

2019/2020 Local Technical Assistance and Community Planning Programs

Application Number: 24

Project Title: Evanston Community Engagement Plan

Applicant: City of Evanston



Project Description:

The City of Evanston is interested in embarking on an extensive and inclusive-outreach approach to gather input about long-range planning issues involving the built environment. Through a month-long three-meeting discussion series (September-October, 2019), facilitated by CMAP with a number of key City staff and community stakeholders, feedback was received about the need for broader outreach and engagement that can produce more civil dialogue from a more representative group of City residents.

The City has a number of long-range planning needs, including ultimately updating the 2000 Comprehensive Plan to reflect current conditions and inclusive growth values. However, recent public input has been disproportionately provided by a select number of vocal residents that have expressed a distrust of the City processes. In order to achieve broader more inclusive perspectives, the City needs to increase credibility in the public engagement process and establish a greater number of deeper relationships. Additionally, the three-meeting series identified the need to build collaborative partnerships with non-governmental entities that can assist in establishing new groups of people to participate in processes and manage a process to reclaim trust.

The City seeks technical assistance from CMAP to employ state of the art practices in community engagement, through both digital applications and extensive face-to-face outreach, to develop consensus around community values. It is intended that the approaches used and social capital established through this process will lead to a culture of ongoing engagement and kickstart more concrete planning products in the near future, including the development of a new Comprehensive Plan document.

Project Location: The City of Evanston corporate boundaries.