

City of Dayton

Community Engagement Strategy

Engaged and informed communities are the backbone of our democratic society. The Community Engagement Strategy (CES) is designed to foster open communication and collaboration among Dayton's residents, business owners, stakeholders, and City government. This CES outlines the roles and responsibilities of all parties in an effort to ensure transparency, collaboration, and accountability.

Community Engagement is a set of intentional processes through which residents, business owners, and community stakeholders interact with each other and governmental bodies. It is designed to foster relationships, encourage collaboration, and provide input and feedback on a range of issues affecting daily lives. It is a system of active engagement to generate ideas and solve common problems through collaboration, with the goal of improving the quality of life within Dayton.

The CES is comprised of four major components:

1. Neighborhood-Focused Outcomes
2. Leadership Development and Training
3. Active Community Engagement
4. Enhanced Communication

For each component, this document describes the roles and responsibilities of the affected parties, including community organizations, stakeholders, and City government.

This Community Engagement Strategy is meant to be a guidebook to help neighborhood associations and City organizations actively engage each other in a thoughtful and constructive manner. The Strategy is designed to be fluid and flexible to meet the needs of all of Dayton's neighborhoods, and should be updated from time to time as needs and technologies evolve.

1. Neighborhood-Focused Outcomes

Neighborhoods are the centerpiece of Dayton, and the CES seeks to empower and foster positive relationships that yield positive quality-of-life outcomes. The City of Dayton seeks to engage, strengthen, and empower neighborhood associations to achieve neighborhood-focused outcomes.

The City will work directly in partnership with neighborhoods to assist in the organization of community-centered projects and organizational capacity building. The City will encourage and support neighborhood-initiated projects and programs designed to improve the image and quality of life of the neighborhoods. That support may take the form of technical assistance, financial assistance through the mini-grant programs, and program and project development. Current efforts include the DIY (Dayton Is Yours) project, neighborhood clean-up collaborations, and the mini-grant program.

Engaging younger residents is key to growing a sustainable system, retaining existing residents, and infusing youthful ideas into our neighborhoods. It is clear that younger residents are inspired by projects, rather than meeting to meet. They want outcome-focused activities. Neighborhood-focused activities and collaborations (DIY, clean-up, mini-grants) will encourage younger people to become more engaged with the community. Ensuring that we communicate via a wide spectrum of platforms is extremely important to engage this group.

Neighborhood Association Roles and Responsibilities

Strong neighborhoods are paramount in a successful community, so they play a key role in Dayton's CES. Neighborhood associations can provide an unmatched, intimate knowledge of a community. The City encourages associations' involvement at every level of the Community Engagement process, to secure the widest possible representation of the views and opinions of the community at large. Among the roles and responsibilities of neighborhood associations are:

1. Effectively communicate information to all neighborhood residents. This entails developing appropriate mechanisms based on the needs of the neighborhood. Communication tools may include neighborhood newsletters, email distribution lists, neighborhood websites, and community meetings.
2. Identify and prioritize needs, goals, and objectives through strategic planning sessions. These outcomes represent what the community believes to be important in the preservation of high-quality neighborhoods and will serve as a work plan for the various neighborhood associations.
3. Seek funding opportunities to implement the various goals and objectives developed through the strategic planning sessions.
4. Participate in neighborhood empowerment efforts through self-help programs designed to address community problems or neighborhood needs such as clean-ups or tree-planting programs.
5. Provide social-engagement opportunities to build relationships among residents. Some possibilities might be neighborhood picnics, progressive dinners, or group volunteer experiences. Their purpose is to encourage interactions with neighbors that are outside of the typical neighborhood-meeting setting.
6. Form partnerships with community or neighborhood development corporations, business associations, or other community anchors to help improve the quality of neighborhood life. These partnerships leverage the skills and abilities of each organization for effective collaboration on issues and projects of mutual benefit. Some examples of positive collaborations are infill housing projects, area marketing events, and festivals.
7. Sponsor events and activities to highlight and actively market the neighborhood. These undertakings may include sponsoring home tours, partnerships with Realtors, garden tours, festivals, or "know your neighbor" events.

City Roles and Responsibilities

While neighborhoods are the central feature of the CES, the City of Dayton plays a key role in ensuring that this strategy is implemented effectively. The City is in a unique position to provide

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staff resources, information, and other tools to assist neighborhoods in achieving their goals and exerting a positive influence in peoples' lives. To that end, the City will support the efforts initiated by neighborhood residents and encourage cooperation of other community institutions with neighborhood associations. The roles and responsibilities of the City in implementing the CES include:

1. Promptly provide neighborhood associations with any information that affects their neighborhoods. This includes information about land use cases, development projects being considered, issues affecting public safety, or quality-of-life issues. Information may be communicated in electronic or printed format, depending on the needs of the neighborhoods.
2. Assist neighborhoods with their strategic planning efforts. This may include direct facilitation or providing appropriate resources.
3. Provide the tools to help neighborhoods in their communication and outreach efforts. For example, assistance may be offered with printing newsletters, website development, or email distribution lists.
4. Foster partnerships between neighborhood business districts and adjacent residential areas.
5. Provide technical assistance to neighborhood associations to help with the implementation of capital improvement projects, program development, or other community improvement initiatives.
6. Provide a menu of incentive programs for neighborhoods to effect positive change. Such programs might include mini-grants to neighborhoods, coordination with other public agencies, or access to technical assistance.

2. Leadership Development

Dayton has a distinguished history of developing great leaders. Direct involvement and leadership by individuals within our neighborhoods have been shown to provide the best approach to achieving community goals. Neighborhood empowerment creates a sense of community and ownership, which in turn enhances the quality of neighborhood life.

In order for our engagement strategy to be effective, continual leadership development must be supported. Through the CES, leadership and empowerment must be actively encouraged and sustained, at all levels and sizes of organizations. Block clubs, residents' councils, neighborhood associations, community councils, business associations, and community/neighborhood development corporations must be nurtured.

However, not all neighborhoods have the same social capital or organizational infrastructure. The City will actively support neighborhood capacity-building. Community partners such as the Neighborhood Leadership Institute Alumni and our institutions of higher education will play key roles in providing help with capacity-building in the neighborhoods.

Neighborhood Association Roles and Responsibilities

1. Encourage leadership development among residents. Neighborhoods should strive for intentional leadership development and growth to develop a pool of talented individuals who can help implement the neighborhood's strategic plans. Leadership turnover should be encouraged.
2. Actively seek learning opportunities that enhance the skills of the association members.
3. Encourage residents to participate in leadership development opportunities such as the Neighborhood Leadership Institute and other community-sponsored programs. NLI members should be active participants in their neighborhood associations.

City Roles and Responsibilities

1. Facilitate leadership development programs and opportunities such as the Neighborhood Leadership Institute, and actively recruit participants.
2. Facilitate project management and development opportunities to help neighborhood associations develop and implement community enhancement projects that encourage neighborhood self-help, such as neighborhood tree planting, Saturday clean-ups, and neighborhood maintenance of parks.
3. Develop community education efforts that focus on topics that are relevant and interesting to neighborhood leaders. Examples are City government operations, grant-writing workshops, and other skill-building programs.
4. Identify and recruit persons with leadership skills and interest who are seeking opportunities to work on community problems.

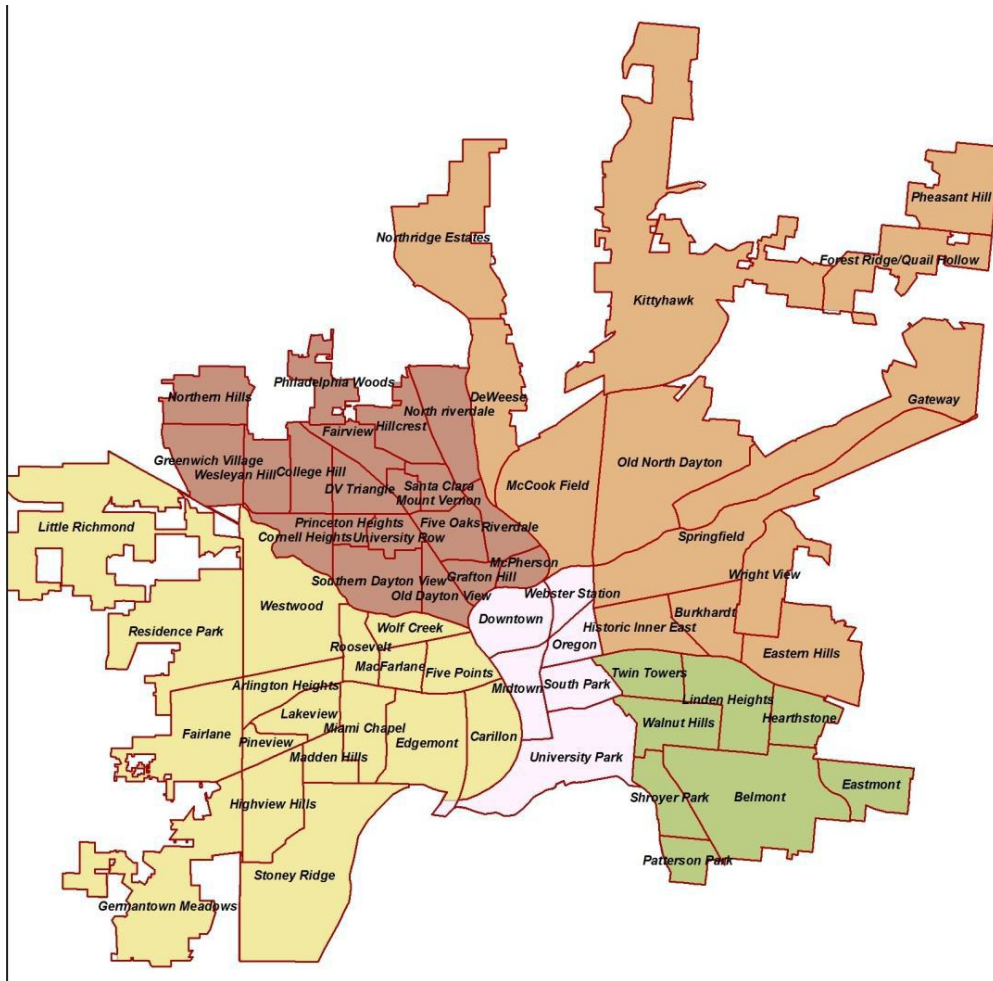
3. Active Community Engagement

As noted earlier, Community Engagement is a set of processes through which community stakeholders interact with each other and governmental bodies to improve the quality of life within Dayton. For effective engagement, Dayton's residents, business owners, and stakeholders must all be involved in the community decisions that affect their lives and neighborhoods. The CES is designed to encourage all stakeholders' active participation in collaborative decision-making and in shaping the policies that directly affect neighborhoods and businesses.

Priority Land Use Boards

In general the Community Engagement Strategy is designed to actively engage residents and stakeholders at the neighborhood level. However, there are issues that affect multiple neighborhoods and require a larger geographic participation mechanism. The Priority Land Use Boards collectively represent neighborhood viewpoints to the City on land use related issues that have significant impact on any neighborhood. This includes issues related to land use planning and policy, comprehensive and neighborhood planning efforts, public investment strategies, or other issues that impact multiple neighborhoods. There are five Priority Land Use Boards, each composed of eleven neighborhood or business representatives.

The Geography of the Priority Land Use Boards is illustrated below:



I. BOARD MEMBERSHIP

1. Each Board will be composed of 11 representatives from the recognized Neighborhood Associations, or Business Associations within each Board's geographic boundary.
2. Beginning December 2014, and every successive two year period following, each Neighborhood Association and Business Association will nominate one representative to serve on a Land Use Board.
3. All current Priority Board Land Use Board members will remain in their existing seats through December 2014.
4. From the pool of representatives nominated, the Dayton City Commission will appoint 11 nominees to serve as members of each Land Use Board.
5. In January 2015, and every successive two year period following each Land Use Board's membership will vote for a President, Vice President, and Secretary.
6. A simple majority of each Land Use Board members must be City of Dayton residents.

7. If any Land Use Board Member is unable to fulfill the two-year commitment, then the member's representative organization will nominate another representative.
8. The Dayton City Commission will fill the vacant Land Use Board seat from the remaining pool of nominated representatives.
9. Each Land Use Board President has a term limit of 4 consecutive years.

II. BOARD RESPONSIBILITIES AND DUTIES

Each Land Use Board will review any proposed land use issue deemed to have a potential significant impact on any neighborhood affecting the representative Board. Significant issues may include, but are not limited to:

1. Conditional Uses
2. Neighborhood and Citywide Plans
3. Planned Developments
4. Alley & Street Vacations
5. Variances
6. Zoning Changes
7. Zoning Text Amendments
8. Liquor Permits

It is expected that each Priority Land Use Board will review and make recommendations on all proposed land use plans, proposed zoning text and map amendments, and written recommendations to the appropriate City or State Board. Priority Land Use Board members shall attend any necessary meetings to convey the recommendation of its membership. Members should monitor zoning enforcement and compliance of conditions on previous land use cases.

III. WHAT TO CONSIDER WHEN REVIEWING A CASE:

1. The standards for variances, conditional uses, and rezoning and any other affected regulations
2. Approved plans for the area
3. Surrounding zoning
4. How the use fits with city ordinances
5. The effects on residents, businesses, and institutions
6. The effects on traffic patterns and parking
7. The effects on safety
8. Accessibility for delivery, emergency and waste collection
9. Aesthetics such as landscaping, signage, fencing, architecture and streetscape
10. The consistency of fit within the neighborhood and the area
11. Does it just plain make sense

IV. BOARD PROCESS

1. Once a land use issue arises, Planning and Community Development staff will coordinate with the President or designee of the Land Use Board to determine the necessity of a meeting to discuss a case and make a recommendation and coordinates the meeting information with the applicant.
2. All Land Use Boards will have designated monthly meeting times and meeting locations.
3. Land use Board President and Planning and Community Development staff will determine if the Land Use Board will meet outside of their regularly scheduled meeting time.
4. When decisions are made outside of the regularly scheduled meetings, the Land Use Board is notified via email and/or telephone.
5. Planning and Community Development staff will notify Land Use Board members, affected residents, businesses and neighborhood associations regarding case information, meeting location and recommendation request.
6. Land Use Board members are responsible for reviewing case information and visiting the site prior to the meeting.

V. MEETING FORMAT

1. Land Use Board President begins the meeting and introductions are made.
2. Presentation is made by the applicant.
3. Questions are asked by Land Use Board members and citizens throughout the meeting.
4. Citizens in favor or opposed to the land use matter speak after the applicant has completed their presentation.
5. If warranted, Planning and Community Development staff will provide additional information or comments about the case.
6. The Land Use Board votes on a recommendation.

VI. LAND USE BOARD RECOMMENDATION

1. Land Use Board recommendation is sent to the appropriate Planning and Community Development staff.
2. Land Use Board designates a member to attend the BZA, Plan Board, Landmarks Commission or associated hearing to convey the Land Use Board's recommendation.
3. Land Use Board will notify the affected Neighborhood Association of their recommendation and actions.

VII. MEMBER RESPONSIBILITIES

All Land Use Board members are expected to:

1. Attend scheduled meetings on time.
2. Keep their representing Neighborhood Association or Business Association informed of all pertinent actions, issues and discussions.
3. Respect other members, by not engaging in side conversations when another board member or meeting attendee is talking.
4. Respect all those in attendance and participants in the Land Use Board meeting.
5. Be mindful of the neighborhood and citywide perspective that represents the scope and responsibility of this Board.
6. Inform the Land Use Board Secretary of any inability to attend or participate in a meeting.
7. Members shall practice The Standard Code of Parliamentary Procedure and these policies and procedures during meetings. The President or Planning and Community Development staff shall request that any member whose conduct violates these rules and/or disrupts the transaction of business leave the meeting.
8. Members have both a legal and moral duty to disclose any conflicts of interest arising from matters discussed and decisions levied by the Land Use Board, where they have a personal financial interest in such decisions. In those instances, members are expected to announce that they recuse themselves from the matter, and though allowed to respond to questions posed to them by other board members or the public, they are not allowed to initiate comments or vote on the matter

Neighborhood Presidents Forum

An effective Community Engagement system requires consistent and open dialog among neighborhood leaders and City leaders. The City intends to develop and facilitate Neighborhood Presidents Forums. These Neighborhood Presidents Forums will provide an opportunity for neighborhood-association presidents and leaders to collaborate on topics of mutual importance. Forums will be held at least quarterly, and will be structured to encourage engagement between neighborhood leaders and City officials. Forum topics will focus on City policies affecting neighborhoods, such as service delivery strategies, neighborhood incentives, public safety, and neighborhood empowerment. The Forum topics will also engage neighborhood leaders to collaborate and find solutions to common problems and provide an environment to share best practices.

Other Boards and Commissions

Dayton has a variety of boards and commissions whose input and policy recommendations directly affect Dayton's neighborhoods. Those boards and commissions include the Dayton City Plan Board, Board of Zoning Appeals, Dayton Landmark Commission, Citizen's Financial Review Group (CFRG), and Community and Neighborhood Development Advisory Board (CNDAB). Each board and commission plays a crucial role in providing policy recommendations to City administration and the

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Dayton City Commission. Active involvement in these various boards is extremely important in shaping the future of Dayton's neighborhoods.

Neighborhood Association Roles and Responsibilities

1. Represent their neighborhood on the Priority Land Use Boards.
2. Send representatives to the Neighborhood Presidents Forum and other community forums to maintain an effective community information system and to foster mutual dialogue on community issues of common interest.
3. Actively participate in crucial decision-making opportunities by providing input and recommendations to City staff, the City Commission, and other boards and bodies regarding issues that affect the quality of neighborhood life, such as:
 - Liquor license applications
 - Plan Board cases
 - Board of Zoning Appeals cases

City Roles and Responsibilities

1. Again, promptly notify neighborhood associations about cases coming before City boards or commissions that involve their neighborhoods. This information may be communicated in electronic or printed format, depending on the needs of the neighborhoods.
2. Ensure consideration of neighborhood concerns in Plan Board deliberations, Board of Zoning Appeals cases, liquor license discussions, and other issues of importance to neighborhoods. Provide technical assistance in presenting those concerns, as requested.
3. Ensure timely input of citizens' concerns about the development, and review of the Consolidated Plan/Annual Action Plan, especially those citizens living in the area of projects proposed under the Consolidated Plan/Annual Action Plan.
4. Develop and facilitate quarterly Neighborhood Presidents Forums.
5. Identify and recruit persons with leadership skills and interest who are seeking opportunities to work on community problems.

4. Enhanced Communication

A key principle of the CES is effective and timely communication among Dayton's neighborhoods, business associations, community stakeholders, and City administration. Such communication is paramount if the community is to give meaningful input, take timely action, or just be generally informed about the issues affecting their neighborhoods. Good communication is especially important for traditionally excluded groups, such as low-income persons or public-housing residents. Prompt communication on the City's part also ensures that Dayton residents have access to information on the crucial community-wide issues for which their voices must be heard.

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The City will utilize a variety of communication means, including email, web postings, and printed material, to reach the broadest possible audience. In turn, neighborhood associations should maintain a comprehensive list of stakeholders and residents in order to disseminate information and engage the community.

Neighborhood Association Roles and Responsibilities

1. Provide the mechanism for disseminating information in a timely manner to residents and stakeholders. Be proactive and consistent. Effective information distribution may take the form of newsletters, email lists, or other electronic communications. A mechanism for resident and stakeholder response is also needed.
2. Maintain a current roster of neighborhood officers and leaders, and inform the City in a timely manner when leadership positions change hands.
3. Respond promptly to City requests for community input.

City Roles and Responsibilities

1. Maintain an effective and consistent community-information system for timely dissemination of information about government and other community actions to all neighborhoods.
2. Provide opportunities for all residents to engage in dialog about issues of common concern, either through open meetings at convenient times, or through electronic communications, including web-based applications.
3. Help neighborhood associations to resolve complaints or concerns by providing technical assistance or referrals to the appropriate agency.
4. Utilize the Dayton Mediation Center to assist neighborhoods in resolving conflicts.