

Communications, Engagement and Consensus Plan

The process for creating Richmond's Master Plan update

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RICHMOND
300
A GUIDE FOR GROWTH

**RICHMOND PLANNING &
DEVELOPMENT REVIEW**
PDR

Created in consultation with



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Table of Contents

	Page
1. Purpose of Plan	4
2. Professional Standards	4
3. Goals	5
4. Measurable Objectives	5
5. Strategy	5
6. Key Roles	6
7. Constituents	6
8. Engagement Approach	6
9. Engagement Logic and Matrix	
9a. Logic	7
9b. Engagement Matrix	8
10. Communications	9
11. Internal Stakeholder Engagement	10
12. External Stakeholder Engagement	10-12
13. Schedule	12-14
- Phase 1	
- Phase 2	
- Phase 3	
- Phase 4	
14. Evaluation	14
- Process Metrics	
- Content Metrics	

1. Purpose

This Communications, Engagement and Consensus Plan (CECP) delineates specific actions and tools for the entire engagement process and the specific tasks and activities that Planning and Development Review (PDR) and consultants will employ to produce an inclusive, transparent and participatory process to create a new city-wide Master Plan, which will be called “Richmond 300: A Guide for Growth. The CECP will present engagement goals, measurable objectives, strategies, a schedule and an evaluation framework for all dimensions of the engagement program. This document is crafted to be a living document that can be modified as the project moves forward. This draft document replaces the “Process & Public Engagement Plan” dated July 13, 2017.

Why does Richmond need to update its Master Plan?

Richmond, VA is 62.5 square miles and cannot annex land. The Master Plan helps determine how to plan for growth within the limited footprint of the city. Furthermore, every jurisdiction in Virginia is required to prepare a master plan (also known as the Comprehensive Plan) per the Code of Virginia (§ 15.2-2223) and review it every five years. The last city-wide Master Plan was adopted in 2001.

Richmond 300: A Guide for Growth is the name of the City’s new Master Plan.

Richmond 300 will be our city's new Master Plan. The Richmond 300 document has not yet been developed - we are just starting the update process now. Richmond 300 will establish a 20-year vision for the city’s growth and be developed with extensive community engagement.

Why is it called Richmond 300?

Richmond was founded in 1737. As we look forward to the city's 300th anniversary in 2037, how do we want Richmond to look and work? How do we want our residents and businesses to feel and grow over the next 20 years so that when we celebrate our 300th anniversary we are proud of where we are? Richmond 300: A Guide for Growth will articulate our vision for Richmond in 2037 and outline recommendations to get us there.

2. Professional Standards

This Communications, Engagement and Consensus plan adheres to the following codes of practice:

Professional Code of Ethics, Association for Conflict Resolution

- Standard I: Self-Determination
- Standard II: Impartiality
- Standard III: Conflicts of Interest
- Standard IV: Competence
- Standard V: Confidentiality
- Standard VI: Quality of the Progress
- Standard VII: Advertising and Solicitation
- Standard VIII: Fees and Other Charges
- Standard IX: Advancement of Mediation Practice

Core Values of the International Association for Public Participation

- The public will have an opportunity to have a say in decisions about actions that will affect their lives.
- The public's contribution will demonstrably influence final decisions.
- The process needs of all participants will be met and their interests communicated.
- The involvement of those potentially affected will be sought and facilitated.

- Participants will be involved in defining how they participate.
- Participants will be told how their input was, or was not, utilized.
- Participants will be provided with the information they need to participate in a meaningful way.

Justice & Sustainability Associates (JSA) Principles of Practice

- Principle 1: We will begin with what we believe about human beings, not what we see.
- Principle 2: We will state our assumptions up front.
- Principle 3: We will hold ourselves and all participants accountable.
- Principle 4: We will measure before we act.
- Principle 5: We will help increase the Five Capitals.
- Principle 6: We will help increase justice.
- Principle 7: We will help increase the benefits of regional inter-relationships.
- Principle 8: We will design human scale, multi-directional and multi-dimensional processes.
- Principle 9: We will do the right thing at the right time the right way with the right people.
- Principle 10: We will state our objectives up front and evaluate whether we have achieved them.

3. Goals

- A Richmond Master Plan Update adopted by the Planning Commission and City Council by the end of 2020
- A more diverse, informed and engaged city-wide planning constituency
- An extensively documented, multi-stakeholder engagement process
- Positive process and content evaluation results

4. Measurable Objectives

- 25% of participants will have never participated in a public planning process
- Documented multi-stakeholder participation
- Evidence of constituency development via 6000 documented “touches”
- Written evaluations from 25% of all engagement process participants
- “Satisfactory” or “Very Satisfactory” evaluations from 50% of all written evaluations received.

5. Strategy

- Recruit at least 50 diverse and engaged Richmond 300 “Ambassadors”
- Utilize partner organizations to inform, educate and engage their constituents
- Train a cadre of residents to be small group facilitators
- Produce earned media
- Extensively use social media platforms
- Promote stakeholder opinions

6. Key Roles

- **PDR Staff:** supervise the engagement process; be the voice of the process; organize most engagement activities; staff the majority of events
- **Consultant team:** propose engagement strategy, help build consensus, support direction of PDR staff; implement specific scope and activities to achieve goals
- **Local government agency partners:** assist in informing their constituents about meetings; disseminate information about the Master Plan at community meetings and events; assist in the crafting of specific amendments
- **Community groups, advocacy groups, etc:** assist in informing their constituents about meetings; host meetings for the amendment process

7. Types of Constituents

- **Geographic Communities:** Residents and stakeholders in every Council district will be engaged, with special attention given to historically under-engaged neighborhoods.
- **Communities of Interest:** Residents and stakeholders based on their interest in key issues addressed by the Master Plan (e.g., Affordable Housing, Transportation, Historic Preservation, Economic Development, Resilience, etc.).
- **Sectoral:** Residents and stakeholders organized based on sectors of local civil society (legal community, small business owners, property owners, faith leaders, youth, seniors, etc.)

8. Civic Engagement Approach

Often agreement is reached on general goals and objectives, while debate later emerges as specific strategies are recommended. It is, therefore, necessary that a high degree of civic engagement be a continuous part of the engagement process.

The interests of property owners, residents, businesses and government agencies will be at stake and robust debate should be anticipated and supported to achieve the best outcome. The choices to be made will affect future quality of life and economic opportunity in significant ways. The value of individual properties may also be affected.

The project team's approach to the task of civic engagement consists of strong stakeholder influence, limited technical jargon, heavy graphic orientation, and creative approaches. In many contexts, technical jargon presents a significant obstacle to public understanding. Plain language, graphics and illustrative diagrams to explain relatively complex terms are more effective. The civic engagement process will focus on defining specific concerns and being sufficiently detailed to provide actionable input during the process.

Master Plan updates require an informed public. The audience should include all residents, the regulated public (e.g., developers, home builders), city agencies, and elected and appointed officials. The project team will inform the public and give all stakeholders the opportunity to review and provide meaningful input. In addition, the Planning Commission and City Council will be informed and apprised of the project's process, progress, impending changes and constituent feedback well before they vote on the submitted plan.

9a. Engagement Logic

The Richmond Master Plan update process reflects lessons learned from comparable projects:

- Many Richmond residents have a limited, if any, appreciation of the role of the Master Plan.
- A benefits-based information and education strategy will increase appreciation.
- Richmond has physical and social assets that are greatly under-utilized.
- The emergence of an informed and engaged city-wide planning constituency offers rewards beyond the update project.
- Producing a broad civic consensus about Richmond's growth and development will provide Richmond with a competitive advantage.
- The Master Plan update project has implications for zoning and economic development in Richmond and the metropolitan region.
- A strong civic constituency is necessary to steward the updated plan through implementation

9b. Engagement Matrix

<p>QUADRANT 1: Not Informed, Interested or Engaged <i>(What is Richmond 300?)</i></p> <p>Who: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * People unaware of the project or its impact on their lives. * People who have no idea what the project is or why it matters. </p> <p>What They Need: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * The most interesting & engaging facts * How the project may affect their lives * Multiple and diverse channels of outreach/education * Interactive and educational content * Usability & accessibility </p> <p>"What's the Richmond 300 Project?" "Why should I care?"</p>	<p>QUADRANT 2: Not Informed but Interested/Want to Be Engaged <i>(Tell Me How)</i></p> <p>Who: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * People already interested in project but who don't know exactly how to get involved in the process. * People who'd get involved in the project if they knew how to overcome a barrier to access (e.g., speak Spanish, no Internet access) </p> <p>What They Need: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Accessibility (information they need) * Usability (know how to find it/use it) * Multiple ways to get involved * Multiple & diverse channels of outreach/education </p> <p>"I've heard about Richmond 300, but don't know how to get involved." "I'd go to the meetings, but I will need child care."</p>
<p>QUADRANT 3: Well-Informed but Unwilling to Get Engaged <i>(Why Should I Waste My Time?)</i></p> <p>Who: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * People aware of the project but who won't get involved because they don't believe their perspective is valued or that it has an impact on their lives. * People aware of the project but who won't get involved because they don't think it will ever be truly implemented. <p><i>Note: People within this quadrant are more likely to express (and spread) cynicism and doubt about the project unless they are effectively engaged.</i></p> <p>What They Need: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Details about process and outcomes * Evidence of an inclusive civic engagement process * Evidence that public comments are being recorded and used * An understanding of the plan's scope * Multiple ways to get involved * Usability and accessibility </p> <p>"Don't waste your time – your voice doesn't matter." "Richmond 300 won't change anything" "The project won't affect me."</p> </p>	<p>QUADRANT 4: Well-Informed, Interested & Engaged <i>(We Can Help)</i></p> <p>Who: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * People who are already interested and informed in the project * People who are aware of the project and know how to be / plan to be fully engaged in the process. * People who want to help implement the plan after it is finalized. </p> <p>What They Need: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Lots of details! * Multiple ways to get involved * An understanding of the plan's scope * Evidence that public comments are being recorded and used * Usability & accessibility </p> <p>"Richmond 300 – know all about it." "I'm aware of the project and can't wait to share my opinions!" "I want to help implement the project."</p>

10. Communications

The general strategy of marketing and communications, which is to inform, interest, engage and build consensus, is an important part of civic engagement. As the first step of communication, staff will determine and develop the message. Content will be informed by the technical team. Messages will be proposed by JSA and finalized by PDR staff. As for messaging vehicles, PDR already has its database for engagement efforts (project website, government website, newsletters, email lists, blogs, etc.) and will take major responsibility for disseminating messages through these established vehicles.

A clear plan of communication is particularly important as the very first step of involving external audiences defined as:

- Richmond residents
- Key stakeholders

Respectful of each audience's preference and varying access to information, JSA will contribute content that will inform:

- Project website and social media
- Earned media
- Public Service Announcements and community programming
- Neighborhood marketing (neighborhood associations, community centers and cultural institutions, etc.)

Proposed content will coincide with Master Plan engagement and process – the Advisory Council, Community Consultations, Working Groups, etc.

Social media content will inform followers about the significance of the Master Plan Update, Community Consultations and Richmond's planning history, present and future. JSA will submit a tranche of social media content to PDR on a monthly basis. That content will be repurposed for incorporation into regularly updated media (newsletters, blogs, tweets, etc.)

Utilizing established relationships with Richmond media professionals, JSA will help disseminate information via press advisories, releases and alerts to focus attention on Richmond 300 milestones and events.

PDR, assisted by JSA, will be deliberate and inclusive in its media outreach and media counsel. The Advisory Council will be extensively asked to vet messages and material. Focused attention will be paid to publications, especially those representative of Richmond's African American and Latino populations – as well as mainstream platforms.

Typically, media actors will be alerted to Richmond 300 events and public programs two weeks before the date of each event. Press materials will be delivered to PDR and the Mayor's Office with sufficient advance to account for a 2-week media distribution period. A key outcome is to keep audiences informed so that conversations take place with the same set of information and facts.

11. Internal Stakeholder Engagement

Technical Team

A key aspect of constructing strong civic agreement will be engaging the city agencies and staff that will implement the revised Master Plan. Updates in public policy can create controversy. Education, teamwork and a shared sense of authorship among many stakeholders are the keys to moving forward collaboratively. The project team aims to create shared ownership and partnership with key City agencies. This approach is intended to produce effective and efficient implementation of the updated Master Plan. Building a base of support and early buy-in are a critical component to successfully executing an effort such as a master plan update.

PDR staff will lead the process of meeting with the multi-agency Technical Team, as appropriate, throughout the project. Staff, working with this group, will also establish a process to resolve potential conflicts between departments on update issues and policy direction. JSA will support that outcome as appropriate.

City Planning Commission

As the first important stakeholder in the approval process, JSA will assist PDR with proposal development to inform City Planning Commission members about the findings resulting from Advisory Council meetings, Working Groups and Community Consultations that have informed draft and final Master Plan updates.

Richmond City Council

Collaboration with the Richmond City Council will include periodic reports throughout the project to provide input about problems to be addressed, key project goals and priorities, appropriate options and strategies to achieve goals, and the proposed direction on the draft regulations.

During Project Phases 2 and 3, JSA will assist PDR with developing reports for meetings with Council (or liaisons) to:

- Interview to gain input about project goals
- Present periodic evaluation results and reports of policy input and direction

12. External Engagement

Advisory Council

The Advisory Council is a 21-member group of residents tasked with advising the PDR team on major policy issues. JSA will design, facilitate, document and evaluate each Advisory Council meeting. Advisory Council meetings will occur on a regular schedule and will be open to the public.

The Advisory Council will:

- Assist in shaping and reviewing the content of *Richmond 300*,
- Help build awareness of *Richmond 300*,
- Encourage community participation in the *Richmond 300* process,

- Inform the *Richmond 300* project team about residents and stakeholders' specific issues and concerns, and
- Advise the *Richmond 300* project team on appropriate communication strategies to sustain a regular and accurate flow of information through the duration of the project.

Working Groups

The Advisory Council will convene issue, sectoral and geographic Working Groups that will be based on topics that emerge through community conversations. Working Group participation will be by invitation and also open to the public.

The Working Groups will:

- Be comprised of community members, Advisory Council members, and Technical Team members
- Help shape policies that will comprise the Master Plan

Education Partners

JSA will recruit local partners whose focus on planning, development, housing, etc. to engage their constituents in the Master Plan Update process. Educating as many residents and stakeholders as possible about the Master Plan update is critical to constructing broad buy-in for the final plan. In addition, education partners will be instrumental in moving residents and stakeholders from not informed, interested or engaged to well-informed, interested and engaged.

Ambassadors

PDR has established an Ambassador program of residents and stakeholders. The Ambassadors are volunteers who will assist in engaging people about the Master Plan and staffing community events (such as the Community Consultations, community events, community meetings, pop-ups, etc.).

The Ambassadors will:

- Be trained by JSA on engagement techniques, small group facilitation, etc.
- Will serve as liaisons to their respective districts and constituents

City-wide Community Consultations

JSA will design and produce a series of three Community Consultations to engage larger numbers of residents and stakeholders in highly choreographed deliberative processes that bring different people together to talk in small facilitated groups. These consultations typically include informational/educational packets that help guide informed conversations organized around specific tasks or questions.

Opinion technology and polling will typically be used to capture and summarize the range of views or choices expressed by participants. Audio-visual and other technological infrastructure will be used to increase ease of participation and engage diverse participants. Social supports, i.e. refreshments, child care, etc. will be included in order to increase broad access and attention. Community Consultations will be designed to achieve equitable participation and inclusion of a broad array of Richmond’s residents and stakeholders, including Spanish speakers and the hearing impaired. Participants will receive a preliminary report on their input and guidance as they leave each consultation. A final report will be published later

The first Community Consultation will develop a draft vision of Richmond for the next 20 years. Specifically, in Community Consultation #1, participants will be tasked with discussing the following:

- PDR's *Insights Report*
- City-wide development principles
- Key success metrics

Participants in the Community Consultation #2 will deliberate on key policy changes proposed for the updated Plan. The draft Plan will be presented at Community Consultation #3.

Open Houses

The project team City staff will host Open Houses with assistance from the Ambassador corps. The Open Houses will be a time for community members to give input at key milestones in the process. The Open Houses will occur all over the city.

Office Hours

City Staff will host Office Hours the 2nd and 4th Thursday of the month from 3-5 PM in City Hall, 900 E. Broad Street, Room 511, Richmond, VA 23219.

13. Schedule

The project will follow this general schedule. **All bold tasks indicate public events.**

<p>Phase 1: Define the Plan</p>	<p>During Phase 1 of the Richmond 300 process, City staff and consultants completed the following tasks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developed a draft process plan • Met with city leadership (Mayor, CAO, Council Members) to review the process • As part of “Why Plan, Help Us Plan,” attended over 75 meetings with external groups and over 30 meetings with internal groups to discuss the purpose of the Master Plan and encourage individuals to sign up for the contact list • Developed a project brand and name • Created two Requests for Proposals for an Engagement Consultant and a Parking Consultant, reviewed proposals, interviewed firms, and contracted firms • Created a website (richmond300.com) and Facebook and Instagram
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	<p>accounts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hosted a Master Plan launch event that had nearly 200 attendees • Established the 21-member Advisory Council and held two meetings in January and March 2018 • Established the 50+ member Technical Team comprise of internal stakeholders and held four meetings • Developed a Demographics, Land Use, and Housing report • Developed an Urban Design Typology report • Updated the Civic Association database and verified the contact information for each of the 100+ civic associations • Collected data and wrote a cross-cutting, easy to read, Insights Report (draft issued in March 2017) to provide baseline data in preparation for the Master Plan update process • Collected data to created Map Booklets for each district (draft forthcoming) • Developed an email list of 1,350+ subscribers with a 49% open rate
<p>Phase 2: Develop the Plan</p>	<p>Key tasks in Phase 2 will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Host monthly Advisory Council meetings every 2nd Wednesday of the month (until draft plan is presented to the City Planning Commission in 2020) • Host Office Hours bi-monthly on the 2nd and 4th Thursday of the month from 3-5PM at City Hall, 900 E. Broad Street, Room 511, Richmond, VA 23219. • Host Technical Team meetings every 4-6 weeks (until plan is adopted by City Council) • Post content to website, social media channels, and email list-serve (until plan is adopted by City Council) • Earned media outreach (May-June 2018) • Conduct parking counts in the seven parking study areas (February-May 2018) • Finalizing the Insights Report and Map Booklets (June 2018) • Establishing the Ambassador program (May-June 2018) • Finding Education Partners to host Education Events twice a month (June 2018 until draft plan is presented to the City Planning Commission in 2020) • Host public stakeholder meetings in the seven parking study areas “Parking Meetings – Round 1: Show, Tell and Listen” (June 2018) • Develop future parking needs assessment (June-July 2018) • Develop a long-list of recommendations to address parking concerns (August-September 2018) • Developing a vision for the city in 2037 and outlining key goals (August-September 2018) • Hosting “Community Consultation #2: Visioning” with 1 large Community Consultation forum, online survey and booths at Folk Festival and 2nd Street Festival (September - October 2018) • Establishing Advisory Council Working Groups for each goal area that will help develop recommendations for that goal (November - December 2018)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Host public stakeholder meetings in the seven parking study areas “Parking Meetings – Round 2: Recommendations” (October 2018) • Develop a short-list of parking recommendations and create the Parking Study report (October-November 2018) • Host “Working Group Meetings” where members will develop policy recommendations (January – June 2019) • Release Parking Study report (December 2018) • Host a “Community Consultation #2: Recommendations” with 1 large Community Consultation forum, online survey and booths at Folk Festival and 2nd Street Festival (September - October 2019) • Write the draft Richmond 300: A Guide for Growth document (October – December 2019)
Phase 3: Refine & Adopt the Plan	<p>Key tasks in Phase 3 will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presenting draft at City Planning Commission (January 2020) • Host a “Community Consultation #3: Draft Plan” with 1 large Community Consultation forum and online survey (January 2020) • Incorporate comments on draft plan and develop pre-final Plan (February – March 2020) • Presenting pre-final plan at City Planning Commission (April 2020) • Incorporating comments on pre-final plan and developing final Plan and accompanying legislation – City Planning Commission Resolution, City Council Ordinance (April – May 2020) • City Planning Commission approves final Plan (goal: May 2020) • Introduce plan at City Council (goal: May 2020) • Land Use, Housing and Transportation Committee approves the final Plan (goal: May 2020) • City Council adopts the final Plan (goal: June 2020)
Phase 4: Implement the Plan	<p>Key tasks in Phase 4 will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publish the City Council-adopted final Plan • Implementing recommendations outlined in the Plan • Annually reviewing work toward implementing recommendations • Update the Plan 5 years after adoption

14. Evaluation

Based on goals of the Master Plan update and listed in this plan, JSA staff will consider its engagement and communications design a success when we have:

- Reached 25% of Richmond residents who have never participated in a public planning process
- Documented multi-stakeholder participation and provided narratives to PDR in a timely manner
- Secured 6000 documented “touches”
- Received written evaluations from 25% of all public program participants
- Received “Satisfactory” or “Very Satisfactory” evaluations from 50% of all written evaluations received.