

CHARLESTON CITY PLAN COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT REPORT

DECEMBER 2020

PREPARED BY: THE ASIKO GROUP
CIVIC COMMUNICATIONS
COMMUNITY SOLUTIONS CONSULTING



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PROJECT OVERVIEW

The 2020 Charleston City Plan is the ten-year revision of the City's Comprehensive Plan as required by the South Carolina Local Government Comprehensive Planning Enabling Act of 1994 (SC Code Title 6, Chapter 29).

Developed by the City of Charleston's Planning Commission and ultimately approved by the City Council, the Charleston City Plan guides the city's growth inside the city limits and the Urban Growth Boundary. It includes the nine elements listed in the Planning Act: population, economic development, natural resources, cultural resources, community facilities, housing, land use, transportation, priority investment. As coastal flooding threatens the city's future, the Charleston City Plan has added a tenth element, resilience, and will consider how growth can occur in a manner which is better able to withstand disasters and climate change.

Recommendations from the City Plan will prioritize where water is and where it is going, use the best data available in an equitable way, and orient towards actions which protect the city's historical diversity with a commitment to ask all members of the community to partner in the planning process.

THE ENGAGEMENT GOAL WAS TO ENSURE INCLUSIVE, OPEN & TRANSPARENT INTERACTIONS WITH PUBLIC OFFICIALS, STAKEHOLDERS, AND MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC, ESP. IN GAINING MEANINGFUL FEEDBACK FROM GROUPS WHICH HAVE BEEN HISTORICALLY UNDERREPRESENTED

Civic Communications, The Asiko Group, and Community Solutions Consulting (CAC) were contracted by the City of Charleston to meet the City Plan's engagement goal by:

- Directing and coordinating outreach efforts to stakeholder groups across a variety of platforms including social media, earned media and printed materials in collaboration with the City's Public Information Office (PIO)
- Managing logistics of all engagement activities and events
- Providing meeting facilitation and support.
- Managing collection and synthesis of data gathered through engagement strategies.

This report captures the authentic voices shared during the community-wide and area sessions with spotlights on the CAC outreach in specific communities. It also offers some lessons learned for the second phase of City Plan outreach and future engagement by the City.

ENGAGEMENT

5

AREAS IN THE CITY
WHICH WERE OFFERED
FOCUSED MEETINGS

11

ORGANIZATIONS
HOSTED ON-LINE
GATHERINGS

500

PEOPLE PARTICIPATED
IN THE FIRST ROUND
OF OUTREACH
MEETINGS

2500

PEOPLE RESPONDED
TO THE ONLINE
SURVEY

APPROACH

The CAC team worked closely with multiple City departments including: Planning, Preservation & Sustainability; Business and Neighborhood Services, and Communications/PIO. The shared goal was to ensure that authentic and effective engagement activities were provided to a significant portion of the residents and stakeholders who live and work within the city. Weekly meetings of the engagement team helped to align messaging, target outreach, and prepare for community questions or concerns.

Designing an outreach and engagement effort during a global pandemic outbreak and a national election year added limitations for in-person contact and scheduling, but the work continued. The result was a project introduction to neighborhood and community leaders, sixteen city-led meetings, and eleven community-led meetings between the months of July - November 2020 via Zoom.

City-led on-line engagement meetings were supported by a comprehensive project website - www.CharlestonCityPlan.com, an active social media effort, multiple issues of a project news-

letter, a project blog, a video channel, follow-up emails to meeting participants, as well as an on-line toolkit for groups to plan their own meetings and share feedback. Flyers and printed surveys were distributed in targeted communities. Each of these tools were designed to meet people where they were, welcome them into the process, provide data and information to ponder, and make it as easy as possible to share feedback and stay involved.

For those who prefer receiving information in Spanish, translation services in the Charla Comunitaria along with a Spanish version of the website, survey, and social media posts made the process even more accessible.

Through information gathered in a kick-off survey of community leaders, online break out groups during area Zoom meetings, responses to social media postings, questions and comments emailed or called into planning staff, and on-line survey responses, the City Plan engagement effort heard from at least 3000 individuals.

AN EQUITY LENS WAS ADDED TO ALL OUTREACH EFFORTS TO ENSURE CHARLESTON'S RICH DIVERSITY COULD BE SEEN AND HEARD IN THE PROJECT'S IMAGES AND VOICES.

RESULTS-BASED FACILITATION EVEN ON ZOOM

MEET
PEOPLE
WHERE
THEY ARE

HUMANIZE
THE
CONNECTION

LISTEN
CLOSELY

AUTHENTIC
ENGAGEMENT

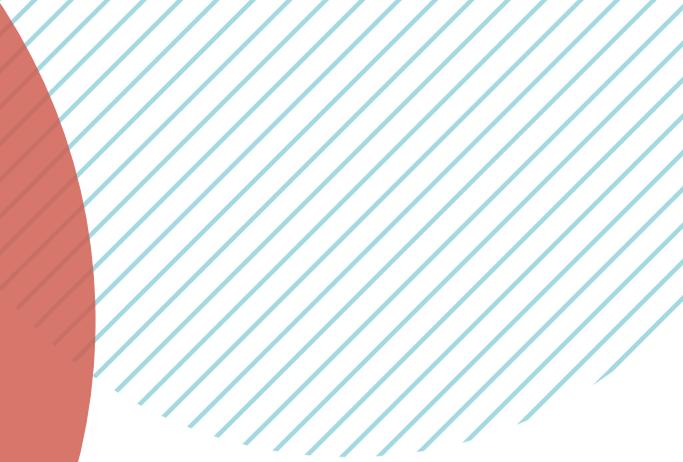
WELCOME EACH PERSON AS THEY ENTER THE SPACE, ENCOURAGE THEM TO SHARE THEIR VIDEO WHILE ENGAGING AUTHENTICALLY.

OFFER OPPORTUNITIES FOR MORE INDIVIDUALIZED ATTENTION IN BREAK-OUT ROOMS WITH FACILITATORS, FOR REAL-LIVED STORIES AND SOLUTIONS.

LISTEN TO LEARN AND DISCOVER, NOT TO REACT. SYNTHESIZE RESPONSES THROUGH CONFIRMING STORIES SHARED IN REAL TIME.



FACILITATED BY: The Asiko Group



COMMUNITY MEETINGS

CITYWIDE ZOOM

Saturday
August 22, 2020 and
September 19, 2020.
24 Registered
8 attended

- Recognize old communities need same level of support given to new communities
- Charleston seems to neglect the needs of communities in which the existing problems are becoming worse, with city not protecting tangible solutions
- Multi-modal transit improvements for everyone's lifestyle
- Questions regarding the schedule of actions being reported with commitment to equity.
- Desire for safer streets and communities with more walkable routes and trails to get around the community (store, parks, neighborhood, schools) to encourage connection to neighbors
- Not worrying about your neighborhood being flooded - especially in regards to flooding and stagnant water and drainage issues in African American and other communities
- Desire for the city to reach out to broader community because diverse voices - who aren't always heard - are the ones who make a community special.
- Keep up engagement efforts beyond social media, the city website, and Council meetings.
- Increase authentic communication by offering multiple platforms (in person, phone and digital) to serve diverse resident population
- Preserve unique culture throughout the city that contributes to the rich heritage of residents and their families.

CHARLA COMUNITARIA

Evening

October 25, 2020

Assisted by

Lydia Cotton and Art Pot

- The LatinX and queer community connect in times of need, but there are also some who are not connected to the grassroots. Not all of the Hispanic community speaks the language or has documentation. They have work and ways to get to work but have fear of speaking up or getting into a complex situation.
- Rural community and centrality are benefits of life on Johns Island; the quality of streets, lack of lighting, and poor signage are problem areas. Need for recreational parks for youth and families - such as a real soccer field or baseball field. Bike lanes/ sidewalks would be helpful on main roads, especially to connect neighborhoods and the high school.
- Community spaces to share culture are important. Spaces need for people to have more contact beyond downtown on King Street. Need more community spaces to get out of our cars and then transportation options to connect with these spaces such as parks, libraries, and work.
- Publix downtown is an example of a good location for hospital employees/visitors.
- Important to protect trees when building houses to protect the atmosphere.
- Gentrification “hurts - feels so awful how much we fight to keep this harmony and unity in areas” only to see people pushed out. Important for people to feel connected. Hope conversations today will show fruit in 2-3 years and people will feel that our voices were included - we were heard and can see a real change.
- Quality of life includes having information in Spanish. If we don't know what is going on, we cannot be included.
- Invest in people's lives so Hispanic/Latinx community feels welcome. “They should feel that ‘this is my community’ where my children will grow. This is their home.”
- Communications - to serve Spanish speaking population
- Quality streets, safety and signage
- Community gathering spaces in public and parks or culture
- Preserve parks and public spaces
- Desire to feel connected to the City in all aspects for a thriving experience in Charleston

COMMUNITY-LED

Host Your Own Toolkit
Expands Engagement

THANK YOU FOR YOUR LEADERSHIP!

American Institute of Architects (AIA)
Charleston

The Asiko Group

Center for Heirs Property

Charleston Area Justice Ministry

Charleston Climate Coalition

Coastal Conservation League

Community Solutions Consulting, LLC

Enough Pie

Lowcountry Black Parents Association

Lowcountry Local First

Preservation Society of Charleston

THE CITY OF CHARLESTON
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 2020
CHARLESTONCITYPLAN.COM



residents participated
in 11 community-led
gatherings*

**held virtually or socially-distanced*

OUTREACH SPOTLIGHT

African American Residents Facilitated By Community Solutions Consulting

- Sessions were in affinity group format; all African American to ensure a safe and supportive community to encourage open discussion without judgement.
- Significant discussions regarding the preservation of local African American communities. in the face of gentrification. Many of the participants felt like the city has largely ignored the plight of local African Americans while supporting the perceived gentrification that is happening in the city.
- Lack of affordable housing and what actually qualifies as “affordable”. Participants felt that as African American’s socioeconomic status is not considered when calculating affordability.
- Doubt about the city’s commitment to making changes that benefit African Americans in general, particularly those who are indigenous to the area.
- Participants feel as though city leadership only focuses on the black community during election years.



OUTREACH SPOTLIGHT

Religious Community

Facilitated By Charleston Area Justice Ministry

- Participants believe the plan needs to focus on increasing or improving the diversity in the area. Planning needs to be done with local residents in mind.
- Participants felt that much of the planning processes have not been done with an eye for human benefit, not just in Charleston, but through out the Charleston area.
- A big priority for people to have jobs.
- Participants expressed concerns about businesses failing because they don't have enough staff
- Families are concerned as kids go off to college because there is no affordable housing. So many 'professional' people can't afford to live in certain places near family and friends.
- Transportation, affordable housing and safety are a big concern due to their limitations.
- Bus stops are needed with safe shelters and with more frequent schedules so people do not have to wait for hours to get to their destination (work, home, grocery store, etc.) Transportation is definitely not viewed as commuter friendly.
- Residents lack of trust in City plan to be used to make a difference to address the needs of the community.



HOUSING LABS I & II

Housing Lab I
Morning and Evening
August 20, 2020

Housing Lab II
Morning - September 25, 2020
and Evening - October 1

- Regional issue – not restricted to one city or municipality. Needs to be a collaborative effort not just with municipalities but with City/Neighborhoods/Individuals
- Need for more information - feel like municipalities have the information about where housing is located but aren't sharing it. – Community asking for more publicity on housing zoned based on income/affordable areas.
- Transportation must be discussed when addressing access to affordable housing. – for example where bus stops and routes are located doesn't always connect to affordable housing and jobs for people who are often living in affordable housing.
- Make sure housing options meet income levels
- Creating housing options for individuals who have aged out of foster care/ recently released offenders
- Tiny houses should be on the table for housing options
- More multi-family duplexes and triplexes with education on why that type of housing is needed in single family neighborhoods *v can elevate homelessness and evictions
- Preserve and use older neighborhoods as an example of need to provide and how to provide multi-family housing options
- Live, work, play concept would help traffic
- A lot of homes are being sold because owners cannot keep up with the City standards
- Barriers to enter housing starts before the housing – lack of rental history, credit issues, income
- Understanding how housing incentives work – where the money goes?
- Need 100% translation for Spanish and other languages
- Expand mental health literacy & partnerships to eliminate homelessness.
- Lack of inventory in housing – duplexes, quadplexes, units for seniors
- Tension between density and communities – need for services
- Cost of housing is not being matched by wages in the area – need for livable wage
- Get creative with housing options – container homes, recycling waste from other construction.
- Streamlining, fast tracking, depoliticizing development and approval process.

WATER LAB

Lunchtime and Evening
September 23, 2020

- Attended by a significant amount of city department staff, low percentage of resident participation.
- Industry specific jargon used in presentation, leaving those unfamiliar with terms and reference to land topography and other civil engineering terminology unable to understand information presented.
- Presentation as presented did not answer the “public” side of water and land usage, and was more directed to those who worked in the field.
- While extremely detailed graphic information was presented, much of the information was too technical for public consumption.

OUTREACH SPOTLIGHT

Managed Developments

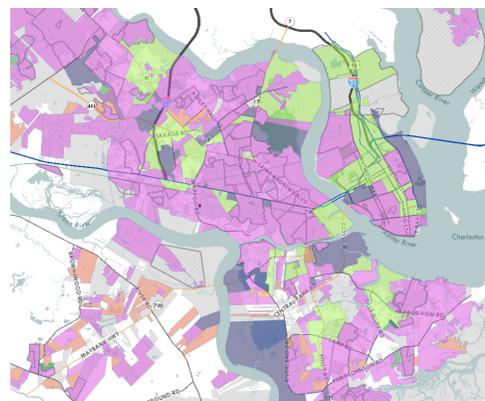
After the Business and Neighborhood Services department mentioned the challenge in reaching out to new neighborhoods and developments with Homeowners Associations (HOA), an effort was made to connect with property managers, specifically those on the Cainhoy Peninsula/Wando Huger, Johns Island, and James Island. When looking for ways to connect with these communities, two lessons were learned: the residents in these properties are connected by a few property management firms and HOA members have enough in common to see the value in associating with each other by area.

While the property management companies and HOA members change on a regular basis, there are several property management firms in the region which are consistent. To avoid having to develop and maintain an ever changing database of association and board members for each and every HOA under property management, a strategy to work with these neighborhoods could be to build better relationships between the BNS department and the leading property management firms in the area.

The John's Island Community Association model, in which members of different HOAs come together to share information, offers another way for the city to expand its reach. Look for ways to support this association of associations by sharing information with them, actively inviting them into conversations, and even encouraging other area groups to follow their model.

Improving outreach with managed communities will become even more important as issues with storm water management and a recognized need for new housing types may be in conflict with the Covenants, Conditions, & Restrictions (CC&Rs) within planned neighborhood developments. Not only will better relationships with these developments improve overall citizen relations and engagement, they could also come in handy if reaching the City's goals requires updating/changing older CCR's and buy-in from neighborhood leadership or even neighborhood votes.

THE CITY HAS EXPERIENCED 13.97% GROWTH AND PERMITTED 19,000 NEW RESIDENTIAL UNITS OVER THE PAST TEN YEARS, MANY OF WHICH HAVE BEEN IN LESS DENSE PLANNED DEVELOPMENTS IN THE CITY'S SUBURBAN AREAS AND APARTMENT COMPLEXES WITHIN THE CITY CENTER.





AREA MEETINGS

DOWNTOWN PENINSULA

Morning and Evening,
August 25, 2020.
60 registered
33 attended.

- There is a sense of pride for both lifelong Charlestonians and transient residents. Everyone wants it to be the best place it can be, but improvements are needed in the areas of transportation, safe walk and biking paths, affordable housing, history preservation to ensure equitable, sustainable, dense, walkable, well-connected, dry places.
- Building codes and zoning regulations are not small business friendly and often have economic barriers that impact local businesses disproportionately. Some businesses located in communities that are still inequitable have stricter standards than others.
- City's relationship with the community lacks transparency and authentic communication.
- City should focus more on investing in an equitable quality of life for residents to make it the best place to live, versus putting Charleston on map for #1 place to visit.
- Traffic and managing the number of people living here needs more attention.
- Flooding is a health and safety issue and affects all aspects of everyone's lives in regards to affordability, air quality, water quality, to prevent residences having to make decision to move. Flooding is the biggest problem, don't have a handle on it yet, and if we can't do that we can't do much else.
- Need to ensure every resident has the resources and amenities needed to thrive. City needs to re-evaluate programs and services offered to the community to ensure it is impacting livability and quality of life.
- Prioritizing public spaces and parks with a variety of amenities.
- Gentrification has caused the loss of affordable housing, especially for African American residents

WEST ASHLEY

Morning and Evening,
September 1, 2020.

98 registered

53 attended.

- Concerns for severe flooding in older more established communities, solution for safety needed.
- Appreciation for the greenway paths and sidewalk segments, are appreciated, paths should be better connected to neighborhoods, recreation opportunities and support lifestyle amenities safely.
- Would be nice to have more access to Charlestowne Landing for walking and biking
- Improvements to transportation infrastructure accessibility and mass transit to eliminate traffic and congestion.
- Improvements to economic infrastructure leading to diverse business development and growth in the area
- More multi-use housing options to support diverse communities

CAINHOY PENINSULA/ WANDO-HUGER

Morning and Evening,
September 3, 2020.

50 registered
24 attended.

- Value public areas for recreation (i.e. tennis courts)- trails as connectors to nature, water, and community. Opportunities for fishing, crabbing, connection to living off of land/water.
- Truck traffic on Clements Ferry - trucks losing cargo/freight, need designated lanes
- Lack of vehicular connection between neighborhoods - recreation trails is a start
- Disconnect between life inside and outside of planned developments seen in conversations about historical perspectives, zoning, “safety”, and access to recreation/trails
- Desire for multi-model transportation such as a ferry system to offset traffic and congestion
- Charleston is having a hard time staying ahead of growth. Time from planning to construction cannot keep up with growth on the ground.
- Desire to avoid negative impacts to the Jack Primus community and area’s history
- Would be good to have green spaces that showcase cultural resources and a farmers’ market - opportunities to get the community to connect and engage.
- Urban Growth Boundary is important to protect
- Preserve and protect greenspaces and forests

COMMUNITY OUTREACH SPOTLIGHT

Jack Primus Settlement

With expansion on the Cainhoy Peninsula and large tracts of land available for development, the City's Planning and Sustainability department recognized the need to reach out to the historic Jack Primus settlement community.

This outreach effort began with Vernelle Dickerson with the Keith School museum, Fred Lincoln of the Wando-Huger Community Development Corporation, and community leader Sybil Mitchell. The conversation began with a reminder that Wando and Huger are recognized places versus Cainhoy, which is more of a regional reference. Cainhoy, which was associated with the Cainhoy school, is now associated generally with new developments in the region and the expansion of the city up from Daniel Island along Clements Ferry Road. Dismissing the Wando and Huger as locations can feel like the City of Charleston is not recognizing historic boundaries.

Growth in this area and within other settlement communities will continue to create issues around access, housing costs, preservation, and cultural sensitivity which will require thoughtful and equitable policies to address.

THE KEITH SCHOOL IS A HISTORIC ONE-ROOM, WOODEN BUILDING FOUNDED BY EDWARD KEITH, WITH HELP FROM THE JACK PRIMUS COMMUNITY, TO EDUCATE CHILDREN OF THE AREA'S FORMERLY ENSLAVED PEOPLE.

JOHNS ISLAND

Morning and Evening,
September 24, 2020.

59 registered

28 attended.

- Environmental preservation and protection is vital such as marsh and other land amenities seem to disappear as more development takes place on the island.
- Connectivity to other parts of the city is necessary.
- There is not a priority for cultural preservation in regards to the native African American population.
- Environmental impact of development exasperates existing flooding issues.
- Safety - flooding, road infrastructure and bike lanes, pedestrians paths due to increase in density in neighborhoods.
- Need to development more diverse socioeconomic units that improve the community over time.
- **Strong concern for the senior population**
- Unregulated growth and development outside of the urban growth boundary
- Appreciation for the rural and green spaces, but desire better connections to neighborhoods, recreation opportunities and support lifestyle amenities safely

JAMES ISLAND

Morning and Evening,
September 29, 2020.
102 registered
55 attended.

- Preservation of existing historic African American communities needs to include a discussion of whether or not African American communities are included in the Urban Growth Boundary (UGB) and city boundaries - many in these communities feel excluded from the benefits of the town's growth.
- Chronic flooding issues seem to be addressed in some neighborhoods more than others. Residents are concerned that flooding issues are exacerbated by new development. People are not going to live or buy in the area if the flooding issue isn't addressed properly.
- Inefficient transportation hinders the island. Proximity to the beach and downtown are strengths for James Island but access to these locations are limited by traffic, poor condition of sidewalks, and lack of express transit to beach or medical district/downtown businesses. Transportation issues are exacerbated for those with low incomes.
- Confusion exists about which properties are in the City of Charleston and which are in the Town of James Island.
- No curbs or sidewalks on major roads.
- Concerns about storm water drainage and fecal matter in the outfalls.
- Riverland Road is scenic, but dangerous for walking and biking. It requires that residents have a vehicle to get around. Major roads can be scenic, but no curbs and sidewalks on major roads prevent
- We have to continue to develop neighborhoods where you live, work and play.
- Sol Legare neighborhoods need attention.

LESSONS LEARNED

Multiple international, national, and community-wide issues made engagement and trust building even more difficult in 2020. The COVID-19 global pandemic caused nationwide shutdowns starting in March of 2020 and prohibited face to face or in person activities. Not only were the health impacts greater within minority and low-income communities, viral videos documenting incidents of racial profiling and police violence spotlighted the additional costs of racism. Competition for the public's time and attention also included a competitive presidential election season - one in which a significant amount of attention was given to both the presidential race and down ballot races.

These challenges required a strategic approach which was primarily virtual supplemented with a few select limited COVID-19 friendly actions. A marketing campaign with social media as well as information drops at various locations helped to promote the meetings. Kicking off the process with outreach to neighborhood leaders, area non-profit directors, and social media influencers built familiarity with the planning process, captured data to understand communication preferences and set the stage for community led meetings.

While virtual engagement allowed for the ability to meet people where they were and captured a good amount of feedback, it also highlighted some of the disparities that have historically impacted participation levels. The digital divide has left significant percentages of the population, especially those living in older or rural homes and communities, or with less comprehensive internet packages, without access to high speed internet.

The largest racial demographic group to participate in the listening sessions were white/Caucasian. Numbers for non-white participation were extremely low given the current makeup of the city. Hosting infinity group style sessions were offered to address this disparity with the intended purpose of allowing those groups to feel safe and heard.

LESSONS LEARNED

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

- Housing and flooding are two of the most significant issues that Charleston residents face and need the most community input to address. Revisiting how listening sessions for these two topics are designed could help facilitate this input. Because both of these topics are extremely nuanced and have significant layers of complexity our team suggests approaching them from the perspective of addressing resident concerns. While we understand that the planning department works from the planning perspective, many in the community are primarily interested in how these topics impact their individual lives. A different approach could allow for the public to not only feel heard but also to leave the engagement with a better understanding of the current housing statistics. The data found in the city's recently published housing report is worthy of a dedicated engagement campaign. Diving deeper into this report would provide the public with greater insight and understanding of the housing situation within the City and could lead to improved communication between the city and general public regarding the development that is happening within the city.
- It would be beneficial to provide ongoing engagement between the city and the various neighborhoods and communities. An often heard statement from less engaged residents was that they were not "aware" of the various plans and how they impacted them. A suggestion would be to have an initiative of deliberate engagement and communication that is associated with the various plans with city staff/departments being designated as points of contact. This would provide a proactive measure which could improve the public's perception of the city's commitment to transparency and authentic engagement. The existing City Plan website is a good existing resource that should be highlighted more in discussions regarding planning changes and their public impact.

LESSONS LEARNED

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

- Allocate or increasing funding specific to community engagement surrounding the existing plans. While these plans are indeed located on the city's website there is not much awareness on the part of the general public of their existence. Add to this the fact that there are several transplants to the area who may not have familiarity with the municipal planning process. It is the belief of our team that having designated funding to support either hiring staff and/or consultants to provide engagement strategies and services will be a worthwhile investment that would yield many long term benefits such as increased public awareness of these plans, improved public engagement and improved public trust. Given the fact that there were some communities that have felt neglected by the city our team feels that this would be an important step.
- The agreement with the Daniel Island developers to create public parks for the city was held up as an example by residents who appreciated those parks. The lack of similar agreements with other planned neighborhoods on Johns Island, James Island, West Ashley, and the Cainhoy Peninsula has resulted in areas in which access to greenspace, water, trails varies depending upon how they are provided only to those within the planned communities and sometimes even to those within sections of the planned community.
- The Host Your Own Meeting Toolkit was a great example of exponential outreach. Organizations of people (like the AIA) or organizations of other organizations (such as CAJM) can really help the city meet people where they are already gathering, multiply the entry points for people to participate, and provide insight to who has or needs the organizational/ influence capacity to be a partner in implementing the plan's goals.
- The community engagement for each plan builds on the ones before it. For example, the foundation made in the Plan West Ashley set the stage for more participation in the City Plan's West Ashley's meetings. Make certain the engagement done in this plan is the start and not a "one off" of deeper relationships - especially with new groups such as The Keith School/Jack Primus and other settlement communities. Keep the conversations and engagement going.

LESSONS LEARNED

OUTREACH & MESSAGING

- Having a designated staff member focused on engagement and information sharing makes a big difference. It is hard for other departments including the PIO and BNS to add project specific messaging without a single designated point person from the project team.
- Project branding is more than just graphics. It requires a broader communications effort not only among city offices but also on different platforms - Having a messaging spreadsheet provides a helpful tool to align project messaging with the city's social media and "Hey Neighbor!" newsletter.
- The City of Charleston should look for social media "influencers" with which they can tag or share information to reach a broader market. Following the comments, discussions, and shares from these pages could offer a deeper insight into community feedback beyond posts only to the City of Charleston accounts.
- The public assumes that the Departments/Offices within the city are coordinated and should be communicating with each other. This means that when one department/office is under scrutiny, such as the police department, or working on issues such as housing or storm water, it impacts the engagement for all departments/offices. It also means that specific outreach for one department/office/project can be built upon by another, especially if there is acknowledgement of the relationship - ie "because you care about X, we thought you might be interested in Y." For this coordination to happen, there must be staff people or coordinating documents to provide the organizational structure.
- More frequent messaging from city departments/offices could possibly help to counter the anti-mayor messaging posted by frequent social media posters. The second post on City Plan topics, such as housing, received less mayoral based negative social media comments.

LESSONS LEARNED

EQUITABLE FACILITATION

- Although the facilitation was done with a human-centered focus to create connection and engagement amongst attendees, the racial optics and lack of diversity were visual and impossible to overlook. There was a desired goal to host at least 30 participants per session to match what had been exhibited in past in-person meetings, and although we reached that goal in some sessions, there was a glaring lack of racial diversity amongst participants. This was apparent with consistent feedback from participants asking how we approached community outreach and engagement to ensure everyone was included. With that being said, the population demographics most represented were most dominated by white, middle class residents.
- The city should ask themselves what is successful outreach when racial, social and age is missing in discussions. When the participants in the conversation are sharing the same general feedback, but there is no feedback that challenges or stands out, you must ask yourself who else is missing that may have a different real lived experience outside of those who are represented here.
- Facilitation is a skill beyond hosting a meeting and requires advance preparation in forming the agenda, training leaders, welcoming participation through multiple avenues, and following up. Once a relationship of trust has been formed with a skilled facilitator, it helps to build upon it at future meetings or to have a clear explanation of the hand-off to a new facilitator. Building trust is especially important among those who are new to or weary of the process.
- When the feedback and conversations become more accusatory - for example claims of favoritism or concern about how policies are made - it is important to respond with the same interest as when feedback is more positive. This is a time to be open and transparent, showing the person you hear them and are taking note of their concerns. Avoiding the topic or not responding does not create trust and tends to be seen as confirming the person's reason for concern.

LESSONS LEARNED

EQUITABLE FACILITATION

- Outside of race, socioeconomics and age were also lacking. When participants attended representing all three or one of each group, creating equitable spaces for feedback and story-telling were encouraged to ensure they felt heard and seen. During story-telling, residents shared their concerns and disappointments and lack of trust. The city should continue to hold space for these conversations and possibly hold them with infinity groups for each population to encourage sharing and authentic feedback for a future relationship with residents.
- When terms such as “access,” “affordability,” “safety,” “diversity,” “culture” and “equity” are used, it is important to take the time to define them - not just as in dictionary definitions but through thoughtful reflection. These words matter. They come with a lot of interpretations and history. Tasked with making decisions about how land is used and built upon to shape neighborhoods and communities, the decisions of the Planning Commission often determine how these terms hit the ground. It could be helpful to have a facilitated discussion among Planning Commission members, city staff, and even with the community about these terms to develop a shared language and consensus about how they will be applied in practice.
- Translation services take time and money but mean a lot for those who need them and can be an effective community builder. This was shown as a worthy investment for the LatinX and disabled participants. Partnering with Spanish speaking organizations and utilizing language services goes a long way for creating a plan that will impact the Charleston area for the next 10 years.



HISPANIC OUTREACH

CHARLESTON CITY PLAN



September and October, 2020

WAYS OF COMMUNICATION USED TO BRING THE CHARLESTON CITY PLAN MESSAGE TO THE HISPANIC COMMUNITY.

- 5 minutes talking about the Charleston City Plan through Charleston, ¡Aquí estamos! Radio show in Spanish, 103.9 FM / 95.5 FM. After the transmission, the audio of the **Radio Show** is posted on Facebook and remains permanent to continue listening. *(2 segments of 5 minutes each)*
Lydia and Maribel-coordination and hosts. Chloe-provides talking points.

- Art Pot Grassroots leaders will develop the **Charleston City Plan community walk**, walking through Hispanic communities in the area to bring information door to door. *(community walks)*
Lydia and Maribel-coordination. Chloe-Engagement consultants&support.

- Co-hosting live on Facebook through **Charlas Comunitarias** in Charleston, aquí estamos (20-30 minutes) to talk about the project Charleston City Plan
Marisol, Lydia and Maribel-coordination and hosts. Chloe-panelist.

Charleston, aquí estamos ha transmitido en directo. 29 de septiembre a las 15:11 · 🌐

Plan de la la Ciudad de Charleston



Charleston, aquí estamos ha transmitido en directo. 30 de septiembre a las 20:04 · 🌐



Charleston, aquí estamos 30 de septiembre a las 16:53 · 🌐

Charleston City Plan <https://youtu.be/cSYsYOk1rmzK>



SURVEYS AND POSTS

Charleston, aquí estamos ha transmitido en directo. 5 de octubre a las 20:11 · 🌐

Gracias comunidad por su apoyo, su opinión y por compartir este video. escriba su pregunta o comentario porque son muy importantes y necesarios. Gracias!!



Charleston, aquí estamos 1 de octubre a las 16:35 · 🌐

<https://www.facebook.com/54339891961/posts/10157304664676962/?extid=0&d=n>

CHARLESTON CITY PLAN
THE CITY OF CHARLESTON
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 2020

CHARLA COMUNITARIA ESPECIAL SOBRE EL 'CITY PLAN'

lunes, 5 de octubre, 8:00 de la tarde

¿Cuáles son las necesidades en la comunidad de la ciudad de Charleston y cuál es su visión para el futuro? Aprenda más sobre el 'City Plan' y sea parte de la conversación.

WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/CHARLESTONAQUIESTAMOS

Charleston, aquí estamos 30 de septiembre a las 12:33 · 🌐

AQUÍ puede ESCUCHAR el Radio Show de HOY 30 de septiembre del 2020. Un programa de Opinión e Información para la comunidad. Charleston ¡Aquí estamos! Comunicación latina. #artpot #comunidad #latina #radio #podcast #español #charleston #northcharleston #sc #información #noticias #salud #saludmental #latinos @Norsan Media

RADIO SHOW



City of Charleston, SC Government 1 de octubre a las 15:50 · 🌐

¿Cuál es su visión para el futuro de Charleston? Su voz importa. Invitamos a la comunidad de habla hispana a unirse a la conversación este lunes y aprender más ... [Ver más](#)



COMMUNITY WALKS



HISPANIC OUTREACH

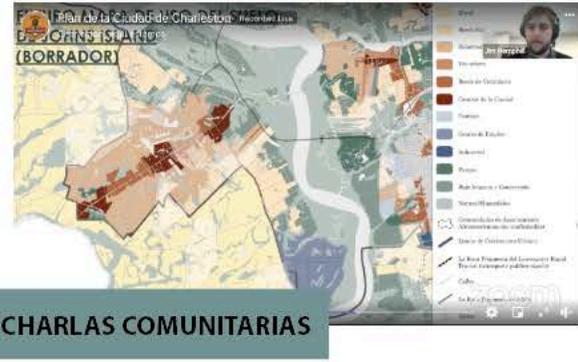
CHARLESTON CITY PLAN



April, 2021

WAYS OF COMMUNICATION USED TO BRING THE CHARLESTON CITY PLAN MESSAGE TO THE HISPANIC COMMUNITY

- Johns Island canvas.
- City Plan session.
- City plan presentation on ¡Charleston, Aqui estamos!
- (Charleston, We are here!) on facebook.
- De Frente (Online Show)



CHARLAS COMUNITARIAS



Charleston, aquí estamos
 26 de abril del 2021. ¡Comunidad Latina! DE FRENTE. Varios temas de opinión e información. #artpot #charlestonaquiestamos #latín #hispanos #charleston... See More

Charleston, aquí estamos
 Publicado por Lydia Cotton
 HOY a las 12 mediodía!
 • Aquí en Charleston, aquí estamos!
 Panel Latino/Hispano con el Plan de la Ciudad... Ver más

Charleston, aquí estamos
 Publicado por Lydia Cotton
 La participación de la comunidad es imprescindible. En nuestro propio idioma la ciudad de Charleston se tomó el tiempo de crear este link para ser escuchados. Demos gracias con nuestros comentarios. Mientras más la comunidad participe, más nos tomarán en cuenta. Gracias por su aportación y apoyo. Por favor entre aquí:
<https://charlestoncityplan.com/comentario>



SURVEYS AND POSTS



Charleston, aquí estamos
 26 de abril del 2021. ¡Comunidad Latina! DE FRENTE. Varios temas de opinión e información. #artpot #charlestonaquiestamos #latín #hispanos #charleston... See More

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 26 de abril del 2021. ¡Comunidad Latina! DE FRENTE. Varios temas de opinión e información. #artpot #charlestonaquiestamos #latín #hispanos #charleston... See More



SOCIAL MEDIA SHOW



COMMUNITY WALKS