



Legislation Text

File #: 20-290, **Version:** 1

TITLE:

Draft Inclusive Carrboro Communications and Community Outreach Plan

PURPOSE: The purpose of this agenda item is to provide a plan of action and strategies to increase access to information, resources and participation in civic processes by the entire Carrboro community with renewed focus on people of color, immigrant, refugee and other marginalized communities.

DEPARTMENT: Town Manager's Office

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INFORMATION: On June 11, 2020, the Council requested a plan for community outreach, education and engagement with intentional cultural sensitivity around language, values and perspectives.

The Town of Carrboro seeks to increase access to information, resources, and civic processes by people of color and marginalized communities through the implementation of racially and culturally inclusive outreach and public engagement processes. The Town will use strategies to effectively educate and inform communities about services, events and programs; opportunities for leadership; and avenues to make positive change.

The process will be guided by the Town's participation with the Government Alliance on Race and Equity (GARE). The Town is committed to advancing racial equity across all functions and levels of municipal government.

The *Draft Inclusive Carrboro Communications and Community Engagement Plan* revises the current Town Communications Plan. The revision of an existing plan is part of a conscious effort to evaluate and update institutional practices as the Town works to dismantle institutional barriers faced by underserved communities.

The Communications Manager, in conjunction with the Race and Equity Officer, is developing strategies for the revised plan to improve engagement and inclusivity, which will include:

1. Building upon successful strategies for generalized communications and engagement
2. Connecting with minority communities and building relationships

3. Adopting a grassroots approach
4. Ensuring culturally appropriate messaging and information

All Town Departments participate in public engagement on projects of various scales. The Town of Carrboro adopted its *Town Communications Plan* in 2017 (included as attachment A). Through the revised *Inclusive Carrboro Communications and Community Outreach Plan* and an interdepartmental team approach, the Town will pursue a common set of goals, standards and best practices.

We have reengaged a Town Communications Team, and with input from the GARE Core Team, to help think about communications and public engagement practices with an equity lens. Revising an existing organizational plan is a conscious effort to evaluate our institutional practices currently in place. Ultimately, having a single plan will help to dismantle institutional barriers faced by underserved communities.

The revised draft plan (Attachment B) includes new strategies to engage, as best as possible, the entire Carrboro community. Staff will pursue non-traditional methods of outreach to inspire entire community involvement. In this plan, we identify alternate opportunities for social interaction and relationship building by “going where the people are.” We will continue to expand new ways for the public to contribute input and offer feedback on the actions of local government.

It should be noted that many of these practices are being implemented by the Town of Carrboro in some form already. Staff intends to deploy new practices within a structural strategy and existing plan to maximize impacts on racial equity.

This draft plan was initially provided for review by the Town Council on July 14, 2020. Since then, the Town Communications Team also has reviewed and provided feedback. We are currently moving forward with several of the action items including recruitment of Neighborhood Liaisons; and analysis of the Town communications and community engagement network. We are identifying priority projects through a Strategy Map that outlines a path moving forward. (Attachment C).

FISCAL & STAFF IMPACT: To be determined.

RECOMMENDATION: Staff recommends the Council adopt the Plan.