

RESILIENT OAKLAND: IT TAKES A TOWN

10 KEY FINDINGS



- MOBILIZE TALENT
- DIVERSIFY OUTREACH
- IMPROVE ACCESSIBILITY
- KNOW THE HISTORY
- FOSTER A SAFE SPACE
- ENSURE EQUITY
- SET EXPECTATIONS
- CREATE TRANSPARENCY
- DEFINE SUCCESS
- INSTITUTIONALIZE

In Fall 2016, the City of Oakland, The West Oakland Environmental Indicators Project (WOEIP), Rebuild by Design, and Streetwyze embarked upon a series of **workshops to understand how Oakland residents can better engage with the City.** Together, with over 55 City leaders and local organizations, we **examined which engagement practices have and have not worked in the past.**

We created a collective understanding of the practice of engagement in Oakland and are **developing guidelines and principles for a future engagement strategy,** the beginning of which is outlined below. The conversation gave way to many concrete suggestions on how the City and Community can work better together to allow both sides to move past original divergent agendas so that affected stakeholders can become a true partner with government.

ABOVE: Margaret Gordon of West Oakland Environmental Indicators Project and Emi Wang, Greenlining Institute



1. MOBILIZE TALENT

Ensure the right stakeholders are at the table from the beginning, including people who are affected by the problems being discussed, and tapping into local knowledge and expertise in relevant subject areas.

2. DIVERSIFY OUTREACH

A robust communication and outreach process should utilize various methods to encourage participation; residents can get involved in multiple ways. Possible methods include: in-person meetings, online surveys, crowdsourcing ideas, and multiple locations for meetings at different times of different days.

3. IMPROVE ACCESSIBILITY

Strive to create the broadest possible access. This includes considering where and when meetings are held, and in how information is accessed before and after meetings. Use multiple platforms to reach different people in the ways that work best for them i.e. utilizing a combination of in-person or digital: email, newsletters, blogs, social media, webinars, etc. to reach those who are connected via computer and fliers, handouts, etc. to reach those who are less digitally accessible. Meetings should be in locations convenient for the community, provide food, translation if the community uses languages other than English. Funding should be available if organizations are asked to take time out of their work to help organize. Minutes should be posted publically. Residents should know who to contact with questions and follow up.

4. FOSTER A SAFE SPACE

Acknowledge that there is mistrust on both sides of the process and build a safe space for moving forward.

5. KNOW THE HISTORY

The process needs to ensure that existing city and community expertise is captured and utilized. Use intensive research to establish the multiple issues that lead to the problem we are trying to solve. Outreach processes should include a review of the background of the problem or issue. Both City and community attendees should be able to add their perspective to what the problem is, to create an understanding of the history of the problem, including what has already been done to address it, and who is working in this space.

6. ENSURE EQUITY

Understand and explicitly state how the community and leadership define equity. Design the decision-making process to ensure equity amongst all the involved groups, based on that definition.

7. SET EXPECTATIONS

Acknowledge that when both sides do not set and manage each other's expectations from the outset, it's difficult to build a safe space to move the process forward.

8. CREATE TRANSPARENCY

Communication of practices and policy between government and community should be transparent and accessible by ensuring that both sides are listening to each other, using shared (non-jargon) language, and having a space for both community members and City staff to report what they are doing. Sharing who is responsible for the outreach process and the outcome increases understanding and transparency into the process.

9. DEFINE SUCCESS

Meetings should have realistic goals, with measurable metrics that encourage active participation.

10. INSTITUTIONALIZE

Institutionalize community engagement into the public planning process. Create processes that include steps and best practices that can be used by everybody. Ensure City workers are well-trained and understand that community outreach is part of their job at the time of hiring. City budget could include funding for community outreach and engagement, and for staff training in effective and equitable engagement.

BELOW: Brian Beveridge of West Oakland Indicators Project moderates a panel on past engagement in Oakland at the first workshop.



OVER 55 CITY LEADERS AND LOCAL ORGANIZATIONS PARTICIPATED IN THE FIRST TWO WORKSHOPS.

LEADERSHIP

Brian Beveridge, WOEIP
Karen Boyd, City of Oakland
Amy Chester, Rebuild by Design
Tara Eisenberg, Rebuild by Design
Mai-Ling Garcia, City of Oakland
Margaret Gordon, WOEIP
Shayna Hirshfield-Gold, City of Oakland
Kiran Jain, City of Oakland
Ayushi Roy, City of Oakland

PARTICIPANTS

Cynthia Armour, Bike Oakland
Ain Bailey, City of Oakland
Mario Balcita, Hope Collaborative
Natalie Berns, WOEIP
Brytanee Brown, Transform CA
Christine Calabrese, City of Oakland
Joe DeVries, City of Oakland
Lincoln Dominie
Ruben Faria, Hope Collaborative
Robin Freeman, Merritt College
Dena Gunning, City of Oakland
Silvia Guzman, Alameda County
Harry Hamilton, City of Oakland
Carlos Hernandez, City of Oakland
Janice Hunter, WOEIP
Sabrina Jones, City of Oakland
Michael Kaufman, No Coal in Oakland
Ray Kidd, WOM
Earl Koteen
Earl Koteen, Sunflower
Helen Lerums
Jose Lopez, Communities for a Better Environment
Jennifer Lucky
German Martinez
Sharon McKellar
Sharon McKellar, City of Oakland
Sona Mohnot, Greenlining
Artub Olortegui, City of Oakland

Alicia Parker, City of Oakland
Shiva Patel, Energy Solidarity Co-op / OCAC
Shiva Patel, ESC
lowayna Pena, City of Oakland
Ronald Pineda, Open Oakland
Neil Planchon
Neil Planchon, Swans Way
Amee Raval, APEN
Wanda Redic, City of Oakland
Dana Riley, City of Oakland
Sara Serin-Christ, City of Oakland
Mona Shah, City of Oakland
Susan shelton, City of Oakland
Iris Starr, City of Oakland
Jennifer Stern, City of Oakland
Sheila Stoglin, City of Oakland
Sandra Taylor, City of Oakland
Beth Teper, Oakland Climate Action Coalition
Jessica Tovar, Local Clean Energy Alliance
Ellie Tumbuan, Open Oakland
Zach Wald, City of Oakland
Emi Wang, Greenlining Institute
Jessie Warner, City of Oakland
Charlene Wedderburn, Hoover Foster Neighborhood
Jennifer West, TransForm
Mike Wetzal, City of Oakland
Joanna Winter, City of Oakland

