From Chaos to Collaboration: A New Paradigm and Process for Public Engagement

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I’m shameless!*

“I don’t have the power now, but I don’t want it anyhow, so I gotta let it go…”

“Thought I’d never compromise...oh, but you convinced me otherwise...”

*but not self-promoting
“I don’t have the power now, but I don’t want it anyhow, so I gotta let it go…”

Whether you give the public the “bully pulpit” or not, they can already “bully” their way onto the “pulpit.”

They’ll influence the process one way or the other; we might as well engage them proactively, thoughtfully, inclusively, and fairly.
“Thought I’d never compromise, but oh you convinced me otherwise…”

public policy conflict resolution processes provide a forum to transform discourse and problem solving:

- citizens engaged in public disputes can have:
  - entrenched positions
  - feelings of hostility toward other groups/viewpoints

A well-convened process enables:

- civic dialogue
- possible collaboration
- win, win solutions based on underlying interests
The Public in Public Policy

- Find ways to include **all** affected stakeholders

- **Especially** hard to reach
  - Seniors
  - Disabled
  - Limited-English speakers
  - Youth
  - Low income

- Create a sustained **culture** of collaboration
Why should this matter to planners?

• **What Is Planning?**
  • When government officials, business leaders, and citizens come together to build communities that enrich people's lives, that's planning.

• **What Do Planners Do?**
  • Planners help government officials, business leaders, and citizens create communities that offer better choices for where and how people work and live.

• **Becoming a Planner**
  • Planning is a collaborative, dynamic field that offers the chance to really make a difference in the communities you care about.

*Credit: American Planning Association*
Changing Views

Customer
- Allows others to define needs and choices
- Consumers, not creators
- Think in terms of I/Me
- Wants services without bearing costs

Citizen
- Accountable
- Committed
- Determines the future
- Exercises ownership
- Acknowledges that change comes through citizens
Works in the private sector: why not public?
Making the case for public engagement

• Benefits for consumers
  – Better services, delivered the way they want them

• Benefits for decision-makers
  – Consumers become better informed and more motivated to get involved and support ideas if they have some influence over the agenda.
  – Better informed consumers are also likely to lead a drive for better quality engagement which will in turn support efforts to improve engagement.
Core Values for the Practice of Public Participation

Public participation:

• is based on the belief that **those who are affected by a decision have a right to be involved in the decision-making process.**

• includes the promise that the public's contribution will influence the decision.

• promotes sustainable decisions by recognizing and communicating the needs and interests of all participants, including decision makers.

• **seeks input from participants in designing how they participate.**

• provides participants with the information they need to participate in a meaningful way.

• communicates to participants how their input affected the decision.
Accountability and Transparency
The City will enable the public to participate in decision-making processes by providing clear information on the issues, the ways to participate, and how their participation contributes to the decision.

Fairness & Respect
The City will maintain a safe environment that cultivates and supports respectful public engagement and will expect participants to do so in turn.
City of Austin Principles

Accessibility
The City will respect and encourage participation by providing ample public notice of opportunities and resources and accommodations that enable all to participate.

Predictability & Consistency
The City will prepare the public to participate by providing meeting agendas, discussion guidelines, notes, and information on next steps.
City of Austin Principles

Creativity & Community Collaboration
The City will use innovative, proven, and customized engagement solutions that are appropriate to the needs of the projects and the participants.

Responsible Stewardship
The City will balance its commitment to provide ample opportunities for public involvement with its commitment to delivering government services efficiently and using City resources wisely.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Increasing Level of Public Impact</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Inform</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>To provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problem, alternatives, opportunities and/or solutions.</td>
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<td><strong>Consult</strong></td>
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<td>To obtain public feedback on analysis, alternatives and/or decisions.</td>
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<td><strong>Involve</strong></td>
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<td>To work directly with the public throughout the process to ensure that public concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered.</td>
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<td><strong>Collaborate</strong></td>
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<td>To partner with the public in each aspect of the decision including the development of alternatives and the identification of the preferred solution.</td>
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<td><strong>Empower</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>To place final decision-making in the hands of the public.</td>
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## IAP2 Community Engagement Spectrum

**Promise to the public**

- We will keep you informed.
- We will keep you informed, listen to and acknowledge concerns and aspirations, and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.
- We will work with you to ensure that your concerns and aspirations are directly reflected in the alternatives developed and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.
- We will look to you for advice and innovation in formulating solutions and incorporate your advice and recommendations into the decisions to the maximum extent possible.
- We will implement what you decide.

**Example techniques**

- Fact sheets
- Web sites
- Open houses
- Public comment
- Focus groups
- Surveys
- Public meetings
- Workshops
- Deliberative polling
- Citizen advisory committees
- Consensus-building
- Participatory decision-making
- Citizen juries
- Ballots
- Delegated decision
• Community workshops to discuss municipal bond projects
• Participants randomly assigned to a tables with ADR neutrals
• **Task**: allocate funds across four categories using “play money”
• Information around room, “dots” to vote for projects
• Allows for multiple forms of participation
Deliberation and Simulation: “Chip Exercise”

**Goal:** Forge group consensus about transportation demands; develop alternatives for public review

- Participants asked to figure out where future residents and workers would go
- Included mobility and previous planning efforts
“Deliberation To Go”: Meetings in a Box

• Similar models in New Hampshire, Arizona, Washington, Texas ("Desoto Dining & Dialogue")
• Volunteers facilitate small groups
• Provides:
  – Convenience
  – Flexibility
  – Safety
  – Honesty
“Deliberation To Go”: Speak Week

- Engaging the un-engaged by focusing on:
  - Convenience
  - Safety
  - Anonymity
  - Different levels of input/time
Can you engage the public?

Over the course of a multi-month or multi-year planning process, how would you most effectively be able to engage the public?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Developing a vision</th>
<th>Assembling a “growth scenario” for the future</th>
<th>Developing details of the plan in several categories</th>
<th>Reviewing the plan as a Whole</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Open house</td>
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<td>Interactive Community meeting</td>
<td>Paper and electronic surveys</td>
<td>Online forum</td>
<td>Mobile outreach/public booths</td>
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<tr>
<td>Portable self-guided “meeting in a box”</td>
<td>Working groups/task forces</td>
<td>Developing details of the plan in several categories</td>
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“Champions”: Long-Term Activities

- Task Forces, Working Groups, Boards and Commissions
- “Neighborhood College” (Hickory, North Carolina)
- AustinCorps
- Conversation Corps
- Youth Councils (Boston, MA; Novi, MI; Hampton, VA)
- Block Clubs (Cupertino, CA)
- International Leadership Academy (Skokie, IL)
Why Conversation Corps?

• Go where people are
• Empower and engage the un-engaged and disempowered
• Foster culture of civility and consensus
• Develop citywide capacity for connecting community to government
Conversation Corps

- Trained community facilitators host dialogue sessions across entire city at a variety of venues
- Solicit input and advice on variety of current topics
- Facilitators report input to government or agency, which in turn provides feedback to public on how input
Why technology?

• Most Americans are already online at home and elsewhere (libraries, smart phones, etc.) or have easy access to a phone

• An online/text message/telephone-based engagement opportunity gives an outlet to those who:
  – Have limited time
  – Feel uncomfortable speaking publicly
  – Lack the means or resources to meet in-person
What’s the state of technology?

- 70% of Americans high-speed home Internet, 3% dial-up. *Varies significantly among ethnicity, age, education, $$*
- >25% have no Internet access at home
- Smart phones:
  - 90% of American adults have a cell phone
  - 58% of American adults have a smartphone
  - 29% of cell phone owners say cell is “something they can’t live without” (Pew Research Internet Project)
Reaching a greater audience: TV, Telephone, and Text

- **Overview videos** shown at community forum, social media, TV
- **Televised community conversations**, with SMS, social media, and telephone technology
Texting

Hey Commuters:
Would you use a rapid transit line along the Boulevard to get to Center City?

Text Yes or No to:
215-987-5444

How does this work?
Text your answer to have your response recorded. You’ll get a series of 2 follow-up questions. Your privacy is important to us. We won’t use your phone number again.

Why does this matter?
We are soliciting input for the Philadelphia2035 Lower Northeast District Plan, which will guide Philadelphia’s physical development by making recommendations for zoning changes, city-owned land and facilities, and public investments.

For more info, go to http://phila2035.org

<3gov
Connect to Your Government

in 3 steps

txt your ideas about your neighborhood
reply to ideas about your neighborhood
talk about ideas in your neighborhood

text 718.514.6113
Austin Police Department launches Nextdoor

Austin Police Department from Austin Police

Hello, this is Chief Art Acevedo and I am pleased to announce that starting today the Austin Police Department will be utilizing Nextdoor in an effort to facilitate a virtual Neighborhood Watch program and help foster neighbor-to-neighbor communications.

Nextdoor is a tool for us to effectively share crime prevention and safety information, such as alerts of property crimes in the area or suspicious activity. You can expect to receive hyperlocal crime and safety updates from us on Nextdoor, but your Nextdoor website is still kept private to only those who live in the neighborhood and who have a
Surveys 2.0

From Chaos to Collaboration
eComment on Meeting Items

From Chaos to Collaboration
Community conversations online
Discuss like would in person... with a facilitator

- Active moderator(s) and subject matter experts
- Links or attachments to additional background information
- Open-ended questions
- Enforceable terms and conditions
Brainstorm and rate different ideas

- Ideas can be pre-loaded or call for new ideas can be open-ended
- Votes are only in support of an idea, not against; easy to oppose, harder to recommend alternatives
- Host agency (city, etc.) can change status of idea to indicate staff’s response and viability
- Can be easier for some to review existing ideas than generate new ones
How to Spend Money
(Courtesy “A Balancing Act,” Denver-based company)
PROBATE CODE SECTION 1003

(a) The court may, on its own motion or on request of a personal representative, guardian, conservator, trustee, or other interested person, appoint a guardian ad litem at any stage of a proceeding under this code to represent the interest of any of the following persons, if the court determines that representation of the interest otherwise would be inadequate:

1. A minor.
2. An incapacitated person.
3. An unborn person.
4. An unascertained person.
5. A person whose identity or address is unknown.
6. A designated class of persons who are not ascertained or are not in being.
7. A nonhuman animal who is either an estate asset or part of a trust res.

(To the status of animals is inherently more than property as evidenced by animals being able to be beneficiaries of trusts pursuant to legislation. It makes sense, therefore, that when needed, a guardian ad litem could be appointed for them.)

PROBATE CODE SECTION 21350-21356

21350. (a) Except as provided in Section 21351, no provision, or provisions, of any instrument shall be valid to make any nonnontative transfer to any of the following:

1. The person who drafted the instrument.
2. Example additional clause here. By the same reasoning, no beneficiary of a will can be an executor of that will. THAT IS CRAZY. A TESTATOR'S CHILD(REN) ARE FREQUENTLY BOTH EXECUTOR(S) AND BENEFICIARY(IES).
How to use Land

1. Scroll around & review ideas
2. To Zoom
   CMD +/- mac
   CTR +/- PC
3. Comment on ideas
4. Add your own ideas! Type here, click “Add Idea,” then move to canvas
5. Vote on top ideas
6. Move to next canvas
Keys to Success

- Identification of stakeholders, pre-existing issues, power imbalances, community spaces
- Accessibility and convenience to process and relevant information, transparency
- Understanding and knowledge of process
- Diversity of times for meetings
- Unique and enticing ways to engage people (online, face-to-face, door-to-door, in familiar surroundings)
- Communication/publicity across multiple media
- Opportunities to participate from beginning
- Framing the issue in an engaging way
Mission...possible! I can help.

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