



City of Richmond

Report to Committee

To: Public Works and Transportation Committee *To Public Works & Transportation* **Date:** August 31, 2006 *Sept 20, 2006*

From: Victor Wei, P. Eng. **File:** 01-0154-00/Vol 01
 Director, Transportation

Re: **TRANSLINK PRINCIPLES FOR PUBLIC CONSULTATION AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT – COMMENTS FROM CITY OF RICHMOND**

Staff Recommendation

That TransLink be advised that the City supports TransLink’s proposed principles for public consultation and community engagement and that the following comments be considered in the refinement and execution of the principles in order to enhance their effectiveness:

- (a) clarify how public opinion and views at the local municipal level will be solicited and considered, separate from local Council resolutions;
- (b) define the terms “key” decisions and “major” projects, policies and programs as well as what criteria will trigger public consultation; and
- (c) provide a public consultation web page within the TransLink website that clearly states TransLink’s principles for public consultation and directs viewers to appropriate areas where public consultation reports, opportunities for feedback and other related information can be accessed.

Victor Wei, P. Eng.
 Director, Transportation (4131)

Att. 1

FOR ORIGINATING DEPARTMENT USE ONLY					
ROUTED TO:		CONCURRENCE		CONCURRENCE OF GENERAL MANAGER	
Communications.....		Y	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N		
REVIEWED BY TAG		YES	NO	REVIEWED BY CAO	
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <i>ajs</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	(ACTING)	
				YES	NO
				<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <i>JE</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Staff Report

Origin

At the May 24, 2006 regular meeting of the TransLink Board, TransLink staff presented a report that proposed a draft set of corporate principles for public consultation and community engagement. Per the staff recommendation, the TransLink Board directed that the report be referred to the GVRD and its member municipalities, key stakeholders and the public of Greater Vancouver for review and comment. This report provides comments on the draft principles.

Analysis

1. Draft Principles for Public Consultation

TransLink's draft principles for public consultation are summarized below (see **Attachment 1** for the full report).

1. *Integrate public consultation into all aspects of TransLink's business.*
2. *Consider both local and regional perspectives.*
3. *Work with municipal partners.*
4. *Clearly define the parameters of the consultations.*
5. *Consult in advance of key decisions.*
6. *Be inclusive and accessible, by offering a variety of opportunities for input.*
7. *Ensure participants can provide informed input.*
8. *Consider public input as advice.*
9. *Inform participants about the results of the consultation process.*

2. Comments on Draft Principles for Public Consultation

Overall, the draft principles provide a sound framework to guide TransLink's public consultation processes. The ultimate efficacy of the principles will, of course, depend upon the degree to which they are translated into active undertakings. The following comments on specific draft principles are offered for the consideration of TransLink staff and the TransLink Board.

- *Draft Principle 3 – Interface with Municipalities*: provide clarity on how public opinion and views at the local municipal level will be solicited and considered. Will Translink presume that local Council resolutions represent the community's preferences and/or best interests or will TransLink undertake its own comprehensive consultation directly with all the public within a municipality?
- *Draft Principle 5 – Key Decisions*: provide clarity on the definition of the terms "key" decisions and "major" projects, policies and programs. What are the criteria that would trigger public consultation regarding a project, policy or program?

- Draft Principle 6 – Opportunities for Input: within the TransLink website, provide a public consultation web page that is easily located from the home page, clearly states TransLink's principles for public consultation and directs viewers to the appropriate areas of the website where public consultation reports, opportunities for feedback, etc can be accessed. Over the next few months, City staff will explore creating such a web page within the City's own web site.

Financial Impact

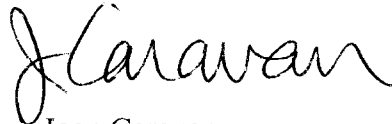
There is no financial impact to the City.

Conclusion

The TransLink Board has offered the City the opportunity to provide comments on TransLink's proposed principles for public consultation and community engagement. The draft principles provide a sensible foundation for conducting public outreach and staff offer several comments intended to clarify and enhance the intent of the principles.



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Communications Officer
(4371)



Joan Caravan
Transportation Planner
(4035)

JC:rg

pc: Joe S. Attachment 1
Victor Uki



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May 25, 2006

CHAIR
Malcolm Brodie

Mayor Malcolm Brodie
City of Richmond
6911 No. 3 Road
Richmond, British Columbia
V6Y 2C1

DIRECTORS
Kurt Alberts
Suzanne Anton

Derek Corrigan

Dear Mayor Brodie:

Marvin Hunt

Re: Principles for Public Consultation and Community Engagement

Peter Ladner

Please be advised that the Greater Vancouver Transportation Authority Board passed the following resolution at the May 24, 2006 Regular Board meeting:

Sam Sullivan

Joe Trasolini

"That the GVTA Board:

Richard Walton

- A. Receives the report entitled "*Principles for Public Consultation and Community Engagement*"; and
- B. Directs staff to refer the report to the Greater Vancouver Regional District and its member municipalities, key stakeholders and the public of Greater Vancouver for review and comment."

Dianne Watts

Maxine Wilson

Scott Young

Accordingly, we enclose a copy of the staff report for your review and comment. Please direct your comments to Mr. Bob Paddon, Vice President, Corporate and Public Affairs at Suite 1600, 4720 Kingsway, Burnaby, BC, V5H 4N2.

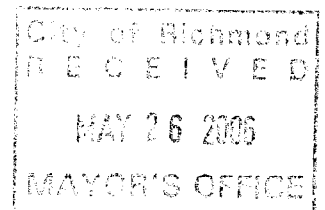
Yours truly,

Carol Lee
Corporate Secretary

Enclosure

cc: Bob Paddon, Vice President, Corporate and Public Affairs

CEO
Pat Jacobsen





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Greater Vancouver
Transportation Authority

To: GVTA Board of Directors

From: Robert Paddon, Vice-President, Corporate and Public Affairs

Date: May 15, 2006

Subject: **Principles for Public Consultation and Community Engagement**

Staff Recommendation:

That the GVTA Board:

- A. Receives the report entitled "*Principles for Public Consultation and Community Engagement*"; and
 - B. Directs staff to refer the report to the Greater Vancouver Regional District and its member municipalities, key stakeholders and the public of Greater Vancouver for review and comment.
-

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to present a draft set of corporate principles for public consultation and community engagement. The principles will guide the role of public consultation in the GVTA's planning and projects, as well as that of its subsidiaries and contractors.

BACKGROUND

In fulfilling the terms of its mission statement (to "plan, finance, implement and champion an integrated transportation system that moves people and goods safely and efficiently, supporting Greater Vancouver's regional growth strategy, air quality objectives, and development"), TransLink strives to be responsive to the communities and populations it serves. The policies, programs and projects that TransLink undertakes can profoundly affect the lives and interests of a wide range of stakeholders, from neighbourhoods to transit users to trucker drivers to cyclists and to the business community. As a public body, TransLink takes into account the interests of the public, stakeholders, and its customers in all it does, reflecting one of the organization's defined core values:

CHAIR
Malcolm Brodie

DIRECTORS
Kurt Alberts

Suzanne Anton
Derek Corrigan

Marvin Hunt
Peter Ladner

Sam Sullivan
Joe Trasolini

Richard Walton
Dianne Watts

Maxine Wilson
Scott Young

CEO

Pat Jacobsen

“Communication and Consultation – {TransLink} will listen to and actively seek the ideas of employees, partners, stakeholders and the public. We will provide clear and concise information in a timely manner.”

Benefits of Public Consultation

Public consultation is a dialogue, entailing a two-way exchange of ideas and information between TransLink and the participants in the consultation process. Experience – both at TransLink and elsewhere – has consistently demonstrated that working closely with interested, potentially affected parties, in a dynamic and responsive manner through meaningful consultation, can facilitate wider support and greater legitimacy for the ultimate outcome (through the transparency and inclusiveness of the process). Furthermore, timely and meaningful consultation can also result in an enhanced outcome, as the valuable experience, wisdom and expertise of stakeholders and communities can substantively contribute to the optimization of any given program, policy or project. Public consultation effectively allows those most affected to add significant, informed value to the development of an initiative.

To that end, TransLink has consistently opted to involve the public in its policy-development and project-planning processes. Section 15 of the *Greater Vancouver Transportation Authority Act* (see Appendix A) specifies the circumstances under which TransLink is required to undertake consultation; however, TransLink consults much more consistently, broadly and frequently than the legislation mandates.

Despite the costs associated with involving the public in its decision-making (up to 0.5 percent of the preliminary planning costs for a typical project), TransLink consults on a wide variety of projects including the development of long term transportation strategies, area transit plans, policies for accessible transit and the detailed planning of major capital projects. These projects and programs have been enhanced as a result of the public’s contributions, and are also more highly regarded by the public and stakeholders because of the inclusive consultative processes through which they have been developed.

Benefits of Establishing Public Consultation Principles and Guidelines

Commitment to meaningful public consultation is a cornerstone of the way in which TransLink conducts its business, it is important that the organization codify the principles by which such consultation and stakeholder relations is decided upon and undertaken. As a publicly accountable body with significant influence on life in the Lower Mainland, TransLink’s ongoing commitment to public consultation needs to be well articulated and transparent. This report provides a draft set of principles, which would guide TransLink’s public consultation processes in the coming years, and would allow the public to understand the depth of the organization’s commitment to meaningful public consultation.

CURRENT STATUS

TransLink works with a fundamental model of consultation. The process of triangulation is used to identify the public view of policy and project issues. For example:

- (1) TransLink uses stakeholder processes to determine views of groups that are impacted by the initiative through advisory committees, roundtables, etc;
- (2) TransLink opens the process to public comment to receive views from people who want to comment who we otherwise wouldn't be able to find, using open houses and the like; and
- (3) TransLink uses public opinion research to gauge the views of the whole population of the region which may affect them, such as taxation.

TransLink collects these inputs and analyzes them for the Board to take into consideration for its decision-making.

At the present time, TransLink is providing the following consultation opportunities:

- **Open Houses / Public Meetings** – are used to deliver information and solicit comments from the public in every project undertaken.
- **Public Opinion Research**
- **Workshops** – Facilitated workshops with stakeholders have been very effective in the development of the Accessible Transit Strategic Plan. They were also very useful in the development of design guidelines for the Golden Ears Bridge.
- **TransLink Website** – The TransLink website is used extensively to provide information and seek comments from the public.
- **Council Meetings** – Staff attend council meetings to provide information on specific projects such as the Evergreen Line, Canada Line, North Vancouver Transit Centre, South of Fraser Area Transit Plan.
- **Community Leaders Panels** – a Community Leaders Panel was established to review and make recommendations on the technology and alignment of the Evergreen Line during the first phase of the project.
- **Advisory Committees** – Project/Public Advisory Committees, Municipal Liaison Committees and Municipal Communications and Consultation Advisory Committee have been established from the Cities of Burnaby, Coquitlam, Port Moody and Port Coquitlam for the Evergreen Line Project and will be established for the South of Fraser Area Transit Plan. Regular meetings are held throughout the project.

- **Area Transit Plan Steering Committee** – A Steering Committee is being established for the South of Fraser Area Transit Plan, with membership that includes senior representatives from applicable municipalities and the GVRD.
- **AirCare Review Stakeholder Advisory Committee** – This committee was formed to assist in the AirCare Review with members from BCAA, BCGEU, BCBC, COPE, Canadian Association of Fleet Supervisors, Environment Canada, Fraser Institute, Fraser Valley Regional District, MRTAC, BC Ministry of Environment and the Repair Advisory Committee.
- **Urban Transportation Forum** – For major planning projects, TransLink convenes stakeholder sessions at the Wosk Centre for Dialogue in Vancouver, engaging 50 or more people in a large group policy discussion.
- **Transportation Outlook Roundtables** – A consensus based process used for three-year and long range planning.

TransLink's Evergreen Line Light Rail Transit Project is an example of a current project that draws upon many of these approaches to provide an inclusive, multi-faceted consultation program in the project's preliminary design phase. The project team has been using open houses, community information displays, a community leaders panel, public opinion research, a project website, and a dedicated community liaison officer to engage in meaningful dialogue with the community and stakeholders. The Golden Ears Bridge Project has been planned with a similarly comprehensive, multi-year public involvement program.

TransLink's Access Transit initiative, which is of a different nature than the Evergreen and Golden Ears Project, has taken a different approach, focusing on three rounds of broad stakeholder meetings, as well as ongoing face-to-face meetings with stakeholders, significant market research, as well as an informative program website.

DISCUSSION

The following – a set of draft corporate principles for public consultation– was developed through a review of TransLink's internal "best practises" in the design and implementation of public consultation programs, as well as a review of other models (local and international) of public consultation principles for public organizations.

The draft principles reflect TransLink's mission and core values, and seek to ensure that effective, meaningful consultation is consistently and appropriately applied to TransLink's activities. The translation of these principles into practice, in the form of specific public consultation plans, will draw upon the resources of the public consultation "toolkit" outlined in Appendix B: Public Consultation Toolkit, and will be undertaken with the guidance of TransLink's Public Affairs Department and the Manager of Public Consultation.

Draft principles for public consultation:

1. **Integrate public consultation into all aspects of TransLink's business.**
Public consultation will be integrated into the planning of all major capital projects, the development of all significant new policies, and all major planning processes.
2. **Consider both local and regional perspectives.**
Where geographically-specific projects have broader implications, perspectives from throughout the region should be sought in addition to local views.
3. **Work with municipal partners.**
Public consultation programs will be planned and implemented in cooperation with interested GVRD municipalities and other levels of government as warranted.
4. **Clearly define the parameters of the consultations.**
When initiating its public consultation processes, TransLink will define the objectives, scope and parameters for the consultations, noting which matters are subject to dialogue with the public and stakeholders.
5. **Consult in advance of key decisions.**
Public consultation will be undertaken well in advance of decisions by the GVTA Board of Directors on major projects, policies and programs, when options are still open to consideration. The results of the applicable consultation process will be communicated to the Board and the public for the Board's consideration of the project, plan or policy, either in a separate report or within a broader report to the Board.
6. **Be inclusive and accessible, by offering a variety of opportunities for input.**
A range of opportunities will be provided for meaningful public input, to ensure the process is appropriately inclusive. TransLink will effectively engage traditionally excluded groups. Public consultation will be tailored in response to the needs of the public and stakeholders regarding the issue at hand. Activities can include, but may not be limited to, open houses, advisory committees, workshops, public forums, websites, and survey research.
7. **Ensure participants can provide informed input.**
Public consultation requires informed participants. TransLink will ensure sufficiently comprehensive and accurate information is available to participants in a timely manner, and that opportunities for interaction with TransLink representatives are provided, so questions can be answered as part of the information-sharing process.

8. **Consider public input as advice.**

Public input obtained through consultation processes is considered as advice to the GVTA Board of Directors. The Board will use this advice in its decision-making processes, in addition to technical, environmental, social, economic, and financial information, and other considerations deemed appropriate.

9. **Inform participants about the results of the consultation process.**

TransLink will report to the public on the results of its consultation processes, and will demonstrate how public input has been used in its decision-making processes.

CONCLUSION

It is recommended that the GVTA Board receive the draft Principles for Public Consultation and Community Engagement as a matter of corporate policy and refer to the Greater Vancouver Regional District and its member municipalities, key stakeholders and the public of Greater Vancouver for review and comment. The adoption of these principles will ensure the appropriate implementation of public consultation and community engagement processes in the major undertakings of TransLink.

Greater Vancouver Transportation Authority Act
Section 15

“Required consultation

15 (1) When the authority is required under this section to consult before taking any proposed action, the authority must

(a) adopt a consultation plan that the authority considers will provide opportunities for

(i) consultation, in the manner required in this section, with the public, municipalities, organizations, the Greater Vancouver Regional District, the government and trade unions, and

(ii) consultation with any other persons or organizations that the authority considers will be affected by the proposed action or consultation plan, and

(b) consider any comments provided during the consultation process before taking the action.

(2) A failure to comply with a consultation plan under subsection (1) does not invalidate the action taken as long as the authority has made a reasonable attempt to consult in accordance with subsection (1).

(3) Subject to subsection (4) and section 35, the authority must consult with the public, all the municipalities and any other organizations that the authority considers will be affected before

(a) assessing any taxes under section 25 (2),

(b) assessing any project toll charges, user fees or motor vehicle charges under section 29,

(c) assessing any parking taxes under section 30 (2), or

(d) finalizing the preparation of the strategic transportation plan and any amendments to the plan.

(4) The authority need not consult in relation to an assessment under subsection (3) (a), (b) or (c) if the assessment results in a decrease in the taxes, project toll charges, user fees, motor vehicle charges or parking taxes, as the case may be.

(5) The authority must consult with the government, all the municipalities and the Greater Vancouver Regional District before

(a) establishing any standards under section 19, or

(b) entering into an agreement under section 1 (2) to add an area to the transportation service region.

(6) The authority must consult with all the municipalities before taking any action under sections 18 (2) (b) and 22 (3).

(7) If the establishment or acquisition of a subsidiary by the authority will alter a bargaining unit, the authority must, before establishing or acquiring that subsidiary, consult with any trade unions representing employees who may be affected by the establishment or acquisition of the subsidiary.”

Public Consultation Toolkit

(Source: International Association for Public Participation. Copyright IAP2. All rights reserved.) © 2000-2004, IAP2

Note: TransLink's public consultation team is currently undertaking accreditation through the IAP2 organization.

Techniques to share information

TECHNIQUE	ALWAYS THINK IT THROUGH	WHAT CAN GO RIGHT	WHAT CAN GO WRONG
PRINTED PUBLIC INFORMATION MATERIALS			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Fact Sheets - Newsletters - Brochures - Issue Papers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Keep it short and simple. Make it visually interesting but avoid a slick sales look - Include a postage-paid comment form to encourage two-way communication and to expand mailing list - Be sure to explain public role and how public comments have affected project decisions. Q&A format works well 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Can reach large target audience. Allows for technical and legal reviews - Encourages written responses if comment form enclosed - Facilitates documentation of public involvement process 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Only as good as the mailing list/ distribution network - Limited capability to communicate complicated concepts - No guarantee materials will be read
INFORMATION REPOSITORIES			
<p>Libraries, city halls, distribution centers, schools, and other public facilities make good locations for housing project-related information</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Make sure personnel at location know where materials are kept - Keep list of repository items. Track usage through a sign-in sheet 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Relevant information is accessible to the public without incurring the costs or complications of tracking multiple copies sent to different people - Can set up visible distribution centers for project information 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Information repositories are often not well used by the public
TECHNICAL REPORTS			
<p>Technical documents reporting research or policy findings</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reports are often more credible if prepared by independent groups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provides for thorough explanation of project decisions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Can be more detailed than desired by many participants - May not be written in clear, accessible language

TECHNIQUE	ALWAYS THINK IT THROUGH	WHAT CAN GO RIGHT	WHAT CAN GO WRONG
ADVERTISEMENTS			
Paid advertisements in newspapers and magazines	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Figure out the best days and best sections of the paper to reach intended audience - Avoid rarely-read 'notice' sections 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Potentially reaches broad public 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Expensive, especially in urban areas - Allows for relatively limited amount of information
NEWSPAPER INSERTS			
A "fact sheet" within the local newspaper	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Design needs to get noticed in the pile of inserts - Try on a day that has few other inserts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provides community-wide distribution of information - Presented in the context of local paper, insert is more likely to be read and taken seriously - Provides opportunity to include public comment form 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Expensive, especially in urban areas
FEATURE STORIES			
Focused stories on general project-related issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Anticipate visuals or schedule interesting events to help sell the story - Recognize that reporters are always looking for an angle 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Can heighten the perceived importance of the project - More likely to be read and taken seriously by the public 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - No control over what information is presented or how
BILL STUFFER			
Information flyer included with monthly utility bill	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Design bill stuffers to be eye-catching to encourage readership 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Widespread distribution within service area - Economical use of existing mailings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Limited information can be conveyed - Message may get confused as from the mailing entity
PRESS RELEASES			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Fax or e-mail press releases or media kits - Foster a relationship of editorial board and reporters 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Informs the media of project milestones - Press release language is often used directly in articles. - Opportunity for technical and legal reviews 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Low media response rate - Frequent poor placement of press release within newspapers
NEWS CONFERENCES			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Make sure all speakers are trained in media relations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Opportunity to reach all media in one setting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Limited to news-worthy events
TELEVISION			
Television programming to present information and elicit audience response	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Cable options are expanding and can be inexpensive - Check out expanding video options on the internet 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Can be used in multiple geographic areas - Many people will take the time to watch rather than read 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - High expense - Difficult to gauge impact on audience

TECHNIQUE	ALWAYS THINK IT THROUGH	WHAT CAN GO RIGHT	WHAT CAN GO WRONG
INFORMATION CENTERS and FIELD OFFICES			
<p>Offices established with prescribed hours to distribute information and respond to inquiries</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provide adequate staff to accommodate group tours - Use brochures and videotapes to advertise and reach broader audience - Consider providing internet access station - Select an accessible and frequented location 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provides opportunity for positive media coverage at groundbreaking and other significant events - Excellent opportunity to educate school children - Places information dissemination in a positive educational setting. Information is easily accessible to the public - Provides an opportunity for more responsive ongoing communications focused on specific public involvement activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Relatively expensive, especially for project-specific use - Access is limited to those in vicinity of the center unless facility is mobile
EXPERT PANELS			
<p>Public meeting designed in "Meet the Press" format. Media panel interviews experts from different perspectives.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provide opportunity for participation by general public following panel - Have a neutral moderator. Agree on ground rules in advance - Possibly encourage local organizations to sponsor rather than challenge 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Encourages education of the media - Presents opportunity for balanced discussion of key issues - Provides opportunity to dispel scientific misinformation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Requires substantial preparation and organization - May enhance public concerns by increasing visibility of issues
BRIEFINGS			
<p>Use regular meetings of social and civic clubs and organizations to provide an opportunity to inform and educate. Normally these groups need speakers. Examples of target audiences: Rotary Club, Lions Clubs, Elks Clubs, Kiwanis, League of Women Voters. Also a good technique for elected officials.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Keep it Short and Simple - Use "show and tell" techniques - Bring visuals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Control of information/presentation - Opportunity to reach a wide variety of individuals who may not have been attracted to another format - Opportunity to expand mailing list - Similar presentations can be used for different groups - Builds community goodwill 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Project stakeholders may not be in target audiences - Topic may be too technical to capture interest of audience

TECHNIQUE	ALWAYS THINK IT THROUGH	WHAT CAN GO RIGHT	WHAT CAN GO WRONG
CENTRAL INFORMATION CONTACT			
Identify designated contacts for the public and media	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - If possible, list a person not a position - Best if contact person is local. Anticipate how phones will be answered - Make sure message is kept up to date 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - People don't get "the run around" when they call - Controls information flow - Conveys image of "accessibility" 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Designated contact must be committed to and prepared for prompt and accurate responses - May filter public message from technical staff and decision makers - May not serve to answer many of the toughest questions
WEB SITES			
A website provides information and links to other sites through the world wide web. Electronic mailing lists are included.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A good home page is critical - Each web page must be independent - Put critical information at the top of page - Use headings, bulleted and numbered lists to steer user 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reaches across distances - Makes information accessible anywhere at any time - Saves printing and mailing costs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - User may not have easy access to the Internet or knowledge of how to use computers - Large files or graphics can take a long time to download
TECHNICAL INFORMATION CONTACT			
Providing access to technical expertise to individuals and organizations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The technical resource must be perceived as credible by the audience 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Builds credibility and helps address public concerns about equity - Can be effective conflict resolution technique where facts are debated 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Limited opportunities exist for providing technical assistance - Technical experts may counter project information

Techniques to compile input and provide feedback

TECHNIQUE	ALWAYS THINK IT THROUGH	WHAT CAN GO RIGHT	WHAT CAN GO WRONG
INFORMATION HOT LINE			
Identify a separate line for public access to prerecorded project information or to reach project team members who can answer questions/obtain input	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Make sure contact has sufficient knowledge to answer most project-related questions - If possible, list a person not a position - Best if contact person is local 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - People don't get "the run around" when they call - Controls information flow - Conveys image of "accessibility" - Easy to provide updates on project activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Designated contact must be committed to and prepared for prompt and accurate responses
INTERVIEWS			
One-to-one meetings with stakeholders to gain information for developing or refining public involvement and consensus building programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Where feasible, interviews should be conducted in-person, particularly when considering candidates for citizens committees 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provides opportunity for in-depth information exchange in non-threatening forum - Provides opportunity to obtain feedback from all stakeholders - Can be used to evaluate potential citizen committee members 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Scheduling multiple interviews can be time consuming
IN-PERSON SURVEYS			
One-on-one "focus groups" with standardized questionnaire or methodology such as "stated preference"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Make sure use of result is clear before technique is designed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provides traceable data - Reaches broad, representative public 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Expensive
RESPONSE SHEETS			
Mail-In-forms often included in fact sheets and other project mailings to gain information on public concerns and preferences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Use prepaid postage - Include a section to add name to the mailing list - Document results as part of public involvement record 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provides input from those who would be unlikely to attend meetings - Provides a mechanism for expanding mailing list 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Does not generate statistically valid results - Only as good as the mailing list - Results can be easily skewed
MAILED SURVEYS & QUESTIONNAIRES			
Inquiries mailed randomly to sample population to gain specific information for statistical validation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Make sure you need statistically valid results before making investment - Survey/questionnaire should be professionally developed and administered to avoid bias - Most suitable for general attitudinal surveys 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provides input from individuals who would be unlikely to attend meetings - Allows input from cross-section of public, not just activists - Statistically tested results have more credibility 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Response rate is generally low - For statistically valid results, can be labor intensive and expensive - Level of detail may be limited

TECHNIQUE	ALWAYS THINK IT THROUGH	WHAT CAN GO RIGHT	WHAT CAN GO WRONG
TELEPHONE SURVEYS/POLLS			
Random sampling of population by telephone to gain specific information for statistical validation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Make sure you need statistically valid results before making investment - Survey/questionnaire should be professionally developed and administered to avoid bias - Most suitable for general attitudinal surveys 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provides input from individuals who would be unlikely to attend meetings - Provides input from cross-section of public, not just those on mailing list - Higher response rate than with mail-in surveys 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - More expensive and labor intensive than mailed surveys
INTERNET SURVEYS/POLLS			
Web-based response polls	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Be precise in how you set up site, chat rooms or discussion places can generate more input than you can look at 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provides input from individuals who would be unlikely to attend meetings - Provides input from cross-section of public, not just those on mailing list - Higher response rate than other communication forms 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Generally not statistically valid results - Can be very labor intensive to look at all of the responses - Cannot control geographic reach of poll - Results can be easily skewed
COMPUTER-BASED POLLING			
Surveys conducted via computer network	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Appropriate for attitudinal research 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provides instant analyses of results - Can be used in multiple areas - Novelty of technique improves rate of response 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - High expense - Detail of inquiry is limited
COMMUNITY FACILITATORS			
Use qualified individuals in local community organizations to conduct project outreach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Define roles, responsibilities and limitations up front - Select and train facilitators carefully 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Promotes community-based involvement - Capitalizes on existing networks - Enhances project credibility 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Can be difficult to control information flow - Can build false expectations
FOCUS GROUPS			
Message testing forum with randomly selected members of target audience. Can also be used to obtain input on planning decisions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Conduct at least two sessions for a given target - Use a skilled focus group facilitator to conduct the session 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provides opportunity to test key messages prior to implementing program - Works best for select target audience 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Relatively expensive if conducted in focus group testing facility
DELIBERATIVE POLLING			
Measures informed opinion on an issue	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Do not expect or encourage participants to develop a shared view - Hire a facilitator experienced in this technique 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Can tell decision-makers what the public would think if they had more time and info. - Exposure to different backgrounds, arguments, and views. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Resource intensive - Often held in conjunction with television companies - 2-3 day meeting

Techniques to bring people together

TECHNIQUE	ALWAYS THINK IT THROUGH	WHAT CAN GO RIGHT	WHAT CAN GO WRONG
SIMULATION GAMES			
Exercises that simulate project decisions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Test "game" before using - Be clear about how results will be used 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Can be designed to be an effective educational/training technique, especially for local officials 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Requires substantial preparation and time for implementation. Can be expensive
TOURS			
Provide tours for key stakeholders, elected officials, advisory group members and the media	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Know how many participants can be accommodated and make plans for overflow - Plan question/ answer session Consider providing refreshments. Demonstrations work better than presentations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Opportunity to develop rapport with key stakeholders - Reduces outrage by making choices more familiar 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Number of participants is limited by logistics - Potentially attractive to protestors
OPEN HOUSES			
An open house to allow the public to tour at their own pace. The facility should be set up with several stations, each addressing a separate issue. Resource people guide participants through the exhibits.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Someone should explain format at the door - Have each participant fill out a comment sheet to document their participation - Be prepared for a crowd all at once - develop a meeting contingency plan - Encourage people to draw on maps to actively participate - Set up stations so that several people (6-10) can view at once 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Foster small group or one-on-one communications - Ability to draw on other team members to answer difficult questions - Less likely to receive media coverage - Builds credibility 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Difficult to document public input - Agitators may stage themselves at each display - Usually more staff intensive than a meeting
COMMUNITY FAIRS			
Central event with multiple activities to provide project information and raise awareness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - All issues, large and small must be considered - Make sure adequate resources and staff are available 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Focuses public attention on one element - Conducive to media coverage - Allows for different levels of information sharing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Public must be motivated to attend - Usually expensive to do it well - Can damage image if not done well
COFFEE KLATCHES			
Small meetings within neighborhood usually at a person's home	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Make sure staff is very polite and appreciative 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Relaxed setting is conducive to effective dialogue - Maximizes two-way communication 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Can be costly and labor intensive

TECHNIQUE	ALWAYS THINK IT THROUGH	WHAT CAN GO RIGHT	WHAT CAN GO WRONG
MEETINGS WITH EXISTING GROUPS			
Small meetings with existing groups or in conjunction with another event	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Understand who the likely audience is to be - Make opportunities for one-on-one meetings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Opportunity to get on the agenda - Provides opportunity for in-depth information exchange in non-threatening forum 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - May be too selective and can leave out important groups
WEB-BASED MEETINGS -			
Meetings that occur via the Internet	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Tailor agenda to your participants - Combine telephone and face-to-face meetings with Web-based meetings. - Plan for graphics and other supporting materials 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Cost and time efficient - Can include a broader audience - People can participate at different times or at the same time 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Consider timing if international time zones are represented - Difficult to manage or resolve conflict
COMPUTER-FACILITATED WORKSHOP			
Any sized meeting when participants use interactive computer technology to register opinions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Understand your audience, particularly the demographic categories - Design the inquiries to provide useful results - Use facilitator trained in the technique 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Immediate graphic results prompt focused discussion - Areas of agreement/disagreement easily portrayed - Minority views are honored - Responses are private - Levels the playing field 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Software limits design - Potential for placing too much emphasis on numbers - Technology failure
PUBLIC HEARINGS			
Formal meetings with scheduled presentations offered	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Avoid if possible 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provides opportunity for public to speak without rebuttal 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Does not foster constructive dialogue - Can perpetuate an us vs. them feeling
DESIGN CHARRETTES			
Intensive session where participants re-design project features	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Best used to foster creative ideas - Be clear about how results will be used 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Promotes joint problem solving and creative thinking 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Participants may not be seen as representative by larger public
CONSENSUS-BUILDING TECHNIQUES			
Techniques for building consensus on project decisions such as criteria and alternative selection. Often used with advisory committees. Techniques include Delphi, nominal group technique, public value assessment and many others.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Use simplified methodology - Allow adequate time to reach consensus - Consider one of the computerized systems that are available - Define levels of consensus, i.e. a group does not have to agree entirely upon a decision but rather agree enough so the discussion can move forward 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Encourages compromise among different interests - Provides structured and trackable decision-making 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Not appropriate for groups with no interest in compromise - Clever parties can skew results - Does not produce a statistically valid solution - Consensus may not be reached

TECHNIQUE	ALWAYS THINK IT THROUGH	WHAT CAN GO RIGHT	WHAT CAN GO WRONG
ADVISORY COMMITTEES			
<p>A group of representative stakeholders assembled to provide public input to the planning process</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Define roles and responsibilities up front - Be forthcoming with information - Use a consistently credible process - Interview potential committee members in person before selection - Use third party facilitation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provides for detailed analyses for project issues - Participants gain understanding of other perspectives, leading toward compromise 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - General public may not embrace committee's recommendations - Members may not achieve consensus - Sponsor must accept need for give-and-take - Time and labor intensive
TASK FORCES			
<p>A group of experts or representative stakeholders formed to develop a specific product or policy recommendation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Obtain strong leadership in advance - Make sure membership has credibility with the public 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Findings of a task force of independent or diverse interests will have greater credibility - Provides constructive opportunity for compromise 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Task force may not come to consensus or results may be too general to be meaningful - Time and labor intensive
PANELS			
<p>A group assembled to debate or provide input on specific issues</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Most appropriate to show different news to public - Panelists must be credible with public 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provides opportunity to dispel misinformation - Can build credibility if all sides are represented - May create wanted media attention 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - May create unwanted media attention
CITIZEN JURIES			
<p>Small group of ordinary citizens empanelled to learn about an issue, cross examine witnesses, make a recommendation. Always non-binding with no legal standing</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Requires skilled moderator - Commissioning body must follow recommendations or explain why - Be clear about how results will be used 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Great opportunity to develop deep understanding of an issue - Public can identify with the "ordinary" citizens - Pinpoint fatal flaws or gauge public reaction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Resource intensive
ROLE-PLAYING			
<p>Participants act out characters in pre-defined situation followed by evaluation of the interaction</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Choose roles carefully. Ensure that all interests are represented. - People may need encouragement to play a role fully 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Allow people to take risk-free positions and view situation from other perspectives - Participants gain clearer understanding of issues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - People may not be able to actually achieve goal of seeing another's perspective
SAMOAN CIRCLE			
<p>Leaderless meeting that stimulates active participation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Set room up with center table surrounded by concentric circles - Need microphones - Requires several people to record discussion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Can be used with 10 to 500 people - Works best with controversial issues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Dialogue can stall or become monopolized

TECHNIQUE	ALWAYS THINK IT THROUGH	WHAT CAN GO RIGHT	WHAT CAN GO WRONG
OPEN SPACE TECHNOLOGY			
Participants offer topics and others participate according to interest	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Important to have a powerful theme or vision statement to generate topics - Need flexible facilities to accommodate numerous groups of different sizes - Ground rules and procedures must be carefully explained for success 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provides structure for giving people opportunity and responsibility to create valuable product or experience - Includes immediate summary of discussion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Most important issues could get lost in the shuffle - Can be difficult to get accurate reporting of results
WORKSHOPS			
An informal public meeting that may include a presentations and exhibits but ends with interactive working groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Know how you plan to use public input before the workshop - Conduct training in advance with small group facilitators. Each should receive a list of instructions, especially where procedures involve weighting/ ranking of factors or criteria 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Excellent for discussions on criteria or analysis of alternatives. Fosters small group or one-to-one communication - Ability to draw on other team members to answer difficult questions - Builds credibility. Maximizes feedback obtained from participants - Fosters public ownership in solving the problem 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Hostile participants may resist what they perceive to be the "divide and conquer" strategy of breaking into small groups - Several small-group facilitators are necessary
FUTURE SEARCH CONFERENCE			
Focuses on the future of an organization, a network of people, or community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Hire a facilitator experienced in this technique 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Can involve hundreds of people simultaneously in major organizational change decisions - Individuals are experts - Can lead to substantial changes across entire organization 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Logistically challenging - May be difficult to gain complete commitment from all stakeholders - 2-3 day meeting