

Designing an Equitable Engagement Toolkit

Phase 1

In the development of this toolkit, we strive to understand the barriers that are preventing communities and organizations from fully incorporating equitable standards into their engagement work. While equity is something everyone supports, actualizing equity and local government and communities is challenging. On July 8, 2019, Blue Thumb and Metro Blooms brought together partners to discuss the complex issue of incorporating equity into the work we all do to build environmentally resilient communities. The discussion included partners from private companies, local governments and community groups. Below are the themes that arose during the two-hour meeting at Autumn Ridge Apartments.

Discussion Questions

1. What does a community's meaningful involvement look like in your organization/community?

2. How is equity incorporated in your organization/community to meaningfully involve underserved populations (communities that have been historically marginalized and disproportionately affected)?

3. What resources or tools do you need in your work to intentionally engage and empower underserved populations?

The theme of interpersonal connection and communication was something that guided a lot of the world cafe session. This was talked about in different ways, including the tools for empowering community members, creating stewardship within communities and, further, fostering sustainable contributions from community participants and leaders while building strong relationships and resilience.

THEME:
**ITERATIVE INTERPERSONAL CONNECTIONS &
COMMUNICATION**

Two leadership development areas manifested themselves. One was training and building the capacity of community members and leaders who would be involved in an environmental project, and then sharing the knowledge with the community. Another involved discussion centered around staff training for both property owners and government or community partners.

THEME:
LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

The theme of lacking the resources to incorporate equitable practices into community or organization centered around training opportunities, having adequate financial resources that bring programs to underserved communities and investment in the local community to build relationships and pay for local expertise and valuable time.

THEME:
RESOURCES

Throughout the discussion, we also reflected on guiding principles for the co-creation of the equitable engagement toolkit. These principles will be transparent throughout our work together.

- 1. Proactively work to involve underserved populations**
- 2. Intentionally engage in the project and at policy level**
- 3. Provide measurable benefits to the community**
- 4. Ensure that this work does not result in displacement**
- 5. Address equity as a central element of the environmental work**
- 6. Agreement that we cannot address climate work without addressing racial equity.**

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

