

City of Oklahoma City Civic Engagement Strategic Plan



Purpose

The Oklahoma City Civic Engagement Strategy is rooted in the fundamental responsibility of government to actively listen to and serve its residents. This strategy ensures that all residents have meaningful opportunities to participate in shaping the City's decisions. Oklahoma City has a long-standing and wide-reaching history of community engagement, and this strategy seeks to improve and expand upon historical and current efforts to create a consistent and structured approach to all engagement activities.

By committing to this process, Oklahoma City can improve trust with residents, better meet community needs, and ensure resources are allocated in ways that reflect the values and priorities of its population. The strategy is a living document, designed to evolve based on community feedback and changing needs, ensuring the City's engagement efforts remain effective and relevant over time.

Embodying Oklahoma City's Core Values

For Oklahoma City, fundamental guidelines help ensure the city operates to fully embody its values. The City's core values inform our civic engagement work to best serve residents.

One City, One Team

We succeed when we work together. This can include inter-departmental collaboration on projects that impact the public but also extend to how the City partners with residents collaboratively.

Service First

We put people at the center of everything we do. Providing transparent and accessible information and opportunities for feedback helps make our City stronger, safer, and more connected.

Respect Always

We serve every person with dignity and empathy. When the City engages with the public, we do so with curiosity, openness, and honesty.

Own the Outcome

We take responsibility for results, not just tasks. Engagement doesn't mean always saying yes to what community members want, but it does mean closing the loop with residents and being clear about how decisions are made.

Keep Getting Better

We are always learning, improving, and adapting. Continuous improvement is a shared goal that we can do in partnership with the public.



Key Definition

Civic Engagement

The process of including the voices, ideas, and capacity of residents in the work of democratic governance. The includes opportunities for collaboration between public officials and residents beyond what the law requires.

Engagement Goals

The overarching goal of Oklahoma City's civic engagement strategy is to foster and sustain a culture and practice of meaningful civic engagement in the City of Oklahoma City to achieve outcomes that reflect our community's priorities, aspirations, and collective vision. This is supported by four key objectives:

1 Optimize Resource Allocation

As the City continues to facing growing demands, resource allocation can be informed by many considerations, including community input. Many engagement activities are meant to generate knowledge by leveraging the community's unique experiences and expertise. These contributions can help the government more effectively choose how to allocate resources, designs programs, and change policies.

2 Collaborate on Decisions

Robust civic engagement creates opportunities for residents to share decision making power with the government for policies and decisions that affect their lives. This can create a stronger sense of self-determination and create a more informed and engaged public.

3 Build and Maintain Relationships

Regular engagement activities move beyond one-time, transactional interactions and help foster a sense of trust between the government and residents. This could lead to a stronger sense of belonging and community among residents, more engagement in local elections, and more support for local government and policies.

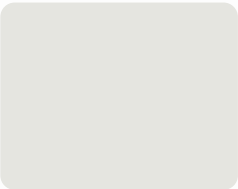
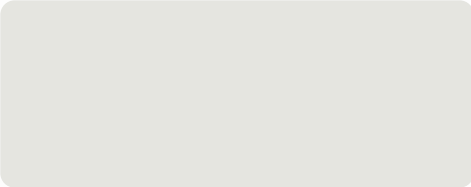
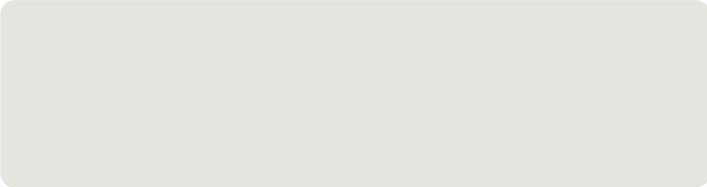
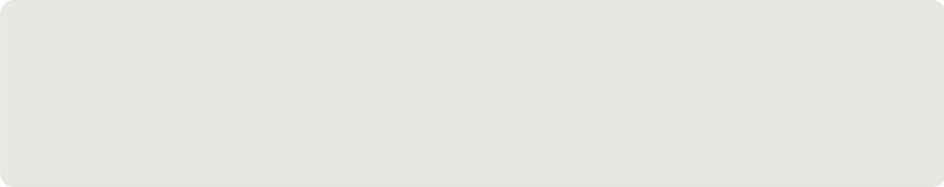
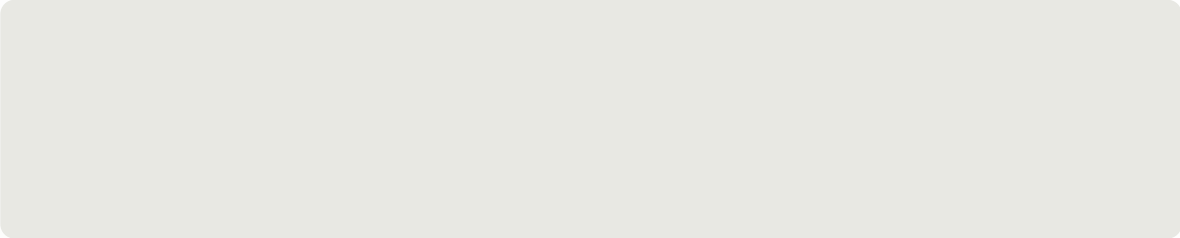
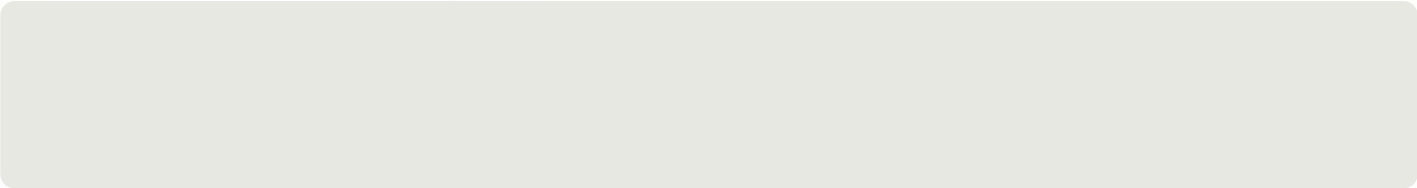
4 Capitalize on Community Resources

Many of the engagement activities may invite the public to provide new ideas, perspectives, and services that contribute to the public good. Beyond generating new knowledge, certain engagement activities (e.g., community-centered design) may help alleviate resource constraints faced by the government and expedite the implementation of new, innovative ideas.



Civic Engagement Strategies

Oklahoma City has identified six key strategies to achieve its engagement goals:

	Learn Together Foster a culture of shared learning between city staff, key stakeholders, and residents.
	Streamline Engagement Processes Develop efficient and consistent methods for community involvement.
	Set Clear Expectations Communicate transparently about the engagement process, timelines, and outcomes.
	Lead with Respect and Curiosity Approach community interactions with openness, humility, and genuine interest.
	Design Thoughtfully Intentionally create engagement opportunities that effectively reach intended audiences and provide actionable input.
	Continuously Improve Regularly evaluate and refine engagement practices based on feedback, results, and new ideas.

SWOT Analysis

A comprehensive SWOT analysis has been conducted to assess Oklahoma City's current position in implementing its civic engagement strategy:

Strengths

- Numerous examples of community engagement that are already happening, providing a foundation to build from.
- Strong commitment to public services and transparency.
- Existing cross-departmental relationships can help add capacity for engagement events.

Weaknesses

- Historically limited engagement with marginalized communities.
- Inconsistent practices across departments.
- Potential lack of public trust due to past exclusion.
- Historically departments have worked in silos.

Opportunities

- Expand use of new technologies, like vision.okc.gov, to reach broader audiences.
- New partnerships with community organizations, particularly those who serve youth, could set the stage for long-term engagement.
- Consultants and contractors can be leveraged to add capacity for engagement and to further help implement streamlined process.

Threats

- Limited resources and staffing for large- and small-scale initiatives.
- Public apathy or disengagement.
- Multiple barriers to engagement for residents (e.g., translation services, transportation, childcare, meeting times/locations, lack of access to internet).



Measuring Progress

The City of Oklahoma City using Leading for Results (LFR) to track progress on key metrics. Multiple civic engagement-focused LFR metrics will be added to measure impact. Performance metrics will be essential for assessing the success of the engagement strategy. These may include:

- 1 Resident Survey**
Measure resident satisfaction with Oklahoma City as a place to live and their perception of the city's direction.
- 2 Project Impact**
Track the percentage of projects and/or departments that conduct some form of civic engagement.
- 3 Range of Input**
Ensure input comes from a broad, diverse cross-section of the community.
- 4 Cross-collaboration**
Assess the level of cooperation between departments and with external stakeholders.