COMMUNITY MEETING FACILITATION GUIDE

Community meetings are one of the most effective ways to hear firsthand the needs of residents, build credibility, and establish meaningful connections.

The following facilitation guide can help you conduct an effective community meeting by outlining potential questions to ask to assess where your community is at, and where you should focus your efforts moving forward. We encourage you to modify and add questions to better suit the specific needs and concerns of your community.

For more details and tips on how to conduct an effective community meeting, view Commerce's **How to Conduct an Effective Community Meeting** resource, included in the community self-assessment toolkit.

WELCOME AND MEETING OBJECTIVE

It's important to open your meeting with the facilitator introducing themselves, welcoming participants, and thanking everyone for attending. You should outline the objectives and the purpose of the meeting, provide context where needed, communicate expectations, and outline next steps/outcomes from the meeting.

Ground Rules and Expectations

Setting the ground rules for your meeting at the beginning can be a helpful way of ensuring you receive the outcome you desire out of your meeting and ensure the meeting stays on track.

Introductions

Depending on the attendance size, you can go around and ask for your attendees to introduce themselves and the organization that they represent (if any). This can help break the ice and produce a more productive conversation.

FACILITATION QUESTIONS

The following questions can help guide a productive discussion. We encourage you to modify or expand on these questions to tailor to your community.

Community Strengths

- What, in your opinion, is the most important part of our community?
- What existing community assets, resources, or programs do you think are working well?
- What are the unique cultural or historical features that make our community special?

Community Needs

- What are the biggest challenges or unmet needs in our community?
- What issues or problems do you think need the most attention or improvement?
- What barriers are currently holding our community back?

Opportunities

- If our community received a grant to fund a new small-scale project, what type of project would you most want to see implemented?
- What are some small-scale projects that could help enhance our community?

CLOSING

To close the session, thank everyone again for their time, and make sure to reiterate the next steps from the meeting. It's helpful to communicate actions that will take place following the meetings, as well as offer a point of contact for follow-up questions.