



City Council Memorandum

City of Arts & Innovation

TO: HONORABLE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL DATE: OCTOBER 17, 2023

FROM: COMMUNITY & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT WARDS: ALL

SUBJECT: CITYWIDE COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT POLICY AND TOOLKIT UPDATE

ISSUE:

Provide an update and adopt the Citywide Community Engagement Policy & Toolkit.

RECOMMENDATION:

That the City Council receive an update and adopt the Citywide Community Engagement Policy and Toolkit.

BACKGROUND:

Riverside has not had the benefit of a formal Citywide Community Engagement Policy to ensure a consistent public participation process prior to major initiatives, policy discussions and the overall decision-making process. Creating and implementing a Citywide Community Engagement Policy provides a consistent and predictable public participation process applicable to future programs, projects, and initiatives. Most importantly, the City has a strong commitment to and has built a culture for effective community engagement and was looking for a tool to grow the efforts to build trust between the City and the community, while identifying values, concerns, and input in the process and overall service delivery.

On August 5, 2020, the Inclusiveness, Community Engagement and Governmental Processes Committee (Committee) directed staff to:

- 1) Initiate a Citywide Community Engagement framework;
- 2) Incorporate input provided on the elements of the framework;
- 3) Engage the community to seek input on the framework; and
- 4) Return with a draft framework prior to finalizing a Policy for City Council consideration.

Community/Stakeholder Outreach

Following this Committee meeting, staff began work on the Engagement Framework to incorporate input, suggestions, and elements from the Committee. On February 20, 2021, the “Community Engagement 101” workshop was held to seek input from participants on the draft

framework. Five virtual meetings were held between March and June 2021. The purpose of these meetings was to receive public input, review best practices from other agencies, work on draft Framework content, and review the draft Framework prior to internal review.

After the completion of the community workshops and meetings, the draft Framework and supporting Toolkit were provided to the City Executive Leadership Team, Deputy Leadership Team, and those providing community engagement throughout all City departments. This group engaged in an iterative review where comments were incorporated into the documents to complete the final draft Framework and Toolkit in April of 2022.

On December 7, 2022, the Committee received an update on the draft Framework including the input from the community. The Committee directed staff to continue engaging the community and report back on progress.

On May 16, 2023, the City Council engaged in a Workshop on the Community Engagement Framework to review the document, the process, and the details of the Toolkit. In general, the City Council shared their satisfaction with the work of the Committee, the public, and the staff team to bring together this living document. The Council directed staff to prepare a final document removing any duplicative information and including any editorial changes to improve the look and feel of the document.

DISCUSSION:

Revisions to the: Community Engagement Policy:

Staff reviewed the Framework for grammatical and typographical errors and adjusted the format for better flow. The Principles of Engagement were moved from the Community Engagement Toolkit. These Principles provide more specific information and guidance for the user related to planning their engagement efforts. The IAP 2 graph, included in the Community Engagement Toolkit, was removed from the Policy portion to reduce duplicative information.

Revisions to The Community Engagement Toolkit:

Staff removed duplicative information stated in the Toolkit and Policy. Information has been rearranged throughout the Toolkit to provide clarity and better flow for the user. Staff converted lengthy explanations and text documents into worksheets to provide dynamic planning and brainstorming resources. Essential tools for community engagement and outreach activities are now found in this section and are expected to assist the user when they plan and create their engagement effort.

STRATEGIC PLAN:

This item contributes to **Strategic Priority 2 – Community Well-Being** and **Goal 2.4** - Support programs and innovations that enhance community safety, encourage neighborhood engagement, and build public trust and **Strategic Priority 5 – High Performing Government - Goal 5.3** - Enhance communication and collaboration with community members to improve transparency, build public trust, and encourage shared decision-making.

The item aligns with each of the five Cross-Cutting Threads as follows:

1. **Community Trust** – The Framework and Toolkit build public trust in the community through collaborative and transparent public engagement opportunities.

2. **Equity** – The Framework and Toolkit are inclusive of all community members and stakeholders while offering several means of communication and input.
3. **Fiscal Responsibility** – The Framework and Toolkit implementation process is conducted by City staff, demonstrating Riverside as a prudent steward of public funds and ensuring responsible management of the City’s financial resources while improving communication and outreach efforts between the City and community.
4. **Innovation** – Exploring a uniform and consistent Community Engagement Policy and Toolkit creates another opportunity to address changing community needs and prepares for the future of transparent and collaborative governance through public engagement.
5. **Sustainability & Resiliency** – By implementing an effective and consistent Framework and Toolkit, the organization creates a sustainable and resilient public engagement program that can evolve with continuous feedback and support.

FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no fiscal impact associated with this report.

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Certified as to availability of funds:	Kristie Thomas, Finance Director/ Assistant Chief Financial Officer
Approved by:	Mike Futrell, City Manager
Approved as to form:	Phaedra A. Norton, City Attorney

Attachments:

1. May 16, 2023 - CC Staff Report
2. Revised - Citywide Community Engagement Policy
3. Revised – Citywide Community Engagement Toolkit
4. Presentation