

Community Engagement Guiding Principles

In February 2015, WSDOT developed Guiding Principles for Community Engagement for all policies, plans, programs and projects.

To more clearly articulate how our vision, mission, goals and values work together and provide consistency in application toward the Community Engagement Goal of Results WSDOT, this Community Engagement Plan lays the groundwork for WSDOT to strengthen partnerships to increase credibility, drive priorities and inform decision making with the communities WSDOT serves.

Washington State Department of Transportation Community Engagement Guiding Principles (in no particular order):

CONNECT AND ENGAGE

Become active members of communities and go to the places they gather. Take advantage of opportunities to work with community members, volunteers and leaders and find out their priorities and perspectives. Reach out to interested parties that cannot attend meetings and receive their feedback. Seek out voices not traditionally heard, including people who are traditionally unable to participate due to age, disability, income or national origin.

LISTEN AND ACT

Focus on listening to what people are sharing before responding. Confirm that the intended message is understood. Receive and act on feedback.

FACILITATE COMMUNICATIONS

Help groups listen to each other and explore new ideas. Solicit input by encouraging everyone to speak up. Check in with the group as a whole, as well as with individual participants, to gauge their comfort levels.

HELP EACH OTHER SUCCEED

Share resources and information with the various WSDOT regions, divisions, and offices to achieve success. Be aware that success is defined in different terms and outcomes. Be creative in defining work teams and understand how team members define success.

MAXIMIZE CREATIVITY AND INNOVATION

Seek out and use successful community engagement tools and techniques when conducting outreach. Prevent requirements from being the only focus of outreach.

BLEND DIVERSE INPUTS

Be sensitive to other perspectives when receiving input. Understand that how WSDOT evaluates and responds to comments from governments, stakeholders and the public is critical, especially if there are opposing viewpoints. Remember that all comments are considered, even if they are not directly incorporated.

PROVIDE ACCESS TO THE PROCESS AND FOSTER INCLUSIVENESS

Rely on effective one-way and two-way communication throughout the process. Strive for transparent conversations that include diverse people, opinions, ideas, and information. Remember that what works for one process or group may not be as effective for others.

BE A WISE STEWARD OF THE PUBLIC'S MONEY

Be mindful of the use of everyone's time and money while ensuring adequate time and funding for community involvement in planning and project development. Achieve effective two-way engagement without exceeding limited budgets.

CONSIDER THE NEEDS OF THE MULTIMODAL SYSTEM

There are a variety of ways to move people and goods on Washington's transportation system. Consider all modes and offer choices and opportunities. Do not focus on just the goals of individual modes.

BE CLEAR AND OPEN ABOUT THE PROCESS

Inform and involve users of the transportation system in planning, construction, maintenance and stewardship of the transportation system. Encourage input at decision points, and involve interested parties throughout the process. Continue to exhibit a high level of integrity.

INVOLVE COMMUNITIES

Engage governments, stakeholders, and the public early and continuously in our decision making process to lay the groundwork for success. Discuss what success means to WSDOT and then jointly define what success means to the community.

"At WSDOT, inclusive engagement means reaching out to all community members, so that they can choose to have a voice in the process and know their ideas were heard and considered."

Secretary of Transportation Roger Millar