Annex C
(informative)

Engagement Methods

This annex contains examples of a variety of connecting/engagement methods and tools that can be considered for use by an operator.

Table C.1—Gatherings

Tool	Description	Who Typically Hosts	Tool Use Considerations	Benefits	Challenges	Additional information
Public Hearings	Formal public hearings with comments and transcripts; typically required by statute; not in the format of questions and answers, but allows the public to make time-limited comments to government staff or officials.	Government agencies, typically during a formal public comment period, often during scoping of an environmental review or at consideration of a permit or other formal agency action.	Access (timing such as day or night and location); comfort of certain marginalized populations expressing their views in large groups; accommodation for those with different needs (language, sight, hearing, child/elder care, transportation access, etc.).	Provides all in attendance equal time to express views; formally documents concerns and issues; meets regulatory requirements; captures the full range of concerns brought to the hearing by the public.	Comes typically very early or late in an action, which could limit problem solving on specific issues; does not provide a fuller forum for questions, answers, and engagement.	Public hearings can be coupled with open houses and public meetings to ensure a range of means for the public to participate; transcribers can be made available for the public who attends but does not want to speak publicly; fair and reasonable time limits for speaking can ensure all have equal but reasonable time to express views.
Public "Town Hall" Meetings or Typical Public Meeting Format	A range of meeting types, but usually include presentations by the convenor of the meeting and questions and answers in a back-and-forth fashion.	Any organization from a federal to local government agency to a company to a national, regional, or local non-governmental organization can host a public meeting.	Access (timing such as day or night); location (including virtual); comfort of certain marginalized populations expressing their views in large groups; accommodation for those with different needs (language, sight, hearing, child/elder care, transportation access, etc.).	Provides for questions and answers in full view of all participants; allows for identification of concerned parties to be engaged with afterward; identifies common issues and concerns that need attention.	Preferences those comfortable in public settings and public speaking; may not provide for answering all or specific, narrower questions; can be a forum that exacerbates differences and conflicts, positioning rather than problem solving; can favor strong views and personalities, or those with more influence, over those with marginalized or more mixed or uncertain views.	Public meetings can be coupled with open houses to provide a fuller range of engagement. Public meetings should be well designed with clear agendas; information covered provided ahead of time; set ground rules or expectations for civility and safety, and allowance for free expression of view; well prepared, succinct, and clear presenters; adequate and sufficient time for questions and interactions, and appropriate balance between talking and listening. Capable moderators or facilitators may aid in running more effective public meetings. Local or other stakeholder co-sponsors can help plan and tailor meetings to the particular audiences and their needs.

Tool	Description	Who Typically Hosts	Tool Use Considerations	Benefits	Challenges	Additional information
Public Workshops	A range of formats, but where participants engage each other in small and large groups to explore problems and possible solutions, and/or different scenarios in project planning, with more diverse ways to engage across the length of the meeting; often focused on specific topics or issues.	Any organization, from a federal to local government agency to a company to a national, regional, or local non-governmental organization, can host a public workshop.	Access (timing such as day or night); location (including virtual); comfort of certain marginalized populations expressing their views in large groups; accommodation for those with different needs (language, sight, hearing, child/elder care, transportation access, etc.).	Provides for focused, in-depth discussion of issues; increases shared learning and deeper understanding of projects, problems, and solutions; provides a means to build relationships and dialogue; may reduce the division and confrontation of presenters/proponents and responders/opponents.	Preferences those comfortable in public settings; often takes longer time commitment to prepare and participate; can favor strong views and personalities, or those with more influence, over those with marginalized or more mixed or uncertain views. Workshops may be able to only engage with a smaller subset of potentially interested parties compared to public meetings or open houses.	Public workshops should be well designed with clear agendas; information covered provided ahead of time in order to prepare participants; set ground rules or expectations for civility and safety, and allowance for free expression of views; should provide well-prepared, succinct, and clear presenters, adequate and sufficient time for questions and interactions, and appropriate balance between talking and listening. Capable moderators or facilitators may aid in running more effective public workshops. Local or other stakeholder co-sponsors can help plan and tailor meetings to the particular audiences and their needs.
Public Open Houses	Open meeting formats typically held over longer periods of time where people can come and go for their schedule and interact at small stations or posters with subject-matter experts.	Any organization, from a federal to local government agency to a company to a national, regional, or local non-governmental organization, can host an open house.	Access (timing such as day or night) and location (including virtual); comfort of certain marginalized populations expressing their views in large groups; accommodation for those with different needs (language, sight, hearing, child/elder care, transportation access, etc.).	Provides for specific questions to be answered by specific experts in informal, individual, or small group setting; allows for the public to come and go as fits their desire and schedule to engage; allows for more informal and multiple interactions at the same time, as well as with a range of potential experts.	Participants do not hear the questions of others that they might have not thought of; answers may vary or be more inconsistent across multiple one-on-one interactions; sentiment of a group as a whole may be harder to ascertain; may be perceived as avoiding the public and their shared views and collective concerns.	Public open houses can be coupled with public meetings and public hearings to provide a fuller range of engagement. Open houses should be well designed and provide effective and clear posters and written information, capable and engaging subject-matter experts, multiple means to engage from conversations to written comments, and a clear way to document questions and issues raised individually to identify common themes and issues for further engagement across participants.

Tool	Description	Who Typically Hosts	Tool Use Considerations	Benefits	Challenges	Additional information
Multi-stakeholder or Community Advisory Groups	Groups of community residents and/or stakeholder representatives meeting on a regular and on-going basis, usually over multiple meetings for a period of time ranging from months to years.	Any organization, from a federal to local government agency to a company to a national, regional, or local non-governmental organization, can form and host an advisory group.	Access (timing such as day or night); location (including virtual); comfort of certain marginalized populations expressing their views in large groups; accommodation for those with different needs (language, sight, hearing, child/elder care, transportation access, etc.).	Valuable for long-term dialogue, relationship building, and problem solving. Can demonstrate commitment to community and by community. May be led by communities and build capacity for local engagement. Can help engage stakeholders in dialogue beyond single project to policy, leading practices, and broader relationship building.	May be time-consuming to establish and maintain. May not represent the community at large given typically a select membership. Can be difficult to organize around linear projects across broad and diverse geographies. Groups may emerge in later stages of a project in response to feeling left out of, or unheard by, other participatory processes. In addition, the federal government has administrative law limitations for creating ongoing, membership bodies.	Consider creating ongoing groups where there is an on-going project or policy issue. Ensure that selection of participants is fair, transparent, and allows for a range and balance of views. Engage the community in the design, convening, and membership selection such that such groups are created with, not just for, the community. Allow the community to take a leadership role in determining agendas and priorities.
Locally Established Meetings Held by Others	Government or industry attending others' meetings, such as the Lions Club, Chamber, Kiwanis, local or regional environmental or other public interest groups, etc.	Local groups host their own meetings. Industry, government, or public interest groups may attend, present, or engage with other organizations.	Consider the range of local groups to meet with, including those with members from or who represent diverse classes, races, and ethnicities. Recognize that this is a specific audience and may not represent the broad spectrum of stakeholders.	Draws from existing networks and meetings and thus can increase participation and engagement in other participation tools. Meets people where they are, going to them rather than asking them to attend a separate, project-specific meeting. Provides new contacts and connections. Provides a forum for pertinent information to be shared.	Can be time-consuming on the part of the host to attend multiple events. Only those individuals attending such meetings are reached, so some segments of the community or general public may not be reached through such efforts. Existing networks and organizations may not capture traditionally marginalized populations.	Useful forums to supplement, but not supplant, broader public outreach through the number of tools listed elsewhere in this matrix (table). Can be particularly useful for reaching marginalized groups and disadvantaged communities.

Tool	Description	Who Typically Hosts	Tool Use Considerations	Benefits	Challenges	Additional information
Local Events	These might include fairs, rodeos, barbecues, and other local events.	Industry or public groups typically participate in such events through booths or other means. It is less likely for government to participate in this way.	Recognize that attendees of events may not represent the broad spectrum of stakeholders affected by or interested in pipeline safety	Meets people where they are, going to them rather than asking them to attend a separate, project-specific meeting. Provides new contacts and connections. Provides an informal means for questions, information, and engagement.	Can be time-consuming on the part of the host to attend multiple events. Only those individuals attending such meetings are reached, so some segments of the community or general public may not be reached through such efforts. May be seen more as advertising or sales rather than engagement. Is not an effective tool for deeper discussion on issues given participants will generally have limited time to engage with hosts at events.	Useful efforts to supplement, but not supplant, broader public outreach through the number of tools listed elsewhere in this matrix (table).
Focus Groups	Organized groups of less than 15 who engage with a moderator around a set of typically scripted, structured questions.	Any organization may host such focus groups.	Careful consideration of group selection to represent a range of views and perspectives, including all affected communities.	Allows for focused, structured small-group conversations with in-depth questions and topics. Can be a useful tool for evaluation and review of projects and programs. Provides a means to potentially obtain "unvarnished" feedback and listening rather than talking when such groups are led by independent parties. If done in an appreciative inquiry and participatory mode, participants can share information, learn, and discuss from one another, and explore a range of issues.	Does not provide the transparency of several other forums described in this matrix (table). Such forums are not as effective for information sharing and can be seen as biased depending on who and how the participants are selected. May be seen as market research rather than engagement.	Focus groups should be organized in ways that ensure a range of views and people are invited and attend. Multiple focus groups that are offered at various times throughout a day or week will likely increase attendance. Focus groups are best led by independent parties without a particular stake in the outcome. Though somewhat risking perceptions of "paying people," providing for modest compensation to attend shows respect for people's time and wisdom.

Tool	Description	Who Typically Hosts	Tool Use Considerations	Benefits	Challenges	Additional information
Site Visit	Visiting a proposed or actual site in small or larger groups as a kind of "tour."	May be hosted by any sector.	Access (timing such as day or night and location); comfort of certain marginalized populations in large groups; accommodation for those with different needs (language, sight, hearing, child/elder care, transportation access, etc.).	Provides the opportunity for stakeholders to discuss concerns in the field, which provides context. Allows for experiential learning and important to "show" not just "tell." Allows informal and real-time engagement in a setting less formalized than a meeting. Technical specialists can provide real-time, specific, concrete interaction.	Property access, transportation, and liability concerns may limit or constrain such efforts. Often limited in size and scale to manage individuals safely. Does not allow for group-level problem naming and problem solving in ways that "meeting" formats can. Can require significant time on the part of participants.	Hold tours with local sponsors or community convenors. Provide for access, such as time of day and week, transportation, and other assistance so that a range of the public can attend. Hold multiple tours if interest is high. Invite and seek out attendees beyond local decision-makers and influencers to be more community engaged. Be fully transparent and prepared to discuss activities occurring on a site.
One-on-One meetings	Individual meetings or conversations between two or a few people.	May be hosted by any sector.	Knowledge that this is possible, and consideration of language, culture, or other accommodations needed to make the interaction fruitful for all.	Allows for detailed information exchange and increase in mutual understanding. Can build and establish relationships when done in active listening and dialogue mode. Can be constructive to resolve specific, individual concerns when appropriate and needed.	Is essential yet time-consuming. Does not raise nor address broader community-wide concerns or issues. Depends on the capability and skill set of many different organizational representatives engaging many different people, potentially leading to different or contradictory information and a range of experience depending on personalities and roles.	Train those engaging one-on-one for both substantive knowledge and skilled and respectful interaction with individuals who may present strong opposing views. Be prepared to field a range of informational requests. Supplement individual meetings with more community-wide forums based on community interest and concern.

Tool	Description	Who Typically Hosts	Tool Use Considerations	Benefits	Challenges	Additional information
Facilitation	A facilitator is a person who helps organize and moderate meetings or events and who has no vested interest in the outcome.	Typically retained by government or industry.	Should be trained in social equity and justice and, in some cases, reflect the communities they help serve.	Provides a distinct, separate, process-based role and skill set that is not always available within an organization. Helps with dialogue/understanding when government may have few options. Provides balance for voices across concerns and issues. Essential in many multi-stakeholder or community-industry gatherings in order to ensure all voices are heard and common ground is established.	Adds additional cost for the funding party or parties. Identifying facilitators who are credible with a community can be a challenge and the entity may be seen as biased if selected and funded by a project proponent.	May work best for large groups, more complex meeting formats, and when differences are expected to be greater and more strongly felt. Consider retaining a local facilitator known by the community or engage the community in facilitator selection. Utilize facilitators to increase dialogue, listening, and implement innovative and inclusive processes.
Mediation	A mediator is a person who helps resolve a conflict or disagreement by working with designated parties in joint and individual sessions and who has no vested interest in the outcome.	Typically retained by government or industry.	Should be trained in social equity and justice, and, in some cases, reflect the communities they help serve.	Provides a distinct, separate, process-based role and skill set. Provides balance for voices across concerns and issues. Brings a strong listening, problem-solving, and agreement focus to interactions. Can ensure all voices are heard and common ground is established. May help resolve intense or long-standing conflict to allow all parties to move forward.	Adds additional cost for the funding party or parties. Identifying mediators who are credible with a community can be a challenge, and the entity may be seen as biased if selected and funded by a project proponent. Is often a tool of "last resort." Due to confidentiality and private caucuses among parties, may not be transparent and inclusive to and of the larger community.	Engage the community or participants in mediator selection. Utilize mediators to address specific, well-scoped disagreements or conflicts. Ensure a transparent link between mediation and broader engagement efforts so that the broader community is aware of the mediation, its process, progress, and outcomes.

Tool	Description	Who Typically Hosts	Tool Use Considerations	Benefits	Challenges	Additional information
Participatory Evaluation (see NOTE)	A method or process for involving stakeholders directly in the evaluation or review of programs or projects.	Project or program proponents such as industry or government typically host these processes.	Access (timing such as day or night and location; comfort of certain marginalized populations expressing their views in large groups; accommodation for those with different needs (language, sight, hearing, child/elder care, transportation access, etc.).	Participatory evaluation can ensure that those most affected have a direct voice and participation in the review of engagement programs and efforts. Increases engagement and shows good faith in such efforts. Provides a means to gather a range of feedback from a host of viewpoints, providing for richer, more robust evaluation.	Can be difficult to get participants with a range of views to participate. Can be costly in time and resources. Can be difficult for project professionals with subject-matter expertise to accept the validity of those with lay/local expertise.	Utilize independent evaluators to organize and manage such processes. Ensure that participatory evaluation is done with rigorous social science methodologies and approaches. Consider how to include all voices in the evaluation. When the evaluation is complete, share conclusions publicly for transparency and trust building.

NOTE   Examples of participatory evaluation:

— https://ctb.ku.edu/en/table-of-contents/evaluate/evaluation/participatory-evaluation/main

— https://www.betterevaluation.org/en/plan/approach/participatory_evaluation

— https://meera.seas.umich.edu/participatory-evaluation.html

Table C.2—Supplemental Communication Tools

Tool	Description	Tool Use Considerations	Benefits	Challenges	Additional Information
Community Surveys	Surveys online, mailed, door-to-door, or telephoned, in or after meetings, to provide input on specific questions.	Accessibility in terms of languages, reading levels, and other factors.	Can help direct outreach and engagement around survey results.	Getting them completed and returned (participation can be below 10 % response rate). Often limited in scope and may not cover all stakeholder concerns. Satisfied parties may not respond so biases negative results. Difficult to follow up or start dialogue.	Consider using throughout the project for feedback and continuous improvement.
Interactive GIS Tool/Maps	Used to map stakeholders and their interests. Used to display information on a project on a website via a web app. Use a story map to describe a project or process. Use a 123 survey (GIS tool with select options, simple form, ease of use) for communication inquiries.	Internet access may be limited (story maps and maps can be printed for broader dissemination). Ensure availability in smartphone format, multiple languages, ADA compliance, and distribution in a host of means and ways.	Very user friendly and versatile. Changes/additions are easy to make.	Slight learning curve to implement. Public often voices frustration if locations are changed during a siting process. Companies can be hesitant to provide information until a route is much more concrete. Can create frustration because allows only limited input.	Companies may vary in the sophistication and detail they provide, but the tool can provide helpful spatial data and extensive interaction with the pipeline's physical location and geography.
Fact Sheets	Visually compelling, shorter documents clearly written in accessible language(s) to provide facts, information, and detail on a project.	Make available in all needed languages; use of plain language essential, along with graphics and other means for multiple ways to engage different learning styles.	Simple and effective; can be made digital and incorporated into websites; provides information as a foundation for future engagement and dialogue and often satisfies information needs of many.	Static information that does not provide a means for real-time feedback or engagement. May be seen as marketing or promotion rather than information and education.	Should always provide means to move beyond fact sheet to further engagement via contact, event, or other further connections. Seek to provide clear, trusted, able writing that is more science translation than marketing skill set.

Tool	Description	Tool Use Considerations	Benefits	Challenges	Additional Information
Videos	Videos often are used for showing and explaining physical aspects, such as horizontal drilling, construction, etc. Can be relatively low-cost and provide regular updates, and allow a range of presenters.	Internet access may be limited. Ensure availability in smartphone format, in multiple languages, ADA compliance, and distribution in a host of means and ways.	Provide visual experience for visual learners. Can show more than tell.	A range of audiences may react quite differently.	Both visual and language cues have to be thoughtful regarding use of terms, risk communication, and other factors. Depends on legitimate and more trusted speakers.
Project Website	Project-specific websites that are easy to find (1-2 clicks), detail information in plain language, including company contacts. Websites can be updated when significant changes in schedule and scope occur.	Internet access may be limited. Ensure availability in smartphone format, in multiple languages, ADA compliance, and distribution in a host of means and ways.	If kept simple, can be very impactful and a good way to make first contact or maintain information flow.	Can't rely on as sole information flow due to some people not having or being able to use the internet.	Can incorporate digital fact sheets, GIS story maps, or interactive maps. Provide links to stakeholders who have more information, including regulatory agency links and documents.

Table C.3—States and Federal Agencies with EJ Screening Tools[6]

Source	
State	California
	Connecticut
	Illinois
	Maryland
	Massachusetts
	Michigan
	Minnesota
	New Mexico
	New York
	North Carolina
	Pennsylvania
	Washington
Federal and Other	CDC Social Vulnerability Index
	EPA EJ Screen
	Indiana University Review of State EJ Screening Tools (2021)
	DOE Disadvantaged Communities Tool
	CEQ Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool
	PHMSA Social Equity Mapping Tools

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[6] Available as of the publication date of this document.