Exploring Together: Navigating Hybrid Engagement

Shared practices, tools, and policies

August 18, 2021
NOTIFICATION OF RECORDING

This meeting will be recorded and the Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC) may choose to retain and distribute the video, still images, audio, and/or the chat transcript. By continuing with this virtual meeting, you are consenting to participate in a recorded event. The recordings and chat transcript will be considered a public record. If you do not feel comfortable being recorded, please turn off your camera and/or mute your microphone, or leave the meeting.
WELCOME
Let's get oriented!

- Start muted
- Name yourself
- Use the chat!
- Change your view
Agenda

• Welcome
• About the Hybrid Initiative Project
• The hybrid meeting context
• Snapshots from municipalities
• Peer to Peer learning in Breakouts
Project Partners

**Town of Dedham**
Leon Goodwin  
Town Manager  
Town of Dedham, MA

Sarah MacDonald  
Selectboard Member  
Town of Dedham, MA

Amanda Smith  
Public Information Officer  
Town of Dedham, MA

**Town of Randolph**
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Planning Director  
Town of Randolph, MA

**City of Framingham**
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Group Agreements

- Use “I” statements
- Take Space, Make Space
- Use accessible language
- Lean into edges
- Accept and expect lack of closure
- Listen for understanding
- Active Participation
Hybrid Initiative: June – December 2021

Project Kick-Off
Initial discussion with partners / Interviews

Focus Groups
IT
Cable Access
K-12 Teachers/ Universities

Workshop #1 Navigating Hybrid Engagement 8.18.21

Workshop #2 Facilitation & Meeting Design 9.29.21

Workshop #3 Technology 10.20.21

Workshop #4 Policy 11.17.21

Online Hybrid Engagement Toolkit
What is a hybrid meeting?

- Attendees can participate live, fully remote or in-person
- Facilitation is in-person and virtual
- Happens during one date/time
- Two-way communication
What we won't be focusing on

- Multi-layered engagement
- Online open houses, surveying, virtual focus groups etc.
- Recorded meetings and posted meetings
- One-way communication
COVID-19: Ever-changing

- In-person meeting policies
  - Contact tracing
  - Mask requirements
  - Proof of vaccination
  - Space management/6-feet
- Plan A, Plan B
  - Flexible meeting planning
  - Potential for return to remote
Pros of Virtual

• Shift in power dynamics
• Accessibility
  – Parents with children
  – people with disabilities
  – Transportation barriers
  – people with non-traditional working hours

Pros of In-person

• Human connection
• Unstructured networking
• Opportunities for analog participation
Hybrid

- Flexibility
- Provide options
- Dynamic government – 21st Century Technology
- Resiliency
Challenges and unanswered questions

• Budget
• Technology
• Capacity - How many people it takes to manage?
• Policies/Open Meeting Law
• COVID-19
• Public discourse
• Quality of engagement/participation
City of Framingham

Population: 74,416
Mayor/Council
As of March 2020, the Framingham Board of Health adopted an order prohibiting all in-person public meetings and encouraged remote participation with respect to Governor Baker’s order suspending certain provisions of the Open Meeting Law, and the City’s Remote Participation Policy. 500+ virtual meetings hosted since March.

• Opportunity to modernize service delivery (assessing technology, practices, policy, etc.).
• Residents, board members, and stakeholders have additional points of access to government.
• Support from a Zoom Administrator allows the Chair to focus on the meeting and not worry about logistics.
Town of Randolph

Population: 34,362
Town Council/Town Manager
Planning Board – Hybrid since March 2020; Replays on cable access TV
Town Council – Remote with livestream on Facebook & replays on cable access TV
Conservation Commission and ZBA – Remote by Zoom

- Increased staff support required for meeting management
- Have a backup plan for equipment/technology issues
- Provide users with instructions
Town of Dedham

Population: 25,219
Selectboard/Town Manager/Representative Town Meeting
Public meetings have been held in both virtual and in-person settings, and some have experimented with hybrid formats using tools like Zoom, Owl Pro cameras, and Facebook Live.

• Higher participation at virtual/hybrid meetings
• Convenient and Accessible
• Enables local government to continue to work, even through a pandemic
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Workshop #2</th>
<th>Wednesday, September 29</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Facilitation</td>
<td>1 p.m. - 2:30 p.m.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Workshop #3</td>
<td>Wednesday, October 20</td>
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<tr>
<td>Technology</td>
<td>1 p.m. - 2:30 p.m.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Workshop #4</td>
<td>Wednesday, November 17</td>
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<tr>
<td>Policy</td>
<td>1 p.m. - 2:30 p.m.</td>
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Fill out the Survey!