

Internal Innovation Advisory Workgroup – decision-making part 1

October 26, 9:00 – 10:00 AM

Metro, Room 370A

Driving question: how can Metro make its decision-making process more transparent, relevant and accessible?

Meeting goals:

- Identify where and how community members can influence Metro’s decision-making
- Review tools Metro currently uses to explain its decision-making and how community can get involved
- Brainstorm what a ‘community guide to influencing a decision’ should include

Participants: Darwin Eustaquio, Olena Turula, Nyla Moore, Noelle Dobson, Sheilagh Diez, Peggy Morell, Erin Pidot

Meeting notes:

Introductions and overview

- Introductions – name, title, department
- Goal of these two work group sessions: design guide for community members interested in getting involved in decision-making; identify opportunities to make this process more accessible
- Reviewed agenda for today

Where does decision-making happen/what are the access points for community influence? You can think about this question from the perspective of a particular project or policy you’ve worked on or advocated for.

- Advisory committees – comprised of community, Metro staff, local jurisdiction staff, technical staff, etc.
 - Grant selection
 - Technical (project level)
 - Steering committees
 - Stakeholder advisory committees
 - Technical and policy advisory committees (JPACT, MPAC, etc.)
- Project team leaders
- Jurisdictional staff
- Role of staff in making recommendations (often staff led)
- Ad-hoc info/input sessions with community
- Community-led advocacy
- Forums/big events
- Levels of engagement drive access points
- Noelle - committees are really complicated and varied – have decision-making power, but what does that mean?
- Peggy – only some committees have community members; can’t imagine community member coming to internal steering committee meeting
- Sheilagh – committees just advising, staff is making decisions – staff relationships are important
 - Staff needs to be more connected to the community

- Whoever from the community can go to a meeting on that day at that time gets to weigh in and staff takes that and calls it “community input”
- Important to differentiate kinds of decisions
 - Staff/community make decisions about what to move forward, but actual decisions are made by leadership and elected officials
- Sheilagh – hard to know how much influence committees have – staff may not know
- Peggy – events like car/ped/bike crashes influence decisions
- Access point - call staff, managers and councilors
- Olena – squeaky wheel has influence
- Darwin – how do different divisions take advantage of these committees to get community input? Not aware of any of this within RNR
- Nyla – each division does it differently
- Sheilagh – a lot of areas at Metro where really staff-led process – like idea of best practices

Share tools and resources that Metro currently uses to explain decision-making and access points

- Reviewed some tools that Metro currently uses including decision-making chart; one-pager on how to get involved; Metro Guide; DEI cards (with links to employment and committee sites, etc.)
- Most participants hadn’t seen any of these resources before – need to build awareness and store in one centralized location where staff know to look

What tools and resources would you want to include in a guide for community members on how to get involved?

Tools for staff

- Nyla – (best/next practice for staff) when putting together committees, seems like we continue to reach out to people we know – what is process to find new people? Need to broaden group of people we recruit from. Rather than ask the person who is always involved to join, ask that person to refer you to someone else. ‘Who do you know that might be interested?’
- (best/next practice for staff) Find out what level of engagement desired by community
- Noelle - best practices for recruiting/accessing community input, for when want to recruit new committee member, engage people, etc. (be clear about commitment, offer different levels of engagement, etc.)
- Best practices for how to get community involved in your project – checklist?
- How can staff do a better job connecting people to decision-making?
- Convey opportunities for getting input to decision-makers
- One centralized place where staff can easily find community engagement resources on intramet

Tools for community

- For overview of how to get involved – would be great to have template for back of the page to tailor for specific project
 - Add overview of specific project and how to get involved, add email address and project-specific website
- Sheilagh - lack of knowledge that things even exist, need to build broader understanding of committee structure and transparency about how decisions made and who is on committees → if communities know who is on committees, may have better understanding of how can make an impact

- Olena – no set process for how to put together committee – great to be able to advertise committee opportunities
- What’s best web hierarchy for community to locate opportunities for involvement including committees where they can serve – by topic area? → ask webteam about this
- How-can-community-access-Metro 101 resources on website
- Nyla – need to differentiate information for different audiences
- Noelle - 2 level of guides for both seasoned advocates and new contributor
- Sheilagh – tool where you can self-select starting point - different points of access
- Noelle – use case studies to demonstrate levels of engagement – examples are really useful
- Nyla – levels of engagement – year-long, short term?
- Examples of levels of engagement – avatar profiles to represent levels of engagement
- Sheilagh – people have different capacity to be engaged
- Ombuds-person or contact person to address community concerns

Parking lot

- Sheilagh – how to address community concerns that engagement/decision-making not working for them/their organization/their community