DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS

CITIES OF **SERVICE**

Using the Design Considerations[1] technique, citizens review firsthand experience data such as surveys or interview notes regarding a specific public service. They tease out common themes and identify design considerations (such as language and accessibility) that could help improve the public service.

BEFORE YOU BEGIN:

Prior to implementing any citizen engagement technique, it is important to set goals and expectations, identify stakeholders, and more. For a checklist of steps you should take before you begin, please visit **citiesofservice.org/techniques**.

HOW TO LEAD A DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS SESSION:

1. Select previously collected citizen input for the participants to analyze. The input could come from interviews, focus group notes, or surveys with open-ended questions. The input should reveal the opinions and experiences of citizens that use a particular city service. *You can find citizen engagement techniques to gather these initial opinions and experiences at citiesofservice.org/ techniques.*

2. Welcome citizens to the meeting and remind them of the meeting purpose, the challenge they are helping to address, and how their input will be used.

3. Break participants into small groups of four to six and provide each group with the citizen input they will be analyzing, poster paper, and pens or markers.

4. Have each group member read the citizen input material. Once done, have the group identify common ideas, inspiring quotes or stories, and the most compelling points. Next, ask the small groups to reflect on the work they have done so far and identify the key learnings.

5. Ask the groups to list the design considerations that underpin the key learnings. For example, if a key learning is "residents do not understand the instructions," then a design consideration could be to provide language interpreters or ensure that content is written at an appropriate reading level.

6. Have each group write a key learning with its associated design considerations on poster paper, repeating the process for additional key learnings if the group has uncovered more than one.

[1]Adapted from "Design Thinking Bootleg" by Scott Doorley, Sarah Holcomb, Perry Klebahn, Kathryn Segovia, and Jeremy Utley. d.school. Accessed September 27, 2019. https://dschool.stanford.edu/resources/design-thinking-bootleg, card #12.

7. Ask each group to present unique key learnings and the associated design considerations to the entire group, and then hang their poster paper in the room. To prevent repetition, groups who have similar key learnings to others do not have to present them. Instead, the posters that have similar key learnings from different groups can be clustered together.

8. After the unique key learnings and design considerations have been presented, bring the groups together and lead a discussion to confirm each group's design considerations fit the associated key learnings. Next, participants are invited to prioritize the design considerations that could be integrated into the service.

9. Thank citizens for their participation, explain how their input will be used by the city, and tell them how they can stay up to date on the project's development.

EXAMPLE:

Richmond, California, embarked on a citywide parks assessment with the Department of Community Services and several community organizations. They began the assessment by asking citizens to gather baseline observational data in all 25 parks in the city. About 75 participants signed up to participate online, and they were randomly assigned to five groups. Each group assessed five parks on their accessibility, family amenities, play facilities, maintenance, and safety using a survey form. The city then gathered these participants and other citizens in January to analyze this data using the Design Considerations technique.

The partners that hosted the Design Considerations workshop offered free childcare, Spanish-language interpretation, and breakfast. The participants were divided among tables, and each table had a facilitator from one of the partner organizations leading the effort. The city staff and partner organizations prepared for this meeting by organizing the survey data in graphs and bar charts. The participants discussed and analyzed the data presented to them, and they organized the survey responses into themes. Through several facilitated discussions, the groups identified the top three priority parks and the top three improvement themes: safety, family amenities, and maintenance.

Following the initial meeting, the city and partners hosted subsequent community meetings for a deeper dive into design considerations for specific parks. With the help of facilitators, participants gathered around aerial images of the parks and added stickers of icons that represented possible improvements within the three identified priority areas. The groups also took notes about their recommendations on poster paper, and they reported these recommendations to all the participants. Participants suggested improvements, including lights, security cameras, trash cans, and hydration stations. Through discussion, they narrowed the recommendations to the most pressing and promising and presented those to the city. The results from these community workshops will be used to guide Richmond's priorities for future park projects and grants for park improvements.

For guidance on using this and other citizen engagement techniques, or to learn more about customizing solutions for your city, contact Cities of Service at **info@citiesofservice.org**.