



Engage Dane Update



1/18/2024

Engage Dane

Approximately six years ago the Dane County Board of Supervisors embarked on an initiative - “Engage Dane”- to make inclusive engagement foundational to Dane County government. Over the past ten years, the Dane County Board has prioritized equity as key to informed and responsible decision making.

The Engage Dane initiative builds on this work and paves a clear path forward between the community and county government, providing for robust and meaningful discussion and partnership on the important issues facing the county.



Engage Dane Reinvigorated

The pandemic has changed how community members connect with one another as well as how government interacts with residents.

When Engage Dane was initially launched, several community groups were asked how they interact and would like to interact with county government in terms of outreach.

To update this information to reflect the current reality, two focus/interview sessions were held with youth organizations, and residents were asked questions about county government using POLCO, a survey tool.





**Focus
group/interview
w and POLCO
survey**

**Uniformity in
presentations
and reports**

**Tools for
Supervisors**

**Strategic
Community
Engagement
Process**



Engage Dane Reinvigorated Focus group/interview



Engage Dane Reinvigorated Focus group/interview

A focus group was held with a handful of youth in partnership with the Boys and Girls Club of Dane County.

An interview was conducted with a 4-H youth.



Engage Dane Reinvigorated Focus group/interview

Questions asked included:

1. What do you know about Dane County?
2. What about those assets is a positive or negative?
3. If you could learn one or two things what would they be to help understand what the county does and how it impacts your life?
4. How do you learn about what is happening in the community?
5. In your opinion what is the best way to get information about the city/town/village you live in?



POLCO Survey

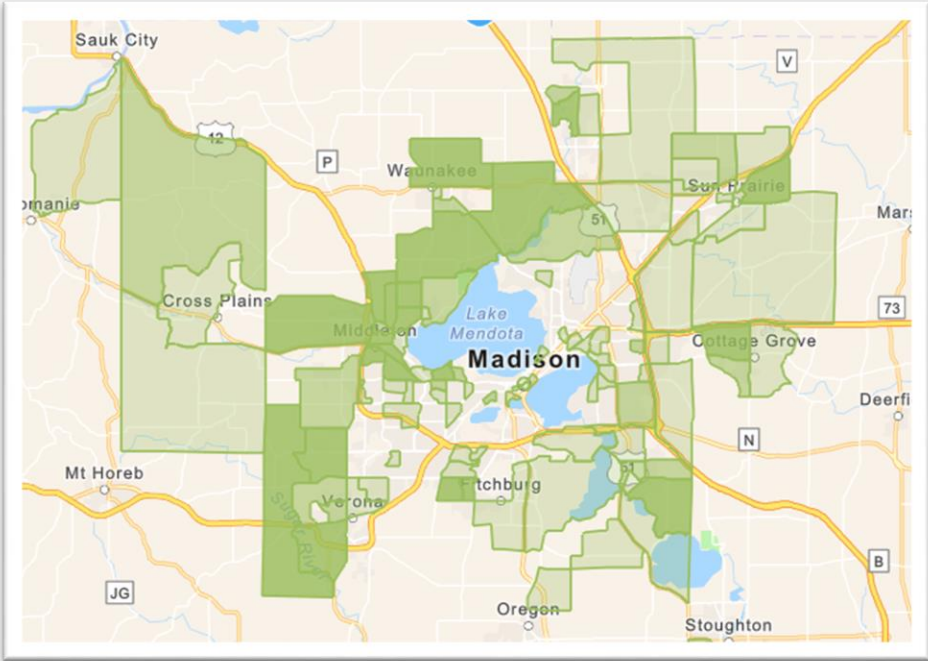




POLCO Survey



Received 436 responses



Verified responses by zip code





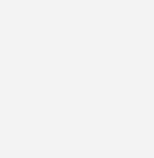
POLCO Survey

If you could learn one or two things to help you understand what the county does and how it impacts your life, what would they be?



Themes that stood out the most:

- What the county does and the services it provides
- Budget including priorities and process – several suggestions for a taxpayer receipt showing where money goes
- Taxes





POLCO Survey

If you could learn one or two things to help you understand what the county does and how it impacts your life, what would they be?



Other themes that stood out:

- Government processes including the structure of government, relationship to municipalities, and other levels of government
- Water quality
- Recreation opportunities including events
- Traffic and highway
- Zoning

Outcomes of focus group/interview/survey



Outcomes of focus group/interview/survey

- Template available for Supervisors for neighborhood, town board, village board, association meetings, etc. (with questions asked in focus groups)
 - Dane County A to Z handout
 - Budget overview
 - Resource for providing public testimony
- Will share information about county government with schools – county government month is in April
- Tailor communication to the way residents get information



Other Efforts



Other Efforts

Style guide

- Consistent language
- Addresses accessibility (reading level, visual impairment, etc.)
- Person-first language

Uniformity for reports and presentations



Strategic Community Engagement Process





Strategic Community Engagement Process

- Amendment in budget for a strategic community engagement process to include facilitated focus groups throughout Dane County to hear from residents regarding priorities, concerns and ideas for policy initiatives.
- Anticipated April start date
- Results anticipated in July 2024



Questions?

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