



COMMUNITY OUTREACH PLAN

Cahokia Heights IEPA Grant



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Why is Cahokia Heights conducting outreach and engagement?

The purpose of the community outreach and engagement plan is to provide an understandable, transparent, and cohesive strategy for informing, consulting, and empowering the community of Cahokia Heights regarding the IEPA Grant. The State requires a city to provide opportunities for community involvement when constructing, amending and updating a general plan. Community involvement entails not only Cahokia Heights residents, but also businesses within the City, other public agencies (such as water districts, public utilities, etc.), and community groups and organizations.

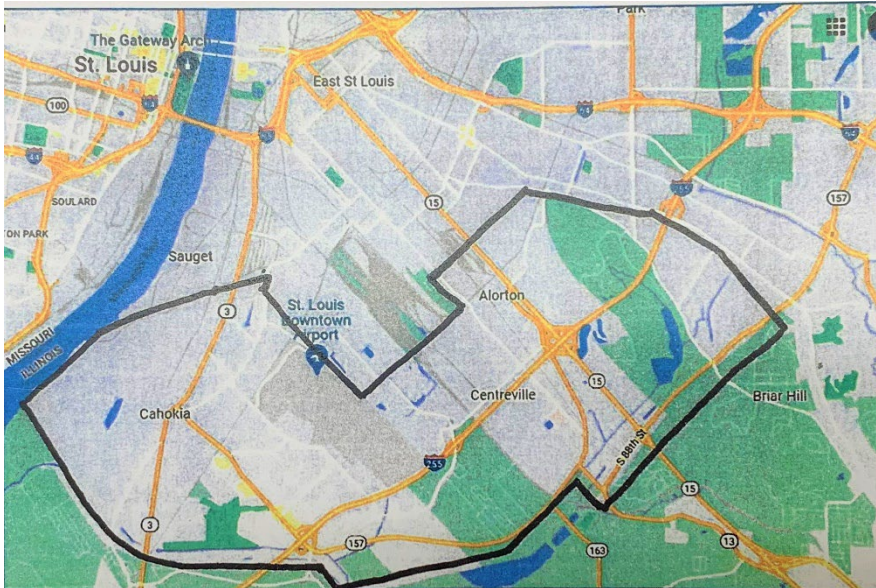
It is important to highlight that community members are holders of local knowledge. It is the responsibility of the City to listen, elevate, and make space for community voices in the planning process. Such space can lead to better and more effective planning decisions. Effective community outreach and engagement represents all stakeholders—those who are directly impacted by the issue, as well as the public at-large; those with adequate resources for engaging, such as time and energy, as well as those who historically are marginalized by traditional methods of outreach.

How does this document work? This document is intended to act as a living document. Instead of a static plan, the City will update the plan quarterly to reflect outreach and engagement efforts that occurred during the quarterly time period (i.e., every 3 months). This provides a single location for community members to access information about the outreach and engagement process, including the plan's progress during implementation. It is important to note that methods and strategies for outreach and engagement may change if it is deemed ineffective or additional methods have been identified that will be more beneficial to its audience. This plan will not change to lessen or decrease outreach and engagement for the 2022 GPA process. Instead, changes will entail capturing feedback from the stakeholders and community members, tracking efforts, and providing a summary on what efforts transpired, such as meeting dates, number of people in attendance, etc. This living document will help City staff and stakeholders understand what methods of outreach and engagement are most effective in our communities, and where improvements can be made for future efforts. Outreach, engagement, and the overall public participation process is always a work in progress that must be

continuously improved upon in order to empower our community in the decision-making process.

Target Audience

IMPACTED AREAS



Outreach Team

The biggest challenge of an outreach program is getting community participation. Forming an outreach team which will represent the community and advocate for the best options to reach citizens will increase community involvement. The outreach team will combine the expertise of local members and subject matter experts to establish a consensus of ideas that will balance the process and establish a strong program geared towards informing the community in the best methods possible.

The outreach team will include:

- Baxton and Associates
- Cahokia Heights Staff
- The City of Cahokia Heights Residents

Identify Outreach Needs

The outreach team will strategize on the current outreach methods utilized and determine if any will meet current needs/goals as well as discussing proposed outreach methods to determine how they can best be utilized.

- Discuss with team the strategies we have identified
- Determine their effectiveness
- Discuss possible alternatives

- Develop a realistic implementation plan
 - Timeline and a schedule of task

Community Engagement Strategies

The outreach team will work with community organizations/outlets to publicize grant information, organize, and then host Community Outreach Meetings in multiple sectors of the city. The purpose of the meetings will be to share with citizens in the affected area the plans for the dissemination of funds related to the IEPA grant as well to work which will be performed and who will be performing the work. The Outreach program (including but not limited to a website, community meetings, targeted mailings, newspaper noticing, etc.) will be coordinated by Baxton and Associates. The Outreach program will be community based, capitalizing on the City's passion for community engagement.

- Community Website: Announcements, timelines , project plans, cost, proposals, bids,
- Quarterly Public Meetings: Will focus on project awards, rfp's, proposals, cost, etc
- Newspaper Noticing
- Ground breaking - Shovel Ready Public Event

Community Outreach Cost

Once all needs are accessed, vendors will be contacted to determine a budget for the outreach program. Multiple vendors will be contacted, from web designers/programmers, local newspaper vendors and printers to determine the best cost. All efforts will be made to ensure quality and affordable options./.;''''

- Website Creator and Cost
- Public Meetings Budget
- Newspaper Quarterly Cost
- Public Event Cost
- Public Relations Cost
 - Signage, printings, yard signs, etc

Establish Goals

Once all other vital areas have been established, goals for the success of the program will be created. These goals will provide a framework for a successful outreach campaign as well as evaluating current methods for improvement.

- Determine dates for launch
- Determine benchmarks for success

Baxton and Associates

Antonio Baxton is the Managing Partner of Baxton and Associates, LLC an economic development consulting company that specialize in business tax credits and grants. Previously he served as manager in the Central Region Tax Credits and Incentives practice for Ernst & Young LLP. where he identified business incentive opportunities for clients in the Central Market. Antonio has a track record of establishing relationships with key government officials and economic development organizations in Illinois and throughout the United States to maximize business incentives for clients.

Prior to joining EY, Antonio was the Deputy Director for the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity. Antonio started at Illinois Department of Commerce in January 2006 and during his role as Deputy Director, Antonio helped clients realize significant benefits in areas such as tax credits and grants. The role of the Department and Antonio's team was to raise Illinois' profile as a premier global business destination; and to provide a foundation for the economic prosperity of all Illinoisans, through coordination of business recruitment and retention, relationship building, as well as the administration of state and federal grant programs. During his tenure at EY and the Illinois Department of Commerce, Antonio was able to forge professional relationships with various economic development organizations such as Illinois Black Chamber of Commerce, St. Louis Regional Business Council, Ameren, Nicor, and numerous national political leaders and business organizations.

Antonio maintains close working relationships with other local and state governmental entities throughout the country and works to transform those relationships into tangible benefits for his client.

In 2020, Baxton and Associates worked with The Village of Alorton, The Village of Cahokia and The City of Centreville to identify citizens needs through needs assessments and multiple townhall meetings to assist with the merger between the 3 communities. We constructed an outreach program which consisted of mailings, social media, townhall meetings, local news and newspapers articles and assisted in successfully making history by merging three communities. Baxton and Associates has maintained a working relationship with the City of Cahokia Heights and its citizens.