Essential Online Public Engagement Toolbox for Planning

MetroQuest

APA

CM APA AICP Certification Maintenance

ncdd

Dave Biggs

Chief Engagement Officer

MetroQuest

Agenda

What’s unique about engagement for planning?

Our panel: online engagement case studies in Texas

The essential tools and best practices for success

Q&A

20 years of best practices research

APA

iap2 international association for public participation USA

NCHRP NATIONAL COOPERATIVE HIGHWAY RESEARCH PROGRAM

TRB TRANSPORTATION RESEARCH BOARD OF THE NATIONAL ACADEMIES

Federal Transit Administration

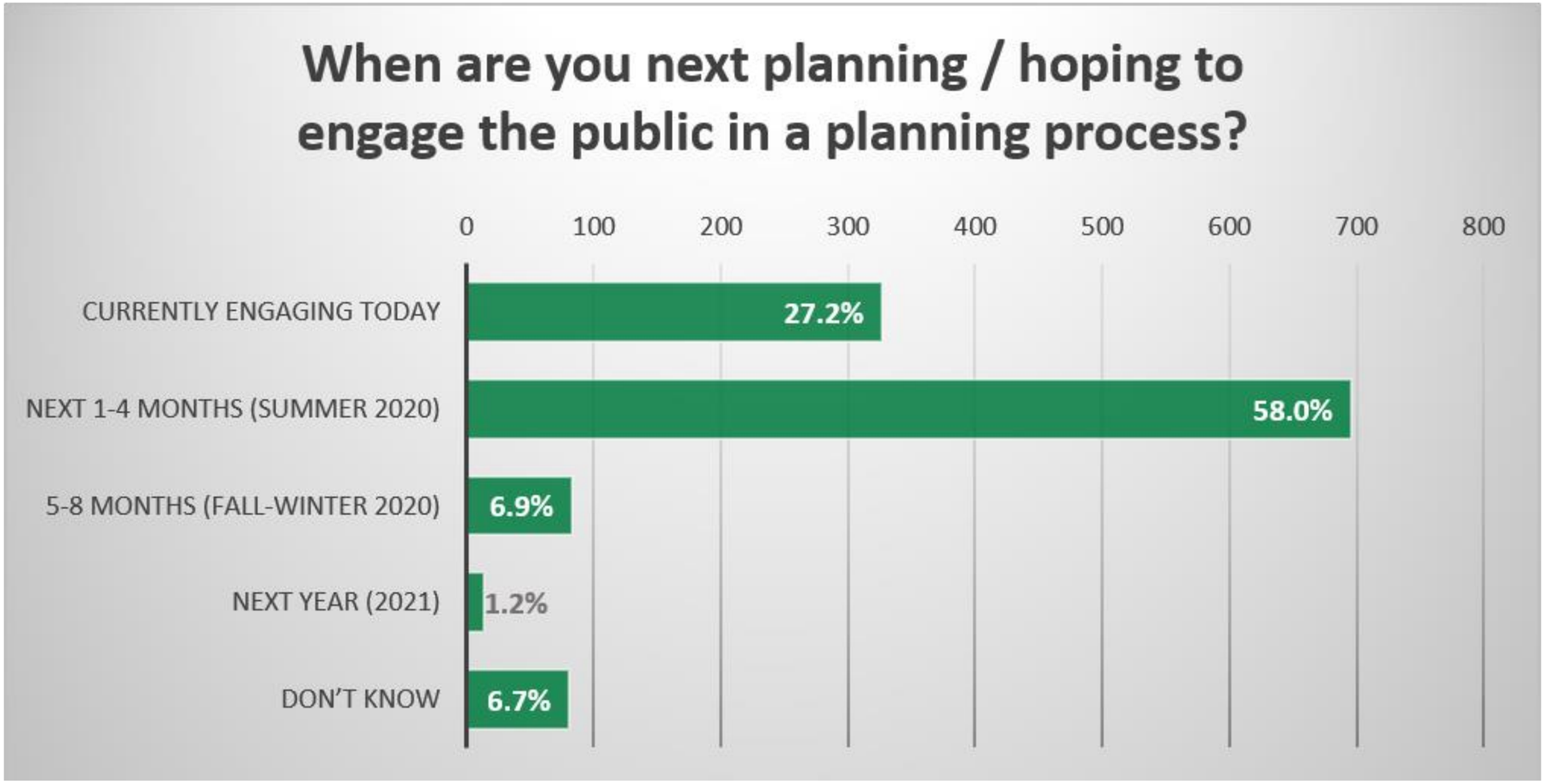
AMPO Association of Metropolitan Planning Organizations

ncdd

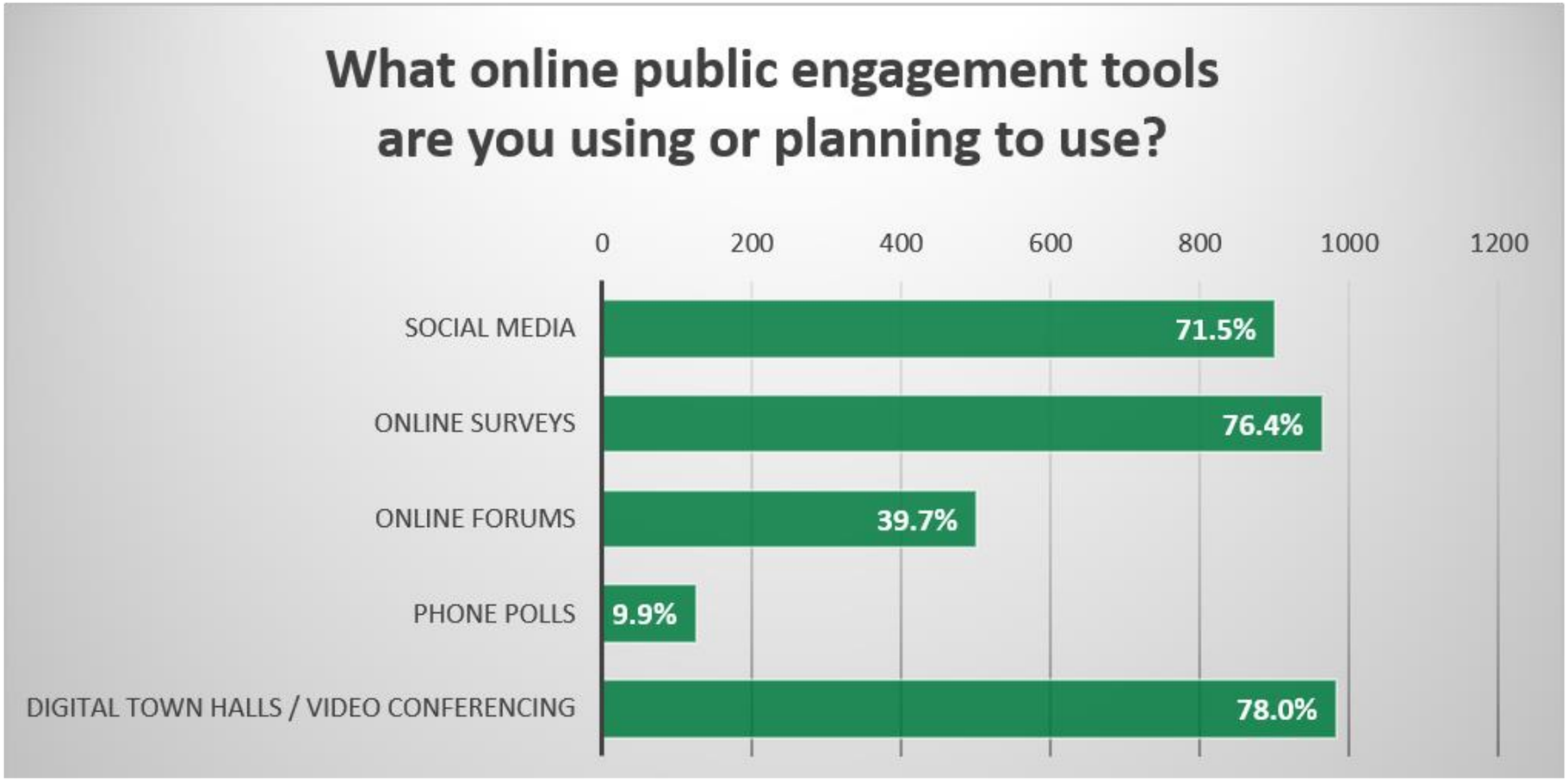
Top planning engagement goals

- Maximum participation
- Diverse representation
- Informed input
- Quantifiable results

Timing for next public engagement



Popular online engagement tools



POLL What are your most important goals when engaging the public?

Select MetroQuest subscribers

Local Agencies

CRTPO charlotte regional transportation planning organization
SFMTA
SEMCOG
Kern Council of Governments
City of Guelph Making a Difference
SCPDC South Central Planning & Development Commission
MTA New York City Transit
East Central Florida Regional Planning Council est. 1962
Town of Chapel Hill
Lancaster County Planning Commission
Sonoma County California Agriculture Industry Recreation
Suffolk County Trail New York
Orange County Government Florida
RTC
MPO

State Agencies

Texas Department of Transportation
State of North Carolina Department of Transportation
MaineDOT
SCDOT South Carolina Department of Transportation
Department of Transportation
VDOT Virginia Department of Transportation
FDOT
New Hampshire DOT Department of Transportation
CDOT
MDOT Maryland Department of Transportation
DOT Oklahoma Department of Transportation
GDOT Georgia Department of Transportation
Ad Astra Per Aspera Kansas Department of Transportation

Consulting Firms

Kimley»Horn
WSP
Freese and Nichols
vhb
Michael Baker International
RHI
Kinney Engineering, LLC
raimi+associates
Snyder & Associates
McFarland Johnson Engineering, Planning & Construction Administration
Renaissance Planning
DIALOG
arellano associates
LURA

Wendy Shabay

VP and Group Manager,
Freese & Nichols

Chance Sparks

Project Manager,
Freese & Nichols

Clyde Melick

Assistant City Manager,
Midlothian

Dan McGinn

Director of Planning,
Corpus Christi

CASE STUDY #1

Midlothian Background

- Population Over 34,000
- 85% growth since 2010
- Historic hub farm/ranch and cement industry
- Growing status as bedroom community and regional hub
- Downtown getting first signs of reinvestment
- Lot’s of ideas, but need a unifying strategy

Key Planning Challenges

- Growth = Change
  - New ideas, some conflicting with past
  - Not ‘connected’ to community yet
  - More commuters to nearby hubs
- Suburbanization and identity
- Difficulty unifying vision
- Busy-ness: Getting people out for engagement
- Reactionary social media environment
- Politically-charged environment

FREESE AND NICHOLS

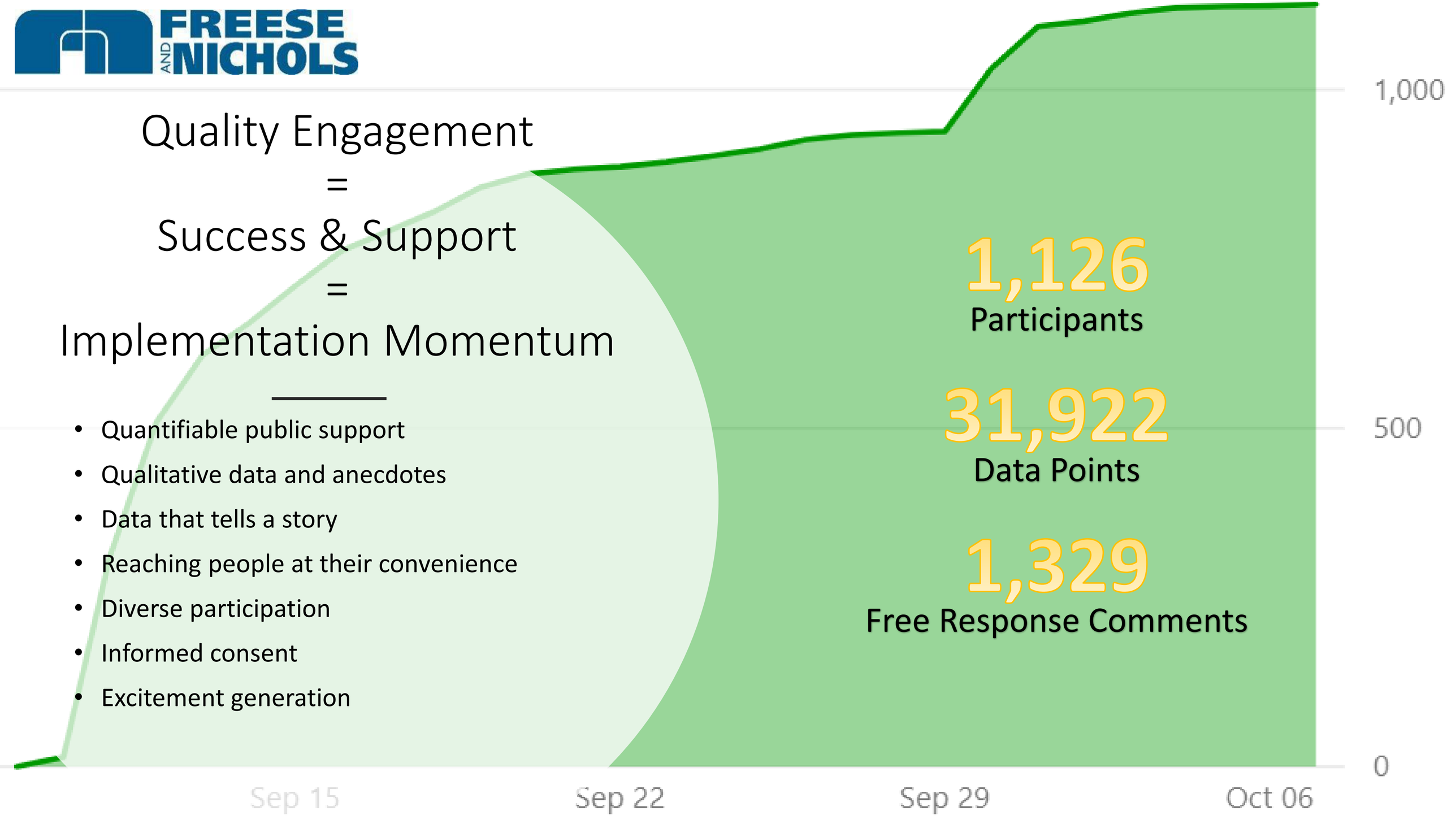
Why Freese and Nichols?

- Downtown planning experience
- Successful plan implementation and momentum-building
- Innovative and agile public engagement
- Data to give the elected officials confidence in making policy decisions
- Demonstrated ability to unify people behind a community vision

FREESE AND NICHOLS

Quality Engagement
=
Success & Support
=
Implementation Momentum

- Quantifiable public support
- Qualitative data and anecdotes
- Data that tells a story
- Reaching people at their convenience
- Diverse participation
- Informed consent
- Excitement generation



1,126
Participants

31,922
Data Points

1,329
Free Response Comments

FREESE AND NICHOLS

Understand Your Needs

Increasing Level of Public Impact

Public Participation Goal	**Inform** Provide info on problem, situation and solutions	**Consult** Obtain public feedback on decisions	**Involve** Work directly throughout process to understand and consider input	**Collaborate** Partner with public in each aspect of alternatives and solutions	**Empower** Final decision in hands of public
Example Techniques	• Fact Sheets • Website • Open houses	• Public comment • Focus groups • Surveys • Public meetings	• Workshops • Deliberative polling	• Citizen advisory committees • Consensus building • Participatory decision making	• Citizen juries • Ballots/ Vote • Delegate decision

Source: IAP2 Spectrum of Public Participation

Understand Your Place

- Digital Accessibility
- Understand Where People Already Go
- Align Yourself to the Culture

Surveying for Success

KNOW YOUR OBJECTIVES AND DATA NEEDS

KNOW WHAT DATA ELECTED OFFICIALS NEED

NOT EVERYTHING CAN/SHOULD BE QUANTIFIABLE

QUALITATIVE & OPEN-ENDED LEADS TO CREATIVITY

LEVERAGE RESPONDENTS' INTERESTS/PASSIONS

AVOID BIAS

HUMANS ARE VISUAL CREATURES

HOLD THEIR ATTENTION!

CRASH TEST TO SEE IF SURVEY PERFORMS WELL

FREESE AND NICHOLS

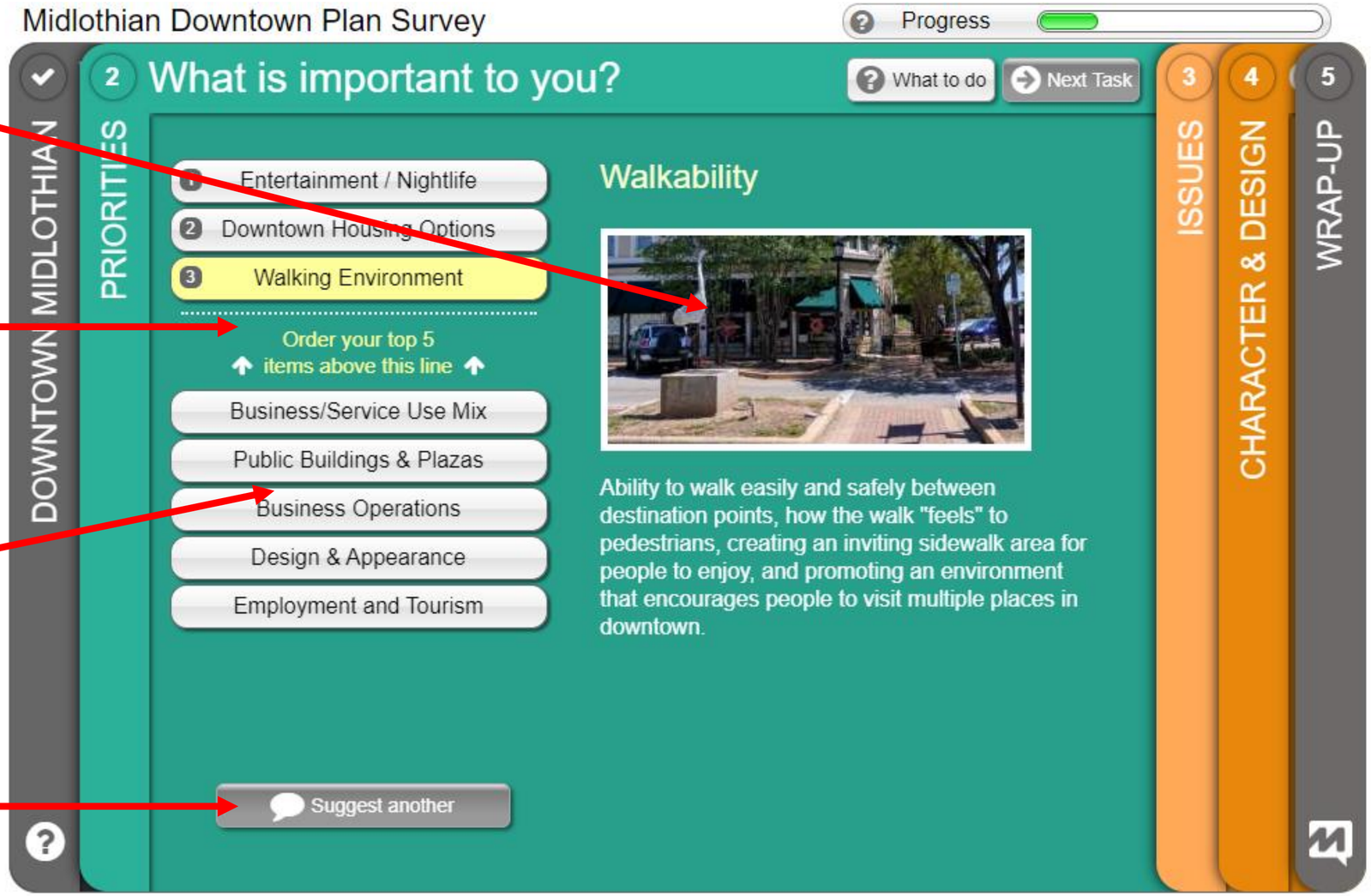
What Made the Midlothian Survey Effective?

Include engaging visuals with explanation

Ask them about things they care most about… and not about things they don't

Know your objective and data needs, and use your advisory committee

Allow for them to present ideas outside of your framework



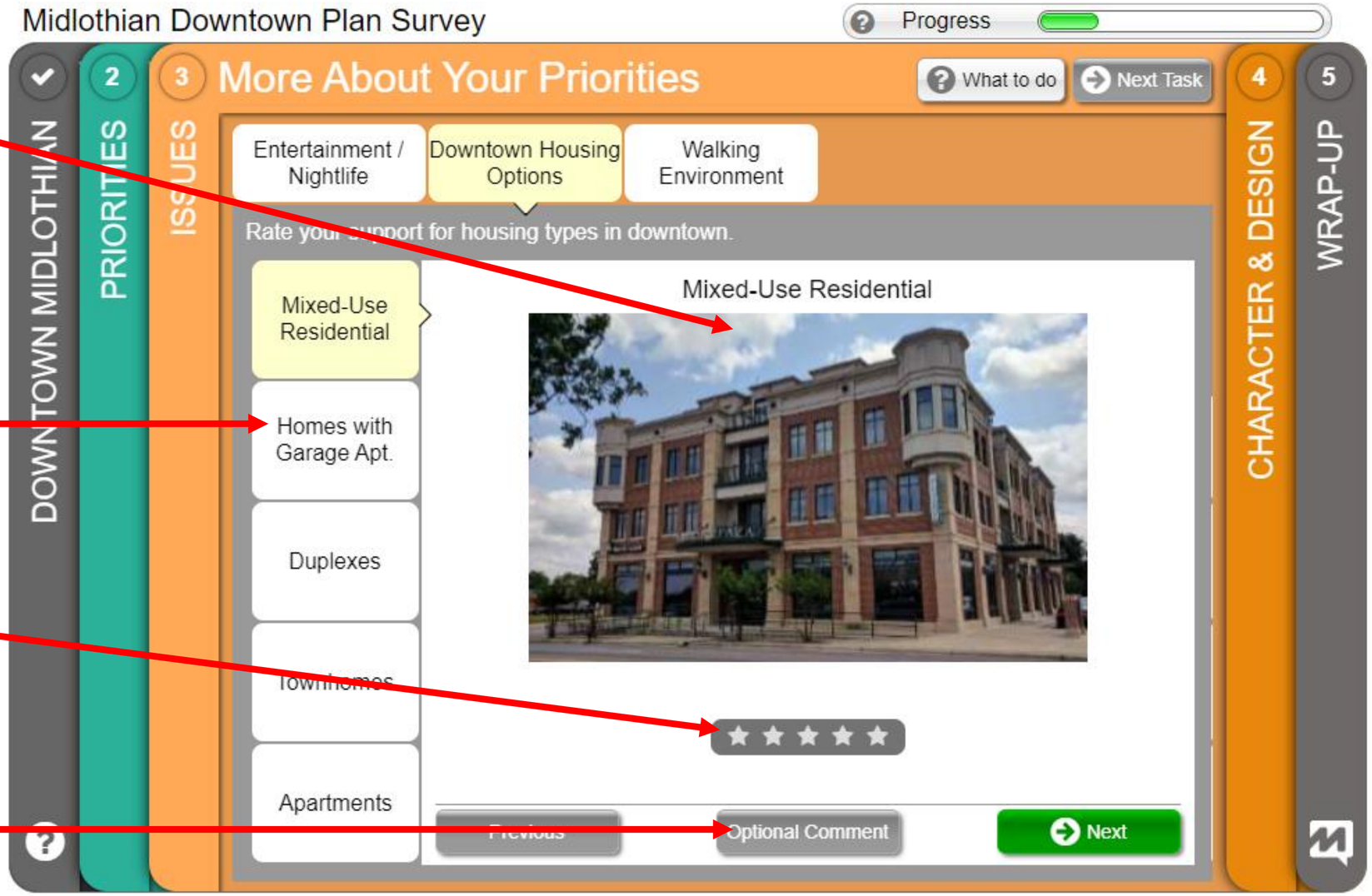
What Made the Midlothian Survey Effective?

Include engaging visuals with explanation

Use terms regular people easily understand

Use rating systems people easily understand (Yelp)

Allow for them to present ideas outside of your framework



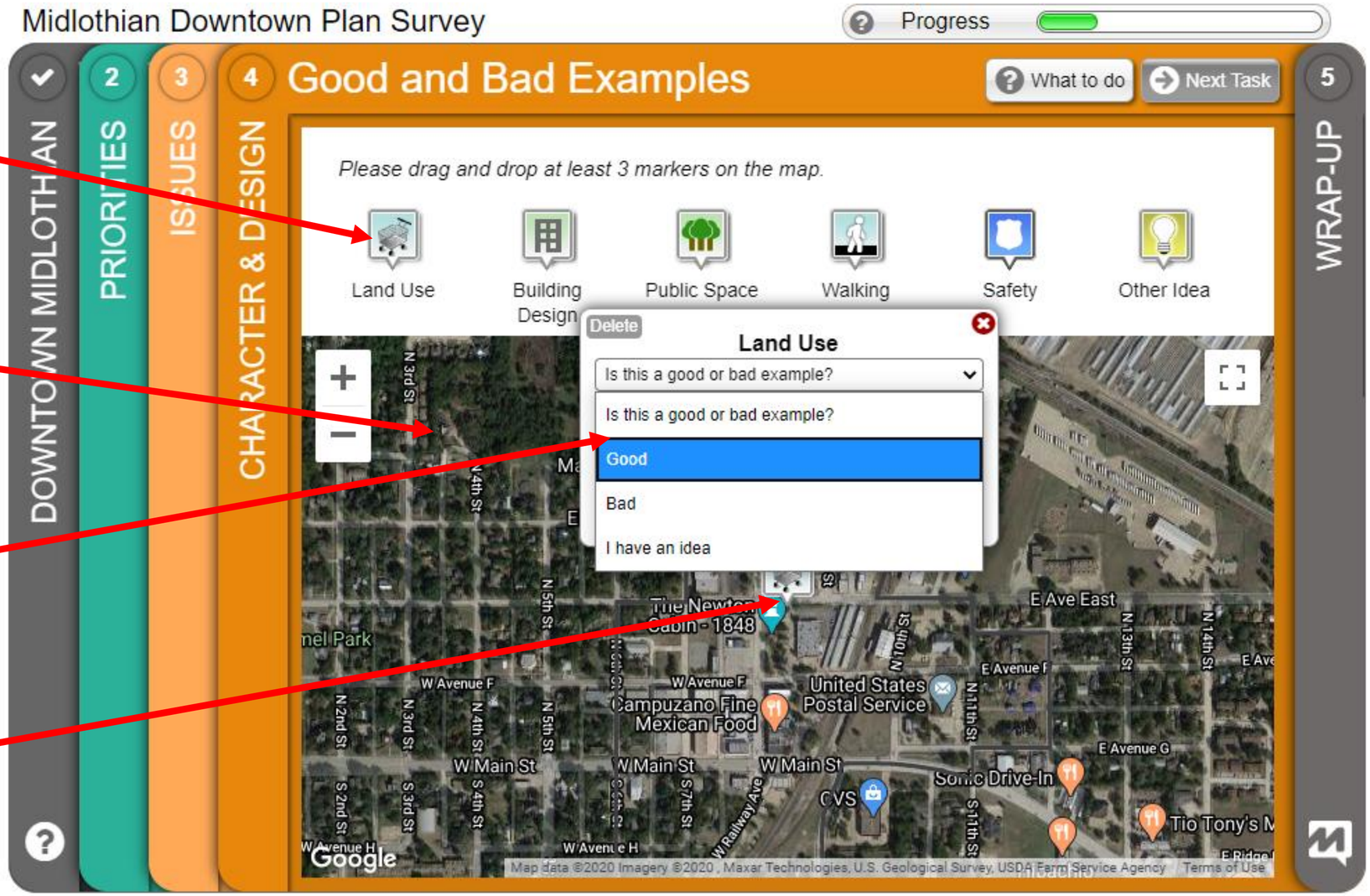
What Made the Midlothian Survey Effective?

Breakdown feedback… to help analysis and prompt respondents

People are used to map applications and like to interact with them; built in landmarks!

Yelp your city! People love rating things! But also give a creative outlet

Georeferenced feedback! Connects comments to location.



#	Type of Response	Building Design Comment
53	-----	Please do something useful here
54	-----	Please do something useful here
55	-----	-----
56	-----	-----
57	Good	-----
58	Good	All the old buildings in the downtown area look appropriate. They may need some sprucing up though keeping the historical look and feel should be top priority.
59	I have an idea	This building really needs a mural on the parking lot side. Adding another building on the other side, in keeping with similar architecture style would be good to provide additional business space.
60	Good	Love the "old town" look of downtown.
61	Good	It looks nicer than it did but it does clash a bit with what I think an old town Texas downtown should look like.
62	Bad	Poor building really needs a facelift in keeping with its classic neighbors across the street. Very little thought was given to this building when it was constructed as it relates to the style of the rest of downtown. I'm sure it wasn't important the
63	Bad	Ugly and out of place.
64	Bad	Ugly. No style at all. Cheap-looking.
65	Bad	Ugly and cheap-looking. No style.
66	Bad	It would be amazing to see this old building restored.
67	Bad	Ugh.
68	Bad	Another detractor.
69	Bad	Ugly. Doubt anything can be done with this.

BUILDING DESIGN

Survey respondents placed markers to indicate good and bad examples of building design. Some also included additional ideas.

GOOD EXAMPLE | TRENDS

BAD EXAMPLE | TRENDS

FREESE AND NICHOLS

FREESE AND NICHOLS

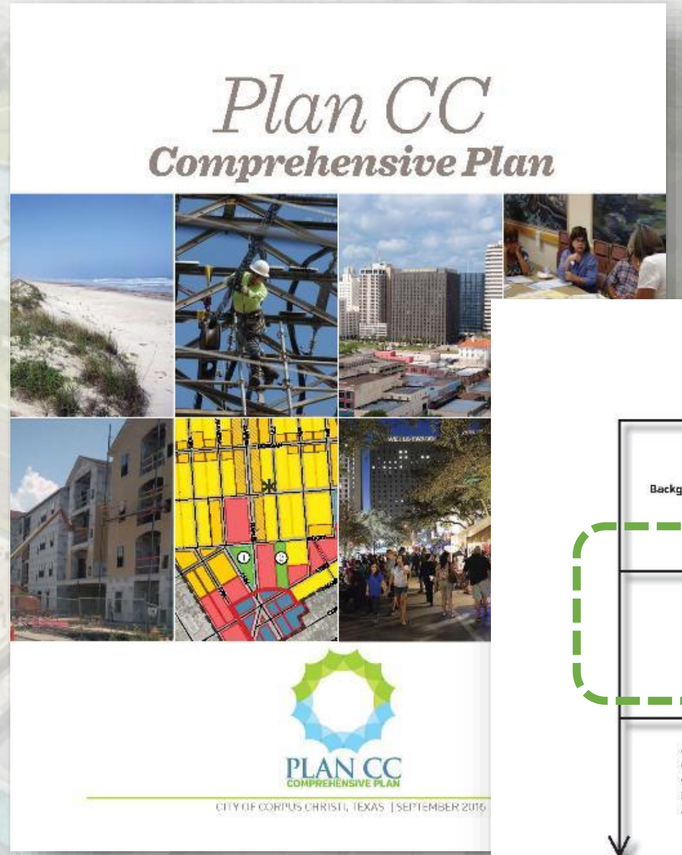
NOTE: This is a co
will need further e

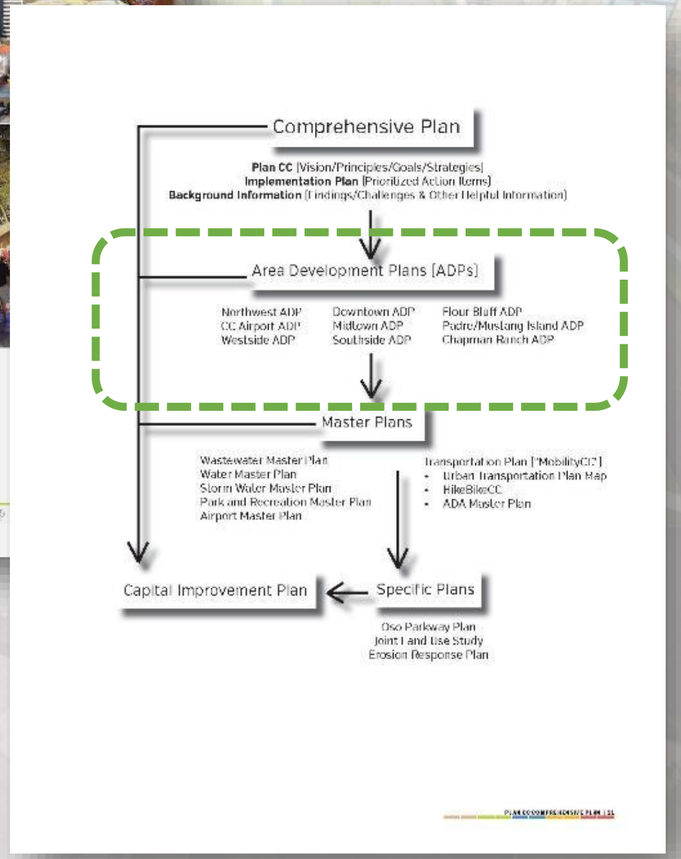
Strong & Responsive Engagement
=
Momentum + Big Ideas

CASE STUDY #2

Corpus Christi Area Development Plans

- Area development plans (ADP) are an initiative stemming from the City's comprehensive plan.
- An ADP goes into more detail about the future development of each area and provides recommendations specific to that area.
- ADPs have been in place for several years and are in the process of being updated.
- Freese and Nichols is working with the City to update 5 of the plans.
  - 2 have already been adopted.



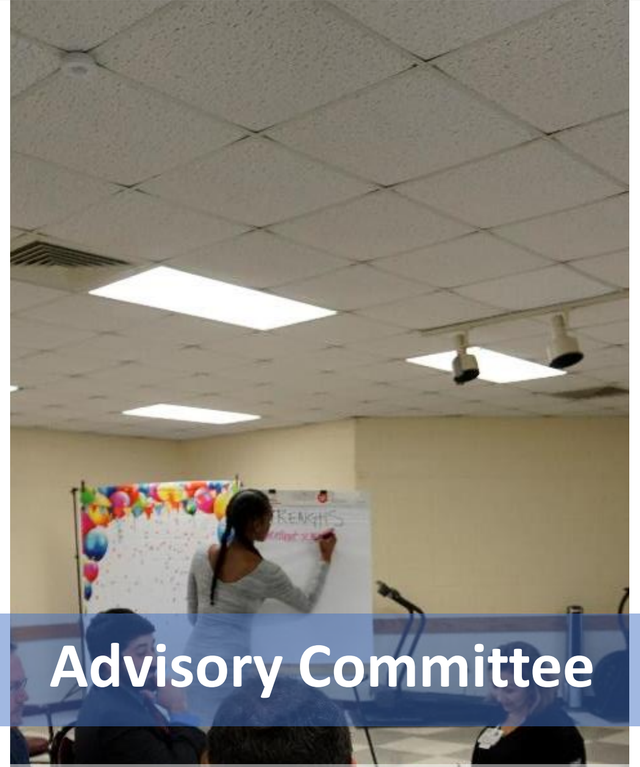


Project Expectations

- Highly Graphic Document
- Short as possible
- Heavy Public Engagement
- Different from plans in the past
- Actionable plan
- Recommendations based on community feedback

Planned Public Engagement

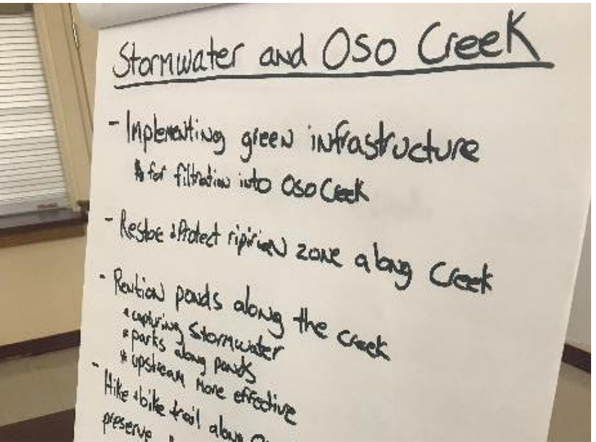
Focus Groups

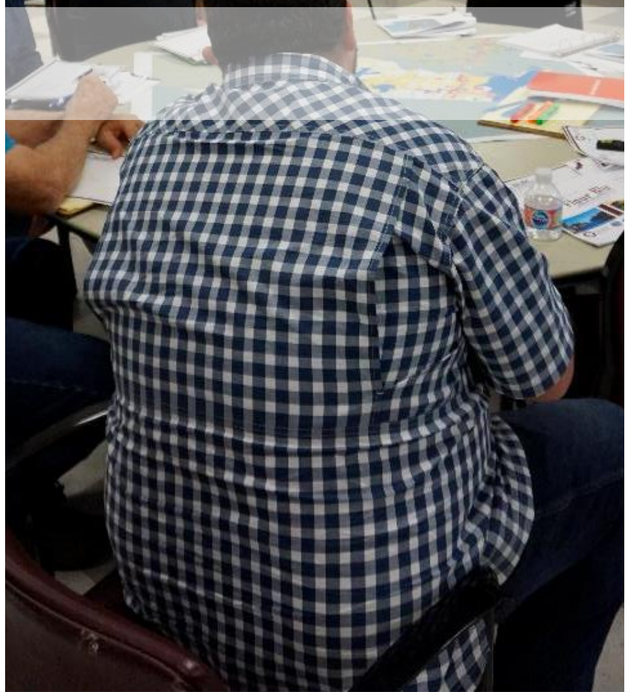


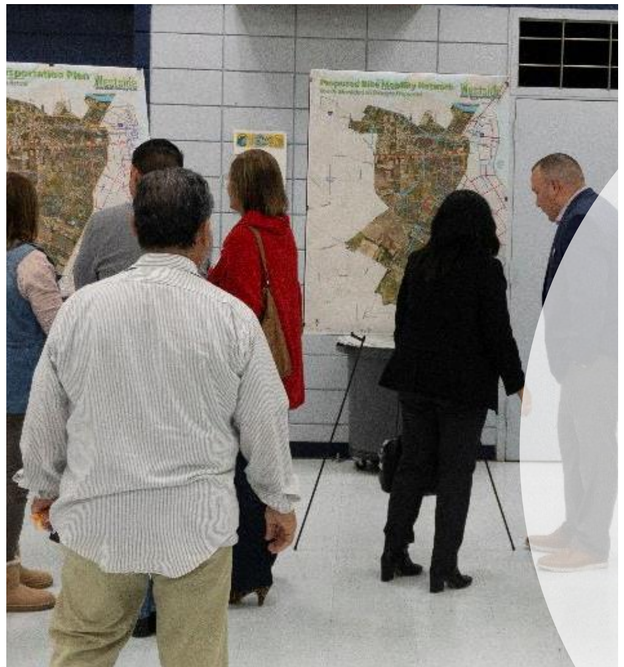
Advisory Committee

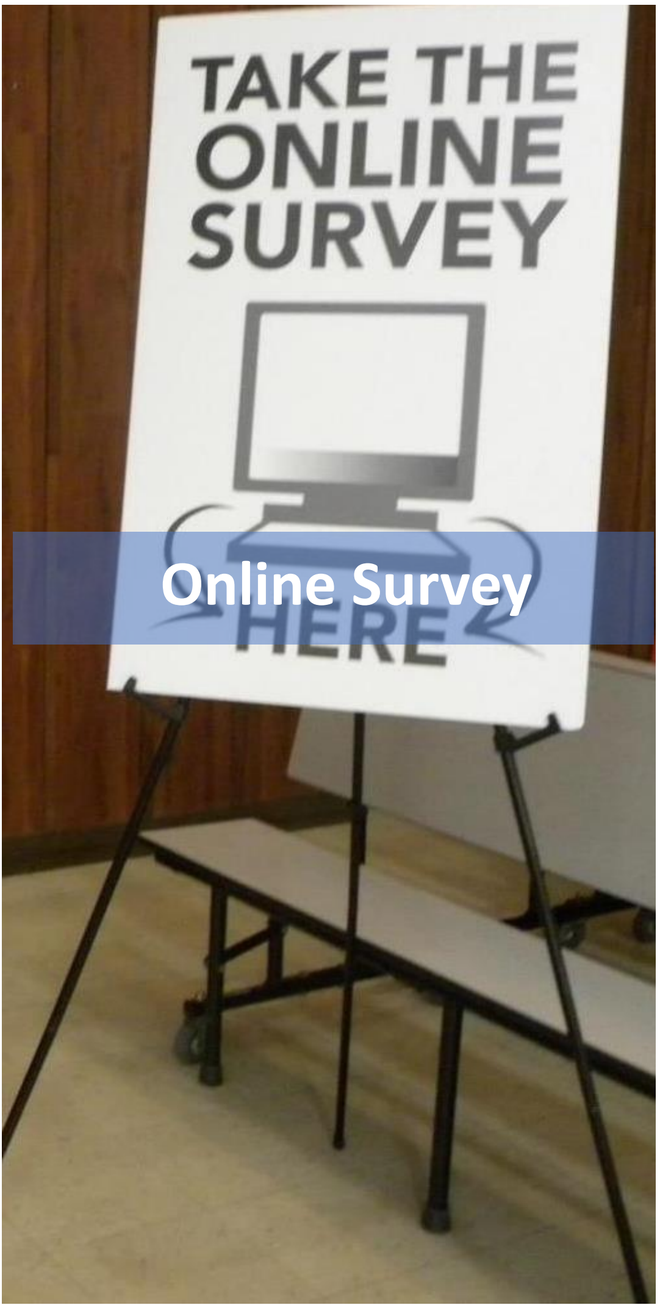
Community Meetings

Online Survey









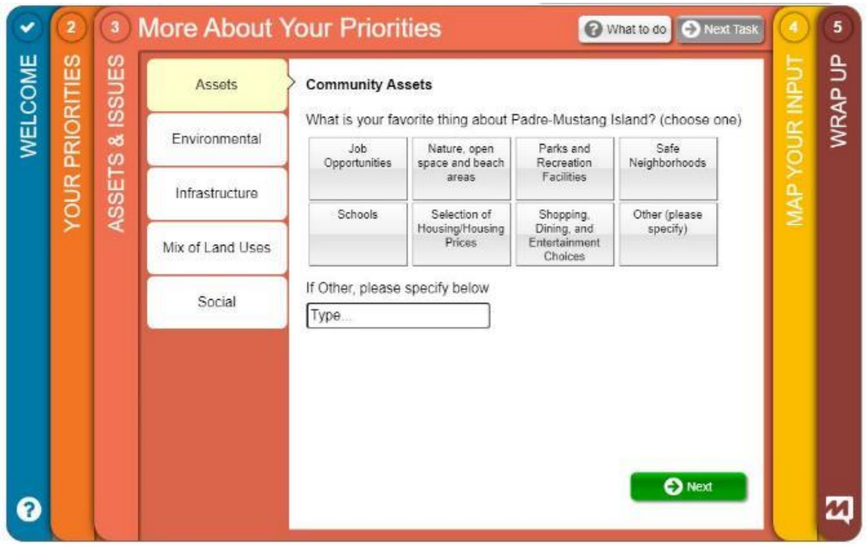
Online Survey

Unique for each small area

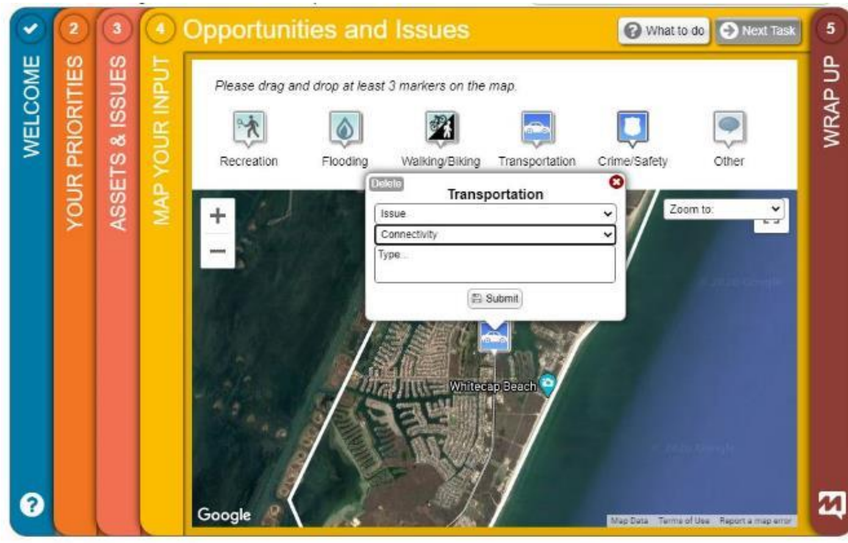
Data Gathering

Use at the Beginning of the Process to:

Identify priorities to influence recommendations



Get specific feedback about the priorities



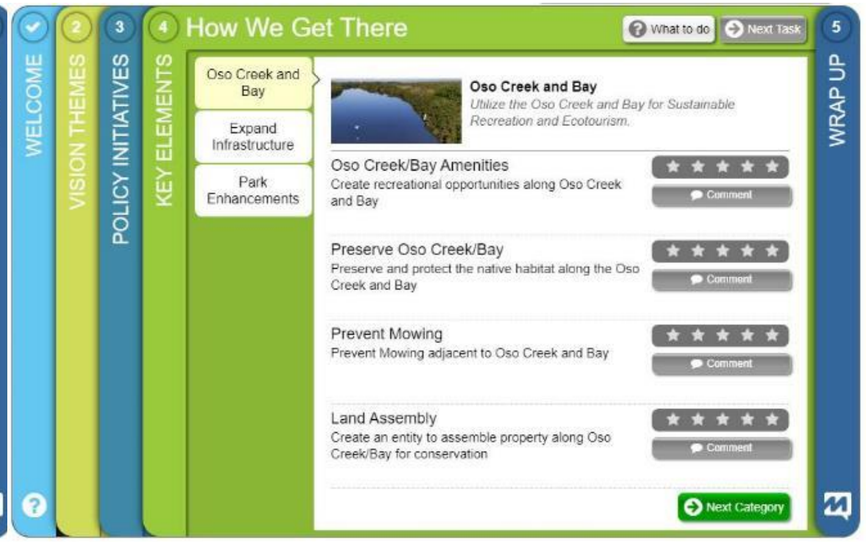
Identify issues and opportunities based on community feedback

Validate Recommendations

Use at the End of the Process to:

Assess if the community agrees with the vision

Prioritize policy initiatives from the plan to direct policy decisions



Rate the strategies and recommendations in the plan

Alteration
IMPROVE
Readjustment
SHIFT
Change
Turn
ROTATE
Realignme
PIVOT
Adjust
PLAN B
Modificati
Adapt
Ch
Adv
Reassess
Reassess
DATA
PTE
ABI
SPO
ZD

City of Corpus Christi

Padre/Mustang Island

AREA DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Online Community Meeting #1
March 26, 2020

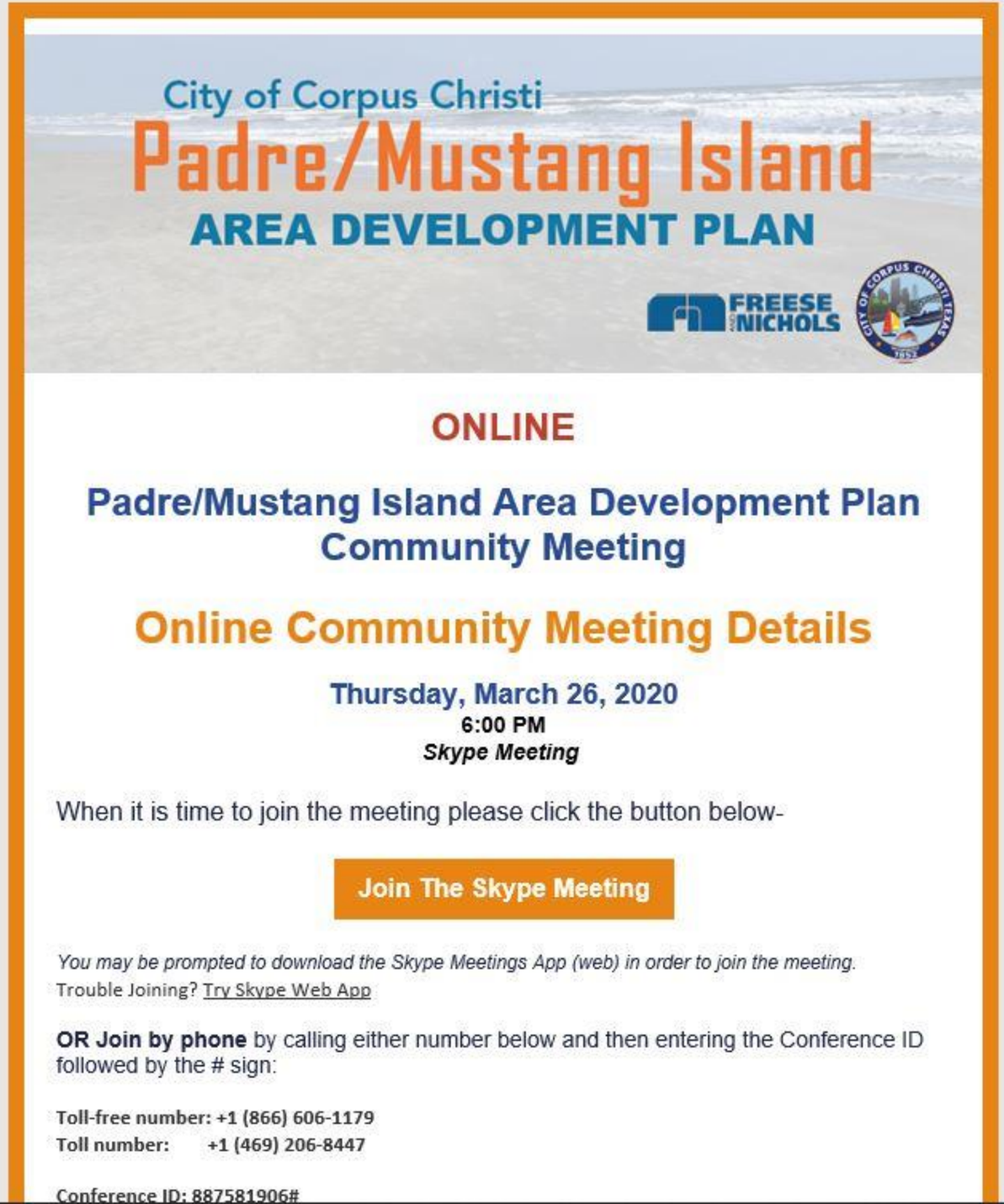
Shifting to All Online Engagement

- Online Community Meetings
- Online Advisory Committee Meetings
- All Community Feedback from MetroQuest Survey

FREESE AND NICHOLS

Boosting Engagement

- Facebook Boost Post
- Facebook Post from City Page
- Constant Contact
- Community Leaders Sharing Content



What makes Corpus Christi surveys Effective?

- Detailed questions tailored to each study area.
- Using surveys strategically at the beginning and end of the survey.
  - Receive feedback to influence recommendations
  - Provide feedback to show City leadership that recommendations are supported by the public
- Partnering with the City to advertise the survey to increase participation.

FREESE AND NICHOLS

Now What?

EMBRACE THE "NEW NORMAL"

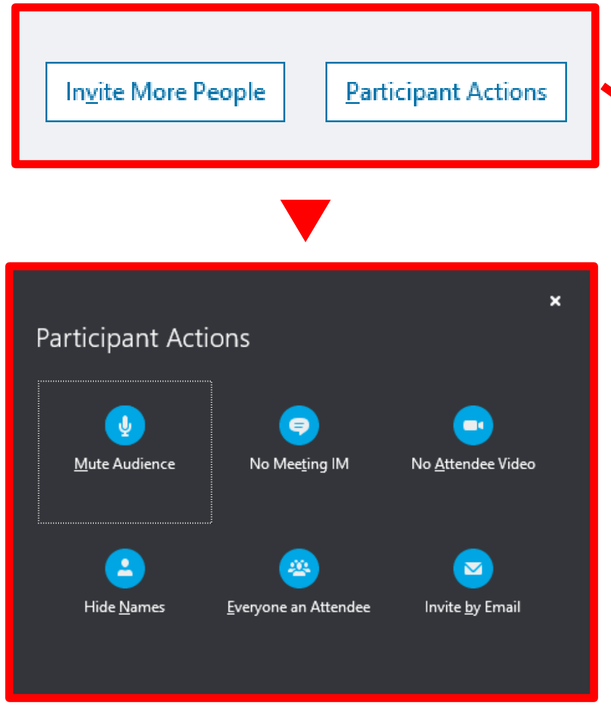
THE VIRTUAL AGE IS HERE TO STAY

Now What?

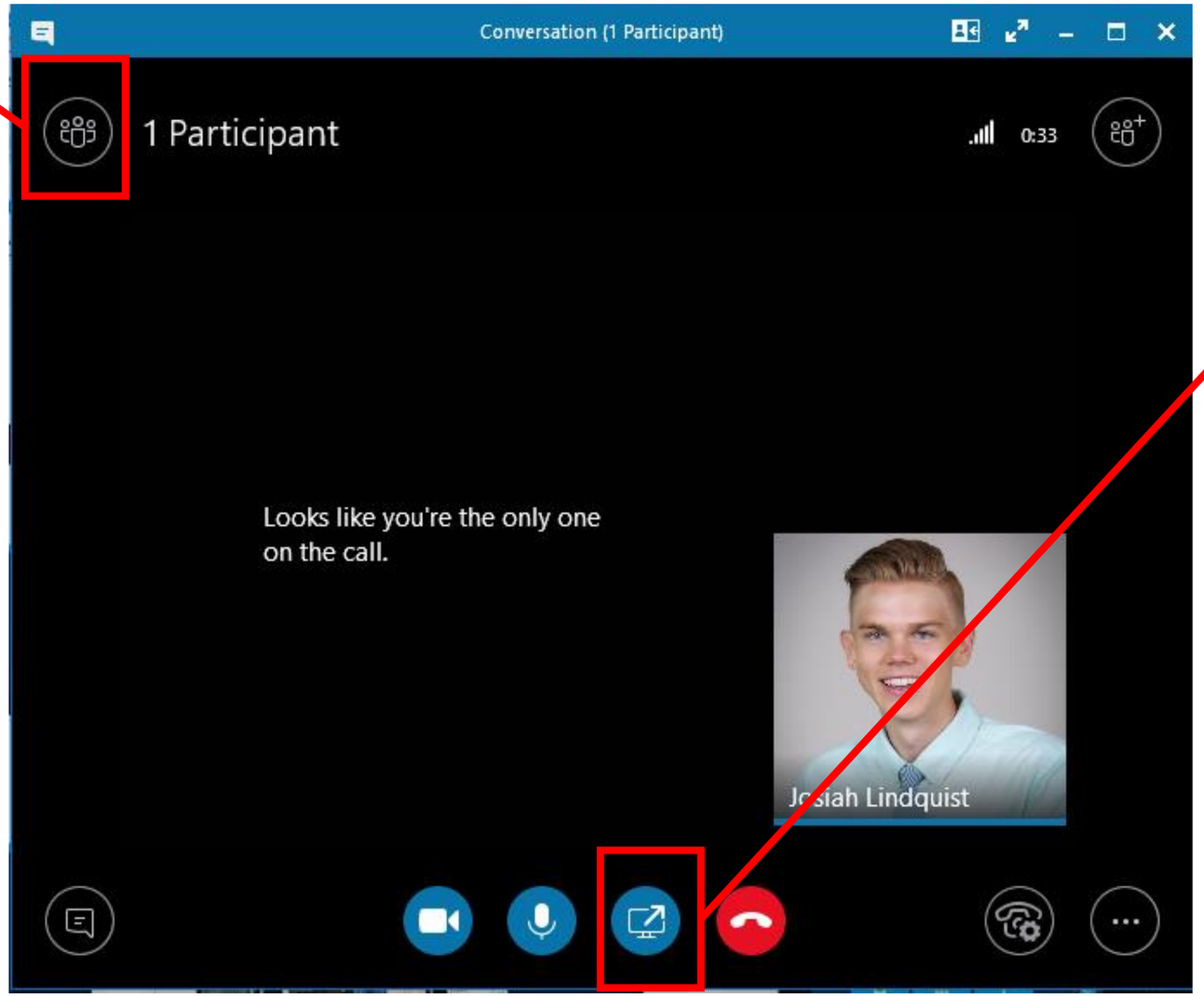
SHIFTING 100% ONLINE

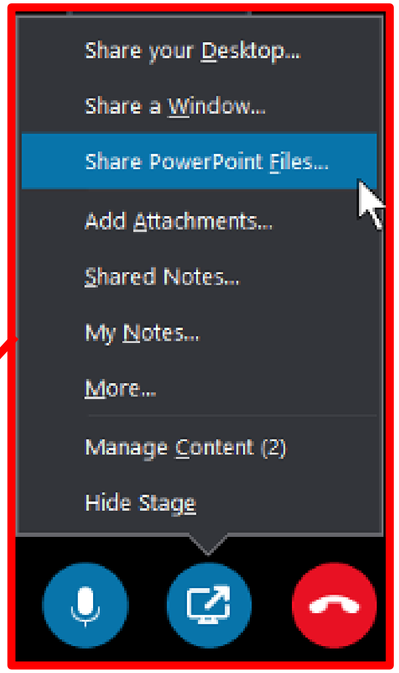
FREESE AND NICHOLS

Skype



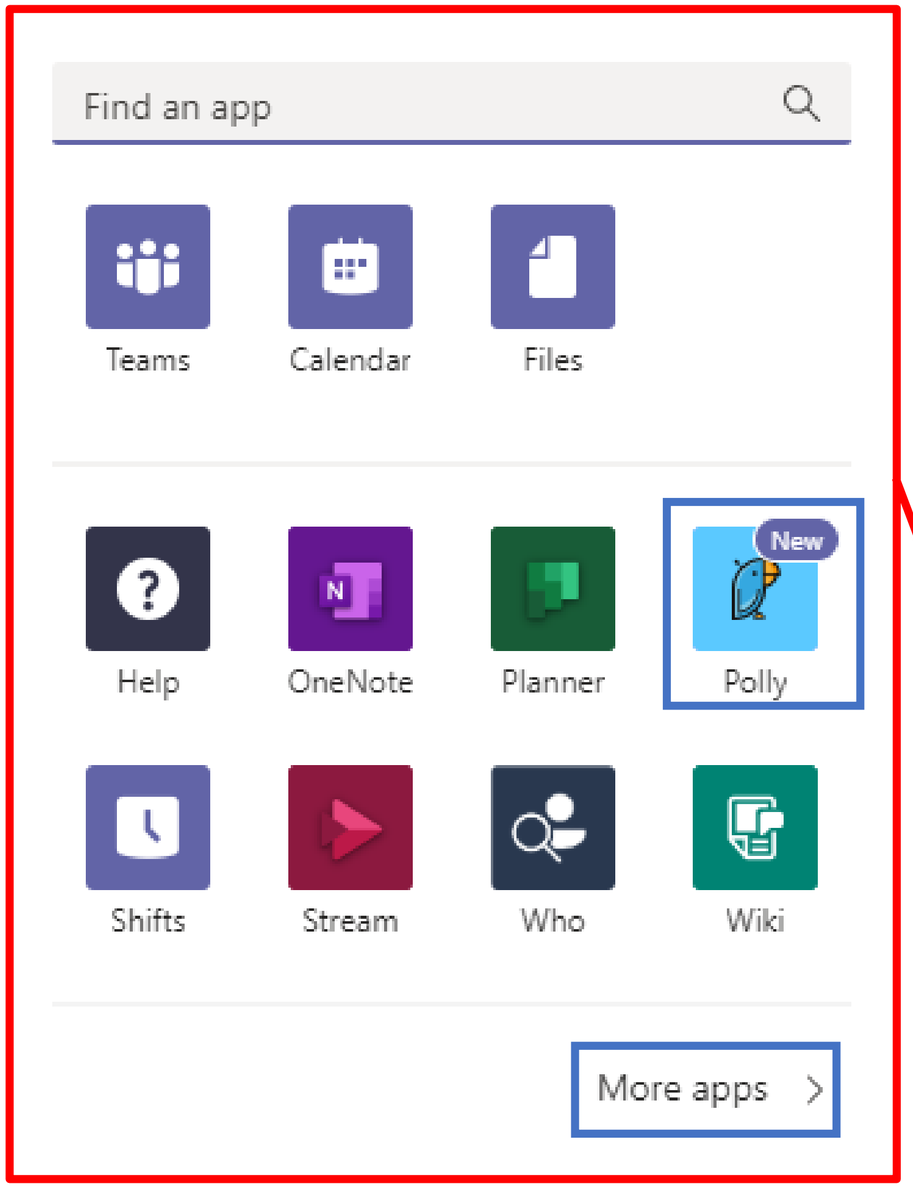
As a presenter, you have access to **controls** such as muting the audience or inviting more people.

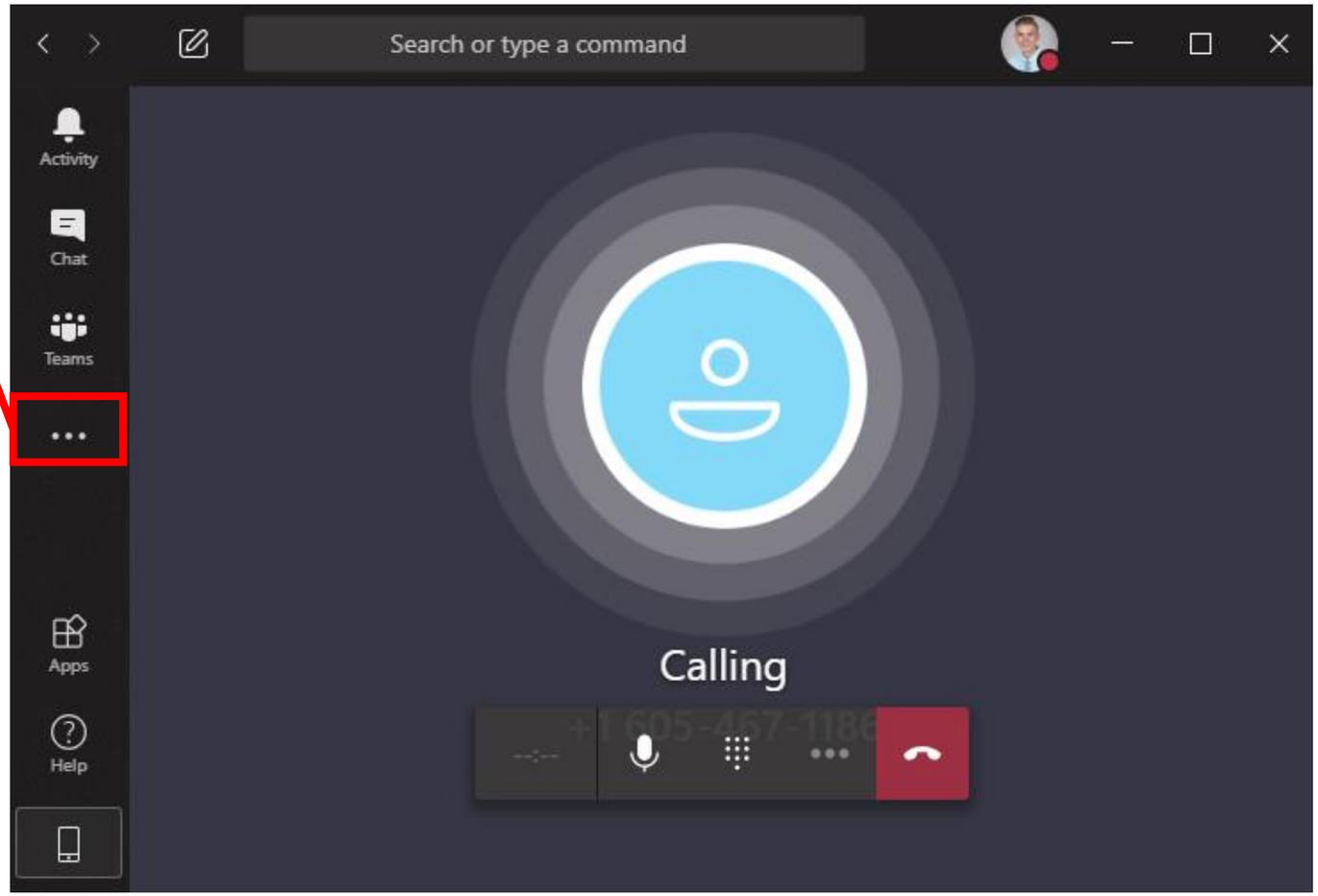




Additionally, you can easily **share screens** for collaboration on Powerpoints or Word documents

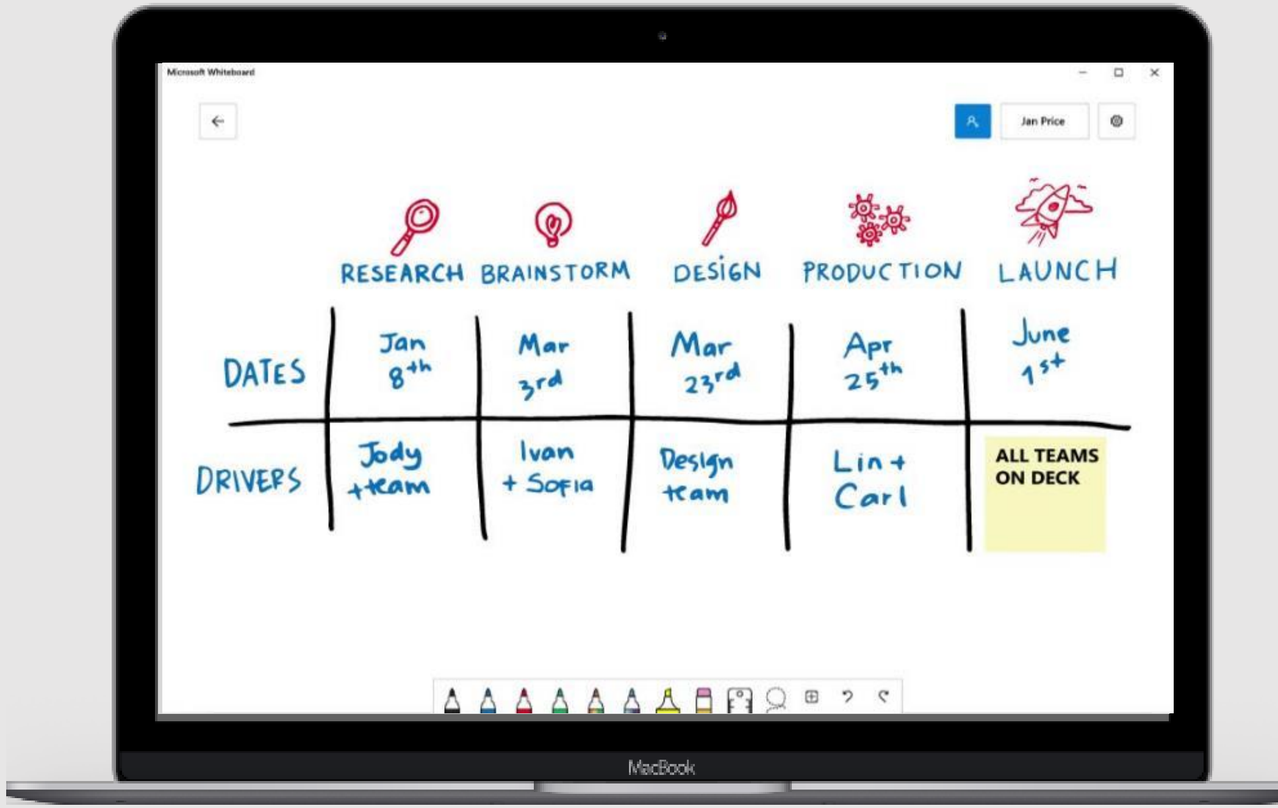
Teams



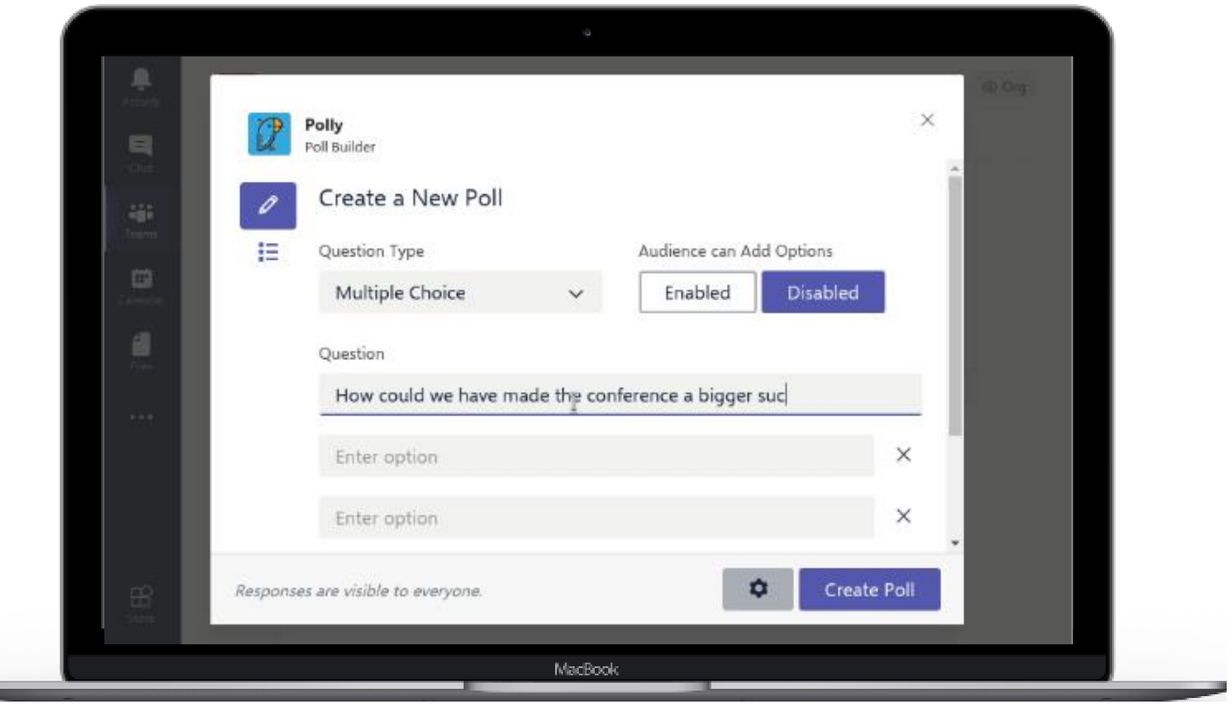


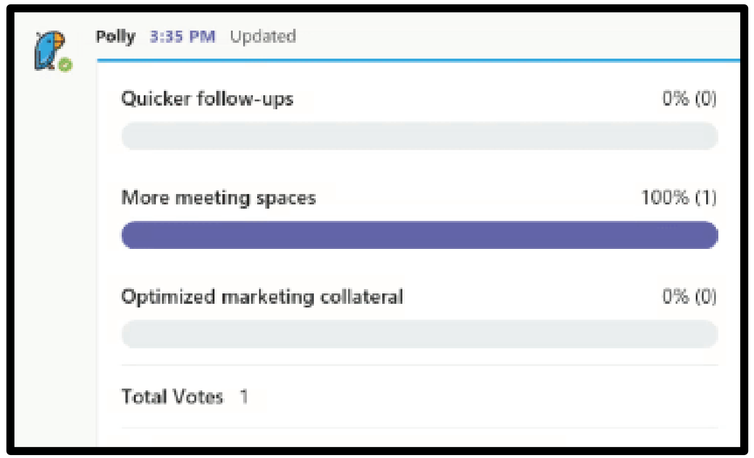
Add a variety of apps like **Polls** or **Whiteboard** for collaboration on group projects so that everyone can be involved.

Whiteboard

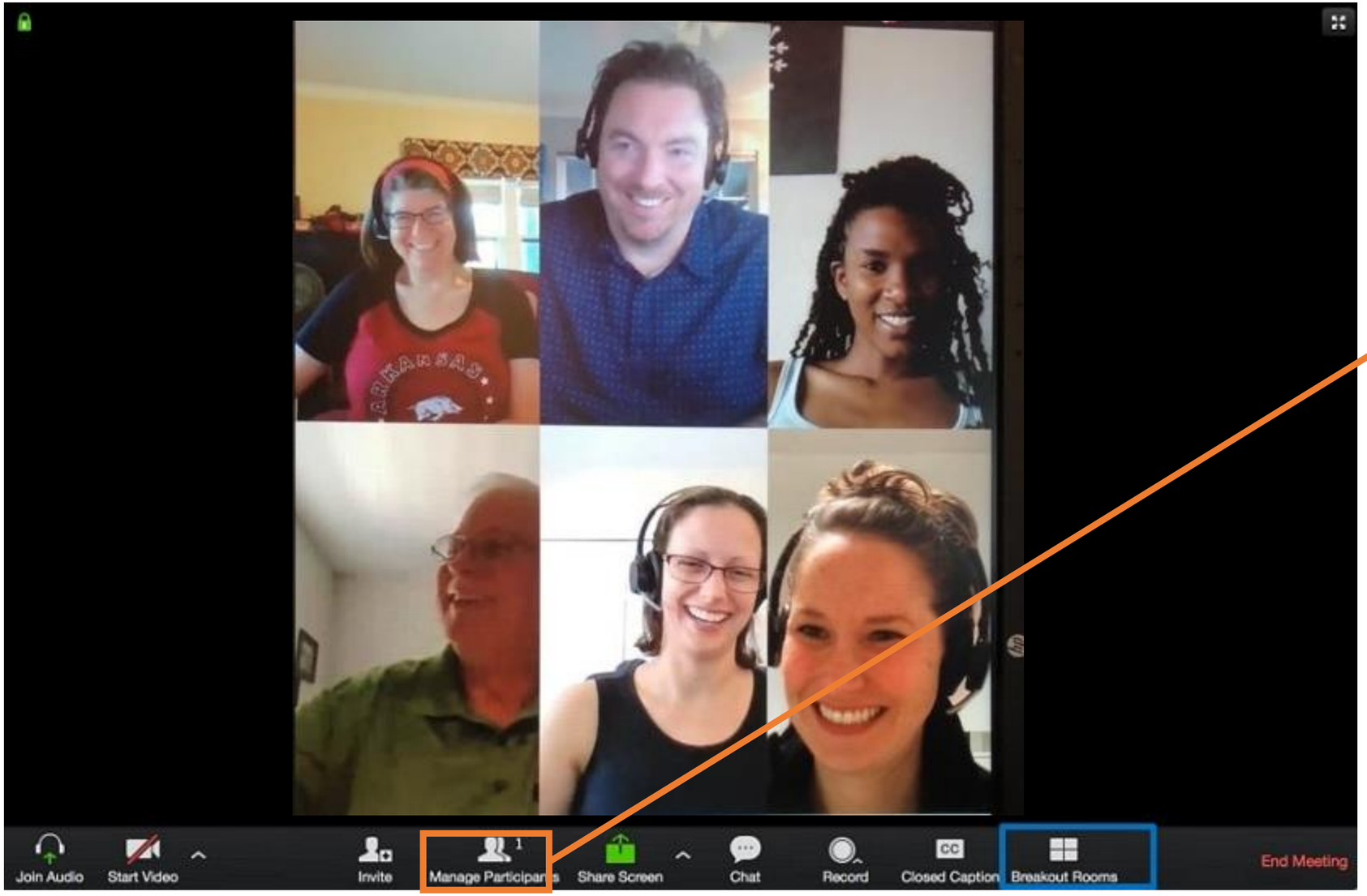


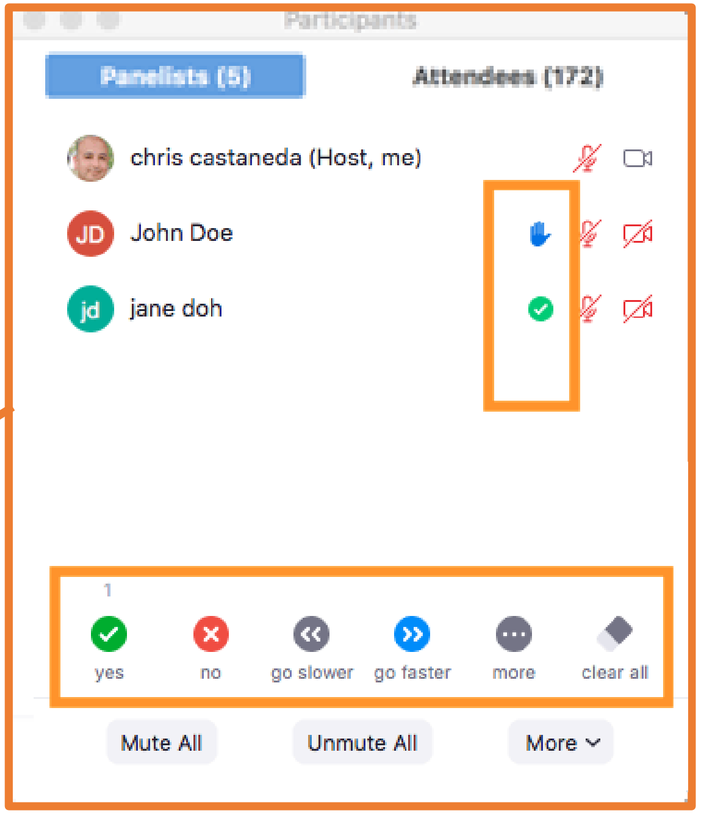
Polls





Zoom


Join Audio
Start Video
Invite
Manage Participants
Share Screen
Chat
Record
Closed Caption
Breakout Rooms
End Meeting

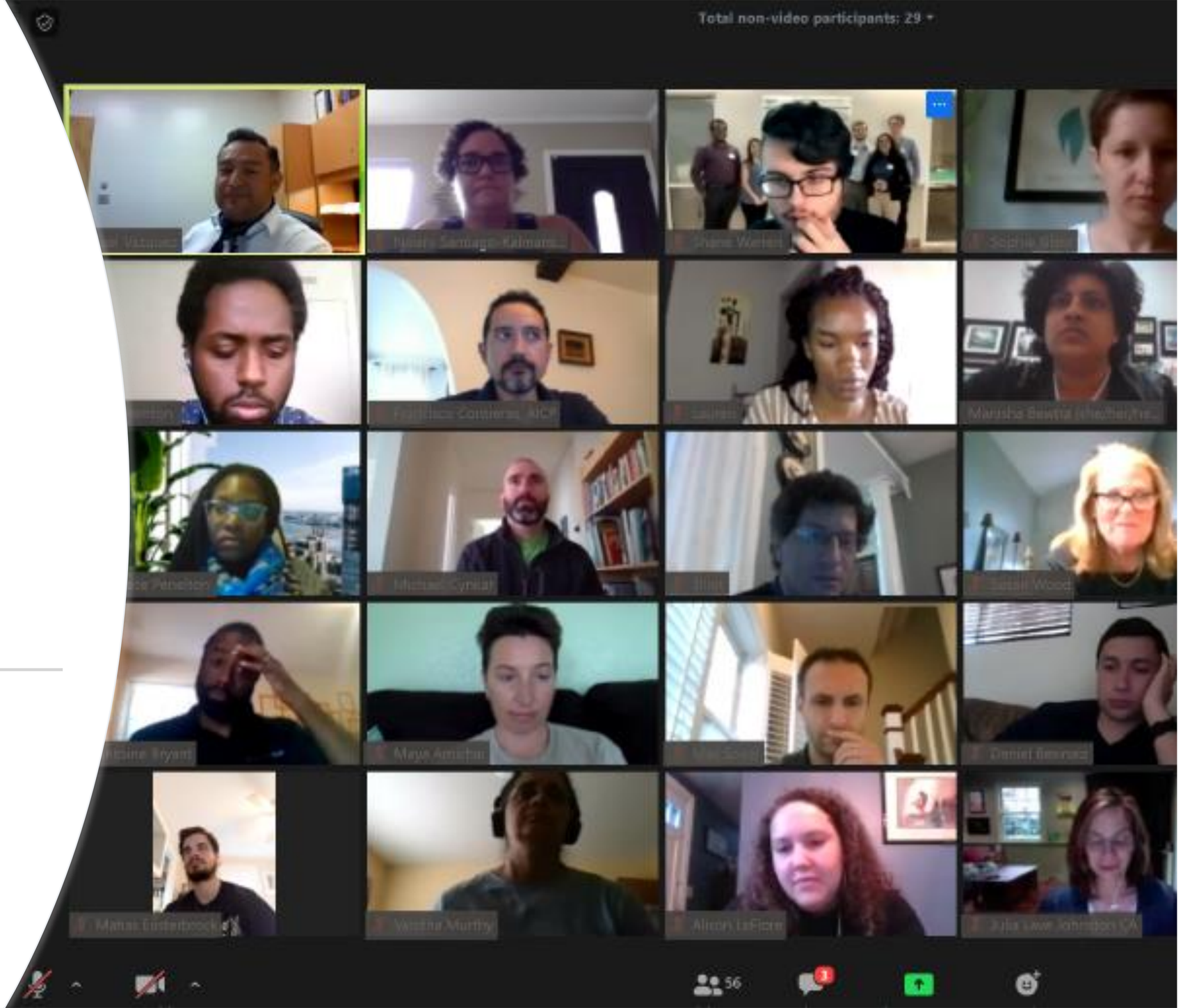

Participants
Panelists (5)
Attendees (172)
chris castaneda (Host, me)
JD
John Doe
jd
jane doh
1
yes
no
go slower
go faster
more
clear all
Mute All
Unmute All
More

Lower Hand
Unmute

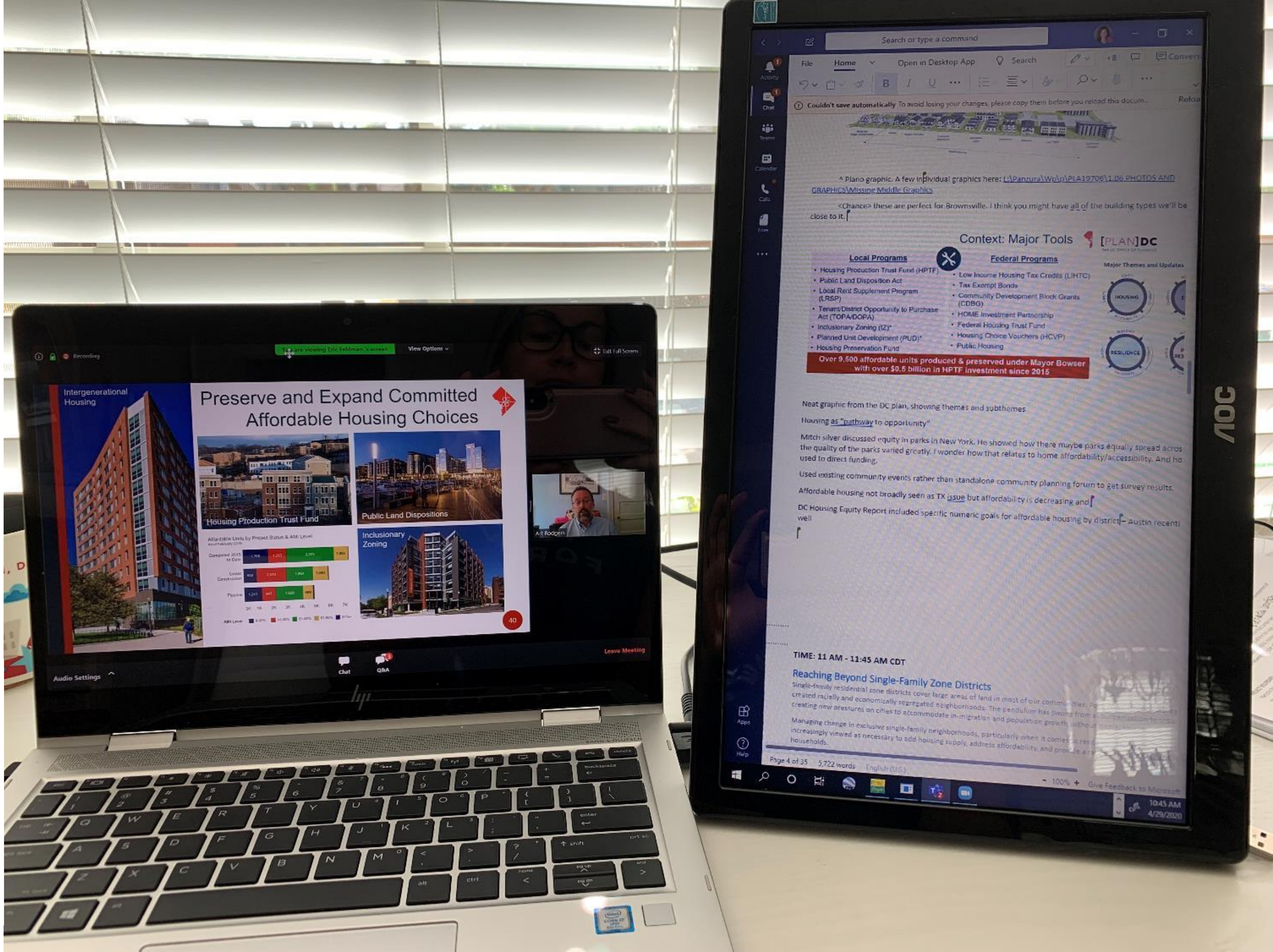
Zoom

NPC20 @HOME

Over 5,000 attendees go from in-person to on-line conference

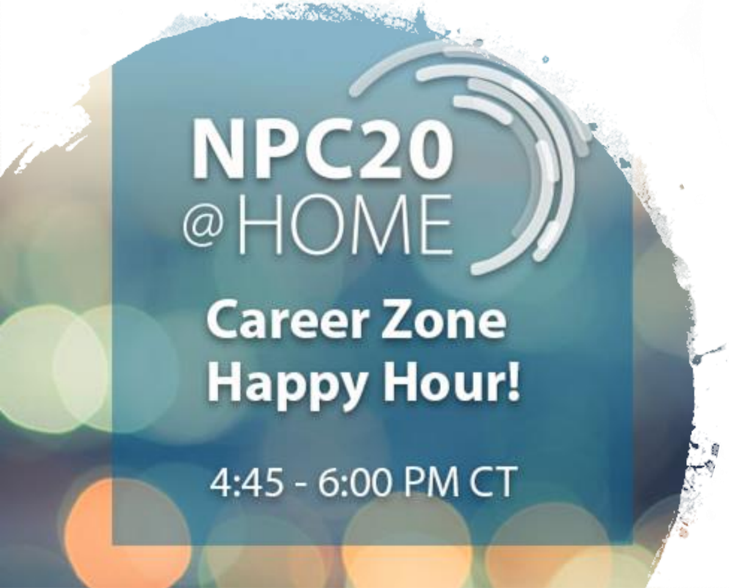


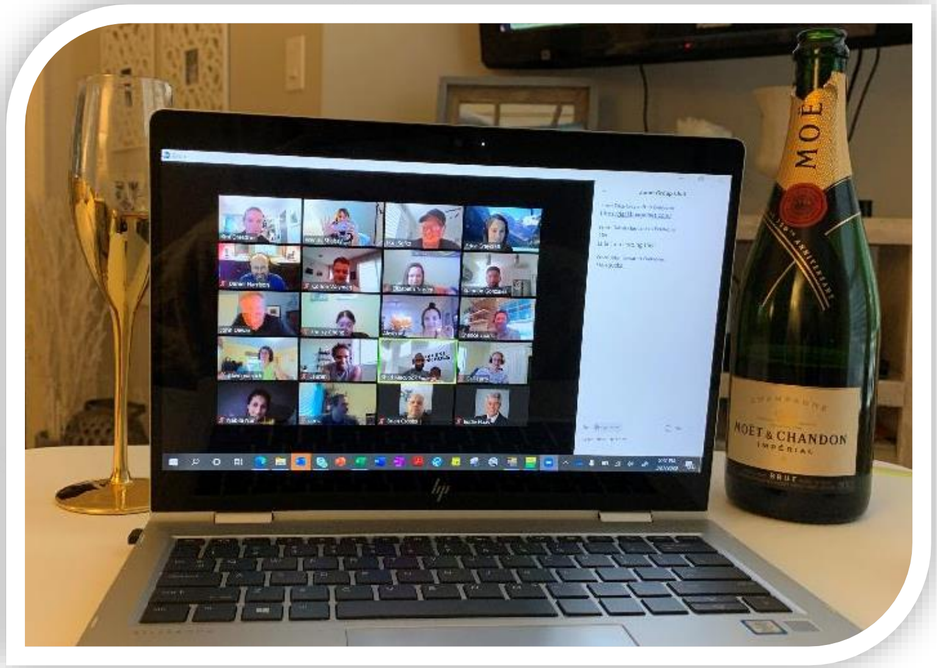
NPC20
@HOME


Preserve and Expand Committed Affordable Housing Choices
Intergenerational Housing
Housing Production Trust Fund
Public Land Dispositions
Inclusionary Zoning
Context: Major Tools
[PLAN]DC
Local Programs
Federal Programs
Major Themes and Updates
Housing Production Trust Fund (HPTF)
Public Land Disposition Act
Local Rent Supplement Program (LRSP)
Tenant/District Opportunity to Purchase Act (TOPA/DOPA)
Inclusionary Zoning (IZ)*
Planned Unit Development (PUD)*
Housing Preservation Fund
Low Income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTC)
Tax Exempt Bonds
Community Development Block Grants (CDBG)
HOME Investment Partnership
Federal Housing Trust Fund
Housing Choice Vouchers (HCVP)
Public Housing
Over 9,500 affordable units produced & preserved under Mayor Bowser with over $0.5 billion in HPTF investment since 2015
HOUSING
RESILIENCE
Neat graphic from the DC plan, showing themes and subthemes
Housing as "pathway to opportunity"
Mitch silver discussed equity in parks in New York. He showed how there maybe parks equally spread across the quality of the parks varied greatly. I wonder how that relates to home affordability/accessibility. And he used to direct funding.
Used existing community events rather than standalone community planning forum to get survey results.
Affordable housing not broadly seen as TX issue but affordability is decreasing and
DC Housing Equity Report included specific numeric goals for affordable housing by district – Austin recenti well
TIME: 11 AM - 11:45 AM CDT
Reaching Beyond Single-Family Zone Districts
Audio Settings
Chat
Q&A
Leave Meeting
AOC

Networking Face-to-Face Digitally

- Open Hallway “Rooms”
- Happy Hour
- Office Hours
- Introvert Heaven





Moving to a virtual word with same success

POLL Which types of online public engagement tools interest you the most?

POLL How many public engagement campaigns does your organization conduct per year?

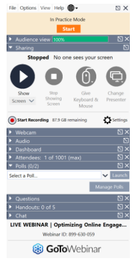
5 Key Steps to Online Engagement Success

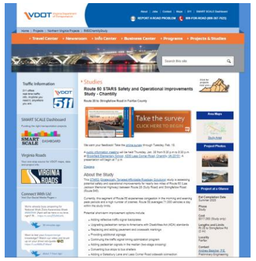
1

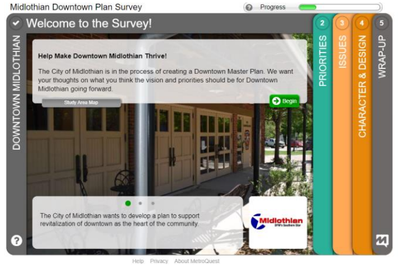
Build core online engagement tools and team

Online tools for your toolbox

- ✓ Online Surveys
- ✓ Digital Town Hall
- ✓ Social Media

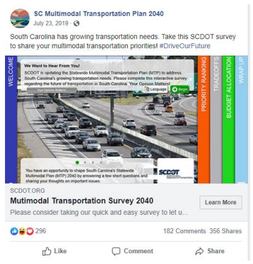


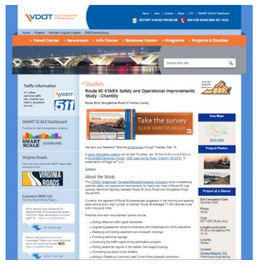




Digital engagement skillset

- ✓ Creativity
- ✓ Graphics
- ✓ Promotions



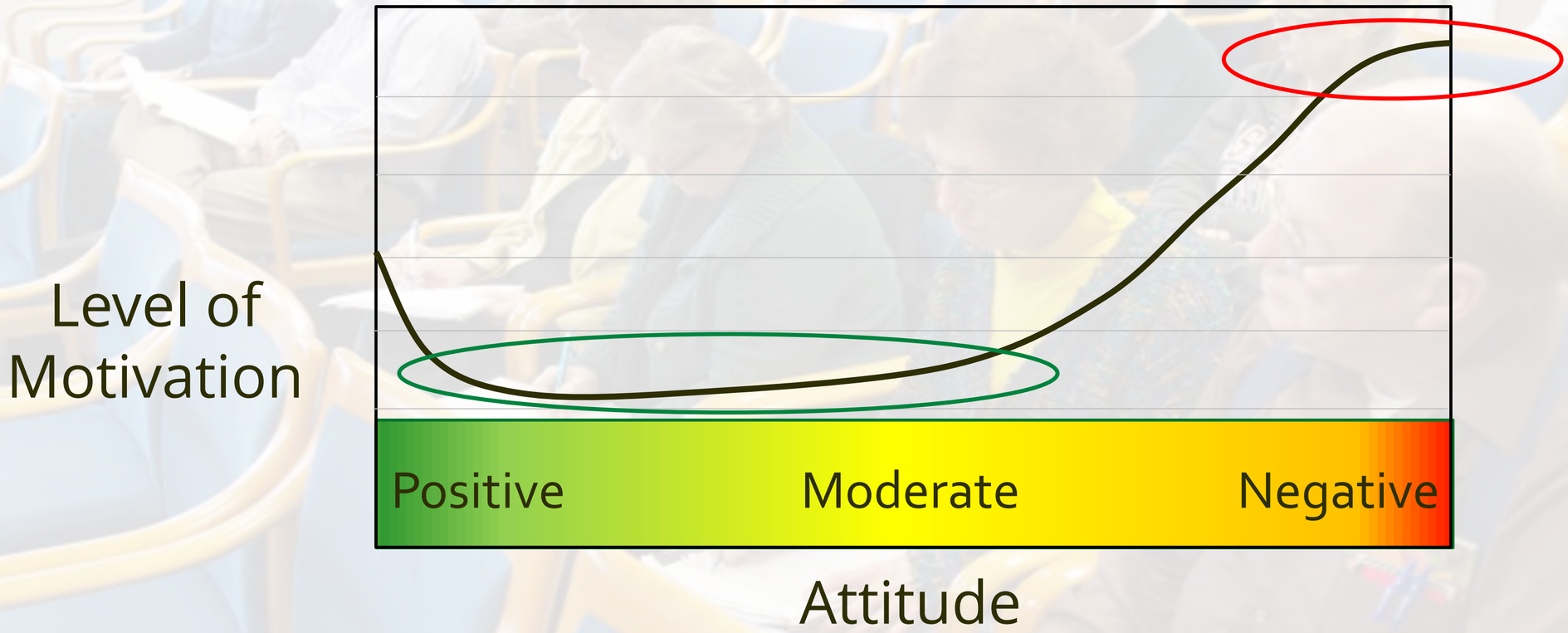


2

Create a frictionless experience

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Engage the moderates



Design it to take 5 minutes

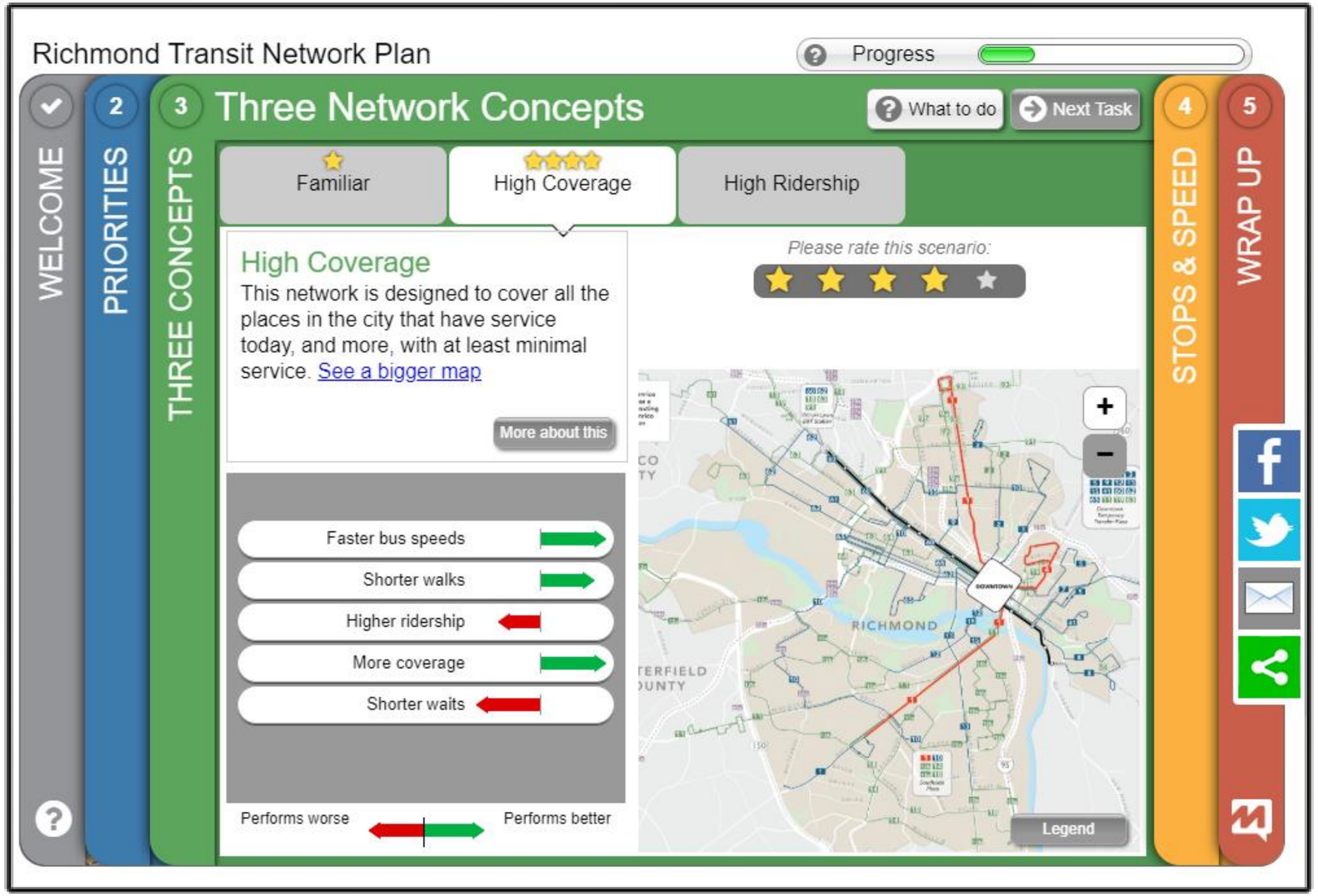
Keep it private for true, unbiased input

3

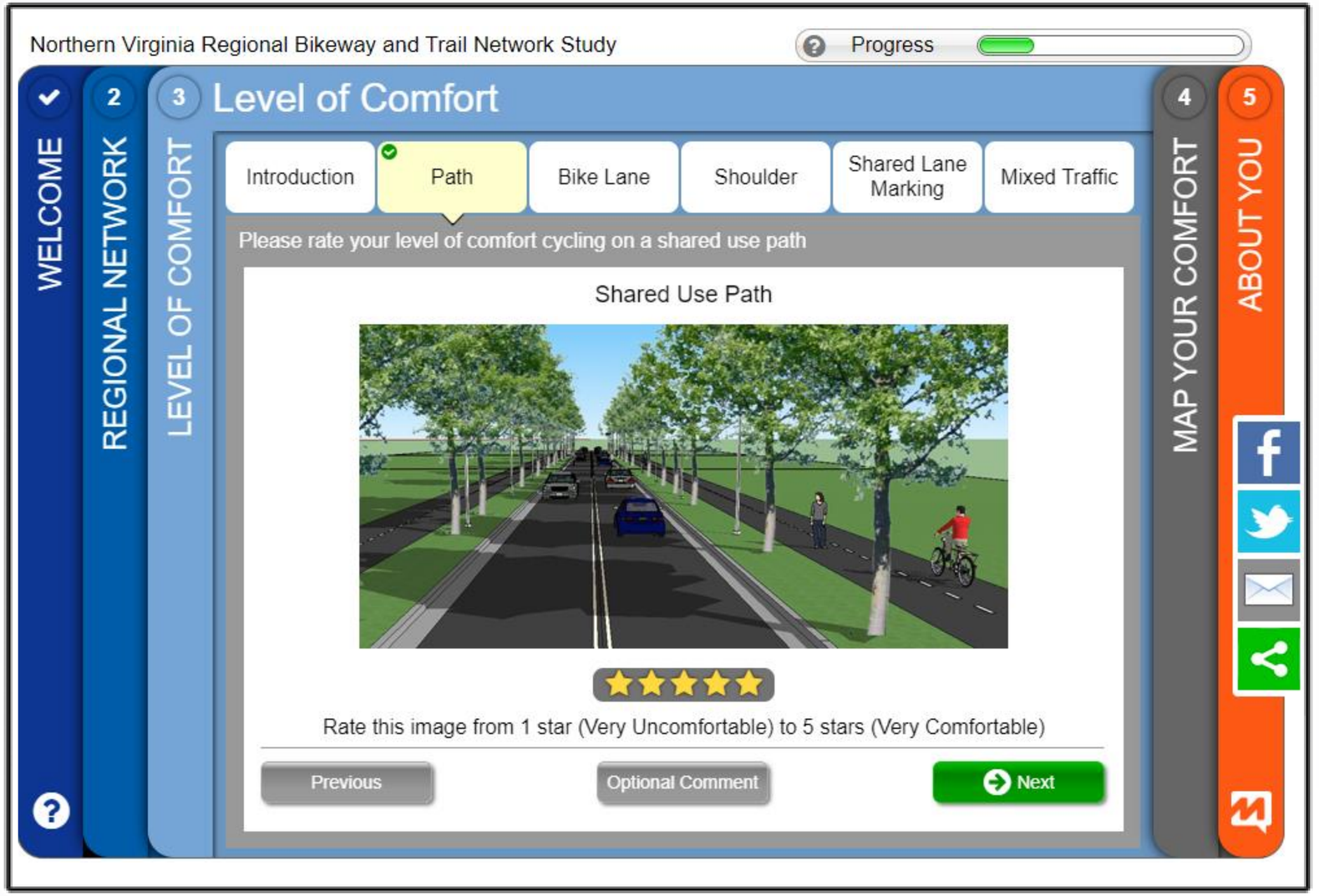
Inform & educate

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Create microlearning moments



Create microlearning moments



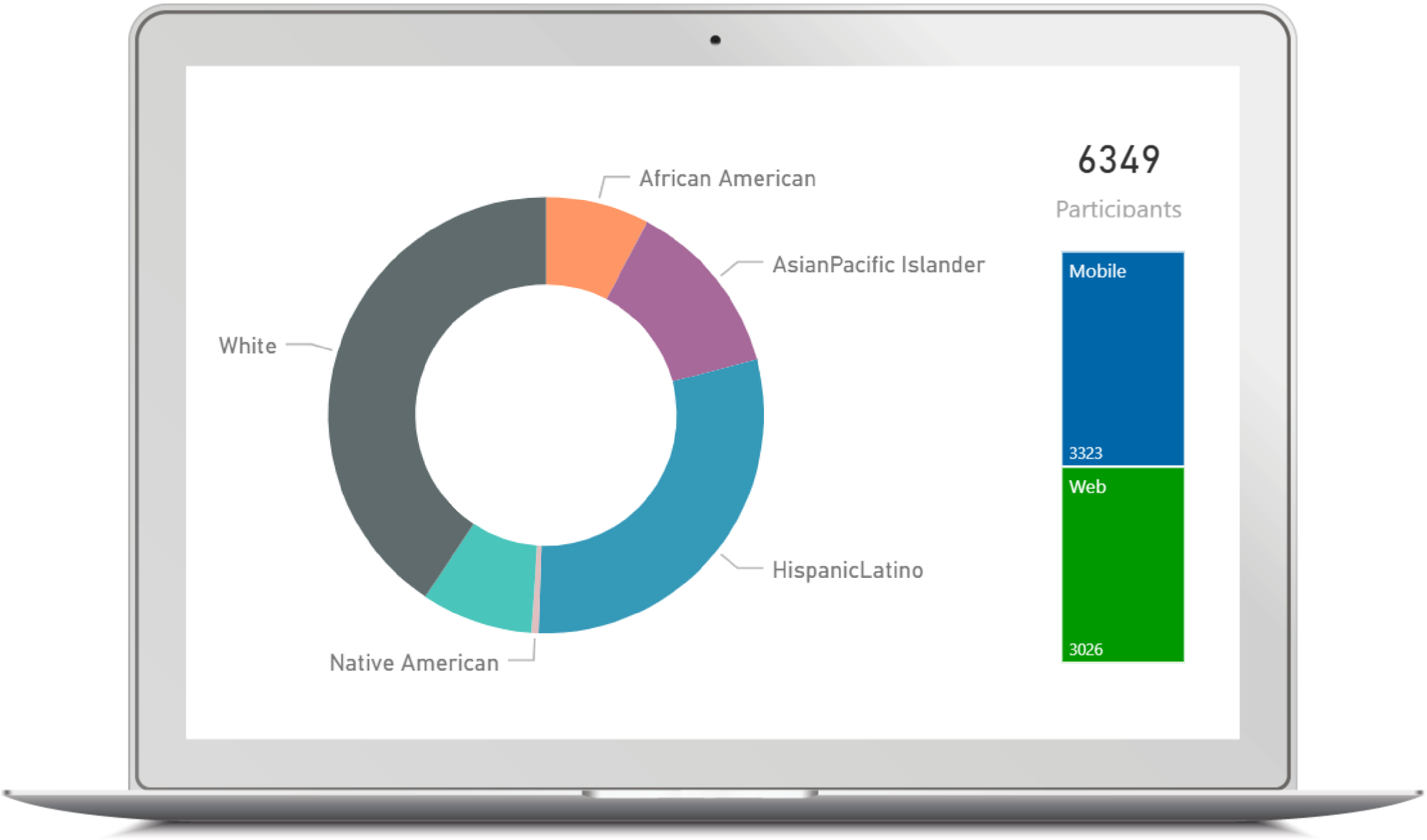
4

Promote strategically

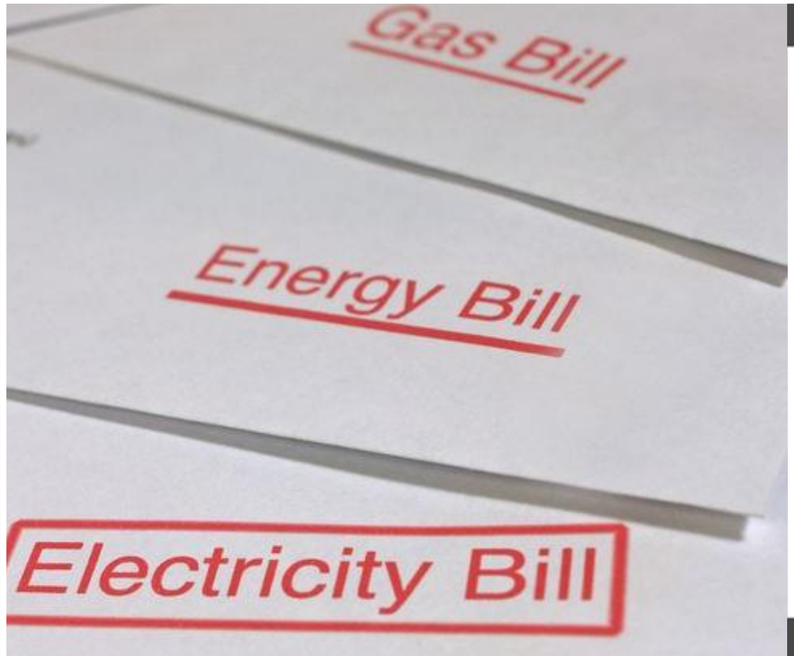
★ ★ ★ ★ ★

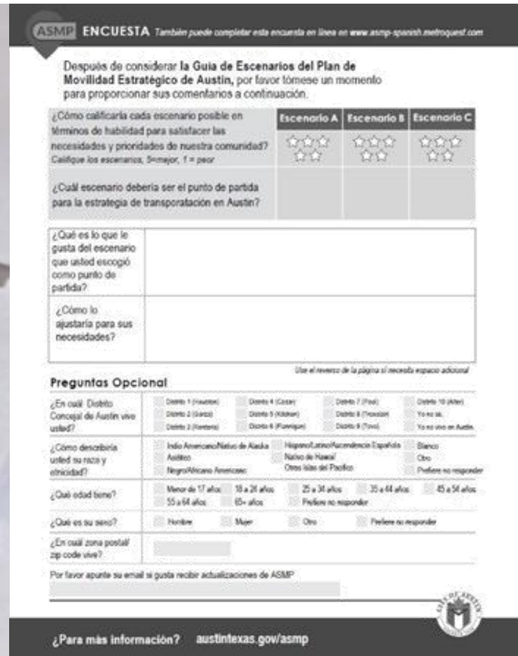
Collect & monitor demographics …

… so you can refocus promotions



Go to them even during COVID-19





Use these 12 promotional tools

FREE eBook: 12 Ways to Promote Your Online Survey Like a Pro

- 12 proven promotional strategies
- 70+ tips & tricks
- Real-world examples
- We will email you a PDF copy!

Thank you: MetroQuest subscribers!

5

Mine for insights & report back

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Focus on quantifiable input

Utilize your results dashboard…

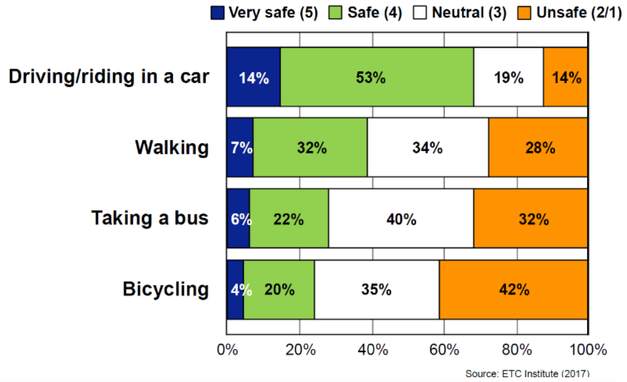
… to support data-driven plans!

November 2017

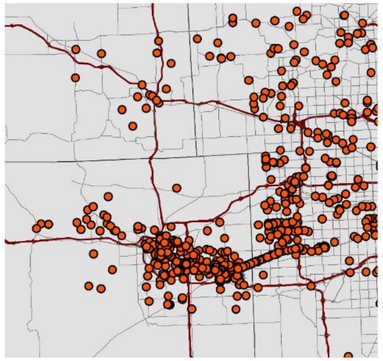
Public Outreach Report
2045 Regional Transportation Plan

SEMCOG | SOUTHEAST MICHIGAN COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

Feeling Safe when Traveling

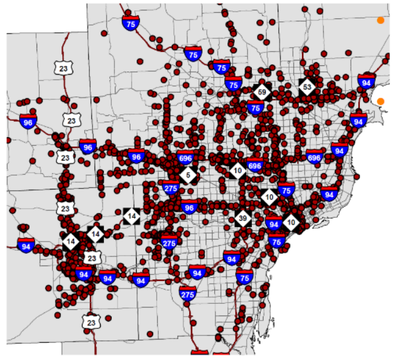


Biking and Walking



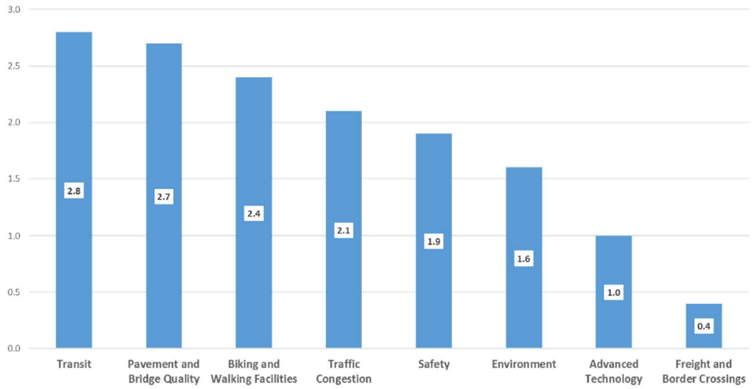
- 20% of total map markers
- Comments focused on:
  - Inadequate facilities and designs: lack of sidewalks, bike lanes, trails, and auto-oriented streets
  - Access

Congestion



- 32% of total map markers
- Comments focused on:
  - General commuting a.m./p.m. congestion
  - Design ex: on/off ramp issues, left turn lane backups
  - Operations ex: lights not timed correctly

Ranking Priorities



Top planning engagement goals

- Maximum participation
- Diverse representation
- Informed input
- Quantifiable results

POLL What types of projects are coming up for you?

Next Webinar

Public Engagement for Environmental Justice During COVID-19 & Beyond

Wednesday, August 5th at 2 pm Eastern (AICP CM 1.0)

Elizabeth Poole

Environmental Protection Agency

Carolyn Nelson

Federal Highway Administration

Denise Freeman

Department of Energy

POLL Save your seat!

Questions?

Wendy Shabay

VP and Group Manager,
Freese & Nichols

Chance Sparks

Project Manager,
Freese & Nichols

Clyde Melick

Assistant City Manager,
Midlothian

Dan McGinn

Director of Planning,
Corpus Christi

Thank you for participating!

AICP CM: https://planning.org/events/course/9202111/