

# Memorandum



CITY OF DALLAS

DATE June 5, 2023

Honorable members of the Workforce, Education, and Equity Committee: Jaynie  
TO Schultz (Chair), Casey Thomas II (Vice-Chair), Jesse Moreno, Paula Blackmon, Adam  
McGough, Omar Narvaez, Jaime Resendez

SUBJECT **Update to Strategic Engagement and Outreach Plan**

On March 07, 2023, Staff briefed the Workforce, Education, and Equity Committee (Committee) on the City's efforts to develop a [Strategic Engagement and Outreach Plan](#) (Plan) that will serve as an organizational standard for engagement and customer service delivery that exemplifies the City's core values and guiding principles.

As you may recall, the Plan researched best practices from other major cities such as [San Antonio](#) and [Austin](#) and organizations such as the [Government Alliance on Race and Equity](#) (GARE), [Robert Wood Johnson Foundation](#), and the [Kirwan Institute for the Study of Race and Ethnicity at The Ohio State University](#). Based on the research, the Plan was categorized into four categories: Identify, Strategize, Implement, and Evaluate. The sample assessment questions within the categories presented were also responsive to community feedback as provided by the Coalition for Neighborhood Self Determination and Ethos Consulting (Attachment A). The Plan's guiding principles are Accessibility, Inclusivity, Transparency, and Accountability.

With direction from the Committee, the City Manager's Office conducted four (4) focus groups composed of City staff across the organization that are focused on engagement and outreach related duties and responsibilities. Each department was asked to identify a minimum of one (1) and a maximum of four (4) department representatives to attend. Based on the number of submissions, Staff were distributed across the four (4) days of focus groups to allow for at least one department representative per focus group. A total of 75 staff attended all four (4) focus groups.

Each focus group started with an abbreviated version of the same presentation provided to the Committee, focusing on the four categories: Identify, Strategize, Implement, and Evaluate. Within each category, participants were then asked to focus on additional assessment questions that should be included in the Plan, tools in their experience that have been helpful and not, and finally identifying best practices internally and externally that the Plan can benefit from.

Based on the interactive and engaging feedback, Staff has identified internal short, medium, and long-term goals that can support and facilitate the development of the Plan.

## **Short Term (next 3 months)**

- Establish a centralized directory of points of contact within each department
- Coordinate a monthly meeting for internal Staff focus on "engagement and outreach" duties to discuss and share events occurring in the future and coordinate resources
- Identify and inventory city-wide resources in a comprehensive resource list made available to departments

- Train and centralize the use of the City Calendar for promotion and awareness of City-led events

**Medium Term (3 – 6 months)**

- Conduct, summarize, and report out a summary of all department practices as it relates to outreach and engagement
- Identify and inventory departmental data that is gathered from community events
- Develop and standardize post-event surveys

**Long Term (6 – 9 months)**

- Centralize resources and create a formalized and standardized process for requesting City-resources to support an engagement or outreach
- Allocate and centralize funding for engagement and outreach activities to create equitable access and opportunities for less resourced departments

Staff have created subcommittees based on the best practices and will further the work started in the focus groups to develop assessment questions, tools, and highlight best practices that not only include internal input but the community input as well.

Simultaneous to accomplishing these goals within the time frame, Staff is identifying ways to receive community input to develop the Plan to ensure it is responsive to their needs. In the next three months, Staff will:

- 1) schedule individual meetings with Councilmembers to better understand the existing engagement and outreach activities occurring within their Districts and their expectations for the Plan;
- 2) identify existing City events to participate in and create input opportunities; and
- 3) identify resources (material, financial, and human) to participate in public events.

Staff will return to the Committee in the fall to provide an update on internal activities and outline the intended community input process.

Should you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me directly.



Genesis D. Gavino  
Chief of Staff and Resilience Officer  
City Manager's Office

c: T.C. Broadnax, City Manager  
Tammy Palomino, Interim City Attorney  
Mark Swann, City Auditor  
Biliera Johnson, City Secretary  
Preston Robinson, Administrative Judge  
Kimberly Bizzor Tolbert, Deputy City Manager  
Jon Fortune, Deputy City Manager

Majed A. Al-Ghafry, Assistant City Manager  
M. Elizabeth (Liz) Cedillo-Pereira, Assistant City Manager  
Dr. Robert Perez, Assistant City Manager  
Carl Simpson, Assistant City Manager  
Jack Ireland, Chief Financial Officer  
Directors and Assistant Directors

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### **Community Outreach & Engagement Recommendations Coalition for Neighborhood Self-Determination January 2023**

**I. Definitions:** The following terms should be defined by the City of Dallas for the purposes of executing on consequent outreach and engagement. Our proposed definitions are outlined below.

- A. Outreach: Outreach is defined as *one way communication* from the City of Dallas to inform the public about a policy, program or campaign but not to solicit input or feedback on that initiative.
- B. Engagement: Engagement is defined as *two-way communication* between the City of Dallas and the public, specific constituencies and stakeholders to collaborate on developing a policy, program or campaign.
- C. Policy: In relation to outreach and engagement, policy is defined as something that will result in changes to city code, the creation of an ordinance, resolution or other formal action by the City Council or committees/commissions/advisory bodies, the creation of a staff, committee, or departmental process that requires action by a voting body or by the City Manager to formalize into procedures.
- D. Program: In relation to outreach and engagement, a program is defined as a fund, benefit, service, tool, or opportunity that is made available by the City to residents and/or business owners.
- E. Campaign: In relation to outreach and engagement, a campaign is defined as a City-led effort to address a particular issue of concern on a City-wide basis or in a particular area of the City through public education, public participation, or implementation of a new policy, program, plan, or strategy, including concerns related to land use planning or zoning, economic development, environment & sustainability, government performance and financial management, housing and homelessness, public health or safety, quality of life, arts, and culture, transportation and infrastructure, public accountability and ethics.
- F. Notification Methods: this includes social media, digital newsletters or e-board, posting on the City of Dallas website, distributing flyers or literature via physical mailer or other documentation, phone call or texting, email, word of mouth via public meeting or event and other methods identified by target constituencies as viable for improving outreach and engagement.

### **II. Short-Term Immediate Recommendations**

- A. Any informational videos, sheets or other materials posted on the City of Dallas website must be bilingual (English/Spanish).
- B. All methods of participating in public meetings (sign up sheets or other forms needed) must be available in English and Spanish (and other languages as

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requested) and must allow the speaker to indicate whether they require a translator or reasonable accommodation.

- C. All written, digital and spoken communication about a new Policy, Program, or Campaign must be made available in English and Spanish.
- D. Any written, digital and spoken communication about a new Policy, Program, or Campaign must be made available upon request in the preferred language of the audience or constituency spoken impacted by a public policy, program or campaign.
- E. For all policies, programs, and campaign, the responsible department or committee shall perform an initial assessment of how to maximize public outreach and engagement and ensure public outreach and engagement is equitable and inclusive, and consult with the Office of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion about to obtain input and options for additional resources that may be needed to meet identified needs.
- F. Engagement methods should be proportional to the scale of the impact of the policy, program or campaign and should be tailored to the constituency most impacted by the policy, program or campaign.
- G. Outreach methods should be proportional to the scale of the impact of the policy, program or campaign and should be tailored to the constituency most impacted by the policy, program or campaign.
- H. Minimum 2 weeks notification must be provided for all Community Meetings and public meetings.
- I. A public dashboard should be created for all active policies, programs and campaigns that are seeking public input through engagement to track past opportunities for engagement, ongoing opportunities and the progress of the initiative to completion.
- J. All engagement opportunities in connection to a specific policy, program or campaign should clearly articulate why input is requested, what the input will be used for, and when the next step to continue staying involved is or will likely be.
- K. Standardization of social media accounts
  - 1. Does each department need a social media account?
  - 2. Do each commission need social media accounts? Should they have them?
  - 3. Should all communication just come out of the City of Dallas social media channels?

### **III. Outreach Plan Self-Assessment Questions**

- A. Who is the target audience or community most impacted by this policy, program or campaign?
  - 1. This defines the geographic area or community characteristics that define outreach methods and boundaries. This is based on both the goals of the

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policy and the use of census data or other public data sources to identify the constituency impacted.

- B. If your target audience is a specific geographic area, what are the documented community partners and communication channels available within that area?
  - 1. There should be a list of partners willing and able to disseminate information to their constituencies within each geographic area (council email list, churches or other faith based institutions, neighborhood associations, schools etc).
- C. If your target audience is a specific geographic area, what are the languages spoken within the boundaries of the impacted constituents?
  - 1. This will inform the languages your materials will need to be translated to and translators needed for outreach and engagement.
- D. If your target audience is a specific geographic area, what barriers and opportunities exist to accessing information virtually or digitally?
  - 1. Look at cell phone data to see if the majority of constituents have access to a phone or have a lack of access to high speed internet infrastructure.
- E. If your target audience is not defined by a geographic area, but by shared interest or need for a city policy, program or campaign, what are the documented partners or organizations that can help reach those impacted individuals?
  - 1. For example a historic preservation policy should involve outreach and engagement of the historic preservation community and stakeholders impacted.
- F. Does this policy, program or campaign further the City's racial equity goals or other adopted City policy?
  - 1. If yes, this will open up additional outreach funding to ensure that sufficient notice frequency and methods are used to reach the maximum impacted constituency.
- G. How is success for this outreach defined for this policy, program or campaign?
  - 1. Quantitative: i.e. number of target constituency reached and informed.
  - 2. Qualitative: i.e. number of locations where information disseminated from and community partnerships that informally distributed information by word of mouth or other networks.
  - 3. Other:

### **Example Outreach Self-Assessment Questionnaire [purely illustrative, not real policy or program]**

*Who is the target audience or community most impacted by this policy, program or campaign?*

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The target audience for the historic preservation grant program led by the Office of Historic Preservation are low income neighborhoods and homeowners with historic designation at the state, local and federal level. Based on census data and public records this includes the Tenth Street Historic District and Wheatley Place. The geographic area and community characteristics are set based on the goals of this policy, so the target constituency is clearly defined.

*If your target audience is a specific geographic area, what are the documented community partners and communication channels available within that area?*

The documented community partners and communication channels available within these neighborhood boundaries include:

- Tenth Street Residential Association
- Greater El Bethel Baptist Church
- Eloise Lundy Recreation Center
- Townview High School
- N.W. Harlee Elementary School
- etc.etc.

The partners above have agreed to host informational materials physically at their facility, have agreed to distribute information digitally via their newsletter and e-boards, and have volunteered to host an event to disseminate this information and engage their constituencies.

*If your target audience is a specific geographic area, what are the languages spoken within the boundaries of the impacted constituents?*

The primary languages spoken within the plan boundaries are English, Spanish and a small population of Vietnamese speaking people. All materials will be distributed in English, Spanish and Vietnamese.

*If your target audience is a specific geographic area, what barriers and opportunities exist to accessing information virtually or digitally?*

Based on publicly available data, the majority of the population within the target area are over 65 years old and 30% do not have access to high speed internet. Because of this, outreach and engagement should be mostly in person and using physical outreach methods.

*If your target audience is not defined by a geographic area, but by shared interest or need for a city policy, program or campaign, what are the documented partners or organizations that can help reach those impacted individuals?*

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N/A

*Does this policy, program or campaign further the City's racial equity goals or other adopted City policy?*

Yes because the homes within these boundaries were harmed by redlining, preventing them from accessing bank loans to purchase and repair their homes. The history of these neighborhoods is based on their contribution to African American history in the City of Dallas. Because of this, additional funding and considerations should be given to support the success of the program.

*How is success for this outreach defined for this policy, program or campaign?*

Based on the information being made available to the maximum number of houses that are eligible for the program, and consequent participation of those households in the program/policy.

### **IV. Engagement Plan Self-Assessment Questions**

- A. Who is the target audience or community most impacted by this policy, program or campaign?
  - 1. This defines the geographic area or community characteristics that define engagement methods and boundaries. This is based on both the goals of the policy and the use of census data or other public data sources to identify the constituency impacted.
- B. If your target audience is a specific geographic area, what are the documented community partners and communication channels available within that area?
  - 1. There should be a list of partners willing and able to disseminate information to their constituencies within each geographic area (council email list, churches or other faith based institutions, neighborhood associations, schools etc), host meetings and facilitate engagement with their constituencies.
- C. If your target audience is a specific geographic area, what are the languages spoken within the boundaries of the impacted constituents?
  - 1. This will inform the languages your materials will need to be translated to and translators needed for engagement.
- D. If your target audience is a specific geographic area, what barriers and opportunities exist to engaging with information virtually or digitally?
  - 1. Look at cell phone data to see if the majority of constituents have access to a phone or have a lack of access to high speed internet infrastructure.
- E. If your target audience is not defined by a geographic area, but by shared interest or need for a city policy, program or campaign, what are the documented partners or organizations that can help engage those impacted individuals?

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1. For example a historic preservation policy should involve outreach and engagement of the historic preservation community and stakeholders impacted.
- F. Does this policy, program or campaign further the City's racial equity goals or other adopted City policy?
  1. If yes, this will open up additional engagement funding to ensure that sufficient notice frequency and methods are used to reach the maximum impacted constituency.
- G. How is success for this engagement defined for this policy, program or campaign?
  1. Quantitative: i.e. number of target constituencies engaged.
  2. Other:

### **Decision Tree when determining if outreach or engagement is necessary:**

Are you/your department seeking public input on a policy, program or campaign?	
Y	N
Outreach and engagement is needed because two-way communication is requested.	No 'engagement' needed, just outreach as defined above because one-way communication.





# ETHOS EQUITY

## CONSULTING

Disrupting the historical power dynamics that systematically silence Dallas' under-supported Black and Brown residents requires intentional effort. The creation of an Equitable Engagement Framework has the potential to be the first step in addressing longstanding power imbalances, while also establishing cross-departmental policies that increase trust, transparency and accountability.

The following outline offers Ethos Equity Consulting's suggestions on how to streamline internal operations related to outreach and engagement, and effectively create connections with City of Dallas residential stakeholders. If you're interested in learning how Ethos Equity can offer assistance when creating implementable strategies to accomplish the items below, follow up with Brittani Hite at [brittani@ethosequityconsulting.com](mailto:brittani@ethosequityconsulting.com).

### **City of Dallas Community Engagement Framework**

#### **1. OUTREACH**

- a. Define the concept in a manner that details the purpose and intended outcome
- b. Identify a diverse set of outreach methods (traditional, digital and grassroots)
- c. Target the identified outreach methods to the unique ways each Dallas neighborhood/community consumes information
- d. Create and implement a cross-departmental SOP to institute best practices for timelines related to each outreach method

#### **2. ENGAGEMENT**

- a. Define the concept in a manner that details the purpose and intended outcome
- b. Determine which internal departments require community engagement as it is defined
- c. Create a decision support tool that allows each department to visually evaluate options and their associated outcomes when determining if and how to implement engagement
- d. Establish a cross-departmental SOP to institute best practices for timelines related to the stakeholder engagement lifecycle
- e. Depending on the initiative, center stakeholders who will be most impacted

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- f. Establish and share key performance indicators that define impactful participation
- g. Partner with community-based individuals and institutions with established presence and trust to help amplify messaging
- h. Explicitly share how community input will be meaningfully incorporated into the decision making process
- i. Engage participants in a phased approach throughout each initiative's entire lifecycle

### **3. COMMUNICATION**

- a. Commission an internal, cross-departmental audit of external communication and the associated budget to understand current outreach and engagement strategies
- b. Explicitly share the definitions of outreach and engagement, as well as the associated indicators for “success,” citywide through a variety of outreach methods
- c. Establish a communication process that provides Dallas residents (participants and others) with progress updates in their preferred language and method of communicative outreach
- d. At a minimum, incorporate communication (verbal and written) methods in English and Spanish
- e. Identify communities in Dallas where languages other than English and Spanish must be incorporated into outreach and engagement efforts

[Ethos Equity Consulting](#) is a social impact firm committed to supporting individuals, institutions and initiatives through an intersectional, anti-racist DEI approach. Ethos Equity understands that people are not one-dimensional and neither are effective strategies. The firm works collaboratively to identify opportunities for increased intentionality and guide transformative system changes; embedding equitable solutions throughout all outcomes. Through system audits and strategic planning, interactive trainings, grassroots community outreach and engagement, and professional development Ethos Equity helps build capacity to reach desired goals.