

Department Source: City Manager
To: City Council
From: City Manager & Staff
Council Meeting Date: November 3, 2025
Re: Community Engagement Update
Impacted Ward: Citywide

Executive Summary

The City Manager's Office has prepared a report that outlines the various engagement initiatives conducted during the past year. This report highlights educational opportunities for residents as well as the efforts of the community engagement team.

Discussion

Recently, the City Manager and City Council placed an increased emphasis on community engagement. The City Manager's Office increased opportunities for community members to learn about various City initiatives/programs and provide input.

The City hired an Engagement Coordinator position in January of 2024, in addition to four part time staff members to create the Community Connectors program.

The goal of the Community Connectors program is to reduce barriers between the City and its residents. Some of the efforts include:

- Serving as facilitators at community meetings that highlight arising issues across the city
- Helping facilitate meetings designed to educate residents on various City initiatives
- Connecting residents to community resources

Some of the programs the office conducts with the assistance of the Community Connectors include:

Let's Talk Local - a monthly meeting hosted by City Council members in their respective wards. These meetings are an opportunity for residents to foster relationships with Council members and City staff. Each meeting begins with a staff presentation on a City project in that ward before opening up for general conversation. Following the staff presentation, community members have an opportunity to engage in general conversation regarding the project and other issues affecting their ward.

Community Classrooms - monthly meetings held during the lunch hour. Community members have an opportunity to learn about City processes. Previous topics have included snow removal, trails and transit, and more.

Budget Town Halls – included sessions on the following topics: budget overview, budget priorities, capital projects, and the FY26 budget. These sessions were held throughout the budgeting process for FY26. Residents had the opportunity to hear from the Finance Director

about how the budget is created and how priorities are identified. Community members were also able to provide input on the City budget.

Listening sessions - The City Manager's Office partnered with Parks and Recreation to host three listening sessions in May regarding upgrades to Douglass Park. Through those listening sessions, community priorities were identified; such as: honoring the history of the park, fostering community through programs and improving safety and access for all. As the project continues to evolve, staff will further discuss improvements to the park with community members.

Summer Block Parties - The City hosted a series of summer block parties in 2025. This initiative was created as a result of feedback gathered at the Community Summit in March. Staff received feedback from residents on how they would like to better collaborate with the City. The block parties were held in the following locations: Stephens Lake Park, Douglass Park, Albert-Oakland Park, Fairview Park, Cosmo-Bethel Park, Indian Hills Park, and Rock Quarry Park.

Fiscal Impact

Short-Term Impact: Enter the cost of proposed legislation to the city for the next **two** years.
Long-Term Impact: Enter the cost of proposed legislation to the city for years **beyond two**.

Strategic & Comprehensive Plan Impact

Strategic Plan Impacts:

Primary Impact: Inclusive and Equitable Community, Secondary Impact: Safe Community, Tertiary Impact: Reliable and Sustainable Infrastructure

Comprehensive Plan Impacts:

Primary Impact: Primary, Secondary Impact: Secondary, Tertiary Impact: Tertiary

Legislative History

Date	Action
N/A	N/A

Suggested Council Action

This report is informational only.