



City of Stevenson

Planning Department

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TO: Planning Commission
FROM: Ben Shumaker
DATE: June 13th, 2022
SUBJECT: Comprehensive Plan Amendment – Capital Improvement Planning

Introduction

City staff submitted an application to amend the text of the Comprehensive Plan to enshrine expectations for capital improvement planning. The application was submitted in 2019 and was to be reviewed in the 2020 Biennial Review Cycle. Because of public involvement complications associated with the COVID pandemic, the applicant agreed postpone review of the application. Review resumed during the 2022 Biennial Review Cycle, and the Planning Commission has spent the Winter and Spring working through details of a “Public Release Draft” amendment which combines the staff proposal with several draft changes to ensure internal consistency. This memo asks the Planning Commission to establish a conscientious public involvement plan for discussion of the Public Release Draft and ongoing review of the proposal. Decision points included in the memo are:

- Decision Point #1 - What methods of Public Involvement are appropriate for the review of this proposed change?
- Decision Point #2 - Who is responsible for undertaking the Public Involvement methods selected?

Proposed Amendment

The proposed amendment is being reviewed as a separate agenda item at tonight’s meeting. Broadly, it focuses on Goal 8 of the Comprehensive Plan. At their core, the changes establish expectations to inventory, project need, plan, and budget for public facilities.

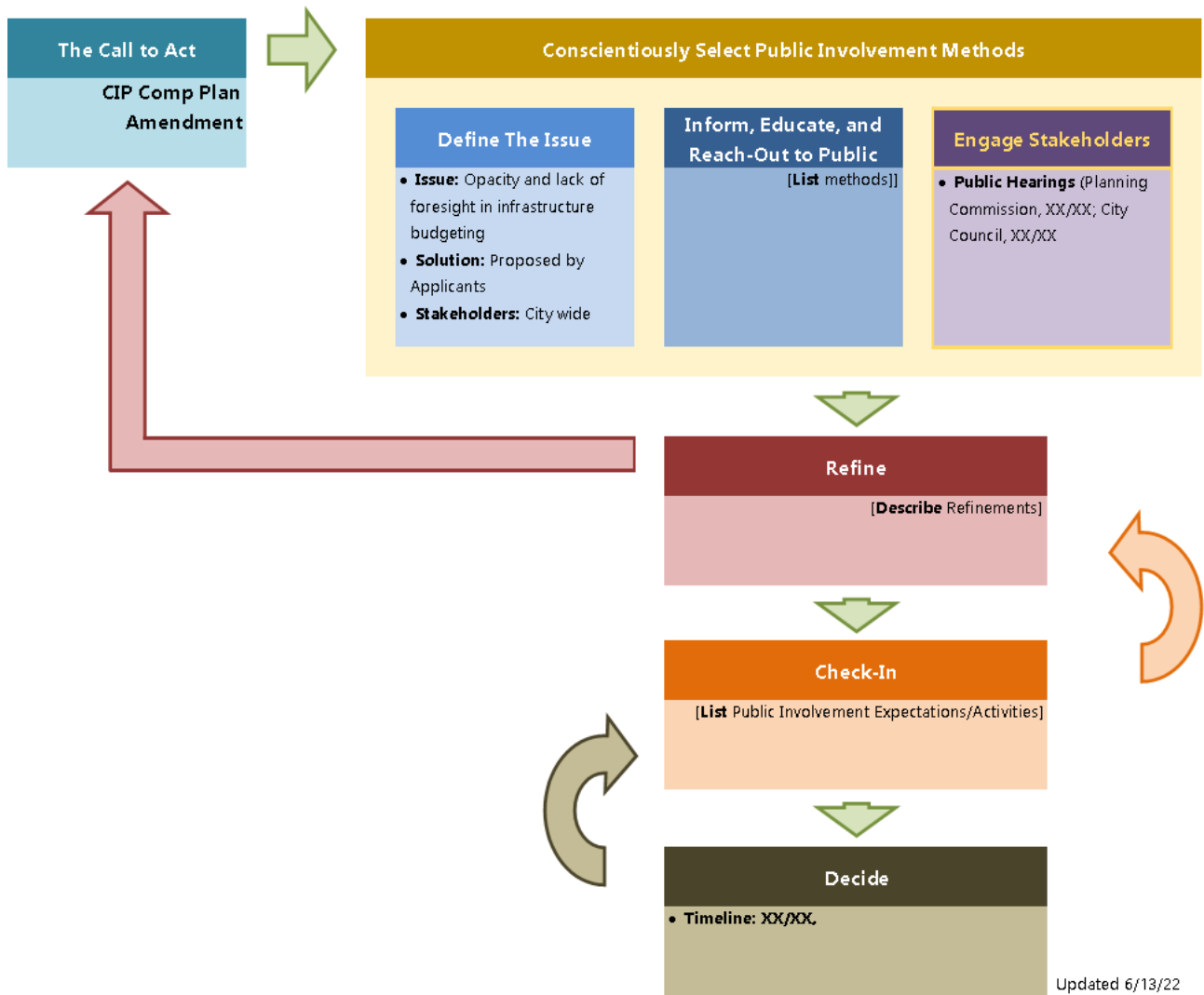
Conscientious Public Involvement

To ensure any proposed changes to the Comprehensive Plan incorporate public input and occur within a manageable timeline, the Planning Commission’s bylaws include expectations for public involvement. These expectations ask the Planning Commission to conscientiously choose, implement, and communicate public involvement techniques from a menu of options (Attachment 1).

Decision Point #1: What methods of Public Involvement are appropriate for the review of this proposed change?

Decision Point #2: Who is responsible for undertaking the Public Involvement methods selected?

The figure below provides context for the implementation of whichever methods are selected, with the current expectation being to work through the 3 boxes under the gold umbrella.



Zoning Context

Guidance and guardrails relating to the review of this change are present in the Zoning Code at SMC 17.11, particularly:

17.11.050 - Biennial amendment cycle.

- An application to amend the comprehensive plan may be made at any time. However, completed amendment applications received after five p.m. on September 30th of each odd-numbered year shall not be considered until the following biennial amendment cycle. Amendment cycles shall occur no more frequently than once per biennium, as established herein, provided, that the city council may by resolution alter or extend the calendar.
- During the months of October, November, and December of odd-numbered years, the planning director shall review and evaluate all proposed amendments to the comprehensive plan and prepare a written report to the planning commission recommending action on each amendment proposed.
- The planning commission shall, at its first regular meeting in January of each even-numbered year, establish a work program for the months of January through April, inclusive, for hearings, deliberation and action upon each proposed amendment. The planning commission shall consider but not be limited by the recommendation of the planning director. The planning commission shall hold at least one public hearing in January prior to determining its work program and one hearing in April prior to making its final recommendation to city council. The planning commission shall at its meetings further provide a continuing forum for on-going public involvement in the comprehensive plan amendment process. The planning commission shall report, via the clerk-treasurer, its recommendation for comprehensive plan amendments to city council not later than the last day of April of each even-numbered year.
- Upon receipt of the planning commission's recommendations, the clerk-treasurer shall certify the date of receipt, and within sixty days of that date, the city council shall, at a public hearing during the months of May and/or June, deliberate and act on the recommendations of the planning commission. The city council shall, by majority vote, approve or disapprove, or modify and approve, as modified, the comprehensive plan amendment, or refer it back to

the planning commission for further proceedings, in which case the city council shall specify the time within which the planning commission shall report its findings and recommendations back to the city council.

- E. The failure to comply strictly with the calendar established in this section shall not affect the validity of amendments to the comprehensive plan.

17.11.070 - Approval criteria.

The comprehensive plan was developed and adopted after significant study and public participation. The principles, goals, and policies contained therein shall therefore be granted substantial weight when considering a proposed amendment. Therefore, the burden of proof for justifying a proposed amendment rests with the applicant, who must demonstrate how the request is consistent with the following approval criteria:

- A. Each amendment:
 - 1. Shall be consistent with Chapter 35A.63 RCW, shall further and be internally consistent with the comprehensive plan (a change to a particular goal or policy not included), and shall be consistent with any interlocal planning agreements;
 - 2. Shall serve the public interest. In determining whether the public interest will be served, factors including but not limited to the following shall be considered:
 - a. The anticipated effect upon the City staff and budgetary resources needed to implement the proposal;
 - b. The anticipated effect upon the ability of the city and/or other service providers to provide an adequate level of service for the full range of public facilities and services, including but not limited to: water resources, utilities, transportation, parks or schools;
 - c. The anticipated impact upon natural systems;
 - d. The anticipated impact upon the health, safety and welfare of city residents;
 - e. Any changes in the community values, information, or assumptions upon which the comprehensive plan was based;
 - f. The ability of specific plan elements or subarea plans to accommodate the needs of the existing or future city;
- B. Amendments to the comprehensive plan map or specific real property:
 - 1. Shall have a similar or compatible designation to adjacent areas of the city; or
 - 2. Shall be subject to conditions that will ensure compatibility with surrounding areas.

Next Steps

After selecting the public involvement components, staff will initiate. Depending on the strategy selected, the Planning Commission may anticipate this item on their July 2022 meeting agenda.

Prepared by,

Ben Shumaker
Community Development Director

Attachment

- 1. Public Involvement Framework (9 pages)

Appendix B – Public Involvement Framework

The following represents a recommended procedure to evaluate and establish topic-specific public involvement plans. As used in this appendix, “Public Involvement” is an umbrella term incorporating a broad range of ways in which the Planning Commission interacts with the public. This range begins with the minimum requirements established by State statutes where information is shared in a uni-directional manner to ensure public awareness of Commission actions. The Public Involvement umbrella embraces bi-directional dialogue wherein the public informs decisions through their meaningful input. At another end of the range, Public Involvement could result in direct decision-making by the public via referendum to the voters. Along the way the term Public Involvement embraces other public participation methods, whether they are suggested in this appendix or not.

This Public Involvement Framework was recommended in summer 2021 by a subcommittee of the Planning Commission. The committee was composed of residents, property owners, Planning Commissioners, and City staff.

The Public Involvement Framework incorporates 7, non-linear, categories of action beginning with a “Call to Act”. As appropriate within this framework the Planning Commission should “Conscientiously Select Public Involvement Methods” to “Define” the issue identified in the “Call”, “Inform/Educate/Reach-Out” to the public about the issue, and “Engage” community stakeholders to exchange information on the issue. These conscientious efforts allow the Commission to “Refine” the issue based on information received, “Check-in” with the public after the issue is refined, and to eventually “Decide” on an action to address the “Call”.

The intent of the Framework is to allow the Planning Commission to conscientiously evaluate each “Call to Action”, right-size its approach to the action, and communicate its expectations and actions to the public. The non-linear aspect of the framework means that the Planning Commission can evaluate and establish independent Public Involvement expectations for each category in the framework and can reevaluate established expectations as necessary.

Documents assisting this conscientious effort include:

- Exhibit B.1 – Visual Public Involvement Workflow Template. During any topic the Planning Commission chooses to address, this template can be edited and used to convey the established topic-specific public involvement plan and update its progress while the topic is being address.
- Exhibit B.2 – Menu of Public Involvement Methods. This exhibit is not intended to be static. As time goes on, this menu of methods may be supplemented, refined, or edited without a formal amendment to the Planning Commission bylaws.

- Exhibit B.3 – Example Public Involvement Materials. Like the menu of methods, the example materials of this exhibit are not static. Dynamic updates to the example materials can be added at any time without amending these bylaws.

Framework Components

Component	Actors	Actions
Call to Act		
<p>The Call to Act is the instant when an issue is identified. The Call to Act can be considered the identification of an Issue or a Need. The Call results from a disturbance, an opportunity, a problem, a request, or any other catalytic moment when the Planning Commission is asked to act.</p>	<p>The Caller can be anyone from the community:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A City elected official • A Planning Commissioner • City staff • Consultants • A partner agency or interest groups, etc. 	<p>Determine whether to answer the Call:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determine whether Issue or Need is accepted • Assess City agency/ability to impact • Assess City responsibility to impact • Assess City capacity
Define the Issue		
<p>Defining the Issue creates clarity by exploring how the Call to Action was created and by whom, identifying who is driving and who is impacted, and identifying available information, observations, public concerns, and determining whether existing data is adequate or more data is required. Defining the issue leads to a reconsideration of whether to answer the Call. Doing so transforms Need into Purpose.</p>	<p>The Planning Commission identifies Potential Stakeholders as necessary. Potential Stakeholders include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Businesses • City officials • Developers • Low Income and/or under represented • Long-term residents • New residents • Those Privileged and Disadvantaged by the issue/topic • Property Owners • Renters, etc. 	<p>Determine Stakeholders:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand who the Caller represents • Understand who benefits/suffers from the Issue or Need • Understand who benefits/suffers from the Solution to the Issue or Need <p>Propose Solutions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determine when a solution is proposed • Determine who proposes solutions • Determine how many solutions are proposed <p>Select Public Involvement Strategies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assess City capacity to implement individual Public Involvement Methods. • Establish who should be involved • Select level of involvement (Inform, Educate, Engage, Ask) • Select specific Public Involvement Methods (Exhibit B.2)
Inform, Educate, and Reach-Out to Public		
<p>Informing, Educating, and Reaching Out to Stakeholders provides <i>uni-directional information sharing</i> from</p>	<p>The Planning Commission and City staff activate Networks (e.g., SDA,</p>	<p>Make Materials Accessible, Understandable, Timely, and Compelling</p>

<p>the City to the Public. The sharing of information could be a preamble to the Engaging Stakeholders or could stand alone as a form of open governance. Informing, Educating, and Reaching-Out to the Public shares the Purpose with the community to generate greater Communal Understanding.</p>	<p>Volunteers, WAGAP, etc.) to help reach-out to identified Potential Stakeholders.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share simple information broadly • Provide access to more detailed information • Make available source documents and reference materials <p>Surface Latent Stakeholders</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide opportunities for the Public-At-Large to become more involved
<p>Engage Stakeholders</p>		
<p>Engaging Stakeholders provides <i>bi-directional information exchange</i> between the public and city staff/elected officials. Engaging Stakeholders results supplements Communal Understanding with Collective Wisdom.</p>	<p>The Planning Commission and City staff activate Networks to help engage identified Potential Stakeholders and previously Latent Stakeholders.</p>	<p>Match the Level of Engagement to the Need for Input and the Impact of Change.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share simple information broadly • Provide access to more detailed information • Make available source documents and reference materials <p>Ensure Engagement is Multi-Faceted.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Select specific Public Involvement Methods (Exhibit B.2) <p>Solicit Input and Expertise Building upon Work of City Officials.</p>
<p>Refine</p>		
<p>Refining involves validating or reconsidering decisions made in earlier steps. Refining applies Communal Understanding and Collective Wisdom to the Purpose. If the issue is complex, refining may involve several iterations of earlier steps and/or offer widening ranges of options. At one end of this range, refining could even lead the Planning Commission to reconsider whether to answer the original Call to Act.</p>	<p>The Planning Commission and City staff respond to stakeholders based on input received.</p>	<p>Distill stakeholder input for Planning Commission to inform next steps and/or a decision.</p>
<p>Check-In</p>		
<p>Checking-In reconnects Stakeholders with the Need and Purpose, and updates the Communal Understanding with the Collective Wisdom gained through implementation of the Public Involvement Plan.</p>	<p>The Planning Commission and City staff re-activate networks, updating stakeholders on the issue's evolution through the Public Involvement efforts.</p>	<p>Create a feedback loop to determine whether additional Public Involvement is necessary before a decision can be made.</p> <p>Respond to Stakeholders to Improve Upon or Help Inform the Final Decision.</p>
<p>Decide</p>		
<p>Deciding involves advancing an Action to address a Need the Purpose. The</p>		<p>Document the Decision</p> <p>Communicate the Decision Broadly</p>

<p>action should integrate the Collective Wisdom received through implementation of the Public Involvement Plan. Through Action a Need is addressed, the Seed of Community is born and the ground is prepared to receive the next Call.</p>		
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Exhibit B.1 – Visual Public Involvement Workflow Template

The following template can be customized to document the topic-specific Public Involvement Plans.

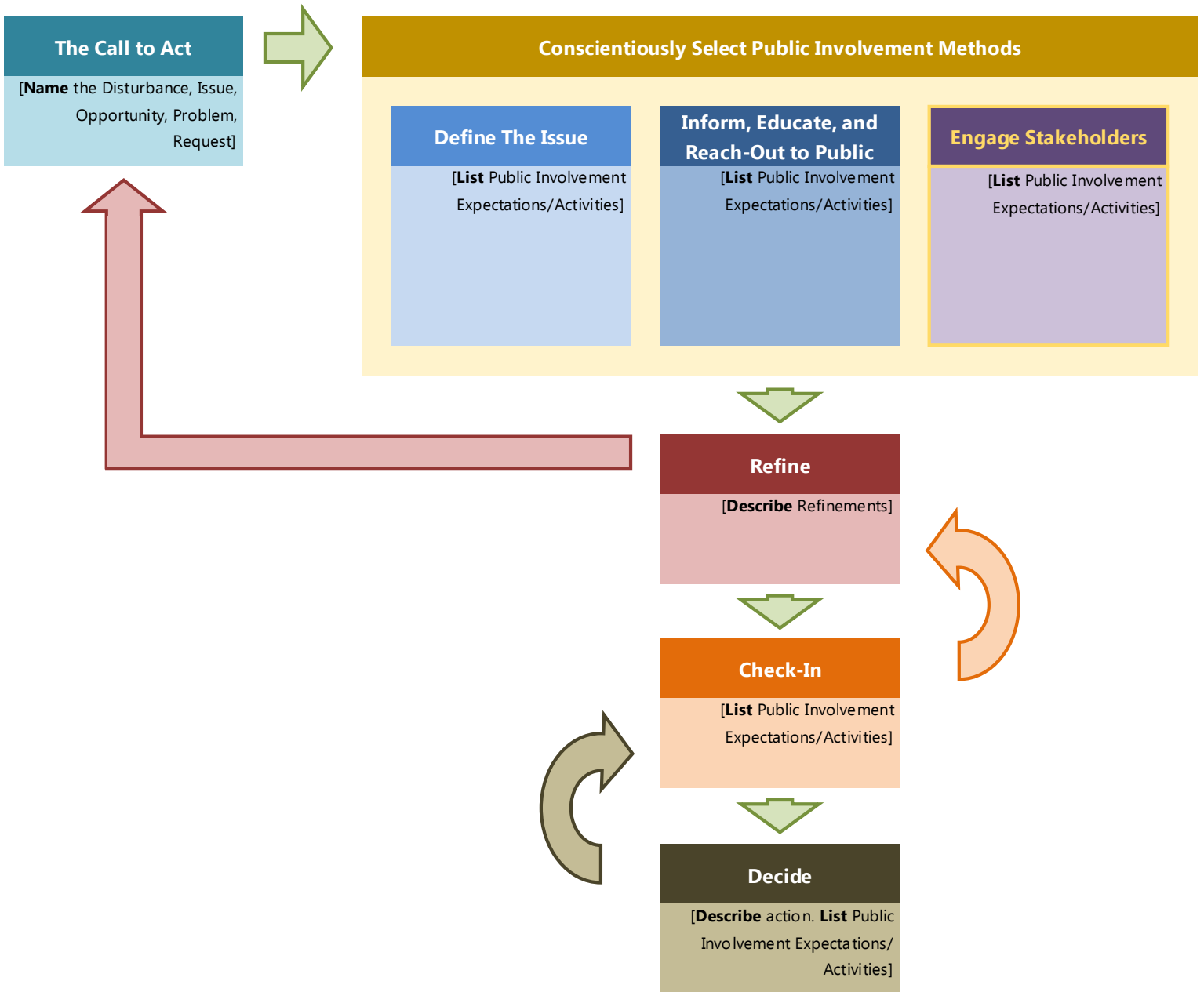


Exhibit B.2 – Menu of Public Involvement Methods.

This exhibit presents several public involvement methods. Some are simple, some more complex. A basic assessment of the impact and associated costs associated with each method is included. This list is dynamic and will grow according to more input and testing of methods.

The menu can be attached to early issue report as a tool for the Planning Commission and shared with the public to share expectations on each Public Involvement Plan.

In general, selected methods to Inform, Educate, and Reach-Out should provide an 1-month timeframe.

Method	Impact	Resource Need	Notes	Included in Plan?
Methods to Inform, Educate, Reach-Out				
Physical Media (posters, informational flyers, newspaper ads)	L M H	\$ \$ \$ \$ \$ \$	Consider posting on bulletin boards and around town (laundry, apartments, post office, workplaces, school/government/semi-public spaces)	Y or N
Targeted Media (postcards with links, invitations to participate)	L M H	\$ \$ \$ \$ \$ \$		Y or N
Requests for neighborhood/group participation	L M H	\$ \$ \$ \$ \$ \$	Planning Commissioners and/or Staff	Y or N
Electronic Media (Facebook page, nextdoor, websites of partners and City)	L M H	\$ \$ \$ \$ \$ \$		Y or N
Press Release, Interviews, Guest Editorial	L M H	\$ \$ \$ \$ \$ \$		Y or N
Sandwich Boards	L M H	\$ \$ \$ \$ \$ \$	Consider placing at Stevenson Downtown Association office, front lawns	Y or N
Guest appearances at events and meetings	L M H	\$ \$ \$ \$ \$ \$	Planning Commissioners and/or Staff	Y or N
Informal community and interest networks	L M H	\$ \$ \$ \$ \$ \$		Y or N
Concise, short and well written flyers delivered to resident's front door by volunteers	L M H	\$ \$ \$ \$ \$ \$		Y or N
Methods to Engage				
Public Workshops	L M H	\$ \$ \$ \$ \$ \$	Accessible and welcoming to all	Y or N
Survey Monkey	L M H	\$ \$ \$ \$ \$ \$	Special attention to language and readability needed	Y or N
Meet & Greets with staff or elected officials	L M H	\$ \$ \$ \$ \$ \$	Requires data collected and staffing of elected, along with public notice	Y or N
Council/Commissioner meetings with focused methods for input/dialogue	L M H	\$ \$ \$ \$ \$ \$	Build upon Commission meetings and allow for back and forth between electeds and community. Add more time for PI (Public Involvement).	Y or N

			Change physical arrangement. Actively promote/welcome PI	
Town Hall - debates or educational forums	L M H	\$ \$\$\$ \$\$\$	Cross talk between electeds, experts, staff with Q&A from audience	Y or N
Story boards - data collection or voting	L M H	\$ \$\$ \$\$\$	Placing story boards in key location to collect input about very specific things OR to get votes on X or Y preference Mimicking this on social media also *Key to have right issue and right language	Y or N
Listening sessions between staff/electeds and public	L M H	\$ \$\$\$ \$\$\$	Planning Commissioners and/or Staff	Y or N
Attend existing meetings of currently organized groups, events and board meetings.	L M H	\$ \$\$\$ \$\$\$	Social service agencies, neighborhood groups, special interest networks, etc	Y or N
Attend large employers meetings (as applicable)	L M H	\$ \$\$\$ \$\$\$	Planning Commissioners and/or Staff	Y or N
Pioneer articles from Council/Commission with key topics needing to be discussed and solicitation of questions for next issue to be answered	L M H	\$ \$\$\$ \$\$\$		Y or N
Form task forces, interest groups, focus groups, etc	L M H	\$ \$\$\$ \$\$\$	Planning Commissioners and/or Staff	Y or N
Pizza party/cook off - casual event	L M H	\$ \$\$ \$\$\$	Planning Commissioners and/or Staff	Y or N
Postcards soliciting input	L M H	\$ \$\$ \$\$\$		Y or N

Exhibit B.3 – Example Public Involvement Materials.

This exhibit presents examples of public involvement materials to effectively implement public involvement plans. These examples will change and supplements will be added in response to the implementation of topic specific public involvement plans.

List of Examples

- Flyer Example.

Flyer Example

ZONING - Your neighborhood could change

We will be discussing how it might change at a meeting next week. Please come.

Then we'd give the time and place where the meeting was going to be held.

Then we would have ended the flyer this way:

For more information on the proposed changes contact _____. Then we'd give three ways to contact this person.