



**STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES (SOP):  
COMMUNITY MEETING ENGAGEMENT GUIDELINES  
FOR DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION  
(DPR) FOR CAPITAL CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS**

**FINAL VERSION 1.0  
MARCH 2021**

## REVISION HISTORY

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# STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES (SOP): Community Meeting Engagement Guidelines for Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) for Capital Construction Projects

## Background

The Department of General Services (DGS) is the District's implementing agency that manages and produces construction projects for the Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) to create or modernize recreation and community centers, parks, and playgrounds. This DGS-DPR guidance focuses on the partnership between the two agencies about outreach practices, protocols, and roles prior to and during engagement with the community and sharing information about these projects. DGS is responsible for supporting DPR during these meetings, which includes developing the scope of work (SOW), securing contractors, and managing the project's construction phases.

Specifically, the guidance sets forth the community engagement process used by both Agency Project Managers (PMs) for DPR construction projects and delineates each agency's responsibilities. Provided below is the purpose of each meeting and examples of activities for each of the actions DGS is responsible for providing.

***DPR PMs, in consultation with DGS PMs, DPR will ultimately determine the duration, project size, and scope of community engagement. Not all Capital Construction meetings may not require the guidelines set forth.***

## Purpose

DPR Capital Construction Projects and renovations in the District of Columbia are managed through a collaboration between DGS and DPR project teams. A vital component of the construction project timeline is creating and rolling out a joint/team 'community meeting engagement plan'. These meetings will be held during the project's planning and construction phases.

During the planning, design, and construction phases of a DPR capital construction project, DPR and DGS will assume unique roles and responsibilities:

### *Roles and Responsibilities for DPR Capital Construction Projects*

#### **Scope of Work**

As the client agency, DPR is responsible for working with DGS and the community in identifying program needs (i.e. a new recreation center or community center) in order to develop a SOW for the new project. DPR will facilitate all community engagement and meetings related to their project.

#### **Lead Facilitator**

DPR is also responsible for leading program development and specifications, community engagement, and design approval of the project building.

#### **Construction Facilitator**

DGS manages the day-to-day operations of construction for its District client agencies. DGS will provide technical and project management facilitation of construction.

## Community Meeting Engagement Plan - Meeting Breakdown

DGS primarily handles its community outreach and engagement through a series of public community meetings attended by a project's interested parties. Below is a description of how each community meeting is expected to be handled to allow both DPR and DGS Project Managers to manage the construction project effectively. Standardizing and setting expectations of what occurs during specific meetings will help detail and memorialize how the community engagement process will flow and how the two agencies will interact. This process will continuously be evaluated -- on a case-by-case basis for each DPR-related project -- by DPR, the client-agency, and DGS, the implementing agency.

Understanding that community situations can be agile, establishing a foundation of solid community outreach is essential to ensure that both the client and implementing agency are on the same page regarding outreach and can tweak engagement plans as needed.

**DPR PMs, in consultation with DGS PMs, DPR will ultimately determine the duration, project size, and scope of community engagement. Not all Capital Construction meetings may not require the guidelines set forth.**

**Community Meeting 1:** This meeting is held before the Architect or Design-Builder is under contract. The purpose of this meeting is to (1) introduce the project to the community, (2) work with the community to finalize the scope of work of the project, and; (3) explain the transition process with community stakeholders regarding programming/design to actual construction.

This meeting should utilize visual aids to help the community best determine what they consider as their top priorities for the project. Previous meetings have used colored sticker dots with display boards containing small spaces listing community wants/needs. Display boards allow community members to 'vote' with their dots for the project features they want to see included. Depending on the project, more than one of these meetings will be required before an Architect or Design-Builder is under contract.

The end-goal is to have an organized and established statement of work scope for a project **before** an Architect or Design-Builder is under contract to ensure a smooth design phase.

**Project Survey:** After the first meeting, DPR will distribute an electronic survey to community stakeholders\* to provide feedback on the project from details learned during the first meeting. The survey will include questions that help define the project's priorities regarding the scope of the proposed work within the allocated project budget. The survey will remain online for three weeks (21 calendar days), and survey results will be compiled and organized for delivery to the architectural/engineering (A/E) firm, once hired.

*\* **Community stakeholders** are generally defined as people, groups, organizations or businesses that have interest or concern in the community. Some examples of key community stakeholders are residents, Advisory Neighborhood Commissions (ANCs), community groups, business owners, neighborhood leaders, and other groups from the community.*

**Community Meeting 2:** This meeting is held after the A/E is onboard, and the design phase of the project is beginning. This meeting aims to introduce the 'project team' to the community and for DPR to work with the community on their program requirements for the project.

This meeting should have visual aids from the previous meeting and project survey results, so the community is aware of what program elements were selected in previous meetings. The display boards

from Meeting 1 should be present during Meeting 2 so that community members can come away with a clear understanding between project priorities versus project 'wants' before Meeting 3 is held. While some refinement of the SOW may be necessary, all 'big-picture' or 'hot-button' elements should have been addressed before this meeting.

**Note: DGS and DPR Project Managers are constantly in communication, at this point both Project Managers have reviewed the community's project results.**

**Community Meeting 3:** This meeting is held once the DGS and DPR project teams and A/E has had time to digest the information from Community Meetings 1, 2, and the project survey results - and after discussion between DPR and DGS Project Managers regarding the SOW.

The purpose of this meeting is to manage community expectations and refine the community's wants and needs. Meeting 3 should include information about all environmental assessments that will or have been conducted to address potential community concerns such as air quality, noise, traffic, logistics, etc. Further, any discussions and comments from partner agencies (such as the District Department of Transportation, Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs and District Department of Energy and Environment) or oversight groups (such as Commission of Fine Arts, National Capital Planning Commission) should be discussed.

DGS should be prepared to begin addressing frequently asked questions (FAQs) on potential construction impacts. The goal is to be proactive and forthcoming with this information and not wait until construction is about to or already commenced. FAQ-questions can be found at the end of these guidelines.

**Community Meeting 4:** This meeting is held to show residents the proposed project designs based on feedback from Meetings 2 and 3. Meeting 4 is held at about the 50% Design Development phase mark, when changes to the design are not overly burdensome or cost prohibitive. This meeting provides the community with a look at progress on the design and a representation/ visualization of what is coming to their community. It is imperative, that the community be asked to provide feedback on the progress at this point. After Meeting 4, DGS and DPR Project Managers will review the feedback and incorporate (what is feasible) into the design, if necessary.

Meeting 4 will also include information about all environmental assessments to address potential community concerns (See Community Meeting 3). This meeting should also reiterate the same message from Meeting 3 regarding information about all environmental assessments. By doing so, both DGS and DPR Project Managers would have communicated twice to residents about these construction impacts.

**Community Meeting 5:** This is the final community meeting **for design**, held at or near the 100% of design phase completion. The objective of this meeting is to show the final design to the community and discuss the construction schedule. This meeting also provides an opportunity for the team to notify the community of any interim changes that the project may require, such as where specific programs will be temporarily relocated during construction.

In this meeting, topics from Meeting 4 should be discussed again regarding all environmental assessments that have been conducted to address potential community concerns. Constant repetition/reiteration is critical in addressing community expectations and hopefully minimize questions about the facility once it is constructed.

**Community Meeting 6:** By the final community meeting –the General Contractor of the design-build team is on board and introduced. At this meeting, the project schedule, and the potential impacts on

residents' quality of life (parking, noise, project work hours, etc.) is openly discussed and shared with the community.

This meeting should also address final solutions to construction impacts, such as changes, noise, project work hours, etc.

## Managing Community Expectations

### Unified Messaging and Collaboration

As the client agency, the DPR Project Manager will take the lead in communicating monthly project updates in consultation with their DPR External Affairs Unit. The DGS Project Manager will provide construction updates to DPR Project Manager.

Prior to all updates being shared with the DPR Project Manager and DPR External Affairs Unit, it is imperative that DGS External Affairs and the Executive Program Manager (EMP) of the DPR Cluster review these updates. Once both the DGS EMP and DGS External Affairs have reviewed and approved the messaging; either the DGS EMP or DGS External Affairs will then route this information to the DPR PM for dissemination to the community

**Note: DPR and DGS (Capital Construction Project Managers and External Affairs Units) will collaborate on unified stakeholder messaging when responding to project inquiries. Unified messaging ensures that both agencies manage expectations and respond to community concerns with accurate and consistent information.**

## Identifying Roles and Responsibilities:

DPR Roles and Responsibilities:

- Facilitates all required community meetings;
- Provides DGS with community presentations and any supplemental information to be posted on the DGS website after the appropriate Meetings.

DGS Roles and Responsibilities:

- Supports DPR during community meetings, as needed
- Provides monthly reports via email to DPR regarding project status;
- Provides periodic status updates on the DGS webpage for construction projects.

The DPR External Affairs Unit will provide messaging to stakeholders regarding design, project budget, and project duration after confirming technical accuracy with the DGS PM.

***For awareness, DPR and DGS will loop each other in on all correspondence to the community to ensure that shared information is accurate and consistent.***

**This includes unforeseen construction concerns that may impact the project.**

## Implementation of FAQs for Community Meetings

Throughout the project's lifespan, both DPR and DGS receive frequently asked questions, including those listed below that are anticipated project questions from community members. The responses to them should answer most inquiries about environmental assessments that will be conducted to address potential community concerns about air quality, noise, traffic, logistics, etc. DGS will gather frequently

received inquiries, and brainstorm on project topical issues, then create a standardized FAQ one-pager for construction-related projects.

Responses to project FAQs allow both agencies to effectively manage community expectations, particularly on regularly mentioned inquiries, to educate new and existing residents about the DPR-DGS capital construction project and build transparency of both DGS and DPR construction and logistics divisions.

The DGS Project Manager will use the questions below to create a standardized FAQ one-pager for construction-related items.

1. What will the routing of trucks be, to and from the site?
2. What road, sidewalk, or bike lane closures should we expect?
3. What air quality or ground vibration monitoring will be done?
4. What will be done to mitigate hazardous materials and/or dust from escaping from the project site?
5. Will any pre-construction and post-construction surveys be done on my home or business?
6. What will be done to mitigate noise and what noise level should we expect?
7. What are the working hours on the site?
8. Will temporary sidewalks or pathways be built?
9. Will any bus stops, bike racks, or bike-share corrals be relocated?
10. What is the expected duration of construction?
11. What trees will be removed, and what tree protection measures will be put in place?
12. What area(s) will be used for staging?
13. Where will the contractors' park be located, and how will any 'no-parking' restrictions be enforced?
14. Will DGS take away any street parking?
15. What will be done to make sure traffic and pedestrian accommodations are implemented during construction?
16. Will trash and debris from construction activity be removed?
17. How will the community be kept updated on construction progress during the project?
18. Will construction workers wear Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and follow social distancing requirements?
19. What measures will the construction team put into place regarding rodent abatement prior to/ and during the construction process?
20. What measures will the construction team put into place regarding monitoring of air quality during the construction process?
21. Who will be the point of contact during construction to report any problems during business and non-business hours?

## Implementation

**This protocol will be implemented in March 2021.**

*\*This protocol applies to all DGS and DPR employees, agents, and contractors who engage with the public. This document will be updated to reflect changes in directives and to introduce new recommended practices as they become available.*