

MEASURE PROJECT SUCCESS

Build Evaluation into your Engagement Timeline

Over your project period, an easy place to start evaluating is to go back to your community engagement goals and see if you were able to meet them fully or in part. With that in mind, how often will you check back on these goals and recalibrate if necessary? Who will you incorporate in this evaluation? Remember your post-event surveys!

Worksheet

Questions for Evaluating Engagement

Here are some more questions to consider asking throughout the engagement process and after activities:

*Evaluating Community **Reach***

- Did our target audience participate in this engagement?
- Were they actively participating in the engagement, giving feedback? Or were they passively listening or watching?

*Evaluating Community **Access***

- Were participants' language, literacy, age, and culture taken into consideration with the process design?
- If a facilitator was used, did they provide a safe and well managed environment?

*Evaluating Community **Capacity Building***

- Did the public engagement process provide residents with additional skills, knowledge, and experiences likely to encourage their role as committed and effective community members?
- Was background information provided so participants were prepared?
- Did the process result in the agency making a more informed and/or better decision?
- How might your agency continue to draw on and develop these community capacities?

*Evaluating Community-led **Decision Making***

- Did the agency consider the ideas resulting from public process in final decisions?
- Did the process result in the agency making a more informed and/or better decision?

Evaluating **Transparency**

- What happened to the input gathered?
- Have participants been given the opportunity to add their names to appropriate mailing lists/listservs for future engagement opportunities?
- Was the process appropriate for the degree of specificity you were seeking?
- Were materials used in the process helpful?
- Did the agency provide feedback to participants about how their recommendations were or were not used and why?
- Was there an effective external communications effort to the larger public during, or at the conclusion of, the engagement effort about the intent of the process, or its outcomes?

Evaluating **Effectiveness**

- Were you satisfied with the internal communication among staff within your organization, project partners, and (any) consultants during the engagement process?
- Was there greater support for the (resulting) new policy or action?
- Did the community say they would be more or less likely to participate in other such processes in the future?

Remember your post-event surveys as well. These are vital to the evaluation. Remember to be flexible! Listen to the community and show that you are learning from them and incorporating their feedback. This will also build trust and buy-in to your process and improve your service.