

City of Biddeford
Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee
November 30, 2023 5:30 PM via Zoom

You are invited to a Zoom webinar.

When: Nov 30, 2023 05:30 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada)

Topic: Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee Meeting (Policy Sub Committee)

Please click the link below to join the webinar:

<https://biddeford.zoom.us/j/96051292936?pwd=UjVWQWVKbVVIVkZyTFhqM1Z0RGpzQT09>

Passcode: 793838

Or One tap mobile :

+13092053325,,96051292936# US

+13126266799,,96051292936# US (Chicago)

Or Telephone:

Dial(for higher quality, dial a number based on your current location):

+1 309 205 3325 US

+1 312 626 6799 US (Chicago)

+1 646 558 8656 US (New York)

Status: Policy Sub Committee

1. Call to Order

2. Discussion Items:

- 2.1. Best Practices for Promoting Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in Community Engagement
[_Best Practices for Promoting Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in Community Engagement v0.2.pdf](#)

3. Adjourn:

Best Practices for Promoting Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in Community Engagement

The City of Biddeford, through both internal and external Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) committees, and with the support of the DEI Coordinator, aims to create an atmosphere of inclusion and belonging across all aspects of our municipal work. While this is an ambitious endeavor indeed, it is also one that can be exemplified by the ways in which we engage with the community. Whether we are hosting events, publishing various communications, soliciting input and feedback, and/or building partnerships across the city, each has the capacity to be designed, implemented, and evaluated through a DEI lens. Thus, we hold this truth at the core of our work: that each resident, business owner, student, and/or visitor of Biddeford, particularly those who have been the most marginalized, don't have to question whether or not they were thought of during the planning process; it will simply be true.

While this document is intended to be a guide (and potentially a checklist) for the planning and execution of varied forms of community engagement, we also recognize that language, context, and best practices are constantly evolving and will need updating. We hope that committees and City government will use the following steps and strategies to plan for and navigate circumstances they may not have considered, or those in need of further investigation.

If you have questions or would like to discuss this document in more detail, please contact the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Coordinator (shelly.gibson@biddefordmaine.org).

Accessibility

Do members of the community have access to programs and the ability to participate?

- Strive to identify which of the following circumstances might be preventing members of the community from participating, and address/accommodate for each as follows:
 - Dis/Ability: Choose locations for events that are accessible to everyone, particularly people with wheelchairs or limited mobility. Include subtitles on recordings, and/or provide for the needs of blind/low vision participants and those who are deaf/hard of hearing.
 - Language: Provide translation materials and/or translators for members of the community who are English Language Learners.
 - Literacy: Use plain language and concise communication, free of jargon and unexplained abbreviations.
 - Time: Host events and programs at different times to accommodate varied life/work schedules, and provide recordings/materials for those who are unable to attend.
 - Location: Host events and programs at locations that can be easily accessed by community members on their own or via public transportation.
 - Technology: Provide materials or channels for communication that are easy to find and review online. Include assistive technology, as well as offline options for those who are less familiar with technology or do not have internet capabilities.

Active Engagement

Do members of the community have meaningful opportunities to be informed and involved in the design, delivery, and evaluation of public programs that affect them?

- Consider how the community can be engaged across the [*spectrum of public participation*](#):
 - *Inform* the public of the issues and initiatives going on in their community
 - Social media campaign; City website; newsletter; press release; presentation; Public Access programming; paid advertising in newspaper
 - *Consult* with the public to identify needs, preferences, or provide feedback on actions taken in the community
 - *Our Biddeford*, the City of Biddeford's online community engagement platform (e.g., surveys, polls); e-mail requests for comment; public hearings; surveys by mail; focus groups; guest speakers
 - *Involve* the public in the planning and implementation of the policies, programs, and decisions that affect them
 - *Our Biddeford*, the City of Biddeford's online community engagement platform (e.g., option analysis, Q&A, mapping); advisory boards
 - *Collaborate* with the public on projects and *empower* them to decide on actions taken in the community
 - *Our Biddeford*, the City of Biddeford's online community engagement platform (e.g., ideas wall, participatory budgeting); partnerships with local organizations; committees; task forces; ballot measures
- *Please refer to the appendix for more information about the *Our Biddeford* platform.

Accountability

Are we responding to feedback and maintaining reciprocal and sustainable relationships within the community, even after an event or project has concluded?

- Build trust and credibility by actively listening to those most often excluded or overlooked (i.e. BIPOC, LGBTQ+ folks, people with disabilities, the unhoused community, etc.).
- When soliciting feedback, acknowledge and validate the concerns, and be transparent about existing (and potential) limitations.
- Continuously review data and meet with constituents to remain familiar with who lives and works in the community.
- Ensure that groups who have been historically marginalized were invited, engaged, felt included, and want to continue to participate in the future.
 - *Consider adding ways to track...*
- Report results once a project is complete so people can understand how their feedback was incorporated when making decisions.
- *Consider adding a bullet/sub bullet about how to measure and evaluate if the above list (community engagement efforts) was utilized, if processes improved from year to year, essentially if we were effective in doing what we set out to do, etc.*