



July 16, 2026

6:00 p.m.

Community Outreach and Engagement Advisory Committee

Lancaster County Administration Conference Room

101 N. Main Street, Lancaster, SC 29720

AGENDA

1. Call to Order

2. Welcome / Invocation

3. Approval of the Agenda – Deletions and Additions

4. Approval of the Minutes

5. Citizens Comments

*Please note that any handouts presented to Council Boards and Commissions become an official part of the record and a copy is attached to the legal minutes for the meeting in the Clerk to Council's Office.]

6. Old Business

- “The Wall That Heals” – Roles and Responsibilities

7. New Business

- Committee Purpose Review & Recommendation to County Council
- Upcoming Community Events
- Member Discussion – Other New Business

8. Adjournment

**Anyone requiring special services to attend this meeting should contact 285-1565 at least 24 hours in advance of this meeting. Lancaster County Council Board and Commission agendas are posted at the Lancaster County Administration Building and are available on the Website:
<https://lanastercountysc.gov>**

Community Outreach & Engagement Advisory Committee

Advisory Recommendation to Lancaster County Council

RECOMMENDATION:

The Community Outreach & Engagement Advisory Committee recommends that Lancaster County Council adopt a public-facing **Purpose, Working Definition, and Guiding Principles for Community Engagement** under Ordinance 2025-1960 to establish a shared understanding of community engagement that guides the Committee's work.

This shared understanding will provide clarity for County Council, County staff, Committee members, and the public.

RATIONALE:

Ordinance 2025-1960 establishes the Community Outreach & Engagement Advisory Committee and identifies community engagement as part of the Committee's purpose. However, it does not define community engagement.

Community engagement is a well-established concept, but its purpose and application vary depending on an organization's mission and role. For example, employers, nonprofit organizations, faith-based organizations, and local governments may engage their communities for different purposes.

Because this Committee advises Lancaster County Council, the County's elected governing body, the Committee recommends establishing a shared purpose, working definition, and guiding principles that reflect the role of community engagement in the context of local government.

Here are some examples of how community engagement is defined in other localities:

- Charlotte – Mecklenburg, NC - describes community engagement as providing opportunities for public participation, feedback, collaboration, and information sharing, and invites residents to participate in the governing process.
 - Richland County, SC - states that its Public Participation Plan is intended to ensure residents are informed and have opportunities to provide input so County plans can reflect community priorities.
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PURPOSE:

The Committee recommends that the purpose of its community engagement efforts be to strengthen civic participation by providing meaningful opportunities for residents and diverse community segments to identify community needs, issues, concerns, and priorities within County Council's jurisdiction.

PROPOSED WORKING DEFINITION:

Community engagement is the **intentional** process of involving residents and diverse community segments in identifying community needs, issues, concerns, and priorities within County Council's jurisdiction to support informed recommendations by the Committee and informed decision-making by County Council.

PROPOSED GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Community engagement should:

- Focus on community needs, issues, concerns, and priorities within County Council's jurisdiction.
- Encourage meaningful civic participation.
- Foster respectful, two-way dialogue between residents and County government.
- Recognize that the community includes residents, neighborhoods, businesses, nonprofit organizations, faith-based organizations, educational institutions, civic organizations, and others who live, work, learn, worship, own property, conduct business, or otherwise have a vested interest in Lancaster County.
- Be inclusive, accessible, and representative of Lancaster County's diverse community segments.
- Provide meaningful opportunities for all residents to participate.
- Recognize and reduce barriers to participation.
- Remain open to new engagement strategies, partnerships, and best practices.
- Promote transparency by communicating how community input is considered in the Committee's recommendations.
- Support informed recommendations to County Council.