



# Public Participation Discussion Report Out

August 28, 2024



Rose	Bud	Thorn
<p><b>What do you appreciate about AQD’s public participation process?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Using what EGLE learns from community to inform future actions (e.g. asking companies to voluntarily reduce emission limits in permits).               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Revising and working to improve. *</li> <li>○ Responsiveness to feedback.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Doing more in-person meetings.</li> <li>• Flexibility for hybrid, virtual, and in-person meetings. *</li> <li>• Ability to view hearings via EGLE’s YouTube Channel.</li> <li>• Schedule of rules being promulgated.</li> <li>• Plain language and science. *               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Being intentional about level-setting with shared. definitions (e.g. point &amp; nonpoint sources).</li> <li>○ Document accessibility. **</li> <li>○ Translation services available. *</li> <li>○ Document organization.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Openness of some EGLE staff to provide more transparency (e.g. educate community, share data proactively).               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Staff dedicated to public participation.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Learn more about other groups' thought processes.</li> <li>• Identifying limits of review (e.g. cannot rezone an area).</li> <li>• Info sessions with experts beforehand [before a hearing].               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Presentations and Info sessions.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p><b>What is something you think AQD should do differently?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Share the public documents with the applicant for QA/QC (Free support QA/QC).</li> <li>• Consider both a virtual and in-person hearing.</li> <li>• Defer more to subject matter experts (e.g. TACs, modeling).</li> <li>• Reassure public about safety (with qualifications as needed).</li> <li>• Accessibility.</li> <li>• Treat community members as experts in their own experience.</li> <li>• Level-setting- speaking the same language.</li> <li>• Time constraints.</li> <li>• Right people in the room from AQD.</li> <li>• Visibility advertising changes.</li> <li>• Implement and communicate cumulative impact analysis when relevant/needed even with constraints of current state law.</li> <li>• Balance the number of EGLE staff at public participation events in order to do more of them proactively.</li> <li>• Keep sending the signal to AQD staff [through training] that community engagement is essential and how to do it well.</li> <li>• Enforcement communications could be better.</li> <li>• More hospitable “environment” for making comments.</li> <li>• Earlier engagement with public. Improve timing. *</li> </ul>	<p><b>What are the possible challenges to doing things differently?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of trust. *               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Perceived differences</li> <li>○ Language gaps.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Educating the public:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Understanding what can be changed in the process.</li> <li>○ Everything has consequences</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Resources*               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Right-sized meetings</li> <li>○ Planning to spend right.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Timing               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Timing to promulgate new rules</li> <li>○ Timing of translation services.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Finding locations for in-person meetings.</li> <li>• Hybrid vs. info and hearing (live vs virtual)               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Zoom meetings – waste of time.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Find all related public documents near my location.</li> <li>• Fear of industry lawsuits</li> <li>• Communication skills</li> <li>• Public internet access*               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Integration into MiEnviro (internet and training access).</li> <li>○ Technology**</li> <li>○ Libraries</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Rules require items like posting in a newspaper.</li> <li>• Changing approach – Decision to decision framework</li> </ul>

\*Denotes when a specific topic was mentioned more than once or was starred as important by participants



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<p><b>What do you appreciate about AQD’s public participation process?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Integration of slides from past air quality learning. sessions in Flint into future events (e.g. permit info sessions).</li> <li>● Communities are engaged and want to be part of the process.               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Provide a neutral space for community and industry to come together for respectful discussion, perspective sharing, and transparency.</li> <li>○ Gives voice to community members.</li> </ul> </li> <li>● FOIA Portal is great!</li> <li>● Getting information out earlier on controversial permits (e.g. posting controversial applications).</li> </ul>	<p><b>What is something you think AQD should do differently?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Benefits of engagement (incentivize companies).</li> <li>● More communication               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Easier to find on the website.</li> <li>○ More public notification options.</li> <li>○ Sometimes process for compliance/enforcement (VN’s) is confusing to companies.</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Think about internet connectivity for meetings and document [downloading].</li> </ul>	<p><b>What are the possible challenges to doing things differently?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ If you are only accepting comments on a particular decision, when do you accept comments on other issues.</li> <li>● Need to hire more people of color and uplift them in EGLE (Diversity perspective)</li> <li>● Culture shift/broader culture change*               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ clash between regulatory and public health mindsets</li> <li>○ Not us vs. them</li> <li>○ Proactive relationships – Community deposits.</li> <li>○ Breaking the norm.</li> <li>○ Addressing and shifting expectations. *</li> <li>○ Training and learning new ways</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Difficult scientific issues.</li> <li>● Lack of technical education or training.</li> <li>● Updates shared before hearing</li> <li>● Unfamiliar with alternatives.</li> </ul>



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