



EFFECTIVE ENGAGEMENT

ARTICLE 80 *Modernization*

Project Introduction Workshop Guide

CITY of BOSTON



City of Boston
Planning Department

PROJECT INTRODUCTION WORKSHOP

PURPOSE OF THIS WORKSHOP

- Introduce the project, by sharing the vision and idea of the project
- Understand community needs, concerns, and preferences on key tradeoffs
- Identify early opportunities to reflect community feedback in the initial filing

WHAT IS IT?

1-to-1.5 hour virtual or in-person workshop that encourages community members to understand and interact with the vision of the project. This can be a stand alone workshop offered by the developer team or as part of an existing community meeting planned by a community organization or neighborhood/ civic associations.

WHEN WILL IT HELP?

This tactic can often work well for very Large Projects or Planned Development Areas (PDAs). The workshop allows for a clear introduction to the project idea and creates a collaborative space to allow

the community to provide share their insights. For example, conversations could focus on project phasing preferences, uses or orientation of open space, or other aspects of the project where community input can be most helpful.

DOCUMENTATION

Once the Proponent has completed any early engagement activities, they will be asked to provide a summary of the engagement in the Small Project Review Application (SPRA) or Project Notification Form (PNF). Documentation for a Project Introduction Workshop should include:

- Date of the workshop
- Location
- Estimated number of attendees

BEST PRACTICES

To support good attendance and expand community awareness of the meeting, we recommend co-hosting workshops with a community organization. These meetings tend to go best when there is meaningful discussion. Some examples of materials to prompt discussion are provided at the end of this document.

SUGGESTED STAKEHOLDER ROLES

Stakeholder	Role	Interaction
Proponent Team	Facilitator, Notetaker & Coordinator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitator: Creates a welcoming space. Guides participants through the activities, asks questions, actively facilitates group discussion or shareouts • Notetaker/ coordinator: Takes notes of ideas or feedback shared by community members and key takeaways. Supports logistics or tech issues
The Planning Department	Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides resources and guidance • If needed, can support with outreach efforts or identification of community stakeholders
Community Members	Community Knowledge Stewards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share lived experience and history related to this site or the surrounding area • Communicate community needs and priorities in relation to project

BEST PRACTICES

Choosing a Location

- We suggest selecting a culturally relevant and welcoming space that is located in the same neighborhood as the project.
- Location (both entering the building and within the room itself) should be ADA compliant and accessible to people with disabilities.
- Selected location should be able to accommodate at least 30 people

Materials

- Bring printouts of all meeting materials. Some example materials shared below.
- Sharpies, pens, and/or other writing instruments
- Sign-in sheet that collects name, zip code, and affiliation
- Optional demographics form that collects age, race, ethnicity
- Materials to support any activities or ways of collecting people's ideas or questions. For example: post it notes, poster paper
- If virtual: Consider using interactive platforms to allow for real time notes, comments, and questions written on materials.

**Services &
Accessibility
Accommodations**

- Request and ensure attendance of interpreter(s), including for ASL, if registered participants prefer or need to communicate in a specific language or have other access needs
- When hosting in person, consider providing drinks and snacks
- Choose a time that works for a wide range of residents (eg. evening or weekend)

**Communications &
Outreach**

- Materials should be written in plain language without jargon or acronyms to allow all people, regardless of past involvement in development meetings, to meaningfully understand and provide feedback
- Materials that include visuals help support a variety of learning styles
- Additional Support: The Planning Department can offer brainstorm support to identify and outline the workshop plan. And/or can support workshop outreach by providing names of organizations willing to engage in early engagement efforts

**Other
Considerations**

- This is an opportunity to listen, learn, and build relationships with community members. It is important that you, as a developer, are in a listening role as much as possible
- Whenever possible avoid lengthy slide based presentations, instead identify creative and collaborative meeting approaches
- Ask participants for permission to take pictures of the workshop and their work

EXAMPLE AGENDA

WORKSHOP WITH SMALL GROUP ACTIVITIES

Time	Topic	Materials/ Content
5 mins	Set up and Settle In Share an overview of the workshop plan. Ask participants to share if they need any accommodations today.	Bring 3-4 blank posters for participants to write comments and questions Post its - Bring a variety of colors, each color used for responses to specific question asked during discussion
10 mins	Project Introduction Provide a general introduction to the project. Be sure to note that this is an early stage and you expect additional changes during the upcoming City-led development review process. As a way of building trust, it may be helpful to include some of your intentions for the project: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do you imagine the project integrating with the neighborhood it is in? • What services, benefits or standards are you striving to include? 	Provide key info about the current thinking regarding proposed project Optional: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project one pager • Map with project site
45 mins	Discussion Discuss project idea and learn about community concerns and priorities. When determining questions, consider opportunities where community feedback is most needed. Some Example Questions: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What should we know about the history of this site or this part of the neighborhood? 2. What should we consider about how potential open space be used? Tradeoffs between parking, space for gardens, something else? 	Offer spaces for people to write their ideas, comments, and questions (eg. plain poster paper and post its notes). This will support more opportunities for people to be heard and ensure an inclusive environment Formatting note: To support a robust conversation, consider splitting people into small groups

Time	Topic	Materials/ Content
	Cont. Discussion 4. Here is the map of the parcel, based on where it is located, what should we consider when it comes to the entry or exit points to the building? 5. Given what you know about the project right now, what are some questions you have that we should address during the next engagement?	
10 mins	Reflection Exercise (optional) As you wrap up the workshop, offer participants a few minutes to reflect on the discussion thus far and take part in a statement exercise (see example below).	Printouts of the statement exercise (see example below) for people to individually fill out

5 mins	Wrap Up! Thank everyone for participating and ask them to sign up for the Planning Department email list to stay up to date on future engagement opportunities about this project.	
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EXAMPLE AGENDA

WORKSHOP WITH INFORMATION STATIONS

This example for a workshop provides more flexibility for attendees and is more interactive. This type of workshop will require more staff to be present.

Time	Topic	Materials/ Content
10 mins	Set up and settle in Set up 3-4 stations with information on different aspects of the project that you are open to receiving feedback on	Feedback board for each specific topic

Time	Topic	Materials/ Content
	Open up the workshop with a common orientation to the project team and the structure of the workshop	Poster/ image of the project concept or topic area
	<p>Info stations</p> <p>In an open house style format, allow attendees to visit each station and engage in conversation</p> <p>Example station 1: Project Concept Options</p> <p>We have prepared two different concepts for the project that you can provide feedback on. Which option do you prefer and why?</p> <p>Example station 2: Land Use</p> <p>This project is planned to be a mixed use building which means it will have both housing and commercial uses. What would you like us to keep in mind when we think about the types of homes and stores that this building could offer?</p> <p>Example station 3: Open/ Green Space</p> <p>We are planning for a public, open space as part of the project. There are different types of open spaces such as a plaza, community seating area, gardens and green space etc. What kind of open space will be beneficial according to you?</p> <p>Other kinds of info stations can include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project ground floor use - discussing type of use, types of retail people would like to see etc? • Parcel map - discussing entrances, ramps, waste room locations based on community preferences 	<p>On each station:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project one pager • Feedback card (see below) • Poster/ image of the project concept or topic area • Post its • Sharpies
10 mins		
10 mins	<p>Wrap Up! Thank everyone for participating and ask them to sign up for the Planning Department email list to stay up to date on future engagement opportunities</p>	

EXAMPLE MATERIALS

PROJECT ONE PAGER

Below is an example of a project one pager. The intention of this collateral is to have an easy to read and digest summary of your current project thinking to prompt discussion. While many other designs can also achieve the same purpose, we are providing a starting place for your one pager design. You are invited to download and adjust for your project using [this template](#).

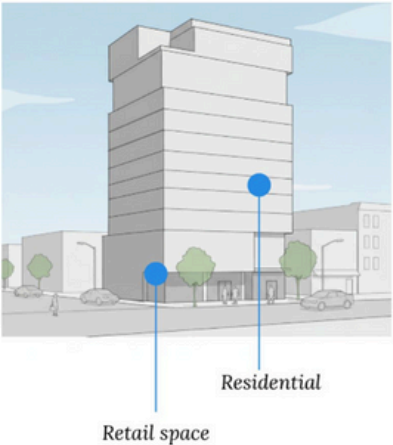


EXAMPLE MATERIALS

FEEDBACK CARDS FOR INFO STATIONS

Below is an example feedback card. You are invited to download and adjust for your project using [this template](#)

Station: Project Concept



Retail space Residential

I find it promising that...
Me parece prometedor que

I would like to suggest that...
Me gustaría sugerir que

EXAMPLE MATERIALS

REFLECTION EXERCISE

I live/ work/ own a business in/ live and work (circle one) in _____ (name your neighborhood). I like the neighborhood because it has _____ (think about things that make it unique) but I also feel concerned about _____ (think about some of the ongoing problems).

I therefore wish any new development in the neighborhood helps with _____ and does not _____.