



STAFF REPORT

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(OCP / LUB review)

To: Gabriola Island Local Trust Committee
For the meeting of March 22, 2012

From: Chloe Fox
Island Planner

CC: Chris Jackson
Regional Planning Manager

Re: Options for Online Public Engagement

OVERVIEW:

At the January 19, 2012 regular business meeting, the Gabriola Island Local Trust Committee amended the Top Priority List of the work program to undertake, as the first priority project, an exploration of the capacity to use online engagement tools in the Official Community Plan (OCP) review process. The purpose of this report is to present a preliminary outline of the options available with respect to online engagement tactics and tools as well as a preliminary discussion of capacity considerations.

DISCUSSION:

Many local governments are looking for new ways of engaging the public in an increasingly wired world. Online tools can be an effective way of involving younger audiences and people who generally do not attend face-to-face engagement events. While many of the makings of successful public engagement apply to both online and traditional face-to-face engagement techniques, developing effective online engagement opportunities involves a number of additional considerations. This section of the report discusses the components of successful engagement, provides an overview of online engagement tactics and tools that could be explored further for use during the next phase of the OCP review, and, finally, considers questions of internal capacity, including staffing, budget and communications policy.

Successful Engagement Strategies

An effective engagement strategy begins with an understanding of the purpose and scope of the project, how public input will impact the decision and the type of information and input from the public that is required to assist in decision-making. One way of ensuring that the level of participation proposed matches the goals of the project is through the IAP2s 'Continuum of Civic Engagement', which has been adapted and presented as Figure 1 below.

THE CONTINUUM OF CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

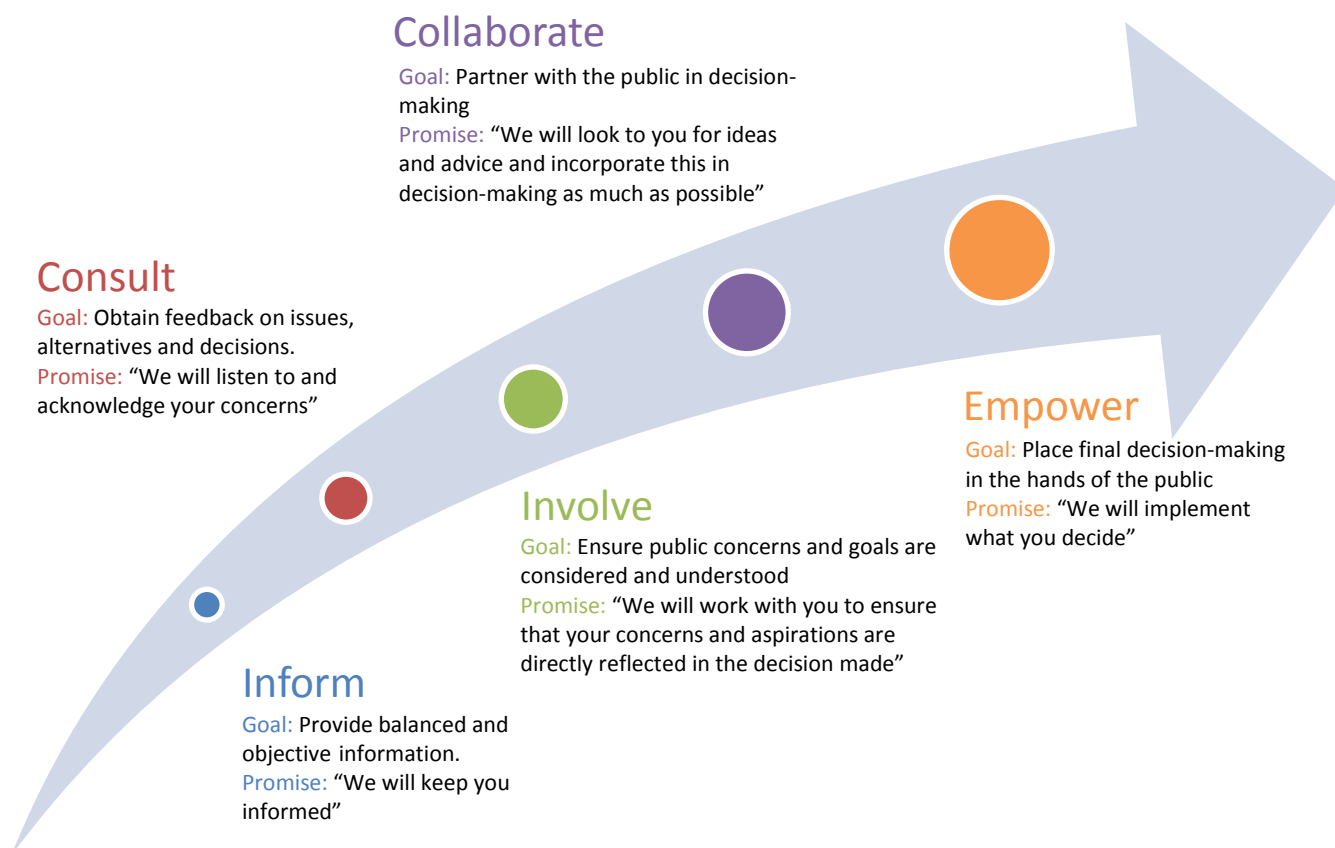


Figure 1: The Continuum of Civic Engagement

Source: IAP2, Auditor General of BC

Both online and traditional face-to-face consultation techniques can be used at all stages on the civic engagement continuum. It is important to recognize, however, that the two forms of communication each have their own unique strengths and weaknesses. Online tools offer convenience and choice, while emotional connections are generally stronger in face-to-face consultation. While online engagement methods generally have a greater potential to reach a wider audience, it should be recognized that many people do not have internet access and, generally, this segment of the population includes an overrepresentation of seniors and lower-income households. In addition, a comprehensive recruitment strategy is still necessary with online engagement methods to avoid the co-opting of engagement processes by special interest groups and to promote the participation of those who are currently less engaged in local government. Given their unique strengths, the two forms of consultation tend to complement and reinforce each other well. As such, effective engagement strategies will often include both online as well as face-to-face methods of consultation.

Online Engagement Techniques

This section provides an overview of a selection of online engagement techniques that could be used to fulfill the consultation goals at each stage on the civic engagement continuum presented in Figure 1, above. Selected case studies of how some of these tools have been used by other jurisdictions are provided in Attachment 1.

Inform

1. *Websites*

Websites provide a platform for a host of information sharing, feedback and involvement and can include links to informational brochures, flyers, discussion documents, FAQs and other sources necessary to fulfill the goal of 'informing' the public about a certain project or initiative.

2. *Electronic Mailing Lists*

Listserve are electronic mailing lists that people can register with to receive messages and updates on a project. Such messages might include the distribution of invitations to participate in upcoming engagement events (either online or face-to-face) or of evaluation forms following an event. When used in combination with a website, registrants can receive notification emails when new material is posted to the website. This is currently used on the Islands Trust website, which people can subscribe to and receive email updates, news articles and notification of upcoming meetings.

3. *Interactive Mapping*

Interactive mapping tools can help communities visualize the distribution of different land uses, natural and cultural features. This tool can facilitate more informed public views and can be useful in community visioning for land use and development. This tool is currently used on the Islands Trust website through the MapIT tool.

Consult / Involve

1. *Online Games*

Online games can fall under the goal of 'informing' and/or 'consulting / involving' depending on how they are designed. Games, for example, can be designed to allow participants to test their knowledge or to develop their own creative solutions to public decisions. This tool works well when it is desired to give the public a more informed, realistic sense of the tradeoffs involved in public decision-making and has been frequently used in participatory budget processes. Online games can encourage creative thinking and can help publicize other engagement opportunities but must be surrounded by other engagement opportunities to have value. In addition, special expertise in game development is usually required to develop this tool.

2. *Online Surveys*

Online surveys can be easily designed and disseminated and can be a useful tactic to get an overview of where people stand on a particular issue. Online surveys can reach more people with less time, effort and expense than traditional survey methods and can serve as a platform to connect users to other engagement opportunities. Online surveys should not be considered as a substitution for scientific opinion polling, as they are not considered to be statistically valid unless other factors are built in. The Islands Trust has an account with surveymonkey, and online survey platform, that has been used in a number of local trust areas for public consultation and by staff for internal information gathering.

3. *Online Forums / Blogs*

Online forums and blogs allow for web-based discussions that can occur in real time or over a period of time. Allowing these discussions to occur over a period of time is generally a more favorable approach as it allows for participation from a wider range of people. Participant guidelines are essential for a successful forum or blog and such sites need to be moderated in order to vet input and focus discussions. Unmoderated, anonymous blogs are not recommended for use by the LTC.

4. *Idea Generation and Ranking (aka Crowdsourcing)*

Crowdsourcing allows participants to propose ideas or make comments and then vote on these ideas or comments. The ability to rank comments or ideas makes this a useful tactic to gauge community priorities. Combined with a promise to incorporate input received, this tool can bridge the gap between 'consulting / involving' citizens and 'collaborating' with citizens or 'empowering' citizens. As with online forums and blogs, participant guidelines are essential as is the role of a moderator.

5. *YouTube Channels*

Like YouTube, YouTube Channels are a way to share videos with the world. Channels allow individuals or organizations to sign up for a personal channel, which can display a short description of the purpose of the channel and can host videos. As the channel 'owner', the individual or organization has the ability to create and share videos, including videos made by others. The channel could, for example, be designed to encourage community members to submit their own videos as part of a video contest in support of a broader engagement effort on a particular project. Community members can subscribe to the channel to receive updates when new content is posted and can comment on videos posted to the channel. The role of a moderator is necessary to review comments and videos created by others prior to posting.

Collaborate / Empower

1. *Wikis*

A "wiki" is a website that allows a group of people to write and edit web pages (e.g. Wikipedia). Wikis allow people to provide ideas and edits on their own time through a process that tracks changes and contributors openly and automatically, minimizing the amount of coordination work required from staff. A wiki can be a useful tool to develop documents collaboratively and incorporate ideas from the public into a document in a transparent way.

2. *Shared Online Workspaces*

Designed for use by a smaller group of people, closed, shared online workspaces allow groups to communicate, plan, write, make decisions and stay connected without having to be in the same place at the same time. This tactic works best for smaller groups, such as an Advisory Commission, who are working together on a project.

Current Initiatives in the Trust Area

Denman Farm Plan Blog (<http://denmanfarmplan.wordpress.com/>)

The Denman Island Local Trust Committee has created a blog for the Denman Island Farm Plan to engage residents of the island in the process of creating the plan.

The blog website was developed by the Island Planner assigned to the Denman Local Trust Area, Courtney Simpson, using the wordpress platform and was launched in January 2012. Planner Simpson is also moderating the blog based on a moderation policy developed in

conjunction with Trust Area Services staff. The moderation policy is available on the blog site and is included as Attachment 2 to this report.

In terms of staff time required to develop and monitor the blog, Planner Simpson estimates that the blog required approximately one full day of planner time to develop with an additional half day required to develop the moderation policy. Since the blog has been operational, staff time is only required when a comment from the public comes in for posting (this has to be checked against the moderation policy prior to posting) or when a post is made by the planner to generate discussion, respond to a comment or redirect the conversation.

In this case, there have been limited comments received but a significant number of 'hits', that is, people visiting the site. Thus, it appears that although the blog has not yet generated a significant amount of online discussion, it has established itself as a successful means of keeping people informed about the project and people are clearly subscribing to the site. For example, the launching of the blog was advertised though an article in the local weekly paper, written by one of the Denman Island local trustees. The day after this article appeared, the blog received 85 hits and, within 3 days of the article appearing, received 100 hits. In addition, Planner Simpson recently posted a question on the blog, which generated approximately 30 hits, although no comments were posted. This lack of commenting may change in the future, however, when a draft plan becomes available.

The Denman Farm Plan blog provides some useful lessons for the LTC to consider when developing its own online engagement tools. First, moderation may require more staff time than traditional face-to-face engagement events. Generally, moderators should be providing responses, or redirections, after every few comments posted. Also, in order to generate discussion, the moderator may need to post more frequently. Although there has not been much activity in terms of commenting on the Farm Plan blog site, this could change with the release of a draft plan. Depending on the amount of activity on a particular blog, moderation may require the time of multiple staff members to provide back up to the Island Planner.

ISSUES SUMMARY:

As part of the development of an online engagement initiative, the LTC should consider:

- The purpose and scope of project in relation to consultation continuum
- Capacity issues: staff resources, capabilities of the new Islands Trust website, internal policies
- How the population wants to be engaged

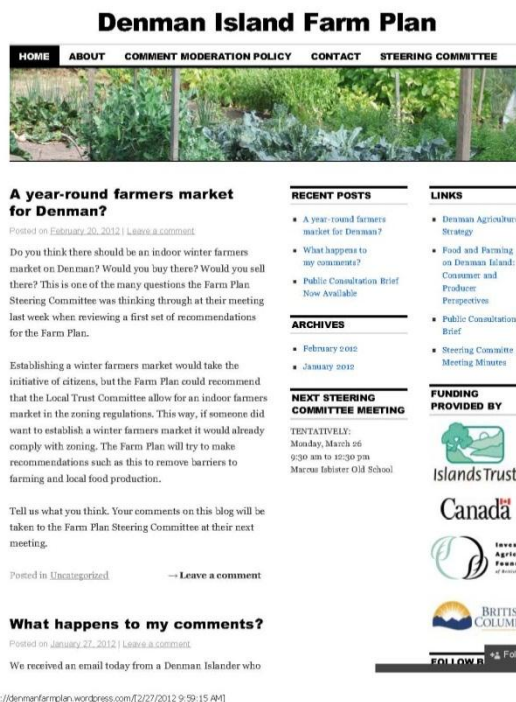


Figure 2: Denman Island Farm Plan Blog Site

STAFF COMMENTS:

Project Purpose and Scope

The development of a successful engagement strategy, hinges on an understanding of the purpose and scope of the project in question and the relationship between public input and the decision that is to be made. The civic engagement continuum presented in Figure 1 provides a useful tool for visualizing the nature of public engagement in relation to the specific decision being considered. Another useful resource, which can assist in defining project goals and target audiences in the development of an overall communications strategy on a particular project, is the Islands Trust document *Guidelines: A Strategic Approach to Local Trust Committee Communications*, approved by the Executive Committee in August 2011 and included as Attachment 3 to this report.

In this case, the project in question is the next phase of the OCP review. Depending on which specific topic areas the review focuses on, consultation on the OCP review will likely span the consultation continuum, involving elements of informing, consulting, involving, collaborating and empowering. As such, staff recommends that separate consultation strategies for specific topic areas or components of the review be developed, depending on their nature and scope. This could occur as individual components of the review are considered and added to the work program.

The previous LTC requested that staff develop a consultation strategy for general education and information regarding Development Permit Areas, an item that is currently outstanding on the Follow-Up Action List. Given that implementation of the Riparian Areas Regulation and the Steep Slopes and Hazard Area Mapping projects, which will likely occur at least in part through Development Permit Area amendments, are currently on the OCP review workplan, staff feel that communication on these two projects could likely occur in tandem and the LTC may wish to consider using these as a pilot project to test some of the online engagement techniques identified in this report.

Capacity Issues

There are several factors that contribute to the capacity for the LTC to use online engagement tools, including: staff time and expertise, the new Islands Trust website and recommendations from Trust Area Services staff.

Staff Resources

As with any engagement strategy, staff time and expertise should be considered prior to choosing a particular engagement tool. Engagement is a crucial component of most LTC projects but should be managed such that other areas of project work can be completed in a timely manner. In general, tools that require continual monitoring or moderation over a long period of time will require more staff time than tools that do not require moderation or that require moderation for a limited period of time. In addition, some online engagement tools require specialized technical expertise that may be outside the assigned planner's skillset. In this case, it may be necessary to bring in outside consultants to help design and develop the online tool and to allocate an appropriate budget to do so. This would be the case, for example, should the LTC wish to explore the use of online games as part of a consultation strategy for a particular project.

Islands Trust Website

Another consideration the LTC may wish to explore further is using some of the capabilities associated with the new Islands Trust website; specifically, the new Islands Trust website will

have the capability to host polls and have chat boxes as well as other functions. As with the existing website, a link to an external website or blog could also be posted to the new website.

Islands Trust Policies

Planning staff have been in conversation with Trust Area Services staff regarding online engagement and have been advised that unmoderated, anonymous blogs and the hosting of Facebook pages are not considered to be appropriate engagement tools for use by LTCs.

Preferred Methods of Engagement

The success of any engagement strategy largely hinges on the interest by a wide cross-section of the community in participating. While the LTC has employed a range of face-to-face engagement techniques, including Community Information Meetings and World Cafes, there has not been any use of online engagement techniques outside those tools currently associated with the Islands Trust website. Given that the use of online engagement tools is also a relatively new idea within the Islands Trust as an organization, staff recommend that, prior to launching an online engagement initiative, the public be asked how they prefer to be engaged. This could be accomplished through a survey, available in hard copy and online, that asks the public to identify which online tools they currently use, which online tools they would use, how they prefer to receive communication on local government issues and through which mediums they prefer to be engaged on local government issues.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

Staff recommends:

THAT the Gabriola Island Local Trust Committee direct staff to develop a draft survey, to be available both online and in hard copy, designed to gather input from the public on preferred methods of engagement and that staff present the draft survey along with a strategy and budget for distribution and advertisement of the survey at a future meeting of the Gabriola Island Local Trust Committee.

Attachments:

Attachment 1 – Case Studies

Attachment 2 – Denman Island Farm Plan Blog Moderation Policy

Attachment 3 – Guidelines: A Strategic Approach to Local Trust Committee Communications

Prepared and Submitted by:

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Chloe Fox
Island Planner

March 1, 2012

Date

Concurred in by:

Chris Jackson

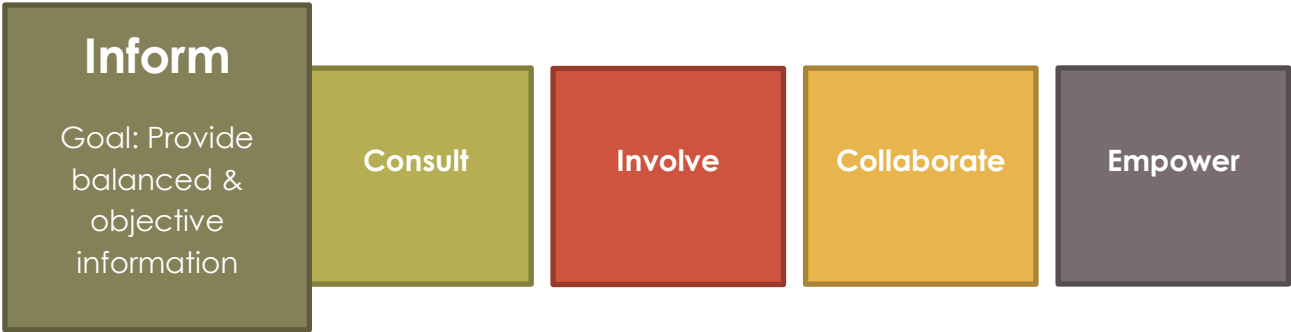
MCIP, Regional Planning Manager

March 5, 2012

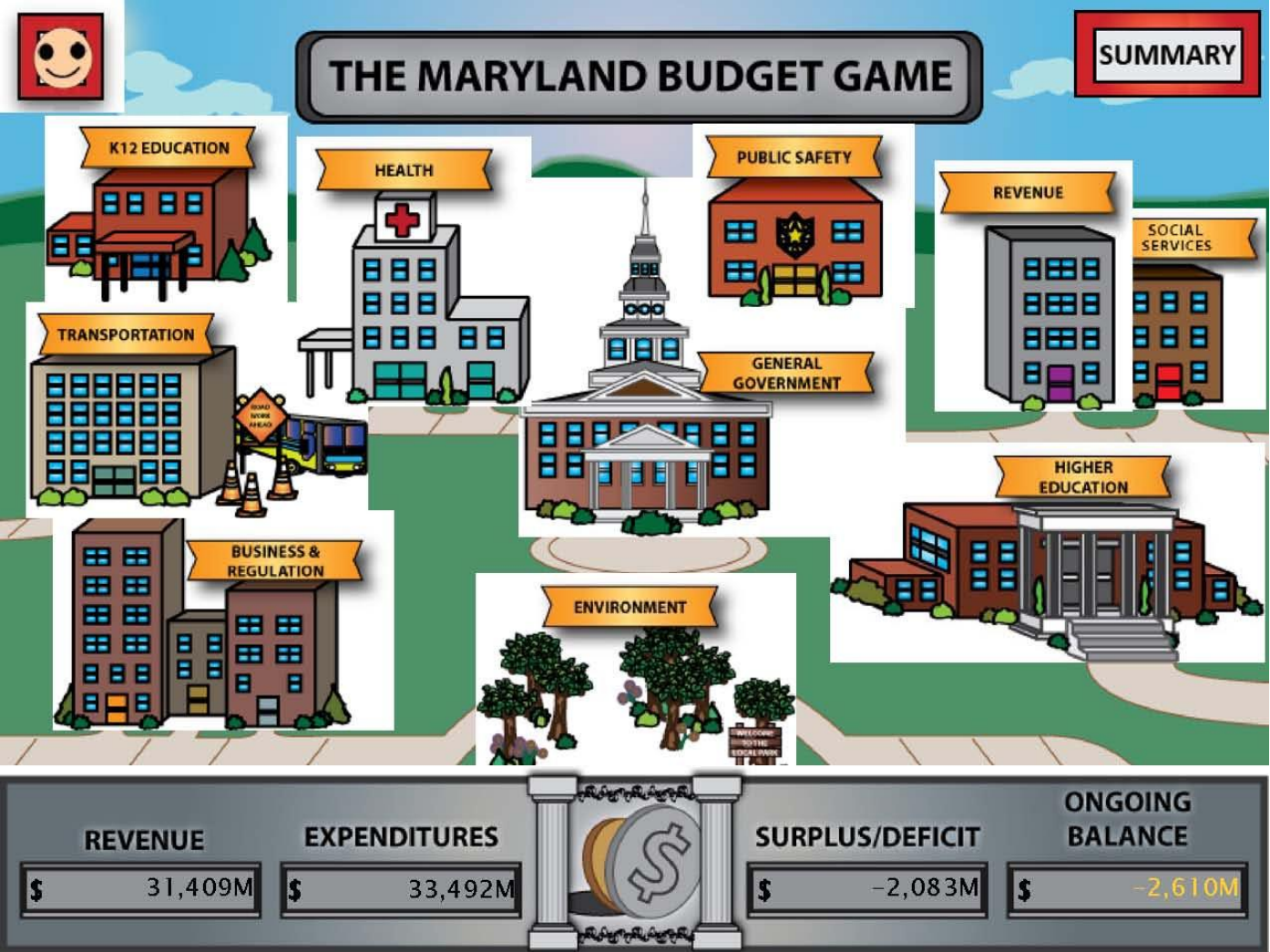
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CASE STUDY #1 – CITY OF VICTORIA OFFICIAL COMMUNITY PLAN WEBSITE	
Project Description	Comprehensive review of the City of Victoria's Official Community Plan
Purpose	To provide a central location for background information, news releases, upcoming engagement opportunities, progress timelines, draft plans and FAQs around the Official Community Plan review process
Features	• Separate website linked from main City of Victoria website • Overview of the review process • Information repository – community profiles, discussion papers, topic-specific factsheets, related plans • Advertising for upcoming public engagement opportunities and displays and summary information from past events • News releases, videos, link to facebook page and contact information
Link	http://www.shapeyourfuturevictoria.ca/

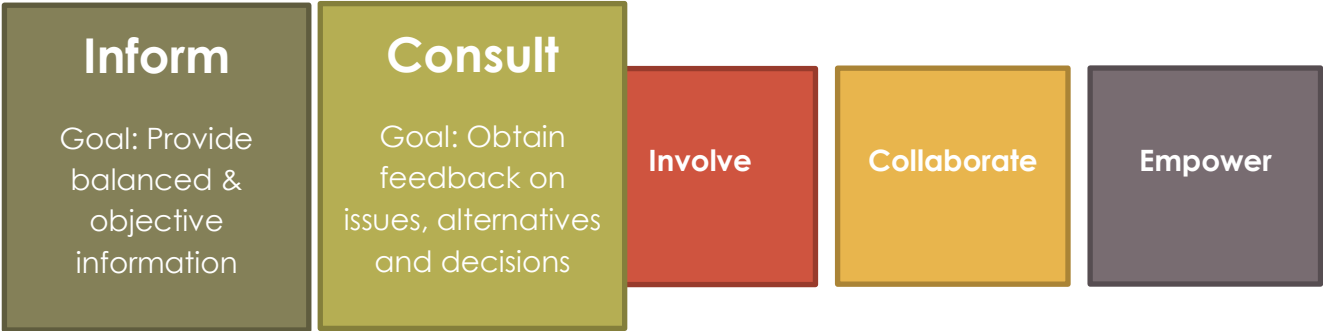
Where are we on the consultation continuum?



CASE STUDY #2 – MARYLAND STATE BUDGET GAME	
Project Description	A joint initiative of the Maryland Budget and Tax Policy Institute and the University of Baltimore, this tool allows users to develop their own proposals for the state budget
Purpose	To educate and inform citizens of the implications of certain budget choices and to obtain citizen-generated solutions to the challenge of creating a balanced state budget
Features	• Presents different budget options in a range of policy areas • Provides background information and factors to consider in selecting your choices • Gives real-time feedback on the impact of choices through calculating a short-term budget and predicting a long-term balance, based on option chosen by the user. • Builds predictions for how different interest groups will react to specific choices
Link	http://iat.ubalt.edu/MDBudgetGame/

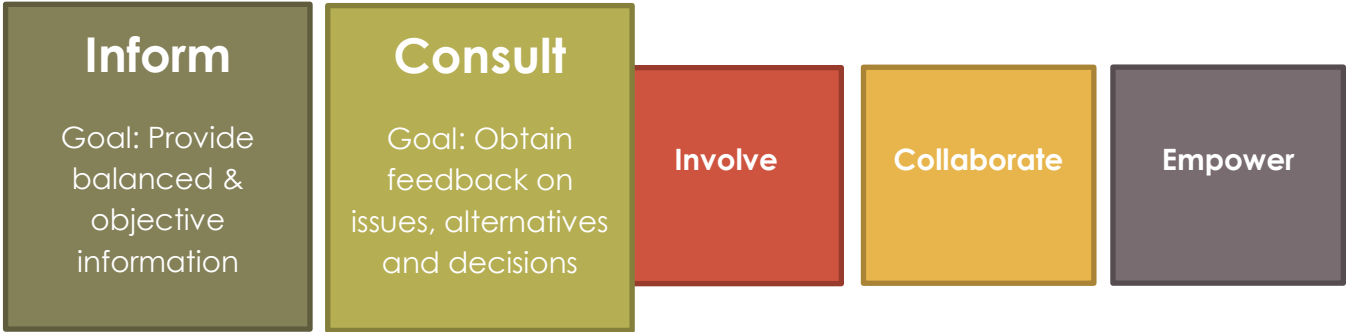


Where are we on the consultation continuum?



CASE STUDY #3 – UNITED NATIONS VIDEOS	
Project Description	The United Nations Videos is the YouTube Channel of the United Nations. It features videos on a wide range of global topics including current news, peace and security, social and economic development, human rights, climate change and more.
Purpose	To raise awareness and generate conversation among citizens on issues of global importance and the work of the United Nations
Features	- Provides a brief description of the channel - Hosts videos (only the owner – the United Nations – has posting permission) - Allows people to subscribe to the channel to receive updates when new content is posted - Allows people to comment on issues raised through the videos on the site
Link	http://www.youtube.com/user/unitednations

Where are we on the consultation continuum?



CASE STUDY #4 – CITY OF PORT COQUITLAM HERITAGE RESOURCE INVENTORY SURVEY	
Project Description	Development of a comprehensive heritage resource inventory reflective of community heritage values
Purpose	To gather suggestions and comments on which resources citizens would like to see represented in the heritage resource inventory
Features	• Uses an online survey powered by surveymonkey, which is linked off the main City of Port Coquitlam website • Prior to entering survey, background information on the project can be accessed from the main City of Port Coquitlam website • Short survey that can be completed quickly by citizens • Contains information on what will be done with the information gathered through the survey and on future engagement opportunities
Link	https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/2FBTV53

Where are we on the consultation continuum?



Heritage Resources Inventory

Exit this survey

2011 Heritage Resources Inventory Questionnaire

We are preparing a comprehensive heritage inventory and invite your suggestions and comments on those properties, places and people you would like to see represented in the inventory. We developed the inventory based on six cultural themes. We also invite your comments on what you consider to be most important. Please take a look at the draft Heritage Resources Inventory dated October 11, 2011 to see which resources have already been brought to our attention.

Suggestions received by November 18, 2011, will be included in the lists to be finalized and evaluated at a heritage inventory workshop to be held November 22, 2011 at the Outlet, 2100 - 2253 Leigh Square Place. All members of the community are welcome to attend the workshop: to register, please contact Minhee Park, Planning Analyst at 604-927-5249.

1. Name (optional)

2. Address (optional)

3. Email (optional)

4. Phone (optional)

Heritage Resources need not just be buildings. They can be landscapes, local traditions and even local people. These resources can be important to your heritage not just because they might be old or physically interesting, but also because they might be important scientifically, culturally, socially, spiritually or important for educational reasons, or because they are associated with a particularly important event in the community.

5. Please list your suggestions for additional resources. (and go to question 6)

Archaeological site	
Art/mural	
Building/structure	
Celebration	
Early settlement	
Garden	

CASE STUDY #5 – METRO VANCOUVER RENTERS SPEAK UP WEBSITE & BLOG	
Project Description	A project by Metro Vancouver and other members of the Rental Housing Supply Coalition intended to advocate for senior government action on stimulating the construction of new rental housing
Purpose	To bring attention to the rental housing shortage in the Metro Vancouver region, to understand the true impacts on renters and to demonstrate broad support for senior government action to stimulate construction of affordable rental housing
Features	• Website and blog • Background information on the issues and news releases • Invitation to renters to share their stories • Ability to post stories and to read the stories shared • Ability for participants to remain anonymous –although this isn't typically recommended, it was felt to be important for the issues being raised through this project • Links to facebook and twitter
Link	http://www.metrovancouver.org/RentersSpeakUp/Pages/default.aspx

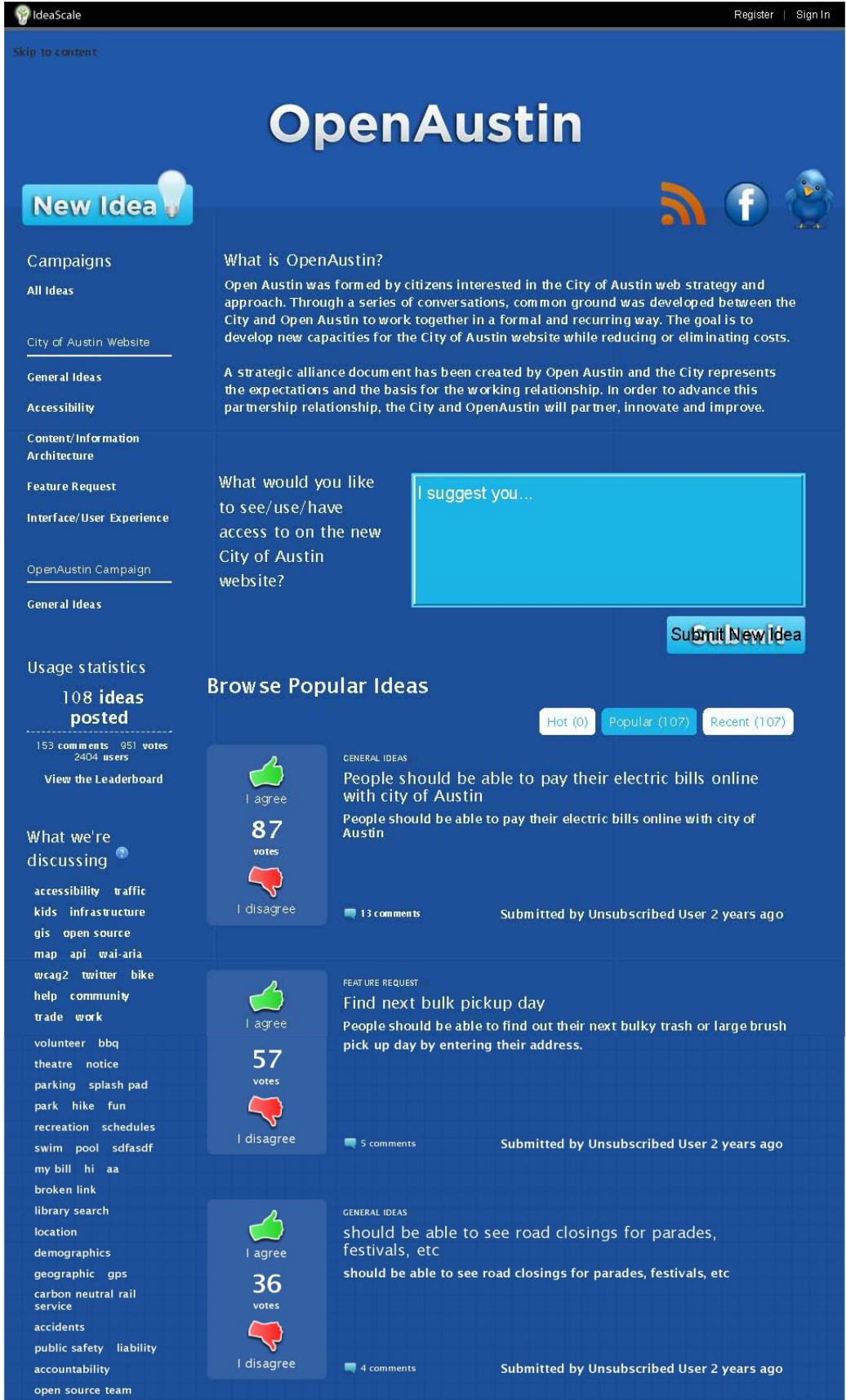
Where are we on the consultation continuum?



The screenshot shows the 'Renters Speak Up' website. At the top is a navigation bar with links: home, about us, the issues, share your story, see the stories, in the news, and taking action. The main header features the 'RENTERS SPEAK UP' logo and the Metro Vancouver logo. Below the header, there's a section titled 'Renter's Stories' with a disclaimer and a link to share a story. A list of stories follows, each with a snippet of text and a 'Read more...' link. On the right side, there are social media buttons for Facebook (Recommend), YouTube, and Twitter (Tweet), as well as a 'Videos' section showing two video thumbnails labeled 'Maggie' and 'Tom'. At the bottom right, there are four large buttons: 'the issues', 'share your story', 'see the stories', and 'taking action'.

CASE STUDY #6 – OPEN AUSTIN CROWDSOURCING	
Project Description	This joint project between the City of Austin and a group of citizens to inform the development of a new web strategy for the City of Austin
Purpose	To generate ideas and assess community priorities in developing new web capacities for the City of Austin while reducing or eliminating costs
Features	• Site powered by IdeaScale, an online idea generation and ranking platform, which allows users to post new ideas and vote on ideas previously posted • Users submit ideas, other users vote on ideas and ideas become 'ranked' based on the number of votes received • Voting mechanism facilitates prioritization • Allows for categorization of ideas into topic areas • Links to facebook and twitter
Link	http://openaustin.ideascale.com/

Where are we on the consultation continuum?



CASE STUDY #7 – FUTURE MELBOURNE WIKI	
Project Description	Future Melbourne is a community plan review project by the City of Melbourne to update and replace the existing City Plan 2010
Purpose	To create a community plan for the people, by the people
Features	• Draft plan developed by project team, partners and stakeholders was posted online as a wiki and opened for public participation for a period of approximately 1 month • Participation by the public could occur though: reading and reviewing the draft plan, editing the document directly, commenting and discussing the plan, and submitting contributions to a series of short stories about future scenarios for Melbourne • Participation guidelines and policies were an important part of the success of the wiki tool and are still posted and available on the Future Melbourne site although participation in the wiki is now closed
Link	http://www.futuremelbourne.com.au/wiki/view/FMPlan/WebHome

about future melbourne

contact us

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Future Melbourne Wiki > FMPlan > WebHome

Future Melbourne

the city plan that anyone can edit.

President's Award Combined Winner

Future Melbourne Community Plan and Sustainable Sydney 2030



This year the President's Award represents outstanding planning practice. This award is judged by the PIA National Awards judging panel in consultation with the PIA National President. It is judged from all nominations.

Future Melbourne Wiki Post-Implementation Review

Our Post-Implementation Review is now available and can be downloaded here (PDF - 1.8MB - Now optimised for printing). The review identifies key successes, learnings and recommendations which were informed by a range of quantitative data regarding site usage and engagement, during both our four week public consultation period and over the life of the project. A number of interviews were also conducted with participants, including staff from various Council branches as well as public participants.

Future Melbourne Blog

Planning begins on Future

Latest Press Releases

+ City of Melbourne & City of Sydney Share Major Planning Award, 31 Mar 2009

+ City of Melbourne takes home prestigious planning award, 30 Oct 2008

+ Melbourne to become one of world's top 10 most liveable & sustainable cities, 30 Jul 2008

more media releases

Recent Changes

S2G6P6InterCityTransport

DaleBowerman 22 Mar 2011 - 10:06

S2G6P5InnerCityRoadUseManageme...

DaleBowerman 22 Mar 2011 - 10:06

ConnectWithAGroup

DaleBowerman 11 Jul 2010 - 03:59

S3Resources

SarahLowcock 10 Jun 2010 - 11:11

ContactUs

SarahLowcock 26 May 2010 - 09:09

PoliciesAndGuidelinesDiscussio...

DaleBowerman 30 Apr 2010 - 12:26

ResidentialSustainableMobility...

PhilL 09 Apr 2010 - 12:09

FutureMelbourneWikiFAQ

DaleBowerman 30 Jan 2010 - 16:57

S2G1P1GreatPlaceToLive

DaleBowerman 04 Jan 2010 - 12:46

S2G3P5LivingAndWorkingInUrbanC...

DavidMayes 24 Dec 2009 - 18:23

more >>

Media Centre

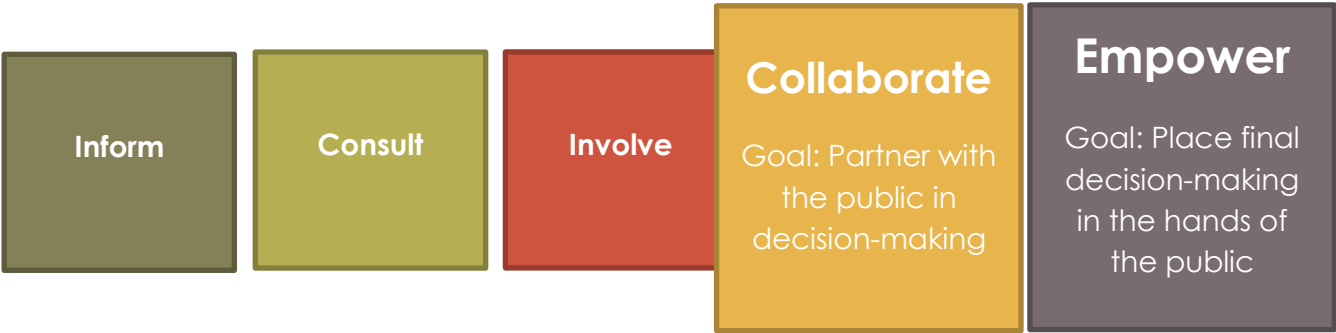
Stay informed of future initiatives. Register for updates regarding Future Melbourne.

Sign up

Video update

Find out what's happening all across Future Melbourne with our video updates.

Where are we on the consultation continuum?



Denman Island Farm Plan Blog Moderation Strategy

January 9, 2012

Background:

The Denman Island Farm Plan is a project of the Denman Island Local Trust Committee, funded by the Islands Trust, the Investment Agriculture Foundation, and DenmanWORKS!. The project began in January, 2010 with the appointment of a steering committee. In September, 2011, the second phase of the project began, which involves gathering information from the public, and soliciting feedback on draft recommendations for enhancing farming, and other components of the Farm Plan.

Purpose of the Blog:

Staff created a blog using the free version of WordPress that will enable the public to provide feedback online through commenting on blog posts. Blog posts will be made by staff, and staff will moderate the comments. From time to time staff may ask a guest such as a member of the consultant team, a steering committee member, or a local citizen “expert” to write a post on a specific topic. In this case staff will review the post before publishing it on the blog, and staff will remain the moderator of comments on the post.

Blog posts will be used to announce new reports from the consultants, drafts of the Farm Plan, steering committee meetings, and minutes of steering committee meetings being available. Other topics will be considered for posts as they come up, but the blog will remain focused on the Denman Farm Plan rather than farming or planning topics generally.

Moderation Policy

The BC Government Moderation Policy will be used for this blog, as shown in Appendix 1.

Issues Management Plan

The comments on the blog will be moderated, meaning that a staff person must approve each comment before it appears to the public on the blog. Criteria must be established for acceptable comments, and those that are unacceptable and will not be posted. There also may be comments that can be posted, but that the moderator will want to comment on themselves in order focus the public discussion, correct misinformation, or the like. Records must be kept of all comments received, whether posted or not, for FOIPP purposes.

The BC Ministry of Education’s Draft Online Moderator’s Guidebook recommends having an “issues management plan” that includes

- Escalation process (steps and actions to be taken to deal with problematic comments);

- Procedures used to document the discussion and resolve critical issues (issues log); and
- Approved moderator responses that may be used when responding to certain public comments.

Instead of the term “escalation process”, the table below uses the term “Comment Evaluation Process” to outline the steps to be taken with all comments, whether problematic or not. Instead of an “issues log”, we will use a “blog comments log” to keep a record of all comments, including those not posted, reasons why, and any follow up. It is important that all comments are recorded separately from the online blog itself.

Comment Evaluation Process				
LEVEL	COMMENTARY	MODERATOR ACTION	REFERRED TO	COMMENTS LOG
Level 1 <i>Spam</i>	Doesn't meet moderation policy	Moderator discards comment	n/a	n/a
Level 2 <i>Approved Comment</i>	Meets moderation policy	a. Moderator approves comment and posts it. b. Moderator may also comment on the comment to encourage the community, indicate a presence, or refocus the discussion.	n/a	n/a
Level 3 <i>Approved comment of a sensitive nature (i.e., culturally, morally or politically sensitive)</i>	Meets moderation policy at face value, but has the potential to deteriorate	a. Moderator approves comment and posts it b. Moderator alerts the Regional Planning Manager (RPM)	RPM	n/a
Level 4 <i>Unapproved comment</i>	Doesn't meet moderation policy	a. Moderator rejects the comment and moves it into a "doesn't meet policy" file.	n/a	Explains reason why unapproved
Level 5 <i>Unapproved comment and reply/forwarded email</i>	Information query unrelated to issues being covered	a. Moderator rejects comment and moves into a "referral" file b. Emails sender	n/a	Explains reasons why unapproved
Level 6 <i>Media on Blog</i>	Media request for more information	a. Moderator rejects comment and moves into "doesn't meet policy" file	Communications specialist	Forwarded to communications
Level 7 <i>Critical Incident: Firestorm or multiple opinions This requires supervisor to be communicating</i>	Comments may be hostile, or on a common theme. May require quick and/or multiple responses or external engagement or intervention. May or may not meet moderation policy	Liaise closely with RPM and communications specialist	RPM	Tracks follow up actions

APPENDIX 1: B.C. Government Moderation Policy

We welcome your participation in our discussion and look forward to an active exchange of ideas.

We want to publish your comments, but we expect conversations to follow the conventions of polite discourse.

Therefore, we won't post comments that:

- contain abusive, obscene, indecent or offensive language
- include defamatory, abusive, harassing or hateful remarks or make unproven or unsupported accusations against individuals or organizations
- constitute spam, promote services or products
- invade anyone's privacy or impersonate anyone
- are far off-topic
- are posted without the necessary rights, licenses and consents
- encourage conduct that may or would constitute a criminal offence or give rise to civil liability, or that otherwise violates any local, provincial, national or international law or regulation anywhere in the world
- contain long embedded URLs
- contain excessive links or contain code
- identify any publicly-elected representative or candidate regardless of their political affiliation, whether those comments are supportive or critical
- are contrary to the principles of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms

We don't edit comments to remove objectionable content, so please ensure that your comment contains none of the above.

Your comments are welcome at any time, 7 days a week. However, given the need to manage provincial resources, moderating and posting of comments will generally occur during regular business hours Monday through Friday. Comments submitted after hours or on weekends will be read and posted as early as possible the next business day.

GUIDELINES: A STRATEGIC APPROACH TO LOCAL TRUST COMMITTEE COMMUNICATIONS

Approved by Executive Committee August 2011



Islands Trust

Value of a Communications Strategy for Local Trust Committees

A Communication Strategy is an essential planning tool to help coordinate communication activities by:

- Ensuring all communications focus proactively on Islands Trust's priorities, goals and objectives in a clear, timely and cost-effective way
- Ensuring roles & responsibilities are clear and consistent, ideally guided by policy
- Harnessing and focusing combined efforts to prevent duplication, avoid unintended conflicts and to make the most of existing opportunities (e.g. partnership with other agencies)
- Minimizing last-minute demands (crisis management)
- Anticipating public reaction before launching projects

Communications strategy framework - six standard questions to answer for all LTC projects

1. Goals: Define the project's communications goals and objectives.

- Goals are broad, general statements about what you need to address
- Objectives are SMART: Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, Timely
- Clearly defining these elements makes it much easier to identify key messages

Questions that help define goals:

- Why are we doing this project?
- What is the risk of not doing the project?
- How will the project promote the object/mandate?
- What do we already know and what do we need to find out to succeed?
- What is the problem and what needs to change to solve the problem?
- Is the solution a change in regulation, policy or behaviour? E.g. If the problem is erosion, is a soil bylaw the only solution or are there other ways to change the behaviour that leads to erosion?

2. Audience: Who do you want to reach?

- Target audiences
- Internal (Trustees, senior staff, front line staff)
- Other agencies affected (Regional Districts, First Nations, Provincial, Federal)
- External (e.g. voters, seniors, media, community organizations and leaders)
- What do you know about the audience? What do they think of your program or service?

3. Messages: What do you want to say to each audience?

- What motivates your audience – Benefits – what's in it for me?
- What stops your audience - Barriers?

- Frame your message to emphasize benefits and overcome barriers.
 - What is your call-to action? You are trying to change the audience's current state in some way. Are you asking them to share their opinions, participate in a debate, to support something, or just to be aware of something that they have little choice about?
 - Crafting your messages
 - Make it easy to remember in easy, simple terms
 - Use captivating information – vivid and personal
 - Use stories and metaphors to engage your audience
 - Use two-sided vs. one-sided message – recognize other viewpoints
4. Methods: How will you reach people? Different audiences have different objectives and need different approaches. Consider finding a well-respected expert or community member(s) to offer testimonials in support of your project.
5. Resources: Who will do what, when and at what cost?
6. Evaluation: Did they did get it? Were there misinterpretations? Was there backlash? How can we improve next time? How can we share what we learned with other staff / trustees?

SAMPLE Communication Action Plan

Project: _____

Launch Date: _____

Methods	Person responsible	Cost	Content Focus / Key message	Audience	Due Date (e.g. for approval)	Publication Date
E-mail						
Direct mail						
News release						
Paid ad (Paper / TV / Radio)						
Letter to editor / editorial						
Web page						
Article for newsletter						
Brochure						
Social media						
Poster / bulletin board						
Annual report						
Public meeting						



Islands Trust

Preserving **island** communities, culture and environment.

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Population (2011):

Approximately 4,045

Size:

5,256 hectares (12,987 acres)

Location:

6 kilometres east of Nanaimo located on Vancouver Island.

[Land Use Planning](#)
[Related Planning Services](#)
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[Trust Area Mapping](#)
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Gabriola Island Local Trust Committee

Latest News

In this section you will find current news items that are relevant to your Local Trust Area and your community. [Subscribe](#) to the Gabriola Island Latest News updates and receive the latest information on official community plan reviews, staff reports, notifications and other documents published in the latest news section.

February 2012

- [Gabriola Island Development Permit Area Factsheet](#)

September 2011

- [Trustee Newsletter - September 2011](#)

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Gabriola Island Local Trust Committee Projects

- [Local Trust Committee Support Action for Water](#)

Climate Change Action

- [Staff Report - October 2009](#)
- [Staff Report - January 15, 2010](#)
- [Staff Report - February 21, 2010](#)
- [Climate Wise Islands](#)
- [Newsletter - November 2009](#)
- [Newsletter - Mudge Island - March 2010](#)
- [Newsletter - DeCourcy Island - March 2010](#)
- [Fact Sheets](#)
- [Minutes - November 26, 2009](#)
- [Minutes - March 10, 2010](#)
- [Minutes - March 20, 2010](#)
- [2007 Community Energy and Emission Inventory Reports \(CEEIs\) now available](#)
- [New Islands Trust GHG Emission Inventories webpage posted](#)

Build-Out Project Map (3rd Edition)

- [Final Report](#)
- [Map of Development Potential \(May 2010\)](#)
- [Map of Development Potential \(January 2006\)](#)

Ecosystem Mapping

- [Draft Gabriola Island Local Trust Area ecosystem maps and feedback form](#)

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Official Community Plan and Land Use Bylaw Review

- [Gabriola Island Affordable Housing Needs Assessment](#)
- [Community Profile](#)
- [Shared Roadways - Gabriola Island Bicycle Route Plan, 2010](#)
- [Geohazard and Mapping - Report from Consultant](#)
- [List of Recommended OCP/LUB Review Phase 2 Topic Areas](#)

November 22, 2010 Community Meeting - Information Packages

- [Community Context, Plan Principle and Major Goals Information](#)

Committee Links

[Committee Home](#)
[Trustee Membership](#)
[Contact Trustees](#)
[Contact Planning Staff](#)
[Planning Bylaws](#)
[Administrative Bylaws](#)
[Meetings Schedule](#)
[Meeting Agendas](#)
[Meeting Minutes](#)
[Resolutions-Without-Meeting](#)
[Associated Islands](#)
[Land Use Application Forms](#)

- [Package](#)
- [Bicycle and Bus Route Policies Information Package](#)
- [Affordable Housing, Density Transfer and Density Bank Information Package](#)

Advisory Planning Commission

- December 1, 2010 – [Agenda Package and LTC Referral](#) | [Minutes](#)
- February 15, 2011 – [LTC Referral Package](#) | [Approved Minutes](#)
- July 21, 2011 - [LTC Referral Package](#)

Agriculture Advisory Committee

- [Terms of Reference](#)

Transportation Advisory Committee

- [Terms of Reference](#)

Volunteer Review Committee

- [Terms of Reference](#)

Meetings

• 2011

- January 11, 2011 - Cancelled
- January 17, 2011 [Agenda - revised](#) | [Minutes](#)
- February 7, 2011 [Agenda - revised](#) | [Minutes](#)
- May 9, 2011 [Agenda](#) | [Minutes](#)
- June 20, 2011 [Agenda](#) | [Minutes](#)
- [October 25, 2011 Agenda](#)

• 2010

- December 15, 2009 [Agenda](#) | [Minutes](#)
- January 26, 2010 [Agenda revised](#) | [Minutes](#)
- February 9, 2010 [Agenda](#) | [Minutes](#)
- March 30, 2010 [Agenda - revised](#) | [Minutes](#)
- April 20, 2010 [Agenda](#) | [Minutes](#)
- May 18, 2010 [Agenda - revised](#) | [Minutes](#)
- June 15, 2010 [Agenda - revised](#) | [Minutes](#)
- July 20, 2010 [Agenda](#) | [Minutes](#)
- August 17, 2010 - Cancelled
- September 7, 2010 [Agenda - revised](#) | [Minutes](#)
- October 5 , 2010 [Agenda - revised](#) | [Minutes](#)
- November 2, 2010 - Cancelled
- December 7, 2010 - Cancelled

Communication Towers and Antenna

- [Staff Report dated January 2010](#)
- [Gabriola Island Local Trust Resolution GB-025-2010](#)
- [Cellular Antenna Proposal Form](#)

Community Wildfire Protection Plan

- [Community Wildfire Protection Plan May 2008](#)

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Applications

GB-RZ-2009.1 (Williamson & Associates, density transfer)

- [Preliminary Staff Report dated July 11, 2011](#)
- [Technical reports from Applicant submitted November 2, 2010](#)
- [Staff Report dated October 18, 2011](#)

Trustee Newsletters

- [March 2010](#)
- [April 2009](#)
- [September 2008](#)

DeCourcy Island

- No items at this time

Mudge Island

GB-RZ-2010.1 (Littlejohn & Beckstead)

- [Staff Report dated October 13, 2010](#)
- [Staff Report dated April 14, 2011](#)
- [Staff Report dated September 9, 2011](#)
- [Staff Report dated December 15, 2011](#)

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