

# Engagement



To create relevant and lasting positive change, it is essential that we directly, actively and meaningfully involve the people who live where the change is intended to take place, the lives most affected by the policies, systems and structures at work in any social change process.



## Six Elements of Successful Resident Engagement

1. Represent – Select staff, board, committee members and community collaborators who understand the community, have a passion for its well-being and can work comfortably within it.
2. Listen – Invite residents to examine issues, set goals and find solutions. Listen to resident concerns and ideas about the community's future. Pay attention to those who historically have been excluded. Create opportunities for residents to share ideas at times and places comfortable and convenient for them.
3. Offer – Offering resources that draw on organizational strengths for common good; for example, sharing research findings on key issues or effective engagement practices, providing space, giving technical support, or facilitating group connections or processes.
4. Understand – Gain deeper knowledge of systems and processes that help residents connect with networks, organizations and each other. Consider how the dynamics of race, class, culture and power affect the community. Facilitate dialogues, engage with networks and collaborate on issues.
5. Partner – Advance residents' ideas and work together to solve problems. This enables residents to share ownership of community visions, solutions and actions around common concerns.
6. Measure – In all efforts, measure the level of resident participation, quality of the engagement experience, actions taken, participant outcomes and community outcomes.

## It's Big, It's Bold

And it will be hard to miss as it rolls through town. Oshkosh Police Chief Scott Greuel wants the department's new Command & Community Outreach Vehicle (CCOV) to be noticed. *(Pictured on the flip side).*

The addition of the CCOV is the last phase of implementation of the OPD's Team Policing philosophy. It serves as a command post at major incidents, such as crime scenes or natural disasters, and events, and for neighborhood outreach efforts. Oshkosh, known as Wisconsin's Event City with more than 1 million visitors annually, has 200 special events that police are involved with each year. Residents can expect to see the CCOV at major events.

As a neighborhood outreach tool, Greuel says the CCOV is providing a hub for neighborhood meetings, internet safety training and educational purposes. "We hope to develop relationships and for people to invite us into their neighborhoods. We believe we can grow stronger and as a safer community neighborhood by neighborhood," he says.

"Team Policing is one example of increasing community engagement across the city and how we are working to better meet the needs of the neighborhoods," says City Manager, Mark Rohloff. "Strong neighborhoods are such an important focus as the city and many others are working to make Oshkosh a great place to live and raise a family."

## Is the Engagement Real?

A national panel of 34 nonprofit practitioners identified these principles for true resident engagement:

**People power.** Everyone can participate in relating to others, understanding the issues, making recommendations and taking action.

**Inclusive.** People from all parts of the community's population are involved in every way.

**Reciprocity.** Organizations and individuals teach and learn from each other in a two-way exchange.

**Partnership,** not directorship. Organizations and individuals work with, rather than for or on behalf of communities.

**Assets,** not deficits. All residents have power and ability. Communities can identify, use and leverage assets such as time, talents, experiences, networks and more.

**More than money.** Organizations have many resources to strengthen communities.

**Everyone gives.** All parties contribute to the effort, drawing on their individual strengths and assets.

## Ask Us

about ways we can collaborate to engage residents for the benefit of all in this community. Please contact us at 920-426-3993 or [Info@OshkoshAreaCF.org](mailto:Info@OshkoshAreaCF.org).