

Village of Oak Park Climate Action Plan Public Engagement Outline

February 2021 – DRAFT

Public Engagement Strategy Outline

Background

Climate Action and Adaptation Plan Timeline Draft (attached)

Public Engagement Goals and Objectives

Key Messages

- Why should I participate in the Climate Action and Adaptation Plan development process?
- Why is the Climate Action and Adaptation Plan being developed now?
- How will my input be used?

Stakeholders

- Stakeholder Groups

Public Engagement Approach

- Roles

1. Workshops and Meetings

2. Public events

Open house promotion

3. Virtual meeting/s and Climate Conversations

4. Technical Advisory Group

5. One-on-one interviews

6. Community Forum Surveys

7. Workshop Toolkit

Background

The Village of Oak Park is developing a Climate Action and Adaptation Plan (CAAP) that includes Equity Community-Driven planning to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and prepare residents, businesses, and local partners and government institutions for a changing climate. The plan will consolidate and highlight progress made by the community to date, as well as provide a roadmap for the community that includes goals, strategies, actions, and timeframes for addressing climate mitigation and adaptation needs in the community. A robust public engagement process that identifies the needs and wants of Village residents, businesses, local partners and other institutions will help ensure that the CAAP is widely supported and reflects the broader community's goals and vision. This Public Engagement Strategy (PES) has been developed to provide a strategic framework for communications and public engagement around development of the Village's Climate Action and Adaptation Plan. The PES outlines public engagement communications goals, key messages, milestones, and stakeholders. It also identifies strategies and tactics to engage the public and solicit feedback. A team will work with the Village of Oak Park over the next year to implement the PES, assessing community needs and engaging the public in order to craft a comprehensive and actionable Climate Action and Adaptation Plan.

Climate Action and Adaptation Plan

Public Engagement Strategy

Public Engagement Goals and Objectives

The Village is committed to providing an open and inclusive public engagement process with ample opportunities to inform and involve the public throughout the CAAP development process. Local residents, community stakeholders, and relevant organizations will have opportunities to share their priorities and expectations with the project team throughout the course of the update, whether it is through a Village of Oak Park community forum conversation, participation in an open house, or an in-person interview.

The following goals will help guide the public engagement and communications strategy. Note that the primary goal of this effort is to inform the planning process. The project team will strive to also address the broader issues around climate science and action through this process; however, outreach and engagement around these issues could also be included in the future as part of plan implementation.

Goal A

Promote an understanding of the purpose, motivation, and value for the project (including an understanding of how the work impacts you) and the process leading to the final decisions.

Objective: Deliver honest and consistent messaging to the public.

Objective: Clearly describe the focus and boundaries of the plan, how the plan is to be used, and the role that public input and informed decision-making play in the final plan.

Goal B

Obtain community feedback on the plan that is representative to guide decision-making and get support from elected officials.

Objective: Recruit diverse and representative participation across demographic indicators such as gender, age, ethnicity, income, and political affiliation.

Objective: Solicit input from key stakeholders including relevant institutions, community organizations, representatives, and businesses.

Objective: Provide multiple avenues/methods for community members to learn about the plan and provide feedback.

Goal C

Ensure that the Climate Action and Adaptation Plan provides clear direction for implementation, builds in accountability, and identifies common language and key messages.

Objective: Provide ample opportunities for the public to voice their priorities and expectations throughout the process.

Objective: Solicit public input in a manner that is meaningful, inclusive, representative, and provides clear direction.

Key Messages

These answers to important questions will be used to encourage broad participation by Village of Oak Park residents, businesses, and organizations in the CAAP development process.

Why should I participate in the Climate Action and Adaptation Plan development process?

- This is your opportunity to tell us your priorities and concerns when it comes to sustainable Village and community practices and policies related to climate change.
- This is also an opportunity to highlight and bring together, in one place, a collection of actions and progress that you and your community have made related to efficiency and sustainability.
- The Village has limited resources and many competing demands. In guiding future funding priorities, we want to be as responsive as possible to individual and community shared priorities and needs.
- This plan will lead directly to projects and money spent on the ground. It is not just a guidance document; by participating, you have an influence on public spending and project implementation.
- The plan helps build a more resilient, responsive, and sustainable Village for its residents, Institutions, businesses, and visitors.

- Various neighborhoods and groups will be impacted differently by climate change. By participating, you can voice specific concerns and priorities for your neighborhood or other communities you interact with.
- Purpose of CAAP: Identify priorities for reducing greenhouse gas emissions and preparing for climate change impacts in the Village and among local partners and affiliates.

Why is the Climate Action and Adaptation Plan being developed now?

- Greenhouse gas emissions from transportation, energy use, land use change, and other sources are changing our climate in ways that could put the Oak Park community at risk. Projected changes in temperature, snowpack, severe storms, and flooding risk could threaten infrastructure, natural resources, and public health. By taking action to reduce emissions and prepare for climate risks, the Oak Park community will position itself to be ahead of the curve and protect the health and well-being of its residents and economies.
- The Village and community have taken action toward reducing emissions and addressing sustainability for many years, including recent completion of a greenhouse gas inventory to provide a baseline. and to identify priorities and optimize data-driven decisions for the use of resources and funds.
- Climate action and preparedness can lead to significant benefits for a community and provide progress toward reducing emissions. Moving forward, we need a comprehensive, coordinated, and communitywide strategy. A Plan will help us to better understand the return on investment of climate action and the potential opportunities that can be created.
- The plan will build on past efforts to establish a clear road map of priority actions and projects to be completed in the short- and long-term. A community conversation is necessary to broaden climate efforts and help direct on-the-ground project implementation funding.

How will my input be used?

- Community input will be considered along with input from Village staff and proposed community groups made up of residents and representatives of local institutions and organizations, and together with careful evaluation of potential actions against agreed-upon metrics such as cost, effectiveness, and feasibility, to help identify recommendations for priority actions. Specifically, your input will be analyzed and considered in devising the overarching goals, vision, and targets; sectors of focus; and implementation strategies and actions of the plan.
- This plan marks the beginning of an ongoing, iterative process that will evolve and grow over time. Actions or issues that cannot be addressed through this plan will be listed as suggested actions suitable or complementary to other projects, programs or services as deemed appropriate.

Stakeholders

In the planning processes equity and environmental justice are central components to ensure that every member of the Village benefits from the planning while reducing unequal burden of impacts. The Village seeks to engage a representative cross-section of residents throughout the public engagement process, including people of color, the science community, conservation groups, low-income communities, and people not traditionally engaged in sustainability issues and programs. Specifically, the goal is diverse participation across socio-economic, racial, and ethnic backgrounds.

Key stakeholders for the Village of Oak Park Climate Action and Adaptation Plan can include the following:

- Village Trustees
- Village staff, led by the Village Manager and applicable Department Directors that include Public Works, Finance, etc.
- Community Groups and applicable Citizen Commissions
- Utilities
- Full-time and part-time residents
- Local organizations, institutions, and businesses (create a detailed list)

Strategies for engagement differ depending on the type of stakeholders. As described in the table below, some stakeholders are informed about key steps and decisions, others are consulted, some collaborate, and finally, one stakeholder group, such as Village leadership, shares decision-making. These types of stakeholder engagement and strategies are described in the table below that was adapted from the City of Seattle's Inclusive Outreach and Public Engagement Guide

Types of Engagement	Strategy
Inform	Educate members of the stakeholder group about the rationale for the project or decision; how it fits with Village goals and policies; issues being considered, areas of choice or where input is needed.
Consult	Gather information and ask for advice from stakeholders to better inform plan development.
Collaborate	Create a partnership with key stakeholder groups to work along with the Village in developing and implementing the planning process or project.
Shared Decision-making	Decision-makers delegate decision making power to stakeholders or give them a formal role in making final decisions to be acted upon.

Stakeholder groups should include a detailed list of organizations, institutions, and businesses that will be targeted for engagement in the planning process. The goal of stakeholder engagement with these groups will be to inform them or to consult with them about the process.

Stakeholder Groups

- Community Stakeholders
- Technical Partners
- Sector-Specific Stakeholders

Public Engagement Approach

A public engagement process should reach a broad section of residents and stakeholders that may include the following activities:

1. Host workshops for staff and group community members to solicit input and vet key decisions, support monthly meetings to coordinate and identify outreach methods and targeted events.
2. Host at least 3 public events to solicit input on plan priorities, goals and strategies
3. Develop a workshop communication toolkit.
4. Convene a group of technical advisors at key points in the process
5. Conduct one-on-one interviews and meetings with key stakeholders.
6. Present to community groups on the Climate planning process.
7. Administer community forum surveys.

Roles

General roles and responsibilities for implementation of the Public Engagement Strategy

Staff Team Coordinators	Village of Oak Park	Outreach Group Team members
<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Plan & facilitate workshops and public events✓ Draft promotional content, interview guide, and survey questions✓ Engage in additional meetings with key stakeholder groups✓ Develop and organize stakeholder interviews	<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Manage project website✓ Support preparation and event logistics, including materials✓ Coordinate project social media, newspaper and radio promotion✓ Host conversations with both the public and planning group members✓ Administer community forum surveys✓ Help conduct one-on-one stakeholder interviews✓ Brief Village Board✓ Present to community groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Promote through listservs, websites, person-to-person outreach, community meetings, and social media✓ Attend all public events✓ Participate in monthly update conversations✓ Introduce a developed workshop toolkit to advocacy organizations✓ Present to community groups✓ Help conduct stakeholder interviews