

Meeting summary



Public Engagement Review Committee, June 11, 2024

Members present:

Isaiah Jackman
Makerusa Porotesano
Henry Miller
Samsam Abdi
Cameron Ruen
JR Lilly

Members absent:

Carine Arendes
Michael Foley

Presenters:

Gloria Pinzon-Marin, Metro Communications (facilitator)

Eryn Kehe, *Urban Policy and Development Manager, Metro*

Glen Hamburg, *Associate Regional Planner, Metro*

Purpose:

Members of the Public Engagement Review Committee (PERC) convened in-person to review *Appendix H – Evaluation of public participation* activities for the Public Engagement Guide (PEG). PERC also heard an update on the annual compliance report for Metro's Urban Growth Management and an overview of Metro's regional land use coordination work.

Meeting topics:

Annual compliance report on Urban Growth Management Functional Plan and Regional Transportation Functional Plan

Following introductions, the meeting began with Eryn Kehe providing history and an overview of Metro's land use management responsibilities. She explained the purpose of an urban growth boundary and provided examples of the ways Metro coordinates with cities and counties to manage it. Glen Hamburg provided an overview of the two functional plans that establish regional land use goals that impact things like industrial land availability, housing, and transportation. These plans set the minimum standards for city and county governments to comply with regional goals. The presentation ended with an update for the PERC committee on the most recent annual compliance report highlighting a change to Happy Valley's land use approved by Metro Council.

Discussion by committee members included:

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Interest in how the development of specific subdivisions are impacted by Metro's functional plans, how housing is considered, how equity and gentrification are considered and how communities are engaged. There was a request for the annual compliance reporting process to use the new Public Engagement Guide for next year's reporting efforts. There was also interest by the committee members to receive more information about land use projects in the future.

Public engagement guide update and celebration:

The second item on the agenda was a project update on the Public Engagement Guide. The committee received an update on the adoption of the guide by Metro Council in February 2024. Staff provided a summary of the key changes made to make the document following the adoption, like a plain language review to simplify language, an update on the "language check" boxes, and design items to improve ADA accessibility. Changes to the content were informed by input from various audiences including PERC, the Committee on Disability Inclusion, Metro staff, Metro Council, and the public comment period.

The committee provided feedback on the update to the definition of "meaningful public engagement" and expressed overall support for it, saying it reflected what had been discussed in this committee in past meetings. Committee members were also interested in understanding how staff were going to use the new guide and whether there would be trainings available for them. It was important to the committee for this document to not become a "plan on a shelf" but to actually be used.

This item ended with a small celebration and gratitude expressed towards the committee by staff for their important contributions to the content of the guide and for pushing Metro to be more clear, inclusive, and accountable to the public and communities that participate in Metro hosted engagement opportunities.

Committee feedback on Appendix H for evaluation of public engagement:

As the last item on the agenda, staff provided an overview of what led to the draft of Appendix H for the adopted guide. It was adapted from the evaluation guidance that existed in the 2013 version of the public engagement guide. The document is split up into few sections starting with an acknowledgement of Metro's Guiding Principle #7 for meaningful public participation and other project management tools available to staff. There are also a set of three focus areas to evaluate engagement activities, communications tactics and a third section focused on evaluation of engagement activities with historically marginalized groups. *The focus areas include:*

Focus area 1: Evaluating effectiveness of virtual and in-person engagement activities.

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Focus area 2: Evaluate effectiveness of communications tactics.

Focus area 3: Involve underserved communities such as those with limited English proficiency, diverse cultural backgrounds, low-incomes, disabilities, seniors and youth.

The committee members were split up into three groups to discuss amongst themselves the set of evaluation questions found within one of the three focus areas. Then, the full group came back together to report out and discuss. Feedback included a recognition that it was a good start and that focus area 3 was an important inclusion in the document. Also, a member recognized that there was a lot to consider in this document for staff and that prioritizing one or two areas to evaluate or improve upon at a time might be helpful to roll out the document.

Feedback specific to the content included requests to:

- add questions related to language access, follow-up with participants, and relationship building activities like providing food and time for connection to Focus area 1.
- add “video” and “audio” to the list of alternative forms of communications for ADA inclusion, be more specific about which media publications or social media will be used for measuring communication tactics, and to include community partner events in outreach/communications options for Focus area 2.
- Ensure that cultural competency and responsiveness is considered in Focus area 3.
- break up the questions a little bit more in categories of virtual vs. in-person engagement, as well as create a more specific questions for partnerships.
- ensure evaluation criteria is considered at the beginning of projects (in the planning phase), rather than at the end.
- provide more specific guidance to staff on how to use the appendix, including making sure their evaluation strategy is based on their project goals.