



MEMO TO: Members of the City Council
FROM: Mayor John Marchione
DATE: November 27, 2018
SUBJECT: **Community Involvement Consultant Findings**

I. RECOMMENDED ACTION

To provide an update and review of community involvement consultant findings.

II. DEPARTMENT CONTACTS

Maxine Whattam, Chief Operating Officer	425-556-2310
Lisa Maher, Communications & Marketing Manager	425-556-2427

III. DESCRIPTION/BACKGROUND

In July of this year the City contracted with an engagement and outreach consultant (EnviroIssues) to conduct community focus groups and polls seeking feedback on:

- What is the community’s understanding of community engagement?
- What is the community’s expectation of the City regarding engagement and outreach?
- How would the community prefer to engage with the City?
- What information/projects are important to the community?
- How does community feedback affect City decision making?
- What best practices and processes should the City be utilizing for a robust community engagement program?

Process and Outcomes to Date

- June 2018 contracted with EnviroIssues
- June 2018 conducted community outreach to recruit
 - 48 community members recruited
- July 2018 conducted external and internal focus groups and online questionnaire (344 external / 70 internal responses).

Key themes from focus groups

- High awareness & satisfaction with community building events
- Good, but not excellent marks for the design and implementation of community engagement
- The term “public engagement” is not well understood

- Good public engagement described as high participation in events, high awareness of what is happening in the City, pathways for two-way dialogue, listening to the public
 - Is the City using consistent public engagement process on land-use issues?
 - Residents unsure how public input is used under a “strong mayor” form of government
 - Preferred ways to give input: email, survey, website, in-person, social media, cell phone
 - Topics of interest: Traffic, maintaining parks and trails, land use, regional issues, community events, safety, environment, water, pedestrian/bike, arts
 - City strengths: fun stuff, multiple outreach tools, frequency and accuracy of communication, visibility of Redmond Police Department (RPD), and inclusive outreach
 - Weaknesses: talking about the “hard stuff”, outreach to new residents, closing the loop after community provides feedback, communicating how public input will be used in decision making

Community Poll (344 responses)

- 57% have lived in Redmond more than ten years
- Topics of Interest: traffic, land use, maintain parks, trails, open space
- Over 40% describe City engagement “somewhat satisfying”
- 40% say there are barriers that prevent them from being involved:
 - Top response (65%) was not being certain that giving their input matters in decision making
- 50% are “very interested” in what feedback the City receives on a project
- Preferred ways of communication: email, e-newsletter, Redmond Reporter, word of mouth

Staff Poll (70 responses)

- Confused who is leading and who should lead engagement: staff or communications
- Need one clear process/set of guidelines for how to begin planning engagement
- Most often shared with Council vs. sharing back with the community
- 61% of staff polled think the City is doing a good job on engagement

- August – September 2018 Draft recommendations and guidebook created
- October – November 2018 finalizing community involvement plan, guidebook, and process improvements, and developing training program
- January 2019 begin training key staff members

Administrative Recommendations

Implement community and consultant recommendations to:

- Update the 2019/20 Communications Plan to include the new community involvement guidebook
- Implement staff training on updated processes, best practices, and tools & techniques

- Provide an online community involvement platform that provides an easy, interactive, and archival way for community members to provide feedback on projects
- Update project notice processes and timelines to provide more timely updates, opportunities for community feedback, and communication of outcomes
- Utilize updated performance measures outlined in the 2019/20 budget to track community involvement and outreach outcomes

IV. PREVIOUS DISCUSSIONS HELD

7/24/18 Finance, Administration, and Communications (FAC) Committee

V. IMPACT

A. Service/Delivery:

No service delivery impacts.

B. Fiscal Note:

Budgeted funds for online community involvement platform are pending the 2019/20 Budget approval.

VI. ALTERNATIVES TO STAFF RECOMMENDATION

N/A

VII. TIME CONSTRAINTS

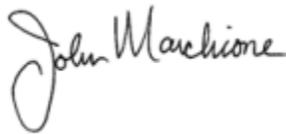
No time constraints.

VIII. LIST OF ATTACHMENTS

None.



Maxine Whattam, Chief Operating Officer



Approved for Agenda _____

John Marchione, Mayor