

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT GUIDELINES



City of Camarillo
February 2020

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INTRODUCTION

Camarillo has something for everyone. We are all tied to this community in one way or another, whether you live, work or play here. In today's world of instant information via social media, it is easy to have a conversation, but not always easy to have a factual and meaningful one. When it comes to outreach and engagement, it's all about communication. When we communicate, we need to have a strategy for who we want to reach, what information we need to share, and how we want to receive input. This strategy will ensure that the City of Camarillo will carry the conversation in order to provide factual information to the community and to solicit constructive feedback on critical issues.

The Guidelines are intended to connect, engage, and educate the community through improved outreach, a relevant and manageable website, and by continuing to foster quality community partnerships.

BACKGROUND

On February 13, 2019, the Camarillo City Council adopted the Council Goals and Objectives for Fiscal Year 2019/2020, which included:

- increasing community engagement and effective communication with the community
- considering an online community engagement platform
- considering a comprehensive community engagement process
- exploring the implementation of periodic community meetings for the discussion of specific City related issues
- maintaining effective communications with local, state and federal elected representatives and other local public agencies including schools, parks, and special districts
- increasing communications with other local public agencies that serve Camarillo residents and businesses

The Community Engagement Guidelines are intended to accomplish the Council Goals and Objectives and serve as a foundation for enhancing the City of Camarillo's relationship with residents and stakeholders who, together, make the City a desired place to live, work, and play.

OBJECTIVES

The following objectives establish the framework for these Guidelines:

ACCESS TO INFORMATION

- Encourage public participation in decision-making.
- Support high quality customer service through responsive, professional, and transparent interactions.

ENGAGE THE COMMUNITY

- Encourage community and stakeholder involvement in the City's decision-making process by fostering personal interactions with City staff and City Councilmembers and maximizing opportunities for civic engagement.
- Actively encourage the involvement of stakeholders and community partners in City processes.
- Participate in networking events to keep communication channels open.
- Broaden the use of outreach methods, including social and static media, to maximize outreach.

MEASURE SUCCESS

- Develop metrics and performance measures to track the success of the Community Engagement Guidelines
- Assess / Improve / Evolve
- Continual Process Improvement

The guidelines provide the City Council, City staff, and the community with a guide to the best practices to be employed in any outreach situation.

WHO we want to reach...

One of the most important aspects of community engagement is determining the stakeholders – those who will be interested and affected by the project or issue under consideration. The list below is not meant to be a comprehensive list of all potential contacts; rather it is intended to provide a framework for considering the stakeholders.

Interest Areas to Consider

Property Owners / Renters
Neighborhood Groups / Homeowners' Associations
Business Operators
Seniors
Adults
Students
Youth/Teens
Families
Sports/Outdoor Enthusiasts
Service Clubs

Community Partners / Governmental Agencies

Chamber of Commerce
Camarillo Old Town Association
Camarillo Ranch Foundation
Pleasant Valley Historical Society
Economic Development Collaborative
California State University Channel Islands (CSUCI)
Pleasant Valley Recreation and Park District (PVRPD)
Pleasant Valley School District (PVSD)
Oxnard Union High School District (OUHSD)
Naval Base Ventura County
Water Districts

Other Special Districts

Ventura County Fire Protection District
Ventura County Sheriff's Department – Camarillo Police Department
County of Ventura Department of Airports
County of Ventura Public Works
County of Ventura Planning Division

County of Ventura Environmental Health
County of Ventura Animal Services
Third District Supervisor, County of Ventura
Caltrans
Other Jurisdictions
Ventura County Transportation Commission (VCTC)
Area Housing Authority
Habitat for Humanity
Camarillo Health Care District

Media Contacts List

The following media contact list is general and may fluctuate over time.
Please use this as a guide and include additional media outlets, as necessary.

Newspaper

- Camarillo Acorn
- Ventura County Star
- LA Times
- VC Reporter
- Citizens Journal
- Pacific Coast Business Times
- VIDA News

Community Newsletters

- Happenings Magazine (monthly)
- Macaroni Kid (Camarillo-Oxnard-Ventura)
- Pleasant Valley Recreation & Park District (quarterly)

Radio

- KCLU (NPR)
- Cumulus Media
- Gold Coast Broadcasting/KVTA

Television

- KADYTV.com
- ABC7 – Los Angeles
- KEYT (Channel 3)
- NBC (Channel 4)

WHAT tools are in our toolkit ...

The City of Camarillo's website [www.cityofcamarillo.org] is the primary location for information about the City's Ordinances, regulations, programs and projects. Each City Department maintains a webpage that contains information specific to that Department, including but not limited to the following information:

- Description of what the department is responsible for
- Names and contact information for department staff
- Public notices about proposals, project reviews and public hearings
- Active and pending construction / development projects

The following list represents the additional tools in our toolkit. These forms of communication enhance the City's outreach, but do not replace the website as the primary location for public information:

- News Release / Media Notification
- Mailed Notice
- Utilities Billing Insert
- Constitution Park Marquee Sign
- City of Camarillo Government Facebook Page
- E-mail Notification
- CityScene Newsletter
- CityScene TV
- Community Bulletin Board on Government Channel
- Flyers
- On-Site Public Hearing Noticing Sign
- Events Calendar on City Website
- Special Events with Opportunities for Interaction
- Outreach events
- Open City Hall story, survey, or question

WHEN to have an event ...

The following community outreach events are opportunities to expand community involvement and provide tools for two-way communication. When scheduling these events, the timing is critical. They should take place during hours when most of the public/affected audience will be able to participate.

PUBLIC FORUM

City of Camarillo

CITY STAFF PRESENTS INFORMATION TO COMMUNITY.

- One way communication to provide information to the community. Staff or Consultant will present information, followed by a question & answer session with an open mic.
- Provide balanced and objective information to the public on a project or issue to increase awareness and understanding of concerns, alternatives and solutions.

TOWN HALL

City of Camarillo

CITY COUNCIL SEEKS INPUT ON A DEFINED ISSUE.

- Solicit ideas / brainstorm / prioritize.
- Survey or online forum to solicit feedback.

COMMUNITY WORKSHOP

City of Camarillo

COMMUNITY HELPS TO DECIDE and/or IMPLEMENT.

- Interactive process that incorporates recommendations.
- Mapping/priority exercises to identify needs.
- Partner with the public to develop alternatives and identify preferred solutions.

WHERE to have an event...

Meetings should be held in an easily accessible location with available parking. Some possible venues in Camarillo include, but are not limited to:

Camarillo Library: 1401 Las Posas Road, Camarillo 93010

City Hall: 601 Carmen Drive, Camarillo 93010

Administrative Conference Room – up to 28 people.

Central Conference Room – seats up to 26 people.

Council Chambers Capacity –134 seats and can hold a maximum of 200 people.

Camarillo Ranch: 201 Camarillo Ranch Road, Camarillo 93010

Community Center/Senior Center: 1605 E. Burnley Street, Camarillo 93010

Serra Center at Padre Serra Parish: 5205 Upland Road, Camarillo 93012

Ventura County Community Foundation: 4001 Mission Oaks Blvd., Camarillo 93012

When planning a community outreach event, be sure to choose a venue large enough to comfortably accommodate the expected audience. Consider the following:

- seating capacity
- heat/air conditioning
- parking
- transportation/transit to and from venue
- lighting

HOW to receive input...

The City's advertising should provide the community with a clear understanding of the distinction between a public forum, a townhall meeting, and a community workshop. When preparing for a community outreach event, ask yourself these questions to help determine how the City would like to receive input:

- What information will the City share at this event?
- How will that information be shared?
- How will the City receive information at this event?

Then, use the guidelines below to determine which type of event is most appropriate. The outreach materials should set the expectation for the community regarding what to expect at the event and how to prepare.

PUBLIC FORUM | *City staff presents information to community*

A public forum is a City staff or consultant-driven event, where an issue is presented and participants have the opportunity to engage in a question and answer session with an open microphone.

A public forum could be held at any time during the processing of a project to provide factual information to the community about a specific issue. A public forum could also be held when a significant number of community members have expressed questions or concerns about a particular issue and it would benefit the community at large to engage in a public discussion.

What should be included?

A public forum should include a presentation on the issue and allow the majority of time for questions from the community.

TOWN HALL MEETING | *City council seeks input on a defined issue*

Town Hall Meetings involve the full City Council at a Special Meeting to hear a specific topic. These meetings are similar to community workshops in that they involve staff presentation and public discussion. Town Hall Meetings allow the City Council to "take

the show on the road" and focus on a specific community or neighborhood interest, at an offsite location closer to the area of concern. Staff should schedule Town Hall Meetings during hours when most people in the affected group will be available.

What should be included?

Town Hall Meetings should include equal parts staff presentation and public discussion. Staff should also consider comment cards, as some people are more comfortable speaking up than others. Provide appropriate contact information so any participant who felt they were not heard has an opportunity to follow up. It is important to inform participants about what happens next in the process, so that they understand what will happen with their feedback.

COMMUNITY WORKSHOP | *Community helps to decide and/or implement*

In order to be successful, workshops should include an even balance of staff presentation and group discussion. Workshops are typically structured in this format:

1. City staff/consultant presentation
2. Small group discussion
3. Reconvene to share ideas with larger group

A community workshop can be structured differently depending on the topic, anticipated attendance, etc. For instance, a workshop could be structured as an open house or design charette, which features various informational stations, rather than a formal presentation.

This type of outreach allows the public to hear factual information in a presentation on a particular project or issue from city staff and/or consultants. After the presentation, the participants will work in smaller groups to develop ideas and alternatives that directly affect the planning process. Following small group discussion, the group will reconvene to share their ideas with the larger group. The outcome of the workshop is then passed on to decision-makers.

The public is encouraged to engage in open dialogue with the facilitator at each station, including asking questions and providing feedback. Notes should be taken on large format paper so participants can see that their comments have been noted. The notes from each station will be compiled into a single list. The outcome of the community workshop is then passed on to decision-makers.

What should be included?

Discussion groups, where the public has an opportunity to weigh in on options and/or develop alternatives and solutions. Groups should be facilitated by City staff and/or consultants, and these facilitators should lead and promote discussion. It is important to inform participants about what happens next in the process so that they understand what will happen with their feedback. Provide appropriate contact information so any participant who felt they were not heard has an opportunity to follow up.

Essentials Checklist for Community Outreach Events

When planning a community outreach event, use this checklist as a guide for items to bring to the event:

- Sign-in sheets (include name, email address, phone number and physical address (when applicable) so staff may follow up with attendees.
- Visual or informational aid(s) to be included in the presentation and/or stations (PowerPoint, video, photos, plans, maps, graphics, etc.).
- Large format paper and thick pens/markers for notes.
- Easels or dedicated wall space for large format paper.
- Facilitators for all small group discussions.
- Comment cards.
- Contact information.
- Name tags for City staff.
- Water. Other refreshments are optional.

CONSISTENCY

When preparing outreach materials, it is important to think of your audience (WHO you are trying to reach) and consider their perspective when designing outreach materials and establishing the message. The materials should set the expectation for the public about what to expect at the outreach event, and the message should always address these two questions:

What are we doing? AND Why are we doing it?

Here are some key things to keep in mind when preparing your message:

- Avoid government jargon and keep descriptions clear and concise.
- Include all relevant contact information, including key contact names, phone numbers, emails addresses and web addresses.
- If noticing a meeting or community event, be sure to include pertinent information (e.g. date, place, time, description, alternate ways to participate if applicable, directions or map if necessary).
- Consider translation of printed materials when it is anticipated that staff may experience language barriers in their outreach to specific groups.

MEASURING SUCCESS

The City's Community Engagement Guidelines are part of a strategy to ensure that the City of Camarillo will carry the conversation in order to provide factual information to the community and to solicit constructive feedback on critical issues. The guidelines are meant to be a dynamic document, which will continually be assessed and improved as needed.

The following metrics will allow the City to measure the success of the Guidelines:

- Increase in visits to City website
- Growth in social media followers
- Increase in direct City staff engagement with community members
- Increase in community participation in outreach events
- Community survey with favorable response rate