



MEMORANDUM

To: Michael Davis, Fairfax County
From: Nelson\Nygaard
Date: December 1, 2021
Subject: Outreach and Engagement Plan

The process of reviewing and updating Fairfax County's parking requirements will be supported by a substantial, multipronged, multiphase effort to inform and engage key stakeholders and the general public. Parking significantly influences many aspects of County life, with impacts on everyday travel, business operations, quality-of-life, public discussions, policymaking, and other realms. Nearly everyone has a perspective on parking based on their own personal experiences. This makes engagement around parking issues challenging, but ultimately rewarding. We generally expect parking to be available (and usually without charge) at every destination, and we have built our communities accordingly—nationally, with seven times more parking spaces than we have vehicles, but locally, it often feels like too much parking in struggling places and too little in more vibrant areas. Few other areas of land-use policy so directly affect our well-being, with impacts on the transportation system directly but also on health, safety, economic prosperity, and environmental protection.

This Outreach and Engagement Plan lays out objectives, audiences, roles, a timeline, and activities. We will finalize this Plan informed by discussions that have begun and will continue through the Startup Phase of engagement described below. Parallel discussions will hone a vision statement and guiding principles for this work, which will be incorporated into the final Plan.

The subsequent sections describe the outreach and engagement plan in general and by specific components. Key roles are described for the consultant team (Nelson\Nygaard and Clarion), the County Project Manager (PM; Michael Davis, Parking Program Manager, Land Development Services), and other County staff and departments.

KEY CONSTITUENCIES

This document defines certain terms for clarity and consistency.

- **Public-** the general public, consisting of individuals who may be residents, business owners, landowners, etc. They individually and collectively have a stake in the way Fairfax County develops, and therefore in its zoning ordinance and parking requirements. The majority of Fairfax County residents, workers, and visitors park a private vehicle at least twice per day (once at home and once at work, school, or another destination). They are users of the parking element of

- the transportation system, and they also feel its impacts in obvious and hidden ways. They receive attention in each of the five objectives described below.
- Stakeholders- individuals or groups with specific perspectives on the way the County develops, and therefore in its zoning ordinance and parking requirements.
 - Officials- includes Fairfax County government individuals and bodies that will draft, recommend, and/or approve changes to County parking requirements. This includes the Board of Supervisors, Planning Commission, and County staff.
 - Community- the aggregate total of the public, stakeholders, and officials described above. In sum, the entirety of Fairfax County interested in, affected by, and/or responsible for parking requirements.

OBJECTIVES

This plan has five key objectives for discussion with stakeholders which, if met, will help ensure that Fairfax County successfully modernizes its parking regulations. It comports with the Spectrum of Public Participation developed by the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2)¹ and the list is ordered accordingly, not by phasing, which is discussed later in this document.

- To present for discussion the challenges and opportunities associated with parking in general, including the costs and benefits of parking, its role in equity and the environment, and the influence of existing and alternative regulations on the supply and design of parking
- To consult regarding the strengths and weaknesses of current parking regulation and its administration, and thereby to understand where, when, and how they experience parking today
- To involve the public and key stakeholders who may be affected by changes to how parking is regulated and administered, and to ensure their involvement is reflected in proposed changes
- To discuss emerging practices in the regulation of parking through zoning, associated policies, and their administration
- To ensure that the public, stakeholders, and officials receive ample notice of a variety of means and opportunities to convey their opinions to the County and the consultant team.

Ensuring Equitable Representation

The County and consultant team believe that meaningful equitable engagement is critical to the success of this project. The County and the consultant team will collaborate on this goal. It is hoped that this initiative will become a pilot project with the County's

¹ <https://www.iap2.org/page/pillars>, accessed 9/10/21.

Department of Planning and Development and Land Development Services as a model of community engagement.

Principles for Equitable Engagement During COVID-19 and Beyond

- Identify project goals, resources, and accountability measures for inclusive public outreach and engagement.
- Identify who the most vulnerable communities are that the project will potentially impact.
- Design outreach and engagement methods—and set equity criteria for accompanying tools—around the project’s most vulnerable communities.
- Consider compensating people for their time, which can increase participation from typically marginalized stakeholders and communities.
- Analog strategies and tools can be just as innovative and effective as digital tools. In other words, mailers, signs, intercept surveys, and other creative if low-tech methods should supplement digital engagement.
- Weight and prioritize input and criteria provided by vulnerable communities.
- Be consistent with messaging and tools.
- Be creative!
- Build trust by following up.
- Acknowledge, document, and forgive mistakes.

Rules of Engagement

To support those principles, we practice inclusive engagement in meetings and other settings. An example of the way we lead and facilitate public meetings can be found in the Elevated Chicago Rules of Engagement.²

- We are aware of our power and our privilege
- We embrace different communication styles, esp. the ones farther apart from ours
- We are mindful of speaking time to avoid a few people dominating the meeting
- We listen with an open mind
- We give and receive feedback, criticism and questioning
- We seek multiple points of view
- We check for diversity gaps (who is missing) and propose solutions for it
- We actively pursue engagement of less vocal members
- We assume good faith

² <https://www.elevatedchicago.org/Elevated%20Community%20Engagement%20Principles-Digital.pdf>

ENGAGEMENT ROLES

Delivery of this engagement plan, and the parking update overall, requires strong yet flexible and evolving roles to be played by numerous individuals and organizations.

Project Team

The Project Team is made up of the County team and the consultant team. In general, the roles of the County and consultant teams are described in the project scope and management plan. With respect to public and stakeholder engagement, specific roles are described throughout this document.

For all meetings and conversations with the public and stakeholders, our practice includes some key procedures that the Project Team will follow.

- All meetings have an agenda and/or clearly articulated purpose and goal distributed in advance.
- Summaries of discussion are distributed to participants and in the case of public meetings, made widely available.
- Meetings include sharing of comments from parallel streams of engagement.

County Team

The County team is led by the County PM, Michael Davis. The county team includes key staff from the Department of Planning & Development (DPD) and from Land Development Services (LDS):

- Leslie Johnson, Zoning Administrator
- William Mayland, Deputy Zoning Administrator, DPD
- Austin Gastrell, Planner, DPD
- Jan Leavitt, Chief, Site Code Research & Development, LDS
- Jerry Stonefield, Engineer, LDS
- Bill Hicks, Director, LDS

It is also comprised of those who use the Zoning Ordinance parking components frequently, including County site planning and engineering personnel, the County attorneys, and staff in other County Departments. This team's responsibilities are to:

- Provide detailed or department-specific knowledge of specific conditions, issues, or concerns;
- Submit comments to the Consultant PM for sharing with the Project Team;
- Consider the enforceability and administrative effort required by proposed changes;
- Assist with the technical review of all products; and
- When in-person meetings are advised by the County, organize venues and distribute notices through the County's established communications channels.

The County team will coordinate engagement and determine the level of consultant participation on specific activities. County staff will prioritize leading activities in situations where their relationships with other staff or stakeholders make them the best representatives of the parking update project.

Consultant Team

The consultant team is led by the consultant PM. It includes several key roles:

- Clarion: Don Elliott, overall contract manager
- Nelson\Nygaard: Iain Banks, PM; Tom Brown, Parking Advisor; Chris Forinash, Engagement Lead; Brynn Leopold, Deputy PM

Project Working Group

As part of Startup Phase engagement activities (described below), the Project Team will create a Project Working Group to provide ongoing advice and feedback over the course of the project. The Working Group is not steering the project nor producing content or recommendations. This group will be comprised of approximately 12-14 individuals, invited from a list finalized by the Project Team based on recommendations from the Board. It is expected that these individuals will each represent one or more of the key stakeholder groups, and will participate for the duration of the project.

The Working Group will meet regularly over the course of the project, but no more than biweekly and often less frequently.

General Outreach

The Project Team will support outreach to the general public in a number of ways as described later in this document. The first such outreach will be Town Hall meetings sponsored and facilitated by Supervisors and supported by Project Team presentations and other information.

Focused Outreach Groups

In addition to the Project Working Group, key stakeholders from identified stakeholder groups may from time to time be convened in small groups. These will be engaged in one-off meetings and activities. The categories of key stakeholders illustrate how these outreach groups may be formed, e.g., a focused outreach group of commercial property owners/managers, developers, land use attorneys, designers and engineers, or faith-based and other community and neighborhood groups.

We will engage with key stakeholders, some of whom are familiar than others with how parking is regulated and operated in the County. The following broad list of stakeholder groups will be notified of upcoming meetings and the availability of draft project documents. Other interested groups can request to be included in stakeholder meetings by contacting the County PM who will inform the Project Team. The Project Team will

maintain this list of community stakeholders with contact information and prepare required mailings or contact lists necessary to keep them informed about the project.

County advisory boards and commissions

- Planning Commission
- Transportation Advisory Commission
- Others

Resident Stakeholders

- Project Working Group
- Citizens Associations
- Transportation/TMA coordinators
- Community-based organizations
- Others

Business and Economic Development Stakeholders

- Northern Virginia Building Industry Association and members
- NAIOP Northern Virginia
- Affordable housing providers and developers
- Parking consultants
- Others

Elected and Appointed Officials

The consultant team will collaborate with the County PM and staff to prepare regular updates for the Planning Commission and County Board of Supervisors on an as-needed basis as determined by staff. Contents will be determined based on recent and upcoming project activities.

TIMELINE OF ENGAGEMENT

The project anticipates included three distinct phases of engagement. Each is described below, but the first phase is described in more detail. How the first phase proceeds and concludes will determine many of the specifics of later phases. To ensure equitable participation and outcomes, each phase will include an evaluation of which groups are not participating, based on which we will adjust outreach methods for subsequent phases.

The project may be structured as two or more rounds, where each round would include all phases. For example, if certain components of the ordinance move first, we would conduct all three phases (other than Startup) for each round. The Project Team may also conduct overlapping phases, for example beginning engagement for a later phase

while finalizing recommendations for a prior phase. Structurally, engagement may proceed as follows:

1. Startup Phase
2. First group of parking regulations (e.g. commercial parking rates)
 - a. First phase
 - b. Second phase
 - c. Third phase
3. Second group of code elements
 - a. First phase
 - b. Second phase
 - c. Third phase
4. Third group of code elements ... etc.

Startup Phase

The startup phase of engagement has begun with meetings of the Project Team and discussions with key County officials to introduce and provide an overview of the project scope. Staff has met with:

- Supervisor Kathy Smith, who chairs the Land Use Policy Committee and is vice-chair of the Transportation Committee
- Outreach to individual Board of Supervisors members is ongoing to discuss the project and solicit feedback on engagement and project goals
- Karla Bruce, County Chief Equity Officer
- Rachel Flynn, Deputy County Executive, who oversees the land development agencies including Land Development Services, the Department of Planning and Development and the Department of Transportation

Other activities in the startup phase will include:

- Briefing the Board of Supervisors and Planning Commission at an in-person joint work session on October 12
- Developing a project vision statement with guiding principles
- Finalizing this outreach and engagement plan
- Forming the Project Working Group

The Project Team will produce materials on parking fundamentals and trends to help inform citizens and stakeholders about the general structure and function of modern parking regulations, major trends in the types of regulations being adopted and approaches to implementation and enforcement, and alternative ways to structure related administrative materials. These materials will be available through handouts and through PowerPoint presentations (and if requested, video) suitable for presentation at neighborhood or association meetings. The materials will also include questions that viewers and readers can respond to through web-based feedback mechanisms.

First Phase: Information Gathering and Existing Conditions

The first phase will focus on introducing the study – its purpose and importance, the aspects of the County regulations and policies it is likely to influence, how it will be completed, and a high-level timeline including additional public input opportunities – addressing questions and concerns, seeking feedback on key issues and opportunities to address, what works well and what should be changed.

Specific goals of first phase include:

- Describing the positive and negative impacts of how we provide parking, including the costs of parking, its impacts on equity and the environment, and the role regulations play
- Describing the context of parking relative to County goals. The parking regulations hasn't been looked at holistically since 1988. The County's development and population, technology, mobility, and the ways people work and play have changed significantly in three decades, necessitating this re-examination.
- Presenting trends in parking supply, demand, and technology (note this information may not be available until later phases of engagement)
- Presenting findings from data collection and trends analysis and their implications for potential changes (note this information may not be available until later phases of engagement)
- Eliciting experience from participants, to learn about general and specific concerns

The Project Team anticipates conducting the following activities in the first phase of engagement.

- Meeting with Project Working Group
- Development of project website (led by County with input from Consultant)
- Meetings with focused outreach groups
- Development of public materials – text, graphics, and video
- Development of web-based feedback mechanism
- Open Houses, District Town Halls and District land use committee meetings
- Collection of feedback

Each meeting will include a brief description of the project scope, structure, and timeline, presented in either PowerPoint or short handout format. At each meeting, the Project Team will solicit input about the County's parking regulations. Meeting summaries covering the key points will be available to the public on the project website.

If requested by the County, the Project Team will also produce short (3-5 minute) video clips to summarize key recommendations and changes when major project resources are posted for public review.

The first phase is expected to begin in Fall 2021 and conclude in Spring 2022.

Second Phase: Recommendations

The second phase will focus on presenting recommended regulation changes, supported by a review of study findings and feedback received from previous outreach and engagement activities.

The second phase is provisionally anticipated to begin in Spring 2022.

EXAMPLE ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES

Given the variability of current and anticipated restrictions on social interaction, the Project Team is prepared to provide “virtual” engagement opportunities throughout the project. As conditions allow, we will also conduct in-person activities.

Engagement activities generally fall on a spectrum of interactivity. At their least interactive, the public or stakeholders are receiving information, with the opportunity to respond but not engage with those presenting the information. At their most interactive, activities allow the real-time exchange of information, whether via in-person conversation, virtual meet-ups, or other techniques. For example:

- Recorded presentation – participants are only receiving information
- Comment via County website – participants are only sending information
- Meeting of focused outreach group – two-way real-time
- Dynamically updated FAQ – two-way delayed

We all know the limitations imposed by the conventional requirement that people show up in a specific place at a specific time to engage in civic life. The COVID-19 pandemic has demonstrated that offering remote participation in meetings can increase turnout, and that those attending can represent more diverse viewpoints and experience than is typically present at a “traditional” public meeting. As we hopefully emerge from the pandemic, we must preserve and expand that diversity by continuing to offer a creative range of ways to participate.

Project Website

The County will develop a website to host information about the project, including reference materials, draft and final products, and engagement opportunities. The site will also provide a method for the public to provide feedback. The Project Team will provide content for the website, and will receive feedback provided on the website via the County PM.

Small-group Meeting

Small-group meetings typically allow a free exchange of ideas, with all participants able to speak and otherwise contribute in ways that are heard by all other participants. The

Project Team will prepare materials, convene groups, facilitate conversation, and summarize results.

Large-group Meeting, Town Hall, or Open House

Groups larger than 20-25 do not support the same level of interactivity as smaller groups. For these meetings, participants are mostly receiving information, with the ability to provide feedback afterward. Often, we will break the large meeting into smaller meetings to facilitate real-time conversation.

The first such outreach will be Town Hall meetings sponsored and facilitated by Supervisors and supported by Project Team presentations and other information.

“Pop-up” Meetings

These less-formal engagements typically occur where people naturally travel and/or congregate. For example, rather than having a meeting in a government conference room on a Tuesday evening, we may have a table or other activity at a regularly occurring farmer’s market. Meeting people where they are is also much more effective when you offer them something fun and rewarding to do. We will consider games, prizes, and other creative ways to get people’s attention and solicit their engagement. During Startup Phase, the Project Team will discuss and decide on who would plan, provide materials for, and attend these.

Plenary Presentation, Keynote, or “TED Talk”

Everyone who has been to a conference understands the role of the keynote presentation: to provide a common base of background information and hopefully inspiration to a large, disparate group. For this project, we have the opportunity to create and record a dynamic presentation, perhaps accompanied by graphics and animations beyond a typical PowerPoint presentation. This recorded presentation could then be distributed via the project website, played at large meetings and open houses, and aired on County Cable Channel 16.

Social Media

In addition to serving as a way to notify people of upcoming events, social media can provide a platform for direct engagement. Via real-time chats, embedded surveys, and other interactivity, we can get participation from a different set of people than those who come to typical meetings or even pop-ups.

Online Surveys

Online surveys will be conducted during multiple phases, in conjunction with large-group meetings and the release of major products. Surveys will solicit comments on the strengths and weaknesses of different elements of parking regulation and administration.

Surveys will have different constituencies as described above. Comments can also be submitted on-line at any time during the process via the project website.

Periodic E-mail Blasts

The County will maintain an open-ended list of interested persons and meeting attendees and will send email updates on a periodic basis. The list will include persons on existing lists used for parking or related planning activities, and will grow throughout the project as individuals attend project meetings or open houses or request inclusion in the mailing lists through the project website. E-mails will be sent when meetings are scheduled and when draft documents are available for review.

Engagement in Other Languages

The County has access to contract support for professional translation of project materials in other languages spoken by County residents. Key project materials will be translated into those languages, and key communications via email or other methods will also include multilingual information. Real-time translation in meetings requires significant investment and will be discussed in advance with County staff.