Putting the People in Planning

A guide for local governmental agencies in Oregon

June 30, 2019

DLCD

Acknowledgments

These guidelines were developed by the Oregon Department of Land Conservation and Development (DLCD) in consultation with the Land Conservation and Development Commission (LCDC) Citizen Involvement Advisory Committee (CIAC). The following people actively participated in their preparation:

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1. Introduction

1 Introduction

1.1 Oregon's Statewide Planning Goals

In Oregon, 19 statewide land use planning goals help to shape the quality of life and character of Oregon's communities, foster the development of healthy livable places, and protect Oregon's agricultural and natural resources. City and county governments across the state work under the umbrella of these statewide goals to implement local land development policies, programs and plans. The Oregon Department of Land Conservation and Development (DLCD) helps to support the statewide goals, by providing guidance and technical assistance to the cities and counties that are responsible for land use planning.

Oregon recognizes that effective public involvement is key to the successful implementation of land use plans. It is no accident that the statewide planning goal with top billing, Goal 1, requires local agencies to meaningfully engage the public in the land use planning process. Under Goal 1, governmental agencies are asked to:

- Provide for widespread public involvement in all phases of the planning process,

- Provide for two-way communication between members of the public and decision makers as plans are prepared, assuring that responses to public inquiries and input are provided;

- Make technical information available and understandable.

A small agency with a large mandate, DLCD is charged with helping local agencies successfully align their land use plans and processes with the statewide planning goals. The Oregon Land Conservation and Development Commission (LCDC), which oversees DLCD's work, has charged a Citizens Involvement Advisory Committee (CIAC) with developing these "Putting the People in Planning" guidelines to help promote the principles of Goal 1.

1.2 What Makes a Great Public Involvement Program?

Community engagement is foundational to successful public plans and projects. By gathering and using information from multiple points of view, agencies can ensure that plans reflect their community's varied needs and concerns. Engaging the public in a meaningful way as decisions are made is key, rather than simply conducting participation activities because they are required. A great public involvement program gives participants assurance that they will be heard, and gives elected leaders confidence that decisions will be balanced and positioned for the public good.

1.2.1 Benefits to Local Agencies and Planning Practitioners

Effective public involvement requires *active outreach*. This means that agencies must proactively seek out their intended audiences and work hard to elicit input and feedback. But resources are limited, and agencies cannot force people to participate. So why should local agencies commit the time and resources to do public involvement well? Consider these benefits:

Public confidence. Broad participation helps give elected leaders confidence in their decisions. It also fosters the public's trust in government, solidifying an agency's legitimacy and building the personal and professional credibility of agency staff.

Better decisions. Community members have intimate knowledge of the places they live, work, shop and recreate. They can point out potential benefits of planning decisions as well as help to head off unintended consequences. Also, as agencies seek to make data-driven decisions, thoughtful analysis of information collected from the public involvement process provides elected leaders and planners with data and information that reflects the public will, helping them to justify the outcome and decisions made.

Balanced perspective. As more views are gathered, it is more likely a plan will reflect a community's needs and address its most important concerns.

1.2.2 Benefits for Community Members

Members of the public may experience these benefits from a well-designed public involvement program:

Increased knowledge. Public involvement provides opportunities for community members to increase their understanding of places that matter to them, and to become educated about planning concepts and processes.

Ownership. People tend to accept decisions that they help to make in the interest of the public good, even if the decisions are hard or personally disadvantageous.

Giving Back and Paying Forward. Public participation strengthens the democratic process, helping people to realize their responsibilities to each other in creating a shared vision for the future. Many of the positive things we enjoy about the places we live today are the direct result of participation by community members who have gone before. By participating in planning for the future, people can help to shape the character and sustainability of their community for generations to come.

1.3 Putting the People in Planning: A Tool Kit for Practitioners

1.3.1 Who is the Audience for These Guidelines?

Putting the People in Planning is intended as a resource for city and county staff with land use planning responsibilities in Oregon. DLCD's principal purpose in preparing the Putting the People in Planning guidelines is to help local governmental agencies successfully engage the public as they develop and implement important land use plans. With that said, concepts, strategies and suggestions provided in the Putting the People in Planning tool kit may be applied to improve public participation in many other areas of government service as well.

1.3.1 Guidance Plus Practical Tools

Putting the People in Planning is a tool kit consisting of multiple parts:

- **This Guidance Document.** This document provides information on how to plan and prepare an effective outreach program, and highlights strategies for communicating with the public throughout the process.

- **Appendix of Tools.** In addition to these written guidelines, we have assembled several tools that local agencies can put to immediate use, including:

o **Public Involvement Checklist** – a simple checklist covering many of the suggestions contained in this document that can be used to prompt you to consider best practices as you design and implement your outreach program.

o **Audience Identification Tools** – Worksheets and an online tutorial to help your planning team organize thoughts about the potential impacts, benefits and stakeholders for your planning project.

o **Public Involvement Plan Template** – An editable template in MS Word format that you can download and use to create a customized public involvement plan for your planning project.

o **Additional Resources and Links** – A list of publications, training opportunities and links to valuable guidance and tools provided by other organizations. The online realm is in continual flux. To minimize the potential for broken links or redirection to outdated materials, this primary guidance document contains only select links to long-standing foundational resources that are unlikely to change. Appendix D, however, includes a number of additional links and resources that practitioners may find valuable. By placing them in a single list, it is hoped that they will be easier to update and maintain over time.

LCDC's Citizen Involvement Advisory Committee welcomes suggestions and input for future updates of these guidelines. Our mission is your success.

2. Preparing and Planning Your Outreach Effort

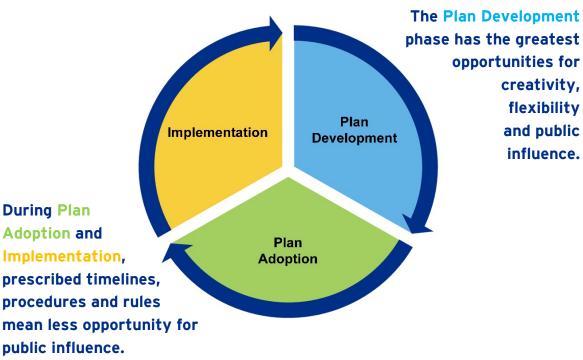# 2 Preparing and Planning Your Outreach Effort

2.1 The Planning Cycle

Planning is a cyclical process, and public involvement opportunities in some phases of the planning cycle are necessarily more rigid than in other phases.

Figure 1 shows a simplified planning cycle. Generally, plans are developed, then adopted, then implemented.

Later, the plan development process begins again, either to make interim refinements based on lessons learned during implementation, or to replace an outdated plan altogether. New planning recommendations are then forwarded for adoption and the cycle continues.

From a public involvement standpoint, *plan development* is the least rigid of these three phases, often allowing considerable creativity and timeline flexibility. An effective public participation program during plan development can head off many issues later during adoption and implementation.

Figure 1. The Planning Cycle

The **Plan Development** phase has the greatest opportunities for creativity, flexibility and public influence.

During **Plan Adoption** and **Implementation**, prescribed timelines, procedures and rules mean less opportunity for public influence.

During **plan adoption,** timelines and procedures for public review and comment are prescribed by a local agency's administrative rules and procedures.[1] There is less opportunity for members of the public to influence plan recommendations at this stage. Rather, public participation efforts during plan adoption are often focused on explaining how and why recommendations were made and communicating information on comment deadlines and public hearing procedures.

During **plan implementation**, recommendations developed and adopted during the previous two phases are put into action. During the implementation phase, members of the public may begin to see real-world effects of the plan such as zone change applications and land development proposals that may directly benefit or impact their daily lives. Like the plan adoption phase, however, public participation during plan implementation is often limited by strict timelines, procedures and rules related to legal standing, notices, and appeals.

Therefore, an effective public involvement program means starting early -- engaging people during plan development, when there is time to identify and work through creative ideas, issues and concerns. While these Putting the People in Planning guidelines are predominantly focused on public involvement strategies for plan development, Appendix D provides additional resources and example publications that may be helpful in communicating the rules and procedures that people must follow to be heard during plan adoption and implementation.

2.2 Communicating Your Purpose and Desired Outcomes

2.2.1 Purpose Statement

Clarity of purpose is essential before embarking on any planning effort. This means being able to explain what is prompting your agency to develop the plan or study, and what you intend the planning process to achieve. A purpose statement needs to clearly state the principal problems or issues that the planning work is intended to address. Explaining the consequences of doing nothing can also help to reinforce the need for the plan or study.

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[1] Administrative procedures, including criteria and timelines for public review and comment on land use planning, zoning and development decisions, are typically included in a local agency's land development code. In Oregon, local agencies are expected to make decisions on land use applications within 120 days of the date the application is considered complete. See ORS 227.178 (cities) and ORS 215.427 (counties).

Desired outcomes in a purpose statement should be articulated *in broad terms*, rather than pre-determining specific results. For example, perhaps the desired outcome is simply resolution of a principal problem or issue. Perhaps you hope to re-align planned land uses with a new community vision. Or maybe you need a plan that will guide land development activities for the next 20 years.

If you anticipate a controversial planning process, your purpose statement can also include wording to affirm your agency's authority and responsibility to take on the planning effort, underscore the credentials of your planning team, and reinforce the legitimacy of the planning process.

FRAMING AN EFFECTIVE PURPOSE STATEMENT:

- **What primary problems or issues will be addressed?**

- **What is the desired outcome of the plan development process, in broad terms?**

- **What responsibility or authority does your agency have?**

- **What expertise does the planning team bring to the table? Why are they the right people to develop the plan?**

- **What are the consequences of doing nothing?**

SAMPLE PURPOSE STATEMENT

Apple Glen Neighborhood Plan

In Deciduous City, the Apple Glen neighborhood has been "rediscovered" after decades of decline. Recent zoning code amendments have set the stage for more commercial uses and greater residential densities. These changes are attracting new development, and while each new commercial building or apartment complex may technically comply with the City's new zoning code, Apple Glen residents feel their neighborhood identity is disappearing.

The Apple Glen neighborhood is at a crossroads. Without a plan, recent development trends in the neighborhood will be allowed to continue. Although many are unhappy with the current trends, residents are divided over whether to try to preserve the retro character of the neighborhood's bygone days, or to establish a new vision for the future. A neighborhood vision and planning process offers the best chance to work through these issues and determine a path forward together.

The Deciduous City Council is willing to consider special development standards for Apple Glen, provided that they are based on a neighborhood plan with broad input from residents, landowners and developers. Development standards that bring cohesion to the character of new development and help shape the neighborhood's future will be a key outcome of the plan.

2.2.2 Public Involvement Objectives

In addition to being clear on the reasons for developing the plan, it is important to be transparent about your reasons for engaging the public in the process -- beyond simply complying with the laws and rules that require you to do so.

A key objective for any public involvement program is to provide clear information about the process and timeline for decision-making, including when and how people can weigh in on plan recommendations.

In defining additional public involvement objectives, consider:

- How much influence will the public have in developing planning concepts? Will people be encouraged to come up with their own ideas, or will the planning team provide concepts for their feedback? The International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) has developed a "Spectrum of Public Participation" that can help to articulate how much influence the public may expect to have in your planning process. See Figure 2.

- Is the outcome pre-determined? While this situation is generally at odds with good community planning practices, it is sometimes a political reality. If there is already an agency-preferred solution at the onset of the planning process and the outreach effort is simply intended to validate it, be upfront about it. Hidden agendas are frustrating for community members who take the time and trouble to participate in a planning process. Honest disclosure provides the best shot at preserving your planning team's credibility under this scenario.

SAMPLE PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT OBJECTIVES:

- **Clearly articulate the process for decision-making and opportunities for input or influence.**

- **Communicate accurate, understandable and timely information throughout the planning process.**

- **Give potentially affected people and interest groups opportunities to express concerns so that they can be considered as the plan is developed.**

- **Get broad, inclusive community feedback on concepts developed by the planning team.**

- **Comply with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act, Environmental Justice and Oregon's Statewide Planning Goal 1.**

Figure 2. IAP2 Spectrum of Public Participation

IAP2 Spectrum of Public Participation

iap² International association for public participation

IAP2's Spectrum of Public Participation was designed to assist with the selection of the level of participation that defines the public's role in any public participation process. The Spectrum is used internationally, and it is found in public participation plans around the world.

INCREASING IMPACT ON THE DECISION →

	INFORM	CONSULT	INVOLVE	COLLABORATE	EMPOWER
PUBLIC PARTICIPATION GOAL	To provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problem, alternatives, opportunities and/or solutions.	To obtain public feedback on analysis, alternatives and/or decisions.	To work directly with the public throughout the process to ensure that public concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered.	To partner with the public in each aspect of the decision including the development of alternatives and the identification of the preferred solution.	To place final decision making in the hands of the public.
PROMISE TO THE PUBLIC	We will keep you informed.	We will keep you informed, listen to and acknowledge concerns and aspirations, and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.	We will work with you to ensure that your concerns and aspirations are directly reflected in the alternatives developed and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.	We will look to you for advice and innovation in formulating solutions and incorporate your advice and recommendations into the decisions to the maximum extent possible.	We will implement what you decide.

Reprinted with permission from the International Association for Public Participation.

2.3 Planning Audience

Most planning efforts affect a wide variety of people with many different interests. Because of this, it is unlikely that everyone will agree 100 percent with every aspect of your plan. Two-way communication between the planning team and people who may be affected by plan outcomes is important, to help the team identify and understand different interests and concerns. Getting a handle on potential audiences and interests early will help your team pick appropriate outreach strategies and shape the plan to fit the public's overall needs.

2.3.1 The Study Area

A first step to identifying the planning audience is to define the study area. Is it regional? City-wide? Neighborhood-specific? After defining your planning area boundary, consider whether your plan may have effects on people or agencies who may be nearby but outside of the boundary. If so, you may wish to expand the area used to identify potential constituents.

2.3.2 Disadvantaged and Under-Represented Populations

Federal law requires that "no person shall, on the ground of race, color or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance."[2] In addition, the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people regardless of race, color, national origin, or income was the subject of an Executive

TITLE VI AND ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE POPULATIONS

- **Ethnic minority populations (African American, Hispanic, Asian, Native American, and Pacific Islander populations)**

- **Elderly populations**

- **Low-income populations (median household income at or below the poverty line)**

- **Disabled populations (both mental and physical disabilities)**

- **Limited English Proficiency populations.**

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[2] Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

Order signed by President William J. Clinton in 1994, to avoid disproportionate environmental and human health effects of governmental actions on minority and low-income people. This concept is referred to as "Environmental Justice".

While every local planning study may not be specifically funded with federal dollars, most local governmental agencies do receive federal funds in some manner, either through direct federal grants or through programs administered by state agencies. And regardless, strategies for reaching and engaging disadvantaged populations are best practices for any public planning process.

You will need to do some analysis to determine where disadvantaged populations exist in and around your planning area. The US Census and American Community Survey are typical data sources for this, and the US EPA has an online tool, EJSCREEN[3], that can help with simple Environmental Justice population maps. The Oregon Department of Transportation's TransGIS[4] site also allows users to query Environmental Justice populations above a defined threshold by zip code. Urban areas with populations greater than 50,000 typically have a regional metropolitan planning organization (MPO) that may also be a good resource for this information. For large or complex plans, it is a good idea to engage the assistance of a GIS analyst.

A high-level scan can be performed first, to help the planning team identify potential disadvantaged populations which may be interested in, or affected by, the plan. A more detailed analysis may be needed later to understand the specific impacts resulting from the plan recommendations.

2.3.3 Potential Interested Parties, Champions, and Opponents

Taking an hour to brainstorm the planning audience before developing a public involvement plan can help tailor public involvement strategies for maximum effectiveness. Appendix B provides instructions and worksheets for an audience identification exercise that can help the planning team anticipate broader public interests, including people and groups that may be supportive or opposed.

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[3]United States Environmental Protection Agency, Environmental Justice Screening and Mapping Tool. (2018, August 2). https://www.epa.gov/ejscreen

[4]Oregon Department of Transportation, ODOT TransGIS. (Accessed 2019, May 3.) https://gis.odot.state.or.us/transGIS/

Use this initial brainstorming exercise to organize thoughts about:

- o   Potential planning impacts and benefits, affected individuals and groups;

- o   Potential champions and opponents;

- o   Initial key messages;

- o   Strategies that are likely to be effective at reaching and engaging affected people and groups.

Levels of interest in the plan are likely to vary. And people's interest and support for potential planning recommendations may change as the plan takes shape. While it may not be possible to anticipate every benefit, impact or concern that may arise during the planning process, taking the time to think through the possibilities early on will help you prepare for many likely stakeholder reactions.

Figure 3 suggests a way to think about how people may react to the planning process or potential plan recommendations.

Table 1 explains how outreach and participation activities can be designed to match anticipated levels of interest and support.
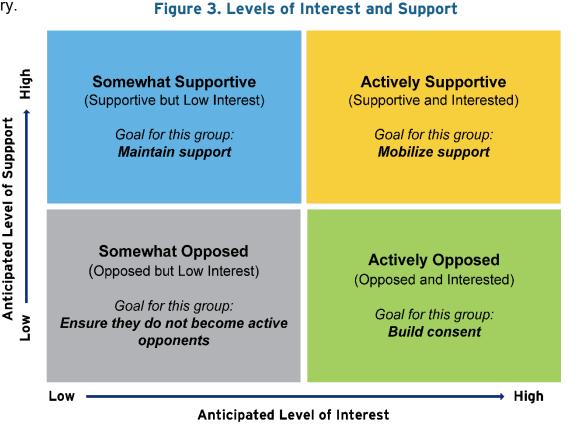
Figure 3. Levels of Interest and Support

	High (Anticipated Level of Support)	
Somewhat Supportive (Supportive but Low Interest) *Goal for this group:* ***Maintain support***	**Actively Supportive** (Supportive and Interested) *Goal for this group:* ***Mobilize support***
Somewhat Opposed (Opposed but Low Interest) *Goal for this group:* ***Ensure they do not become active opponents***	**Actively Opposed** (Opposed and Interested) *Goal for this group:* ***Build consent***

Low ← **Anticipated Level of Interest** → **High**

Table 1. Addressing Different Levels of Public Interest and Support

Somewhat Supportive	Actively Supportive
Some people may be generally supportive of potential planning outcomes, but not all that interested in participating in the process. For supportive but low-interest stakeholders, passive types of outreach activities, primarily to keep them notified and informed may be enough.	Some stakeholders may be supportive of possible planning outcomes and motivated to participate. For these people, two-way communication channels are important, so that they have an opportunity to not only follow along as the plan unfolds, but also to provide input and feedback along the way. Supportive and interested stakeholders may become active champions of plan recommendations later.
Somewhat Opposed	**Actively Opposed**
Some people may be generally opposed to potential plan recommendations, but not to the point where they are motivated to participate in the planning process. While they may not initially appear to be interested, people and groups in this category have the potential to become active opponents, often late in the planning process after a significant amount of work has been accomplished. Consider more assertive, targeted strategies for keeping potentially opposed people notified and informed. Encouraging these stakeholders to take advantage of opportunities for input and feedback during the planning process will help you to understand the reasons behind potential objections and avoid surprises when the plan moves to the adoption process. Having educational information ready to help correct misconceptions can also be helpful for this group.	It is not uncommon for complex plans to have people who are active opponents. Often, these are people who may fear that plan recommendations could be significantly detrimental to them or an aspect of the community that they care deeply about. Some active opponents may be motivated to attempt to obstruct the plan adoption or implementation process. For stakeholders in this category, consider more structured, in-person public involvement opportunities to help build a common understanding and informed consent. While some opponents may never agree with the ultimate plan recommendations, if they feel the planning team has made a concerted effort to listen, understand and address their issues, they are much less likely to take drastic action to block plan adoption. Where large opposition groups exist, engaging a professional facilitator can be helpful to work through potential issues.

2.3.4 Reaching Your Audience

You will usually need to go beyond general public notifications and press releases to make sure your audience is aware and informed of participation opportunities. Look for opportunities to meet with your audience where they are by taking advantage of local gathering places – churches, activity centers, etc. – where community groups already tend to congregate.

Setting up communication channels with target audiences early makes it easier to disseminate information and solicit input as the plan unfolds. General best practices for communication and outreach are discussed in Chapter 3. In addition, Table 2 below provides specific suggestions for reaching targeted populations or groups that may be found in your planning area. This list is not exhaustive; rather, it is intended to help spark ideas for reaching your unique audience.

Table 2. Outreach to Specific Groups

Target Population or Group	Possible Outreach Strategies*
Young People	• Coordinate with school districts offices to disseminate notices. • Send notifications to school districts, colleges and universities, including student body associations and student newspapers. • Reach out to high school social studies and civics teachers. • Coordinate with local business leadership or mentoring programs for young professionals.
Older People	• Send notifications to senior centers. • Consider large print versions of hard copy information.
Low Income People	• Coordinate with transit and human services transportation providers to get notifications to transit riders. • Post notices with local offices of Oregon Department of Human Services, Social Security Administration and public libraries. • Reach out to neighborhood councils in areas with concentrations of low-income populations.

Target Population or Group	Possible Outreach Strategies*
Disabled People	• Make sure all public events are held in locations that are ADA compliant and wheelchair accessible. • Coordinate with paratransit providers and/or local disability support services offices to disseminate notices. • Use the ADA checklist[5] to assess your website accessibility.
People with Limited English Proficiency	• Reach out to churches that offer services in languages indicated by your Environmental Justice scan. (see Section 2.3.2.) • Look for radio stations with programs in languages indicated by your Environmental Justice scan. • Prepare translated hand-out materials. • Offer translation services upon request at public meetings.
Tribal Populations[6]	• Coordinate with the tribal planning director for advice on interacting with tribal members and potential meeting venues. • Publish notices in tribal newspapers/newsletters. • Request an opportunity to present to the tribal council.
Business Interests	• Coordinate with chambers of commerce to disseminate notices. • Request an opportunity to present to chamber members, or other local business/civic groups. • Advertise in the local business journal. • Contact leaders of local-chapter professional organizations.
* This list is not exhaustive! Use it to help generate your own ideas for reaching select groups within your planning area.	

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[5] The United States Department of Justice Civil Rights Division provides technical assistance documents related to the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) for state and local governments. A website accessibility checklist is available at https://www.ada.gov/pcatoolkit/chap5chklist.htm. (Retrieved April 30, 2019.)

[6] Oregon maintains a government-to-government relationship with each federally recognized tribal nation in the state. Under ORS.182 162-168, each state agency is responsible for developing and implementing state programs that affect tribes. If your planning area includes or impacts tribal lands or people, a special consultation process may be needed. Contact your regional DLCD representative to coordinate this.
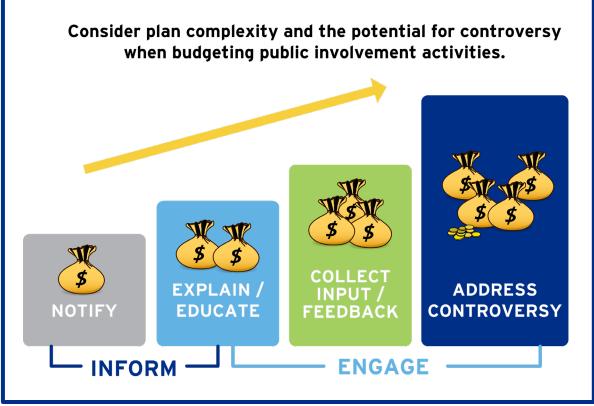
2.4 Preparing Your Public Involvement Plan

2.4.1 Budgeting for Outreach

Good planning is people intensive. This means a significant portion of the plan development budget will likely be spent on outreach and engagement activities. And, the level of complexity and controversy you anticipate during plan development will have a direct bearing on the amount of resources needed to accomplish the plan. For example, online tools may be cost effective options for public notifications or collecting input and feedback; however, controversial situations may call for more time-intensive activities using a face-to-face approach.

Often budgets for planning efforts are established long before the planning work begins. Preparing a public involvement plan is an opportunity to give your budget a reality check. While many strategies can help to make public engagement more cost effective, corners can only be cut so far. If your agency's resources are not adequate to support a level of engagement that is appropriate and necessary for your plan, consider reaching out to external partners such as stakeholder agencies, community organizations or non-profit groups to see if others have the capacity to shoulder some of the outreach effort.

Figure 4. Budgeting Considerations

Consider plan complexity and the potential for controversy when budgeting public involvement activities.

NOTIFY

EXPLAIN / EDUCATE

COLLECT INPUT / FEEDBACK

ADDRESS CONTROVERSY

INFORM

ENGAGE

In the event that adequate resources for public involvement are simply not available, decision makers should consider whether it is wise proceed with the planning effort until this can be resolved. In rare situations where it may be necessary to proceed, the reasons for limiting public access to the planning process must be clearly explained to the public.

2.4.2 Public Involvement Plan Components

An effective public involvement plan should contain these core elements:

- Study area description, including a map.

- Planning purpose and desired outcomes (see section 2.2.1 for suggestions on how to craft a purpose statement).

- Public involvement objectives (see section 2.2.2 for suggestions).

- Information on how recommendations or decisions will be made during the planning process. A timeline showing how public involvement activities will relate to key decisions or milestones is helpful. Information on how public input will be used as decisions are made should also be included.

- Communication protocols for the project, including how the planning team will handle public inquiries, media relations, interactions with other agencies or tribal governments, and methods for documenting the outreach process.

- Description of any general outreach materials to be prepared, such as a website, brochures, flyers, fact sheets, etc.

- Communication and engagement activities planned, including specific strategies for reaching and engaging your target audiences.

Appendix C provides an editable template that can be customized to document your anticipated public outreach and engagement activities.

3. Tools and Strategies

3 Tools and Strategies

Tools and strategies for public engagement range from communicating information about the plan and planning process to engaging people in two-way collaboration. Most public involvement programs will require activities for one-way communications from the project team (such as project notifications, or information about the study or process), as well as two-way communication to collect input and feedback. Complex plans may require higher levels of two-way engagement, to understand and address significant barriers or concerns.
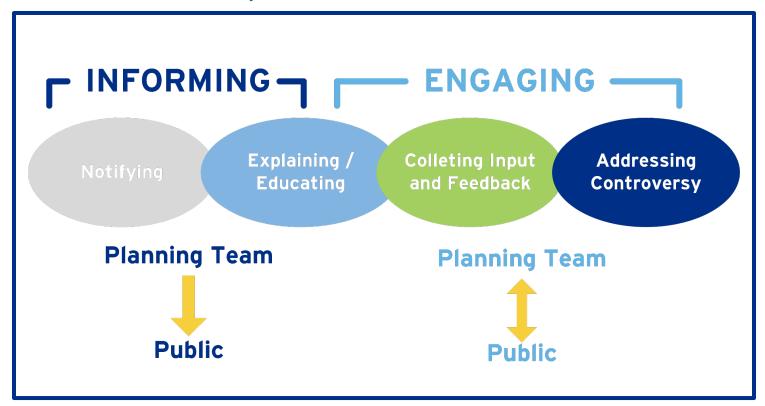
Figure 5. The Communication Continuum

3.1 Key Communication Principles

The public's trust in government can be a fragile thing, and an agency's approach to public communications can either elevate or diminish this trust. It can be easy to lose the public's trust, and difficult to regain it once lost. An open and transparent public process is key to the successful development, adoption and implementation of any plan.

As public involvement activities are performed, these core communication practices can establish the planning team's credibility and help to maintain trust:

- **Be truthful.**

- **Be crystal clear about the public's ability to influence or drive decisions.** People need to understand how their input will be used. The IAP2 "Spectrum of Public Participation" can help to clarify and articulate the level of influence that the public can expect to have in the planning process. (See Figure 2.)

- **Listen.** And seriously consider what you are hearing. Don't just wait for your chance to talk.

- **Focus on interests, not positions.** Ask "why" to get at the reasons behind positions taken by members of the public.

- **If you don't know, say so.** Then follow up.

- **If you're wrong, admit it.**

- **Be reliable.** Follow through on all commitments, whether written or verbal.

3.2 Explaining Planning Concepts to Lay Audiences

Helping people to understand complex planning concepts is a chief objective of the public involvement process.

Boil it down; don't dumb it down. Brevity is important, but no one appreciates being talked down to.

Answer the "why should they care?" question. To communicate planning concepts in a way that is both interesting and comprehensible, provide context that is meaningful for the audience. Working through an audience identification exercise at the beginning of the planning process (see Section 2.3) will help identify how planning concepts may affect various individuals and groups. In conveying complex information, a sentence or two to explain why your audience should care can help people grasp the meaning and importance of the information.

Avoid jargon and acronyms. Straightforward everyday language is essential.

For example, statements like this are frustrating for members of the public who may be seeking information about the process:

> *"TSP deliverables will be reviewed by a PAC with representation from the CPC, B-PAC, COG, EDC, DLCD, ODOT, OHA and ODEQ, before submission to the CPC for ultimate consideration by the City Council."*
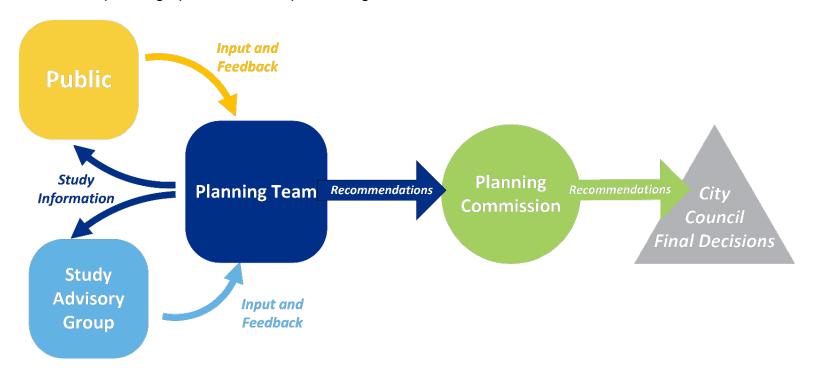
Plain language is better. For example,

> *"The planning team will work with an advisory group that includes organizations with land use,*

"Remember that there is a difference between using language that is simple (easy to understand), and simplistic (treating the problem as if it is not actually very complex at all). Keep your words as simple and clear as possible and use real-life examples and illustrations where possible. But don't patronize your audience by pretending that something is not as complicated as it really is."

-- Dr. Emily Grossman, Science Communicator
How to Present Complex Ideas Clearly
The British Council, Voices Magazine, May 2015

transportation, health, economic and environmental responsibilities, before making recommendations to the planning commission and city council. A full list of the organizations involved is available on our website if you're interested."

Even better, a simple infographic makes the point at a glance:

3.3 Informing

"Informing" includes notifying people and explaining information about the planning study. Table 3 describes techniques and strategies that could be considered for informational objectives. These are primarily one-way communication tools. Strategies that encourage a two-way dialogue (see Section 3.4) are often more effective for educational objectives.

Table 3. Tools for Informing

Tool	Description and Strategies for Use	Best for	
		Notifying	Explaining/ Educating
Briefing	A presentation given in-person, or a brief informational paper, often tailored to a specific person or group such as an elected official, policy board, neighborhood council, or a civic organization.		✓
Brochure	An informational handout, usually printed, to provide general information about the planning study and process.	✓	✓
Community Profile	A compilation of general demographic information about people in the study area. A community profile might include information on population, age distribution, ethnicity distribution, income levels, housing units, household size, existing land uses, or other relevant facts. A community profile could be printed or made available online.		✓
Direct Mail	Distribution of information about the planning study or planning process via the U.S. Postal Service. Direct mail campaigns can be costly but provide a level of certainty that affected interests have been notified. Where cost is a concern, an initial direct mail campaign could direct people to an online source for future updates, or let people know how they may sign up to receive future notifications and information via email.	✓	✓

Tool	Description and Strategies for Use	Best for	
		Notifying	Explaining/ Educating
Displays	Posters, banners or other large-size documents suitable for displaying on easels, walls or other vertical spaces. Displays may be used to provide information at a specific public meeting. Or, they may be designed as self-explanatory materials that can be left unattended in a public space over a certain period of time for people to peruse at their convenience.		✓
Email	Compiling an email list of interested parties and providing periodic email updates is a cost-effective way to communicate information about the plan and planning process.	✓	✓
Fact Sheet	Typically, a one to two-page document, either printed as a handout or made available online, that provides information about the plan or a specific planning topic. Fact sheets are useful in helping to dispel misinformation. A complex planning study might have separate fact sheets for a variety of individual topics.		✓
FAQs (Frequently Asked Questions)	A set of questions and responses about the planning study, or specific planning topics used to educate the planning audience and reduce misinformation. This is a useful item to include in a **media packet**.		✓
Flyer	A one-page, one-sided handout suitable for posting in public places, often with brief information about the plan and upcoming outreach activities. Other agency	✓	

Tool	Description and Strategies for Use	Best for	
		Notifying	Explaining/ Educating
	partners, such as transit providers, or social services offices, can often help to post or distribute flyers.		
Infographics	A compilation of images and/or charts with minimal text, that helps to explain a planning concept or process. Infographics can be useful at multiple levels ranging from an "at-a-glance" overview of a specific topic or an explanation of a more complex process. For example, A flow chart of your planning process may be a helpful infographic that can be used as a stand-alone document or inserted in other outreach materials.		✓
Media Packet	Providing "ready to publish" information about the planning study or process for those in the media industry can be an effective way of managing your message and reducing the spread of misinformation. A basic media packet might include a **press release**, a study area map, **fact sheet** or **FAQ's**, timeline, and perhaps an **infographic** about the planning process or a specific topic. A media packet could be made available online for download by media outlets.	✓	✓
News Articles	Information about the project that is published in print or online, usually at no cost to the planning study. Providing information in a **press release** or **media packet** can help to encourage news outlets to publish stories. Some publications may allow a planning team member or a local elected official to contribute an article as a guest columnist. Others may seek out interviews with members of the	✓	✓

Tool	Description and Strategies for Use	Best for	
		Notifying	Explaining/ Educating
	planning team or others. For complex or controversial plans, it is important to establish the planning team as the official, legitimate source of information. The planning team may wish to sit down with local news editors to ask for assistance in making sure published stories are balanced and factual.		
Newsletter	Typically, a one to four-page document, either mailed, emailed, handed out, or posted online, that is updated and distributed periodically throughout the planning study. Newsletters provide a status report, explaining plan recommendations as they unfold, as well as the reasons behind the recommendations. In addition, newsletters can communicate next steps and explain any upcoming participation opportunities.	✓	✓
Newspaper Ads	Purchased space in a print or online publication, typically used to notify people of input opportunities. (While less common, larger planning projects with significant budgets may sometimes purchase bigger advertising spaces to display or explain specific plan recommendations.)	✓	
Online Ads	Advertisements placed with online search engines, third-party websites, online publications, or other online services to notify people of input opportunities.	✓	
Presentations	Speaking to groups about the planning study or process, often using a slide show.	✓	✓

Tool	Description and Strategies for Use	Best for	
		Notifying	Explaining/ Educating
Press Release	A text document, typically one page or less, sent to news outlets to provide information about the planning study and process, including announcing upcoming milestones or public involvement opportunities.	✓	
Reports	The planning study may produce interim reports or technical memos, such as a **community profile** or an existing conditions report, that can provide valuable information for interested parties. Including executive summaries can be helpful for a lay audience.		✓
Social Media	A host of social networking applications can be used to help disseminate plan information. These tools require careful planning to determine if and how social media interactions will be used during the planning process. For example, perhaps the planning team wishes to use social media to get the word out about a specific event but does not have the resources to monitor and respond to ongoing social media discussions. In this case, messaging should be clear that social media comments will not be monitored or considered by the project team. Instead, people could be directed to official input channels.	✓	
Speakers' Bureau	Enlisting volunteers from outside the planning team to present information to community groups can be a budget-sensitive way to expand the reach of a public involvement program. Care is needed, however, to confirm that volunteer		✓

Tool	Description and Strategies for Use	Best for	
		Notifying	Explaining/ Educating
	speakers are well-educated on the salient planning issues and topics, and to make sure that no unintended bias or alternative agendas are introduced.		
Translated or Alternate Format Materials	If a scan indicates the planning area has concentrations of people with limited English proficiency, preparing translated versions of informational materials such as **brochures, flyers** or **newsletters** may be important.[7] It may also be desirable to provide these general informational materials in a large-print format to assist older or visually impaired participants.	✓	✓
TV or Radio Spots	A public service announcement (PSA) can be written and sent to local radio and television stations. PSA's are often communicated by media outlets free of charge to help raise awareness of topics that are in the public interest. The planning team typically has no influence on when a PSA will air, however. Purchased radio or TV spots are another option. An independent production company may be hired to develop an audio or video advertisement. Or a media	✓	

[7] Executive Order 13166, signed by President George W. Bush on August 11, 2000, requires that agencies who are recipients of federal funds take reasonable steps to ensure meaningful access to their programs and activities by people with limited English proficiency. Agencies often ask if there is a population threshold or other quantifiable factor that would indicate when accommodation should be provided; however, this is a judgment call to be made on a case by case basis. Generally, agencies should consider four factors: 1. The number or proportion of people with limited English proficiency that will be affected by planning decisions; 2. The frequency with which limited English speaking people will come in contact with the planning process; 3. The nature and importance of the plan to people's lives; and 4. The cost of accommodation and resources available to the planning agency. For additional information, refer to the Federal Interagency Website on Limited English Proficiency at www.lep.gov.

Tool	Description and Strategies for Use	Best for	
		Notifying	Explaining/ Educating
	station may have its own production capabilities and can work with the planning team to create a customized script or video about the project for a fee.		
TV, Radio or Newspaper Interviews	Advance preparation is important if there is a chance someone from the project team may be asked for an interview by a television, radio station or print publication. As part of your public involvement planning, be sure to identify who is authorized to speak to the media about the project and direct any interview requests to that person. Strategize key messages with your planning team and create an **FAQs** document to help prepare responses to questions that your spokesperson may be asked. Also see guidance above for **news articles**.	✓	✓
Website	An online presence for most planning studies has become a standard practice. If your agency has a website, perhaps a new page can be created for your specific planning project. Alternatively, if a separate website for the planning study is desired, many low-cost website builders are available that allow someone with little or no web design experience to create an effective site for disseminating information. (See Section 3.4.1 for discussion of online tools for two-way interaction.)		✓

3.4 Engaging

"Engaging" means having **two-way** communication with the public as plans are prepared and decisions are made. This section highlights interactive strategies that can generate meaningful input and feedback from the public, helping people to become knowledgeable participants in the planning process. Engagement strategies can also help to manage and resolve controversial situations.

3.4.1 Tools for Input, Feedback and Developing an Informed Public

Advisory Committees. Oregon Statewide Planning Goal 1 requires governments to have a committee for public involvement, to monitor and encourage public participation in planning. This committee may be helpful in an advisory capacity as the plan is developed. Alternatively, you may wish to form a plan-specific committee by either supplementing the general public involvement committee with people representing additional interests or establishing a separate advisory group altogether.

A written charter is recommended for any advisory committee, to explain the purpose of the committee, membership criteria, committee and individual member roles and responsibilities, and how the committee's activities will be documented and used during the planning process.

Advisory Committee: Carlton Pool House Restoration

The City of Carlton appointed a Project Citizen Advisory Committee to spearhead the restoration of the Municipal Pool House after a narrow defeat of a local bond measure. A broadly representative group, committee members became active champions for the project, leading public outreach activities for the City and ultimately shepherding the project through to a successful completion.

The City received an ACE (Achievement in Community Engagement) Award for empowering community members to mobilize support, in order to accomplish a beneficial public project.

Meetings. Public workshops, open houses, neighborhood meetings and similar forums are useful for giving the public access to the planning team, to ask questions or have more in-depth discussions. Public meeting locations should be selected carefully to avoid physical barriers for people with limited mobility or who rely on assistive devices. Accommodation for people with other disabilities may need to be provided upon request.

Stakeholder Interviews. Telephone or in-person interviews with key constituents may be helpful at the beginning of a planning project to identify issues of importance and concerns that may need to be addressed.

Community Conversations. Meeting people where they already spend time can be an effective way to capture broad input from community members who may not otherwise participate in the planning process. Consider bringing planning project information to community events, churches, schools and universities, and other venues where people congregate and socialize. Request opportunities to get on agendas for civic group meetings such as neighborhood councils, tribal councils, chambers of commerce, Rotary clubs, Toastmasters, etc. Cultural events and festivals sponsored by minority groups are excellent places to interact with potential planning stakeholders.

ADDRESSING CULTURAL AND LINGUISTICAL BARRIERS

People from diverse cultural backgrounds, especially those with limited English proficiency, are often underserved by conventional outreach methods. Failing to account for cultural diversity in your planning process can set up de facto barriers to full participation.

- Seek out and consult with cultural leaders in the community, to identify potential barriers and ways to overcome them. Ask for help in educating your planning team on cultural norms and expectations of the groups you need to reach.

- Go to where the people are! Meeting locations which may seem unconventional, but which are familiar and comfortable for your audience, can help underserved people feel more confident in participating.

- Religious organizations, immigrant services, regional health professionals and other community and social service organizations who routinely interact with people from diverse cultures may have good advice for making connections and communicating effectively.

Small group meetings at the neighborhood level can help lessen the intimidation factor, especially for participants from diverse cultural backgrounds, or those who are participating in a planning process for the first time.

Translation Services. Making translation services available at public meetings or for individual stakeholder discussions may be important if the study area includes concentrations of people with limited English proficiency[8], or if a planning participant requires sign language translation. A number of Oregon firms offer translation services for a fee, including many in the Portland area. Nearby colleges and universities can sometimes be a potential source of volunteer translators. When it is necessary to enlist the services of a translator at a distance, web conferencing can help to control costs by eliminating the need for travel.

Focus Groups. A focus group is a tool often used in market research. It involves convening a small group of people who generally represent the demographic makeup of a given geographic area. Researchers use these small groups to solicit reactions and perceptions about a specific topic or product. For development of land use plans, a focus group can be helpful in vetting public information to make sure it is clear and understandable, and to explore how the broader public might respond to certain planning concepts or regulatory proposals. Using a neutral third-party to facilitate focus groups is usually a good idea, to ensure the planning team is not introducing their own biases into focus group questions or interpretation of responses.

Online Engagement Tools. Online tools have evolved to allow for robust community interaction and can have significant advantages. They can cost-effectively reach a broad cross-section of the community and are especially effective at providing participation opportunities for people who are short on time, lack transportation, or are uncomfortable attending public meetings. Additionally, online educational tools can be designed with varying levels of detail for different audiences.
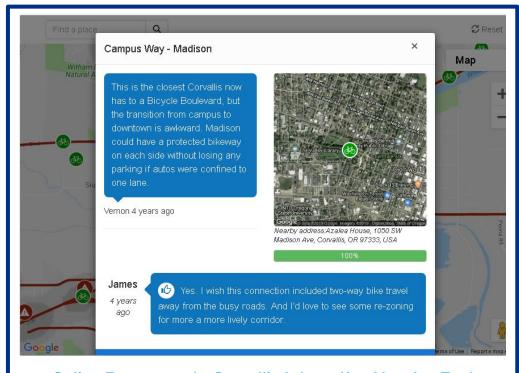
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[8] Ibid.

If desired, online comments can be made visible to other participants, improving the transparency of the planning process. Another advantage is that data is also easily compiled to help monitor how many people are accessing online information or linking to specific topics.

While there may be important reasons to provide opportunities for face-to-face interaction in many planning processes, nearly all plans will benefit from online interaction. At the basic level, providing a way for people to learn about the plan and submit comments online is helpful. Where greater online interaction is desired, online discussion forums or webcasts can allow people to interact with each other or with the planning team to discuss planning concepts. Some specialized webtools allow participants to explore the potential impacts of their own ideas and choices, to become more informed about planning concepts.

Surveys, Polls and Questionnaires. Surveys can be an efficient way to gather and organize information from large numbers of people. Examples include formal public opinion surveys with statistical validity, more general community surveys, questionnaires that allow for open-ended questions and detailed responses, or even keypad polling during large group meetings to quickly assess group opinions and reactions.

Online Engagement: Corvallis Interactive Mapping Tool

For a Transportation System Plan update, the City of Corvallis used an interactive mapping tool to collect information from the public on known transportation issues. Participants could click on the map to describe areas of concern for later review by the planning team. Other members of the public could view and comment on posted issues, prompting a community dialogue.

Surveys, polls and questionnaires need to be carefully designed. Unclear questions can lead to large numbers of non-responses or erroneous findings. Consider these tips to help avoid unintended bias and low response rates:

- Check to make sure that questions are posed from a neutral standpoint since phrasing that unintentionally evokes positive or negative reactions can introduce bias.

- Prioritizing questions that are most important and reducing the number of less important questions is a good idea. "Survey fatigue" can occur if respondents are asked to answer a large number of questions or read long narratives before answering, leading to incomplete surveys.

- Take care to use color schemes that are simple, neutral and professional-looking since the survey instrument itself can evoke unintended reactions if people are turned off by distracting colors or graphics.

- It is a good idea to explain upfront how responses will be used, and whether or not individual responses will remain anonymous.

- Timing can also be important. During certain times (such as in the summer and fall months leading up to a presidential election, for example), planning projects may compete for public attention with other issues. Community members can experience polling fatigue during these times and may be less likely to respond.

3.4.2 Addressing Controversy

People experiencing anxiety about potential planning outcomes may react toward others in ways that are uncomfortable or unpleasant. It can be tempting to avoid direct contact with prickly people when controversial situations arise. However,

managing controversy absolutely requires an in-person approach. And, it takes time. A foundation of trust is necessary for open, honest dialogue and trust building is usually accomplished through multiple face-to-face interactions. Providing opportunities for structured, facilitated dialogue can promote a civil discourse between groups of people who may disagree with each other, or with potential plan recommendations.

Consider the following approach for building community consent in controversial situations:

- **Listen**. An initial listening session to air and understand differences can help open a constructive dialogue. Focus on *interests*, not *positions*: Ask "why" often, to get at the reasons behind controversial positions. Avoid the temptation to respond with immediate answers, and rather take listening session input "under advisement". Especially avoid discounting any input or suggestion at this stage no matter how impractical it may seem. The purpose of the listening session should be to do just that – listen!

- **Think.** Give careful thought to the input received, especially the "why" behind concerns heard at the listening session, before the next interaction.

**Managing Controversy:
Bend Urban Growth Boundary**

The City of Bend received an ACE (Achievement in Community Engagement) Award for their people-centered process to resolve controversial Urban Growth Boundary expansion issues. The City's process included three technical advisory committees, representing a broad cross section of the community, who participated in 41 meetings over a 20-month period. Online interaction extended the reach of the project to members of the general public.

In addressing a controversial situation, this successful effort demonstrated the importance of taking time to build an informed public and collaboratively generate solutions.
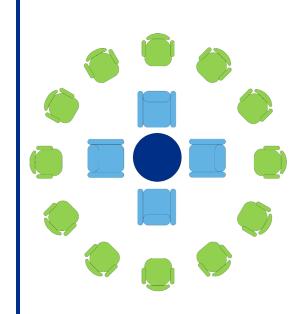
- **Explore**. This is the time to get creative and identify possible alternatives for addressing concerns raised. Focus on looking for alternatives that address the "why" behind the concern, rather than the concern itself. You may wish to explore alternatives internally with your planning team before taking ideas back to your constituents. Or, if a stated objective of your public involvement process is to empower community members, direct collaboration with the individual or group raising objections may be helpful here.

- **Discuss.** Convene a discussion of alternatives with the affected people. Whenever possible, bring more than one option to the table that your planning team can live with.

- **Repeat.** Several rounds of listening, exploration and discussion may be needed to ultimately determine a path forward.

When You Can Compromise No Further.
Note that public "consent" may not be "consensus". For complex plans, it is unlikely that every stakeholder will agree 100% with every plan recommendation. Planning decisions need to be good for a majority of

"SAMOAN CIRCLE "

- To speak a person must be seated in a center (blue) chair. Those in the outer circle (green chairs) or anywhere else in the room must remain silent.

- A person may come to the center as often as they like, whenever there is an open seat, and remain as long as they like.

- A person in the center may invite anyone else to join them in an open chair.

- When the center chairs are full and others wish to speak, standing and hovering behind the center chairs is allowed (without vocalizing.)

Structured Listening Technique for Discussing Controversial Subjects

A "Samoan Circle" is an example of a discussion technique that can help groups to articulate and understand opposing issues. The process, which encourages civility and humanizes interactions, can be tailored to groups ranging in size from 10 to several hundred participants. Although the exercise is structured, the discussion is owned by participants, not the presenter – a powerful way to show a planning team's desire for open and honest dialogue.

people over a long period of time, not just immediately expedient. And, decisions should never compromise the ability of future generations to meet their needs. Consent building looks for common ground where it can be found, without undermining the integrity of plan recommendations, unreasonably delaying the process, or giving disproportionate weight to the concerns of a small group of vocal opponents.

In working through controversial issues, there may come a point when all practical ideas have been exhausted, yet objections persist. A relationship of trust and respect between the planning team and potential opponents is crucial to helping people to understand and accept a greater public good. A planning team's sincere commitment to consent-building can reduce the potential for stakeholders to take drastic actions to block plan adoption or implementation later in the process, even if they are not happy with the outcome.

3.5 Selecting the "Right" Outreach Techniques

Table 4 provides a high-level summary of many tools and strategies described in these guidelines, including a comparative assessment of the resources needed to implement them.

Table 4. Matching Outreach Strategies with Your Audience, Budget and Participation Objectives

Tool or Strategy (Click on the tool or strategy name to be taken to the relevant section in these guidelines.)	Suitable for			Cost Level $ Low $$ Med $$$ High	Planning Team Time Commitment ○ Low ◖ Med ● High	Participant Time Commitment ○ Low ◖ Med ● High	Notes
	Informing/ Educating	Collecting Input and Feedback	Addressing Controversy				
Advisory Committees	✓	✓	✓	$ to $$$	●	●	Third-party facilitator can be helpful in controversial situations.
Briefing	✓			$	○	○	
Brochure	✓			$	○	○	

Tool or Strategy (Click on the tool or strategy name to be taken to the relevant section in these guidelines.)	Suitable for			Cost Level $ Low $$ Med $$$ High	Planning Team Time Commitment ○ Low ◐ Med ● High	Participant Time Commitment ○ Low ◐ Med ● High	Notes
	Informing/ Educating	Collecting Input and Feedback	Addressing Controversy				
Community Conversations	✓	✓	✓	$$	●	◐	
Community Profile	✓			$$	◐	○	
Direct Mail	✓			$ to $$$	◐	○	Cost depends on number of mailing recipients
Displays	✓			$$	◐	○	
Email	✓	✓		$	◐		
Fact Sheet	✓			$	○	○	
FAQs	✓			$	○	○	
Flyer	✓			$	○	○	
Focus Groups		✓		$$	●	●	Third party facilitator is a good idea.
Infographics	✓			$	◐	○	
Media Packet	✓			$	◐	○	Need to keep media files updated to avoid misinformation.
Meetings – Public Workshop	✓	✓		$ to $$	●	●	
Meetings – Open House	✓	✓		$ to $$	●	◐	
Meetings – Consent Building	✓	✓	✓	$ to $$$	●	●	Facilitation consultant can be helpful in controversial situations.
News Articles	✓			$	○	○	
Newspaper Ads	✓			$$	○	○	

Tool or Strategy (Click on the tool or strategy name to be taken to the relevant section in these guidelines.)	Suitable for			Cost Level $ Low $$ Med $$$ High	Planning Team Time Commitment ○ Low ◑ Med ● High	Participant Time Commitment ○ Low ◑ Med ● High	Notes
	Informing/ Educating	Collecting Input and Feedback	Addressing Controversy				
Online Ads	✓			$$	○	○	
Online Engagement Tools	✓	✓		$ to $$	◑	◑	Simple online review and comment opportunities are straightforward and inexpensive. Consider consultant assistance for design of other interactive tools.
Presentations	✓			$$	◑	○	
Reports	✓			$	◑	◑	Consider creating executive summaries for technical reports
Social Media	✓	See notes		$	○ to ●	○	Monitoring and responding to social media comments may require a significant effort.
Press Release	✓			$	○	○	
Speakers' Bureau	✓			$$	◑	○	Time commitment for volunteer speakers can be ◑ to ●
Stakeholder Interviews		✓		$	◑	◑	
Surveys - Online		✓		$	◑	◑	Online survey tools can reduce the level of effort needed to compile and

Tool or Strategy (Click on the tool or strategy name to be taken to the relevant section in these guidelines.)	Suitable for			Cost Level $ Low $$ Med $$$ High	Planning Team Time Commitment ○ Low ◐ Med ● High	Participant Time Commitment ○ Low ◐ Med ● High	Notes
	Informing/ Educating	Collecting Input and Feedback	Addressing Controversy				
							summarize survey findings.
Surveys - Emailed or Hard Copy		✓		$	●	◐	
Surveys – In-Person		✓		$ to $$$	●	◐	
Surveys – Keypad Polling		✓		$	○	○	Useful in large group meetings.
Surveys – Statistically Valid		✓		$$$	●	◐	Hiring a public opinion research consultant is a good idea when statistical validity is needed.
Translated or Alternate Format Materials	✓	✓		$	◐	○	
Translation Services	✓	✓		$$	◐	○	
TV or Radio Spots	✓			$ to $$	◐	○	Public service announcements are aired for free. Paid spots are also an option.
TV, Radio or Newspaper Interviews	✓			$	◐	○	Prepare carefully.
Website	✓	✓		$	◐	○	

3.6 Monitoring, Evaluating and Documenting Your Public Involvement Program

3.6.1 Checking In on How It's Going

Statistics such as public meeting attendance and website hits can be tracked as the planning process moves forward. After the first significant outreach event, it is a good idea to review and assess whether public participation is in line with your expectations or if an adjustment is needed.

Low turnout at meetings can indicate more promotion may be needed, or perhaps a shift toward more online participation opportunities may be warranted. Low participation rates online may indicate that interactive tools are too complicated, or written information is confusing. Asking for feedback from those who take advantage of participation opportunities may help to identify things that may be inadvertently discouraging others from participating and generate ideas for increasing participation rates.

3.6.2 Measuring Performance

Measures for gauging the effectiveness of your public involvement program can be tied back to the objectives you identified when first preparing your public involvement plan (See Section 2.2.2.).

Data is needed to assess performance. While it is fairly easy to track numbers of meeting attendees or numbers of website hits, these numbers do not tell you much about the effectiveness of your information and communication methods. Including an evaluation form for participants to complete as they take advantage of input and feedback opportunities can be helpful.

Table 5 demonstrates how performance measures could be linked back to initial objectives for a public involvement program.

Table 5. Example Public Involvement Performance Measures

Example Public Involvement Objective	Possible Ways to Measure
Clearly articulate the process for decision-making and opportunities for input or influence. **Communicate accurate, understandable and timely technical information throughout the planning process.**	• Ask participants to complete an evaluation form to rate the clarity of information about the process and planning concepts.
Give potentially affected people an opportunity to express concerns so that they can be considered as the plan is developed.	• Were notices broadly distributed? (Y/N) • Did the planning team provide targeted notifications to potentially affected people or groups? (Y/N) • Were opportunities to provide input and feedback convenient and considerate of the public's time? (Y/N)
Get balanced community feedback on concepts developed by the planning team.	• Number of participants providing feedback. • Geographic distribution of participants providing feedback (such as a zip code tally). • Did comments received reflect a variety of interests and needs? (Y/N)
Comply with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act, Environmental Justice rules and Oregon's Statewide Planning Goal 1.	• Did the planning team provide targeted notifications to disadvantaged or under-represented people or groups? (Y/N) • Was accommodation available for people with disabilities or language barriers? (Y/N)

3.6.3 Documentation

While the plan development process is underway, it is important to keep a log of questions, comments and suggestions received from the public, and notes on how the planning team addressed them. A key tenant of Oregon Statewide Planning Goal 1 is that members of the public are entitled to receive a response from their policymakers. Having an organized log of comments and responses from the planning process that can be made available to the public will help to facilitate this. For large numbers of similar comments, providing a synthesis that can be reported back to the public may be more appropriate than repetitively responding to each individual comment.

As the plan development stage comes to a close, it is important to compile and retain copies of all public notifications, press releases, news articles, meeting attendance rosters, and other outreach materials. These documents may be needed later to demonstrate input and feedback opportunities that were offered, and to help quantify and characterize levels of participation.

For documentation requirements in later stages of the planning cycle (plan adoption and implementation), refer to the administrative procedures in your agency's land development code.

Tool Box (Appendix Materials Provided Separately)

A - Public Involvement Process Checklist

B – Audience Identification Exercise – Instructions and Worksheets

C - Public Involvement Plan Template

D –Additional Resources and Links