff to improve strategic planning and service delivery. A regular, two-way conversation ensures transparency, accountability, and an informed governing body in its decision-making process, which demonstrates integrity and builds trust within the community.

Where appropriate, community engagement should go above and beyond legislative requirements. The information and knowledge gained through hearing a range of community perspectives assists in making informed decision, develops strong partnerships, and creates sustainable outcomes.

The community also benefits from participating in engagement activities. Participating in matters that may have an impact on them can create a sense of belonging and connection, increases community involvement, unites and empowers individuals and communities, and leads to a greater community ownership and resilience.

The knowledge and experience gained also provide the City with a foundation to advocate other relevant parties, including federal and state government bodies, on issues of community importance that are out of its direct control.

There are a broad range of benefits to effective and authentic community engagement, both to the City and to the community.

Some of the benefits include:

1. Increasing community involvement and connections.
2. Developing strong relationships and partnerships with community, leading to a shared understanding of community needs, aspirations, and priorities.
3. Meeting legislative requirements.
4. Providing a valuable source of evidence-based information that gives a wider perspective on issues and supports future planning and service delivery activities.
5. By supporting transparency and accountability, integrity is demonstrated, and trust is built between all parties.
6. Ensuring the community's right to assist with the democratic process.
7. Ensuring informed decision-making occurs and issues are addressed.
8. Helping inform and assist with advocacy.
9. Leading to more sustainable outcomes.
10. Building community resilience and capacity leading to community empowerment.





WHO WE ENGAGE

The City of Riverside is a diverse community with a mix of people from all walks of life, with unique interest groups. Everyone has a role to play in the community, so it is important that the methods used are accessible and have a broad reach.

For the purpose of this Policy, the Riverside community is defined as individuals or groups who live, work, play, visit, study, invest in, or pass through the City. They could share a geographical location, characteristic, or interest.

The term “stakeholder” defines community groups or individuals who are directly impacted by, involved with, or interested in, the City’s decision-making, relationship building or community strengthening process.

Each person within the community has the potential to be a stakeholder in the City’s community engagement activities.

In Riverside, some of the stakeholder groups include:

- Arts & culture community
- Business and industry
- Chambers of Commerce
- Children
- Community service providers
- Commuters
- Emergency services
- Environmental groups
- Faith-based organizations
- Families
- Government departments
- Heritage groups
- Indigenous community
- Lesbian, gay, bisexual, background transgender and intersex
- Local, State and Federal agencies
- City staff
- City Council and Mayor
- Media
- Neighboring cities or other local government agencies
- Nonprofit organizations
- People experiencing homelessness
- People from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds
- People with disabilities
- Public transport user groups
- Ratepayers
- Residents
- Schools, education facilities, and students
- Seniors/senior groups
- Service groups
- Sporting, leisure, and recreational clubs
- Visitors to Riverside
- Volunteers/volunteer organizations
- Youth



WHEN WE ENGAGE

Community engagement will take place at the planning stage of a project or initiative or when a need arises such as a change in service, activities or infrastructure is considered. Community engagement is likely to be undertaken at multiple stages within a project, program, or development.

CIRCUMSTANCES THAT TRIGGER COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES

City staff will promote opportunities for the community to actively participate in the following processes:

- Where a proposed change to activities or strategic direction may significantly affect the community in terms of the economy, lifestyle, environment, wellbeing, or amenity of the municipality
- When developing new or reviewing existing policies, strategies, or plans
- Introducing a new service, discontinuing an existing service, substantially changing, or reviewing a service that may significantly affect how services are provided
- Proposals for changing the way in which public space looks, is used, or enjoyed
- Planning and development of major projects and capital improvement works, including public buildings, centers, or other infrastructure
- Urban development/redevelopment proposals, such as infrastructure plans, that may significantly alter the existing amenity or characteristics of a geographical area
- Any circumstance where more information or evidence was needed to make an informed decision

MANDATORY ENGAGEMENT

While the City of Riverside Administrative Manual and a range of legislation sets out minimum requirements for public involvement, each community engagement process will be considered on an individual basis. In many instances City staff will go above and beyond the minimum requirements to gain a strong understanding of the community's vision to ensure we are achieving the best possible outcomes for the City of Riverside.

Some of these specific matters may include, but are not limited to:

- Adopting Citywide plans
- Adopting budgets
- Creating local laws
- Declaring special rates or charges
- Selling, exchanging, or leasing land
- Entering into regional agreements
- Deviating or discontinuing a road
- Making amendments to the General Plan

CIRCUMSTANCES WHERE COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT WILL BE LIMITED

There are times when the City's level of community engagement and key stakeholders will be limited. In certain circumstances, staff may only be able to inform the community and stakeholders of the decisions and actions taken.

Examples include when:

- An immediate resolution is required
- Technical or other expertise is required
- An initiative involves confidential information
- There are clear and defined legislative responsibilities that legally require compliance
- Developing or reviewing internal policies and procedures
- Emergency response is necessary
- There is a risk to public safety

INFLUENCING DECISION-MAKING

Where decision-making is the purpose of a community engagement process, it must be identified that the final decision rests with the City Council.

Good governance is based on the belief that those impacted by a decision may have important contributions to make in the decision-making process. In planning a community engagement process, staff will determine at which levels they will engage and what corresponding commitment they will make to stakeholders and/or the community. This decision is likely to impact the nature and methods of community engagement.



HOW WE ENGAGE

There is no one-size-fits-all approach to community engagement activities. A variety of methods will be required to cater for the different purposes of community engagement, as well as a broad range of groups and individuals in the community.

PLAN

The planning stage is critical to ensuring a successful and authentic community engagement process. During this stage we will understand, outline, and gain agreement on:

- Why we are engaging (purpose)
- What we are trying to achieve through the process (engagement objectives)
- How results will be used (engagement outcomes)
- Who we want to engage with (stakeholder analysis)
- At what level do we wish to engage
- How we will engage (engagement methods)
- When to engage (time frame)

During this stage, it is also important to consider the monitoring and evaluation steps that will be embedded into the process.

DO

Those undertaking the community engagement process will do so in a non-judgmental and respectful way. They will follow the community engagement principles as outlined in the “Our Commitments” section. The following steps will be considered to ensure the activity is successful.

1. Decide on the most appropriate ways of informing the community and stakeholder groups of the planned community engagement activity.

2. Organize resources, including identifying who will conduct the community engagement activities, meeting locations will be, logistics, and determine supplies needed. It is also important to consider specific needs, such as transportation, childcare, and translation services.
3. Invite previously identified stakeholders to participate in the community engagement activity.
4. Provide information to participants in clear and simple terms. Use case studies or examples to assist in explaining the initiative. Provide translation services as needed.
5. Conduct community engagement activity.

SHARE

Following the community engagement process, we will report the results and outcomes of the community engagement activity back to the community. This will be done in a timely, accessible, and informative manner so that participants understand how their involvement influenced the process, and therefore, the outcomes or decisions.

If the community engagement process is lengthy, it is important that we regularly report on the project's development to ensure that the community remain involved and engaged.

EVALUATE

Evaluation of the community engagement process will be planned at the beginning of the project so we are aware of the outcomes that will be measured. Evaluation will be continuous so that the process can be adjusted should any aspect need refinement. After completion, the community engagement process will be reviewed to ensure we understand what happened and why. We will objectively reflect on what did and didn't work. We will prepare an evaluation report to share observations and recommendations.

IMPROVE

We will take the lessons learned throughout the project, capturing them in an accessible format. Ideas for improvement of the community engagement process will be shared across the organization and will aid in informing future versions of this policy, as well as the City's broader community engagement framework.





SUPPORTING INFORMATION

The International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) is an international organization advancing the practice of public participation. The IAP2 framework is underpinned by seven core values that are aimed at ensuring organizations make better decisions that reflect the interests and concerns of potentially affected people and entities.

These values are:

1. Public participation is based on the belief that those who are affected by a decision have a right to be involved in the decision-making process.
2. Public participation includes the promise that the public's contribution will influence the decision.
3. Public participation promotes sustainable decisions by recognizing and communicating the needs and interests of all participants, including the decision-makers.
4. Public participation seeks out and facilitates the involvement of those potentially affected by or interested in a decision.
5. Public participation seeks input from participants in designing how they participate.
6. Public participation provides participants with the information they need to participate in a meaningful way.
7. Public participation communicates to participants how their input affected the decision.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Community engagement is the responsibility of all City Departments as appropriate to their role and functions. Engaging the community should be a core process considered by staff in the delivery of services, development of projects, or building relationships.

RELATIONSHIP TO THE ENVISION RIVERSIDE 2025 STRATEGIC PLAN

Community engagement processes support the delivery of all outcome areas identified in the Envision Riverside 2025 Strategic Plan. Principles and processes of community engagement outlined in this policy are aligned with the Strategic Plan's Vision and Mission.

VISION

Riverside is a city where every person is respected and cherished, where equity is essential to community well-being, where residents support one another, and where opportunities exist for all to prosper. In Riverside, everyone comes together to help the community, economy, and environment reach their fullest potential for the public good.

ENVISION RIVERSIDE 2025 MISSION

The City of Riverside is committed to providing high quality municipal services to ensure a safe, inclusive, and livable community.

RELATED KEY GOALS

Arts, Culture & Recreation:

1.1: Strengthen Riverside's portfolio of arts, culture, recreation, senior, and lifelong learning programs and amenities through expanded community partnerships, shared use opportunities, and fund development.

Community Well-Being:

2.2: Collaborate with partner agencies to improve household resiliency and reduce the incidence and duration of homelessness.

2.3: Strengthen neighborhood identities and improve community health and the physical environment through amenities and programs that foster an increased sense of community and enhanced feelings of pride and belonging citywide.

2.4: Support programs and innovations that enhance community safety, encourage neighborhood engagement and build public trust.

2.5: Foster relationships between community members, partner organizations, and public safety professionals to define, prioritize, and address community safety and social service needs.

Economic Opportunity:

3.1: Facilitate partnerships and programs to develop, attract and retain innovative business sectors.

3.2: Work with key partners in implementing workforce development programs and initiatives that connect local talent with high quality employment opportunities and provide access to education and training in Riverside.

3.4: Collaborate with key partners to implement policies and programs that promote local business growth and ensure equitable opportunities for all.

High Performing Government:

5.3: Enhance communication and collaboration with community members to improve transparency, build public trust, and encourage shared decision-making.

Policy Control Schedule:

Policy Title: Citywide Community Engagement Policy		Policy Number: TBD	Policy Type: City Council Policy
Policy Creation Date: April, 2021	Current Version Adopted by City Council: TBD	Current Version number: 01	Policy Review Date: August 2025 or sooner, if necessary
Parent Policy: None	Policy responsibility: Community & Economic Development Department		Resolution Number: TBD



