Public Outreach & Engagement GUIDEBOOK

Broward MPO

Introduction

Public engagement and outreach are essential ingredients for any project that affects a community.

Think of it like planning a big neighborhood event—you wouldn't just send out a flyer and hope people show up. Instead, you'd knock on doors, chat with neighbors, listen to their ideas, answer their questions, and make sure everyone feels welcome. That's what good outreach is all about!

Public outreach is more than just sharing updates. It's about making real connections. It means reaching out to residents, businesses, schools, community groups, and government agencies to hear their thoughts, understand their concerns, and involve them in decisions that affect their lives. It's about meeting people where they are—at the grocery store, online, at the park, or at their front door—and making sure everyone has a chance to be heard.

When done well, outreach builds trust, promotes transparency, and creates stronger, more connected communities. It helps people be part of the process—not just being told what's happening but helping shape the outcome.

This guide is designed as an easy-to-follow "*cookbook-style*" resource for public outreach—providing step-by-step "recipes" for different methods, strategies, and real-life tips. Whether you're hosting your first community meeting, setting up a table at a local event, sending a survey, or running a full outreach campaign, these tools will help you keep things simple, inclusive, and effective.

You'll learn:

What each type of outreach is good for	**What it might cost**
Who should be involved	**Easy tips to make it all work**

You don't need to be a professional communicator or event planner to do good outreach—you just need the right tools, a little planning, and a whole lot of heart.

Let's get started on making public outreach simple, successful, and impactful—for everyone!

Table of Contents

What is Public Outreach?

Public outreach is how you connect with the people and communities who are affected by a project or decision. It means sharing information, listening to feedback, and making sure the community is heard and included. Outreach helps build trust, clear up confusion, and create a stronger relationship between agencies and the people they serve.

Imagine you're working on something that might affect a neighborhood – like building a new park or updating roads. Public outreach is how you make sure everyone has a chance to know what's going on, ask questions, and share ideas.

What Makes Outreach Work?

Clear, easy-to-understand information – Skip the complicated words. Use plain language and explain things simply.

Honest and consistent communication – Be upfront and follow through.

Focus on people, not just the project – Think about what matters to the community, not just what you want to say.

Know the rules – Follow local, state, and federal requirements for outreach (especially for big public projects).

Step-by-Step Outreach Process

Step 1	Start by Educating People

Before asking for input, people need to understand the project. They need to know:

How to do it

▶ Use plain language – no government or technical jargon

▶ Share info in ways people can easily access *(flyers, social media, email, neighborhood meetings)*

▶ Tailor the message to different groups *(residents, businesses, youth, etc.)*

What is happening → **Why** it's happening → **How** it affects them

Staff Involved: 1 team member responsible for crafting and distributing messages

Cost: Low ($-$$)
Unless you're printing or advertising

Tips: Include visuals, like maps or simple graphics, to explain things better

Step 2	Listen & Answer Questions

People will have concerns, and sometimes, they'll be skeptical or frustrated. **That's normal.** The important thing is to listen without being defensive and give honest, clear answers.

How to do it

▶ Be available to respond through email, meetings, or social media

▶ Hold Question and Answer (Q&A) sessions *(in-person or virtual)*

▶ Share a Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) document to address common concerns

Staff Involved: 1 or more team members to respond and engage – multilingual staff if needed

Cost: Varies ($-$$$)
Digital tools are low cost; meetings and media outreach can add up

Tips: Every person you talk to can go back and inform others, so every conversation counts

Step 3   Ask for Input

People want to feel involved. Give them real chances to help shape the project – not just be told what's happening.

How to do it

▸ Host events like town halls, open houses, or focus groups

▸ Send out surveys *(online or paper)*

▸ Create simple ways for people to give feedback

▸ Work with community leaders to help spread the word

Staff Involved: 1 team member to plan and lead the conversation

Cost: Moderate to High – ($$-$$$)
Depends on event size, materials, and if you're offering incentives

Tips: Make sure your event is at a convenient time and location. Offer food or small giveaways to boost attendance.

Step 4   Keep the Relationships Going

Don't stop after the meeting ends. Outreach should keep the community engaged and helps build long-term trust.

How to do it

▸ Send updates through newsletters, emails, or social media

▸ Follow up on concerns and share progress

▸ Partner with community organizations for ongoing support

Staff Involved: 1 team member dedicated to ongoing communication and follow-up

Cost: Varies ($-$$$)
Depends on tools and time needed for long-term communication *(free options available)*

Tips: Track who you've talked to and follow up regularly. Stay transparent, even if there are delays or changes.

Estimated Cost Breakdown

Small-scale Outreach $	Medium-scale Outreach $$	Large-scale Outreach $$$
▸ Minimal in-person events ▸ Basic materials ▸ Social media ▸ Website	▸ Some events ▸ Surveys ▸ Digital Tools ▸ Printed Materials	▸ Multiple events ▸ In-depth Community Engagement ▸ Partnerships ▸ Ongoing Efforts

Why this matters

Good outreach makes people feel seen, respected, as well as informed. It creates better projects, fewer misunderstandings, and stronger communities. The key is to be transparent, inclusive, and responsive – making sure that public outreach is more than just a one-time effort, but rather an ongoing process of engagement and collaboration.

Types of Public Engagement

Public engagement means connecting with the community in ways that are clear, simple, and helpful. Not everyone gets their information the same way, so using a mix of outreach methods helps you reach more people and make sure more voices are heard. Below are different methods you can use – with how to do them, who you'll need, how much they might cost, and helpful tips.

Key Elements of Effective Public Engagement

Use different tools – Meetings, flyers, surveys, social media, etc.
Be clear about your goals – Are you informing, listening, or collaborating?
Communicate honestly – Be consistent, transparent, and respectful.
Keep it community-focused – Think about what people care about, not just what you want to say.
Stay flexible - Be ready to adjust your plan based on how to respond.

Type 1 | **Public Meetings** *(In-person, Virtual, or Hybrid)*

Public meetings provide a structured space for dialogue, allowing the community to learn about a project and provide input.

How to do it

▶ Schedule and advertise the meeting widely
▶ Prepare a clear agenda and presentation
▶ Allow time for Q&A and comments

Staff Involved: 1 to 3 team members to run the meeting, handle logistics, and answer questions

Cost: Moderate to High ($$-$$$) Depending on venue, materials, tech setup

Tips: Offer translation or sign language if needed. Test your technology ahead of time. Use hybrid meetings to include more people.

Purpose: Provide transparency and gather broad input

Type 2 | **Workshops / Open Houses / Information Sessions**

These engagement methods allow for interactive discussions, helping to generate ideas and solutions collaboratively.

How to do it

▶ Set up interactive displays or activity stations
▶ Use visuals to explain complex topics
▶ Encourage group discussions

Staff Involved: 1 to 3 team members to plan, host, and support the event

Cost: Moderate ($$-$$$) Depends on venue, materials, and facilitation costs

Tips: Label events clearly: use "Workshop" for hands-on ideas and "Open House" for walk-through info. Use tools like maps, sticky notes, or surveys, and maintain a casual, inviting tone.

Purpose: Get feedback, answer questions, and brainstorm with the community

Type 3   Pop-Ups *(Community Events, Markets, Parks, etc.)*

A casual and approachable way to meet people where they already are, creating opportunities for easy interaction.

How to do it

▶ Choose a high traffic areas (parks, transit hubs, markets, large community events)

▶ Set up table or booth with signs and handouts

▶ Keep conversations short and friendly

Staff Involved: 1 to 2 team members to interact with the public and create visuals and materials

Cost: Low to Moderate – ($-$$)
Mostly setup and print materials, plus optional interaction incentives

Tips: Offer giveaways like stickers, brochures, or tote bags. Keep interactions brief but meaningful to respect people's time. Use QR codes to provide more info later.

Purpose: Raise awareness and gather feedback in informal spaces

Type 4   Door-to-Door Outreach

This method involves direct, one-on-one conversations to share and build trust.

How to do it

▶ Map out your route ahead of time

▶ Go in teams of two

▶ Engage residents in a conversational manner

▶ Leave flyers or door hangers **(never in mailboxes!)**

▶ Bring translation support if the area warrants it

Staff Involved: 2 team members trained for door-to-door engagement

Cost: Low – ($)
Mostly involves printing and time, with minimal additional costs

Tips: Always wear ID and be respectful. Provide materials in multiple languages. Write down questions or concerns for follow-up.

Purpose: Build personal connections and make sure everyone has a chance to be heard

Type 5   Surveys *(Online or Print)*

Surveys are great for collecting opinions and ideas from a large number of people, allowing for varied feedback and valuable insights.

How to do it

▶ Keep questions short and easy to understand

▶ Include images for choice questions

▶ Share the survey by email, social media, or at events

▶ Share QR codes for easy access

Staff Involved: 1 to 2 members to create, share, and review responses

Cost: Low to Moderate – ($-$$)
Depends on the distribution method, whether it's printed or created using a digital survey tool

Tips: Offer small incentives like raffles or gift cards to boost participation. Translate the survey if needed. Share the results with the community.

Purpose: Collect broad input and track community preferences

Types of Public Engagement *(Continued)*

Type 6   Mailers *(Flyers, Postcards, Newsletters)*

Mailers help you reach people who aren't online or don't attend meetings, ensuring they stay informed and can provide feedback.

How to do it

- Create a simple, clear mailer explaining where, when, why, and how
- Use up-to-date mailing lists
- Include a clear call to action
  (like "join us at the meeting")

Staff Involved: 1 to 2 team members to design, print in-house or with a printer, and coordinate mailing

Cost: Moderate – ($$-$$$)
Printing and mailing costs can add up, so decide whether to print in-house or use a printer based on budget and volume

Tips: Include a QR code for more info, target specific neighborhoods or stakeholder groups, and design/print in other languages if needed

Purpose: Reach stakeholders, including those without internet access

Type 7   Social Media Engagement

Social media offers a fast, wide-reaching way to improve engagement, provide updates, and quickly respond to feedback.

How to do it

- Post regularly with graphics or short videos
- Respond to comments and messages quickly
- Boost posts or use ads to reach more people

Staff Involved: 1 team member to create content and engage followers

Cost: Low to Moderate – ($-$$)
Organic posts are free and build connections, while paid ads boost reach and target audiences for a cost

Tips: Keep posts short and visual. Post in multiple languages when needed. Use polls or Q&A stickers to get feedback. Schedule posts consistently to maintain engagement.

Purpose: Promote events, share updates and keep the conversation going

Type 8   Online Engagement Platforms *(Websites, Forums, Interactive Tools)*

Online engagement platforms allow people to provide feedback on their own time, making it easier for them to participate and share their thoughts at their convenience.

How to do it

- Build a user-friendly website or forum
- Post updates regularly
- Monitor activity and respond to user inputs
- Include comment forms, polls, or virtual Q&As

Staff Involved: 1 to 2 team members to manage platform, monitor activity, and respond to public inquiries

Cost: Moderate to High – ($$-$$$)
Depends on the tools and features offered, as well as the level of site management required to maintain and monitor interactions effectively

Tips: Make it easy to navigate, allow people to sign up for updates/e-newsletters, and ask community partners to share the link.

Purpose: Keep people involved throughout the project, even outside meetings

Type 9 **Focus Groups**

Focus groups are small group discussions designed to get detailed feedback on key issues.

Staff Involved: 1 to 2 team members to lead discussions, summarize insights, and take notes

How to do it

▸ Make sure you need to focus group ideas and or campaigns

▸ Recruit a diverse group of community members

▸ Facilitate discussions on specific topics

▸ Summarize key takeaways for decision-makers

Cost: Moderate to High – ($$-$$$) Depends on participant incentives, recruitment method (volunteer or paid), facilitation, and venue expenses

Tips: Offer stipends or refreshments to encourage participation. Keep the group size small. Use a neutral facilitator to guide the conversation effectively.

Purpose: Understand community views more deeply, especially on tricky topics

Estimated Cost Breakdown

Small-scale Outreach $	Medium-scale Outreach $$	Large-scale Outreach $$$
▸ Social media ▸ Surveys ▸ Door-to-door ▸ Pop-ups	▸ Public meetings ▸ Workshops ▸ Mailers ▸ Online Engagement Platforms	▸ Focus groups ▸ Large engagement campaigns using multiple methods

Final Tip

Using just one method usually isn't enough.

Mix it up! Use surveys to get input, social media to promote your events, pop-ups to meet people casually, and public meetings to explain decisions. That way, you'll reach more people, build more trust, and get better results.

Note: If you don't have a large budget to work with, start small. Choose one or two outreach methods that best fit your audience and goals, then use what you learn to adjust and expand your approach. Keep in mind that stacking multiple outreach strategies can increase staff time and costs, so plan accordingly as you scale up based on what works.

What You Will Need

Planning a public outreach event might sound overwhelming, but don't worry – it's just like hosting a block party or school open house. The key is having the right tools, a little prep, and a team that's ready to roll. Here's your go-to-checklist to help you stay on track and make your event a success.

Step 1 — Basic Setup Essentials

These are the items that help your event look organized and feel welcoming.

- ☐ **Tables and Chairs:**
  You need somewhere for people to sit, talk, or fill out forms. Bring extras— someone always brings a friend.
- ☐ **Tablecloths:**
  Makes everything look clean and put-together. If you can, use ones with your logo or in your project colors.
- ☐ **Tents or Shade:**
  Hosting outdoors? Avoid sunburns or rainouts. Bring pop-up tents or umbrellas for comfort.
- ☐ **Signs and Directionals:**
  People need to know where to go and what's happening. Put up clear signs with arrows, welcome banners, and labels for each table or area.
- ☐ **Event Branding:**
  Use your logo or project name on everything — signs, flyers, tablecloths, handouts, shirts, you name it. It makes the event look organized and helps people remember why they're there.

Step 2 — Stuff So People Can Hear and See You

If people can't hear or understand what's going on, they'll tune out.

- ☐ **Microphones and Speakers:**
  If you're talking to a crowd, you'll need a mic so people can hear you. Wireless mics are great if you want to walk around.
- ☐ **Projectors and Screens:**
  Want to show a map, video, or slides? Project it so the whole room can see.
- ☐ **Laptops, Tablets & Connectivity:**
  Use these devices to run your slides, collect digital feedback, or let people take quick surveys. Test the venue's Wi-Fi signal beforehand — if it's weak or unreliable, have a hotspot ready as a backup.
- ☐ **Extension Cords & Power Strips:**
  Everything you plug in needs power — and you'll always need more outlets than you think. Don't forget these!

Quick Tip: You don't have to buy this stuff. Many community centers, libraries, or tech rental companies can loan or rent it affordably.

Step 3 — Printed Materials to Hand Out

People like to leave with something they can read later.

- ☐ **Flyers or Info Sheets:**
  Basic overviews of your project or event. Easy to read, short, and useful.
- ☐ **FAQs (Frequently Asked Questions):**
  Save time by printing answers to the questions you hear most.
- ☐ **Maps or Infographics:**
  Help people understand complex info with visuals. These look great on posters or as handouts.
- ☐ **Translated Materials:**
  If you're serving a multilingual community, provide info in multiple languages so no one is left out.

Step 4 — Interactive Tools

These help you *hear from the public*, not just talk at them.

☐ **Comment Cards:**
Let folks write down thoughts, questions, or suggestions. Even a few words can be helpful.

☐ **Posters or Pin-Up Boards:**
Set up a board where people can add sticky notes, draw ideas, or vote on priorities.

☐ **Digital Feedback Stations:**
Set up a tablet, laptop or have a QR code with a short survey. It's fast, paper-free, and easy to track later.

☐ **Giveaways (Optional):**
Branded pens, magnets, or bags can help people remember your message.

Step 5 — Back-End Tools to Stay Organized

These help your team stay on track and follow up later.

☐ **Event Agenda or Run of Show:**
A simple timeline of what's happening and when. Keep a copy at every table.

☐ **Sign-In Sheets:**
Ask for names and emails so you can share follow-up info or track who came.

☐ **Name Tags:**
Helps everyone feel more comfortable and makes conversations easier.

☐ **Clipboards, Pens, Tape:**
Don't forget the small stuff! These come in handy for everything.

Final Tips

Test your equipment before the event:
You don't want to be figuring out the projector five minutes before people arrive

Bring water and snacks – for you and maybe for guests. Hungry people don't like to listen.

Assign roles:
One person to greet people, another to manage questions, someone to track sign-ins.

Smile and be approachable:
A friendly attitude makes a huge difference

If you've got tables, chairs, signage, clear information, good visuals, and a way for people to ask questions or give input – you're already ahead of the game. Prep what you can, be ready to adapt, and keep it simple.

You got this!

Public Meetings/Workshops

Public meetings—workshops, open houses, or forums—are a great way to connect with the community. Whether you're sharing updates, asking for feedback, or answering tough questions, a well-planned event helps people stay informed, know they have been listened to and stay connected to the process. The key is to have a clear purpose, a welcoming space, and a simple, organized agenda.

Step 1 | Know Why You're Meeting

Before anything else, be clear on what your meeting is for:

To Share Updates:
Use an Information Session

- Show slides, videos, or posters
- Provide clear updates and key milestones
- Include time for a short Q&A
- Great for project status updates or press briefings

To Gather Feedback:
Use an Interactive Workshop or Open House

- Set up stations or tables for discussion
- Use surveys, comment cards, or digital polling tools
- Perfect for brainstorming or community design sessions

To Encourage Dialogue:
Use a Public Forum or Roundtable Discussion

- Facilitate open conversation between residents, stakeholders, and decision-makers
- Use panels or guided discussion formats
- Best for long-term planning or policy input

Step 2 | Plan a Simple Agenda

Even if the meeting is casual, it should still have a flow. Include:

- Welcome and introductions
- A quick overview or presentation
- Time for feedback or discussion
- Q&A and wrap-up

Step 3 | Pick a Format That Fits

Virtual

- Great for accessibility and convenience
- 30–90 minutes per session
- Prep: Allow 30 minutes to ensure audio and video work smoothly on your chosen platform

In-Person

- Ideal for personal connection and hands-on activities
- 30–90 minutes per session
- Prep: Arrive at least 1 hour early to set up materials and check A/V services

Hybrid

- Best of both worlds—engages in-person and remote participants
- 30–90 minutes per session
- Prep: Arrive 60–90 minutes early to set up materials and confirm all A/V is working in both the room and online

Step 4 Get Your Materials Ready

▶ Visuals: posters, maps, slides

▶ Handouts: flyers, FAQs, feedback forms

▶ Sign-in sheets

▶ Translation or bilingual materials, if needed

Step 5 Choose a Good Location

▶ Pick a spot that's easy to get to, has parking or public transportation nearby, and is accessible for people with disabilities

Step 6 Spread the Word

Use all the tools you have:

▶ Flyers

▶ Social media

▶ Email lists

▶ Community groups or partners

Send reminders a few days before to boost attendance!

Step 7 Staff Involved

You'll need **a small team of 2 to 4 members** to:

▶ Plan the event

▶ Handle logistics

▶ Promote the meeting

▶ Set up tech or translation if needed

▶ Greet people and help them participate

Step 8 Know your Budget

▶ **Low ($)**: Small meeting with printed handouts and minimal setup

▶ **Medium ($$-$$$)**: Bigger crowd, printed materials, translation help, or tech

▶ **High ($$$$)**: Large venue, professional speakers or facilitators, and multimedia support

Time Needed
Session Length: 30–90 minutes
Preparation: Begins 3 months in advance

Final Tips

Make people feel welcome:
Friendly greeters make a big difference

Be inclusive:
Offer materials in different languages

Stay flexible:
Be ready to adjust based on the turnout or feedback

Always follow up:
Thank people for coming and let them know what happens next

Public meetings help you build trust and keep the community informed and involved. If you plan with care, keep it simple, and truly listen, people will leave feeling respected and included.

Pop-Ups

➡️ Pop-ups are an easy, low-pressure way to talk to people in the community. No stage, no microphone – just a table, some flyers, and a few friendly faces in a busy spot. They're perfect for sharing info and getting quick feedback without needing a big formal event.

How to do a Pop-Up:

Step 1   Pick a Busy Location

Look for places where people are already gathered – like:

▸ Farmers' market
▸ Parks and playgrounds
▸ Transit stations or libraries
▸ Community event or festivals

Step 2   Set up a Welcoming Table

Bring:

▸ A table and chairs
▸ A tablecloth or banner with your project name
▸ Signs that explain what you're there to talk about

Step 3   Offer Simple Giveaways

People love freebies. Bring small items like:

▸ Pens, magnets, or stickers
▸ Tote bags or water bottles with your project logo/name
▸ Printed flyers or postcards with more info

Step 4   Keep Your Message Short

Most people won't stop for more than a minute.

▸ Have a quick and clear way to explain your project
▸ Be upbeat and avoid information overload
▸ Hand them a flyer or QR code if they want to learn more later

Step 5   Make it Fun

To keep if fun and engaging, include:

▸ A prize wheel or quick game
▸ A one-question poll
▸ A comment board or feedback card

🕐 **Time Needed**
Setup/Prep: 30–60 minutes
Engagement Time: 2–6 hours, depending on event type

Staff Involved

1 to 3 friendly team members
who are approachable and excellent at explaining the project in simple terms. One person to handle set-up and clean up.

Cost

Low	$

Just a table, a sign, and some flyers

Medium	$$

Add giveaways like pens or stickers and interactive tools like a spinner or whiteboard

High	$$$

If you need permits, a fancy booth setup, or you're doing multiple pop-ups

Tips

Arrive Early:
Always arrive early to set up

Identify Yourself:
Wear name tags or branded shirts so people know who you are

Be Approachable:
Smile and keep it casual – this is a conversation, not a presentation

Share Information:
Use a QR code that links to detailed info online

Track Interactions:
Keep track of how many people you talk to and what they ask

Pop-ups are simple, flexible, and fun – and they help bring your outreach right to where people already are.

Door-to-Door Outreach

Door-to-door outreach is one of the most personal and direct ways to reach the community. It means walking through neighborhoods, knocking on doors (or leaving flyers), and having short, friendly conversations with residents or business owners. It's a great way to **build trust, share information and hear feedback – face-to-face.**

How to do it:

Step 1 | Plan Your Route

- Use a map to choose which streets or buildings to visit
- Focus on areas that will be most affected by your project
- Group routes by neighborhood or zip code to stay organized

Step 2 | Bring Printed Materials

- Flyers or brochures should be easy to read and short
- Explain the project, why it matters, and how to learn more
- Always bring extra copies just in case

Step 3 | Be Friendly and Approachable

- Smile, introduce yourself, and keep it casual
- Wear a name badge or bring an ID so people know who you are
- Be clear that you're not selling anything – you're just sharing info and listening

Time Needed
Preparation: 1–2 hours
Engagement Time: 2–6 hours depending on neighborhood size

Step 4 | Listen and Take Notes

- If someone has questions or concerns you can't answer, write them down
- Let them know someone will follow up
- Keep a log of key feedback for your team

Step 5 | Leave Info if No One's Home

- Tuck materials on the door handle, under a mat, or by the door
- **Never place anything inside a mailbox – that's against federal law**
- Make sure materials are in multiple languages if needed

Staff Involved

2 to 4 Outreach Team Members: One to lead the team and keep track of safety, and questions that need follow-up. Need 1-3 friendly team members who are comfortable talking to strangers, answering basic questions, and collecting feedback.

Cost

Low	$

Just printed materials and staff time

Medium	$$

If you're printing in bulk, using branded materials, or covering a large area

High	$$$

If you include giveaways, door tags, or hire temporary outreach staff

Tips

Always Go in Pairs:
It's safer and helps with note-taking

Be Respectful of Signs:
Skip places with "No Soliciting" or if someone says they're not interested

Keep It Short:
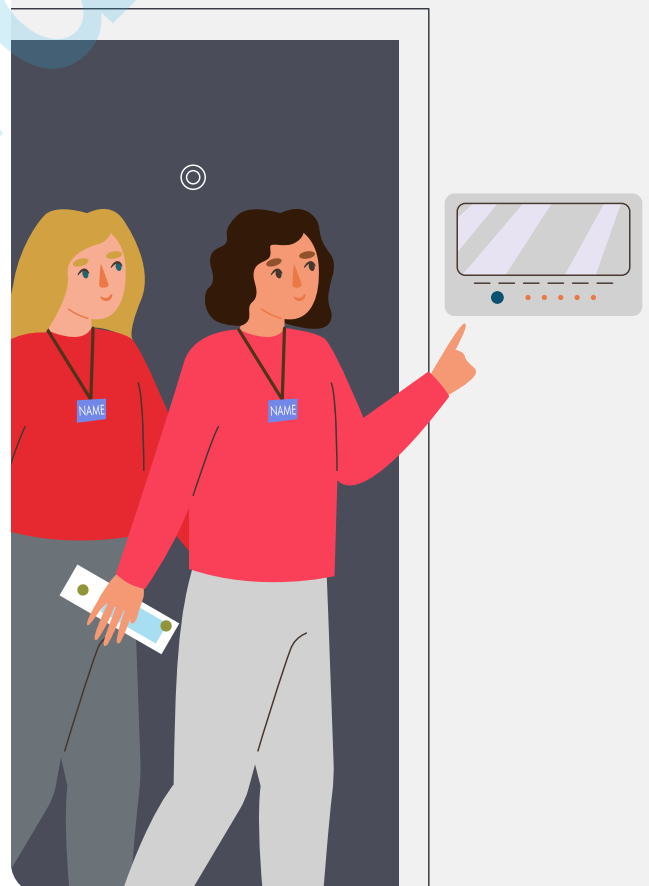1-3 minutes max per door

Bring Materials In Other Language:
Know the community's needs

Follow Up:
If someone asks for more information, make sure someone gets back to them

Track Where You Went:
So you don't double back and can show who was reached

Purpose

▶ Share project information directly with residents and businesses

▶ Build trust through face-to-face interaction

▶ Hear from people who may not attend meetings or use social media

Door-to-door outreach is all about showing up in person, being kind, and making sure everyone has a chance to be informed and heard—no screens, no social media—just real people having real conversations. It's important to always bring proper identification to build trust, and if you're working in a multilingual community, make sure your team includes staff who can speak the local languages. When leaving materials behind, never place anything inside mailboxes (it's against federal law)—instead, tuck flyers on the door handle, under a doormat, or in another visible, respectful location.

Surveys

➡️ Surveys are one of the easiest ways to get feedback from the community. You can ask what people think, what they care about, or what ideas they have – and they can answer whenever it's convenient for them. Whether online or paper, surveys help you hear from lots of people, including those who may not come to meetings.

How to do it:

Step 1	Design Your Survey

- Use easy tools like Google Forms, SurveyMonkey, or paper surveys
- Keep it short and simple (aim for 5-10 questions)
- Mix up the question types:
  - Multiple Choice
  - Rating scales (1-5)
  - Open-ended (write your opinion)

Step 2	Make It Accessible to Everyone

- Offer the survey in multiple languages
- Provide both online and paper options if possible
- Make sure it's easy to read and mobile friendly

Step 3	Share It Everywhere

Distribute your survey through:

- Email lists
- Social media (with a direct link or QR code)
- Flyers at events, libraries, or parks
- Door-to-door with printed copies or QR code
- School newsletters or local groups

Step 4	Give People Time to Respond

- Keep the survey open for at least 1-2 weeks
- Send reminders halfway through
- Watch response numbers to see if you need to promote it more

Step 5	Look at the Results and Share What You Learn

- Summarize answers in a simple chart or report
- Share with your team, decision-makers, and the public
- Let people know how their feedback will be used

Staff Involved

1 to 2 team members
to write the questions and build the survey, share the survey with the community, and review and summarize the responses

Cost

Low	$

Free survey platforms and digital distribution

Medium	$$

Printing paper surveys or using small giveaways to encourage participation

High	$$$

Hiring a research firm, offering large incentives, or translating into multiple languages

Tips

Keep it short:
People are more likely to finish a quick survey

Use simple, clear words:
Avoid big words or technical terms

Offer incentives:
Raffles, gift cards, or small giveaways can boost response rates

Make it mobile-friendly:
Most people complete surveys on their phones

Follow up:
Share the results with the community to show their input matters

Surveys are a great tool for gathering real feedback from the people who matter most— your community. They're quick, affordable, and when done right, they help shape smarter, more community-focused decisions.

Time Needed
Design: 1-2 hours
Distribution: 1–2 hours depending on method (online or in-person)
Collection Period: 2–4 weeks depending on project timeline

Focus Groups

Focus groups are small, guided conversations that help you understand what people really think and feel. They're great for digging deeper into ideas, getting honest opinions, and finding out what matters most to your community – all in a relaxed, face-to-face (or virtual) setting.

How to do it:

Step 1 | **Choose Who to Invite**

Pick 6–12 people who represent different ages, backgrounds, and experiences. Make sure the group reflects the people who will be impacted by your project.

Step 2 | **Write a Few Good Questions**

Create a short list of 5–7 open-ended questions like:

▶ "What do you think about this idea?"

▶ "What concerns you the most?"

▶ "What would make this project more useful to you?"

Keep the questions simple and focused.

Step 3 | **Pick a Comfortable Space**

Choose a quiet and welcoming place – like a library, classroom, community room, or Zoom call. Offer snacks or drinks if it's in-person. Make sure it's easy to find and accessible to everyone.

Step 4 | **Have Someone Lead the Discussion**

Use a trained facilitator to:

▶ Welcome everyone

▶ Keep the conversation on track

▶ Make sure everyone has a chance to speak

▶ Keep the tone respectful and open

Time Needed
Preparation: 1–2 hours
Session Length: 1–2 hours per group

Step 5 | **Take Notes or Record (with Permission)**

Ask someone to write down what's said or record the session (if everyone agrees). Look for common themes, concerns, and ideas that come up.

Step 6 | **Follow Up After**

Send a thank-you message and let participants know how their input will be used. Later, share a summary of what was discussed and any actions taken.

Staff Involved

1 to 3 team members
to lead the discussion and ensure every voice is heard. Another team member to recruit participants, manage invitation. And if needed a translator/interpreter to ensure accessibility for non-English-speaking participants.

Cost

Low	$	Medium	$$	High	$$$

Using free meeting space and staff facilitation

Includes printed materials, refreshments, and basic participant incentives

Professional facilitators, transcription services, and larger incentives (gift cards, transportation, etc.)

Tips

Recruit intentionally:
Aim for diverse voices based on neighborhood, age, language, or interest in the project

Keep the group small:
6 to 12 participants is ideal for meaningful discussion

Offer incentives:
Gift cards or snacks can help boost participation and show appreciation

Provide interpretation:
Bring interpreters if your group includes non-English speakers

Follow up:
Share a short summary with participants and let them know how their feedback made a difference

Focus groups are one of the best ways to listen and learn in a focused, respectful space. When done right, they provide powerful insights that help shape better decisions and more community–centered projects.

Mailers

➡️ Mailers are a great way to reach people who don't follow social media, check websites, or attend meetings. A flyer or postcard in the mail puts your message right in their hands at home. It's personal, easy to read, and helps make sure no one gets left out.

How to do it:

Step 1 | **Design Your Mailer**

Use a flyer, postcard, or newsletter with:
- A clean, easy to read layout
- Big headlines and short text
- A clear call to action like:
  - "Join us at the meeting!"
  - "Scan the QR code to learn more"
  - "Visit our website for updates"

Step 2 | **Include the Essentials**

Make sure your mailer clearly shows:
- Date, time and location of your event or meeting
- Project info in a sentence or two
- Contact information
- A link or QR code for more details
- Translations if your audience includes non-English speakers

Step 3 | **Print and Organize**

- Choose paper size and colors that are easy to see and hold
- Print enough copies based on your mailing list
- Personalize mailers (if possible) by neighborhood or topic
- Use updated mailing lists and double-check addresses

Step 4 | **Send and Track**

- Use stamps for small batches or bulk mailing for bigger lists
- If budget allows, use delivery tracking to confirm they were sent
- Keep a list of where they went in case you need to follow up later

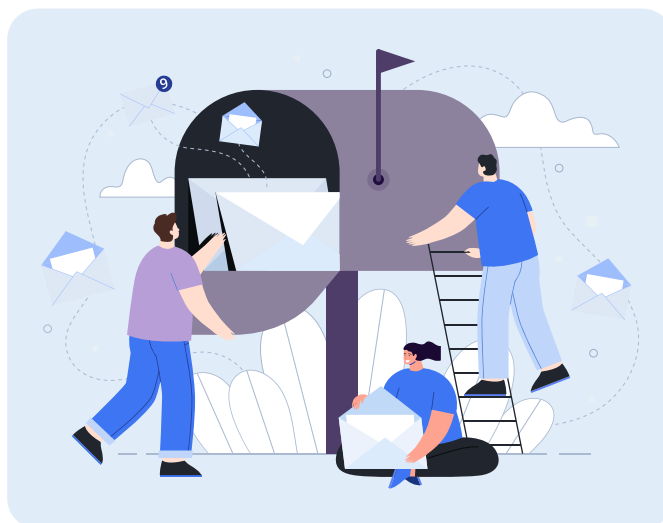**Step 5** | **Follow Up**

Once mailers go out, follow up with:
- A post on social media
- A reminder at pop-ups or door-to-door
- Email blasts with the same message

⏰ **Time Needed**
Design, Editing & Approval: 2–4 hours
Format: Time will vary on whether the distribution is physical or digital

Staff Involved

1 to 3 team members
to create the mailer layout and visuals, gather mailing list, organize printing and prepare and send out mailers

Cost

Low	$

Small batch printing and hand delivery

Medium	$$

Larger print runs with standard postage

High	$$$

Full-color newsletters, personalized mailers, and bulk mailing services

Tips

Keep it short:
Most people will skim it so use big headlines, bullets, and bold text

Make it eye catching:
Bright visuals or bold fonts can help your mailer stand out

Make it actionable:
Include "RSVP here", "Call us", or "Scan this code"

Think ahead:
Mailers take time to arrive so try to send them 1–2 weeks before your event

Combine with other outreach:
Follow up through email, social media, or community events

Mailers are a great way to connect with the community – especially people who prefer printed info or may not be active online. With a clear design and smart timing, a well-done mailer can go a long way in keeping people informed and involved.

Public Meeting

Help Shape the Future of Your Neighborhood!

Please join us for a hybrid public meeting to discuss potential road safety improvements in your neighborhood!

At this meeting, local transportation planners and engineers will present proposed ideas to improve pedestrian, cyclist, and driver safety. Community input is essential to ensure these

When:
Weekday, Month XX, Year
6:00 PM to 7:30 PM

Where:
Broward Metropolitan Planning Organization
100 W Cypress Creek Rd

Broward Metropolitan Planning Organization
100 W Cypress Creek Rd
Fort Lauderdale, FL 33309

Public Meeting
Help Shape the Future of
Your Neighborhood!

Attendee Name
1234 Palmdale Lane
Fort Lauderdale, FL 33309

Newsletters

Email newsletters are a simple and effective way to keep your community informed. They're great for sharing project updates, promoting events, and encouraging people to get involved—all straight to their inbox.

Easy Steps to Create and Send a Newsletter:

Step 1   Build Your Email List

▶ Collect email addresses from event sign-in sheets, website forms, or surveys
▶ Always include an unsubscribe option to stay privacy-compliant

Step 2   Plan What to Say

▶ Project updates and key milestones
▶ Event announcements and links to RSVP or attend
▶ Community input opportunities like surveys or meetings
▶ Links to resources (flyers, videos, or reports)

Step 3   Design Your Newsletter

Use an email tool like Mailchimp, Constant Contact, or even Canva

▶ Keep your layout clean and mobile-friendly
▶ Add visuals like photos, icons, or infographics
▶ Use short, action-oriented language (like "Join us," "Click to learn more," or "Take our survey")

Step 4   Test Before You Send

Preview the email on different devices (phone, tablet, computer) to make sure it looks good everywhere

Step 5   Send and Track

Monitor how many people open the email and click the links to improve future newsletters

Time Needed
Design, Editing & Approval: 2–4 hours
Format: Ongoing
(allow extra time for any agency-specific approval processes)

Staff Involved

Communications Specialist:
1 member writes and formats content

Graphic Designer:
1 member designs layout and visuals (if needed)

Outreach Coordinator:
1 member manages email list and ensures timely distribution

IT or Compliance Lead:
1 member ensures emails follow privacy regulations—consider setting this up once in a standard newsletter template to allow for easy reuse

Cost

Low	$	Medium	$$	High	$$$

Free tools and simple design

Subscription-based platforms, professional design templates, or translation services

Custom design, large email list management, or external marketing support

Tips

Keep it short and skimmable:
Use headlines, bullet points, and short paragraphs

Use strong visuals:
Pictures and icons make content more engaging

Send regularly:
Weekly, monthly, or as needed—
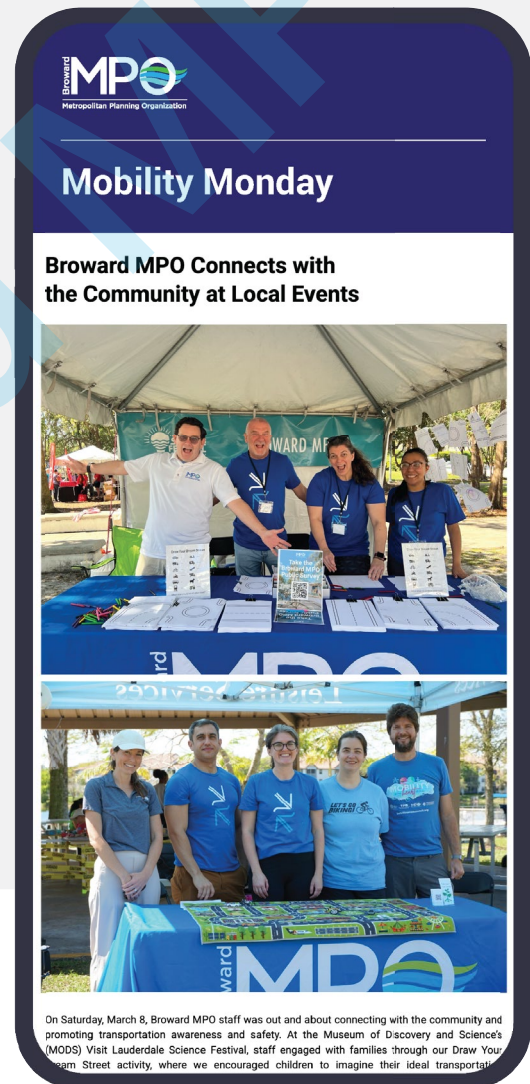just stay consistent

Track performance:
Look at open rates and clicks to improve over time

Make it multilingual if needed:
Include translations for communities that speak different languages

Newsletters are an easy and affordable way to stay connected with your community. When done right, they build trust, keep people in the loop, and help drive participation.

Mobility Monday

Broward MPO Connects with the Community at Local Events

On Saturday, March 8, Broward MPO staff was out and about connecting with the community and promoting transportation awareness and safety. At the Museum of Discovery and Science's (MODS) Visit Lauderdale Science Festival, staff engaged with families through our Draw Your Dream Street activity, where we encouraged children to imagine their ideal transportati...

Online Engagement Platforms

➡️ Online engagement platforms are a great way to reach people who can't make it to in-person events. Whether they're home, on their phone, or catching up after work, these tools let the community learn, ask questions, and give feedback on their own time.

They help you include more voices, especially those who prefer digital engagement or need flexible options.

How to Use Online Engagement Tools:

Step 1	Pick the Right Platform

Choose a platform that fits your needs and is easy for the public to use:

- ▶ Zoom or Microsoft Teams – Good for live meetings or virtual open houses
- ▶ Google Forms or SurveyMonkey – Simple tools to collect feedback
- ▶ Make sure it's mobile-friendly and doesn't require special logins

Step 2	Add Key Materials

Upload everything people need to understand your project, like:

- ▶ Maps, flyers, videos, or project summaries
- ▶ FAQs
- ▶ Contact info or links for more details

Step 3	Make it Interactive

Keep visitors engaged by using tools like:

- ▶ Quick polls and surveys
- ▶ Comment boxes or discussion boards
- ▶ Live chat or Q&A during virtual meetings

These help you get feedback while letting people know their input matters.

🕐 **Time Needed**
Setup: 1–2 hours
One time Online event: 2–3 hours
Engagement Tracking: Ongoing

Step 4	Let People Participate Anytime or Live

- ▶ Host live virtual meetings for real-time engagement
- ▶ Allow drop-in-participation so people can visit the site and leave whenever it's convenient for them
- ▶ Be sure to check and respond to input regularly

Step 5	Follow Up with Your Audience

- ▶ Send a thank-you email or post a short update
- ▶ Let people know what you heard and how it's being used
- ▶ Keep the page updated so visitors stay informed

Staff Involved

1 to 3 team members
for setting up, monitoring the online tool, facilitating or moderating discussions and keep engagement. One team member to upload content and handle follow-up messaging.

Cost

Low	$	Medium	$$	High	$$$
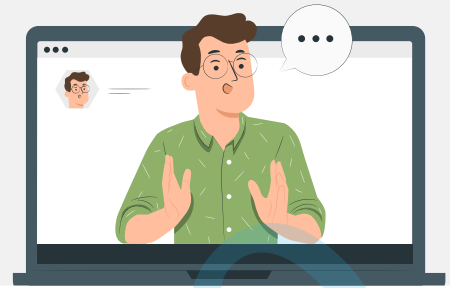
Using free versions of tools like Zoom or Google Forms

Subscription-based platforms with extra features

Custom-designed platforms or ongoing third-party support

Tips for Online Engagement Success:

Keep it simple:
Make sure the platform is easy to navigate, even for first-time users

Use visuals and short text:
People are more likely to engage when content is easy to understand

Check accessibility:
Make sure the platform supports multiple languages and is usable with screen readers

Promote it just like an event:
Let people know when and where they can engage online

Be responsive:
Regularly check for new comments or questions and reply quickly

Online engagement platforms make it easy for people to participate from anywhere. When used well, they extend the reach of your outreach and help build an inclusive and informed community.
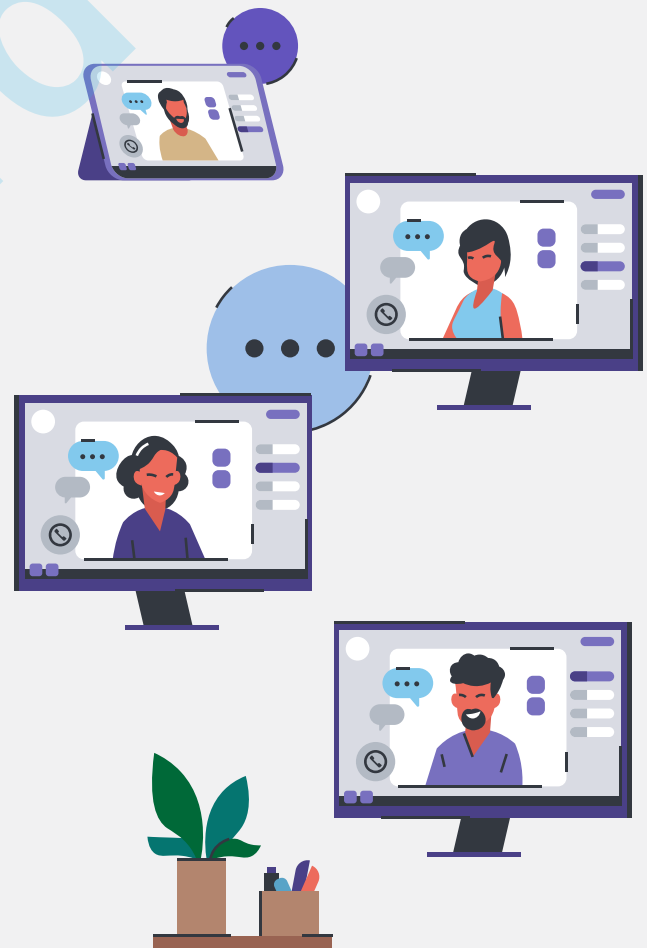
Social Media Outreach

➡️ Social media is one of the fastest and easiest tools for public outreach. It helps you share updates, promote events, answer questions, and reach people where they already spend their time – on their phones and online. Whether you're posting a quick update or promoting a big event, social media makes it easier to connect with a wide range of people, fast.

How to do it:

Step 1 **Pick the Right Platforms**

Choose based on your audience and what you're trying to say:

- **Facebook:** Great for promoting events and community discussions
- **Instagram:** Perfect for photos, videos, and visual storytelling
- **X (Twitter):** Best for quick updates and real-time announcements
- **LinkedIn:** Ideal for reaching professionals and organizations
- **Nextdoor:** Effective for local, neighborhood-level updates
- **Podcasts:** Partner with a podcast hosted by a related organization or community leader for a special episode promoting your outreach event

Step 2 **Create Eye-Catching Posts**

Use:

▶ Clear, bold images or short videos
▶ Short, simple captions with direct call-to-action:
  • "Join us"
  • "Click the link to RSVP"
  • "Scan the QR code to learn more"
▶ Hashtags and tags to increase visibility and partner collaboration

Step 3 **Post at the Right Time**

Use scheduling tools (like Insights or Analytics) to see when your audience is most active, and schedule posts for those times. If you're not using a tool, follow a general posting schedule: mid-morning (9AM-12PM) or early evening (5PM-7PM) on weekdays. Weekends tend to have lower engagement, so be mindful of this.

Step 4 **Engage With Your Audience**

▶ Check in on your posts regularly
▶ Reply to comments, direct messages, or questions, following any agency-specific social media policies.
▶ Be friendly, respectful, and consistent

Step 5 **Boost Your Reach**

If you have the budget, consider:

▶ Boosted posts (paying to show your post to more people)
▶ Targeted ads (focusing on specific age groups, ZIP codes, or interests)
▶ Partnering with local groups or influencers to share your message

⏰ **Time Needed**
Content Creation:
30 minutes -1 hour per post
Tracking & Response: Ongoing

Staff Involved

1 to 3 team members
to plan and post content, monitor engagement, create visuals like flyers, videos, or infographics and write captions and respond to community questions

Cost

Low	$

Free posts with in-house content

Medium	$$

Boosted posts and small ad campaigns

High	$$$

Professional content creation, ad buys, and influencer partnerships

Tips

Keep it short and visual:
People scroll fast so use bright visuals and simple captions

Use hashtags and tags:
This helps more people find your content and builds momentum

Post consistently:
Don't post once and disappear, keep your audience updated

Be available:
Monitor your posts and reply to questions quickly

Track what works:
Use platform analytics to see what people like, then do more of that

Be accessible:
Post in multiple languages if your community is multilingual

Include links or QR Codes:
Make it easy for people to take the next step
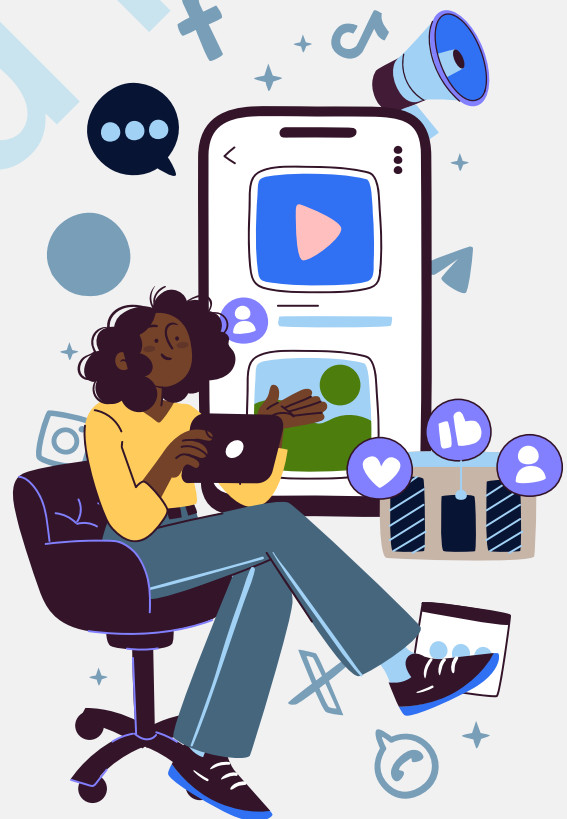
Social media outreach is fast, affordable, and effective when done right. It's a great way to keep your project visible, make your messaging accessible, and complement everything else you're doing in person.

Setting Up a Public Meeting

➡️ A well-organized public meeting is essential for engaging the community, sharing information, and gathering meaningful input. Below is a simple, structured guide to planning and hosting an effective public meeting.

Key Elements of a Well-Planned Public Meeting

Defined objectives – Clearly outline the meeting's purpose, whether it's to share updates, gather feedback, address concerns, or encourage community discussion.

Accessible venue – Select a location that is easy to reach, ADA-compliant, and provides necessary amenities like seating, parking, and restrooms.

Clear agenda – Structure the meeting to keep discussions focused, allowing time for presentations, Q&A, and interactive engagement.

Promotional outreach – Use multiple communication channels (flyers, social media, email) to inform the community and encourage participation.

Step 1   **Define Objectives**

Before planning a meeting, determine its purpose. This will help shape the format, materials, and engagement strategies.

Purpose: Share Updates - Optimal Outreach
Type: Information Session

- Use presentations, visual aids (slides, posters, fact sheets)
- Provide clear, concise updates and key milestones
- Allow time for a brief Q&A session to clarify any points
- Example: Project status meetings or press briefings

Purpose: Address Concerns- Optimal Outreach
Type: Listening Sessions or Town Hall

- Allow stakeholders to express concerns directly
- Provide knowledgeable representatives to address issues
- Use a moderated Q&A format to keep discussions focused
- Example: Meetings about controversial or sensitive project changes

Purpose: Gather Feedback - Optimal Outreach
Type: Interactive Workshop or Open House

- Include breakout sessions, discussion tables, or interactive boards
- Collect input via surveys, comment cards, or digital polling tools
- Example: Community brainstorming sessions

Purpose: Provide a Platform for Community Input- Optimal Outreach
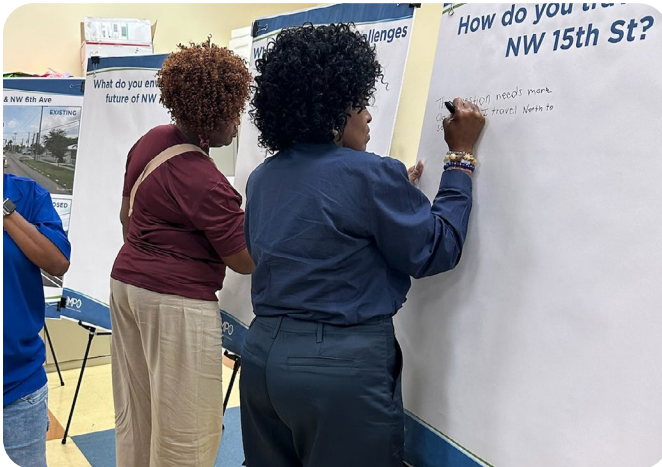*Type: Public Forum or Roundtable Discussion*

- Facilitate open dialogue among residents, stakeholders, and decision-makers
- Foster collaboration through guided discussions or panel formats
- Example: Policy development forums or strategic planning discussions

Staff Involved: 1 to 2 team members to define meeting objective, ensure alignment with project goals, develop meeting materials, and manage logistics

Cost: Varies ($-$$$) Varies depending on the meeting format, materials, venue, and facilitation needs

Tips:

Match the format to the goal: If the purpose is to share updates, a structured presentation works best. If the goal is gathering input, interactive sessions or open discussions are more effective.

Be clear on expectations: Let attendees know whether decisions have already been made or if their feedback will influence project outcomes

Engage the right audience: Identify key stakeholders and tailor outreach efforts to ensure relevant participation

Use the right tools: Digital polls, live Q&A sessions, and breakout discussions can enhance engagement based on the meeting's purpose

Balance structure and flexibility: While an agenda keeps meetings organized, allow space for open dialogue when necessary

By defining clear objectives, you ensure the meeting format aligns with community needs, leading to productive engagement and better project outcomes.

Step 2 **Select a Venue**

Choosing the right location ensures accessibility and maximizes participation.

1. Date and Availability

▶ Confirm the venue's availability on the preferred date

▶ Avoid scheduling conflicts with major local events, commission meetings, and major holidays to ensure maximum attendance.

2. Accessibility

▶ Choose a location easily accessible by public transportation

▶ Select venues within 2 miles of the project area when possible

Popular options:

• Community or recreational centers

• Libraries

• Government chambers or city halls

• Cultural centers

3. Facilities

Ensure the venue can accommodate your expected audience size:

▶ Small (less than 25 attendees) – Community rooms, small libraries

▶ Medium (25-100 attendees) – Meeting halls, event spaces

▶ Large (100+ attendees) – Auditoriums, conference centers

Check for necessary equipment:

• Projectors, screens, microphones or any other equipment

• Suitable seating and table arrangements

• Look for free venues to minimize costs

4. Timing

▶ Schedule meetings after 5 p.m. to accommodate working community members

Setting Up a Public Meeting *(Continued)*

5. ADA Compliance

▸ Ensure the venue meets Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) standards

Staff Involved: 1 to 2 team members to manage venue selection, setup, logistics to ensure accessibility and community convenience as well as checking the set-up for audio/visual equipment if needed

Cost:

▸ **Low ($)** Free or community-provided venues (libraries, recreation centers)

▸ **Moderate ($$-$$$)** Renting meeting halls or event spaces with basic A/V needs

▸ **High ($$$$)** Large conference centers or venues requiring additional equipment and staffing

6. Parking and Amenities

▸ Provide ample parking

▸ Offer amenities like restrooms and refreshments, if possible

Tips:

Book in advance: Secure the venue early to prevent scheduling conflicts

Consider transportation access: Ensure the location is reachable via public transit and has adequate parking

Check for necessary facilities: Confirm seating, A/V capabilities, and ADA compliance to accommodate all attendees

By selecting an appropriate venue, you create a welcoming environment that encourages community participation and effective engagement.

Step 3   **Plan the Agenda**

A well-structured agenda ensures a productive and engaging meeting.

1. Welcome and Introductions

▸ **For formal meetings:** Start with a greeting, an overview of the meeting's purpose, and introductions of key speakers

▸ **For drop-in sessions:** Set up welcoming stations where staff can guide participants and explain the session format

2. Meeting Format

▸ **Structured format:** Includes presentations, Q&A, and discussions

▸ **Informal drop-in format:** Allows attendees to engage at their own pace

3. Key Considerations for Meeting Type Selection

▸ **Audience Needs:** Consider community schedules, language barriers, and accessibility

▸ **Purpose:** Align the format with meeting goals (formal for detailed presentations, drop-in for flexible participation)

▸ **Logistics:** Factor in venue capacity, staffing, and materials

▸ **Engagement:** Decide if interactive elements (maps, displays, live polling) are needed

4. Agenda Planning

For formal meetings:

- ▶ Allocate time for presentations, Q&A, and open discussions
- ▶ Keep sessions structured with clear time limits

For drop-in sessions:

- ▶ Set up topic-based stations where attendees can provide input
- ▶ Use interactive tools like whiteboards, digital surveys, or comment cards

5. Clarity and Communication

- ▶ Keep the agenda focused and aligned with meeting objectives
- ▶ Share meeting details in advance to manage expectations

6. Flexibility

- ▶ Drop-in formats allow for greater flexibility and convenience
- ▶ Ensure clear signage at events so attendees understand how to participate

Staff Involved: 1 to 3 team members for managing presentation, guiding discussion, prepare materials, organize logistics, including room setup and interactive

Cost:

- ▶ **Low ($)** Basic meeting format with printed agendas and minimal materials
- ▶ **Moderate ($$-$$$)** Interactive sessions with polling tools, whiteboards, and digital surveys
- ▶ **High ($$$$)** Large-scale events requiring multiple facilitators, translation services, and advanced engagement tools

Tips:

- ▶ **Match the format to the audience:** Formal meetings work best for presentations, while drop-in formats encourage informal participation
- ▶ **Allow flexibility:** Interactive elements like Q&A sessions and discussion tables keep attendees engaged
- ▶ **Manage time effectively:** Clearly define time limits for presentations, discussions, and feedback
- ▶ **Communicate expectations in advance:** Share the agenda before the meeting to help participants prepare
- ▶ **Use clear signage and instructions:** For drop-in sessions, ensure attendees know how to participate

By planning a structured and well-communicated agenda, you set the stage for a successful and meaningful public meeting.

Setting Up a Public Meeting *(Continued)*

Step 4	Publicize the Meeting

Ensuring strong attendance requires a well-planned outreach strategy that leverages multiple communication channels to reach a diverse audience.

1. Outreach Methods

▶ **Neighborhood Platforms –** Post on NextDoor and other hyperlocal forums to connect with residents in the immediate area

▶ **Email Campaigns –** Send targeted emails to Homeowners Associations (HOAs), Parent-Teacher Associations (PTAs), elected officials, and community leaders to share with their networks

▶ **Print & Digital Media –** Announce the meeting in local newspapers, community newsletters, and radio stations to reach a broader audience

▶ **Flyer Distribution –** Post flyers in high-traffic areas such as libraries, grocery stores, and community centers

▶ **Social Media Promotion –** Use Facebook, Instagram, and X (formerly Twitter) to create engaging visual content and event reminders

▶ **Public Spaces Advertising –** Place posters at transit stops, parks, and other locations where residents frequently gather

Staff Involved: 1 or 2 team members
to manage messaging, digital promotion and create flyers and visuals

Cost: Low to moderate ($$-$$$)
Print materials, digital ads, and media placements may require funding

Tips:

▶ Use event hashtags to improve social media visibility

▶ Schedule multiple reminders across platforms leading up to the meeting

2. Engaging Local Institutions

Partner with trusted community organizations to spread the word and increase credibility

▶ **Places of Worship –** Churches, mosques, synagogues, and other faith-based centers

▶ **Nonprofits & Advocacy Groups –** Organizations that work with specific populations or causes

▶ **Schools & PTAs –** Engage families and educators in school districts near the project area

▶ **Cultural Organizations & Clubs –** Reach diverse populations through affinity groups and associations

Staff Involved: One team member to build partnerships and coordinate messaging with institutions

Cost: Minimal ($) Relies on existing community networks

Tips:
▶ Attend community events to establish relationships before requesting promotion
▶ Provide ready-made social media posts for partners to share

3. Essential Information

Partner with trusted community organizations to spread the word and increase credibility

▶ **Date, Time, & Location –** Include the full meeting details
▶ **Meeting Purpose –** Explain what attendees can expect
▶ **Map or Graphic –** Highlight the project area and venue location for clarity
▶ **Contact Information –** Provide an email or phone number for questions

Staff Involved: 1 to 2 team members To create visuals and write content

Cost: Low ($) Unless hiring professional design services or printing in bulk ($-$$)

Tips:
▶ Use simple, direct language to make materials easy to understand
▶ Ensure materials are ADA-compliant for accessibility

4. Targeted Messaging

Tailor outreach to different demographics and communities to improve engagement

▶ **Multilingual Materials –** Provide flyers, emails, and social media posts in multiple languages
▶ **Community-Specific Content –** Highlight issues and benefits relevant to the audience
▶ **Visual Aids –** Use infographics, videos, and icons to make key points easily digestible

Staff Involved: 1 to 2 team members for adapting message and translating content

Cost: Moderate ($$) Translation services may be needed

Tips:
▶ Work with community leaders to ensure culturally appropriate messaging
▶ Use closed captions on videos to improve accessibility.

Setting Up a Public Meeting *(Continued)*

5. Tactical Strategies for Effective Engagement

Go beyond standard promotion by using creative strategies to maximize attendance

- ▶ **Engage Community Influencers –** Work with local leaders who can share the meeting details
- ▶ **Door-to-Door Flyer Distribution –** Distribute materials in key neighborhoods for direct outreach
- ▶ **Host a Social Media Q&A –** Answer questions in advance to boost interest
- ▶ **Use Geo-Targeted Ads –** Reach residents within a specific radius of the meeting location
- ▶ **Collaborate with Local Radio Stations –** Broadcast announcements to reach non-digital audiences

Staff Involved: 1 to 2 team members to manage online ads and conduct door to door engagement

Cost: Varies ($$-$$$)
Door-to-door efforts are low-cost, but targeted ads and media partnerships may add expenses

Tips:
- ▶ Test different ad formats to see which generates the best response
- ▶ Use short, engaging videos for social media promotions

By using a combination of these strategies, you can maximize attendance and ensure that your public meeting reaches the right audience.

6. Facilitate Effectively

A well-run meeting ensures productive discussions, encourages participation, and keeps conversations focused.

- ▶ **Create a welcoming environment:** Greet attendees warmly and explain the purpose and format of the meeting
- ▶ **Moderate discussions effectively:** Stick to the agenda while allowing space for meaningful input
- ▶ **Encourage engagement:** Actively listen to concerns and acknowledge all contributions
- ▶ **Facilitate Q&A sessions:** Manage time efficiently, ensure all voices are heard, and provide clear responses
- ▶ **Document feedback:** Take notes or record the meeting to accurately capture public input for follow-up

Staff Involved: 1 to 2 team members to lead discussions, ensure the meeting stays on track, manages Q&A, engage attendees and documents feedback

Cost:
- ▶ **Low ($)** Basic facilitation with note-taking and minimal technology
- ▶ **Moderate ($$-$$$)** Larger meetings requiring multiple facilitators and digital engagement tools
- ▶ **High ($$$$)** Events with professional moderation, real-time transcription, or recording services

Tips:
- ▶ **Control time effectively:** Keep discussions on schedule while allowing flexibility for important issues
- ▶ **Encourage balanced participation:** Ensure diverse voices are heard by calling on different speakers
- ▶ **Provide clear next steps:** Let attendees know how feedback will be used and when they can expect updates

By facilitating effectively, you create a structured and inclusive space where public input is valued, ensuring a productive and meaningful discussion.

7. Follow Up After the Meeting

Effective follow-up ensures continued engagement, transparency, and trust in the outreach process.

- ▶ **Summarize key takeaways:** Provide an overview of attendance, discussions, and decisions made
- ▶ **Distribute meeting outcomes:** Share a summary via email, social media, and community newsletters
- ▶ **Address unresolved concerns:** Follow up on unanswered questions and provide additional resources
- ▶ **Keep communication open:** Maintain dialogue with stakeholders through regular updates

Staff Involved: 1 to 2 team members to manage follow-up communication, compile key takeaways and next steps, and distribute meeting summaries across multiple platforms to maintain engagement

Cost:

- ▶ **Low ($)** Digital meeting summary distributed via email and social media
- ▶ **Moderate ($$-$$$)** Professionally designed reports or additional follow-up meetings
- ▶ **High ($$$$)** Ongoing engagement efforts, including in-depth responses and relationship-building initiatives

Tips:

- ▶ **Be timely:** Send meeting summaries and next steps within a few days to keep momentum
- ▶ **Use multiple communication channels:** Email, social media, and local newsletters help reach different audiences
- ▶ **Keep stakeholders engaged:** Invite participants to future meetings or provide ways to stay involved
- ▶ **Demonstrate impact:** Show how community feedback influenced the project or decision-making

By following up effectively, you reinforce transparency, build long-term relationships, and show the community that their input matters.

Benefits Chart

Every community is different, so using just one outreach method usually isn't enough. This chart shows how each method has its own strengths—some help you reach lots of people, others are better for having deeper conversations.

Think of it like using different tools for different jobs. Want big turnout? Use public meetings or social media. Need honest opinions? Try surveys or focus groups. Want to build real trust? Go door-to-door or set up a pop-up booth.

The key is to mix and match—use a few methods together to make sure everyone gets a chance to learn, ask questions, and share their thoughts. That's how you build trust and get results that reflect what the community really wants.

Engagement Method	Key Benefits	Best Use Cases
Public Meetings	Transparency, inclusivity, broad feedback	Large-scale projects, regulatory updates
Workshops/Open Houses	Collaboration, hands-on learning, deeper understanding	Problem-solving, vision planning
Pop-ups	Accessibility, informality, reaching underrepresented groups	Community events, awareness campaigns
Information Session	Immediate feedback and clarification	Raise awareness on upcoming events and initiatives
Door-to-Door Communication	Personalized trust-building, direct feedback	Localized projects, underserved areas
Surveys	Wide input, quantitative insights	Assessing priorities, tracking opinions
Mailers	Offline reach, simple information sharing	Event invitations, non-digital outreach
Social Media	Real-time interaction, broad audience	Event promotion, ongoing updates
Online Platforms	Continuous engagement, interactive tools	Long-term projects, detailed information sharing
Focus Groups	In-depth feedback, targeted exploration	Testing concepts, resolving controversies

Additional Outreach Strategies

Want more people to know about your project, stay in the loop, and get involved? Outreach isn't just about holding one meeting or sending out a flyer. It's about showing up in different ways – online, in person, through trusted partners – and meeting people where they are. Here's how you can do that (without needing a big team or fancy tools).

Step 1 Emails

Email is one of the easiest ways to stay connected with you community.

Build Your List

► Collect emails at events, on your website, or through surveys

► Always include an "unsubscribe" link to stay privacy-compliant

What to Send

► Project updates

► Upcoming meeting invites

► Survey links or past meeting recordings

► Keep it short, visual, and easy to read

Cost: Low ($)
Free or low-cost email platforms

Staff Needed: 1 person to write the email, build it in a simple platform (like Mailchimp or Constant Contact), and send it out

Step 2 Printed Materials

Not everyone is online, so printed materials are still super useful.

What to Print

► Flyers, fact sheets, FAQs, and postcards

► Use big fonts, plain language, and simple visuals

Where to Share It

► Libraries, grocery stores, schools, laundromats, coffee shops

► Bring them to events or hand them out door-to-door

Cost: Low ($)
Depends on how many you print and if you pay for graphic

Tips:

► Print in multiple languages

► Add a QR code that links to your website or survey

► Keep extras on hand for future events

Additional Outreach Strategies *(Continued)*

Step 3   Partnerships with Local Groups

Work with the people who already know and serve your community.

Who to Team Up With

- ▶ Schools and PTAs
- ▶ Churches, mosques, temples
- ▶ Nonprofits and community organizations
- ▶ Neighborhood associations
- ▶ Local businesses

Tips:

- ▶ Provide materials they can easily copy or forward
- ▶ Say thank you and offer to return the favor

How They Can Help

- ▶ Share flyers or emails
- ▶ Post about your project on their social media
- ▶ Host you at one of their meetings or events

Step 4   Use the Media to Spread the Word

Local news is still powerful – especially for older adults and folks not online all the time.

Send a Press Release

- ▶ Include the who, what, when, where, and why
- ▶ Make it easy for reporters to cover

Be Available

- ▶ Offer a spokesperson for interviews
- ▶ Have visuals, quotes, and background ready

Write Your Own

Submit a guest column or letter to the editor explaining the project from perspective

Cost: Low ($)
Mostly time, unless you hire a PR person

Tips:

- ▶ Monitor news coverage around your project
- ▶ Correct misinformation quickly and respectfully

| Step 5 | **Show Up at Community Events** |

Go where people already are – don't wait for them to come to you.

Where to Go

- ▶ Farmers markets, festivals, school fairs, back-to-school nights
- ▶ Local sporting events or neighborhood block parties

What to Bring

- ▶ A table, banner, and friendly staff
- ▶ Flyers, maps, surveys, or comment boards
- ▶ Freebies like pens, stickers, or coloring pages for kids

Make it Engaging

- ▶ Ask people to vote on ideas
- ▶ Invite them to write suggestions on sticky notes
- ▶ Collect email addresses for future updates

Tips:
- ▶ Have materials in different languages
- ▶ Include something for kids so families can stop by
- ▶ Make sure staff know the project and can answer basic questions

| Step 6 | **Outreach Best Practices** |

Here are some general tips to make all your outreach stronger:

Be Honest

- ▶ Don't oversell or hide things
- ▶ If something might be hard or unpopular, explain why
- ▶ Use clear, everyday language

Be Inclusive

- ▶ Use visuals and plain language
- ▶ Translate materials when needed
- ▶ Think about who's not being reached and adjust

Be Consistent

- ▶ Show up regularly, not just once
- ▶ Respond to comments and questions quickly
- ▶ Keep people updated, even if there's no big news

Ask Feedback

- ▶ Use comment boxes, short polls, or just talk to people
- ▶ Track who you've reached, what they've said, and what questions keep coming up

Additional Outreach Strategies *(Continued)*

Tips

Mix and match your methods.

No single strategy works for everyone. Combining email, social media, events, printed materials, and partnerships helps you reach the widest audience – and makes your outreach stronger, smarter, and more trusted.

Remember:

Outreach isn't just about telling people something – it's about building a relationship over time. Be real, be present, and be open. That's how you build trust – and that's what great public engagement is all about.
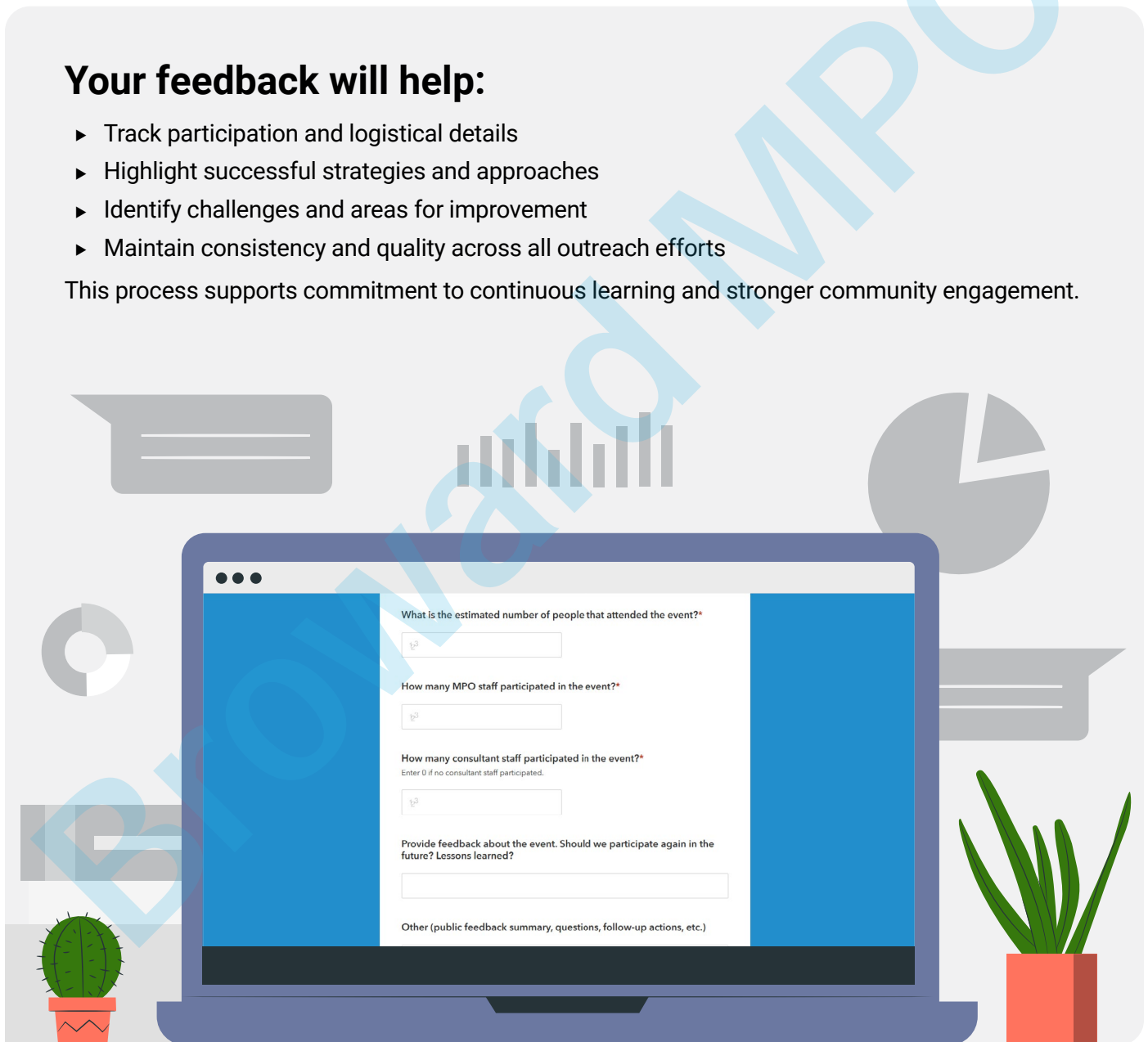
Outreach Assessment Survey

Following each outreach event, it's important to take a few minutes to reflect on what went well, what could be improved, and any key takeaways. Create a short survey that's designed to help staff evaluate the effectiveness of engagement activities and capture meaningful insights for future planning. Try to complete the survey as soon as possible after your event.

Your feedback will help:

▶ Track participation and logistical details

▶ Highlight successful strategies and approaches

▶ Identify challenges and areas for improvement

▶ Maintain consistency and quality across all outreach efforts

This process supports commitment to continuous learning and stronger community engagement.

What is the estimated number of people that attended the event?*

How many MPO staff participated in the event?*

How many consultant staff participated in the event?*
Enter 0 if no consultant staff participated.

Provide feedback about the event. Should we participate again in the future? Lessons learned?

Other (public feedback summary, questions, follow-up actions, etc.)

Final Thoughts

Public outreach isn't just about sending flyers or hosting a meeting. It's about building real relationships with the people you're trying to reach. When done right, it helps communities remain informed, included, and heard—and helps you make better, more trusted decisions.

This guide gave you simple, step-by-step tools to plan and run public engagement—from meetings and surveys to pop-ups and social media. Whether your audience is online, in-person, or both, you now have different ways to reach them and invite them into the conversation.

Final Reminders for Outreach Success

Tailor Your Approach

No two communities are the same. Use the outreach tools and strategies that make sense for the people you're trying to reach. Don't copy-paste—adjust your style, tone, and materials to fit the neighborhood.

Be Inclusive and Accessible

Make it easy for everyone to participate.

▶ Use plain language (no technical speak)

▶ Offer translated materials when needed

▶ Pick meeting times and places that work for families, workers, and seniors

▶ Use both digital and printed options

Keep Improving

Outreach is not "one and done." Ask for feedback along the way and pay attention to what works (and what doesn't).

▶ Did people show up?

▶ Were your messages clear?

▶ Did you reach the folks you meant to?

▶ What did we learn to make our next outreach even better?

Lead with Honesty and Respect

Tell the truth. Be clear about what's possible, what's still undecided, and what the community can influence. Listen more than you talk. People will trust you more when they experience that you're being real with them.

The Big Picture

Public engagement isn't just a task to check off. It's your chance to build trust, bring people together, and make decisions that reflect real community needs.

With the right mix of planning, tools, and a people-first mindset, your outreach can:

▶ Improve your project

▶ Strengthen your relationships with the community

▶ Help residents feel seen, valued, and respected

In Simple Terms

Keep it clear

Keep it kind

Keep it consistent

And always keep the community at the center of everything you do

When you do that, you're not just informing people—you're inviting them in. And that's what real, meaningful engagement is all about.

STAY CONNECTED

Powered by the Broward MPO

BrowardMPO.org