

# **PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT & EQUITY**

**Increasing Access & Building Trust**

*Wednesday, September 22, 2021*

# WELCOME



## Erica L. Manuel

*CEO & Executive Director  
Institute for Local Government  
Moderator*

## About this Session

Public Engagement is even more complicated since COVID with compounded concerns around transparency, digital divide and participatory access needs.

- *How can cities rise above the fray to position their under-engaged communities for constructive dialogue that improves public trust while also accomplishing local priorities?*
- *How can cities integrate equity into their planning and engagement processes that elevates collaboration and foster foundational partnerships in the community?*

This session will provide practical tips for incorporating equity into public engagement activities. We will explore a range of options to help local leaders build community relationships, increase public participation and find common ground.

# PANELISTS



**Megan MacPherson  
Scheid**  
*Deputy City Manager  
City of Roseville*



**Debra Oto-Kent**  
*Founder & Executive Director  
Health Education Council*



**Jose Arreola**  
*Community Safety Administrator,  
City of Salinas  
Director, Community Alliance for  
Safety and Peace*

# NON-PROFIT, NON-PARTISAN & COMMITTED TO SUPPORTING LOCAL GOVERNMENT

- The Institute for Local Government is the non-profit training and education affiliate of three statewide local government associations
- Together with our affiliates, we serve over 2,500 local agencies – cities, counties and special districts
- We provide practical and easy-to-use resources so local agencies can effectively implement policies on the ground



**California Special  
Districts Association**  
*Districts Stronger Together*

# ILG'S PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

## Program Areas

Leadership & Governance

Civics Education & Workforce

Public Engagement

Sustainable & Resilient Communities



## Services

Education & Training

Technical Assistance

Capacity Building

Convening

Our mission is to help local government leaders **navigate complexity, increase capacity & build trust** in their communities.

# A WIDESPREAD NETWORK OF LOCAL GOV'T LEADERS



58  
Counties

482  
Cities

2,500+  
Special  
Districts

20,000+  
Local  
Agency  
Leaders

# ABOUT OUR ENGAGEMENT & EQUITY WORK



**California's local government leaders face a myriad of complex and evolving leadership challenges.**

- Elected leaders and staff cannot effectively address these challenges without a strong foundation of good government - trust, accountability, responsiveness, equity and transparency.
- ILG's **Public Engagement** pillar is focused on imbedding authentic, effective and inclusive public engagement practices that encourage greater public trust and confidence in local government, while also helping local jurisdictions achieve their goals.

<https://www.ca-ilg.org>

# ADVANCING EQUITY THROUGH PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

- To achieve equitable outcomes, **equity should be considered early** in the development of government programs, policies and services.
- The goal is to prevent or **mitigate adverse impacts or unintended consequences** on communities of color and other vulnerable groups.
- The approach should be to learn **what factors might be affecting** communities of color and/or other vulnerable populations differently.

Public Engagement allows us to better understand the **needs and nuances** of the diverse populations we serve so that we can create the most effective and most equitable policies, programs, and services.





# EQUITY-RELATED QUESTIONS TO ASK IN POLICY & PROGRAM DESIGN

**Community Input:** What, if any, **input from communities of color and/or other vulnerable populations**, especially those most affected, has already been considered?

**Stakeholders:** Who should be consulted in design and implementation to ensure success and **equitable program outcomes**?

**Barriers:** What are anticipated **barriers for communities of color and/or other vulnerable populations** and ways to design the program and structure its implementation to reduce those barriers?

**Burdens:** What are potential disproportionate **impacts on communities of color and/or other vulnerable populations**. How could these be eliminated or mitigated?

**Assets:** What **assets** in the community **can we build** on to achieve successful outcomes through our program or policy?



# A Commitment to Racial Equity & Public Engagement

League of California Cities Conference  
September 22, 2021

# Inside Outside Race Equity Strategy



Work together with community leaders and organizations to set race equity goals and strategy.



Set agreements for communication. This work can be hard.



Have the Racial Equity Plan vetted with community input and support by City leadership and eventually council.



**Race Equity Training 2015**  
50 Community Leader + 50 City Staff Leaders

# Challenges of the Inside Outside Strategy



Communication



We Will Not Always Agree  
(and that is okay)



Forgiveness



**BREAKING NEWS**

Protesters clash with police over officer involved shootings



# Lessons Learned

(and learning)

- Community activism is a critical component of change in institutional systems.
- Rather than avoid, dodge or actively defy community activist it is important to listen, developing working relationships and foster community engagement and leadership.





# Facing Race 2018 Joint Presentation



# Towards a Racially Equitable Monterey County

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- A Regional Approach
- Includes City and County Government, Education, CBO's and Philanthropies
- Historic year long cohort launches in two weeks with over 150 participants from around Monterey County



# BUILDING THE WE:

Healing-Informed Governing for Racial Equity in Salinas



## Recommended Resource

- The short documentary is on YouTube
- The report is available online search "Building the We"



# VISIÓN SALINAS



Renewed Commitment to Community Engagement



## Spectrum of Community Engagement

The Alisal Vibrancy Plan completed in 2019 set out to defer to community!



# ALISAL Vibrancy Plan

PART OF VISIÓN SALINAS

## Equity

- Access/Ease of Participation
- Meeting time and location
- Meetings and materials in Spanish
- Food and Childcare

## Consensus versus Majority rule

## Working Group topic matrices

## Building Capacity

- Facilitation Training
- Planning Concepts
- Developed Agendas

## Empowerment

- Residents as experts
- Facilitated meetings





# Community Engagement Best Practices



**Small-group discussions and engaging activities**



**Folklórico or other hooks to increase draw to workshops**



**Quick visual surveys for pop-ups**

Challenges or opportunities Desafíos u oportunidades	Community Concerns Preocupaciones Comunitarias	Technical Solutions Soluciones Técnicas	Address Activities Actividades de Abordaje	Follow-up/Support Seguimiento/Soporte	Final Use Goal Objetivo Final
...	...	...	...	...	...
...	...	...	...	...	...
...	...	...	...	...	...

**Enlarged text documents for group commenting**



# Community Engagement Best Practices

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- Accessible time and location
- Dinner Provided
- Child Care Provided
- Marketed with community partners



# Lessons Learned



Under estimated staffing resources and time commitment to effectively implement community engagement strategy



Would integrate more “technical” representatives with residents on Steering Committee.



Challenge of balancing resident desire for short term impact/results with a longer term planning effort and capacity building objective

# An Ecosystem Approach

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# **Equity & Public Engagement: Increasing Access and Building Trust**

League of California Cities Annual Conference  
September 22, 2021

Debra S. Oto-Kent, MPH  
*Founder & Executive Director*



HEALTH  
EDUCATION  
COUNCIL

## Objectives:

- Discuss HEC role as a partner with local government to expand and enhance resident engagement and empowerment.
- Share specific examples of expanded resident engagement strategies implemented as part of Invest Health Roseville and outcomes to date.
- Discuss lesson learned, how to measure engagement and why prioritizing public engagement of historically excluded residents is critical.



The mission of the Health Education Council is to cultivate health and well-being in under-served communities by leveraging the power of collaboration.





## Key strategies of all HEC Initiatives:

- Cross-sector collaboration/collective impact
- Resident Engagement – asset based; historically, excluded







## **Resident Engagement – asset based; belonging/connection**

- Variety of approaches: asset based; social networks; focus groups; key informant interviews; resident outreach activities; multi-cultural/lingual; meeting people where they are; kitchen table discussions; backyard barbeques; after school parent groups, etc.





# Roseville, California



- Population –135,868
- 11<sup>th</sup> Healthiest city
- 6<sup>th</sup> Best city in CA for young families
- 21<sup>st</sup> Safest city
- 24<sup>th</sup> Best place to retire
- Healthcare 'Hub'



Roseville is home to the largest railyard west of the Mississippi and the three neighborhoods are adjacent to the railyard in downtown Roseville.



HEALTH  
EDUCATION  
COUNCIL

## Invest Health Roseville: Vision

# Invest Health

## Roseville

To improve the quality of life and community well-being in Downtown Roseville's core neighborhoods of: Roseville Heights, Cherry Glenn, and Thieles Manor, through projects that will result in positive health outcomes for residents of the neighborhoods. The projects developed address issues and concerns expressed by residents and others during stakeholder meetings.



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# Invest Health Home Advisory Committee



Schools



Business



Faith Community



City Government



Community Service  
Providers



Dignity Health



Residents



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# Invest Health Roseville: Outcomes

## OUTCOMES WE SEEK:

### INCREASING SAFETY & WALKABILITY



### REDUCING CRIME



### IMPROVING CONNECTION TO MENTAL HEALTH, PRIMARY CARE, SOCIAL SERVICES, NEIGHBORS & GOVERNMENT



### INCREASING PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AND HEALTHY FOOD ACCESS





### Average Household Income

City of Roseville  
\$75,867  
Roseville Heights  
\$32,615



### Families in Poverty

City of Roseville  
8.78%  
Roseville Heights  
25.26%



### Unemployment

City of Roseville  
4.7%  
Roseville Heights  
12.75%



### Education High School Diploma

City of Roseville  
94.5%  
Roseville Heights  
19.68%



### Diversity

City of Roseville  
15%  
Roseville Heights  
58.3%



**Roseville Demographics**



**HEALTH  
EDUCATION  
COUNCIL**

# Weber Park



## Park Characteristics

- Under-utilized
- Limited view from street
- Homeless hangout
- Drug activity/ visible paraphernalia
- Poor lighting





# Invest Health: Program Overview



## ACCOMPLISHMENTS ALONG THE WAY

- Formed high functioning Invest Health lead 'traveling' team;
- Expanded our knowledge; formed an Invest Health Advisory committee;
- Gather data and hear voices of neighborhoods: 30 Stakeholder meetings; Community focus groups- English and Spanish; follow up resident survey 225+ responses to date;
- Invest Health Breakfast Forums;
- Elementary school outreach and health education events for families
- Sidewalks/ multiple park and street clean ups;
- Weber Park Re-Imagination
- Building partnerships: RPAL; Police; Parks and Rec and Libraries; Roseville City School District; service providers;
- Brought nearly 100 business leaders to the city to learn about Invest Health;
- Johnson Pool upgrades;
- Upgraded all street lighting in the Core Neighborhoods.
- **Built new relationships, leveraged resources**

# Family Meal Roseville Food Delivery Program

Over 16,000 meals served  
May 2020



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## Belonging and Civic Muscle

Equitable decision-making must include the voices of those most impacted by decisions and provide structures and spaces for people to have the power to make the collective and civic decisions that shape their future. Decision-making power is far too often held by a few people, and belonging and civic muscle efforts should grow to engage people as equals, collectively, to make change.

Building Healthy Places Network: Healthy Neighborhood Investments: A policy scan and strategy map



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**Debra Oto-Kent, MPH**  
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# Equity & Public Engagement

Megan MacPherson Scheid, Deputy City Manager

*Advisory Council, Davenport Institute at Pepperdine's School of Public Policy*

# Inclusivity

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- Educate about inclusivity and its benefits
- Has to be intentionality behind or it's not going to happen
- Can be a lonely job
- Start with policy is it's not already part of the culture

# **Integrating inclusivity into policy**

## ***Making the case***

***Presentation to Council in 2020***

# SACOG 2019 Prosperity Strategy

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- Sacramento Area Council of Government's 2019 Prosperity Strategy Framework
  - Research performed by the Brookings Institute
  - An economically prosperous region must tackle both growth and inclusion
  - Inclusion must be an essential input to any decision making, instead of a separate policy consideration.



# Community inclusion

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A process by which efforts are made to

- Ensure equal opportunities for all, regardless of background, to achieve their full potential in life
- Create conditions which enable full and active participation of every member of the society in all aspects of life, including civic, social, economic, and political activities, as well as participation in decision-making processes.

*--United Nations*

# Highlights of City's current inclusivity approach

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- Age-Friendly City by World Health Organization
- 10% affordable units in new planning areas
- Invest Health partnership in core neighborhoods
- EngageRoseville broad input
- Small-business loans
- Recreation and library programs: Literacy, census,
- \$5-6 million annually to prevent homelessness
- Non profit grants: Citizen Benefit Trust/REACH
- Disability access on transit and for pedestrians
- Veterans outreach

# Highlights of City's inclusivity approach

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- Conducted staff-facilitated *Appreciating Differences* training with employees throughout the City, reaching nearly all employees in 2016-2017
- Focus on inclusivity in recruitment materials and career fairs with Inclusion Committee
- Holds Police Citizen Academy each year, including a virtual one during this pandemic
- Joined the Government Alliance on Race and Equity in August 2020

# Aspects of Diversity

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- Cultural/Ethnic
- Racial
- Religious
- Age
- Gender
- Sexual orientation
- Disability
- Socio-economic
- Political

# Top 50 Places to Live in the US

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- Money Magazine ranked Roseville 34<sup>th</sup> in 2020
- Only California city on list
- Initial screen [eliminated cities without diversity](#)
- Ranking based on 115 data points in 9 areas:
  - Economy and income
  - Housing market
  - Cost of living
  - [Diversity](#)
  - Education
  - Health and safety
  - Health and safety amenities
  - Entertainment amenities
  - Weather and lifestyle

# National trends

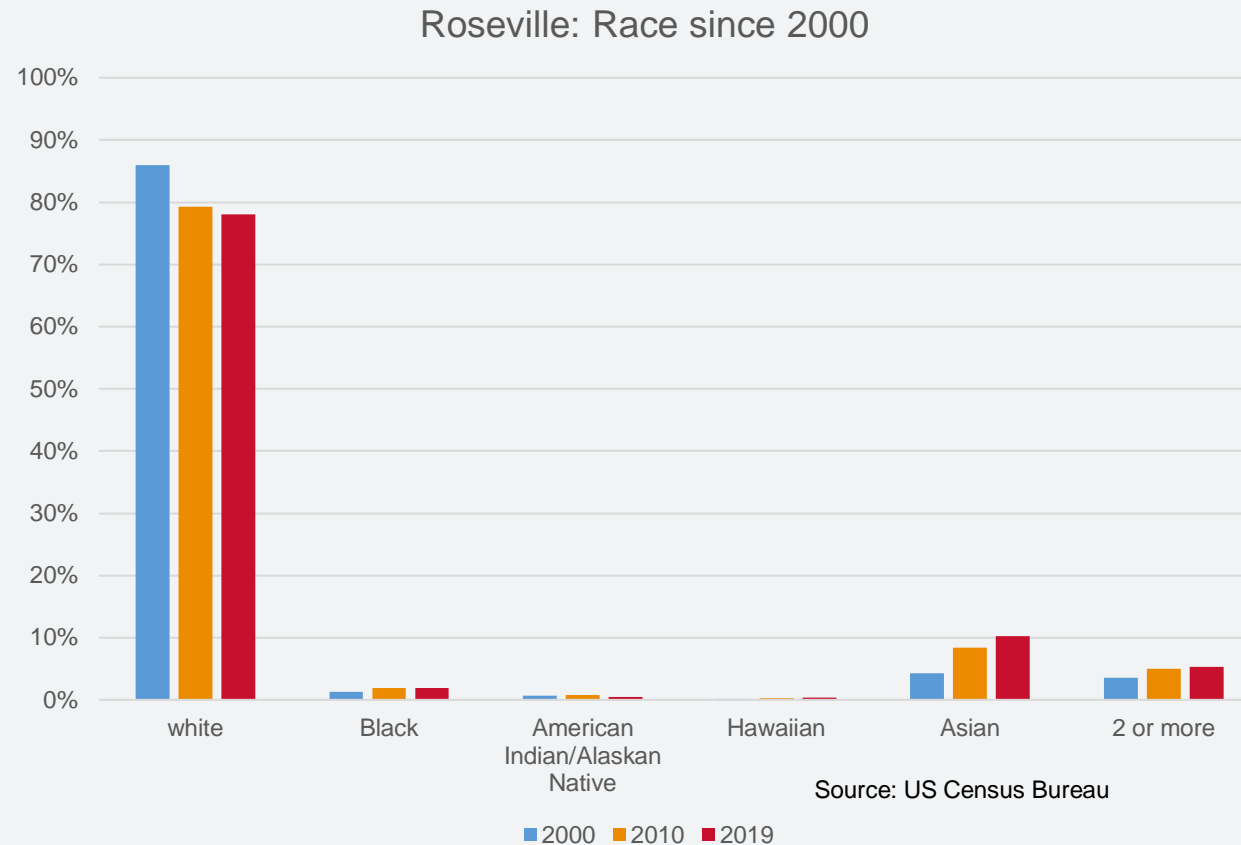
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- The U.S. Census estimates that within a couple of decades over half of all Americans will be members of a racial or ethnic minority group

# Roseville: Increasingly diverse

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- Racially and ethnically
- More ethnically diverse than the data show



# Increasingly diverse

- 2020 Census: more data on ethnic diversity

**What is this person's race?**  
Mark  one or more boxes **AND** print origins.

<input type="checkbox"/> White – <i>Print, for example, German, Irish, English, Italian, Lebanese, Egyptian, etc.</i> ↴ <input type="text"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Chinese <input type="checkbox"/> Filipino <input type="checkbox"/> Asian Indian <input type="checkbox"/> Other Asian – <i>Print, for example, Pakistani, Cambodian, Hmong, etc.</i> ↴ <input type="text"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Vietnamese <input type="checkbox"/> Korean <input type="checkbox"/> Japanese <input type="checkbox"/> Other Pacific Islander – <i>Print, for example, Tongan, Fijian, Marshallese, etc.</i> ↴ <input type="text"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Native Hawaiian <input type="checkbox"/> Samoan <input type="checkbox"/> Chamorro
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Black or African Am. – *Print, for example, African American, Jamaican, Haitian, Nigerian, Ethiopian, Somali, etc.* ↴

American Indian or Alaska Native – *Print name of enrolled or principal tribe(s), for example, Navajo Nation, Blackfeet Tribe, Mayan, Aztec, Native Village of Barrow Inupiat Traditional Government, Nome Eskimo Community, etc.* ↴

Some other race – *Print race or origin.* ↴



# Hispanic/Latino Ethnicity

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**Is this person of Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin?**

- No**, not of Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin
- Yes, Mexican, Mexican Am., Chicano
- Yes, Puerto Rican
- Yes, Cuban
- Yes, another Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin – *Print, for example, Salvadoran, Dominican, Colombian, Guatemalan, Spaniard, Ecuadorian, etc.* ↴

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# UN Inclusive Cities indicators

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- ✓ Accessible built environment
- Degree of a positive social environment
- ✓ Affordability
- ✓ Geographical availability
- Quality Information; services
- Meaningful participation
- Transparency and good governance

# In summary:

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- **Policy direction:** Add a fourth strategy to the City council's four-year strategic plan under **Goal C: Maintain a Safe and Healthy Community.**
- Council decided on the following:
  - *Strengthen inclusiveness, equality, and justice efforts in partnership with the community for all*

# Inclusive Model of Engagement

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- Values differences within the community
- Cooperates with, and contributes to, its surrounding community
- Dual focus acknowledges responsibility to community
  - Intrinsic focus on success of project or initiative
    - How can we (agency/department) make this successful?
  - Extrinsic focus on what is best for the community
    - How can we make this a good fit for the community?
- Collaborates with individuals, groups, organizations across boundaries
  - Partnerships with diverse community leaders
  - Inviting all voices to the table

# Exclusive Model of Engagement

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- Based on perception that community has one, conformed voice
  - Determined by the most outspoken (mainstream) voice
- Misses connection between project success and community buy in
  - May focus solely on checking the boxes (intrinsic goals)
- Disregards the value brought forward by diverse groups and how that contributes to to the full voice of the community
- Collaboration limited to majority community groups
  - Note, if there is collaboration with the community at all
- Informs only in one language or modality, disregarding various community needs

# Why people don't show up

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- Lack of knowledge of the political system
  - Previous negative community engagement experience
  - Historical patterns of municipal decisions not reflecting community input, broken promises made by political candidates, or both, resulting in reinforced distrust of government and institutions
  - Economic barriers; needing to focus on basic needs of self and family
  - Not seeing one's own culture or identity reflected in meeting format or content
  - Fear of being judged, unsafe, or unwelcome
  - Transportation barriers
  - Childcare needs
  - Spiritual beliefs and practices
  - Immigration status
  - Meeting time or date does not consider work schedules, religious holidays, meal times, or other family needs
- GroundworkUSA

# Engaging historically underrepresented populations

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- Identify who is underrepresented at your meeting or event.
- Put yourself in other people's shoes
- Listen more than you speak
- Gather input and buy-in on your project, its aims, and its marketing materials
- Address language barriers
- Be thoughtful about location of meetings and events
- Get creative in defining what “engagement” looks and feels like

--Groundwork USA

# Engaging historically underrepresented populations

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- Tap existing networks to spread the word
- Consider providing food and childcare at events
- Verbally and publicly acknowledge citizen distrust and historical patterns of decision making that is not reflective of previously gathered public input
- Manage expectations by being upfront and honest
- Take time to establish “rules of engagement,” sourced from stakeholders in the room
- Ensure team’s manner and practice reflect core principles

--Groundwork USA



# Dialogue vs. Debate

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Collaborative: Working toward common understanding.	Oppositional: Attempting to prove each other wrong.
Goal: Finding common ground	Goal: Winning
Listen to understand, find meaning and find agreement	Listens to find flaws and to counter the arguments.
Expands and possibly changes a participant's point of view.	Affirms a participant's own point of view.
Reveals assumptions for reevaluation.	Defends assumptions as truth.
Causes introspection	Causes critique
Assumes that many people have pieces of the answer and that together they can put them into a workable solution.	Assumes that there is a right answer and that someone has it.
Remains open-ended.	Implies a conclusion.

-Racial Healing Dialogue handout, adapted from *Educators for Social Responsibility*

# EMPLOY AN EQUITY-INFORMED OUTREACH STRATEGY

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## One Size Does Not Fit All

Define targeted groups

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Use culturally and demographic appropriate outreach methods and materials

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Account for translation/ASL/close captioning

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Host formal or informal focus groups to test messaging & visuals

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Budget for traditional, digital, cultural and ethnic media outreach

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Increase tailored outreach to under-engaged populations

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Partner with CBOs and ethnic media

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# CREATE MEANINGFUL PARTICIPATION FOR MARGINALIZED POPULATIONS

Frame your agency's project in reference to **their needs** and experiences and how their engagement will **benefit them**.



Build trust through more intimate engagement formats.



Give space to hear people's voices, to share their stories and experiences. **Give people a chance to vent.**



Remember that people are coming to the table with a history of discriminatory policies by government. **Learn what they are.**



**Acknowledge and apologize for past and current grievances.**



Ensure your engagement is not solely extractive – **provide resources, stipends, thank you gift cards.**



Government is perceived as one entity to people – **be willing to connect them to other government agencies and resources.**



**Respect their time.** Coordinate engagement with other regional entities on the front-end. Prevent engagement fatigue.

# LANGUAGE ACCESS TIPS

Develop policies that clarify your local agency's responsibilities and commitment related to access

Partner w/ CBOs & Ethnic Media

Translate print & online materials





Create easy to navigate webpages in language

Use bilingual employees effectively & appropriately

Provide printed materials whenever possible

Enlist community members to ensure messages are appropriate

# LANGUAGE ACCESS TIPS FOR SMOOTH MEETINGS

-  Identify a co-facilitator who speaks the language and dialect.
-  Conduct meetings in the native language of participants with interpretation for English speakers.
-  Plan out the time it takes for simultaneous translation – slowly, pause as needed.
-  Arrange language-specific break-out groups or ensure interpreter in each group.

# WAYS TO MAKE YOUR VIRTUAL MEETING MORE ACCESSIBLE

## Think About

Using ADA-accessible formatting for visibility and readability, etc.

Using talk-to-text transcription – Live Captions

Using the simultaneous translation line on Zoom

Activating a call-in interpretation line, if available

Translating agendas and all other English materials

Weighing the pros and cons of live streaming on social media feeds – don't forget public comments

Mailing any required printed materials at least 72 hours before meeting date

# EQUITY CONSIDERATIONS FOR MEETING DESIGN

**Consider what methods will best engage the marginalized populations that have been historically excluded...**

**Always consider who you are leaving out through virtual engagement, e.g. seniors, people without access to the internet, etc.**

**Think about who will be using digital tools and what challenges they may face or accommodations they may need to fully participate.**

**Consider who is left behind through digital engagement and how you will engage them differently.**

# FREE PE RESOURCES FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENTS

## TIERS Framework



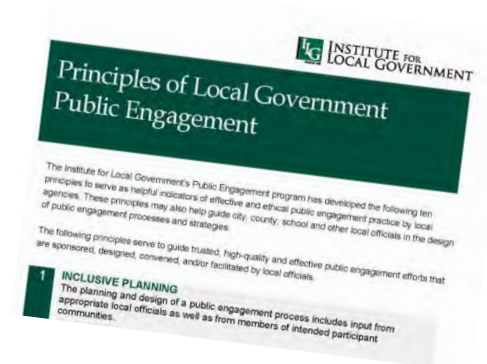
TIERS is a step-by-step approach to public engagement at any level.

## Translation Equipment



Free interpretation equipment can be loaned out and used for simultaneous and consecutive translation with a live translator.

## Tip Sheets & Resources



Dozens of tip sheets about effective, inclusive and ethical public engagement, describing successful public engagement processes and strategies.

[www.ca-ilg.org/inclusive-public-engagement](http://www.ca-ilg.org/inclusive-public-engagement)



# ILG'S PE TRAINING IS NOW VIRTUAL!

**NEW TRAINING!**

**PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT TRAINING for LOCAL GOV'T**

**POPULAR PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT WORKSHOP NOW VIRTUAL & UPDATED FOR A POST-COVID WORLD!**

**THURS, NOVEMBER 18 & FRI, NOVEMBER 19, 2021 via ZOOM**

**SPACE IS LIMITED. REGISTER TODAY!**

**ILG**

**WWW.CA-ILG.ORG**

## **NEXT TRAINING on 11/18**

- Updated to include post-COVID resources
- New emphasis on virtual engagement strategies and equity considerations
- Customized for individual contributors in local government

# DISCUSSION AND Q&A



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newsletter

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/stayinformed](http://www.ca-ilg.org/stayinformed)

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**THANK YOU FOR  
JOINING US!**