

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT SUMMARY

FOR THE DESIGN PHASE OF BROOKHAVEN CITY HALL
APRIL 2023

Overview

The future Brookhaven City Hall will be a gathering space for conducting the people's business, to celebrate as a community, exchange ideas, and serve as a focal point and North Star for the City of Brookhaven within the Atlanta metropolitan area.

The City of Brookhaven sought input from residents and community members on the look of its future iconic City Hall. The vision for this building is to create an award-winning design. The Project Team focused on best practices that included sustainability, art integration, social justice, race, and equity throughout the community engagement process.

Engaging the public was an essential aspect of the design and construction planning process because it provided a platform and opportunity to convene community stakeholders to provide their input for the success of the project. Furthermore, upholding full transparency throughout the course of this project promoted building trust and set the stage for open and honest dialogue while incorporating diverse interests and perspectives, attracted a variety of new ideas, gained buy-in, and provided community members with a sense of ownership in the overall process.

The community engagement process was designed to involve stakeholders and community members in planning decisions. The process involved strategies and a variety of methods of community engagement techniques to reach a large and diverse public that ensured input was gathered and information was disseminated.

The Project Team worked in alignment with the Administration's April 2022 SJREC Recommendations Implementation Plan to outline the following tasks:

- Ensure meaningful community participation leadership, and ownership
- Create healthy, opportunity-rich neighborhoods for all
- Effectively engage diverse communities in planning and participatory budgeting processes, and integrated their arts and culture throughout government activities
- Institute Principles of Effective Community Engagement and
- Use targeted community-specific strategies implement Principles of Participatory Planning to ensure that the full community participates

The five points above outlined the initial project framework that provided the foundation for the successful implementation of the plan. The plan structure remained fluid so that critical input from the City of Brookhaven's City Manager and Executive Staff, as well as the Project Team, could be duly incorporated. The conceptual design approach included:

- A vision session with the Mayor and City Council members to build a consensus on the design
- The coordination of a tour for the Mayor and City Council members of local iconic buildings to act as case studies
- Development of a 3D "fly through" rendering and schematic pricing set

Strategy

The Project Team developed and implemented a comprehensive strategic Community Engagement Plan to achieve successful outcomes for the City of Brookhaven's City Hall Design and Construction Project. The team engaged with the community and stakeholders using methods that were most familiar and convenient, while seamlessly representing the City of Brookhaven by providing engagement that was accessible and equitable. The engagement plan was inclusive of tactics and strategies for the project. The team's process for the Community Engagement Plan included the following elements.

STRATEGIC PILLARS

The community engagement plan was built on a foundation comprised of the following strategic pillars: Educate, Engage, and Inform. The Project Team, in coordination with City of Brookhaven's Communications Department, utilized traditional media and digital platforms that broadened the audience, built community capacity, and supported engagement efforts with elected officials, businesses, stakeholders, community leaders, and residents in the project area.

- **EDUCATE** Educating stakeholders and community members about the City of Brookhaven's City Hall Project was an important part of the process. Education and outreach activities gave the Project Team direct interaction with the community and provided an opportunity to garner support for the project.
- **ENGAGE** Stakeholder engagement was an essential component of the outreach process as it helped translate stakeholders' needs into project goals. Establishing consensus among project stakeholders fostered shared motivation that helped different stakeholder groups arrive at decisions that resulted in desirable outcomes for all involved. The Project Team's strong relationships and influence within the host community was an asset and useful throughout the engagement process.
- **INFORM** Maintaining ongoing communication with stakeholders minimized the potential for misunderstandings and dissemination of inaccurate information about the project. The Project Team ensured stakeholders and community members were informed throughout the process, updated on project milestones and outcomes, and were shown how their participation contributed to the project.

Community Engagement Approach

The objective of the community engagement plan was to involve stakeholders and community members in planning and design decisions for the future Brookhaven City Hall project. The Project Team incorporated a variety of engagement tools as a part of the public outreach process that encouraged participation in the process and addressed potential challenges. Listed below are engagement techniques included in our communications tool kit which netted positive outcomes.

ENGAGEMENT MARKETING

Social Media expanded the reach by providing the ability to capture diverse audiences and generating buzz about the project. In collaboration with the City of Brookhaven's Communications Department, the Project Team utilized the City's designated social media platforms to facilitate communication. Multimedia content was used to captivate target audiences and to spur online engagement. Social Media content was created on an as-needed basis and in a consistent, expository style.

LANGUAGE TRANSLATION

The Project Team translated Marketing collateral into Spanish to reach a more diverse audience.

TRADITIONAL MEDIA

Media relationships were utilized to gain positive coverage of project related news in print and broadcast. Traditional media was used as a strategy to reach people without Internet access and individuals who are not technology savvy.

VIRTUAL PLATFORMS

Zoom was used as the essential virtual tool to ensure internal team operations and public outreach efforts were not impacted by COVID-19 and other unforeseeable factors.

QR CODES

The placement of QR Codes on collateral was efficient and effective in driving the public to the project website and other digital destinations to promote various outreach activities.

PROJECT WEBPAGE

The project webpage, linked to The City of Brookhaven's website, contained information regarding the community engagement outreach plan. The project website included a variety of pertinent information such as informational text, collateral materials, calendar of events, meeting notifications, surveys, and project videos.

LITERATURE DROPS

Distribution of literature in high traffic locations and popular venues, which included pertinent project-related information such as meeting notifications, surveys, fact sheets, and FAQs expanded the reach to those who would not normally participate in outreach activities.

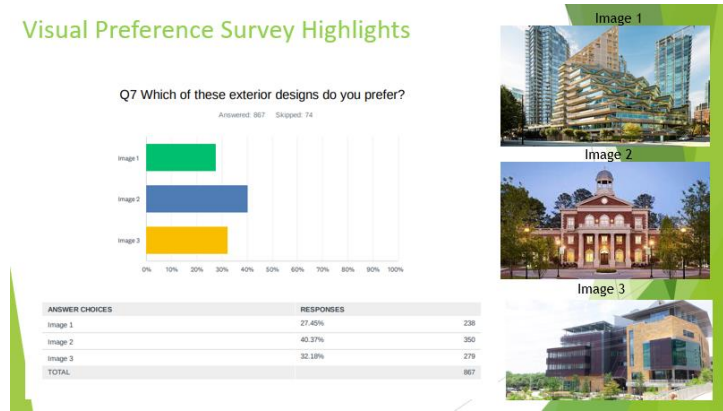
Outreach Materials

The following materials were developed to provide information regarding the project and to collect input from the public.

- **Online Survey** – The Project Team developed an online visual preference survey to obtain input on design and usage preferences that received over 950 responses. Stakeholders and community members were encouraged to provide feedback which was integrated into a final product designed to offer inspiration and guidance for further design and construction throughout the city. The online survey was conducted and promoted during outreach activities including targeted focus groups, social media, email newsletters, and pop-up events to effectively encourage community members to participate. **Refer to Figure 1.**

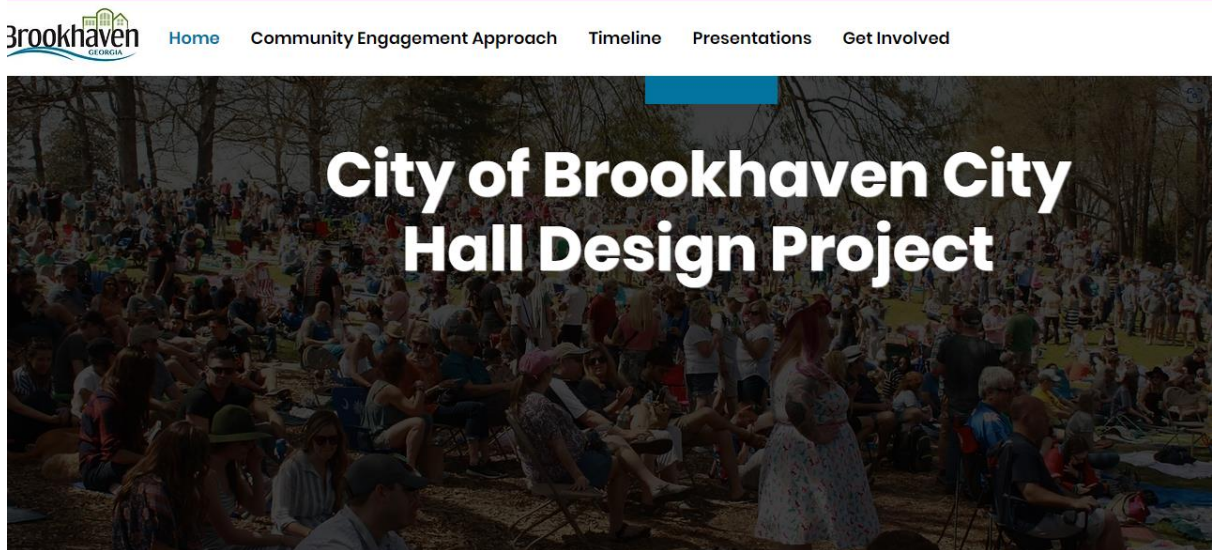
Figure 1 : ONLINE SURVEY

Visual Preference Survey Highlights



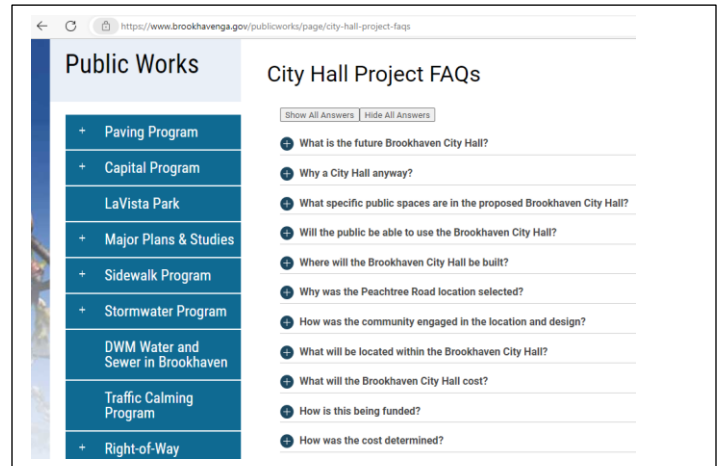
- **Project Webpage** – A third party website was developed attracting over 1400 unique visitors that could access the site via the City of Brookhaven’s website to support information sharing. The Project Team provided content and maintained the project website to be used as a centralized platform for communicating project details and updates to the public. Community members were able to submit questions and/or concerns via the designated project submission form for action and follow-up. Project information, including meeting schedules and project presentations, were posted periodically on the website. **Refer to Figure 2.**

Figure 2: PROJECT WEBSITE



- **Marketing Collateral (Survey/Public Meeting/FAQs)** – Vibrant marketing materials (postcards) were developed and distributed throughout the City of Brookhaven and digitally (English and Spanish), inclusive of QR codes, to visually inform and drive community members to the project website or other digital destinations (online survey & public meeting information) to promote various outreach activities. **Refer to Figure 3.**

Figure 3: MARKETING COLLATERAL



Outreach Activities

A comprehensive series of public outreach activities were conducted to gather input, educate, and engage staff, agencies, elected officials, stakeholders, and the public on the planning process. Below is a breakdown by category of outreach activities conducted.

Meeting Coordination and Special Events

The Project Team managed and facilitated a variety of events including presentations during City Council Meetings, visioning charrettes, and other activities. The Project Team developed strategic event plans that focused on the 4 P's: Preparation, Promotion, Production, and Post Event Activity. Utilizing this process has proven to be extremely successful as it relates to attendance, publicity, day-of execution, and event close-out. Public meetings and pop-up events were an essential part of the engagement process as they provided a platform to provide critical information and educate the community, as well as bring stakeholders and the community together for a common goal.

The Project Team facilitated public meetings in collaboration with the City of Brookhaven and other vested partners. This coordination ensured local governments and agency partners were informed on all aspects of the Brookhaven City Hall Design and Construction Project; captured data, issues, and project concerns; and assisted

with identifying any additional stakeholders. Community meetings allowed an opportunity for in-depth discussions and to minimize misconceptions. Tailored and digestible presentations were developed and presented to the City Council and the public to gain information on their goals, needs, and desires. Both individual and group stakeholder meetings were conducted based on the nature of the organization and the level of input desired.

Engagement is a key component for stakeholders, residents, and businesses. Some of the most important outreach activities for this project included the following:

- Periodic community events that involved community members throughout the project
- Planned and scheduled events that provided on-site display of the project
- Tour to City of Chicago for the City of Brookhaven leadership during the project
- Coordination with the City’s staff, specifically including the City Manager, his designee for communications, and other entities regarding public facing events
- Planning and management of outside vendors, organizations, and local involvement with the special events

Multilingual Outreach

The language component was an integral part of the outreach process given the large number of Spanish-speaking residents in the community. The Project Team was well-experienced in multi-lingual support, having coordinated and managed translation and interpretation projects involving marketing collateral, surveys, meeting facilitation, and events. The team has ongoing relationships with local and regional cultural organizations, businesses, and language experts with successful engagement.

Arts, Culture, and Quality of Life

Based on current and prior work in the City of Brookhaven, it was noted that arts and culture, along with quality of life, were critical elements that were included with this iconic project. For the last several years, The Project Team has been engaged in the community with other projects that have incorporated and included art and culture specifically related to the City of Brookhaven and its community members. Brand messaging and bilingual coordination have been critical elements in the city and were incorporated in the project. In addition, the involvement of the local schools, non-profits organizations, and other groups specifically aligned with the City of Brookhaven, are examples of the inclusionary efforts that were used to integrate into this project.

Elected Official and Stakeholder Outreach

During the outreach process, input from Mayor and City Council, as well as other internal and external stakeholders was gathered on the onset of the outreach process through stakeholder interviews, City Council briefings, community charrettes, and public meetings. The aim of the stakeholder briefings was to gather input to assist in tailoring project-related messaging and materials. An auxiliary benefit was that these engagement strategies helped the Project Team gain a clear understanding of the intended outcomes for the project’s overall communications efforts. Bilingual communication was utilized to fully achieve maximum participation of the diverse communities in the City of Brookhaven. **Refer to Table 1, Stakeholder List.**

Table 1: STAKEHOLDER LIST

Last Name	First Name	Organization
Riggins	Maggie	Southeast Energy Efficiency Alliance
Woodward	Tom	Social Justice, Race & Equity Commission
Keifer	Lauren	Chair of the Arts & Culture Commission
Pugh	David	Project Execution

Environmental Justice Communities

The project's public engagement efforts were tailored to the audience for which they were intended. The demographic constitution of the intended audience had a large effect on the types of engagement techniques that were used for the project. It was especially important to consider Environmental Justice (EJ) communities, whose populations are primarily minority and/or low-income individuals. In the interest of equity, fairness, and representation, it was vital to engage EJ communities in the public involvement process so they could have a voice in project development. Engagement techniques used by the Project Team were comprehensive enough to eliminate barriers of participation for these communities, which include a lack of access to the internet, inability to access in-person meetings, or limited English proficiency.

Sustainability and Environmental Conservation

The Project Team emphasized the integration of sustainability into the project concept through community engagement. This involved identifying private and public agencies that have an orientation towards environmental protection and sustainability and incorporating their insights into recommendations for the project design.

Social Justice, Race, and Equity

The Project Team upheld the values of social justice throughout the project. Ample time and resources were dedicated to ensure minority, underprivileged, and historically underrepresented groups like people of color had a say in the project. Upon completion, Brookhaven City Hall will be a facility that is welcoming to all people regardless of their identity or creed, which began with giving all groups a chance to voice their opinions on the project.

Activities

- Conducted several interviews with key stakeholders identified by the Project Team
- Coordinated with City staff to provide updates and briefings to elected officials at key points in the project. This allowed for the Project Team to receive feedback about ongoing activities and to adjust efforts as needed
- The engagement process was designed to educate stakeholders about the Brookhaven City Hall project
- Documented stakeholder input and feedback

Stakeholder Feedback

- Include Lynwood Park 's feedback within the outreach plan with Lynwood Park being the first predominantly Black subdivision in DeKalb County
- While discussing design suggestions of the Brookhaven City Hall, it was mentioned to focus on making sure the elements included in the design were "culturally sensitive and allowed expression from the public"
- Ensure that the new City Hall has an emphasis on diversity and recommends the art "captures" that
- The LGBT community and wanting the new City Hall to welcome all genders, races, and backgrounds
- Recommends art be displayed throughout the City Hall

Community Outreach

The Project Team identified four (4) in person opportunities to engage the community. **Refer to Figure 4.** These opportunities targeted small- and large-scale events, where the Project Team was able to directly engage with over 300 community members. The Project Team worked diligently to solicit community participation at these events to ensure that residents and community members were effectively engaged with the specific project initiatives and goals. Visual boards, survey postcards, QR codes directing members of the community to Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) and email sign-up sheets are examples of materials that were used to help increase participation. Event activities are detailed below.

Figure 4: COMMUNITY EVENTS

- ▶ Paint The Park, October 16th
- ▶ Design Charette, October 18th, 19th and 20th
- ▶ Light Up Brookhaven, November 15th
- ▶ Cherry Blossom Festival, March 25th and March 26th

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT FEEDBACK

Common Themes

- A place that everyone feels welcome
- Brings the community together
- Public Art throughout the facility
- Modern look and feel
- Green space and dog park
- Peachtree Road facing
- Concerned about noise from pedestrian and vehicle traffic
- Concerned about how the project would be funded

General Feedback

- I would like to see a City Hall that reflects all of Brookhaven
- The scale and cost of this project needs to be scaled way down - by half or more
- I think it's lovely. Very concerned about how you're going to manage traffic during construction
- I think coffee adjacent to MARTA is a great idea
- Thanks for sharing this and allowing for input
- As someone who lives in sight line to this new space, I appreciate that we are being thoughtful in the design as not to depreciate home values for residents who live so close. It's also beautiful
- I think it looks and sounds great, I'm excited to see it happen

Methodology:

The Project Team used the following channels of communication to increase awareness of project information in the following ways:

- Utilized City of Brookhaven's social media platforms including Facebook and Nextdoor, to drive traffic to the online survey, project webpage, and other communication collateral **(Refer to Figure 5)**
- Inclusion in City of Brookhaven's weekly e-newsletter, Brookhaven Blast, to drive traffic to online survey, project webpage, and other communication collateral **(Refer to Figure 6)**
- Conducted literature drops in the study area to libraries, grocery stores, retail stores, local businesses, eateries, educational institutions, on board MARTA buses, and fitness centers **(Refer to Figure 7)**
- Distributed communications (event information) to local media outlets. Below is a list of media hits. **(Refer to Figure 8)**
 - Rough Draft
 - Atlanta-Journal Constitution (AJC)
 - Atlanta Business Chronicles
- Established local partnerships with the following organizations to increase outreach efforts:
 - ✓ Oglethorpe University
 - ✓ Marist High School
 - ✓ Lynwood Park

- ✓ Latin American Association
- ✓ Brookhaven Chamber of Commerce
- ✓ Cross Keys High School
- ✓ St. Martin's Episcopal
- ✓ Mt. Zion Church

Figure 5: SOCIAL MEDIA

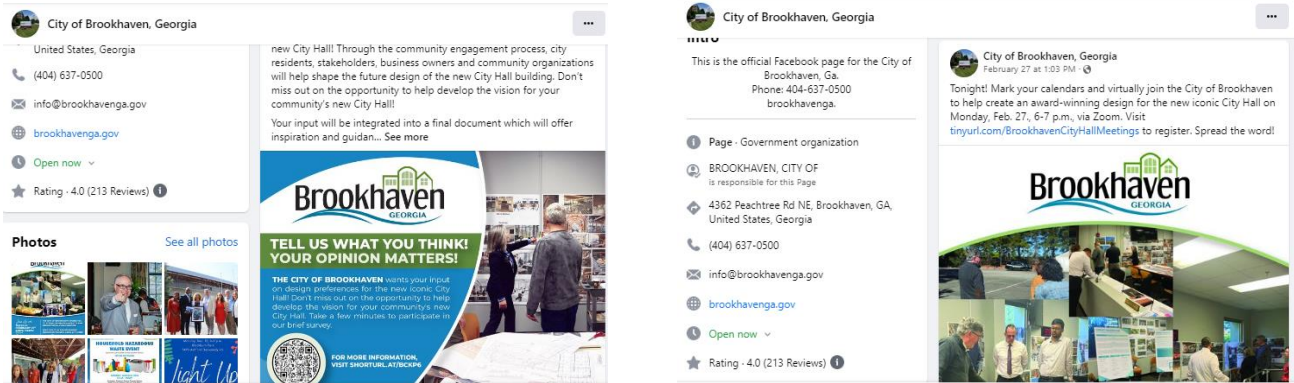


Figure 6: E-NEWSLETTER (Brookhaven Blast)



Figure 7: LITERATURE DROPS

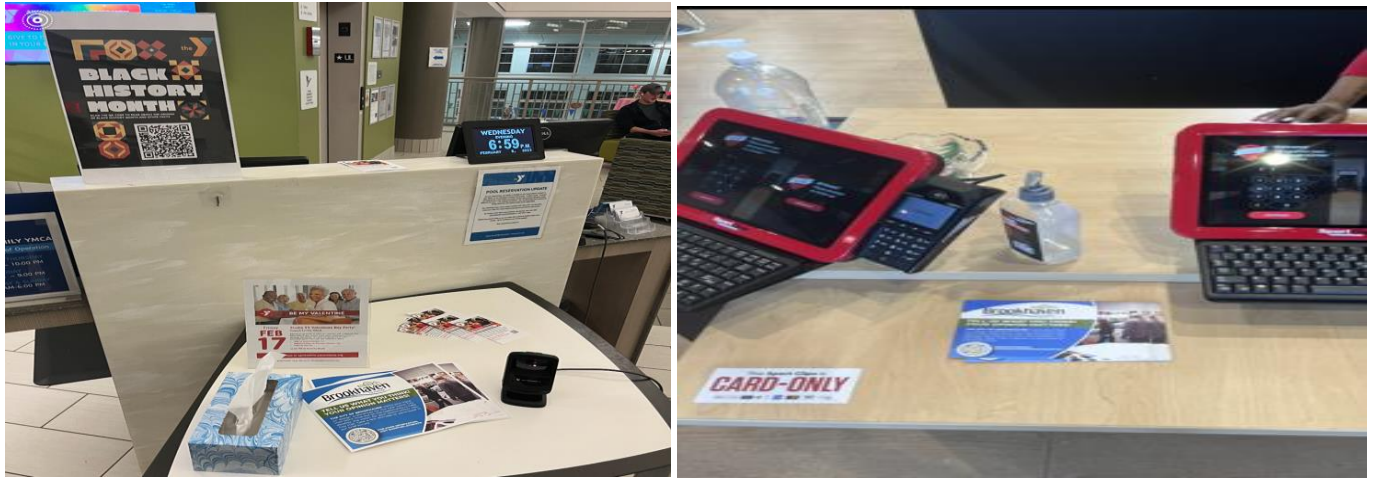


Figure 8: MEDIA HITS

