

City of San Diego – Inclusive Public Engagement Guide

Focused Discussion Group Meeting #1: “Welcome & Project Overview”

Meeting Summary Report

Meeting held April 19, 2023

Prepared by:

City Planning Department



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Focused Discussion Group Meeting #1 Summary

Meeting Details

April 19, 2023 – 6:00-8:00 PM

Dolores Magdaleno Memorial Recreation Center

2902 Marcy Ave, San Diego, CA 92113

Meeting Overview

The goal of Focused Discussion Group (FDG) Meeting #1 – Welcome & Project Overview – was to share the purpose and scope of the Inclusive Public Engagement Guide and introduce the project team and FDG members. The project team shared information about the City of San Diego’s organizational structure, the intention of the FDG and the objectives and project schedule for the Inclusive Public Engagement Guide. The project team asked FDG members what they hoped to accomplish through the Inclusive Public Engagement Guide and how they had participated previously in other City of San Diego public processes.

Meeting Participants

Focused Discussion Group

- Candice Carr
- Rebecca Egipto
- Rachel Graham
- Andrea Hetheru
- Tanisha-Jean Martin
- Christine Millena
- Ethan Ramirez
- Danielle Knauff Raykowski
- Andrea Schlageter
- Marry Young

Project Team

City of San Diego

- Alejandra Gavaldon, Deputy Director, City Planning Department
- Cristhian Barajas, Senior Planner, City Planning Department
- Colette Redon, Senior Planner, City Planning Department
- America Aceves, Assistant Planner, City Planning Department
- Helen Weldeghiorgis, Program Manager, Race and Equity Department

Kearns & West (meeting facilitation)

- Brisa Aviles
- Joan Isaacson

Meeting Activities and Input

The project team welcomed FDG members and shared the agenda for Meeting #1:

- Concept and scope of the Inclusive Public Engagement Guide
- Guide timeline
- Expectations from group members
- Getting to know each other
- Perspectives on project priorities

FDG Introductions

The project team welcomed FDG members and invited them to share something about themselves in a roundtable discussion. FDG members were also invited to share their experiences in City engagement processes, if applicable.

FDG member responses about themselves included:

- The members' amount of time living in the city of San Diego varied from two to over 15 years.
- Some members work in the mental health field, academic institutions, and higher education.
- Some group members have previously engaged with the City's Homelessness Strategies and Solutions Department, Library Department, City Planning Department, Child and Youth Success Department, previous and current Mayor's Offices, Parks and Recreation Department, previous and current Council District offices, Development Services Department, the Fire Department, and others.

Concept and Scope of the Inclusive Public Engagement Guide

The project team shared the overall purpose of the FDG and participation expectations. They also provided an overview of public engagement and its importance in City decision-making, including examples of how public input shapes City decision-making, the current City organizational structure and ways the City collects public input.

The project team shared the purpose and objectives of the Inclusive Public Engagement Guide including examples of what the Guide will and will not influence as a Citywide engagement tool. For instance, the Guide can inform how the City gets community input on programs, plans, and projects. However, the Guide will not determine courses of action on public health & safety-related issues in critical situations.

FDG Timeline and Schedule

The project team reviewed the project's anticipated engagement timeline, key milestones and what the Guide would cover, including barriers to participation, techniques to increase participation from underrepresented stakeholders, inclusive engagement principles and how to measure engagement success. The project team outlined the FDG candidate selection process, including the evaluation criteria for selecting participants.

FDG Project Priorities

During the roundtable discussions, FDG members were asked what they hoped to achieve in the group and what was most important for them to accomplish through the Inclusive Public Engagement Guide.

FDG member responses included:

- Being able to inform others about the City's work and engagement opportunities.
- Helping to improve the engagement process.
- Providing guidance and recommendations.
- Building transparency and accountability.
- Supporting efforts for more follow-up after engagement processes have concluded.

The project team also informed FDG members that the FDG roster would be shared online and confirmed that members gave their permission to share that information. FDG members were informed of the themes for the next FDG meeting and were asked to complete two take-home assignments (see Appendix) to prepare for the next FDG meeting.

Appendix: Meeting #1

The Appendix includes the worksheets and additional materials sent home with FDG participants to review and complete before the next meeting as preparation for getting their input on the Meeting #2 topics (Participation Challenges and Meaningful Engagement). A list of the materials is included below.

1. Inclusive Public Engagement Principles Worksheet
2. Barriers to Engagement Worksheet

Worksheets & Additional Materials Sent Home with FDG Participants

Inclusive Public Engagement Principles Worksheet



Meeting #1

Focused Discussion Group

[Worksheet to Prepare for Meeting #2](#)

[Inclusive Public Engagement Principles Worksheet](#)

Instructions: Please review the inclusive public engagement principles below. After reviewing the principles, please answer the reflection questions with your feedback or questions.

Inclusive Public Engagement Principles

- **Inclusion:** Engagement strategies should account for language differences, income level, digital divide, and other barriers to participation to achieve an accurate representation of the demographics in San Diego.
- **Respect for community knowledge:** Show respect by asking about people's lived experiences. Reduce engagement fatigue by consolidating feedback and collaborating internally. Appreciate the uniqueness of each community.
- **Transparency:** Identify and communicate the level of engagement, and goals we are trying to accomplish. Develop a summary of how input was used and follow up with participants about project status and updates.
- **Clear communication:** Make sure information is accessible and understandable to non-technical experts. This will allow community members to participate effectively and build their capacity to engage.
- **Build True Relationships & Partnerships:** Establish a process to develop trust through communication. Cultivate respectful and long-term relationships and partnerships with community groups and stakeholders.
- **Commitment to good process:** Develop a process that provides people enough time to weigh in. Prioritize involving community members that are directly impacted by decisions. Commit to continuous improvements for our engagement practices.

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Worksheet to Prepare for Meeting #2

Inclusive Public Engagement Principles Worksheet

What do you think about the inclusive public engagement principles?

What should we consider adding to the inclusive public engagement principles above?

Notes/Questions

Barriers to Engagement Worksheet



Meeting #1



Focused Discussion Group

Worksheet to Prepare for Meeting #2

This worksheet is an optional opportunity for you to start brainstorming discussion points for our next meeting.

What are the things that limit or prevent people from being involved in community meetings or other community engagement activities?

If you haven't attended a community meeting or other community engagement activities, what has stopped you?

Focused Discussion Group

Worksheet to Prepare for Meeting #2

This worksheet is an optional opportunity for you to start brainstorming discussion points for our next meeting.

What things can be done to make attending community meetings and participating in engagement activities easier and more convenient?