City Council
Proposed Community Engagement Strategies

City of Raleigh – City Council
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Strategies for Success

 These recommendations and strategies are the result of hours of discussions with constituents, City Staff, elected officials, community organizations, and CE practitioners across the country – research of other jurisdictions. They offer a suite of strategies and activities that would be a part of a comprehensive approach to community engagement. It is the responsibility of the Council and City staff to prioritize and sequence the implementation of these recommended strategies, and to find the appropriate time and process to vet them with stakeholders.

Community Engagement as an organizational value lives in the heart of the organization. It is evident in all of the organizations' policies, transactions, decisions, and activities.

Community Engagement as a set of disparate loosely connected actions are connected with planning, projects, or in response to episodic events.

CE

The homeostatic state

CE

Create a government, structure and culture that has community engagement at its core.
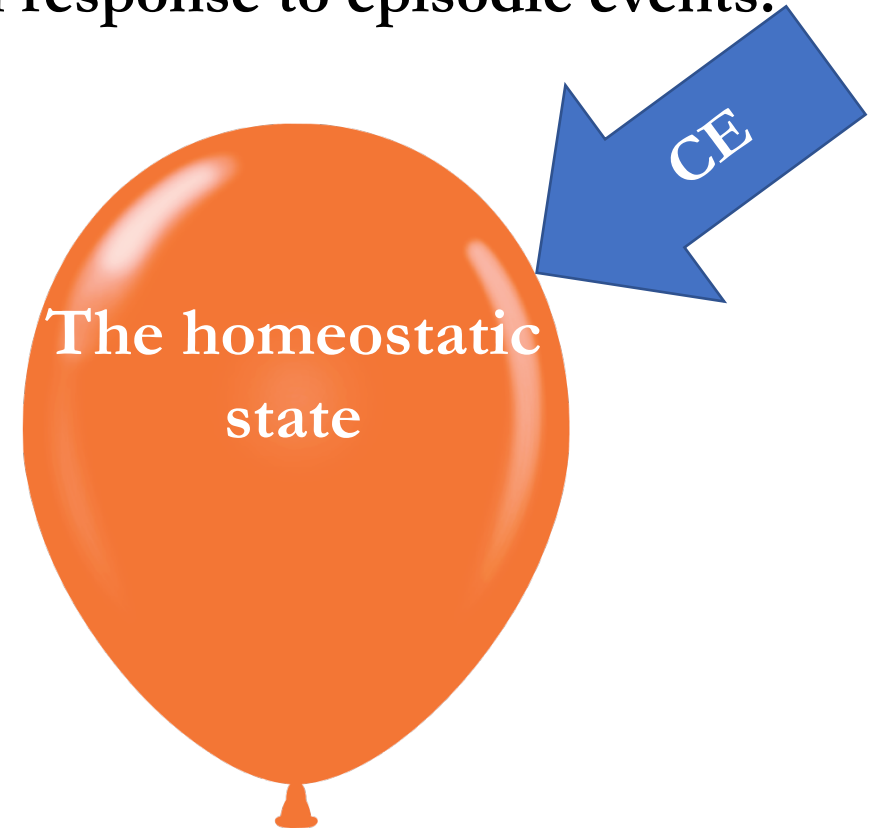
We must have a clear, well articulated, and communicated definition of community engagement

- Is it the constant flow of energy, knowledge, and information between residents and their government?

- Harnessing and focusing the collective intelligence, creativity, and energy of the citizenry, public servants, elected officials, and community organizations.

- This engagement should be viewed as interactions between the City, constituents, and community organizations. Community engagement enables the community to offer opinions, propose ideas, and develop collective solutions.

Community Engagement

The City engages constituents and community organizations as:

- Citizens
- Customers
- Partners
- Co-creators
- Volunteers
- Stewards

- › Trust
- › Honest and timely communication
- › Stewardship of their talent, time and resources
- › Follow through
- › Responsiveness
- › Accountability
- › Transparency
- › Responsiveness
- › Accountability
- › Transparency
- › Continuous learning
- › Healing and Compassion

Stewardship

Responsiveness

Accountability

Transparency

Follow through

Inclusion

Community Engagement Values

Community building

Continuous Learning Capacity Building

Innovation

Trust

Communication

Collaboration

ALL OF THESE ARE INTERRELATED

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Preparing for the journey

- Audit the structure and culture of City government and make necessary adjustments to create a foundation that will support support new strategies.

Community **Engagement** Functions

All of these are interrelated

Inclusion

Assessment

Technical Assistance to CE Stakeholders

Community building

Continuous Learning Capacity Building

Support of community & neighborhood organizations

Collaboration

Supplemental workforce

Innovation

Communication

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Strategy 1: Assessment: How will we know if we are successful?

- Conduct periodic analysis of the effectiveness of our current public engagement activities. Conduct internal and and external benchmarking.

- Identify criteria or metrics to determine if public engagement activities and strategies are successful.

Strategy 2: Supporting community and neighborhood organizations

At the core of our community's capacity to effectively express its opinions are neighborhood and community organizations. Recognizing and strengthening the role of these neighborhood and community organizations is critical. These local "associations" are the most powerful opportunities constituents have to express their views. These organizations include block clubs; religious organizations; sports and recreation groups; youth, women's, men's, and seniors' groups; issue advocacy organizations; cultural groups, etc.

Strategy 2: Continued:

Create, support, and sustain neighborhood organization organizations that address the myriad of our neighborhood interest and concerns including but not limited to:

- Zoning
- Environment & Ecology
- Affordable housing
- Access to transportation
- Economic development
- Jobs/Employment
- Education
- Quality of Life
- Health/environmental justice
- Youth Development

- Gentrification/housing
- Arts & recreation
- Parks
- Equity
- Safety nets for our most vulnerable citizens
- Crime & safety
- Homelessness
- Traffic
- Community building

Strategy 3: Customer Service: Increase the potency and capacity of the thousands of transactions between City staff and constituents that occur each day.

- Use transactions with constituents as a component of our engagement and communications' strategies.

- Create goodwill by ensuring that those transactions create a trust and a positive perception of City government.

Strategy 4: Implement continuous learning and capacity building strategies and activities for:

- **The Council**
- **City Departments**
- **Constituents**
- **Consultants doing work for the City**
- **Community organizations**
- **Other Stakeholders**

Strategy 4 Continued: Continuous learning – Capacity building

Design and conduct community engagement capacity building activities for city departments to ensure:

- That all City community engagement strategies and activities conducted by the City or consultants are aligned with our community engagement values.

- The design and implementation of an equitable, culturally relevant, and inclusive community engagement process for all communities.

Strategy 5: Funding/Support: Community engagement is investment not expenditure

- Commitment to community engagement is one of the City's core values, it must be reflected in the budget.

- We should examine how internal and external collaboration can minimize budgetary impact but have maximum impact.

- Seek foundation support for innovative community engagement activities.

- Use collaboration, voluntarism, corps work, youth employment, to enable us to extend services while minimizing budget impact.

- In as much as the current Community Engagement team does not have the capacity or resources to lead the implementation of these strategies, the City should form a City community engagement Core Team composed of staff from appropriate departments .

Strategy 6: Youth engagement: Taking responsibility for producing the next generation of "Big Citizens?"

Take advantage of the idealism and energy of young constituents

- **Create parallel engagement processes for the young constituents.**

- **Work with City departments and youth serving organizations to design and implement civics experiences that encourage civic stewardship and spirit and the sustained engagement of young constituents**

Strategy 7: Equity and Inclusion:

- Understanding intersectionality, and collaboration with stakeholders.

- Understand how the unique evolution of race in Raleigh has impacted the engagement of Black constituents.

- Understand how race, class, ethnicity, culture, age, and other characteristics impact constituent's inclination to engage.

- Engage ethnic, cultural, and socio-economic, populations who have not historically been engaged.

- Discover ways to inspire the engagement of:
  - Renters
  - Immigrants and refugees
  - Youth and senior populations
  - Low-income constituents
  - Communities of color
  - Limited English-speaking ability
  - Constituents with limited mobility

Strategy 8: Create a community idea/innovation system

Innovation brings together internal and external stakeholders and their collective talents to increase operational efficiency by promoting continuous improvement, collaboration, and citizen-driven programs and services.

- Create an idea system that inspires constituents, community organizations, and City staff to submit ideas about how to improve community engagement programs, services, and systems and that ensures that historical rituals, practices, and behaviors don't blind us to new community engagement possibilities

Strategy 9: Stakeholder communications' strategy: As a leader, how you communicate is just as important as what and why you communicate.

Effective communication between stakeholders is critical. It enables the constant flow of information between the City, constituents, and community organizations. It encourages constituents to participate in important decisions that impact their quality of life

- The Community Engagement Unit and the Department of Communications should lead a discussion to create strategies regarding improving communications between all community engagement stakeholders.
- Ensure the appropriate use of technology as not to replace other important forms of engagement.

Strategy 10: Community building, celebrations, and kinship -The more opportunities we give citizens to gather, the more they find common ground, shared vision, and shared purpose.

- Create creative innovative opportunities for residents to gather and engage

- Provide gatherings, special events etc. that result in greater kinship – gatherings in which we learn what we all share and in which we learn from our differences