

## Tool 5.2: Considerations for Appropriate Public Engagement Methods

### Benefits, Drawbacks, and Actions to Consider for In-Person Public Meetings

Benefits	Drawbacks	Actions to Consider
<b>Public Meetings and Forums</b>		
Preapproved presentations and supporting materials reduce the risk of miscommunication and verify stakeholders receive the same information.	With contentious issues, reactions from individuals can be unpredictable, which may result in unfavorable media attention.	Provide take away printed materials with summary information, meeting agenda, and contact information for the Public Engagement Team.
People feel more comfortable reaching out when they can associate names and faces with the airport or its Public Engagement Team.	People may be uncomfortable asking questions in a large group setting or may feel intimidated about expressing their opinions candidly.	Provide a point of contact for follow up on a topic or question not sufficiently addressed during the meeting.
This efficient framework conveys information within an established timeframe; keeping discussions on topic.	Audience members may have alternative agendas, which may undermine the presentation, and confrontations between staff and community members could occur.	Request stakeholders submit questions or comments in advance so the Public Engagement Team can prepare responses ahead of the meeting.
Multiple speakers from the airport team can attend and answer topic-specific questions based on their expertise.	If there is a large audience, it may be difficult to have adequate time to address each question. With a structured start and end time, some stakeholders may feel marginalized if they do not get an opportunity to speak.	Be mindful of persons with disabilities and accessibility challenges and consider having translators for non-English speakers or visual media available for the hearing impaired.

Benefits	Drawbacks	Actions to Consider
<p>During a "Question and Answer" component of the meeting, the public can share their views, ask questions, hear what their peers are concerned about, and obtain answers to their questions; the airport also benefits from hearing public concerns and questions to inform their decision-making.</p>		<p>Consider creating an online registration platform to get a sense of participation and interest; this will inform the size of room needed and amount of time adequate to address audience questions.</p> <p>Utilize a meeting facilitator to direct questions, facilitate discussion, and keep the meeting agenda on schedule.</p> <p>Assess a meeting's success and if additional meetings or other engagement methods are needed with exit surveys.</p>
<b>Meet-and-Greet/Open House</b>		
<p>The informal setting and longer time format provide more opportunity for greater community involvement.</p>	<p>People may receive differing information depending on who they talked to.</p>	<p>Plan for the event to last a few hours so people can easily come and go and integrate event attendance into their already planned schedules.</p>
<p>Face-to-face communication builds relationships between airport staff and the community.</p>	<p>The setting is less controlled and audience reactions could be unpredictable, particularly in one-on-one interactions.</p>	<p>Consider having multiple airport staff present to keep the Public Engagement Team from being overwhelmed.</p>
<p>One-on-one interactions enable experts to answer technical or personalized questions.</p>	<p>The public's interest may require planning multiple open houses (on the same subject) in various communities</p>	<p>Select meeting locations accessible via public transit and convenient for community members and consider providing childcare or refreshments during meetings.</p> <p>Provide staff with their own topic or talking point for public conversations, but instruct</p>

Benefits	Drawbacks	Actions to Consider
	<p>to verify accessibility and adequate room capacity.</p> <p>This is a time-consuming format and may be more costly than other methods. There may be a need to print boards and provide adequate staffing at each of the stations, which may require consultant or stakeholder assistance if there are not enough airport staff members.</p> <p>People may not feel comfortable asking questions to one individual.</p>	<p>them to refer audience members to other staff for discussion outside their topic area.</p>
Workshops/Working Sessions		
<p>Promotes collaboration and problem solving for issues affecting the community where multiple recourse options exist or the public can take direct action.</p> <p>The group can consider multiple recourse options for an issue and come to consensus through in-depth exploration of the topic.</p> <p>Often includes technical experts who share information with the group which allows the group to gain a common understanding of the issue before identifying potential solutions.</p>	<p>Only allows involvement from a small group of people and may exclude some relevant community perspectives.</p> <p>Often requires multiple sessions and airport staff time to facilitate.</p>	<p>Bring a specific set of goals to the meeting and be clear with the group about what they can influence and what is outside of the scope.</p> <p>Advocate for working groups to share findings with the broader community through outreach materials or meeting summaries and solicit feedback from other community members to bring back to the group.</p>

Benefits	Drawbacks	Actions to Consider
<b>Focus Groups</b>		
Local communities can voice their concerns and ask questions in a smaller group setting.	Often entails meeting community members off-site, and hiring a facilitator may be costly.	Bring questions for the group to spur discussion, assess their knowledge of the issue, and determine their concerns.
Meetings can be helpful for groups with diverse backgrounds, lived experiences, or requests as their opinions and perspectives can be addressed separately.	If multiple focus groups are established, efforts can be labor intensive and time consuming.	Determine if compensation for participation is appropriate.
The airport can gather opinions, ideas, and beliefs from a specific community; this confirms various community voices are heard and not generalized; individuals may have different experiences or understandings of the same issue and it is important to capture these.	The focus group may not have the capacity for all those interested in attending.	Identify a limited number of participants so the group is not too large for coherent discussion. Work with trusted community leaders to share focus group registration information with appropriate community members.
<b>Listening Sessions</b>		
Community members can share feedback and personal experiences about the topic, and anyone is welcome.	If these occur too late in planning, development, and construction phases, community members may feel disenfranchised and concerned that the airport is only checking off a box.	If interest is high and large participation is expected, consider hosting multiple sessions so no one session is extraordinarily lengthy for attendees and staff.
There is no limit on the quantity of participants.		Utilize a facilitator for managing discussion and keeping the conversation on topic.
The airport can gather opinions, ideas, and beliefs from a specific community; this confirms various community voices are heard and not generalized; individuals may have different experiences or	This method of engagement is not designed for the airport to answer questions, provide information, or clarify incorrect statements from the audience.	Provide listening sessions early in the engagement process to hear community members concerns before planning and change is underway. Forums and open houses which provide details on the project

Benefits	Drawbacks	Actions to Consider
understandings of the same issue and it is important to capture these.	A long time period may be required if no limits are set on the time allocated for comments and the number of comments each individual is able to make.	can occur later and factor in considerations from the listening session.
<b>Roundtable or Advisory Group</b>		
Members represent their respective organizations or constituencies, and can be a conduit of information between the airport and their constituencies; members are likely trusted by their peers and serve as trusted sources of information.	Small groups may not bring all voices and opinions to the table. Community members may not feel heard or that their questions about sensitive topics are addressed.	Identify influencers, people who influence community perceptions, are trusted by the people they serve, and are in close contact with the public, to be included on the advisory board or round table.
Repeated engagement allows for consensus building and the community to play an active role in decision making.	Since they require a facilitator to provide consistent administrative support, facilitate meetings, provide outreach materials, and coordinate between members, this can be resource intensive.	Allow members of the public to attend the meetings as observers and allocate a portion of the end of the meeting to let individuals voice their opinions.
Neutral forum allows for a broad range of stakeholders to share information, resolve issues, and obtain technical information.		
<b>Staff Training</b>		
Environmental compliance training materials may be a cost-effective venue for communicating information to airport staff about PFAS at the facility.	Information on PFAS is rapidly evolving, so training materials may quickly become out of date, which would require frequent and possibly time-consuming revisions.	If the airport has its own employee training program, consider if a discussion of PFAS or AFFF use is appropriate for inclusion.
	Training may not be offered often, or it may be administered by a third-party organization, which is costly.	

ACRP Project 02-93

The Airport Cooperative Research Program (ACRP) is sponsored by the Federal Aviation Administration. ACRP is administered by the Transportation Research Board (TRB), part of the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine. Any opinions and conclusions expressed or implied in resulting research products are those of the individuals and organizations who performed the research and are not necessarily those of TRB; the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine; or ACRP sponsors.