

Equity Advisory Board

Historic Colored Addition Beautification Plan

***Community Engagement Plan* DRAFT**

This Community Engagement Plan is designed to strengthen relationships, gather meaningful historical and cultural perspectives, and ensure that residents and partners remain active contributors throughout the duration of the Historic Colored Addition Beautification Plan project. This community engagement plan emphasizes transparency, consistency, and long-term partnership-building. It creates a structured process for engaging community members through stakeholder mapping, listening sessions, a Community Advisory Board, and a formalized approach to collecting and preserving oral histories. The goal is to honor the community's lived experiences while creating accessible pathways for ongoing involvement.

1. Stakeholder Map

Purpose: Identify who is involved now, where gaps exist, and how to strategically build out relationships.

1.1 Current Stakeholders

Initial stakeholders include individuals and groups already connected to the project, such as community leaders, legacy residents, founding family members, faith-based groups, and local nonprofit leaders. These participants represent the existing foundation of community trust and engagement.

1.2 Desired/Add-On Stakeholders

To ensure inclusion and depth, the plan expands the stakeholder base to groups not yet fully represented. These groups may include youth and young adult voices, cultural historians, artists and creatives, social service providers, civic advocacy organizations, senior residents, and emerging community leaders not currently connected to formal institutions. Including these groups allows the project to capture a more complete range of perspectives and experiences, particularly from communities that may have faced barriers to participation in the past.

1.3 Engagement Profiles for Each Stakeholder

Each stakeholder or stakeholder group will be documented in an engagement profile that outlines:

- Preferred communication channels (email, phone, text, in-person interaction)
- Specific areas of expertise, historical knowledge, or influence
- Any accessibility needs that support meaningful participation

This process ensures the project team recognizes and respects individual communication styles and capacities, thereby supporting consistent and responsive engagement.

2. Historical Themes

Listening sessions will be organized around themes such as education, faith communities, land ownership, business ownership, and any additional themes that emerge through early stakeholder conversations. These topics were selected for their significance in understanding identity, opportunity, and generational experience within the community.

These include:

- Education/Schools
- Faith Communities
- Land Ownership: The history of land acquisition, inheritance, loss, displacement, or development that has shaped neighborhoods and family ties to the community.
- Business Ownership: Contributions of local businesses to the economy, cultural identity, and intergenerational entrepreneurship.
- Additional evolving theme: To be finalized through early CAB discussions—examples include cultural heritage preservation, historical community or neighborhood events, and/or neighborhood formation.

3. Listening Sessions

Each listening session will be held in trusted community spaces and designed in collaboration with residents and stakeholders. Facilitators will guide conversations using prompts that encourage storytelling rather than formal testimony. The intention is to create an environment that centers lived experience and invites broad participation.

3.3 Community Advisory Board Role in Listening Sessions

Members of the Community Advisory Board (CAB) will play an essential role in shaping these listening sessions. The CAB may help design agendas, facilitate discussions, recruit participants, and review synthesized findings. Their involvement ensures that the listening process remains grounded in community priorities and perspectives.

4. Community Advisory Board Framework

Purpose: Create a sustained partnership structure that maintains feedback loops and honors community leadership. The Community Advisory Board is a cornerstone of this engagement plan, providing sustained, structured input throughout the project. The CAB ensures that the community remain partners in planning, decision-making, and evaluation.

4.1 Purpose of the Community Advisory Board

The CAB exists to elevate community voices, validate themes and findings, and help create an equitable and transparent engagement process. The board also serves as a bridge between the project and the broader community.

4.2 Structure & Membership

The CAB will consist of a subcommittee of the Equity Advisory Board, individuals representing a range of community sectors, experiences, and perspectives. Members will be selected based on demonstrated interest, personal expertise, or a lived understanding of community history and culture. The group will meet at a frequency determined by the CAB to review project updates, provide recommendations, and support engagement activities. The CAB will also assist in facilitating listening sessions. The CAB will consist of 5 total members with the following makeup:

1. Two members of the Equity Advisory Board
2. One member of St. Mary Missionary Baptist Church
3. One at large community representative
4. One representative for founding families.

This group is intended to help provide communication back to each key stakeholder group.

4.3 Meeting Cadence

The CAB will meet twice monthly or as determined by the CAB.

5. Oral History Framework

Purpose: Establish ethical, consistent, well-documented processes for capturing and preserving oral histories. To preserve individual narratives and collective memory, the plan incorporates a structured oral history component. This framework ensures that all collected stories are gathered ethically, stored securely, and preserved for future generations.

5.1 Consent Process

The consent process will include:

- Written consent form outlining purpose, use, and storage
- The ability to withdraw consent at any time

5.2 Recording Process

Interviewers will follow a standardized guide as determined by the Equity Advisory Board and CAB to ensure consistency while still allowing for open-ended storytelling. High-quality audio or video equipment will be used to preserve clarity and accuracy.

5.3 Filing & Archiving Process

Once collected, recordings will be labeled and archived. Documents and/or interviews may be added to the City's Digital History Archive.

5.4 Integration with Engagement Activities

Oral histories may be used to inform future engagement sessions, community exhibits, educational materials, or final project outputs. This ensures that individual experiences enrich and guide the broader narrative of the project.