

Port Moody Public Engagement Toolkit

Prepared for The City of Port Moody
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Introduction

The Port Moody Public Engagement Toolkit was developed as part of the Port Moody Interactive Government Project, which assessed Port Moody’s public engagement efforts and proposed ways to improve how Port Moody interacts with the public.

Over the course of the Port Moody Interactive Government Project, it became clear that Port Moody is a dynamic municipality that interacts with the public in multiple and various ways. For this reason, Port Moody Staff and Council require a range of flexible public engagement options that can be used separately or in combination to engage Port Moody residents in the activities and decision-making processes of the City.

Since local issues and developments change over time, the Port Moody Public Engagement Toolkit was designed to ensure that Port Moody Staff and Council are able to determine the potential impact of a community development or issue, and are able to identify the level and type of engagement that is most appropriate for the particular development and/or issue in question.

The Port Moody Public Engagement Toolkit ought to be used at the beginning of projects or reviews of services to ensure that the appropriate engagement tool or set of tools are being used. In addition to using the Port Moody Public Engagement Toolkit, Staff should also consider relevant legislation or other Port Moody Public Engagement policy requirements.

The Port Moody Public Engagement Toolkit is a user-friendly toolkit that consists of a series of self-guided steps, all of which are explained in the next section.

How to use this toolkit

Using the Toolkit involves following each of the following steps that are summarized below:

1. Step One: Assess Level of Community Impact
 - a. Using the assessment criteria on page 5, determine the type of impact of the issue or development that you are dealing with.
2. Step Two: Identify Appropriate Types of Public Engagement
 - a. Based on the level of impact you are dealing with, determine the general types of public engagement that are required of your issue/development. Use the table on page 11 to determine the appropriate types of public engagement for your initiative.
3. Step Three: Select Particular Public Engagement Methods
 - a. Use the Public Engagement Matrix on page 13 to determine the specific public engagement method or methods that are most appropriate for the issues and/or development in question.
4. Step Four: Develop Public Engagement Plan
 - a. Consider the determinants of successful public engagement processes and develop a clear public engagement plan, using a logic model format to organize your initiative.
5. Step Five: Implement, Monitor and Evaluate
 - a. Perform the activities that are outlined in your public engagement plan and evaluate the process.

Step 1: Assess Level of Community Impact

By the term ‘level of community impact’, we are referring to the effect of a current action or potential change in the community for which Port Moody is at least partly responsible. By effect of an action, we are referring to the degree to which people in Port Moody would experience a change in lifestyle due to changes in service, a new development and/or issue.

To determine the level of impact at which an issue and/or development is operative, it is advisable to work with other appropriate staff or Councillors to identify the community groups and stakeholders that are or would be affected by the development project, issue, and/or service in question.

On the following page, four types of impact are defined for your reference. Beside each definition is a set of criteria that should be used to determine the level of impact to which the issue and/or development best relates. Each level of impact assumes that the project, issue, and/or service in question will have some real or perceived impact on the community.

Four Levels of Community Impact and Assessment Criteria

Levels of Impact	Assessment Criteria	Examples
<p>Level One: High impact on whole of Port Moody</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High impact across Port Moody, including significant changes to the natural environment or the general health and safety of all Port Moody residents • High degree of interest across Port Moody • Strong possibility of conflicting perspectives on the initiative or issues in question 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council's Strategic Plan • Official Community Plan • Major zoning change proposals or change to land categorization • Removal of a facility or service that serves the entirety of Port Moody • Major service change • Major transportation initiative
<p>Level Two: High impact on select area and/or community group within Port Moody</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High impact on a neighborhood area, community group(s) or specific facility or service • Strong possibility of conflicting perspectives at the neighborhood level or among particular groups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relocation of youth centre • Proposed changes to a valued activity or program • Removal of car parking lot

Levels of Impact	Assessment Criteria	Examples
<p>Level Three: Low impact on whole of Port Moody</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low impact across Port Moody • Sufficient degree of interest across Port Moody to warrant public engagement • Moderate possibility for conflicting perspectives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proposed improvements to a Port Moody wide service, such as library services or garbage collection • Proposed improvements to customer services • Provision of a community wide event
<p>Level Four: Low impact on select area and/or community group within Port Moody</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low impact on a neighborhood area, community group(s) or specific facility or service • Small change or improvement to a localized facility or service • Low or no risk of controversy or conflict at the local level 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local street cleaning • Upgrade dilapidated sidewalks • Changes to a local youth activity program, such as timing or venue/ location

Step 2: Identify Appropriate Types of Public Engagement

Once you have decided the level of impact that best suites your issues and/or development, your next step is to determine the appropriate type of public engagement for involving the public in the matter at hand.

In the following pages, we present two tables of information. The first table includes definitions and popular rationales for each one of the three types of public engagement: communication, consultation and public participation. In the second table, we offer a general review of the relationships between the different levels of impact and the different types of public engagement.

Once you have established the level of impact you are working with and the general types of public engagement that are most appropriate for your purposes, use the public engagement matrix in the following section to determine the specific public engagement methods that you will use for your situation.

Definitions of the Three Types of Public Engagement

Type of Public Engagement	Definitions
Communication	<p>In municipal governance, communication efforts aim to transfer relevant information from the government to the public. The goal is to reach as many relevant citizens as possible with as much of the information as possible. This is the most common form of engagement for municipal governments. Examples of common municipal government communication methods include: cable TV, radio, websites, email, newspaper ads, newsletters, hotlines, etc.</p> <p>Communication is the thread that ties together all types of public engagement. It is not possible to consult with or involve the public in city sponsored activities or decision making process unless they are first adequately informed about the matter at hand. Communications are fundamentally important because they serve as the first point of contact for the public and enable members of the public to gain an understanding of the services and activities of a municipality.</p>

Type of Public Engagement	Definitions
<p>Consultation</p>	<p>Consultation in the municipal context can be the reverse of communication as characterized above because it attempts to maximize the inflow of information from the relevant public population to the government. While consultative processes often include communicative aspects, they focus on bringing information from the public into the internal decision making processes of the city. Common municipal consultation methods include: focus groups, public meetings without voting, public hearings, public input sessions during council meetings, surveys, workshops, etc.</p> <p>Consultation can help municipal staff and elected officials make better informed program and policy decisions. This is because:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • consultation enables municipal staff and elected officials to gain information from stakeholders and the public • consultation allows municipal staff and elected officials to test their assumptions; invite new ideas; and provide a broader view of an issue than policy teams might otherwise be able to provide • the consultation process encourages thorough project planning; early input by stakeholders; and careful consideration of all available options • consultation highlights potential problems early on so that you have a chance to put them right before the policy becomes legislation • Consultation is also effective in improving accountability and public ownership over direction of city activities. This is because consultation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • promotes municipal staff and elected officials transparency and accountability • improves awareness and understanding of the program and/or policy areas • encourages public ownership of the program and/or policy, therefore increasing public commitment to it

Type of Public Engagement	Definitions
Participation	<p>Public participation in municipal decision making often includes communication by government, as well as dialogue and negotiation, which can transform opinions and create new understandings of participants (both elected and non-elected). Public participation in decision making also means that the municipality shares decision making power with the public.</p> <p>Pure forms of public participation in decision making are the least common forms of public engagement in representative democracies. Some common examples of public participation in municipal government decision making include: advisory committees, deliberative polling, citizen’s juries, participatory budgeting, etc.</p> <p>A participatory approach advocates actively involving the public in decision-making processes, whereby the relevant public depends upon the topic being addressed. The public can be average citizens, the stakeholders of a particular project or policy, experts and even members of government and private industry. It should be noted that the level of participation is a continuum and methods vary in the degree to which they engage participants in framing the questions and issues and in designing the procedures. The popular rationale for involving the public in local decision making processes consists of two arguments: the pragmatic argument and the normative argument.</p> <p>The pragmatic argument contends that: Local processes that directly involve the public in decision making address the problem of distrust among the public toward local government. Involving the public and including their informed input in final decisions serves as a means to legitimate final decisions and improves public confidence in local government. It is useful to have as much knowledge, experience and expertise as possible in addressing the complex nature of local issues</p> <p>The normative argument suggests that public participation in local decision making processes fosters pluralism and encourages: Examinations of issues from as many perspectives as possible in order to find the best common solution for everyone involved, and to practice their human right to express their voice on matters that concern their life.</p>

The table below provides a series of explanations about the relationships between each level of impact and each type of public engagement. Use this table to ascertain the types of public engagement that are required of your situation.

Levels of Community Impact and Type of Public Engagement

Levels of Impact	Types of Public Engagement
Level One: High impact on whole of Port Moody	In general, issues and/or developments that have an impact on the whole of Port Moody require all three types of public engagement. Where the issues or development in question will have an enduring impact on Port Moody, it may be necessary to form an ad hoc committee or develop local partnerships to ensure that any decision making process involves the diverse perspectives in the community.
Level Two: High impact on select area and/or community group within Port Moody	Where a development and/or issue has an impact in a particular area of Port Moody or a community group within the City, a combination of all three types of public engagement should be used. In some cases, it will be imperative to form a partnership with a local organization in order to ensure that the populations affected by the development and/or issue are given an adequate opportunity to offer their input on the matter at hand. The difference between level one and level two is the scope of the public engagement initiative. It will be more narrow in comparison to a public engagement initiative for a level one issue.
Level Three: Low impact on whole of Port Moody	In most cases, it is sufficient to inform and/or consult the public when dealing with an issue or development that falls in the Level Three category.
Level Four: Low impact on select area and/or community group within Port Moody	Similar to Level Three, it is typically sufficient to inform and/or consult the public when dealing with an issue or development that falls in this category.

Step 3: Select Particular Public Engagement Methods

In this third step, you will select a limited number of public engagement methods that are appropriate for your particular situation. It is useful to keep in mind that there is no perfect combination of methods for engaging the public. It is also useful to remember that the order of your public engagement effort will vary from one project to the next. As such, be prepared to be innovative in your approach.

The public engagement matrix in this section is a user-friendly tool that was designed to guide you through the process of selecting the public engagement methods that are most appropriate for your situation.

To use the public engagement matrix, follow these two easy steps:

1. Identify the level of impact and corresponding column that best defines your situation
2. Consider the symbols in the selected level of impact column and pick the methods that seem to best fit your situation.

In keeping with the design of the *Warringah Council Community Consultation Matrix*, we have used three symbols, each of which serve to define the utility of the given method in relation to the level of impact in question.

The symbols are intended to have the following meaning:

1. E=Essential (this method is essential to effective public engagement for the level of impact expected of your situation)
2. SR=Strongly Recommended (this method is likely appropriate for your situation; however, there may be aspects of your initiative that would not benefit from the given method).
3. O=Optional (this method may or may not be useful for your initiative situation).

Symbols have been affixed to each method as it relates to the level of impact in question. We feature forty-five different methods in the matrix below. A complete description for each method is offered in the sections following the matrix.

Public Engagement Matrix

Public Engagement Methods	Levels of Impact			
	Green	Blue	Orange	Yellow
Communication	L1: High City Wide Impact	L2: High Area and/or Group Impact	L3: Low City Wide Impact	L4: Low Area and/or Group Impact
Ad in Local Publication	E	SR	O	O
Notice on Website	E	E	E	SR
Media Release	E	E	SR	O
Direct Mail Piece	SR	SR	O	O
Staff briefing on City messaging regarding local issues	E	E	SR	SR
Issue notes (backgrounders) for staff and Council	E	E	SR	SR
Site Display - Notification signs of impending change/action, such as proposed zoning changes	E	E	SR	O
On-hold message - customized to topics as required	O	O	O	O
Newsletter	SR	SR	O	O
Displays in other Locations (eg. Info booth at Fair)	SR	O	O	O
Pamphlet Post card info piece	SR	SR	O	O
Personally Addressed Letter containing information about a major city initiative	O	O	O	O
"Expert" commentary on City initiative by neutral third party (ies)	SR	SR	O	O
1-page Flier Poster	SR	O	O	O
Podcast	O	O	O	O
Blog	O	O	O	O
Billboard	O	O	O	O
Radio Ad	O	O	O	O
TV Ad	O	O	O	O
Banner Ad on Web	SR	O	O	O
Response to correspondence from constituent	E	E	E	E

Email to relevant database manager	SR	O	O	O
Flash Demo animation	O	O	O	O
Topic-specific interactive mini sites dedicated pages within City website	E	SR	O	O
Consultation				
Workshops	E	E	E	E
Public Exhibition, inviting submissions	E	E	O	O
Survey	O	O	O	O
Suggestion Box	O	O	O	O
Hotline/Phone In	O	O	O	O
Public Meeting	E	SR	SR	O
Online Forum	SR	SR	SR	SR
Interviews or meetings with Stakeholder groups	E	SR	SR	SR
Focus Groups	SR	SR	SR	SR
Workshop Session	SR	SR	O	O
Site Tour	O	O	O	O
Dialogue	SR	SR	O	O
SpeakOut	O	O	O	O
Open Space	O	O	O	O
Public Participation				
Citizens' Jury	SR	SR	O	O
Charette	SR	SR	O	O
Collaborative, participatory, empowerment evaluation	SR	E	O	O
Deliberative Polls®	SR	O	O	O
Future Search Conference	SR	O	O	O
Participatory Budgeting	SR	O	O	O
Study Circles	SR	SR	O	O

Explanations of the various public engagement methods

The following section explains the details of each of the public engagement methods listed in the public engagement matrix. It has been prepared so that the various pieces of information about each method are easily identified as you move through the document. The following symbols correspond to the kinds of information provided under each method:

- ? - Explains what the method is
- ① - Explains how you can use the method
- ⇒ - Explains considerations to keep in mind when using the method
- ☆ - Gives a real case example

Communication Methods

Ad in Local Publication

- ? A paid or free (PSA) advertisement in a local publication giving details about an event or city initiative etc. Ads can be placed in colour or black and white in various sizes.
- ① The local newspapers reach a wide audience and have been identified by survey respondents as a preferred method of getting information from the City. Both local papers are published twice weekly, making it more likely that the ad will be seen at least once.

Ads reach virtually every household in the region as the local newspapers are delivered to each household and are also available for free in community centres, grocery stores and drop in centres.
- ☆ All cities publish ads regularly regarding notices about road closures, by-law changes, Town Hall meetings and more. Every issue of the Tri-City News or the Coquitlam Now has examples of the style and format of ads from the three local cities.

Notice on Website

? A notification of an event or a notice about upcoming Council meetings or a notice that acts as a window to get more details (“looking for information on ...?”) about major issues is often placed prominently on the home page to keep content fresh and relevant to visitors. These can take the form of banner-style ads, or news-style items with headlines, or a picture/graphic with a cutline. Essentially they are all links that lead to additional details when the visitor clicks on it.

i Using the home page of a website or frequently visited pages of a site to post information about current events and issues allows visitors to get information when and where they want it. The web is now a major channel of information gathering for most people and they expect to be able to get details about important local topics from the City via the City’s website. Addressing items of major impact in real time helps keep the City’s website useful and relevant to its audiences. The web is also an easy and cost-effective way to deliver information in multiple languages using technologies such as PDFs.

⇒ Internet and broadband penetration in the Lower Mainland is the highest in Canada. The majority of households in Port Moody will have access to a computer and the internet so notices posted on a website will reach a high percentage of Port Moody residents.

☆ A strike by CUPE in the City of Vancouver had a major impact on City services, including garbage and community centers. The City used its website to keep residents informed about what services were affected and also provided tips about how to cope during the strike.

Useful Resource

City of Vancouver
www.city.vancouver.bc.ca

The City used its home page effectively during the 2007 outside workers strike to keep the population updated about negotiations and notices about what to do with garbage etc.

Media Release

- ? A media release is used to notify local media about issues, events, City positions/statements and progress on projects. It is generally issued to keep the media informed about current projects, or in response to events that have occurred that require a City response. A media release is not a free advertisement, so it should not be relied upon as the only means of communications.
- i Media releases are useful for keeping the media up to date about projects, City issues and positions etc. Keeping the media informed is beneficial because you want to build bridges before you need them – it helps maintain a friendly, open door relationship with local reporters and editors. When coverage results from a media release, it gains credibility because the story has been vetted by an independent third party and the public tends to put more faith in news stories than in ads.
- ⇒ Because media releases are sent broadly to all relevant local media, a media release has a good chance of reaching a high percentage of the local population.
- ☆ During a strike by inside and outside workers in the City of Vancouver, regular updates were issued via media releases to keep the public and the media informed about the progress on negotiations.

Direct Mail Piece

- ? Direct mail (often referred to as letter drops) is typically unaddressed mail that is delivered via Canada Post to resident mailboxes. Frequently used to distribute advertising and coupons, the piece does not have to be in an envelope.
- i Direct mail is a cost-effective way to deliver printed material directly to a household. It can be mass produced and does not have to be personalized, which saves time and money sorting.
- ⇒ Direct mail can be delivered via postal code, so all households within a postal code sector will receive the item. This allows distribution to be fairly targeted, via neighbourhoods, or it can be done on a City-wide basis.

Useful Resources

City of Vancouver
www.city.vancouver.bc.ca
The City issued regular updates on strike negotiations and the status of talks. Note the pronunciation guide included at the end of the release.

Staff briefing on City messaging regarding local issues

- ? Whenever issues or major projects arise it is important that staff be made aware of the City's position. This is especially true for department spokespeople and frontline staff who may be called upon to deal with constituents who demand answers. Briefings are typically held first thing in the morning, or immediately after an incident, either in person or via teleconference to apprise appropriate stakeholders of appropriate responses and positioning statements.
- i Briefings are useful because they keep all staff up to date on what the City's position is with regard to key issues and events. It ensures that residents will hear a consistent message when they speak to staff or Council members.

Issue notes

- ? Issue notes (also called backgrounders or briefing notes) provide quick reference for staff and Council about the City's position on major incidents and events, etc. They are typically issued in conjunction with briefing sessions so that all participants have the same reference notes.
- i Issue notes ensure that there is a permanent, consistent record of speaking points and positioning from the City's perspective that is blessed by senior officials.
- ☆ A series of rare severe winter storms left the Greater Vancouver Area without power for several days in mid-December 2006. The power outages crossed municipal boundaries and required cooperation on a massive scale, as well as continuous updating of over 1,000,000 constituents. Issue notes kept staff and spokespeople up to date on the status of repairs and the impact of outages across all jurisdictions.

Notification Signs

- ❓ Notification signs are information signs posted on sites – either buildings or vacant land – that describe what the proposal is for a site or a building. These signs typically contain references to a city bylaw, including zoning, the names of the requestors, a project number and if applicable a picture or blueprint drawing.
- ⓘ These signs are helpful in communicating the proposed plans for a piece of land, helping citizens to visualize the impact and changes a building or vacant lot may go through. They also help to raise awareness about the proposed change.

Anyone within the immediate vicinity of the lot or building will see the sign, so the affected neighbourhood generally has good exposure to the proposed change.

On-hold message - customized to topics as required

- ❓ The on-hold message callers hear when waiting to speak to a telephone contact is used to convey key messages. Instead of the usual music, callers hear customized scripts recorded by voice professionals that promote events, etc.
- ⓘ On-hold messages help to reinforce City positions on key issues, inform callers about upcoming events like Town Hall meetings or zoning forums or promote participation in committees or surveys. It is an easy, cost-effective way to take advantage of a “captive” audience.
- ★ Shaw has a customized on hold message that promotes special offers on its entertainment bundles, and also explains how callers can use the web for self-service.

Newsletter

- ? Newsletters are information updates issued on a regular publication schedule. They are generally organized around a specific topic or area of interest, often used to keep people informed about projects, social club happenings or community issues. Stories are typically short and take more of an overview perspective than in-depth approach.
- i Because they are typically quick snippets of news and updates, newsletters are effective channels for keeping stakeholders informed at a high level. They follow a template format that allows promotes easy, fast production and, with the advent of eNewsletters, cheap distribution.
- ⇒ Distribution of e-newsletters requires some form of subscription service, either via email or RSS feeds. Sign up can be open to the general population, or can be restricted.

Info Displays

- ? On-site information booths with strong graphics and compelling signage/headlines are useful tools that allow the public to ask questions of real people who have been briefed on project details. Booths are generally small, with pictures and large, bullet pointed text explanations. Staffed by “experts” who can answer questions about specific topics, the booth will be equipped with handouts that visitors can take away.
 - i Bringing the information to the people – setting up the booths in shopping centres or at local events – helps residents gain access to answers about City initiatives. On-site displays are also good ways to raise awareness about projects, events and City initiatives.
- Since the booths are generally set up in high traffic locations, they provide good exposure to a broad audience.
- ☆ During the development of citysoup.ca a roving team of ambassadors set up information displays around the region at shopping centres and events. The public was able to learn more about the project, ask questions and walk away with promotional items, including the occasional press-on tattoo for their kids.

Useful Resources

PHSA At Work
www.phsanewsletters.ca
A monthly newsletter from the Provincial Health Services Authority that provides an overview of the activities across the PHSA.

Napa Valley Vintners
www.napavintners.com
Quarterly newsletter from the Napa Valley Vintners, a non-profit trade association responsible for promoting and protecting the Napa Valley Appellation.

Pamphlet | Post Card info piece

- ❓ Pamphlets and post cards are print publications that are generally focused on a single message. A post card is printed on stiff “cover-weight” paper and is generally printed on both sides. It can contain text, graphics or a combination. Pamphlets, too, are printed both sides, and are generally printed on glossy, folded (either once or twice, like a letter) paper.
- ℹ️ Post cards are good for quick reminders or promotional support pieces because they can be mailed without an envelope. They also display well in wall holders. Pamphlets are good as information summaries because they offer more space and, with the folds, natural segmentation for information.
- ⇒ Because distribution is easy and cost-effective for both post cards and pamphlets they can be used to reach a wide audience.
- ★ Canada held a nation-wide census in 2006 and used post cards to remind households that their participation was required by law. Post cards contained details on how and where to complete the census.

Personally Addressed Letter

- ❓ Personally addressed letters are a form of one-on-one communication used to initiate a direct line of contact between the sender and the receiver.
- ℹ️ Personally addressed letters are effective because they are so rare these days. They would typically be used to indicate the level of importance of the topic addressed in the letter and so would only be used for major City initiatives or under special circumstances.

Expert commentary on city initiative by a neutral third party

- ? Expert commentary is provided by subject matter experts about topics that might otherwise be too complex for the average resident. Things like the impact of zoning proposals or bylaw changes, or a major change to the Official Community Plan would be places where expert opinion can be used to help residents understand what it means to them personally.
- i The inner workings of local government and the impact of zoning changes are generally things that the average person find confusing and intimidating. When asked to vote on proposals that will affect the City, an informed resident is the best asset the City has, so helping them understand all of the implications of what they are voting on will pay long term dividends. Removing the barriers to understanding gains credibility and acceptance.
- ☆ The City of Kingston, Ontario has a website created by a group called the Kingston Electors whose goal is “to foster good local government. Through this website, we are using 21st century tools to harvest ideas and create a dialogue that will help our community reach its full potential.”

Billboard

- ? Billboards are large outdoor advertising signs located on the side of buildings or situated along major thoroughfares. Typically used for promotional campaigns, billboards tend to contain one single, simple message as the major audience is automobile drivers who view the signs for minimal periods as they drive by.
- i Billboards are useful for promoting a single, effective message over a broad geographic area as they are usually purchased as part of a multi-location campaign. Large and graphic, billboards deliver a static and consistent message to a repeat audience as commuters and pedestrians pass by the same location daily.
- ⇒ Purchased either in a single location or as part of a multi-spot buy, billboards capture the attention of a wide audience on major roads.

Useful Resources

Kingston Electors
www.kingstonelectors.ca/article.php?id=370
Background on the Kingston Taxpayers Association is provided in an article to give a counterpoint to debates about local issues.

Kingston Electors
www.kingstonelectors.ca/article.php?id=197
Background on the impact of waterfront development proposal in front of city council.

Radio Ad

- ? Radio ads generally run in 30 or 60 second formats and consist of audio (spoken word and/or music) clips promoting something.
- i With at least two dozen local radio stations catering to different tastes, radio offers an opportunity to segment messaging effectively. It is a cost-effective form of advertising that reaches a broad audience, and, through repetition within very short time frames – like two or three times an hour – radio commercials can help ensure a message is heard.
- ☆ Participation in local elections has been on the decline for many years and as part of a drive to encourage people to get out and vote the City of Vancouver ran commercials on local radio stations.w

TV Commercials

- ? Television ads generally run in 15, 30 or 60 second formats with video and audio components. Most commercials are produced by an agency that specializes in TV.
- i Television ads can be costly to produce and air but they are an effective means of reaching a broad audience.
- ☆ The City of Vancouver used TV ads on the Shaw local TV channel during the 2005 civic election to promote voter participation.

Useful Resources

City of Vancouver
The City of Vancouver uses radio ads during elections to encourage voters to participate. You can listen to samples here: city.vancouver.bc.ca/ctyclerk/election2002/electindex.htm#radio_ads

City of Vancouver
city.vancouver.bc.ca/ctyclerk/election2002/electindex.htm#radio_ads
The City ran several different ads on the local Shaw cable channel promoting voter participation.

Podcast

- ? Podcasts are audio or video files that are available through syndication. You can listen to individual podcasts on your desktop computer, download them to a portable listening device (such as iPods or any other MP3 players) or subscribe to make the process automatic when new podcasts are added.
- i Podcasts are useful when a sound or video clip will add extra impact. They are popular among the 18-35 crowd as a means of getting news and information updates. Because they are downloadable, podcasts can be seen anywhere any time and it gives them a longer shelf life than traditional radio and TV broadcasts. Also, because they are created and recorded by the “source” podcasts allow the entity to retain control of the message.
- ☆ Politicians and rights advocates are using podcasts to reach a young and influential audience. The 2008 US election process has embraced podcasts as a means of delivering key messages to target audiences.

Blog

- ? Blog is short for weblogs which provide frequently updated commentary or news on a particular subject such as food, politics, or local news; some function as more personal online diaries. Communities of bloggers now have easy tools to syndicate, update and search content.
- i Blogs are useful as communication tools that provide a direct link between the author and the audience. Blogging tools are easy to use and require no knowledge of code so they can be easily set up and managed by technophobes. Like podcasts, they are a main source of information and news for younger, net-savvy generations. And, like podcasts, since the author controls the message they are considered a valued alternative to media stories. Blogs are also a growing means of engaging the community via their ability to provide a forum for views and opinions in the comments sections of a blog. Reviewing the comments shared on a blog post is a good straw poll on community opinion.
- ☆ Blogs are flourishing among the political community, especially at the national level. Party leaders and commentators alike use blogs to sway voters and build support for views and platforms.

Useful Resources

Kingston Electors
www.kingstonelectors.ca/forums/showthread.php?t=1220

During the 2003 municipal election the City of Kingston held a series of candidate meetings. This podcast is a presentation to the Kingston Arts Council by candidate Richard Moller and has been rated 5 stars.

Guelph NDP
www.guelphndp.ca/podcasts
The New Democratic Party in Guelph, Ontario offers a variety of podcasts by local and provincial politicians on current topics.

Guelph Ward 4
www.ward4guelph.ca/
City Councillor Mike Salisbury shares his views and solicits comments via his personal blog.

Hillary Clinton
www.hillaryclinton.com/blog/
US presidential candidate Hillary Clinton uses a blog to share news about campaign events. The blog is a forum for platform messages and features guest bloggers from across the nation.

RSS Feeds

- ❓ Really Simple Syndication - RSS feeds allow people to sign up for updates on web pages without having to give their email addresses. This anonymous subscription format has rapidly replaced email as a delivery method and is very popular among the net generation as no personal information is required. A “feed reader” (which is web-based and requires no downloads of software) notifies the subscriber of any updates to the section of the website that they have subscribed to. The reader shares a short description – either a headline or a couple of lines of text – about the update and a link to the full item.
- ℹ️ RSS feeds are fast becoming the delivery channel of choice among the web surfing public. All major news sites offer RSS feed options, as do most media pages on corporate sites. The net generation prefers RSS feed to email subscription because of its anonymous quality and offering this means of staying up to date will capture an important demographic. Because no personal information is captured, the hosting site does not need to maintain a database of addresses and the cost to distribute newsletters, updates etc is minimal because there is no maintenance required nor any privacy law compliance.
- ★ The bridge collapse in Minneapolis was covered by media worldwide and all subscribers to the RSS feeds from news organizations were able to stay up to date on the latest rescue efforts without having to search or visit individual news sites. Governments and health organizations are starting to use RSS feeds as a means of issuing updates to a broadly distributed audience without having to rely on potentially outdated email addresses.

Useful Resources

City of San Francisco
www.sfgov.org/news/rss.aspx
The City of San Francisco offers RSS feeds to keep up to date on the latest posting to the city’s site.

City of Tampa
www.tampagov.net/appl_rss_feeds/rss.asp?feed=news
The City of Tampa offers RSS feeds to keep up to date on the latest posting to the city’s site.

Center for Disease Control, Atlanta
www.cdc.gov/od/oc/media/rss.xml
The CDC keeps media and interested stakeholders up to date via regular updates to its media page which offers an RSS feed.

Tagging | Tag Clouds



Tagging - allows visitors to put labels on website pages that make sense to them. Much like bookmarks, but the labels are very personalized. An example would be a picture of a puppy posted to a photo site. Someone might tag it “puppy, cute, dog” etc, while someone else might come along and tag it as “irritating, messy, high maintenance”. The next person who searches on the site for messy would have this picture returned or if they searched on cute, they’d also get this picture. Tagging lets people file things according to the way our brains think.



A tag cloud is a visual depiction of the content tags applied to a website. Often, more frequently used tags are depicted in a larger font or otherwise emphasized using bold or colour.



Installing easy one-click tagging options by any of the providers (digg, delicious etc) and a corresponding tag cloud view of what people are tagging on a site gives a unique insight into the minds of visitors. They organize and label content the way they think. Tag clouds can help provide better navigation labeling or search term optimization for a website.

Useful Resource

Newzingo.com
newzingo.com/
This tag cloud service tracks Google News to see the most frequently tagged stories.

[Center for Disease Control](http://www.cdc.gov/ToolsResources/)
www.cdc.gov/ToolsResources/
The CDC.gov Tag Cloud is an alphabetized list of the most popular search topics on the CDC.gov website. The text size of the term shows its relative popularity: bigger terms are more popular than smaller ones.

Wiki

- ❓ A wiki is a collaborative web page that can be collectively edited by anyone with access to it (or with privileges). Multiple people can edit the content on the page without having to download software or know any special code. Instead of trying to follow an email trail of changes to Word attachments, editors can go to a single site, change the most current version and see the history of changes.
- ⓘ Wikis are useful collaborative tools that allow teams to contribute to documents and have the edits displayed in real time. Knowledge is no longer hidden in email trails, but captured and shared in the various versions of the wiki. Because no special code or software is required to edit the page, wikis are accessible by anyone with a web browser. Any member of a community can share their opinions in an easy to use forum.
- ⇒ Wikis can be left open whereby all visitors to the page can edit the contents, or they can be closed and only editable by authorized contributors.
- ★ Companies are using wiki technology to manage lists like glossaries for new employees, where the list is managed by the staff at large. The World Health Organization is using a wiki to update its International Classification of Diseases.

Useful Resources

World Health Organization
www.who.int/mediacentre/news/releases/2007/pr13/en/index.html
Updates to the International Classification of Disease are being managed using a wiki. Users can also see what others have proposed and discuss these topics through a blog. These suggestions will be reviewed by expert groups and formulated as an ICD-11 draft, which is the second step in the revision process. The draft will be formulated using a wiki, similar to the widely known Internet encyclopedia "Wikipedia" but with stricter editorial rules, to jointly author the next version of this international public good.

Quick 1-question Online Polls

- ?** Online polls are a fast and easy way to take the pulse of the public about topics of interest. They use online “voting” technology that allows anonymous visitors to click on a choice from a list of options and track the responses. Results are shared once the person has clicked on a choice, or they can be shown without having to vote.
- i** Online polls can be a fun, quick peek into the opinions of residents about any number of topics. They can be used to gauge support for a municipal initiative or they can be used for lighter things – like chocolate or vanilla ice cream preferences. Polls help to raise awareness of issues, and they help a website stay fresh. Polls are a good means of engaging the community and getting feedback.
- ☆** The City of Greenville in South Carolina uses its poll to ask questions as serious as “are you in favor of the city becoming smoke-free” to “do you prefer sweet or un-sweet tea.”

Banner Ad on Web

- ?** A banner ad is a form of advertising on the web. It can be horizontal or vertical in format, and today many banner ads “float” around a page. They are clickable images that often contain animation and sound, much of which activates when a cursor passes over the ad (without the visitor having to click on it).
- i** Use of banner ads – on audience appropriate sites and even within the City’s own website – allows for the promotion of key messages and events. Banner ads can be used to solicit feedback, direct viewers to additional information about high profile topics and more.

Useful Resources

The Globe and Mail
www.theglobeandmail.com
 The globe offers a daily poll for its readers.

City of Greenville
www.greatergreenville.com/
 The poll this week is “how do you view downtown events.”
 Click on the view past polls button to see previous polls.

Email to appropriate Database

- ❓ Email lists are databases of email addresses that subscribers have shared in order to have a newsletter or other form of update delivered to their email inbox. Strict privacy legislation and resistance to spam (unsolicited email) means that email lists must be permission-based – the person has agreed to receive information from you by signing up to the list.
- ⓘ Email lists are useful communication channels to pre-selected audiences who by self-selection match the demographic profile the list keeper wishes to reach. As RSS technology is just becoming mainstream, email subscription lists provide a good, convenient means of reaching an audience.
- ★ Community groups, professional societies and retailers all offer newsletters or some other form of email communication to keep their members/customers informed.

Consultation Methods

Workshops

- ? As implied by its name, a 'workshop' involves a group of people who meet to work through an issue and/or develop solutions. Workshops may be formally or informally structured to disseminate information about a particular topic and provide a forum for group discussion. To make workshops more interactive, discussions and dialogues typically involve the larger group as well as smaller group exercises. These events may take place over a two hour period or last an entire day and are usually facilitated by one or more facilitators.
- i Workshops are useful to generate discussion and broader thinking regarding an issue or topic. They also provide a forum through which participants can genuinely be involved in identifying and solving particular issues.
- ⇒ Workshops may involve a small number of people (e.g. 10-12) or a larger number of people (e.g. 30-40). Workshops that have more than 40 participants may be difficult to manage and may create challenges for participants to actively engage in workshop activities and exercises.
- ☆ The City of Vancouver held a free workshop on Damage Assessment and Light Rescue for Vancouver residents located at a central community centre. The workshop addressed structural home retro-fitting, hot water tank strapping, and basic structural stability evaluation methods. For more information visit the City of Vancouver website at www.vancouver.ca/communitypages_wa/index.cfm

Useful Resources

Community Empowerment Training Methods
www.scn.org/cmp/modules/tm-wksh.htm

Links and resources for preparing community workshops

Enhancing Education
www.enhancinged.wgbh.org/formats/person/wkshplanning.html

Explanations and examples of workshop scheduling, sample workshop agendas, and evaluation questions

The City of Evanston (Illinois)
www.cityofevanston.org/departments/communitydevelopment/planning

The city used two public workshop sessions as part of their ongoing Downtown Planning Project to learn what residents had to say about the revitalization of the area. Residents identified solutions such as pedestrian friendly walkways, better public amenities, and tighter rules on development plans.

Public Exhibition, Inviting Submissions

? A public exhibition is the formal exhibit of a plan, document, or project at key locations for a set period of time. These exhibitions allow the public to view, comments and provide input on the displayed information. To enable public participation, public exhibits should operate over a number of hours and be located in publicly accessible venues such as libraries, community centres, or shopping malls. Public exhibits may invite the public to submit their views on the proposed concept or activity via a written submission to the City. Depending on the scope of the proposed project or issue, notice of public exhibitions and inviting submissions may be given to the community at large and/or target specific groups within the community.

i Public exhibitions and inviting submissions are useful as they allow the broad community to provide feedback on a proposed draft plan, project, or issue.

This type of public engagement method may be open to the broad community and/or target specific groups within the community.

☆ The City of Red Deer drafted a plan available for public review at public exhibition. For more information visit the City of Red Deer website : www.city.reddeer.ab.ca/Connecting+with+Your+City/City+Services+and+Departments/City+Planning/Municipal+Development+Plan+Update.htm

Useful Resource

Best Practices Guidelines on Public Engagement in the Waste Sector - Inviting Submissions: Consultation Paper and Request for Comments pg. 23
www.nrwf.org.uk/documents/BestPracticeGuidelines.pdf
Highlights necessary steps to invite written submissions

Survey

- ? A survey is a structured form or questionnaire distributed to a representative number of people within the community or a particular group. Surveys may be carried out in a number of ways depending on the purpose, scope, and stakeholders involved. The five main types of surveys include: web-based surveys, telephone surveys, mail out surveys, in-person interviews, hand out surveys linked to a service, facility, or workshop. In order to easily collate and analyze results, survey questions are typically clear, simple, and closed (i.e. tick box, choice of given answers, or Lickert scale of preference 1-5) with space provided for comments.
- i Surveys are used to gather data, assess needs, gain feedback, and/or collect community opinions. If sufficient time and background information are provided, surveys enable participants to respond to a particular issue or project in their community.
- ⇒ Surveys can be designed for any number of people, from the entire community to specific groups within the community. When conducting a survey it is important to ensure the number of responses adequately represent the group you are surveying.
- ☆ The Township of Verona implemented a municipal web-based survey allowing Verona residents to share their perceptions and suggestions about their local government, specific public issues, and various municipal services. For more information visit the following website:
www.quantisoft.com/Surveys/VeronaResults.htm

Useful Resources

The Survey for a City Plan
www.library.cornell.edu/Reps/DOCS/pray.htm

Discusses essential elements of developing a survey used for municipal planning purposes.

What is a Survey?
www.whatisasurvey.info/
Directions and resources for developing and implementing surveys.

Suggestion Box

- ?** A suggestion box may be either a physical or online location designed for members of the public to provide ideas and feedback. Participants either write down their suggestions and/or input on a piece of paper and insert it into a box administered by municipal staff or type their comments into a designated municipal webpage for suggestions. Suggestion boxes can be used to gather information about a specific issue or to collect general comments. To encourage community members to use physical suggestion boxes they are often brightly coloured, have available paper with specific questions or space for comments, and are located on a front counter or entrance of a municipal office. Suggestions are generally anonymous unless contact details are recorded to follow up on the suggestion provided.
- i** Suggestion boxes are a useful way of enabling programs and services to be improved in response to community ideas and input.
- ⇒** Suggestion boxes can be open to anyone in the community or targeted to a specific population. The location of the suggestion box, as well as how it is advertised, will determine who participates.
- ★** The Sechelt and District Chamber of Commerce has an online suggestion box to determine how they can serve the region better. For more information visit the following website: www.thesunshinecoast.com/secheltchamber/suggestions.html

Useful Resource

[Wikipedia – Suggestion Box](http://www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Suggestion_box)
www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Suggestion_box
Provides a definition and instructions on how to prepare a suggestion box.

Hotline / Phone In

- ? Hotlines or phone-ins involve municipal staff setting up and advertising a phone line that members of the community can call to provide input on a particular community issue. Hotlines or phone ins are open to the public for a set period of hours, day, or weeks. Municipal staff or trained staff answer the calls and record and/or respond to comments. To encourage community members to use hotlines it is important to advertise the topic under discussion, background information, and why community members should be involved.
- i A hotline or phone in are used to provide a time limited opportunity for community members to give their feedback on a particular issue or project. This method of public engagement also allows people to discuss their particular needs, opinions, or concerns.
- ⇒ Hotline or phone-ins can be open for anyone to participate.
- ☆ The City of Davis, California has a Pesticide Hotline available to community members to gain information about the use and potential hazards of pesticides in the Davis community. For more information visit the following website: www.city.davis.ca.us/pcs/hotline.cfm

Useful Resources

Setting up a hotline field guide
www.jhuccp.org/pubs/fg/01/01.pdf

In depth description of methods to follow in setting up a hotline or phone in service.

Public Meeting

- ? Facilitated, formal meetings with the public where the City can share information, make presentations, and discuss a particular issue or project with citizens.

A public meeting is useful for face-to-face interaction between the city and the public. Formal public meetings can generate interest in the community about a topic and serve as a venue for citizens to raise questions or concerns that they may share.

- i A public meeting can be guided by facilitators, and can include additional speakers presenting on a topic. There should be adequate time for the public to give their feedback and ask questions.
- ⇒ The number of participants can be large or small, however venue selection should be planned accordingly.
- ☆ For example, the City of Vancouver held public meetings as part of their “Living in Community” project to discuss concerns and strategies with local residents on issues surrounding the sex trade. For more information visit: www.livingincommunity.ca/

Useful Resources

RCRA Public Participation Manual
www.epa.gov/epaoswer/hazwaste/permit/pubpart/manual.htm
Users manual on various public participation methods including public meetings

Florida Department of Transportation
www.dot.state.fl.us/emo/pubs/public_involvement/pubinvolve.htm
Handbook on how to plan public involvement including a chapter on public meetings

Online Forum

- ? An online forum is part of a website where expression of viewpoints and discussion can take place in the form of electronic postings. Online forums are open to postings for a set period of time: hours, days, weeks, months, or indefinitely. An administrator who has the ability to add, edit or remove content monitors an online forum. The administrator can either create the topic of the online forum, or individual users can create it, if the administrator allows it.
- i An online forum is useful for generating interest and feedback from the public over a period of time and does not require the same amount of physical investment as a public forum. An online forum is accessible at any time of the day and therefore may appeal to regular Internet users because it does not require planning to participate.
- ⇒ The forum can be open to anyone and be anonymous, or only to members who sign up with a special username.
- ☆ The City of Mississauga has created an online discussion forum called eTown Hall where residents can post responses under topics such as “Active Living – Fitness, Sports, Recreation” or “Getting Around – Transit, Roads, Traffic”.
For more details visit: www.mississauga.ca/portal/services/discussioncentre

Useful Resources

Think of It
www.thinkofit.com
Over 14 Links and resources
for how to create online
communities

Interviews or Meetings with Stakeholder Groups

- ?** Interviews or meetings with stakeholder groups entails identifying which groups in the population are the most affected and concerned about a decision, project, or issue. The stakeholders are invited to attend a session where a facilitator can guide the group through a discussion, giving them information about a topic and recording their feedback.
- i** Interviews or meetings with stakeholder groups are useful to obtain feedback, to learn about needs or ideas from the stakeholder groups and to involve stakeholders in the planning process.
- ⇒** The number of people involved may depend on the number of stakeholder groups. Smaller groups can be less formal, where larger groups demand more structure to be organized.
- ☆** The Vancouver Agreement held meetings with numerous organizations operating in the Downtown East-Side to learn about the economic and social indicators of the area, the experiences of those organizations working in the area, and to identify what gaps or issues could be addressed by an economic revitalization plan.
For more information visit: www.vancouveragreement.ca

? Focus Groups

- Focus groups are structured interviews with a small number of people from a key stakeholder group. The group is lead through a series of questions by a facilitator and the feedback is usually recorded by an audio recorder and sometimes by another individual for use in analysis later.
- i** Focus groups are useful when planning a project or campaign that targets a specific portion of the population. Obtaining feedback from a small, specific group of that population can shed light on what will be effective and appropriate for that population.
 - ⇒** The ideal number of participants in a focus group is 8-10. A mix of genders is ideal, unless the target group is gender specific.

Useful Resources

RCRA Public Participation Manual
www.epa.gov/epaoswer/hazwaste/permit/pubpart/manual.htm
 Users manual on various public participation methods including stakeholder meetings

Example of Toronto stakeholder meeting on pesticides
www.toronto.ca/health/pesticides/pdf/pesticides_stakeholdermeeting.pdf

Victorian Local Governance Association
www.vlgaconsultation.org.au/groups.shtml
 Online guide to consultation and engagement, detailed description of many methods including focus groups

Texas Center for the Advancement of Literacy and Learning
www-tcall.tamu.edu/orp/orp1.htm
 Basics on uses of focus groups and tips on how to hold one

Site Tour

- ? An organized tour of a site of issue to discuss site plans and obtain feedback from community members. The tour can be organized for a small or large group, however large groups will require more structure to the tour than small ones.
- i Site tours are useful to inform community members or specific stakeholder groups of the issues, concerns, or details of a proposed site of development. Site Tours offer a chance for the public and stakeholders to imagine development or see development in progress and to have their concerns heard or questions answered.
- ☆ The City of Toronto engaged citizens in their development plans for an environmental community centre, 'Evergreen Commons', by holding stakeholder workshops and a site tour. 'Evergreen Commons' was built on the site of the historical Don Valley Brick Works. For more information visit: www.evergreen.ca/rethinkspace/

Dialogue

- ? Dialogue is a form of facilitated engagement on a topic that allows participants to have a free flowing conversation about that topic. The goal of dialogue is to improve understanding of an issue, and create a shared understanding of an issue. A facilitator is present to give structure to the format of the dialogue, however the participants direct the content.
- i Dialogue allows a conversation-like situation to unfold in a group where participants are encouraged to tell stories and bring up opinions relating to a topic. Every participant is encouraged to say something and contribute to the broader thinking of an issue. The best physical arrangement for a dialogue is a circle where participants can feel on an equal footing and have eye contact with others.
- ☆ SPARC BC used public dialogue to facilitate discussion and expand awareness and understanding of accessibility among the general public, government representatives, organizations, and business owners.

Useful Resources

AICP Community Assistance Program

www.planning.org/cap/sanantonio2006/index.htm

Case example of a development project that used workshops and site tours as engagement methods

David Bohm

www.david-bohm.net/dialogue/

Theoretical principles of dialogue, also explains how to start a dialogue, including numbers, duration, etc.

National Coalition for Dialogue and Deliberation

www.thataway.org

Online dialogue community and network, access to over 2000 resources in their learning exchange

SpeakOut

- ?** The SpeakOut model was developed by Dr. Wendy Sarkissian and Andrea Cook, which they define as a lively, innovative, colorful and interactive staffed exhibition — a hybrid event combining some of the characteristics of a meeting and some of an exhibition or ‘open house’.
- i** The purpose is to provide an informal and interactive ‘public meeting’ environment where a wide range of people have a chance to participate. It is designed to facilitate structured ‘drop-in’ participation about planning and design issues. Typically, a SpeakOut is structured into a number of ‘issue stalls’ which relate to findings of earlier consultations and to the specific project goals.

Participants come to the venue, find the issues on which they wish to ‘speak out’ and have their say.

- ⇒ A SpeakOut is used in any community planning process and can be organized at the start of a process — to introduce a community to a project and generate early enthusiasm and participation — or at the end of a process to ‘test’ material generated in other consultation processes and ‘wrap up’ a substantial consultation phase.

Open Space

- ?** Open Space conferences take form according to participants’ agendas. Participants sit in a large circle and devote their first hour towards creating their own conference. All participants are teachers and learners. When a topic is brought up, everyone provides their views and opinions on the topic. There is no limit to the number of participants. The conference usually lasts for a couple of days and concludes when participants decide that their work is done. The idea is to allow participants to create and define their version of a conference and articulate what they believe are the important and essential issues.

Useful Resources

For more details on the SpeakOut model read the following article by Wendy Sarkissina and Andrea Cook: *Speaking Out in Community Engagement: A Review of Fifteen Years of Refinement*. The article can be found at: www.engagingcommunities2005.org/abstracts/Sarkissian-Wendy-final.pdf

Co-Intelligence Institute.
“Open Space Technology.”
www.co-intelligence.org/P-Openspace.html

Open Space World.
www.openspaceworld.org/

Public Participation Methods

Citizens' Jury

- ❓ The Citizens' Jury method is a means for obtaining informed citizen input into policy decisions. The jury is composed of 12-16 randomly selected citizens, who are informed by several perspectives, often by experts referred to as 'witnesses'. The jurors then go through a process of deliberation where subgroups are often formed to focus on different aspects of the issue. After a series of focused discussions, the jurors produce a decision or provide recommendations in the form of a citizens' report. Usually a 4-5 day process, the Citizens' Jury is intended to provide a means for more democratic decision-making.
- ℹ️ The commissioning authority is required to publicize the jury and its findings, to respond within a set time and either to follow its recommendations or to explain publicly why not. "Compared with other models, citizens' juries offer a unique combination of information, time, scrutiny, deliberation and independence."¹
- ★ The Citizen's Jury Project at Australian National University (ANU) is a good example of how to run a Citizen's Jury project. Under the project, two citizens' juries have been run. The first, which was conducted in October 1999, involved examination of the management of national parks and reserves in one Australian State. The second, conducted in January 2000, looked at management options for a coastal road in northern Queensland. For complete details of the project, see: cjp.anu.edu.au/index.html

Useful Resources

The Jefferson Center is a nonprofit, non-partisan organization that advocates the use of the Citizens' Jury method. They have produced the following publication on Citizens' Juries: Veasey, K. (2002). *Citizens Jury Handbook*, The Jefferson Center. This resource can be accessed at: www.usinternet.com/users/jcenter/

Charrette

- ? A charrette is an intensive, multi-disciplinary developmental process that is designed to facilitate an open discussion between community stakeholders. A team of experts meets with community groups, developers and neighbors over a period from 3-4 days to 2 weeks long, gathering information on the issues that face the community. The charrette team then works together to develop solutions that will result in a clear, detailed, realistic plan for future development.
- i Charrettes are popular because they are often fun and attract the interest of a broad range of people. They serve as a useful way of marketing the project in question and provide a good story for the press.
- ⇒ Charrettes vary in size, from 50 to over 1,000 people.
- ☆ Bealls Hill Neighborhood, Florida, assembled its various visions during a community design charrette from October 31 until November 5, 2001. The entire process was documented online: www.beallshill.net/

Collaborative, Participatory, Empowerment Evaluation

- ? Collaborative, Participatory, Empowerment Evaluation (CPEE) is an opportunity for the stakeholders of a project to stop and reflect on the past in order to make decisions about future project activity. CPEE processes require stakeholders to share the control and responsibility for:
 - deciding what is to be evaluated
 - selecting the methods and data sources
 - carrying out the evaluation and
 - analyzing information and presenting evaluation results.
- i CPEE can be useful because:
 - it can help to avoid a potential crisis by bringing people together to discuss and mediate a solution to important issues.
 - it may provide more information that can help people determine why there is a problem and how to remedy it.
 - it can introduce and establish a participatory approach in local project work.

Useful Resources

The National Charrette Institute (NCI) is a nonprofit educational institution that specialized in Charette design. There are several useful tools available on their website: www.charretteinstitute.org/people.html

The Charrette Center encourages the sharing of information regarding Charettes. See the following link for more details: www.charrettecenter.net

Digital Resources for Evaluators is an on-line database providing resources for the evaluation community in Canada and abroad: www.evaluationcanada.ca/site.cgi?s=1

The blog of Stanford University Professor David M. Fetterman is an excellent resource for people interested in CPEE: www.stanford.edu/~davidf/empowermentevaluation.html

Deliberative Polls®

- ? According to Professor James S. Fishkin: “A Deliberative Poll® is designed to show what the public would think about the issues, if it thought more earnestly and had more information about them.”
 - i The IPAC Centre for Governance Dialogue explains a Deliberative Poll® as entailing a large random interview sample, and eventual participation in a weekend face-to-face discussion group, buttressed by a background reading package of materials certified as impartial and balanced by a third party. The discussion phase includes both deliberation and interviews of experts and public officials.
 - ⇒ Surveys conducted both before and after the deliberation process allows for documentation and measurement of the nature and degree of opinion change. Research shows that such experiences cause significant change in participants’ views.
- A deliberative poll is especially useful when the public is likely to have little information on the issue or when a policy choice depends on trade-offs between competing goods.
- ☆ A popular example of this type of public participation is the Australian Deliberative Poll on Aboriginal Reconciliation, 2001. See the following link for more information: cdd.stanford.edu/polls/docs/summary/

Future Search Conference

- ? Future Search Conference is a task-focused planning meeting. The meeting is held over 2-3 days to help diverse groups (organizations and / or community members) discover shared values, purposes and projects. The goal is to help define which actions need to be taken in order to reach those goals.
- ☆ For a useful plan on how to conduct a Future Search Conference, visit the Department of Sustainability and Environment of Victoria’s (Australia) website. Department of Sustainability and Environment. “Future Search Conference.” (Victoria: Australia, October 2005). www.dse.vic.gov.au/DSE/wcmn203.nsf/LinkView/

Useful Resources

The IPAC Centre for Governance Dialogue is a project of the Institute of Public Administration of Canada which offers useful resources on deliberative polls and other methods: www.quantumgovernance.ca/about.html

For a detailed discussion of this method see the following article: Fishkin, James S., et al. “Deliberative polling and public consultation”, *Parliamentary Affairs*, 53(4) October 2000, 657-66

For complete details related to a Future Search Conference, see: Future Search Network. www.futuresearch.net

Participatory Budgeting

? Participatory budgeting (PB) is a mechanism of local government, which brings local communities closer to the decision-making process around the public budget.

i It is a flexible process, which has been implemented in varying forms across cities of all sizes, within Brazil and beyond. It works to enhance participation in local democracy while improving community cohesion and ensuring the delivery of cost-effective local services.

According to the Participatory Budgeting Project website in the UK, there are several potential benefits to PB, including:

- Enhancement of participation in local decision-making, reducing the so-called ‘democratic deficit’;
- A better focus on issues of social exclusion and neighbourhood renewal, bringing clear benefits to the poorest neighbourhoods;
- Cost-efficient improvements in service delivery.

☆ A good example of PB in Canada can be found in the City of Greater Sudbury.

Participatory Budgeting processes began in Sudbury with the 2002 election of a new mayor, who began his term by initiating a Task Force on Community Involvement and Volunteerism. The task force sponsored a series of community meetings for citizens to voice concerns. Emerging from citizen suggestions at these meetings was the concept of “Community Action Networks” which now provide an ongoing structure through which citizens come together in forums to raise issues and voice concerns, according to their neighbourhood of residence. Additionally, the initiative for a more participatory method of setting the municipal budget came from feedback through the mayor’s task force.

Following this suggestion, the municipal department of Corporate Strategy and Policy Analysis interviewed 300 businesses and 1,200 citizens. This became the basis on which to set priorities for the 2001 city budget, which has been deemed highly successful. For more details see: www.participatorybudgeting.org.uk/Downloads/PB%20In%20America.pdf

Useful Resources

The Participatory Budgeting Project advocates for the use of PB in the UK and around the world. See their site for a wide range of useful resources: www.participatorybudgeting.org.uk

A Guide to Participatory Budgeting includes a useful step by step method for using PB methods: www.internationalbudget.org/resources/library/GPB.pdf

Study Circles

- ? Study circles are an informal gathering of a group who want to discuss a certain topic. The group can range in size, but is often composed of a diverse group of 8-12 people. The group decides how frequently they meet, but usually, discussions are held in two hour sessions. A facilitator does not assume the role of a teacher; rather, she leads the conversation by identifying key points, asking questions, and managing the group's process.
- ☆ Aurora Community Study Circles is also a great example of the success study circles can bring when used at a community level. Aurora Community Study Circles. "Circles of Understanding." www.acstudycircles.org/

Useful Resources

Additional resources on this method can be found at the Study Circles Resource Center website. Study Circles Resource Center. www.studycircles.org.

Step 4: Develop a Public Engagement Plan

Before you begin to write your public engagement plan, it is useful to first consider the general determinants of effective public engagement. In this section, we provide a discussion of five general determinants of effective public engagement for your consideration. This step will provide you with the requisite information you need to create a public engagement plan, which is explained in the following section.

Key Considerations of Effective Public Engagement Initiatives

Although there are many different local processes and qualities that determine the success of a public engagement initiative, there are five considerations that should be part of your planning process. In this section we provide short descriptions of each of the following categories of determinants:

- Clear, Accurate and Consistent Communication with Public
- Transparent Process that Links Outcomes of Public Engagement to Decision
- Recognition of Knowledge and Expertise of Participants
- Representative Participation by Relevant Population Groups
- Accessible and Socially Inclusive

Clear, Accurate and Consistent Communication with Public

The first step to effective public engagement is informing the public about the particular issue or project under discussion. The public must have sufficient information to make informed decisions. Examples of the type of information that the public should receive include pertinent project / issue facts and perspectives, the City's role and responsibilities in undertaking the project, and constraining factors such as budgets or timelines.

Equally as important as informing, is the act of promoting how the public can be involved. The public must be informed of the available avenues to contribute to the process and therefore consideration should be given to the best method of promotion. Generally more than one type of promotion is required to increase the likelihood of raising awareness of and interest within the community. Further, the level of promotion should reflect the level of impact of a project or issue. For example, a targeting meeting will not require broad promotion. Larger open meetings, workshops, displays, and exhibitions, on the other hand will require a commitment of resources to broad promotion.

Central to informing the public of an issue or project and the related engagement process is the use of clear accessible language. Technical terms and jargon should be avoided. Additionally informational and promotional material should endeavor to engage the public by making the topic of consultation relevant to their lives. Key questions to guide the development of informing and promoting materials address the basic who, what, when, where, and why. Examples of these questions include:

- **who** is the issue or matter affecting?
- **who** should be involved?
- **what** is the decision, issue?
- **what** does the public need to do?
- **what** potential impacts will this issue / project have on the public?
- **where** will meetings be held?
- **where** will information be available?
- **when** is an activity taking place?
- **when** is a meeting being held?
- **why** is the City changing a policy?
- **why** is the City providing advice?
- **how** can the public get involved?

It is important to communicate regularly with stakeholders and/or the general public to keep them informed of the progress or delays of a project as well as pertinent issues and milestones. In making a decision about the specific project or issue, it is essential to always explain the process that was followed to come to that decision as well as to answer why and how it was decided.

All communications should enforce realistic expectations of the City of Port Moody staff and Council and of the opportunities to engage in civic planning by local residents. By providing clear expectations of the nature of the project or issue under discussion, including constraints and decision making steps, unrealistic expectations may be avoided.

Transparent Process that Links Outcomes of Public Engagement to Decision

In the context of public engagement the term ‘transparency’ implies openness, communication, and accountability. Applied, it is a means of holding public officials accountable by making laws, rules, and decisions open to discussion. Transparent public engagement processes also encourage the public to trust in elected officials and have faith that their voices have been heard. Additionally, by having a transparent process projects are able to stand up to scrutiny from the community throughout the project. On the other hand negative public perception can undermine the success of public engagement regardless of how well designed that process is.

Public engagement processes should be designed to be as transparent as possible. Clearly define the objectives of the process, ensure these objectives are realistic, and articulate exactly how the public’s input will be incorporated into the local policy or decision under discussion.

It is essential to provide feedback to participants of a consultation process. Participants have given you their time and knowledge and it is imperative to recognize this by keeping them updated. Information to provide includes how participant’s input has been used, the next steps of the project, and details as to future opportunities for input. Providing feedback on a consultation event is particularly important when there is a vast difference of opinion within the community.

In order to provide feedback to people who have been involved in the consultation event, it is essential to keep accurate records and/or minutes. These records/minutes should be made available to participants and should be utilized throughout the life of the project. In many cases feedback will need to be provided throughout various stages of a particular project.

Recognition of Knowledge and Expertise of Participants

In designing and implementing public engagement processes it is imperative to recognize the knowledge and expertise of community participants. They live in the community and experience it day to day. Appropriate public engagement processes should be applied to provide an opportunity for the thoughts, opinions, ideas, and vision of participating community members to be expressed, acknowledged, and incorporated into the project or policy under discussion.

Representative Participation by Relevant Population Groups

In the context of public engagement, the term ‘representation’ reflects the involvement of people who represent the characteristics of the target population group. For example, if an issue or project affects all of Port Moody, then the select engagement methods should reflect the entire community including people from all age groups and types of characteristics, e.g. low income, employed, unemployed, people with disabilities, people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, and local First Nations. If the issue or project relates to only one age group or type of characteristic, such as youth or senior, then the people consulted should reflect these characteristics.

A public engagement process should be as representative as possible, but also reflect the level of issue or the importance of a project. For example, an issue that related to the whole of Port Moody and is considered to be a priority should include statistically valid and highly representative consultation. A consultation program that relates to a small group of users of a facility or a service may not need to be statistically valid, but should endeavor to involve as many people as possible.

Representative consultation will sometimes require undertaking both qualitative and quantitative types of consultation, particularly when an issue is higher priority or relates to the whole of Port Moody.

Qualitative consultation refers to the quality of involvement of people through personal meetings and workshops, where the input will not be statistically valid but will provide a better understanding of the views and expectations of the community. Qualitative consultation cannot be statistically valid as it is not measuring the quantity of a response. It is instead gaining a range of views and ideas. However it can be representative by involving a range of people who reflect the characteristics of the broader community or the target group.

Quantitative consultation refers to obtaining data to measure the response of the community regarding an issue, need, or view. This is generally undertaken through community and user surveys (by mail, telephone, or interview).

Accessible and Socially Inclusive

Accessibility is a key consideration for any effort to engage the public. The guiding principle driving accessibility is that all people in the community should have the opportunity to influence City policy and decision-making. There are six important factors to address in order to ensure public consultation is accessible. These include:

Venues

The location where public engagement activities take place must be physically accessible to all members of the public. Necessary amenities should be provided for people with a disability such as pathways and ramps at exits, entrances, and to meeting rooms, wheelchair accessible washrooms, and parking for people with disabilities.

To ensure visual needs are met, an emphasis should be placed on making material and presentations as visually appealing and accessible as possible. Good lighting should be provided in and around the venue. Written materials such as leaflets, forms, overheads, and Power Point presentations should be prepared with readable print.

It is also very important to hold meetings in venues that have good acoustics so that visually and hearing impaired people can clearly hear what is being said. Consideration should also be given to the specific needs of people who are hearing impaired, such as providing hearing loops.

Language

Language barriers should be considered at all stages of the public engagement process especially when preparing written material and holding events open to the public. Interpretation of written material in different languages should be provided to people of culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. This is particularly important when informing the public of a specific issue and promoting a method of consultation. Additionally, ask local immigrant and cultural groups to distribute translated communication documents to their members. Further, ensure that signs and printed materials used for displays are available in other languages.

Language barriers should also be addressed when consulting with groups in person. In particular consideration should be given to involving interpreters in meetings in order to ensure stakeholders from diverse backgrounds can participate in the consultation. Consideration should also be given to cultural values and constraints when planning in person consultation.

Child Care

Parents with young children should have the opportunity to participate in public engagement events. This can be achieved by providing free child care for meeting participants. Additionally, children could be invited to meetings or meetings could be organized to take place during a child play group to ensure parents participate.

Transportation

The need for transportation to and from public consultation events should be taken into consideration when organizing such an event. In particular free transportation should be advertised and provided to members of the public who otherwise would not attend consultation events. People who would likely benefit from this service include seniors, youth, and low-income families who may not have access to a vehicle. Additionally a community bus could be booked to take people on a site tour as another forum for public interaction and consultation.

Timing

When consultation events are held is another important factor to consider in planning such events. Events should be scheduled to encourage the public or group being consulted to participate. For example, instead of having one public open house, hold two or three at different times (e.g. morning, noon, evening, and weekend).

Sense of Belonging

For many people, coming to a public engagement activity is often accompanied by feelings of not being welcome. In order to make public engagement meeting something that are widely known as socially inclusive events, it is important to ensure that everyone is welcomed for showing up and that their contribution is valued. Making people feel welcome means holding events in spaces where they feel welcome. As such, consider rotating meetings to different locations to ensure diverse participation. The presence of different food types and swag (i.e. stuff everyone gets) at the public engagement meetings can also go a long way to making different groups feel welcome.

By creating a welcoming environment the likelihood of a person feeling like they belong at a public engagement event is strengthened. People who feel like they belong usually feel like they can contribute, which means that they are empowered to shape a part of their lived public experience and enhance the quality and effectiveness of civil society in general.

Using a Logic Model to Create Your Public Engagement Plan

Regardless of the complexity of your initiative, it will be useful to organize your thoughts and the order of your process into the form of a logic model. In so doing, you can articulate the phases of implementation, the desired outcomes of your process and be able to plan for how you will measure your success.

In his recent book on performance measurement and program evaluation, James McDavid explains that logic models are visual representations of programs that show how resources for a program are converted into activities, and ideally into intended results. He remarks that a logic model has two primary purposes: they describe a program and they delineate intended cause and effect.¹

To assist you in the development of a logic model for your public engagement initiative, we have created three tables that outline the different elements of an effective public engagement initiative. Complete one table at a time. All three table are featured in Appendix 1, all of which have been informed by the Canadian Rural Partnership's application form for network fundraising for 2007.

¹ McDavid, James and Laura L. Hawthorn 2006. *Program evaluation and performance measurement: An introduction to practice*, Thousands Oaks: Sage publications, 50.

Step 5: Implement, Monitor and Evaluate

Once you have a clear logic model for your initiative, you are ready to do the work that you have planned. Based on the guidelines that you articulated in your public engagement logic model, you can implement the different phases of your initiative – the complexity of which will depend on the level of impact expected of the situation you are dealing with.

Since public engagement work includes many variables it is important that you closely monitor, and where appropriate, modify your approach. For example the type of consultation process applied may need to change if the level of an issue changes: i.e. if an issue that was considered to be low impact becomes higher impact, the level of consultation should increase or vary accordingly.

Undertaking evaluations of a public engagement process is key to understanding what was done well and what could be improved upon in the future. In your public engagement logic model, you can articulate your expected outcomes and measure the degree to which you were successful. This information can then be shared with other staff and thereby improve Port Moody's ongoing public engagement efforts.

Appendix: Logic Model Template

In this appendix, we feature three tables to help you think through the different elements of planning for an effective public engagement initiative. The first table will help you define the objective and intermediate outcomes of your initiative. The second table will help you define the activities, timeline, outputs and immediate outcomes. The third table will assist you in the development of formulating performance measures for your initiative.

1. OBJECTIVES AND INTERMEDIATE OUTCOMES	
1.a. Objectives	1.b. Intermediate Outcomes
<p><i>Objectives should outline what the public engagement process aims to achieve over its funding period. Care should be taken to ensure that the objectives are representative of the project's time and resources. (Add additional rows as required).</i></p>	<p><i>Intermediate outcomes should describe the changes envisioned at the end of the public engagement process. They should be aligned to the objectives and incorporate, to the extent possible, a "change" word, such as: Increased... Decreased... Enhanced... Diminished... Strengthened... Weakened... Up to ...</i></p>

2. ACTIVITIES, TIMELINES, OUTPUTS AND IMMEDIATE OUTCOMES			
2.a. Project Activities	2.b. Timelines	2.c. Outputs and/or Deliverables	2.d. Immediate Outcomes
List each activity separately. (Add additional rows as required).	mm.yyyy - mm.yyyy	Outputs should describe the immediate and concrete deliverables.	Immediate outcomes should describe the changes envisioned <u>during the course of the public engagement process</u> . They should be aligned to one or more activities and incorporate, to the extent possible, a “change” word, such as: Increased..., Decreased..., Enhanced..., Diminished...; Strengthened..., Weakened..., Up to...

3. PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT FRAMEWORK			
3.a. EXPECTED OUTCOMES	3.b. PERFORMANCE INDICATORS	3.c. MEASUREMENT STRATEGY / DATA SOURCE	3.d. FREQUENCY
INTERMEDIATE OUTCOMES (Take from 1.b.)			
<i>Intermediate outcomes copied from Section 1.b).</i>	<p><i>Performance indicators are the measures you select as markers of your success.</i></p> <p><u>Quantitative:</u> <i>Number of..., Proportion of..., Frequency of..., Ratio of..., Rate of..., Cost per..., Dollar value of...</i></p> <p><u>Qualitative:</u> <i>Extend to which... Level of satisfaction/confidence, Quality of...</i></p>	<p><i>Measurement strategies may include but not be limited to:</i></p> <p><i>Count of..., Review of..., Survey of..., Analysis of..., Questionnaire...</i></p>	<p><i>Examples of frequencies include:</i></p> <p><i>Ongoing (according to milestones)</i> <i>Monthly</i> <i>End of project</i> <i>Once</i></p>

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