

# Engaging the Public in Closing the Jobs Housing Gap in San Mateo County

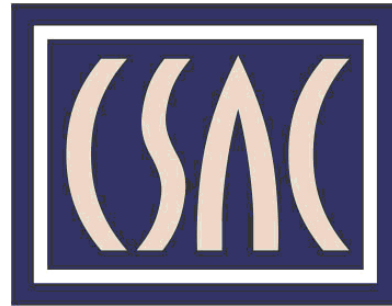
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# Institute for Local Government (ILG)

non-profit research and education affiliate of:



**California Special  
Districts Association**  
*Districts Stronger Together*

[www.ca-ilg.org](http://www.ca-ilg.org)





# Public Engagement Program

Supports local governments effectively plan and implement engagement strategies to reach beyond the usuals:

- **Online Resources (tipsheets, case stories)**
- **Workshops and Convenings**
- **Technical Assistance**

<http://www.ca-ilg.org/inclusive-public-engagement>

# Purpose Today:

Discuss how to effectively bring the



## *Menu of Solutions*

back to your community for further discussion and potential adoption



# Why Engage the Public?

**Informed residents  
issues and local  
agencies**

**Improved  
decision-making  
better impacts and  
outcomes**

**buy-in and support,  
effective  
implementation  
Potential to get  
funding**

**Greater Trust  
in each other and in  
local government**

**Increased  
community  
participation  
Potential leadership  
development**

# The 3 Ps of Public Engagement

**Who**

• **Participants**

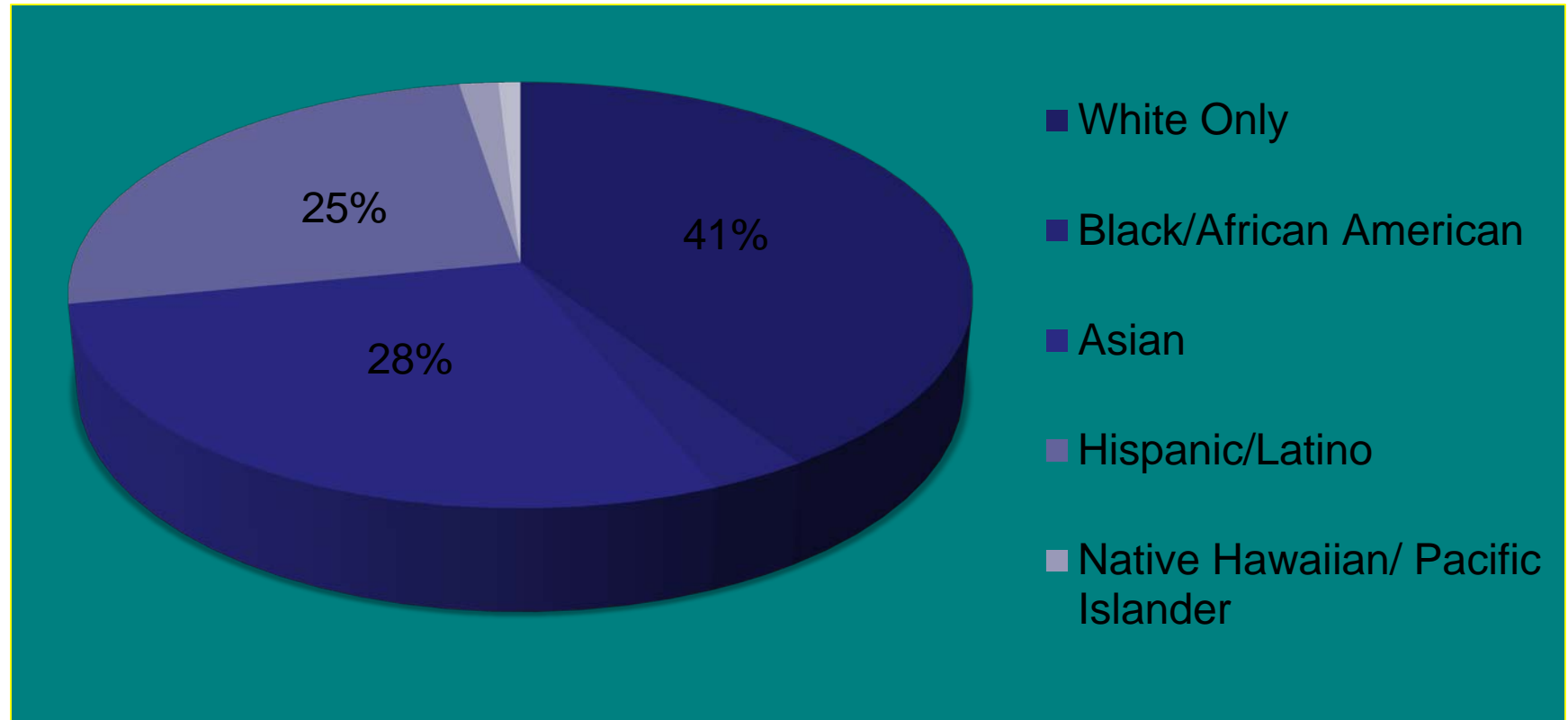
**What**

• **Purpose**

**How**

• **Process**

# San Mateo Demographics 2014





# San Mateo Demographics

**Foreign Born**

**34.4%**

**Residents through foreign  
immigration**

**+ 3,438**

**Residents through domestic  
migration**

**- 339**

**Language Other than English  
Spoken at Home (>5 years)**

**46 %**



# Think About Your Likely Participants

Concerns and  
Interests

Perception of  
public engagement  
or agency and  
officials involved

Assumptions or  
gaps in  
information?

Past experiences  
in other settings?



# Exercise

**What are the:**

- 1. Concerns and Interests**
- 2. Perceptions**
- 3. Assumptions or Gaps in Information**
- 4. Past Experiences of Public Engagement**

**Of Likely Participants**



# Clarifying Your Engagement Purpose

**Should Be:** Generate public views and ideas to help shape local government action or policy, rather than persuade residents to accept a decision that has already been made.

## **Clarity & Transparency About:**

Sponsorship, purpose, design and how decision makers will use the process results.



# Designing an Appropriate Process

Inclusive Planning -  
local officials +  
intended participant  
communities.

Accessibility-  
location, time,  
transportation,  
childcare, language

Don't ignore the  
“small” concerns

Acknowledge past  
experiences +  
restrictions on  
actions

Focus on a do-able  
work

Design in flexibility  
(have a “plan B”)



# Example: City of Southgate

Small city in LA  
County - <  
100,000  
Majority Latino

Corruption  
Scandal

Award Winning  
General Planning  
Process

# Outreach

**City aggressively sought to engage beyond the usuals:**

flyers, posters, banners and flyers in English and Spanish

word-of-mouth campaigns and outreach messages  
- community events, schools, religious institutions  
and citizen advisory committees

local media channels and through the city's  
telephone reminder system.

# Creative Process

Interactive discussions, small group exercises, informal discussion and workshops.

Games and raffles to maintain interest and encourage participants to remain at the meeting.

# Impact

Useful in solving subsequent problems and addressing ongoing community concerns.

Southgate received more than \$2 million and the General Plan was recognized by the American Planning Association





# Responding to Negative, Challenging or Emotionally Presented Comments

Remain calm and  
actively listen

Identify and  
respond to the  
substance of the  
comment rather  
than to its tone

Keep in mind  
*ALDDD*  
(Acknowledge,  
Legitimate, Defer,  
Delegate or Deal)

Ask for more  
explanation (as  
appropriate)

Use the wisdom in  
the room

Intervene if  
personal verbal  
attacks are made

# Keys to Consider

Learn from  
Others

Think about  
Likely  
Participants

Outreach  
beyond  
Usuals

Clarity of  
Purpose

Practice  
Transparency

Inform and  
include

Fit the  
Process to  
the People &  
Purpose

Prepare for  
“what if...”

# Resources

## **Principles of Local Government Public Engagement**

<http://www.ca-ilg.org/resource/principles-local-government-public-engagement>

## **Beyond the Usuals: Ideas to Encourage Broader Public Engagement in Community Decision Making**

[http://www.ca-ilg.org/sites/main/files/file-attachments/beyond\\_the\\_usuals\\_8\\_15.pdf](http://www.ca-ilg.org/sites/main/files/file-attachments/beyond_the_usuals_8_15.pdf)

## **Effective Public Engagement through Strategic Communication**

[http://www.ca-ilg.org/sites/main/files/file-attachments/effective\\_public\\_engagement\\_thru\\_strategic\\_communication\\_march\\_2015.pdf](http://www.ca-ilg.org/sites/main/files/file-attachments/effective_public_engagement_thru_strategic_communication_march_2015.pdf)

## **Dealing with Deeply Held Concerns and Other Challenges to Public Engagement Processes**

<http://www.ca-ilg.org/DeeplyHeldConcerns>

# Questions or Comments?



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