CITYWIDE COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT FRAMEWORK

Work Group 3

A framework creating a Citywide Policy on Community Engagement practices within the City.

Neighborhood and Community Relations

Community Engagement Policy Work Group
Draft Report 12/14/2018

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The Neighborhoods 2020 process was created by the City Council to look at how the City serves and supports neighborhood organizations both internally and externally via staffing, organizational/advisory board oversight and grant-funded programs. Each piece is important for equitable and high-quality services to be provided to residents. The Neighborhoods 2020 process comprises four important parts:

- consistent funding and programming for neighborhoods and other community-based programs such as the One Minneapolis Fund and the Community Innovation Fund
- proper sizing and oversight of these programs by an advisory body
- a consistent citywide community engagement policy for the City of Minneapolis that incorporates the Core Principles of Community Engagement
- evaluating the Neighborhood and Community Relations Department's service delivery model and making changes if necessary.

As part of the Neighborhoods 2020 process, the City Council created three work groups. "Work Group 3" was charged with developing a framework for a Citywide Community Engagement Policy. The work group included five neighborhood organization representatives, three cultural community representatives, two representatives from the Neighborhood and Community Engagement Commission (NCEC), one Neighborhood Revitalization Program (NRP) Policy Board representative, two undoing racism/equity representatives, two representatives of the City Council and one representative from the Mayor's office.

The work group met eight times between July 25 and November 4. On November 4, it approved the following recommendations to the City Council for a framework for a Citywide Community Engagement Policy. This framework outlines the Community Engagement Policy Work Group's recommended positions and outlines the roles and commitments necessary to ensure that community engagement is integrated into all City activities to support decision making, build relationships, strengthen communities and extend respect to all residents of the City. The framework aims to improve the City's engagement processes and outcomes through encouraging a consistent approach and continual learning through evaluation, and through expanding the range of engagement methods used.

> *The City of Minneapolis values the contributions of our Neighborhood Organizations. These organizations are the City's partner in community engagement.*

Core Principles of Community Engagement

In 2007, the Minneapolis City Council adopted Core Principles of Community Engagement. These should continue to be at the core of a community engagement policy.

Right to be involved. Public participation is based on the belief that those who are affected by a decision have a right to be involved in the decision-making process.

Contribution will be thoughtfully considered. Public participation includes the promise that the public's contribution will be thoughtfully considered.

Recognize the needs of all. Public participation promotes sustainable decisions by recognizing and communicating the needs and interest of all participants, including decision-makers.

Seek out involvement. Public participation seeks out and facilitates the involvement of those potentially affected by or interested in a decision.

Participants design participation. Public participation seeks input from participants in designing how they participate.

Adequate Information. Public participation provides participants with the information they need to participate in a meaningful way.

Known effect of participation. Public participation communicates to participants how their input affected the decision.

Core Principles for a Citywide Community Engagement Policy

To implement these principles, the City also must consider these additional principles:
- decision processes must be clear, open and predictable
- roles and authority must be clear and well understood
- communication must be two-way and consistent
- representative participation is needed at all levels
- participants at all levels must be held accountable
- genuine engagement (not just input) is essential
- local and citywide plans should be related and consistent
- change must occur to build trust and participation
- Neighborhood Organizations and Cultural Community Organizations should be viewed as partners with City departments and should play a vital role in any engagement activity

Structure of a Citywide Community Engagement Policy

The City of Minneapolis, Neighborhood Organizations, Cultural Community Organizations, key stakeholders and the wider community engage with each other at different levels along a spectrum of increasing involvement. The process of community engagement is a dynamic one for which there is likely to be movement back and forth through the different levels as an engagement model is implemented.

To provide consistent service across City departments and in the community, the Work Group recommends that the City of Minneapolis use the International Association of Public Participation (IAP2) model for community engagement. This model has proven to be effective and provides good techniques for staff to properly conduct public participation processes. It also provides Neighborhood Organizations and Cultural Community Organizations with the information they need to be involved in a meaningful way and communicates to residents how their input affects the decisions that need to be made.

Inform	Involve	Empower
Low Level of public engagement	Mid level of public engagement	High level of public engagement

The chart on the next page depicts varying levels of participation, depending on the goals, time frames, resources and levels of public concern or interest in the decision. Most importantly, each participation level involves a promise to the public that if not defined or understood clearly by both participants and decision makers, can result in dissatisfaction in the process and outcomes. At all public participation levels, promises should be clear – and promises must be kept.

	INFORM	CONSULT	INVOLVE	COLLABORATE	EMPOWER
Goal	One-way communication to provide balanced and objective information to assist understanding about something that is going to happen or has already happened.	Two-way communication process aimed at obtaining feedback on ideas, alternatives and proposals to inform our decision making.	Participatory process designed to help identify issues and views to ensure that concerns and aspirations are understood and considered.	Working together to develop an understanding of all issues and interests to work out alternatives and identify preferred collective solutions.	To build the capacity of the community to lead their own plans for change.
Role of community and/or stakeholders	Listen - Understand	Contribute	Participate with the City of Minneapolis	Partner with the City of Minneapolis	Lead the process, program and development
Examples when this engagement level may be appropriate	In the event of an emergency Snow Emergencies Street Sweeping	Undertaking a survey on playground redevelopment Provide feedback to a proposal	Seeking input from a Citizen Advisory Council (CAC).	Stakeholder-led discussions on developing community vision key directions	Building capacity skills of small business employees through skills-based training
Possible methods	• Advertisements • Fact sheets • Newsletter • Public Notices • Social media • Websites • Neighborhood Orgs. advised • Cultural Orgs. advised	• Focus groups • Public exhibition • Surveys • Neighborhood Orgs. Opinions sought • Cultural Orgs. Opinions sought	• Advisory committees • Deliberate voting on options • Workshops • Neighborhood Orgs. Formal resolutions • Cultural Orgs. Formal resolutions	• Consensus building • Participatory decision making • Participant led workshops • Neighborhood Org. at planning table • Cultural Org. at planning table	• Facilitation of networks • Practical skills workshops • Training events • Contact Neighborhood and Cultural Orgs. to design and implement
Promise to the Public	We will keep you informed	We will keep you informed, listen to and acknowledge your concern, and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.	We will work with you to ensure that your concerns and issues are directly reflected in the alternatives developed and provide feedback on how the public input influenced the decision	We will look to you for direct advice and innovation in formulating solutions and incorporate your advice and recommendations into the decisions to the maximum extent possible	We will implement what you decide.

Commitment to a Community Engagement Policy

The Work Group further recommends that the City of Minneapolis adopt the modified IAP2 Code of Ethics in implementing a Citywide Community Engagement Policy.

Purpose. We encourage and support public participation as a process to make better decisions that incorporate the interests and concerns of all affected stakeholders and meet the needs of the decision-making body.

Role of Practitioner. We will enhance the public's participation in the decision-making process and assist decision-makers in being responsive to the public's concerns and suggestions.

Trust. We will undertake and encourage actions that build trust and credibility for the process among all the participants.

Defining the Public's Role. We will accurately portray the public's role in the decision- making process.

Openness. We will encourage the disclosure of all information relevant to the public's understanding and evaluation of a decision.

Access to the Process. We will ensure that stakeholders have fair and equal access to the public participation process and the opportunity to influence decisions.

Respect for Communities. We will avoid strategies that risk polarizing community interests or that appear to "divide and conquer." Neighborhood Organizations and cultural community organizations will be treated as partners and play a vital role in any community engagement activity.

Advocacy. We will advocate for the public participation process and will not advocate for interest, party or project outcome.

Commitments. We ensure that all commitments made to the public, including those by the decision-maker, are made in good faith.

Support of the Practice. We will mentor new practitioners in the field and educate decision-makers and the public about the value and use of public participation.

Accountability. Every City department shall abide by the Citywide Community Engagement Policy in good faith, in both planning and implementation. Departments should include their community engagement efforts in their internal and external reporting. Departmental "Dashboards" and "Results Minneapolis" presentations should include metrics for measurement of these engagement efforts. Repeated underperformance in community engagement may result in a budgetary penalty. Any such budget reduction would be placed in a reserve account for community engagement activities. Neighborhood Organizations, cultural community organizations and other funded entities will have engagement activity expectations written into contracts.

Review and Evaluation. This policy will be reviewed annually by the governance body for community engagement.

What is community engagement?
Community engagement is defined as the range of opportunities for public involvement in the work of the City. Some community engagement processes are undertaken to support decision making (to provide opportunities for the community to contribute to the overall decision-making process), some are about relationship building (to build and improve relationships with stakeholders), while others are focused on strengthening communities (to build the capacity of the community on a specific theme or issue to increase knowledge or change behaviors). Often engagement processes support more than one of these objectives.

Why do we engage?
Community engagement is a collaborative process that connects the City, Neighborhood Organizations and cultural communities, as well as other stakeholders in a mutually beneficial sharing of new ideas, skills, knowledge, expertise and experience.

Effective community engagement has real benefits for the Mayor, City Council, City departments, Neighborhood Organizations, Cultural Community Organizations and the community. Better identification of priorities, needs and aspirations of our community will assist the City to improve its strategic planning and service delivery. A regular two-way conversation ensures that actions are transparent, accountable and informed in the City's decision making, and will demonstrate the integrity of the process and build trust within the community.

When appropriate, engagement should go above and beyond legislative requirements. The information and knowledge gained through hearing a range of community perspectives assists the City in making informed decisions, developing strong partnerships and creating sustainable outcomes.

The community also benefits from participating in engagement activities. Participating in the decision-making process on matters that have a direct effect on people can create a sense of belonging and connection; increase community involvement; unite and empower individuals, neighborhoods and communities; and lead to a greater sense of ownership of their community.

The knowledge, expertise and experience gained by the City also provides it with a foundation to advocate to other relevant parties, including Federal, State, County and metropolitan government bodies, on issues of community importance that are out of the City's direct control.

There is a broad array of benefits to effective and authentic community engagement, both to the City and to the community:
- increasing community involvement and connections
- developing strong relationships and partnerships with our communities, leading to a shared understanding of their needs, aspirations and priorities
- meeting City Council expectations and requirements
- providing a valuable source of evidence-based information which presents a wider perspective on issues and supports future planning and service activities
- supporting transparency and accountability to demonstrate integrity and trust
- ensuring informed decision-making occurs and issues are addressed
- helping to inform and assist with advocacy
- leading to more sustainable outcomes
- building Neighborhood Organization resilience and capacity, leading to empowerment
- fulfilling the City Council-adopted Blueprint for Equitable Engagement

Who do we engage?

Minneapolis is a diverse community with a mix of people from all walks of life with unique interests. It is important that the City's engagement methods are accessible and broad-reaching. Minneapolis has a unique grassroots system of Neighborhood Organizations which can assist, supplement and broaden any engagement activity.

The Minneapolis community comprises individuals and groups that live, work, play, visit, study, invest in and pass through the City. They may share a geographic location, characteristic or interest. The term stakeholder defines our Neighborhood Organizations, Cultural Community Organizations and individuals who are directly impacted by, involved with, or interested in the City's decision-making, relationship-building or community-strengthening processes.

Each person within our community has the potential to be a stakeholder. Neighborhood Organizations are always a stakeholder for geographic areas (place-based activities). These organizations can often engage residents on a scale greater and more detailed than City departments. Organizations are not to be used the exclusive community engagement tool, but rather to supplement the departments work.

When do we engage?

Community engagement should take place at the beginning stage of any project or initiative when a change in service, activity or infrastructure is considered, when an issue is raised and requires a decision, or when more information or evidence is required. Engagement is likely to be undertaken at multiple stages within a project, program or development. Connecting with Neighborhood Organizations and Cultural Community Organizations should be the first step in any engagement effort to develop an all-encompassing plan of needs. These place-based and people-based organizations should be considered partners in citywide endeavors.

The City of Minneapolis should promote opportunities for the community to actively participate in the following processes:
- when a proposed change to City activities or strategic direction may significantly affect the community in terms of the economy, lifestyle, environment, well-being or amenities of the City
- when the City is developing new or reviewing existing policies, strategies or plans
- when the City is introducing a new service, discontinuing an existing service or substantially changing or reviewing a service that may significantly affect how services are provided
- when the City is considering or requesting proposals for changing the way a public space looks, is used or enjoyed
- when the community raises an issue with the City for a decision (or outcome) and there are likely to be competing community interests
- when the City is planning for or developing capital projects, including private or public investment
- when the City is considering urban development/redevelopment proposals, such as infrastructure plans, that may alter an existing amenity or characteristics of a geographic area (long- and short-term alterations)
- when the City needs more information or evidence to make an informed decision

The Work Group recommends that there are certain City activities that must always be subject to community engagement. These activities include, but are not limited to:

- City Council and Mayoral allowances
- developing and adopting a comprehensive plan
- adopting small area plans
- considering or adopting a local law or ordinance
- considering or approving zoning changes
- considering or approving variance requests
- undertaking road construction, closures or modifications
- considering or approving the selling, exchanging or leasing of City-owned land

There are times, however, when the City's level of engagement with the community and key stakeholders should be limited. In certain circumstances, the City may only be able to inform the community and stakeholders of decisions and actions. Examples of such limited engagement include when:

- an immediate action or resolution is required
- a decision rests solely on technical or other professional expertise
- an initiative involves confidential information
- an action has legal implications
- the City is developing or reviewing its internal policies and procedures (e.g., human resources)
- the City is responding to an emergency or immediate risk to public health or safety
- the City is making a decision that is pre-determined by Federal or State law

How do we engage?

There is no one-size-fits-all approach to community engagement activities. A variety of methods will be needed to cater to the different purposes of engagement, as well as the broad range of groups and individuals in the community. A specific requirement for most projects or plans is the connection with geographic Neighborhood Organizations for a geographically-located plan.

The following steps should be considered by the City to ensure the process is successful:

- decide on the most appropriate way of informing the community/target group of the planned engagement activity
- organize resources, including who will conduct the engagement, and venues with full consideration of specific needs such as transportation, childcare and translation services
- connect with Neighborhood Organizations and/or Cultural Community Organizations
- provide information to participants in a jargon-free manner and in multiple formats and languages
- Departments, Neighborhood Organizations and cultural community organizations will engage to the capacity available
- Engagement activities, follow up to engagement and results should be directed to the communities in places and ways that are accessible to them

Who is responsible for community engagement?

Community engagement is the responsibility of the Mayor, City Council and all City departments. Implementation of this policy relies on the Mayor and the City Council adopting a Citywide Community Engagement Policy. Department directors have the specific responsibility to oversee the implementation of the policy within their departments.

Neighborhood Organizations and cultural community organizations are vital for community engagement and play an essential role in any engagement activity. City departments, Neighborhood Organizations and Cultural Community Organizations should be viewed as partners in a Citywide Community Engagement Policy.

Budget Implications
By adopting a Citywide Community Engagement Policy, the City of Minneapolis will be making an investment in the ability of its residents to be informed and involved. City departments must make community engagement a budgetary priority, even, sometimes, over historic budgetary obligations. It is recommended that each department identify its community engagement practices as part of its business plan, and include known community engagement efforts as part of its budget submission and during its budget hearings.

Job Descriptions
Through the adoption of a Citywide Community Engagement Policy, the City of Minneapolis will be making a significant investment in a holistic approach to community engagement. This investment should be reflected in the job expectations of every City employee and part of every employee's performance review. Any specific community engagement job expectations should be written in plain language.

Training
The City of Minneapolis should train specific positions in key departments to become the key departmental resource for the implementation of this policy by employees. Training on the policy should be provided to all employees every two years. The City also should provide this training to all members of the City's boards and commissions so that they are aware of and understand this policy.

Planning for community engagement
The planning stage is critical to ensuring a successful and authentic engagement process. During this stage the City should understand, outline and gain agreement on:
- why is the City engaging (purpose)
- what is the City trying to achieve through the process (engagement objectives)
- how the result will be used (engagement outcomes)
- who needs to be engaged (stakeholder analysis)
- where the project is located (neighborhood contact)
- who the specific non-geographical stakeholders are that are affected (Cultural Community Organizations)
- what the level of engagement should be (IAP2 Spectrum)
- how the City will engage (methods and best practices)
- when the City will engage (timeframe)
- how will the evaluation metrics (outcomes/results) be shared

During the engagement planning stage, it is important also to consider the monitoring and evaluation steps that will be embedded into the process. Each Neighborhood Organization or Cultural Community Organization may need an extended amount of time to engage residents. A minimum amount of time for any engagement activity beyond the *Inform* level should be 45 days.

Sharing the results and impact of community engagement

Following the engagement process, the City should report back to the community the results and outcomes of the engagement process in ways that fit the stakeholder's needs. This should be done in a timely, accessible and informative manner so that participants and other stakeholders understand how their involvement influenced the process, the outcome and the decisions.

Evaluating the community engagement process

Evaluation of the engagement process should be planned for at the beginning of the process so that all participants are aware of how the success of the process will be measured. Evaluation should be continuous so that the engagement process can be adjusted should any aspect of the process not be working well. The engagement process should be reviewed at the end of the activity to ensure that all participants and stakeholders understand what happened and why. The implementing department should objectively and realistically reflect on what did and did not work.

For larger projects, the City also should ask the participants in the community engagement effort to evaluate the effort, methods and outcomes.

Neighborhood and Community Relations Department (NCR) role in community engagement

NCR should be a key resource to the City for implementation of the Citywide Community Engagement Policy. City departments, Neighborhood Organizations and Cultural Community Organizations can utilize the department, when needed, to ensure that the policy is being implemented adequately and honestly.

NCR also should work as a conduit between City departments and the residents of the City of Minneapolis. Furthermore, NCR should:
- assist departments in determining which engagement methods are most appropriate under the IAP2 Spectrum
- assist departments in determining the appropriate timeline needed for the proposed project; timelines should never be asking for resident participation with less than 45-day notice
- work with City departments and others to ensure that all City engagement processes abide by the Core Principles of Community Engagement and other aspects of a Community Engagement Policy
- assist with City departmental training on the Community Engagement Policy

Policy oversight

Work Group 2 of the Neighborhoods 2020 process is charged with making recommendations concerning the oversight of this body of work. However, Work Group 3 recommends that the responsibility to oversee proper implementation and administration of this policy should be conducted by the Community Engagement Commission (CEC) .

The Community Engagement Commission (CEC) should annually review the City's Community Engagement Policy for effectiveness, ease of use and the status of its implementation.

The Community Engagement Commission should also have the ability to make recommendations to revise this policy and review the engagement-related actions of the City and any organizations contracted to assist in this engagement. If the Community Engagement Advisory Board deems a community engagement effort to be significantly deficient, then it should have the ability to recommend to the City Council (department-related)

or NCR (Neighborhood or Cultural Community organizations) a reduction of budgetary funding until the department or organization is able to demonstrate a viable action plan.

Appendix A: Key Definitions

Community Engagement
Community engagement is the range of opportunities for public involvement in City decision-making, relationship building and community strengthening. Community engagement is achieved when the community is and feels part of a process.

Community Strengthening
Refers to a sustained effort to build cohesiveness and equity in inclusive communities. This process aims to increase the connectedness, active engagement and partnership among members of the community, Neighborhood Organizations and Cultural Community Organizations to enhance social, economic and environmental well-being.

Cultural Community Organizations
Cultural Community Organizations are people-based and relative to a member's culture. The City funds some organizations for a variety of activities including equitable engagement within their community.

Neighborhood Organizations
Neighborhoods are geographic locations of a specific area defined by the City of Minneapolis. These areas have Neighborhood Organizations that engage their residents where they live. The City funds such organizations for a variety of activities including inclusive, equitable engagement.

Appendix B: List of stakeholders in the City of Minneapolis*

- Arts and Culture Community
- Affinity Groups
- Bicyclists
- Business and Industry
- Chamber of Commerce
- Children/Youth
- Community Service Providers
- Commuters
- Cultural Community Organizations
- Disabled Residents
- Emergency Services
- Environmental Groups
- Families
- Governmental Departments
- Heritage Groups
- Homeless
- Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex community
- Local, State, County Gov't
- Minneapolis Employees
- Mayor and Council
- Media
- Neighborhood Organizations
- Non-Profit Community
- Public Transit Users
- Residents
- Schools and Students
- Seniors/Senior Groups
- Taxpayers
- Various Commission members
- Visitors to Minneapolis
- Volunteers/Volunteer Orgs

This list is not all-inclusive within the City of Minneapolis

Appendix C: Potential Best Practices

The voices of individuals and the community are valued and will be heard and involved at appropriate points in the City's decision-making processes. The City will be more effective and efficient in how it communicates with and engages communities, and will work to include those who are typically under-represented in public dialogue. The City should focus its engagement efforts in a manner that supports the long-term strength of a community.

Provide an Easy-to-Use Platform for Innovation and Engagement

When it comes to interacting with government, citizens should be empowered and engagement should be easy. They should be able to quickly retrieve data; submit forms and find the information they need.

Empower Citizens

The City should give some authority and power in the decision-making process to those directly impacted by the issue.

Comprehensive Communications Strategy

For community engagement to truly work, the City must create a comprehensive communications strategy that includes, on a routine basis, email, social media, advertisements, door to door contact and attendance at in-person events or hosting informational sessions.

Provide Sufficient Staffing, Resources and Success Metrics

Clear goals, objectives and measurements must be identified to track engagement initiatives, and proper staffing and resources must be allocated to the initiative. Also, it is essential that a sense of fairness be retained as to how resources are allocated across the city.

Neighborhood Organizations and Cultural Community Organizations should be funded at acceptable levels to be able to fulfill their obligations under a Citywide Community Engagement Policy.

Government Management

The City should focus on enhancing productivity and creating a customer service-oriented culture. The City should foster a work environment in which employees can excel by building employee skills and improving employee diversity. Better information and analysis should be used to allow for more informed decision-making at both the elected and staff levels. The City should develop and maintain a long-term, sustainable financial plan for the City. Special focus will be given to engaging City employees and the community in how the City addresses and communicates these financial challenges.

Mobile integration

Websites, email and online engagement tools should be mobile-friendly to be useful and to optimize the experience.

Create captivating content

Storytelling and anecdotes are effective ways to engage with people. The community is more likely to trust the City if it communicates with a genuine voice and demonstrates its willingness to listen.

Software integration
The City should have a strategy in place to drive engagement. This might include using an online engagement platform that integrates mobile and social media platforms to drive traffic to the City's engagement hub.

Retargeting
The communications and marketing process should not stop once a City engagement process has started. Exposure to the community several times about the project is needed before high engagement can be expected.

Maximize diversity
of the City comprises many cultures and demographic groups. It is important to understand these groups and plan the City's engagement activities accordingly. The City should utilize tools to help identify all affected residents.

Reporting
The City needs to let community members know how their input has influenced the final decision.
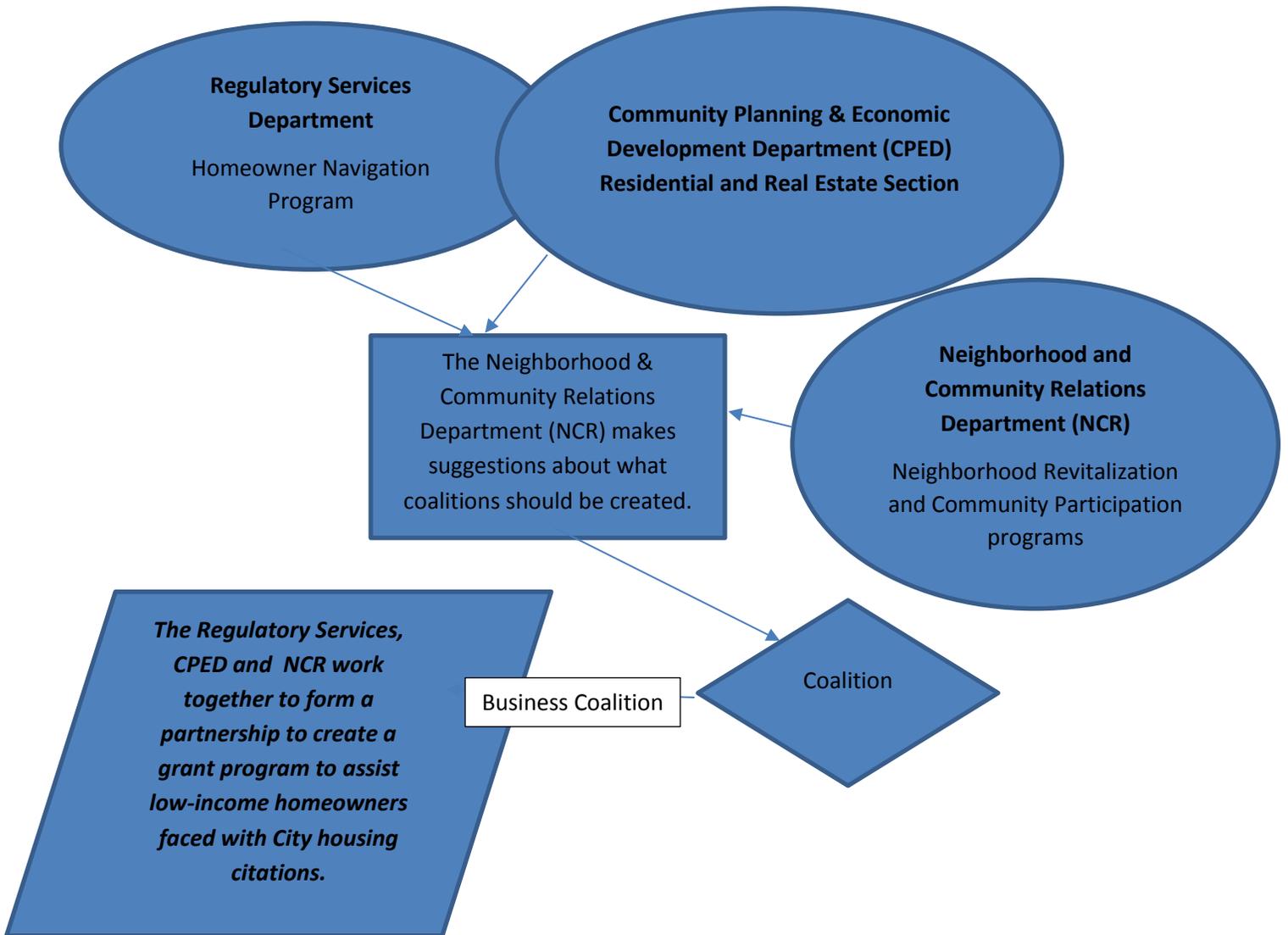
First Contact
All mailings and electronic correspondences should clearly indicate what is expected from the community. The City should standardize communications to clearly notify recipients if the communication or activity is to "*Inform, Consult, Involve, Collaborate* or *Empower.*"

The communication will clearly state:
- what type of response is needed
- when and where information can be collected
- what the timelines are for engagement
- what the opportunities are for resident responses and how those responses might affect the outcome

Coalition Work

As part of a community engagement effort to reach out to more community members and offer enhanced services that will develop trust and involvement, each City department should have the responsibility to partner with other City departments to develop an interdepartmental coalition to create a collaborative strategy to tackle a specific issue or community need. The coalition should set aside resources for community organizing and issue-based outreach. The coalition also should include community members so that they have a role in the decision-making process of such programs or initiatives.

Regulatory Services Department

Homeowner Navigation Program

Community Planning & Economic Development Department (CPED) Residential and Real Estate Section

The Neighborhood & Community Relations Department (NCR) makes suggestions about what coalitions should be created.

Neighborhood and Community Relations Department (NCR)

Neighborhood Revitalization and Community Participation programs

The Regulatory Services, CPED and NCR work together to form a partnership to create a grant program to assist low-income homeowners faced with City housing citations.

Business Coalition

Coalition

Appendix D: A Community Engagement Tool Kit

Neighborhood and Community Relations Department will create a *Public Engagement Toolkit* in February 2019