

## Community Engagement Leadership Team Informational Packet

**Background:** Over the next 2 years, Baltimore's Department of Planning will lead a public process to develop a new Comprehensive Plan.

The Comprehensive Plan will serve to define + guide equitable neighborhood development over the next ten years.

The Comprehensive Plan asks, how can we make Baltimore an inviting place for residents so that our residents:

- Want to stay
- Benefit from staying
- Invite and encourage their family and friends to live in Baltimore

In order to develop a plan that represents Baltimore, the Department of Planning is seeking Community Based organizations to lead this engagement process. This means that community based organizations will play the lead role in determining and designing what meaningful engagement looks like.

In order to plan more equitably, we want our plan to listen to voices representative of Baltimore, especially those that have been systematically left out of and/or harmed by the urban planning process in the past.

### Community Engagement Leadership Team responsibilities:

- Raise awareness: make sure that their community knows about the Comprehensive Plan process, and how to get involved and provide input.
- Design: develop and implement **creative engagement strategies** to get the word out about the Comprehensive Plan and solicit input. Document your community's ideas and priorities for the plan.

### Frequently Asked Questions

#### What do you mean by “creative engagement strategy”?

We define engagement broadly. We want to reach as many people as possible, through whatever means works best for them. We also value deeper resident engagement – longer conversations to understand resident experiences and opportunities to shape the ideas, policies and content of the Comprehensive Plan.

Creative engagement strategies might include surveys, social media, art, community festivals, or pop up events. But, we are leaving the specifics up to you – you know best what works for your neighborhood or community.

#### How many organizations will be selected? How will these organizations be selected? How will they be compensated?

As you might expect, the Department of Planning is working with a limited project budget.

We anticipate having the capacity to support 15-20 organizations citywide with roughly \$5,000-\$7,500 dollars per organization – but are hoping to be able to provide more. We are looking for the organizations to guide this – as part of the process, please let us know what you need to do this work.

We know that it will be challenging to select 15-20 organizations that represent all the geographic and demographic communities of our City - though this is our goal. We hope to be able to fund more organizations over time, and aim to provide many additional avenues for the public-at-large to engage with the plan.

The organizations will be selected based on responses to the short questions in the proposal form, reviewed by a team of DOP staff and members of the Comprehensive Plan Advisory Council working collaboratively.

### **Is equity a factor in the selection process?**

The selection process will prioritize racial equity. Specifically, this means prioritizing Black-led community organizations in Baltimore.

In addition, through our pre-planning process, we identified several other priority communities. We hope to partner with organizations connected to these groups and best able to represent their voices.

The groups identified include (1) youth (especially young men); (2) renters (especially housing insecure residents); (3) elderly (and others with limited access to technology); (4) immigrant communities. Overall, these groups include many of our lowest income residents in Baltimore.

When filling out your proposal, be sure to highlight how you will amplify the voices of the groups noted above.

### **What about the City's COVID-19 and Vaccination policy?**

Organizations must be flexible to do engagement both virtually and in person, depending on how the Covid-19 situation evolves. In addition, organizations must be flexible to quickly change approaches as the Covid-19 situation changes. The Department of Planning will provide real time guidance to organizations about appropriate protocols.

The City of Baltimore has a vaccination or weekly testing requirement in place for all employees. While staff of your organization would not be subject to this requirement, we highly encourage all staff who would have contact with the public to be fully vaccinated, including boosters.

### **What organizations are eligible?**

Selected organizations will enter a grant agreement with the City. Therefore, to be eligible organizations must meet the City's grant agreement requirements. The organization must be:

- A 501c3, or partner with a 501c3 that serves as a fiscal sponsor.
- In good standing with the Maryland Department of Assessments.
- Able to meet City's insurance requirements.

### **How do we know that the creative engagement work will actually inform the content of the plan?**

The purpose of the engagement process is to document the ideas, recommendations and priorities from your community. We will provide support to document this information and will work with you during the plan writing process to make sure that the information captured during engagement makes it into the plan.

### **Reporting**

We ask each organizational partner to design their own metrics for successful engagement, and share this as part of your proposal. We hope that partners will share their best practices and what worked for them along the way with our team and the other engagement leadership organizations, so that all have the chance to discuss and learn. As part of the grant agreement, reporting on all engagement activities will be required.

### **Timeline and Key Dates**

- February 18 – Proposal submission deadline.
- No later than March 11 – Community Engagement Leadership team selected and notified
- March/April 2022 – Community Engagement Leadership team meets and discusses shared goals for process; shares ideas.
- April/May 2022 - Spring Engagement Period
- Summer 2022 – Community Engagement Leadership team meets and discusses progress/challenges/shares ideas.
- September/October 2022 – Fall Engagement Period
- November/December 2022 – Celebration (TBD)

### **How to Submit Your Application?**

**[The application is available via this link.](#)**

Questions/need more info?

Our team is here to help. We are planning a virtual information session for any interested organizations on February 2, at 6 PM. Link here:

<https://planning.baltimorecity.gov/events/engagement-leadership-team-info-session>

We are also offering office hours during the week of February 7 to support any organization interested in submitting a proposal.

To sign up for office hours, please use this link:

<https://calendly.com/baltimoreplanning/office-hours-comp-plan-engagement-team>