

## OVERVIEW

### PURPOSE OF THIS DOCUMENT:

This document is designed to support the ongoing benchmarking and evaluation of inclusion of socially vulnerable populations to influence the Resilient NJ Plan so that it prioritizes the needs of vulnerable populations. Bridging different kinds of expertise will benefit both the process and results. This includes generating a range of ambassadors and building shared understanding that can influence decisions. By prioritizing the voices and needs of socially vulnerable communities in resilience planning, the resulting resilience plan will be positioned to account for local conditions, increase local stewardship, and to build community capacity and social cohesion.

*The benchmarks included are suggestions and may be revised and customized for each community based on their needs.*

### GOALS:

To ensure that community engagement goals are on track by building inclusive practices and benchmarking progress along the way.

To create opportunities for feedback, adaptation and improvement throughout the process.

To position community as experts and consultant teams as resources.

To create the conditions for longstanding relationships and trust to form that will live beyond a specific project.

## TABS

Tool	Purpose	Recommendations	Context
<b>1_Self-Assessment_Committees</b>	To provide a structured way to facilitate planning and self-assessment of inclusive committee meetings.	This tool is envisioned to be useful both prior to meetings and in reflecting upon them; the self-assessment can guide agenda and meeting planning, so that the team is proactively designing for inclusion, and can be used with committees to ask how they would assess the experience. There is space for notes and self-ratings for each priority	Committee engagement (not open to public)
<b>2_Public Engagement</b>	To help identify opportunities to improve outreach and engagement of traditionally marginalized communities, and to evaluate the inclusiveness of public meetings.	This tool provides prompts to assist meeting planners as they create inclusive community participation opportunities. Prompts cover topics such as: recruiting non-traditional participation, leadership development, meeting design, evaluation and improvement, and planning beyond meetings	Direct public engagement
<b>3_Participant Poll</b>	To evaluate the accessibility of a public participation event and the opinions of those participating in Resilient New Jersey planning processes.	The intent of this tool is to gauge the opinion of public participants at the end of each public meeting. The goal of the outreach team is to achieve an average total rating of 9 across all participants in each meeting.	Direct public engagement
<b>4_Public Mtg Benchmarks</b>	To plan and assess the level of engagement in your public meetings, and to identify opportunities for measurement and improvement over the course of the planning process	This tool provides a opportunity to set participation targets for each meeting and then record actual participation to provide a dashboard of your engagement process over the course of the planning process.	Direct public engagement
<b>5_Communications Benchmarks</b>	To evaluate the overall effectiveness of indirect engagement efforts to reach socially vulnerable/underrepresented people.	This tool provides measures to assess the breadth, depth and relevance of outreach to socially vulnerable/underrepresented people living in the planning area	Indirect public engagement - e.g. through surveys etc.
<b>6_Evaluation</b>	To evaluate the overall effectiveness of the participatory planning process to engage of socially vulnerable and underrepresented people at interim points and at the end of the engagement process.	These two tools have been designed to provide a structured place to reflect and evaluate the community engagement process. The interim tool is designed to be used by the consultant group, regional teams and committees at key intervals during the planning process. Regional teams should adjust the timing to fit the specific needs of each region's planning process - quarterly, semiannually, or at the end of each project phase (as currently configured). The final tool is designed to be used at the end of the project to assist with reporting and to provide insights into ways to improve the community engagement process in similar projects in the future.	For use by consultants, committees, regional team

Developed by Enterprise Community Partners as part of the Resilient NJ program for the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection. This work was funded by U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) through an award from the National Disaster Resilience Competition.

## Planning & Assessing Committee Engagement

### INSTRUCTIONS

Use this tool to plan and assess your committee meetings. It can be used proactively as a planning tool for those facilitating the meeting, and retroactively as a group reflection tool with the committee. Those involved should self-assess and rate the degree to which each of the commitments is occurring.

### RATING

0 = No, not considered  
1 = No, but in consideration  
2 = No, but in development  
3 = Yes, but needs work  
4 = Yes, going well

### NOTES & RATINGS

	COMMITMENTS	EXAMPLE: Steering Committee Mtg 1: Mar 15, 2021	Steering Committee Mtg 1: Date	Community Advisory Committee Mtg 1: Date	Steering Committee Mtg 2: Date	Steering Committee Mtg 3: Date	CAC Mtg 2	Tech Adv Committee Mtg 2	etc
Priority	<b>1) INCLUSIVE RECRUITMENT &amp; RETENTION</b>	100% of participants spoke during meeting. Active listening between townships that represent varied concerns. Ex: Concerns about needle exchange elevated and those unaware of this need agreed to prioritize it. Ex: Multiple perspectives shared on importance of transit system.	Add notes here to describe the practices you used						
Practices	Prioritizes the issues and/or populations that need to be represented on the committee and in the resulting plan: • Recruits and retains diverse membership, including racial, ethnic and economic diversity. • Recruits from underserved and diverse populations for participation in leadership roles within meetings and other activities. • Facilitates consistent participation and engagement across all members								
Metrics	1.1: > 50% of participants representing populations identified as socially vulnerable (e.g. non English speakers, seniors, health-compromised, others impacted locally by Sandy and COVID)	3	Add your rating here						
	1.2: Consistent participation and engagement across all members of the committee (attendance and participation at meetings)	4	Add your rating here						
Priority	<b>2) INCLUSIVE MEETINGS</b>	• Agreed to recording all meetings for transparency. • Interviewed all members prior to meeting, enabling facilitator to bring them into conversation on relevant topics. • Provided opening slides with Purpose & Agenda to set meeting intentions • Group is establishing a culture of hearing from everyone - not shy!							
Practices	Practices meeting norms that foster group cohesion and effectiveness: • Builds trust by establishing policies around transparency and confidentiality as appropriate • Creates meeting norms that set a condition of safety and encouragement for people to participate and provide their perspective • Ensures that meeting are accessible, comfortable and inclusive of all participants (meeting norms, minutes, multilingual materials as appropriate). • Provides adequate time in advance of meetings for committee members to review materials, including technical reports and data that are intended for discussion during the meeting.								
Metrics	2.1: Meeting practices evolve in response to regular meeting evaluations	2							
	2.2: Effective engagement across all members of the committee (presence and preparation for meetings, contribution to discussions and decision making)	3							
Priority	<b>3) STRUCTURES FOR PARTICIPATION</b>	Introduced self-assessment for use by the group. Discussed the first 2 priorities + tried self-assessment rating. Did not have enough time for priorities 3+4. General agreement with priorities so far.							
Practices	Evaluates and creates structures for participation by unheard and typically marginalized voices: • Ensures satisfaction of participants based on evaluation information and committee practices. • Shares knowledge across multiple committees and participant groups. • Explores and makes decision about how to best engage youth input, including alternatives to direct involvement. • Establishes policies and identifies ways to support participation (childcare, transportation, etc.)								
Metrics	3.1: Evaluation opportunities are regularly provided and garner strong participation by committee members	1							
	3.2: Youth engagement results in meaningful contributions to decision making that includes input across age groups and by representatives of socially vulnerable populations	3							
Priority	<b>4) INCLUSIVE COMMUNICATION</b>	So far, using slide decks for in-meeting communication and to share after. Planning team agreed to prioritize info on opportunities for decision making in initial slides for upcoming meeting.							
Practices	Effectively bridges the divide between technical knowledge and nontechnical audiences: • Effectively communicates the meeting's purpose and makes clear opportunities for input • Develops communication platforms and materials that facilitate understanding across a range of expertise • Ensures that materials and presentation for all meetings clearly convey the								
Metrics	4.1: Committee includes membership from diverse organizations, local government, community organizations, employers and business leaders, resident and tenant advocacy groups, etc.	4							
	4.2: Production and distribution of materials support effective decision making by participants across a spectrum of experiences	2							
	<b>AVERAGE RATING</b>	<b>2.75</b>							#DIV/0!
Notes	Additional Notes & Considerations to carry forward for future meetings	• Remember to cover priorities 3 and 4 in next meeting. • Remember to share schedule of upcoming public engagement opportunities in advance of next meeting							

### REFERENCE

Adapted from Spark Policy Institute ([www.sparkpolicy.com](http://www.sparkpolicy.com))

## Planning & Assessing Committee Engagement

### INSTRUCTIONS

Use this tab when planning for your public meetings, focus groups, and other public engagement. Those involved in planning the meeting should self-assess and provide a rating for each of the benchmarks. The purpose of this tool is to (1) identify opportunities to improve outreach and engagement of traditionally marginalized communities, and (2) evaluate the inclusiveness of public engagement over the course of time.

### RATING

0 = No, not considered

1 = No, but in consideration

2 = No, but in development

3 = Yes, but needs work

4 = Yes, going well

		NOTES & RATINGS									
COMMITMENTS		EXAMPLE: Public Meeting Mtg 1: Apr 15, 2021	Public Meeting Mtg 1: Date	Public Meeting Mtg 2: Date	Focus Group Group 1: Date	Focus Group Group 2: Date	Focus Group Group 3: Date	Focus Group Group 4: Date	Public Meeting Mtg 3: Date	Public Meeting Mtg 4: Date	etc
Priority	<b>1) INCLUSIVE RECRUITMENT</b>	Materials were produced in multiple languages. Partners actively recruited through their channels, ensuring messaging was tailored to their constituencies. Prioritized groups were seniors and renters and youth. Seniors were high participants. Unable to gauge renters status. Youth were present but	Add notes here to describe the practices you used								
Practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Identify the issues and/or populations that need to be represented</li><li>Develop messaging and graphics to specifically increase access for prioritized groups</li><li>Recruit from underserved and diverse populations for participation</li><li>Explore and make decisions on how to best engage youth input, including alternatives to direct involvement</li></ul>										
Metrics	1.1: More than half of participants represent populations in the prioritized groups	3	Add your rating here								
	1.2: Languages used in communications materials reflects local populations	4	Add your rating here								
Priority	<b>2) INCLUSIVE ENGAGEMENT</b>	Meeting time was held after work and dinner hours. Visuals were sent ahead so people could listen on a phone without needing to be on zoom. SMS engagement activity had high participation and enthusiasm.									
Practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Plan to meet the needs of prioritized participants when deciding on time, location, and participation mode (remote/in-person/hybrid) of meetings, and provide supports such as childcare, food, translation.</li><li>Create a process for engaging new voices, such as orientations, introductory packets of information, mentoring or partnering practices</li><li>Use accessible engagement strategies that facilitate high levels of participation from all participants</li><li>Incorporate advice and input from other groups that have experience engaging typically marginalized voices</li></ul>										
Metrics	1.1: Engagement strategies resulted in high levels of participation by prioritized groups	3									
	1.2: Engagement results in meaningful contributions to decision making that includes input across age groups and by representatives of socially vulnerable populations	4									
Priority	<b>3) LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT</b>	Provided resources for additional training on our website, recruited 3 active community members to play a welcoming role in meeting.									
Practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Connect members to community leadership training opportunities</li><li>Engage members of the prioritized communities to welcome / mentor new participants</li><li>Compensate members for participation in community leadership training, when possible (include asking what incentives would be valued)</li><li>Engage typically excluded voices in leadership roles within meetings and other activities</li></ul>										
Metrics	2.1: Members of the prioritized communities participate in welcoming, orienting, or mentoring new participants	2									
	2.2: At least one participant who belongs to a prioritized community has a visible / leadership presence in meeting/activity	3									
Priority	<b>4) EVALUATION &amp; IMPROVEMENT</b>	Evaluation at end of call got about 30% response. Meeting was a good opportunity to generate interest in focus groups.									
Practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Use evaluation information to inform participation policies and practices</li><li>Use focus groups, interviews, or surveys to engage additional voices outside of those participating meetings</li></ul>										
Metrics	4.1: Evaluation opportunities are regularly provided	4									
	4.2: Meeting practices evolve in response to regular meeting evaluations	2									
AVERAGE RATING		3.125									
Notes	Additional Notes & Considerations to carry forward for future meetings	Think about how local radio call-in show could be an additional opportunity to get more people aware and calling in/discussing, ideally timed prior to an upcoming meeting									

### REFERENCE

Adapted from Spark Policy Institute ([www.sparkpolicy.com](http://www.sparkpolicy.com))

## Participant Poll

### INSTRUCTIONS

**Language for use in polls to be completed by participants at end of each public meeting.**

*This recommended language is designed for use by consultants and regional teams seeking to gauge the opinion of public participants in planning efforts. Polls are intended to be completed by participants at the end of each public meeting. The goal is to achieve an average total rating of 9 across all participants in each meeting.*

#### PUBLIC PARTICIPATION POLL

The information provided was clear and relevant  
I found it easy to participate  
I trust that my input will be used  
Location/Township

**TARGET:**

#### SCORING

{ 1 = no  
2 = somewhat  
3 = yes

**Average total rating of 9**

## Public Meeting Benchmarks

### INSTRUCTIONS

Use this tool to plan and assess engagement in public meetings.

**Targets** represent the figures you anticipate prior to a meeting.

**Actuals** should reflect what actually occurred at meetings.

### RATING

Actual = less than target

Actual = equal to target

Actual = greater than target

		EXAMPLE (Set target goals in advance. Update with actuals)		e.g. public meeting 1 6/15/21		e.g. focus group 1 9/10/21		Add Meeting Add Date		Add Meeting Add Date		Add Meeting Add Date		Add Meeting Add Date		TOTALS	
		TARGET	ACTUAL	TARGET	ACTUAL	TARGET	ACTUAL	TARGET	ACTUAL	TARGET	ACTUAL	TARGET	ACTUAL	TARGET	ACTUAL	TARGET	ACTUAL
BREADTH	# meetings held	1	1	1		1		1		1		1		1		5	1
	# of participants invited	40	40													40	40
	# of participants attending	12	50													12	50
DEPTH	Average of total participant polling scores	9	9	9		9		9		9		9		9		9	#DIV/0!
	Average of total participant polling Q1: clarity & relevance	3	3	3		3		3		3		3		3		3	#DIV/0!
	Average of total participant polling Q2: ease of participation	3	3	3		3		3		3		3		3		3	#DIV/0!
	Average of total participant polling Q3: trust that input will be used	3	3	3		3		3		3		3		3		3	#DIV/0!
RELEVANCE*	<b>Timeliness:</b> Community engagement takes place when it is possible to influence decisions	3	1	3		3		3		3		3		3		3	#DIV/0!
	<b>Expectations:</b> Communication is clear about what level of input will influence decisions	3	2	3		3		3		3		3		3		3	#DIV/0!
	<b>Action:</b> There is a clear strategy for how input will be synthesized and integrated into the plan	3	3	3		3		3		3		3		3		3	#DIV/0!

\* Self-rating: 1 = No. 2 = Somewhat. 3 = Yes.

## Communication Benchmarks

### INSTRUCTIONS

*This tool is designed for use by consultants and regional teams seeking to gauge the effectiveness of outreach methods to support participation in planning processes and plan development.* It provides measures to assess the breadth, depth and relevance of outreach to socially vulnerable/underrepresented people.

**Breadth:** A measure of how many people received a particular piece of outreach. Consultants and regional teams should identify demographic factors relevant to their geographies and planning process.

**Depth:** A measure of how much engagement each piece of outreach generates, such as click-throughs from links embedded in emails, etc.

**Relevance:** A measure of how a particular piece of outreach will influence planning and decision-making, contribute to plan development, or impact strategic recommendations.

Engagement Method (e.g. survey, text campaign, email, newsletter, etc.)*	Method	Method	Method	Method	Method	Method	Method	Method	Method	Method
Engagement Date:	Date	Date	Date	Date	Date	Date	Date	Date	Date	Date
<b>BREADTH</b>										
Total # of persons targeted for outreach										
Total # of sites targeted for outreach										
Percentage open rate										
Percentage open rate by identifying factor 1 (e.g. primary language)										
Percentage open rate by identifying factor 2 (e.g. geography)										
Percentage open rate by identifying factor 3 (e.g. racial/ethnic identity)										
Percentage open rate by identifying factor 4 (e.g. age/family status/etc)										
Percentage open rate by identifying factor 5										
Percentage completion rate										
Percentage open rate by identifying factor 1 (e.g. primary language)										
Percentage open rate by identifying factor 2 (e.g. geography)										
Percentage open rate by identifying factor 3 (e.g. racial/ethnic identity)										
Percentage open rate by identifying factor 4 (e.g. age/family status/etc)										
Percentage open rate by identifying factor 5										
<b>DEPTH</b>										
Total # increase in visits to project website following engagement event within 3 days of event										
Total # shares/reposts of digital outreach										
Total # participants sharing with their own groups, communities										
Total # increase in downloaded documents from project website										
Total # of repeat participants in planning events										
Total # increased newsletter/e-blast sign-ups following engagement event										
Total # comments responding to social/digital media										
Total # increase in attendance following engagement										
Total # increase in followers for social media										
Percentage completion rate of post-event survey										
<b>RELEVANCE</b>										
<b>Timeliness:</b> Community engagement takes place when there is an opportunity for community input to influence decisions.										
<b>Expectations:</b> Communication is clear about what level of community input will have influence.										
<b>Action:</b> There is a clear strategy for how community input will be synthesized and integrated into the plan										

\*Use N/A if metric is not applicable

## Community Engagement Evaluation - Interim Evaluation

### INSTRUCTIONS

**Interim Evaluation:** The interim tool is designed to be used by the consultant group, regional teams and committees at key intervals to reflect on the effectiveness of community engagement and participation to inform the development of the plan. Regional teams should adjust the timing to meet the specific needs of each region's planning process - quarterly, semiannually, or at the end of each project phase (as currently configured).

INTERIM	Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3
What are the key engagement methods we planned to engage socially vulnerable/underrepresented voices?			
What key engagement actions have we employed so far to engage socially vulnerable/underrepresented voices for this project?			
Is our outreach succeeding in bringing socially vulnerable/underrepresented voices to this project?			
How is what we're hearing from those groups influencing the plan and priorities?			
What changes or refinements to our outreach and engagement processes would make them more effective?			

## Community Engagement Evaluation - Final Evaluation

### INSTRUCTIONS

**Final Evaluation:** The final tool is designed to be used by the resilient New Jersey consultant group, regional teams and committees at the end of the project to reflect on the effectiveness of community engagement and participation to inform future Resilient New Jersey and inclusive planning efforts.

FINAL	
What are the stand out engagement moments where something significant happened (e.g. a personal story was shared, the plan was influenced by a community participant, the committee made an important decision based on community input, etc.)?	
How would you characterize the final result of the community engagement process?	
What did we learn about creating an inclusive process that engages socially vulnerable/underrepresented voices?	
What should the regional team carry forward in future efforts to strengthen New Jersey communities' resilience?	
What recommendations does the team have for the Department of Environmental Protection in preparing for future resiliency planning efforts seeking to engage socially vulnerable/underrepresented voices?	