

- 1. Is the recently completed “Equitable Engagement Toolkit and Guidebook” available for review?**
 - A. At this time the document has not been released, however, we anticipate it will be ready to share by the start of the project. A summary of the toolkit can be found at the end of this document.

- 2. What was the catalyst for the November 14, 2022, Neenah Transfer Center relocation?**
 - A. This is a temporary move that was done in conjunction with the City of Neenah and Valley Transit. Before relocating to the temporary location, the transfer center did not have restrooms, so the move to City Hall is also able to accommodate restroom access. Other issues with the location before relocating to the temporary location included conflicts with bus users and businesses, issues with on-street parking and bus traffic, and conflicts with buses/pedestrians on Wisconsin Ave. The City of Neenah plans to reconstruct East Doty between Commercial and Oak streets in 2024, so they want to evaluate how the station functions in the new location before proceeding with the design of the new street.

- 3. Please confirm the ECWRPC has identified a “short list” of potential sites for the proposed downtown Neenah Transfer Center.**
 - A. A “short list” has been compiled, however, it is an informal list and not exhaustive. We anticipate the consultant would work with the City of Neenah, Valley Transit and East Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission to create a list of potential sites.

- 4. Is the 2022 technical assistance study regarding transfer center locations available for review?**
 - A. Yes, it will be posted on VendorNet and on East Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission’s website.

- 5. What is the budget or budget range for this project?**
 - A. As the project will be evaluated for both quality and cost, each proposer is encouraged to provide details sufficient to outline the project and a budget that aligns with the proposed scope of work.

- 6. Interviews are tentatively slated for the week of January 2, 2023. Will the interviews be conducted virtually or in-person?**
 - A. The interviews, if needed, will be conducted virtually.

- 7. The Project Team and Experience with Similar Projects section requires a spreadsheet with personnel hours and costs. This information will also be provided within our cost proposal (provided under Budget and Fee Information). Must the information be duplicated in this section, or can we reference it in the Budget and Fee section?**
 - A. Please duplicate the information in the Budget and Fee Information section and expand upon the proposed consultant fees for each phase of the project.

Summary of *ECWRPC Equitable Engagement Toolkit and Guidebook*

What is the Equitable Engagement Toolkit?

The Equitable Engagement Toolkit is a resource for East Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (ECWRPC) staff and local partners to use as they plan and implement community engagement on transportation projects. The toolkit offers guidance and strategies to improve current methods (e.g., online surveys) and implement potentially new methods (e.g., pop-up kits) in ways that will make engagement activities more meaningful, purposeful, and worthwhile for those that live in the ECWRPC region.

While the resources in the toolkit have the potential to improve engagement for all residents, they are specifically designed to improve engagement to reach those in historically underserved communities, such as People of Color, low-income households, people with disabilities, or those who do not primarily speak English, among others.

There are two distinct sections to the Equitable Engagement Toolkit:

Guidebook. The Guidebook details key steps for developing an inclusive engagement strategy that can better reach historically underserved populations. This includes guidance for determining target audiences, scoping engagement plans, conducting engagement activities, evaluating outcomes, and sustaining community relationships. Worksheets are included as part of the guidebook to help staff think through and document their engagement process and plan.

Outreach Strategy Toolkit. The Outreach Strategy Toolkit provides an overview of various community outreach strategies and activities that should be considered in engagement efforts. For each strategy there is information about materials needed, potential partners, cost, and other details that should be considered when selecting an engagement strategy.

Why is the Equitable Engagement Toolkit Needed?

Community engagement is a critical piece of any transportation project, plan, or program. Community engagement provides local governments with key information and local expertise that may not be available anywhere else and is often required to receive federal, regional, state, or local funding. Additionally, when community engagement is conducted inclusively with principles of mobility and environmental justice, it can help local governments improve equity in both process and outcome.

Conducting equitable engagement invites people to reflect on their lived experiences and consider how they would improve moving about their community from big picture changes to incremental steps. Historically, marginalized communities have intentionally and unintentionally been excluded from transportation planning efforts and decision-making, which has resulted in these communities having less access to safe, comfortable, and convenient transportation. ECWRPC wants to address these past wrongs and help prevent their own organization and local partners from perpetuating past harms in future planning efforts. This guidebook is a step in the process.

Guidebook

Equitable community engagement requires planning, forethought, and creativity. It requires creating a collaborative environment where people feel valued and respected, as well as honoring the perspective they bring from their culture and experience. When community engagement is done right, it can have significant and valuable impacts on project design, implementation, and/or use.

This section of the toolkit, the Guidebook, offers a step-by-step process for planners and engagement practitioners to use as they start a project and create their community engagement strategy. And, while each step will be unique given the intricacies of each project and its stakeholders, there are six steps that should be followed:

Step 1. Self Reflection and Research. Reflection and research include understanding your place, role, and power in the project. This is especially important if you live outside of the community where you are working and/or if you are a white person working in a place where People of Color also live. It should be noted that while this is the first step, planners should be contentiously reflecting on their role throughout the engagement process, not just right at the beginning. Continual reminders may be necessary.

Step 2. Scope. Scoping forces the public engagement lead and the project team to honestly decide the role that public engagement will play for the project and how the feedback received from public engagement will be used to impact decisions.

Step 3. Plan. Planning is deciding what strategies will be used for public engagement to get the feedback you need and engage the stakeholders you want at the table. This section is essential when inviting historically marginalized populations to become involved in the project.

Step 4. Engage. Engaging involves holding events, sending out communications, and getting feedback. Engagement needs to be flexible and adaptable. Engaging people you have not previously reached will include a learning curve, and the mistakes and recoveries that go with learning any new skill.

Step 5. Review. No engagement process is perfect. The review step allows the project team to look back at the engagement process and identify lessons learned that can improve future efforts.

Step 6. Sustain. Every project should be seen as a possibility to create new and sustainable relationships. This step offers guidance of how to keep relationships going into the future.

Each step is accompanied by a worksheet to standardize and document the engagement process, and offer strategies to make engagement efforts successful and more equitable.

The Equitable Engagement Toolkit as a whole provides an overview of various engagement strategies that can be used to engage stakeholders. This includes activities like focus groups, interviews, pop-up events, and walking tours. The toolkit is not comprehensive nor do we expect the consultant to use every strategy, however, we intend it to be a guide.