COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT BENCHMARKING REPORT

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SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The purpose of this report is to help the Citizens' General Obligation Bond Oversight Committee (CGOBOC) understand more accurately and analyze more effectively how community engagement affects San Francisco's general obligation bond program. The report provides information on best practices in community engagement in San Francisco and from other external jurisdictions, and includes specific guidance on how the City and County of San Francisco could build on its existing practices to improve its community engagement process in the future.

BUILD ON SAN FRANCISCO'S EXISTING PRACTICES

Current community engagement for bond-funded capital projects in San Francisco focuses primarily on group meetings with community members, usually held in the vicinity of the proposed project. The purpose of each particular meeting can vary, and can include both providing information and gathering input. City staff generally use a three-meeting-minimum framework as the foundation for community engagement, expanding the number and type of meetings as needed, based on the complexity of the project, level of community interest, and/or potential for conflict. Project web sites, emailed and mailed notices, and leaflets posted onsite complement the meeting process to provide project information and updates.

This general practice of engaging people in person has gotten mostly positive feedback from community members, although a few of our interviewees mentioned that the quality of the meetings can vary widely depending on the project manager involved. In addition, the City can do more to engage a wider group of people who may be affected by the projects. More important, however, it is not the structure of the process but the actual nature of the interaction between the City and the community that appears to determine whether the community engagement is really effective or productive – specifically, community engagement appears to work best when there is an authentic and meaningful back-and-forth between the community and the City, and both sides feel like they are really being listened to.

That being said, there are some additional tools that came out of our research and our knowledge of the field that we think could help the City strengthen its community engagement in several ways. The tools are reflected in a flow chart on page 5.

CONDUCT AN ASSESSMENT OF STAKEHOLDERS: INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL.

Conducting an assessment before the process starts is a critical tool to identify stakeholders, issues and potential project challenges and learn about the best methods of engagement, including the digital landscape of a community. Staff can also use that assessment to better understand internal capacity to support a project, to identify inter-departmental issues, and to review process timelines.

BUILD THE PROJECT SCHEDULE AND BUDGET IN CONCERT WITH A COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PLAN.

Community engagement needs to be planned and budgeted for as carefully as any other part of a capital project. The project's plan should reflect an understanding of the anticipated levels of interest

that the project will excite in the affected community. If the level of public interest encountered by the project is unanticipated, and is not reflected in the project budget and schedule, the project may be delayed. This planning failure may result in increased costs.

CONSIDER CONVENING A PROJECT ADVISORY GROUP.

For the Dolores Park renovation, in addition to community meetings, the City convened a 45-member advisory group which met regularly to work through issues. The City of Denver and the Denver public school district have used advisory groups frequently for developing and implementing bond projects. The advantage of an advisory group is that the members are committed in advance to work together over a specific period of time to produce specific outcomes. In addition, it can serve as representative for the larger community and provide invaluable insight for staff in designing and navigating a community engagement process.

EXPAND THE SUITE OF OUTREACH TOOLS TO ENGAGE A BROADER AUDIENCE.

Conspicuous on-site signage that describes the project is an important primary source of information for members of local communities. Using technology to solicit ideas and share information is another way to engage a broader audience and complement in-person meetings and outreach efforts.

PROVIDE TRAINING FOR STAFF ON HOW – AND WHY – TO ENGAGE THE COMMUNITY.

The City of Portland places a high value on staff training in order to improve the consistent quality and level of community engagement. This training not only includes information on best practices, but also helps staff members understand the value of the role of the community in their work.

EXTERNAL JURISDICTIONS OFFER ADDITIONAL LESSONS

While the current state-of-the-art of community engagement in San Francisco features a number of best practices that have proven effective, jurisdictions outside the City also offer significant lessons for San Francisco:

Portland, Oregon has placed great value on community engagement. Most bureaus with significant capital improvement budgets have dedicated public involvement staff, and the City has established a shared governance structure (with staff and community members) to improve community engagement. In addition, Portland has institutionalized the process of public involvement by requiring staff to complete a public involvement audit before the City Council can approve the project within the government system, and has developed public involvement principles and a suite of tools used for community engagement.

San José, California has demonstrated that making collaboration with the community explicit and responding to the priorities of the community can support an enduring relationship with community members who expand their civic engagement over time. Being transparent about funding and creating realistic timelines also support community members' commitment to engage over time. Substantial effort was put into community organizing to develop clear priorities with broad community support to guide the selection of capital projects.

Denver, Colorado uses advisory committees to engage the community, convening respected civic leaders to take the time to work through difficult issues, and then holding community meetings and presentations to communicate information about projects as part of the larger public education process. Denver demonstrates that drawing on leaders is an effective tool to guide efforts and strengthen and tailor the message to garner support and understanding.

OTHER FINDINGS

THERE IS NO ONE RECIPE FOR PERFECT COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT.

Although many search for the one recipe for the perfect community engagement structure and process – number of meetings, timing, who to involve etc. –no such recipe exists. The process of engaging the community depends on the nature of the project and the particular issues that engender community interest and/or controversy. No matter what the process looks like, having a commitment to listen and engage authentically is the most important foundation for success.

NO CERTAIN CORRELATION EXISTS BETWEEN COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND PROJECT DELAYS.

Project delays can be due to many factors, including project complexity and unanticipated levels of controversy. Although community engagement can add time to a construction process, it's difficult to tell if putting in that time up front to address community issues prolongs a project or in fact saves time in the end. In addition, community engagement as described in this report is only part of the overall public process for implementing bond-funded projects. The permitting and internal approval process, which comes later in the schedule, can often cause project delays as well.

USE ONLINE TECHNOLOGY AND OTHER TOOLS TO REACH OUT TO THE "SILENT MANY."

Although getting the attention of those who are difficult to engage (but who may have important contributions to the process) is always difficult, there are ways to do it. Broadening meeting times and ensuring language accessibility can be helpful. The use of technology (including web sites, email and mobile announcements) also has the potential to expand the audience to community members who are unlikely to attend a public meeting in person.
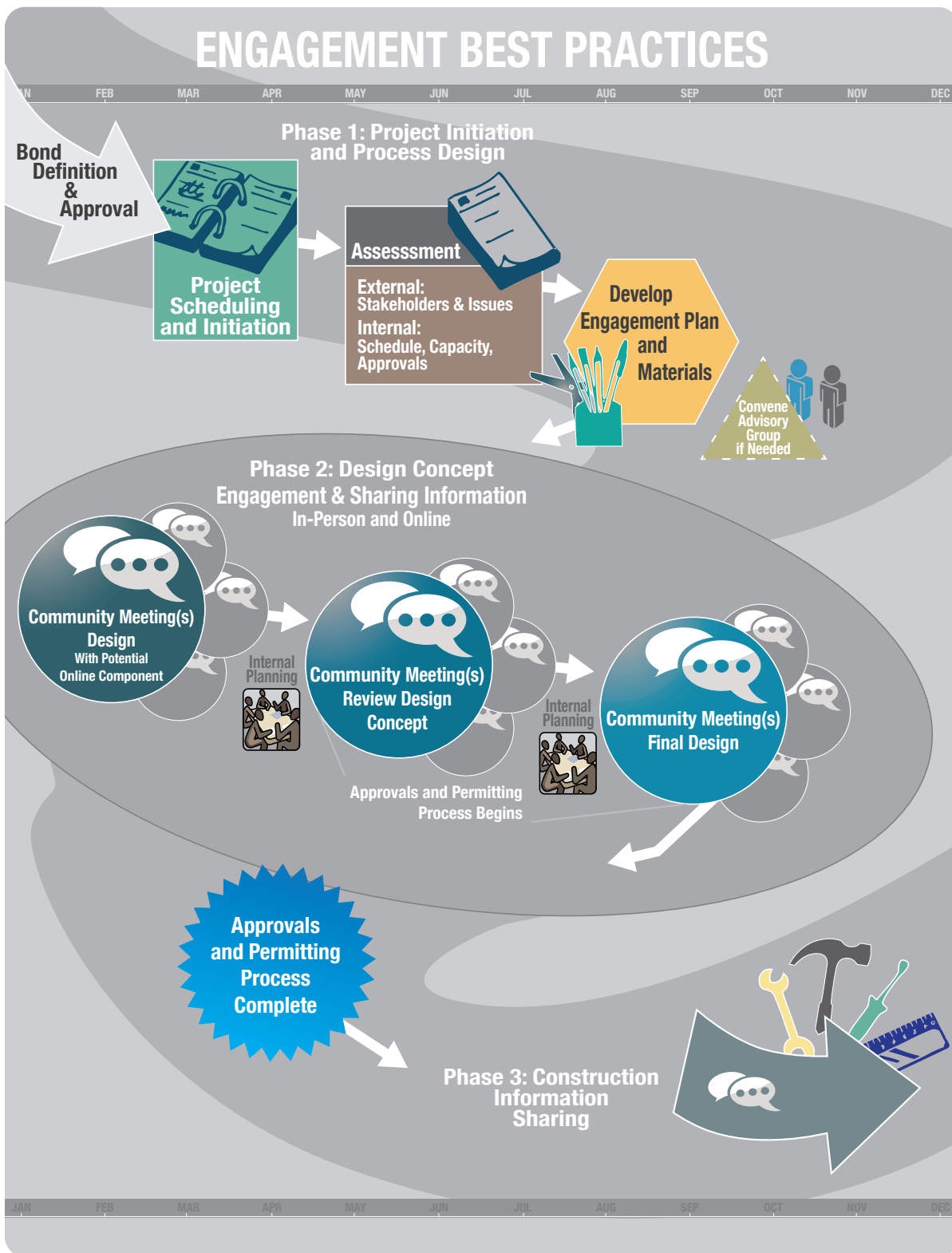
USE OF PROFESSIONALS CAN BE HELPFUL.

Community engagement is hard work and requires expertise. Hiring dedicated staff or outside professionals, such as facilitators or outreach experts, can help. Also, consider bringing in a mediator early when a conflict emerges.

USE COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT FOR THE PROJECT TO BUILD COMMUNITY CAPACITY.

Authentic engagement helps build relationships – between City staff and community members, and between the community members themselves. This increases everyone's capacity to engage better and more productively in the future.

ENGAGEMENT BEST PRACTICES

JAN　FEB　MAR　APR　MAY　JUN　JUL　AUG　SEP　OCT　NOV　DEC

Bond Definition & Approval

Phase 1: Project Initiation and Process Design

Project Scheduling and Initiation

Assesssment
External: Stakeholders & Issues
Internal: Schedule, Capacity, Approvals

Develop Engagement Plan and Materials

Convene Advisory Group if Needed

Phase 2: Design Concept
Engagement & Sharing Information
In-Person and Online

Community Meeting(s) Design
With Potential Online Component

Internal Planning

Community Meeting(s) Review Design Concept

Approvals and Permitting Process Begins

Internal Planning

Community Meeting(s) Final Design

Approvals and Permitting Process Complete

Phase 3: Construction Information Sharing

JAN　FEB　MAR　APR　MAY　JUN　JUL　AUG　SEP　OCT　NOV　DEC

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INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to help the Citizens' General Obligation Bond Oversight Committee (CGOBOC) understand more accurately and analyze more effectively how community engagement affects San Francisco's general obligation bond program. This report is the result of a five-month research and analysis process that included interviews with City and County of San Francisco program staff, San Francisco community members, program staff and community members from three jurisdictions external to San Francisco, and leaders in the field of community engagement including those piloting the use of technology to advance engagement. In addition, we drew from our own experience in the field to contribute to the analysis and recommendations.

The report ends with suggestions for principles the CGOBOC can use to guide its work, including some specific best practices and possible outcomes that emerge from those principles.

We hope that this report will be helpful to the CGOBOC in determining what community engagement strategies are working well with regard to construction and capital projects, and that the report will help provide a roadmap to think through possible improvements and refinements.

RESEARCH PROCESS

INTERVIEWS WITH LEADERS IN THE COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT FIELD

We began our research process by talking with leaders in the field of community engagement, including Matt Leighninger from the Deliberative Democracy Consortium, Bill Barnes and Mark Linder from the National League of Cities, Paul Alexander from the Institute for the Common Good at Regis University, Michael Pagano from the University of Chicago, Harris Sokoloff from the Penn Project on Civic Engagement at the University of Pennsylvania, and Bill Potapchuk of the Community Building Institute. We also reviewed materials from the Institute for Local Government (an affiliate of the League of California Cities and the California State Association of Counties), the International Association for Public Participation, and the National Coalition for Dialogue and Deliberation. Our goal was to find robust examples of civic engagement around bond-funded projects, particularly after bond-passage. Although most of the robust examples tend to center in the planning realm, with a few in other areas like budgeting and program development, we were able to develop a list of possible external jurisdictions to study. These interviews were also helpful to develop a list of recommended reading and other resources (see Appendix A).

SAN FRANCISCO INTERVIEWS

Working with the City's Community Benchmarking Team that oversaw this process and with the help of interviewee referrals, we selected and interviewed 25 people in San Francisco. Most of the San Francisco interviewees were connected with two specific case studies: the 2008 Clean and Safe Neighborhood Parks Bond Program and the 2000 Branch Library Improvement Bond Program. We interviewed program staff people from the Recreation and Parks Department, Department of Public Works, and the San Francisco Public Library. We also identified community members to interview

who represented a range of interests – including business, labor, the environment, library users, and historic preservation – as well as a variety of neighborhoods across the City. A list of San Francisco Interviewees can be found in Appendix B.

We developed two survey instruments for the San Francisco interviews: one for City staff and one for community members. The questions were sent out in advance to the interviewees, but we encouraged the interviewees to answer beyond what was on the page. We also took the opportunity to probe and follow up on specific points, depending on the interviewee and also depending on where we were in the interview process (e.g., using information from the early interviews to inform what we asked in our later interviews). Sample of survey instruments can be found in Appendix C.

EXTERNAL JURISDICTIONS

We also identified three jurisdictions outside of San Francisco from which to gather information on community engagement best practices: Portland, Oregon, Denver, Colorado, and San José, California. We chose them through a process that began with telephone interviews with leading practitioners and researchers in the civic engagement field to do an initial assessment of possible jurisdictions to explore, as well as possible local capital projects on which to base the interviews. From the assessment we assembled a list of potential jurisdictions and matched them up against the following criteria:

- *Potential best practices,* if initial research showed that the external jurisdiction was doing something interesting with regard to community engagement and had potential best practices and/or important lessons to contribute;

- *City-driven* community engagement, as opposed to a third party (i.e., a local foundation, other nonprofit, or business) driving the effort; and

- *Controversial/significant* capital projects involved.

For our interviewees, as in San Francisco, we selected a combination of city staff people and community members/stakeholders– about five to eight for each jurisdiction. For the external jurisdictions, we began with the city staff interviews and asked staff to identify community members for us to approach, including neighborhood and civic leaders and representatives of various interests. The list of external jurisdiction interviewees is in included the Appendix.

TECHNOLOGY BEST PRACTICES INTERVIEWS

To deepen our understanding of technology in civic engagement, we drew on our own practice and thinking, but also reviewed the insights of other thinkers and practitioners in the field, including a representative from the Mayor's Office of Civic Innovation and a colleague who worked for the White House and Google on integrating technology and civic engagement.

BEST PRACTICES OVERVIEW: REVIEW OF THE FIELD

We begin our report with an overview of the field of community engagement. Our review of the field is based on our collective knowledge, as practitioners trying to shape this work, as long-time students of the field, and as teachers trying to pass on the lessons we have learned to our colleagues and partners.

WHAT IS COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT?

Community engagement is a way that decision-makers can interact productively with people who really matter – those who have a stake in solving the problems in question. Often misunderstood and now elevated to buzzword status, community engagement develops and strengthens the relationship between government and community, that is, between the decision-makers and the ones whom their decisions affect.

There are a multitude of different interpretations of community engagement. The term can refer to members of the general public engaging with the civic world. It can describe processes that do everything from providing input to policy-makers to putting people to work side-by-side with government to implement solutions to public problems.

THE ENGAGED CITIZEN

Civic engagement describes a relationship that individuals and organizations have with their community and, in many cases, with the public sector, which does much of our civic work. Some of the more traditional forms of engagement include voting, speaking at public hearings, and writing or phoning public officials, all of which are important manifestations of that government-individual relationship. However, these forms of engagement have their limits.

In today's society, community engagement is taking on a different meaning. The term now describes new processes for involving and engaging people and organizations in the work of the public sector – processes that are being developed because more traditional processes have reached their limits. These new types of engagement allow more deliberation, more discussion, and generally more productive interaction than traditional engagement. Practices also tend to happen earlier in the decision-making process, which can create more time for input and can allow for more creativity and provide more opportunity to craft win-win solutions than traditional input processes.

WHY COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT?

Community engagement has become increasingly important, particularly in the past decade or two. The way society solves problems is changing. Government is working differently, resources are limited, and public problems are becoming larger and more complicated.

WORKING WITH LIMITED RESOURCES

In the past, government has been charged with much of the burden for solving problems in America. That was particularly true as the public sector took on the New Deal, created the Social Security system for workers, passed the Medicare program to provide health care for people older than 65, and developed Medicaid, Head Start, and other social welfare programs to assist people in need. Over the years, the public sector's resources have decreased while the problems that plague society continue to grow larger and more complex. Limited resources are forcing more interdependence between the public sector and the private and nonprofit sectors, necessitating unified efforts in solving problems. In some cases, limited resources must be pooled, which often results in public-private partnership arrangements.

A NEW RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN GOVERNMENT AND THE PUBLIC

The relative decline in public resources to solve social problems has changed the relationship between government and the people. Another contributing factor is the public's waning confidence in government. As a result, today's government is taking on a new role that gives the public greater responsibility in its decision-making.

In addition, because of people's loss of confidence in government, legislators are hesitant to legislate, which also places more responsibility on citizens. In some cases, the public has taken away some of the government's tools; for example, California law requires a public vote on all local taxes, and that law itself was the result of an initiative put to public vote. Public issues are often fought in the media, which takes away some of the flexibility that public officials enjoyed in the days before television and Twitter.
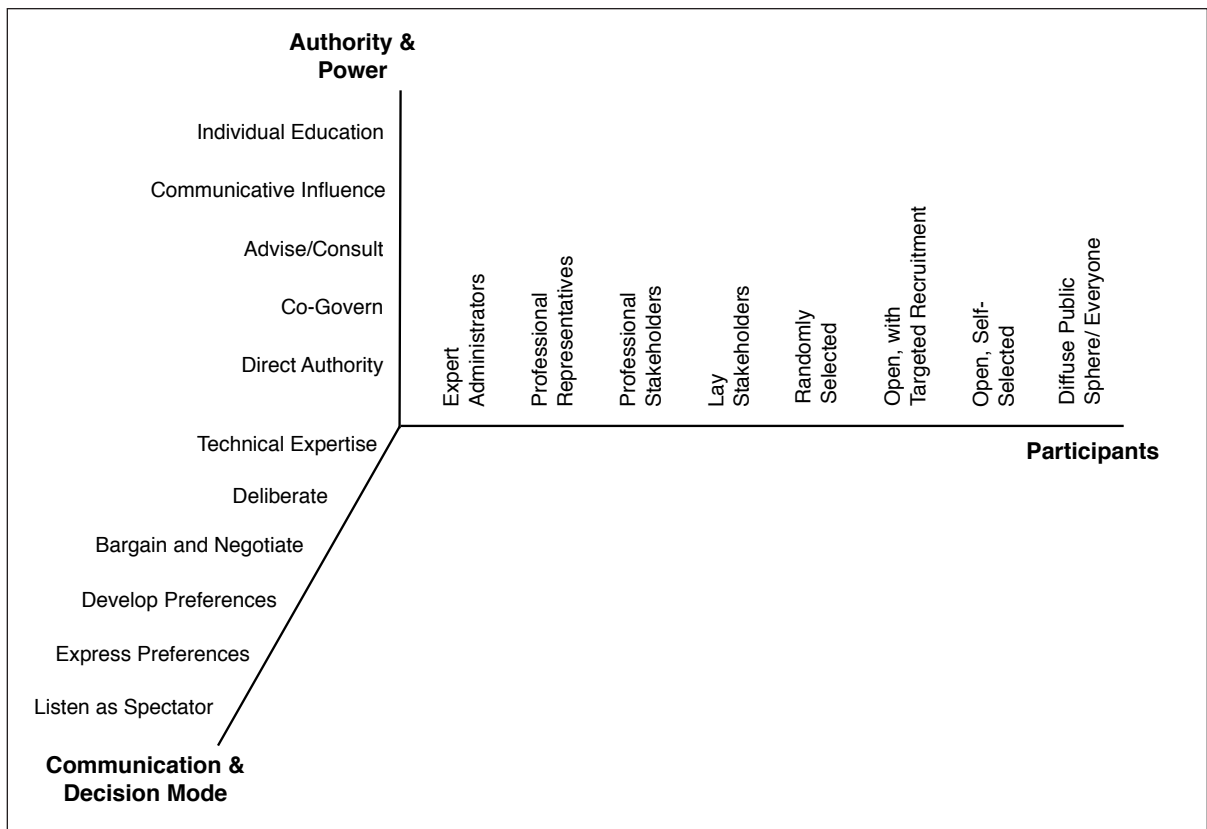
And more and more, the government is asking for assistance from the public in the form of earmarked funding, like bond measures for capital improvements. The government's ability to get bond measures passed for infrastructure and other capital projects is directly linked to the public's confidence that the bond money is going to be used effectively to produce the results promised. This makes successful community engagement critical for trust and confidence leading to support for passing future bonds.

A VARIETY OF MODELS

Many different models of community engagement exist – as many models as there are ways that people work together. These models can involve multiple players such as government, the nonprofit sector, private citizens, and the private sector. They can also be used for different purposes: to brainstorm a community vision, to design or plan a program or policy, to implement a policy/program that has already been developed, and to get the word out about an important policy or project that is underway.

There are many different processes, tools, and structures to engage, including town-hall meetings, working groups, brainstorming sessions, group dialogues, and many ways of communicating information. Recent years have yielded the development of new technology that can also be helpful in civic engagement processes, particularly when engaging large groups of people. Other emerging areas in the community engagement field include participatory budgeting and community capacity-building.

There are also different dimensions of engagement. Archon Fung, professor at Harvard University's Kennedy School of Government, has introduced a way of thinking about this called the *Democracy Cube* (see below). The three dimensions, or axes, of the cube model the different dimensions of participation by the public in government decisions. One axis describes various ways that the public can communicate information, beginning with listening as a spectator and moving to expressing preferences, developing preferences, aggregating and bargaining, deliberating and negotiating, and contributing technical expertise. The second axis describes who participates: starting with participation from everyone and moving along a continuum that ends with expert administrators. And a third axis models the level of ability of the public to influence decisions, including having communicative influence (e.g., at a public hearing), to being in an advising/consulting role, and finally to having direct authority over the decision, as we see in some examples of participatory budgeting initiatives.

Authority & Power

Individual Education

Communicative Influence

Advise/Consult

Co-Govern

Direct Authority

Technical Expertise

Deliberate

Bargain and Negotiate

Develop Preferences

Express Preferences

Listen as Spectator

Communication & Decision Mode

Expert Administrators

Professional Representatives

Professional Stakeholders

Lay Stakeholders

Randomly Selected

Open, with Targeted Recruitment

Open, Self-Selected

Diffuse Public Sphere/ Everyone

Participants

Democracy Cube, by Archon Fung

BOND OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The Citizens' General Obligation Bond Oversight Committee was formed subsequent to the passage of Proposition F (March 2002) to inform the public, through review and report, on the expenditure of general obligation bond proceeds in accordance with voter authorization. CGOBOC is comprised of nine members meeting certain minimum qualifications and appointed as follows: three members by the Mayor, three by the Board of Supervisors, two members by the Controller and one member by the Civil Grand Jury. Each member serves for a term of two years.

CGOBOC's primary responsibilities are to ensure that bond revenues are expended only in accordance with the ballot measure and that no funds are used for any administrative salaries or other general governmental operating expenses unless specifically authorized in the ballot measure for such bonds. In addition, in furtherance of its purpose, CGOBOC may also review efforts by the City to maximize bond proceeds by implementing cost-savings measures.

CGOBOC recognizes the great value of community input and engagement, as they are vital components of the City's construction planning and decision making. CGOBOC's charge to us was to identify best practices in community engagement, specifically as they relate to planning and implementation of the City's general obligation bond programs' construction and capital projects.

In this context, community engagement includes activities that provide members of the public with direct ways to be involved in public life and decision making, particularly on issues in which they have a direct interest.

The results of this benchmarking study are aimed to provide the City with a set of best practices and roadmap of strategies for improving the City's community engagement practices and procedures, delivering quality outcomes for all stakeholders, and potentially reducing City costs.

ISSUES/ASPECTS TO CONSIDER

Given the interest and scope of CGOBOC, for the purposes of this study we focused our research on two phases of community engagement:

- Engagement around project planning and design, which involves engagement both to inform and get input; and

- Engagement around project construction, which primarily involves engagement to inform but can also provide opportunities for input.

Theoretically, the project-planning phase occurs before the construction phase, but in actuality, especially with some of the complicated projects that we were investigating, this can look more "messy," as the different pieces of the projects moved forward at different times.

In taking a close look at engagement during these phases, we considered these important issues/aspects:

- What is the scope of the public's role in bond measure project implementation? What should be the public's role?

- How does the City currently reach people? And who should the City be trying to reach?

- What are the processes the City uses now to engage people? What works and what doesn't? Are there other processes/best practices that the City can add to its toolbox?

- How do the issues above change the predictable cost and timing of community engagement?

SAN FRANCISCO EXISTING PRACTICES AND FINDINGS

We will begin our discussion of findings from our San Francisco interviews with a look at the San Francisco landscape, including an overview of the bond measures that formed the basis of our San Francisco research, the culture and expectations in San Francisco with regard to community engagement, existing community engagement practices, some of the challenges the City faces, and other general themes and insights.

PARKS AND LIBRARY BOND MEASURES OVERVIEW

The 2000 Branch Library Improvement Program (BLIP) was approved by San Francisco voters in November 2000 to allocate $105.9 million to fund the modernization and improvement of 24 branch library projects. These funds were further leveraged with funding made available via the Library

Preservation Fund, lease revenue bonds, grants and private funds for a total program budget of $196.3 million. The goals of the BLIP are to increase public safety through seismic strengthening and hazardous materials abatement; increase accessibility by conforming with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA); improve infrastructure through modernization and code compliance upgrades; and improve public library service through reconfigured interior spaces and adaptations for technology. As of July 2013, 23 out of the 24 branch library projects have been completed and one support services center has been completed. Construction for the North Beach Branch Library Project is slated to be completed in early 2014.

The 2008 Clean and Safe Neighborhood Parks Bond Program is a $185 million general obligation bond enacted in February 2008 for specific, voter-approved parks and open space recreation projects, to be completed by both the Recreation and Parks Department and the Port of San Francisco. These funds were further leveraged with funding made available via the revenue bonds, gifts, private funds, and funding from both Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART) and the Port for a total program budget of $213.6 million. The program is comprised of six sub-programs with 80 percent of the bond funding dedicated to major capital renovation and the remaining 20 percent dedicated to the other five sub-programs, which include restroom repair and renovation, playfield renovations, park forestry needs, park trail reconstruction, and the Community Opportunity Fund that match funds from private grants and donations for resident-initiated improvement projects. As of July 2013, seven projects are complete and open to the public, four projects are in construction, one project is in design, and one project is simultaneously in design and planning phase. All projects are expected to be complete by June 2015.

We focused most of our interviews in San Francisco talking with people in connection with the above two programs. In addition, we interviewed a few people who spoke about community engagement in San Francisco in different contexts.

TOOLS

The interviews yielded information about community engagement-related tools that are currently being used by City staff in San Francisco.

CONCEPT PLANNING MEETINGS

Both the parks and library bond project processes included concept planning meetings with the community. For a typical park project, the staff would convene a minimum of three concept design meetings, described below:

- **Meeting #1:** The staff members ask the community, "What do you like? What would you like to see improved?" and then set goals for the renovation.

- **Meeting #2 (typically two to eight weeks after the first meeting):** The staff members present a basic conceptual diagram based on the community's comments at the first meeting, asking for feedback from the participants. Typically, a couple of alternative concepts will also be presented.

- **Meeting #3 (typically a few weeks after that):** The staff members present a preferred option, for feedback.

The three-design-meetings process is a minimum. Depending on community concerns, there could easily be as many as four, five, six, seven meetings – and even more. We were told that the Dolores Park planning process had around 50 meetings in all (approximately seven large public workshops and numerous steering committee meetings). For small projects that don't have much of a design element (e.g., trails and forestry), the outreach strategy is a little different. Staff members typically hold only one outreach meeting, primarily for the purpose of answering people's questions/concerns.

The library projects had a similar process – a minimum of three community meetings, sometimes as many as 20. The first meeting is typically what one interviewee termed a "hopes and dreams" meeting, to give the community members a chance to familiarize the project team with what they want to see in their neighborhood library. The purpose of the second meeting is to get feedback on some specific designs. And then depending on what that feedback is, more community meetings are convened to work out the final design concept.

PEER REVIEW PROCESS

In addition to community meetings around design, the library program also utilized a peer review process. Two external professionals, one a librarian and one an architect, would visit the site, meet with staff, review the design, and provide guidance to the Library Commission. The Library Commission would then have the opportunity to modify the design based on the peer review and any other public feedback received at the Commission's meeting. Those interviewed saw the peer review process as serving two goals: not only did it contribute to "design excellence," but it also helped focus the design conversation with the community.

STEERING COMMITTEE

For potentially controversial projects the Recreation and Parks staff would also create a steering committee of different interests (e.g., "friends" of that park, dog owners, parents) to provide input to guide the planning process. For the Dolores Park renovation there was a 45-member steering committee.

COMMUNITY OPPORTUNITY FUND

The 2008 Clean and Safe Neighborhood Park Bond set aside $5 million for a Community Opportunity Fund, to fund small-scale, community-nominated capital (physical) improvement projects in neighborhood parks across San Francisco. This allows for capital improvements to be made in parks that aren't slated for any large renovation, and it also allowed for the community to give more direct input. Individuals or organizations had the opportunity to nominate projects ($250,000 limit per project) using an application process. One of our interviewees said that by encouraging neighborhoods to prioritize what they wanted in the way of improvements, the Community Opportunity Fund enhanced community engagement.

OUTREACH TOOLS USED DURING CONSTRUCTION PHASE

Most of the tools above are used during the design phase of the process. During the construction phase, as mentioned earlier, the goal of engagement shifts from community input to community outreach and education. Below are some tools that San Francisco staff use for outreach during construction:

- **Neighborhood meetings:** Quarterly meetings during construction were useful to inform neighbors of construction plans and to flag and respond to concerns. In the case of the San Francisco General Hospital renovation, other departments (e.g., Planning, Public Works, Municipal Transportation Agency, Public Utilities Commission, Fire Department) became involved when issues/concerns fell into their area.

- **Community assessment:** For the 2012 bond, the Recreation and Parks Department hired someone to find groups and individuals affected by each project to ensure that they would be reached out to during construction.

- **Other ways to get the word out:** Community members also highlighted project blogs, project web pages, email lists of interested people, and signage at sites as effective ways to inform the public about construction.

CULTURE OF COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT IN SAN FRANCISCO

In San Francisco, compared to many other cities and towns around the country, there is a strong culture and history of community engagement. A core group of people in the City expect to have their voices heard by those in power, and they believe that being listened to and consulted is an integral part of their rights as residents. This belief in the right of the public to be heard is shared by many City staff.

That being said, many, many members of the San Francisco community do not choose to participate in the day-to-day business of the City even if it affects them directly. There can be many reasons for that – people are busy, focused on other things, or just not interested. There may also be people who could be interested in participating, but are unaware about how they can do so. A recent report on public outreach and engagement, commissioned by the San Francisco Planning Department, describes these different parts of the community, terming them the "vocal few" and the "silent many." The Planning Department report also identifies connecting with the "silent many" in its outreach and engagement efforts as a challenge that needs to be met in order for the Department to be more effective in its work.

This strong culture and expectation of community engagement dominated our conversation with both staff and community members in San Francisco. Members of the San Francisco community have a strong expectation of community engagement, whether or not they actually engage. And the community members expect not only to be able to speak out, and give their opinions, but they expect to be listened to. For some community members, being "listened to" meant getting what they wanted. For some staff, "listening to" everyone meant they thought they had to please everyone, which raised concerns on their part. This dichotomy illustrates one of the many challenges faced with regard to community engagement in the city.

OTHER CHALLENGES

THE PERMITTING PROCESS IS COMPLICATED AND CAN BE CHALLENGING TO PROJECT DEVELOPMENT.

Over and over again, particularly in our interviews with City staff, the complicated permitting process that exists in the City came up as a challenge to project development. A forthcoming report to CGOBOC from BAE Urban Economics summarizes the project approval process, and provides some recommendations for ways the process can be improved. The permitting and approval process

can include environmental review (mandated by the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)) and, depending on the project, could also include review by the California Coastal Commission, the Bay Conservation and Development Commission, the San Francisco Arts Commission, the Planning Commission and the Historic Preservation Commission, in addition to various other federal, state, regional, and local bodies. If a project requires a permit to start construction, it only takes one appeal to stop the project – or at least that portion of the project. That being said, the permitting process, as opposed to most of the processes that are termed "community engagement," is one of the few avenues afforded to concerned members of the public that potentially carries the weight of the law and creates a legal avenue for the public to contest a project. In San Francisco, nearly all of our interviewees supported the idea of a legal appeal; however, they expressed frustration with the multiple channels of appeal and the subsequent delay that can cause, especially if community engagement has provided a robust input process.

DESPITE BEST EFFORTS, THERE'LL ALWAYS BE PEOPLE WHO CARE ABOUT A PROJECT BUT HAVEN'T HEARD ABOUT IT.

As discussed above, engaging the "silent many" who may be affected by or interested in a project is a challenge. Some examples that came up of communities who are difficult to engage are working people, parents of young children, and people with limited understanding of English. The point was made several times that people who haven't been engaged – and who want to be – will end up being unhappy that they weren't.

YOU CAN'T PLEASE EVERYBODY.

We made the point earlier that some staff members we interviewed felt that they had to please everybody – actually, this observation about staff was also shared by some of the community members we interviewed. But pleasing everybody is impossible; people want different things, some of which are in conflict with each other.

GENERAL THEMES – WHAT WE'RE HEARING IN SAN FRANCISCO

Below is a list of general themes that surfaced from our San Francisco interviews:

THE CITY STAFF IS DOING A GOOD JOB ON THE WHOLE.

Our interviews, both with City staff and with community members, were fairly consistent on this point. The City staff members we interviewed are trying to be good engagers and good listeners. They extol the importance of bringing in community input in the design phase, and in keeping the community in the loop during the construction phase. Most of the community members we interviewed said the same thing.

However, not all of the people we interviewed felt this way. A few community members expressed strongly that the City doesn't listen, or doesn't listen to the right people and tends to do "what it wants." Many said that the City's outreach tools could be better, that it could (and should) reach out to a broader group of people. Some of the community members we interviewed said the City is trying too hard, that it gets pushed around too much, is paying too much attention to nay-sayers, people who

don't want anything to change, people who "yell loudest" – this theme was also echoed by many of the City staff. Many said that the City needs to strike a balance between community engagement and staff expertise and figure out what is best.

Some said the City's performance varied depending who was in charge of the project. There were some program managers who really stood out and were mentioned repeatedly as working very well with the community. We also heard that the City staff members learn from their mistakes, learning to put in more time in the front end of the project to prepare for permitting delays down the road.

THE "COMMUNITY" INTEREST IS NOT MONOLITHIC.

In our experience, we have noticed that, when thinking about community engagement, some (both government and community members) have an underlying assumption that the community is a monolithic entity that has only one interest. That is not the case, and we heard that loud and clear in San Francisco. Different members of the community are affected differently by a project. Because both the library and parks bond projects are neighborhood-based, they affect the neighborhood residents in a certain way, particularly during the construction phase. But there may be others in the City who are affected by a project (for example, soccer players, dog owners, or even some library users) who do not live in the neighborhood, and they may feel differently about the project. (And even within a neighborhood, there may be people with differing interests, depending on preferences regarding design, personal park and library use, etc.) As we will discuss below, understanding and appreciating community diversity has important implications for community engagement. Staff must strive to understand differing viewpoints, identify areas of agreement, and then move forward balancing the diversity of viewpoints.

EVERY PROJECT – EVEN POST BOND-PASSAGE – HAS A DESIGN ELEMENT, AND THAT MEANS AN OPPORTUNITY FOR INPUT/AUTHENTIC ENGAGEMENT.

For the bond measures we were investigating, the projects were more or less specified in advance, at least regarding location, scope, and initial budget. This tends to be true for most bond-funded projects that require a vote of the people; we heard that the more specific a proposed bond is about actual projects (all other things being equal), the more likely it is to pass. However, every bond-funded project that we looked at in our research had some design questions that weren't yet answered, and that provided an opportunity for asking the community for input.

However, a challenge can emerge if city commissions that must ultimately approve the design don't participate at this input phase. In that case, even if the design was developed with a certain amount of community input, the commissions (or members of the community members who felt they weren't listened to early on) can later disapprove of the design.

IN SAN FRANCISCO, ENGAGEMENT (GATHERING INPUT) IS USUALLY DONE IN-PERSON MEETINGS AND PARTICIPANTS MAY NOT REFLECT THE FULL SPECTRUM OF STAKEHOLDER PERSPECTIVES.

Although holding an in-person community meeting can provide a good opportunity for dialogue, it does mean that the people who come to the meetings have an advantage – they are more likely to get "heard." Those who attend meetings are normally older (no dependent children to care for), richer

(more discretionary time, and more vested in community through property ownership), and English speaking (more confident of their ability to participate). We heard in our interviews (with both City staff and community members) that reaching out beyond those groups is necessary. Another disadvantage of in-person meetings is that if there are a lot of meetings, particularly over a long period of time, people can get "meeting fatigue" and participation wanes.

Advocates of integrating technology into community engagement processes tout its potential to expand the audience to citizens who are unlikely to attend a public meeting. These advocates also believe that they can overcome the "digital divide" to engage members of the public without computers and smart phones by integrating in a text-based component that can be used on all cell phones.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT IN THE CONSTRUCTION PHASE IS DIFFERENT FROM ENGAGEMENT AROUND DESIGN.

After construction starts, the goals of community engagement change. Engagement becomes much more about informing people about what's planned, and about keeping them in the loop as the construction is underway. As we will discuss below, that engagement uses different process tools than engagement to gather input, including web sites to share project information, flyers, mailings, as well as community meetings.

THESE PROJECTS CAN TAKE A LONG TIME.

We were reminded many times by our interviewees that these projects can take a long time. Some of them are extremely complicated and have multiple phases; in most cases, even a simple project can take several years. If these processes take too much time, community members can get impatient. Additionally, even supportive community members may "run out of gas" by the time the project gets to the appeals stage, which may have implications for the project's success.

IT'S DIFFICULT TO PIN DOWN THE ROLE (IF ANY) OF COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT IN PROJECT DELAYS.

We asked both City staff and community members about project delays and what caused them. Although we found many reasons for delays (see below), we did not see a strong positive correlation between community engagement and delay – that is, that more community engagement causes more delay. In fact, many interviewees said the opposite – that more community engagement, especially early on in the process, could reduce delays down the road.

In general, even in the case of a project that was the subject of much community controversy, we cannot say that community engagement itself caused the delays – that is, that putting in more time and effort to engage the community affected the schedule. In most cases, it's the concern over issues associated with the project – these concerns often requiring examination and resolution – that are the source of the delay. More (and better) community engagement can address those concerns.

On the other hand, community engagement can potentially bring in more opponents. In the case of the Glen Canyon Park project, timely and informative response to the initial surprise about the felling of trees would have helped better engagement with the community. It also might have contributed to a more organized response against the project resulting in further delays.

Below are some reasons that we heard for project delays:

- **Noe Valley Library:** the contracting process was delayed because the combination of a robust economy and the City's contracting requirements resulted in not enough competitive bids to proceed, so the project had to wait. When the economy got worse, they got bids – but the price went up.

- **Bayview Library:** also a delay because of the contracting process. The original contracts had to be replaced because local residents felt that the City used an insufficient proportion of labor from the Bayview neighborhood.

- **North Beach Library:** delayed because of appeals/lawsuits, as well by the need to do an extensive environmental review, which took about two years.

- **Visitacion Valley Library:** a back-and-forth with the community about the design extended the project schedule beyond original expectations. In addition, as there was a general interest in enlarging the size of the library building, it took a while to develop the creative financing required to make that happen.

- **Glen Canyon Park Renovation:** A few residents were surprised by the extent of tree removals included in the plan. Although residents participated in the outreach process, they missed this significant detail and felt that the Recreation and Parks Department was not responsive to a request for clarifying information. An individual from another neighborhood filed an appeal against the building permit for the project that was denied on technical and other grounds. Then another individual from another neighborhood, representing another non-governmental organization, filed an appeal with the Board of Supervisors against the issuance of a CEQA Categorical Exemption. This was denied on a technicality. Then the first appeal against the building permit was re-filed by the original filer as a Request for Rehearing. This was duly reheard and the permit was upheld. These appeals took a few months.

For the most part, one City staff person told us, the community engagement process did not delay parks projects. For the library projects, if there was a delay (for whatever reason), it did not have as much of an impact if the old library stayed open before the new library was complete, or, in the case of libraries that had to be rebuilt, if there were adequate bookmobiles on site. In addition, if a part of a project was stalled, some City staff members became adept at moving other parts of the project along in order to minimize impact on the overall project schedule.

SUCCESSFUL LOCAL ENGAGEMENT CAN IMPROVE THE COMMUNITY AND ENCOURAGE PRODUCTIVE CIVIC ACTIVITY.

The bottom line, we were told, is that good community engagement can strengthen a project by making it responsive to community needs, which improves the quality of life in that community.

In addition, several City staff and community members told us that a good community engagement process has positive implications that go beyond the scope of the project. Community engagement provided opportunities to meet and celebrate with neighbors, encouraged the additional raising of funds, (e.g., for library furnishings), and built local leadership for subsequent projects (e.g., those who organized to support the Portola library subsequently supported various local Park Bond projects).

PORTLAND EXAMPLE

INFORMATION-SHARING TOOLS

Traditional

E-BULLETIN AND NEWSLETTER

ATTEND COMMUNITY EVENTS – CONCERTS IN THE PARK

FLYERS AND DOOR HANDLES

PUBLIC MEETINGS AND OPEN HOUSES

ICE CREAM SOCIALS AND OTHER "PARTIES"

PRINT MEDIA (ESPECIALLY GOOD FOR COMPLEX TECHNICAL WORK)

TV COVERAGE (ONCE CONSTRUCTION STARTS)

Personal Approach

DOOR-TO-DOOR CONVERSATIONS

STOP & TALK: STANDING OUTSIDE THE GROCERY STORE

Online

EMAIL LIST

BLOG

TWITTER

FACEBOOK

WEB PAGE

FLICKR—TO PROVIDE PHOTO LIBRARY OF THE PROJECT

EXTERNAL JURISDICTIONS FINDINGS

PORTLAND: FINDINGS AND LESSONS LEARNED

The City of Portland has a progressive approach and commitment to community engagement for capital improvement projects. Portland demonstrates its commitment to meaningful public engagement in several ways: (1) it has public involvement principles and a suite of tools used for community engagement; (2) it has institutionalized the process of public involvement within the government system by providing a public involvement audit before the city council can approve the project; (3) it has established a shared governance structure to improve community engagement; and (4) most bureaus with significant capital improvement budgets have dedicated public involvement staff. We spoke with representatives from the Office of Neighborhood Involvement, Bureau of Water, Bureau of Environmental Services, Portland Parks & Recreation and a community advocate and reviewed various community engagement materials provided to us.

PORTLAND HAS PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT PRINCIPLES AND A SUITE OF TOOLS USED FOR COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT.

The City has a set of principles, indicators, and outcomes to provide a common set of expectations for community engagement. The indicators and outcomes also serve to provide public officials and agencies with tools to assess the quality of engagement. To guide the staff's work, the City has developed a toolkit that includes an environmental scan, a stakeholder assessment, a review of public involvement goals, and information on evaluating resources available for public engagement in advance of initiating the public engagement process. The City also provides recommendations for outreach tools based on assessment findings and public involvement process goals. The Bureaus of Water, Parks, and Environmental Services use the information learned through the assessment process to develop public involvement plans: basically an outline of activities and tools to engage the community during the capital improvement project. However, it is important to note that several bureaus do the assessment without talking to stakeholders. Typically, they conduct the assessment with the project manager, and staff will walk the site to identify potential impacts. One interviewee mentioned that if the project is really large, she will consult with community representatives during the assessment stage.

All the bureaus' public involvement staff work with technical teams to provide a suite of information-sharing tools (see sidebar). The staff assess their success by supporting projects that are responsive to the community's concerns and delivering the projects on time. Of note, the public involvement staff work with the project manager and engineer to ensure that the project schedule is adequate to accommodate the level of interest (or concern) within the community.

PORTLAND HAS INSTITUTIONALIZED THE PROCESS OF PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT WITHIN THE GOVERNMENT SYSTEM.

All projects that come before the City Council for approval require a public involvement statement providing information about what types of public involvement activities took place and outlining the effect of public involvement activities. The City has for many years required projects to provide other types of essential information, such as information about project financing, so this similarly institutionalizes Portland's commitment to community engagement. Essentially, the public involvement statement requirement has triggered the need for each staff member to have a comprehensive approach to engagement and to be able to explain the public involvement process.

The City is also conducting training with hundreds of staff so that they understand public involvement. The City trained everyone on the tools for public involvement including the process of conducting an assessment. As part of the training and emphasis on public involvement, leaders are working with staff to understand the value that the community can provide in a community engagement process. As a result of these efforts, the bureaus/agencies have taken the tools provided by the City and are tailoring the tools, such as the assessment, to meet each bureau's/agency's specific needs.

PORTLAND HAS ESTABLISHED A SHARED GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE TO ENHANCE COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT CAPACITY.

Staff from Portland talk about developing a shared governance approach: the city staff, officials, and the community all have something to contribute. The City staff believe they are managing the city for the community's benefit. The City has established a Public Involvement Advisory Council made up of city officials, staff, and community members. The purpose of the Public Involvement Advisory Council is to think about the best methods to engage the community. Although Portland is famously home to established neighborhood councils that, for many years have proven an effective organizing tool, more recently, changing demographics have necessitated other forms of organizing and engaging communities. The Public Involvement Advisory Council and Office of Neighborhood Involvement are developing competencies to expand engagement to new communities in Portland, such as immigrants, or ethnic groups, that tend to participate in civic activities other than those of the long-established, geographically-based neighborhood councils.

Portland has elected city commissioners that govern the City. Each commissioner takes responsibility for a bureau, making that official the point person for the public should concerns arise. Bureau staff keep commissioners' staff informed about capital improvement projects, as the commissioners represent another channel of information accessed by inquiring constituents. Another example of Portland's commitment to shared governance is that the Planning Bureau allocates public monies for technical assistance and communication to coalitions of the aforementioned neighborhood councils. Each coalition has an assigned planner who is the dedicated point of contact for planning projects.

MOST BUREAUS WITH SIGNIFICANT CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT BUDGETS HAVE PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT STAFF ESPECIALLY DEDICATED TO THE PROJECT.

Most of the city bureaus (Water, Parks, and Environmental Services), responsible for capital improvement have staff dedicated to community engagement, typically called public involvement staff. Their purpose is to inform, involve, or educate the community. The public involvement staff conduct assessments, develop public involvement plans, and work closely with project staff and the community to ensure projects are responsive and run smoothly. They are flexible, creative, and dedicated to their efforts (standing in front of grocery stores, holding "ice cream socials," walking door-to-door, and notifying construction staff about neighbor concerns). In the case of potential neighborhood disruption by a project, the public involvement staff in all the bureaus in the City coordinates with one another via email to manage the disruption. Also, when possible, they will work across bureaus to coordinate projects. Most importantly, the public involvement staff members report that they are able to deliver projects on time and budget, and project staff members appreciate the role of public involvement in delivering a successful project.

CITY STAFF MEMBERS MATTER.

The most important lesson learned from the Portland experience was articulated concisely by one of our interviewees: "We are responsible for meaningful public engagement for projects." In any community engagement process, the attitude and expertise of the staff members matter immensely. If staff believe in the importance of engaging the community and are trained well, the engagement will be authentic and productive. Following are some other lessons learned:

PRINCIPLES ALONE HAVE ALMOST NO EFFECT.

Developing some general principles of good public engagement is a good start, but not enough. The City learned that they have to provide specific tools and indicators that flow from their principles to have a real effect on community engagement, and to ensure that engagement processes are well designed and successful.

CREATING INCENTIVES FOR STAFF TO USE PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT HAS ALSO BEEN CRITICAL.

The hardest question for staff is to understand what value the public can bring. Without that understanding, public involvement leaders suggest the only staff motivation to engage is because it is the "Portland way." Through training, public involvement leadership helps staff understand the tenets of basic participatory democracy that community members bring resources and ideas to the table. As one interviewee said, "the community might not understand engineering of a pump station, but they understand the historical context around a site that affects the project and shapes community support. Projects are part of a whole fabric of civic work."

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT IS PART OF THE BUDGET.

One manager recommends that public involvement always be 5-10% of the total project budget. This ensures that funding is available to address any concerns and manage community input.

The technical staff (engineers and project managers), formerly resistant, now trust the role of public involvement staff to support capital improvement projects' success. One reported that the engineers have become huge advocates of community engagement because they appreciate that projects move forward without complaint or delay.

SAN JOSÉ: FINDINGS AND LESSONS LEARNED

The City of San José has two examples of projects with robust community engagement to show us. The first is the Strong Neighborhoods Initiative (SNI), that used redevelopment funds coupled with energetic community engagement to identify and build projects in a large number of low-amenity neighborhoods. The second is the Water Pollution Control Plant Master Plan, a multi-jurisdictional community engagement process that developed a preferred alternative plan prior to the start of the project permitting process.

We spoke with former members of the staff of the San José Redevelopment Agency, the Office of the City Manager, and the Environmental Services Department, as well as with community advocates in academia, business, and others who were selected as representatives of their communities. We also reviewed documentation of the community engagement activities of these projects.

STRONG NEIGHBORHOODS INITIATIVE

Early in the new millennium the San José Redevelopment Agency changed its approach for identifying projects: by consulting with the community rather than by consulting only with their planning staff. The agency created the Strong Neighborhoods Initiative and created eighteen Neighborhood Action Coalitions (NACs) to each identify and prioritize ten projects. SNI undertook to fund the top priorities, and to fund lower priorities as money became available. These efforts were staffed with approximately three community organizers for each Neighborhood Action Coalition. The teams were not only experienced as community organizers, but also had language skills that matched the communities that they served. Instead of considering the capital projects as ends in themselves, the projects were treated as part of the process of building the social fabric of the neighborhoods. Approximately one third of the lists of prioritized projects were classic capital projects. The remaining projects addressed social issues, or were "quick wins" intended to be responsive to coalition requests and to demonstrate good faith in the Agency's engagement with the communities.

The Strong Neighborhoods Initiative worked hard to strengthen the capacity of each neighborhood to function cohesively and effectively in partnership with redevelopment efforts. The amply staffed engagement effort built trust in the neighborhoods by conducting over 1,000 community meetings and by ensuring community access to staff members who spent thousands of hours face-to-face with community members. The City leadership was explicit that it was building a partnership with the neighborhoods in which the neighborhoods would set goals and the City would manage the projects. The main features of this approach were:

- Make the relationship with the community an explicit collaboration;

- Listen carefully to the community. "Sometimes neighborhoods just need a good listening to."

- Initiate the development of priorities by building on existing strengths;

- Respond to the priorities of the community;

- Be explicit about the amounts of funding available; and

- Create realistic timelines, and prevent open-ended plans.

SAN JOSÉ/SANTA CLARA WATER POLLUTION PREVENTION PLANT MASTER PLAN PROCESS

As the Redevelopment Agency developed the Strong Neighborhoods Initiative, the Environmental Services Department embarked on a plan to rebuild the ageing San José/Santa Clara Water Pollution Prevention Plant. Community engagement for the project was complicated because the plant serves several jurisdictions and the proposed re-configuration of the plant raised significant land-use issues. The objective of the community engagement plan was to ensure public support for the very considerable expenditures and consequent rate increases and for the land-use plan that would accompany it. This was expected to help the City Council feel confident about community support as they made decisions about this and to reduce the risks of litigation.

The Community engagement effort was based on careful "base-lining" to identify community concerns, and key stakeholders. Based on this research, the engagement consisted of two distinct efforts: a high-touch effort using a facilitated Community Advisory Group and a general outreach effort focused on public awareness of the plant. These two efforts were treated as separate although they used the same materials, and the messaging, terminology and tag lines were consistent for both efforts.

Most of the community input was received through the Community Advisory Group although surveys were used to obtain input from the broader community. The Community Advisory Group's agreements on land use questions and its vision for the plant had a real influence on the outcome of the planning process and on Council decisions.

Among the several challenges for community engagement in this project, the potentially long timeline was significant. The engagement required consistent participation by members of the Community Advisory Group for three years. To facilitate this, City staff mapped out what they thought was a reasonable timeline and held to it. Members interviewed acknowledged that the timeline was long, but felt their time was well spent. They noted that the meetings were very well staffed, that they received well-prepared materials, and that the Director of the Environmental Services Department always attended their meetings. Although this process prolonged the normal timing for this phase of a project, the schedule was considered necessary to meet the specified objective. The staff responsible for engagement recognized that the planning process had been purposefully prolonged to accommodate the community engagement effort. Even though this was not the schedule initially favored by engineers working on the project, one outreach staff person underscored that the engagement process was integral to the planning process.

HELPING RESIDENTS TO ENGAGE EFFECTIVELY INCREASES THEIR CIVIC ENGAGEMENT.

The Strong Neighborhoods Initiative produced millions of dollars worth of very well received neighborhood capital projects. The energetic organizing efforts of the initiative also produced 18 Neighborhood Action Coalitions, many of which have survived the disappearance of the Strong Neighborhoods Initiative, and the community activity produced Council District Neighborhood Groups in each of the city's ten council districts, as well as a citywide civic group that unites their efforts. Poor, and especially immigrant, communities that once stayed out of the political process are now fully engaged with their City Council members and with the staff of city agencies. So the community engagement efforts that sought to reinforce the fabric of communities as well as building their prioritized capital projects has succeeded, in the words of one resident, in "a grass-roots push to transform local government into a participatory democracy." Although less funding is available for capital projects, more people are participating in local government processes, for example, in the budgeting process.

IN-DEPTH ENGAGEMENT WITH STAKEHOLDERS IN THE PLANNING PROCESS BUILDS INSTITUTIONAL CONTINUITY OUTSIDE OF GOVERNMENT.

The community engagement efforts for the Plant Master Plan ended with a sense of considerable achievement. Although the agency has not called on the community to rejoin the process since entering the permitting process, the Community Advisory Group represents the best institutional memory of the planning process. The project continues, and we have yet to see whether or not the City will take advantage of the valuable legacy of the group's community engagement efforts.

LONG-TERM COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT REQUIRES TRANSPARENCY, ORGANIZATION, AND COMMITMENT.

Members of the Community Advisory Group sustained their participation over three years because they could see that their participation was valued and respected:

- The Department Director came to all their meetings as well as key staff members.

- They were provided with high-quality materials explaining complicated issues.

- Appropriate subject matter experts participated in meetings, so that answers to questions from the public were almost always available in real-time.

- Their planning process had an explicit timeline, and they were able to hold to it.

DENVER: FINDINGS AND LESSONS LEARNED

We chose Denver as one of our external jurisdictions because we had heard about two particular projects to explore that might have best practices to share: the Better Denver Bonds Program and the Denver Public Schools Bond. Both of these projects utilize citizen-led advisory committees to engage the public. We spoke with staff from the Denver Mayor's Office, the Colorado Governor's Office, the Denver Public Schools district, and several community leaders that were recommended to us by the staff people we interviewed.

The Better Denver Bonds were put on the ballot on 2007 as eight separate bond measures –
A through I – totaling $550 million. They spanned a number of issues relating to City infrastructure and new construction: (1) city buildings, (2) health and human services, (3) parks, (4) fire, (5) public works (streets, transportation), (6) libraries, (7) cultural rehabilitation, and (8) construction of new cultural facilities. Although they were separated on the ballot, they were developed as a package. The process was driven by Denver's mayor at the time, John Hickenlooper, and was carried out in three steps:

1. First, the Mayor put together internal teams of City staff – one for each of the issues – to review reports on infrastructure needs and come up with a list of the most important projects.

2. Then they took those lists and brought in teams made up of external people, forming eight committees. There was also a finance committee. The committee members (115 in all) were civic leaders, chosen for their expertise in the issues and standing in the community. The job of the committees was to identify the priority projects on the lists and put them in priority order, and ultimately to decide how much money to ask for. The committees met every few weeks for about six months.

3. There was also a public meeting component to the process, with a "speakers bureau" made up of committee members who agreed to make presentations at these public meetings, as well as at some meetings not convened by the City. (Note: although most of the people we interviewed applauded this component as the opportunity to bring the general public into the process, one of the interviewees felt that this part of the process could have been more "robust.")

City staff supported the teams and developed fairly specific criteria for how to choose projects (e.g., could the project be accomplished in 5 years?). There was also an executive committee made up of chairs of the other committees, plus a few additional people, who made the final decisions about what to recommend to the City Council. After the Executive Committee finished its work, the bond recommendations went to the City Council, who placed the measures on the ballot. All the bond measures passed.

After the bonds passed, the Mayor's office built a special internal team consisting of 45 project managers, most of whom were city employees. There is a separate program office for the bond management that reports directly to the Mayor, which includes a cross-City Bond Executive Committee (made up of high-level representatives of City departments) and, reporting to the Bond Executive Committee, a Bond Leadership Team (made up of portfolio managers and functional group leaders – e.g., streets and transportation, facilities, planning, etc.).

DENVER SCHOOL BONDS PROGRAM

The Denver Public Schools district is one of the fastest-growing large urban districts in the country, and like many districts, had been experiencing some significant maintenance and infrastructure issues: in some cases, influencing potential health and safety. The district needed to build community awareness of its growing infrastructure needs and needed to prioritize what was most critical.

District voters passed a bond measure in 2008 that totaled $450 million (the largest one in the state at the time) and another one in November 2012 that was about the same size, plus a mill levy to fund maintenance.

For the 2012 bond, the District Superintendent appointed a community project advisory committee that met from Feb-June 2012. The committee's job was to figure out the package. The committee had about 75 people on it, with about 40-50 actually participating. The meetings were open to the public, with opportunity for public comment.

Post bond-passage, the District has continued to use the advisory group process to engage community members. For each new design, a Design Advisory Group advises the District architect. Each Design Advisory Group consists of 8-15 people, chosen via application, meeting about once a week for 5 weeks. The District has also convened Program Advisory Committees, which advise on the academic program that would be provided by the school, and naming committees. A citizens' oversight committee oversees the whole post-bond process.

ADVISORY COMMITTEES WORK.

In general, our Denver interviewees told us that the external advisory committee process helped form a bridge between the City and the general public. Most felt that even if a member of the public was not personally involved, the advisory committee process made everything transparent and helped build public trust and confidence. In addition:

- The committees were inclusive rather than exclusive, so they built a broad constituency of support. There was an intention to have different interests represented.

- The fact that committee members had expertise and time to think through difficult issues helped them get deeper into discussions in a way that can't be done in one community meeting. The committee discussions then helped focus the agenda for the public meetings.

- Strong support of the committees by staff was critical.

TECHNOLOGY USE IN SAN FRANCISCO AND ELSEWHERE

SAN FRANCISCO EXISTING PRACTICES

The City of San Francisco is using technology for a range of initiatives through the Mayor's Office of Civic Innovation, the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission (SFPUC) and other departments. Both the Recreation and Parks Department and the Branch Library Improvement Program have a web presence for capital improvement projects. This section provides a brief overview of existing practices and makes recommendations for enhancing community engagement through the use of technology.

Interviewees talk about initial work in this area as focusing on helping the public access government information and provide feedback. One interviewee sees *Open Government 2.0* as moving beyond asking for feedback to responding to feedback. Chicago and Philadelphia are cited as good examples, with much of this work occurring through participatory budgeting.

The Mayor's Office of Civic Innovation is working to "transform government for the 21st century." One element of that effort is citizen engagement. In April 2012, the office launched ImproveSF.com, an online program that connects community members to civic challenges. The City has explored a number of ideas on ImproveSF, including designing a library card, submitting ideas to provide healthy food in the Central Market area, and most recently, open data. ImproveSF creates an online engagement forum

to promote public brainstorming and idea sharing. The SFPUC Urban Watershed Management Program uses Metroquest to inform residents about complex, novel approaches to stormwater management and to elicit opinions about its application in their neighborhoods.

A major initiative of the Office of Civic Innovation is "open data" – making government data and information sharing readily available to the interested public. Sharing restaurant inspection data online is a recent example. In 2013, the Office of Civic Engagement is building on previous success to create Living Innovation Zones – to explore untapped city assets; the Civic Marketplace – to make civic solutions more sustainable; Business One-Stop – to simplify permitting for business entrepreneurs; and Culture Change – to introduce innovation across the city.

The San Francisco 2012 Parks Bond is using its web site with a blog to update the community on timeframes and progress of individual park renovation projects. These include fact sheets with budget information and timelines. The Branch Library Improvement Program also has a web site. (Although, since the library projects are mostly complete and the web site is currently limited to the libraries' opening day festivities, it is difficult to discern how library construction web sites were used during construction.)

Interviewees report that the biggest challenge to online engagement is getting people to participate. As one interviewee, said, "digital doesn't always mean more inclusive." On the other hand, interviewees suggest that using online technology to solicit input gives individuals another way to participate and contribute without needing to show up in person. Staff have struggled to get high participation on online efforts – one key to success is finding the right partners and focusing on "hot" topics. Other ideas include crafting the questions in a way that invites participation and making sure that the answers are needed and that staff can respond to the input.

Interviewees also identified using mobile/cellular networks to engage audiences as an untapped resource in San Francisco. While many people do not have or know how to use a computer, nearly everyone has a mobile phone and is able to receive texts. In many countries, mobile phones are a prime vehicle for outreach. Innovative software is also providing opportunity for people to respond to questions in addition to receiving input. Another recommendation is tagging events effectively so the public can search and find events on the web.

TECHNOLOGY TOOLS FOR CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS

- *Community Networking:* Next Door

- *Public Brainstorming and Idea Sharing:* ImproveSF (which uses MindMixer), Metroquest, Open Town Hall, Crowd Gauge, Brainstorm Anywhere, Neighborland, Co-Vision

- *Information Sharing:* web sites, blogs, project web pages, public service announcements through mobile devices, email

- *Crowdsourcing:* soliciting broad scale opinion in the form of yes/no from lots of people to inform thinking.

- *Mobile:* Poll Everywhere, Textizen

- *Tagging Events for Search:* Schema.org

- *Sentiment Analysis: applying tools that marketing companies use to "mine" online information to assess public opinion.* Gnip, Ushahidi, Crimson Hexagon, and Datasift

RECOMMENDED BEST PRACTICES

ONLINE TOOLS ARE YET ANOTHER VEHICLE TO SHARE IDEAS AND INPUT.

According to one interviewee, "technology tools should strengthen or amplify community engagement." These tools do not replace face-to-face interaction, but they can expand outreach to audiences that might not engage face-to-face. Citizens who might not attend a meeting to engage on a topic might join in an online forum to learn about a proposed project and solicit information. Allowing people to provide input online is also useful. People can engage either on their own time or in a setting with others, like a webinar, or a "hackathon", which give the public opportunities to share creative ideas.

EXISTING COMMUNITY NETWORKS ARE IMPORTANT VEHICLES FOR EXPANDING THE AUDIENCE ONLINE.

For these tools to be successful and engage a range of audiences, the City will still need to draw on existing networks to solicit participation. Successful efforts talk about leveraging existing networks of community leaders and organizations to get people to sign on to online engagement. Determining how to get people who are most affected to weigh in is a challenge. In Minneapolis, staff went door-to-door to encourage people to sign up and engage online.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT STAFF CAN ASSESS STAKEHOLDERS' DIGITAL USE.

In the early phase when staff are assessing issues and stakeholders, staff can also explore which technology tools are used by stakeholders, helping staff understand how to better reach them.

EXPANDING THE USE OF OUTREACH TO MOBILE PHONES IS AN UNTAPPED RESOURCE FOR SAN FRANCISCO.

As interviewees state, many countries are using mobile outreach as a tool for public service announcement and information sharing. Importantly, these techniques do not necessarily require smart phones. The City can explore mobile outreach as a tool for sharing information and potentially soliciting input as tools become more sophisticated.

FINAL ANALYSIS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Our interviews, both in San Francisco and in external jurisdictions, surfaced many common themes. Every city has similar challenges, and is struggling with similar issues, below:

- **Input versus outreach:** When is it appropriate to ask for input from the community, as opposed to focusing on letting the community know what's going on?

- **Who to involve:** How do we go beyond the "usual suspects" and reach everyone who has (or should have) an interest in the project?

- **How to get community input:** What processes do we use to get input from the community and how do we weigh that input?

For the San Francisco interviews, we focused on understanding and communicating the current landscape of community engagement. We found that San Francisco had useful lessons to share and its own set of best practices that it should continue using.

Armed with what we had learned in San Francisco, we moved on to the external jurisdictions interviews, where we were able to take the opportunity to reinforce/check out some assumptions about what we were seeing in San Francisco and identify some refinements. We also learned about some new tools, including :

- The Strong Neighborhoods Initiative in San José, which considers the development of the community's capacity to engage as part of the process of public engagement. Substantial effort was put into community organizing in order to develop clear priorities with broad community support to guide the selection of capital projects.

- The community engagement process for the San José/Santa Clara Water Pollution Control Plant Master Plan was a three-year public engagement phase prior to the permitting/CEQA phase. The process included regular meetings of a Community Advisory Group involving participation at every meeting by senior agency staff from Planning and Plant Management, and the Department Director.

- The work with City staff in Portland, using both a "carrot" approach (building the capacity of staff to engage the community and to appreciate and understand that community engagement will save time and money) and a "stick" (institutionalizing community engagement as a requirement for each project).

- The use of advisory committees in Denver, convening respected civic leaders to take the time to work through difficult issues, and then using community meetings and presentations to communicate their thought process as part of a larger public education process.

MAP OF ENGAGEMENT BEST PRACTICES / TOOLS FOR SUCCESS

In the Summary of Findings is a map of what we consider the most important milestones in community engagement practices in a typical project's life. The diagram focuses on the stages after bond approval since that is the focus of the CGOBOC's work.

PHASE 1: PROJECT INITIATION AND PROCESS DESIGN

Phase 1 in the timeframe is project scheduling and initiation, conducting an assessment both externally to identify stakeholders and issues and internally to assess ability to fulfill the schedule, staff capacity, and approval processes. Depending on the level of complexity determined in the assessment, staff may convene an advisory group to oversee and consult on the community engagement process.

PHASE 2: DESIGN CONCEPT

Phase 2 community engagement has a much more public component, with community meetings, online engagement, and internal planning meetings all focused toward designing a project that meets the project goals and is responsive to the community. At the same time, staff members need to organize and manage the approval and permitting process in concert with community input.

PHASE 3: CONSTRUCTION INFORMATION SHARING

Once the project has taken shape, staff can shift to information sharing during construction, focusing primarily on outreach and keeping people in the loop to stay abreast of construction information.

FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS

Following are some final thoughts about what we consider to be the most important ways to create effective, cost-efficient, and successful community engagement in San Francisco.

USE THE OPPORTUNITY TO ENGAGE PEOPLE AROUND THE DESIGN ELEMENTS OF THE PROJECT.

People liked being asked their opinion, and design is an area that really provides an opportunity for input. In addition, community members can contribute good ideas that staff hasn't heard. The more questions staff can ask of the community, the more productive the conversation will be.

ENGAGE STRATEGICALLY.

Community engagement is tough. It takes time and energy – on the City's part and on the community's part, too. Don't bother with the small stuff, and don't burn people out. Use precious engagement tools, particularly high-resource tools like meetings, strategically. But when you do, it's important to give people real decisions to make.

BE TRANSPARENT ABOUT HOW YOU REACH DECISIONS SO THAT PEOPLE UNDERSTAND THE TRADE-OFFS.

People want to be listened to, but they also know you can't please everyone. It will help everyone – the City and the community – if you can be clear about how you make decisions and why you made the decisions you made. People will appreciate that and will feel more heard.

ENGAGE BROADLY ENOUGH SO THAT YOU UNDERSTAND DIFFERENT POINTS OF VIEW.

You don't have to do what everyone says (that's impossible, anyway), but it's helpful to know what everyone thinks. Bringing together participants with opposing perspectives encourages them to consider conflicting interests and to understand the trade-offs involved in decision-making. You can't assume that silence is tacit approval.

START EARLY AND PLAN AHEAD.

Assessment is critical; the more proactive the City can be, the better. The project plan needs to be adjusted to reflect the level of community interest -- if unanticipated, that can cause the project to go

off schedule, which costs money. Even before your first meeting, you have to do your homework. You have to know who the community leaders are and understand individual perspectives. You also have to understand the larger context.

USE A VARIETY OF WAYS TO REACH PEOPLE.

We have outlined a number of tools here to engage and involve people – in-person, using technology, posting bulletins, etc. People engage differently, so use a variety of tools to reach out. You can also use partner organizations to get the word out, and go to other people's meetings as well as convening your own.

WORK WITH OTHER DEPARTMENTS.

The Mayor's Office of Civic Innovation and the Planning Department are experimenting with new and improved ways to enhance engagement. Work with them, as well as other departments, so you don't have to reinvent the wheel.

BE FLEXIBLE.

Even if you do your homework, you won't be able to predict every community response. Build flexibility into your project plans. Especially if you have multiple stages and phases in a plan, something can always move forward.

VALUES AND RELATIONSHIPS ARE IMPORTANT TO BUILD TRUST.

Creating and strengthening relationships in the community is an integral part of engagement. It can help broaden your base of communication, and can also build trust. Central to that trust is that City staff understand the value the public brings.

USE OF PROFESSIONALS CAN BE HELPFUL.

Community engagement requires expertise. If you can, build into your budget the ability to hire outside facilitators, communications professionals, and process consultants. If you are expecting conflict, you may want to consider bringing in a mediator.

DON'T BE AFRAID OF LOSING COMPLETE CONTROL.

A well-organized engagement process that allows community members some free rein can produce enthusiastic and productive participation. You may need to give up some control, but you'll get more out of it.

USE THE PROJECT TO EMPOWER THE COMMUNITY TO SHAPE THEIR NEIGHBORHOOD.

We heard from one of our interviewees that, in general, the structure of a capital projects process is designed so that the community engagement is unlikely to be very productive. So, instead of trying to jam community engagement into a traditional capital projects process, think of building the plan around engagement.

SUGGESTED PRINCIPLES AND BEST PRACTICES

Below are suggestions for principles that CGOBOC and City staff could use to inform their community engagement work. These principles incorporate our recommendations (above) and include some of the best practices that came out of our research in San Francisco and in other jurisdictions. The framework was adapted from the City of Portland Public Involvement Principles (4 August 2010), and content was also drawn from the Portland principles, as well as principles developed by the Institute for Local Government (an affiliate of the League of California Cities and the California State Association of Counties), the International Association for Public Participation, and the National Coalition for Dialogue and Deliberation.

PRINCIPLES	BEST PRACTICES	OUTCOMES
Public agencies that achieve excellence in community engagement follow these principles.	These best practices generally indicate agencies are striving to implement the principles.	Quality community engagement processes often produce the following outcomes and benefits.
Early Involvement Public involvement is an early and integral part of issue and opportunity identification, concept development, design, and implementation of city programs and projects.	Community members help shape priorities and projects. Staff members conduct an assessment to identify stakeholders and issues. Key stakeholders are involved as early as possible. Key stakeholders help define the problem, issues, and project elements. Broad community contributes to their needs and hopes for project. Community members help define the process for outreach and decision-making.	Early and broad community support for the process and project. Better project scoping, more predictable processes, and more realistic and defendable assessments of process time and resource needs. Identification of potential problem areas before they become an issue.

PRINCIPLES	BEST PRACTICES	OUTCOMES
Building Relationships and Community Capacity Public involvement processes invest in and develop long-term, collaborative working relationships and learning opportunities with community partners and stakeholders.	Community members feel heard and feel that their input is valued and used by city staff. Community members trust the process and city staff. City staff have consistent and reliable connections with stakeholders and community groups that facilitate effective two-way communications. City staff hold periodic meetings. City staff engage in ongoing monitoring of relationships. City staff continually assess which communities and populations are missing key information or are not involved.	Processes leave neighborhoods and communities stronger, better informed. Communities increase their capacity to participate in the future, and develop new leaders.
Informed Participation Participants in the public engagement process have information and/or access to expertise consistent with the work that sponsors and conveners ask them to do.	Materials that are lengthy or complex are made available with additional lead-time to ensure community members can review and understand the materials, clarify with staff, and check back with communities that they represent as needed. Design or technical experts are enlisted for peer review or ensure quality outcomes. Review information is readily available to community. Community provides input in selecting technical or design expertise or contributes to the criteria for selecting experts.	Processes yield projects based on sound expertise, and communities increase their understanding of the technical elements of project.

PRINCIPLES	BEST PRACTICES	OUTCOMES
Good Quality Process Design and Implementation Public involvement processes and techniques are well-designed to appropriately fit the scope, character, and impact of a policy or project. Processes adapt to changing needs and issues as they move forward.	The public is allowed an opportunity to give meaningful input regarding what the community needs from government. Process facilitators have the skills, experience, and resources needed to be effective. Mediators are available when needed to assist in resolving conflicts. Careful planning of project timelines take into account the length of time community, media, neighborhoods, and organizations require for effective community engagement. The city communicates information in a timely manner so people and organizations can respond. City staff engage the community in designing the process on an ongoing basis, especially in projects with intense interest in the project. City staff periodically solicit participant input on how the process is working for them. The community has input on whether engagement processes should change or adapt.	People understand the purpose of the project and the community's role in the process. Conflict is reduced, as are challenges to the project. Communication is more efficient and effective. Outcomes are more sustainable. Public confidence and trust built through good processes can carry on to future processes.

PRINCIPLES	BEST PRACTICES	OUTCOMES
Inclusiveness and Equity Public dialogue and decision-making processes identify, reach out to, and encourage participation of the community in its full diversity. Processes respect a range of values and interests and the knowledge of those involved. Historically excluded individuals and groups are included authentically in processes, activities, and decision and policymaking. Impacts, including costs and benefits, are identified and distributed fairly.	A strong effort is made to accommodate diverse needs, backgrounds, values, and challenges. An assessment is made to identify communities affected by a project or policy. Active participation of these communities is made a high priority. City staff identify the demographics, values, and desires of and impacts on affected communities early on to shape the process design and re-affirm throughout the process. Participation in the process reflects the diversity of the community affected by the outcome. Culturally appropriate and effective strategies and techniques are used to involve diverse constituencies. City staff follow up with under-engaged groups to see how the process worked for their community members.	City policies, projects, and programs respond to the full range of needs and priorities in the community. Trust and respect for government increases among community members. City staff and members of more traditionally engaged communities understand the value of including under-engaged communities. Equity is increased by actively involving communities that historically have been excluded from decision-making processes. Members of under-engaged communities increase their participation in civic life. New policies do not further reinforce the disadvantaged position of historically disadvantaged people or groups.
Authenticity A primary purpose of the public engagement process is to generate public views and ideas to help shape local government action or policy, rather than persuade residents to accept a decision that has already been made. The public contributes ideas, preferences, or recommendations, which decisions makers seriously consider.	City staff and the public understand decision-making and the role of people's input in the process. Technical and other information are available to inform people about the project, trade-offs, and choices to support effective decision-making. Decision makers consider public input, and then communicate decision outcomes, explaining the role of public input in forming those decisions.	People understand their role and contribution in decision-making. Community support for decision making and decision outcomes. Projects move forward, strengthened by community input.

PRINCIPLES	BEST PRACTICES	OUTCOMES
Transparency Public decision-making processes are accessible, open, honest, and understandable. Members of the public receive the information they need, and with enough lead time, to participate effectively. There is clarity and transparency about public engagement process sponsorship, purpose, design, and how decision makers will use the process results.	Roles and responsibilities are clearly identified, understood, and accepted. All meetings are open to the public and held in venues that are accessible and welcoming to community members. Relevant documents and materials are available to the public. Materials are available prior to meetings so people are informed and ready to participate fully. City staff use a variety of communication tools (blogs, signage, bulletin boards, e-newsletters, etc.) tailored to keep the public abreast of the project. Adequate time and resources are given for translation of materials and interpretation services and accommodations at meetings and forums as necessary.	Community members have a clear understanding of the process and their role and are better able to participate effectively. Government understanding of community opinions and needs is enhanced.
Accessible Participation Public engagement processes are broadly accessible in terms of location, time, and language, and support the engagement of residents with disabilities.	Meetings occur in accessible facilities at times that will maximize the ability of the community to attend. Language interpretation and translation of materials is done in a culturally competent manner. City staff are aware of the diverse needs of the project's constituents and work with groups in different forums to solicit input and support effective participation. (i.e., attend groups' existing meetings or meet with people individually)	Project is responsive to diverse constituencies. The City has facilities and projects that are useful to people with differing abilities and cultural norms and behaviors.

PRINCIPLES	BEST PRACTICES	OUTCOMES
Feedback to Participants Local officials communicate ultimate decisions back to participants in the process and the broader public, with a description of how the public input was considered and used.	City staff and elected officials communicate about the decisions, and the role of the community in shaping those decisions.	The public trusts the authenticity of community engagement and increases trust of city staff and elected officials. The public understands how their input was used and the outcome reached.
Evaluation Sponsors and participants evaluate each public engagement process with the collected feedback and learning shared broadly and applied to future engagement efforts.	City staff seek feedback at meetings about process and content. City staff close a project by surveying in person or by phone or by electronic format the public for feedback on the community engagement process.	The public indicates that the process was transparent and appropriate. The public understands how its input was used and the outcome reached. Participants feel that it was worth their time to contribute in this effort.

CONCLUSION

We hope this report has been helpful in identifying some best practices for the City as it works to engage community around bond-funded capital projects. Although the bottom line is that we can't say for sure that better community engagement will save money or shorten the project planning/ construction phase of a project, that is definitely the sense of people engaged in the work. Although many search for the one recipe for the perfect community engagement process – number of meetings, timing, who to involve, etc. – no such recipe exists. However, making a commitment to listen and engage authentically is the foundation for any successful community engagement process. In the long run, better community engagement should reduce project uncertainty and help manage risk.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: SELECT BIBLIOGRAPHY AND OTHER RESOURCES

SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY/RECOMMENDED READING

Alarcon de Morris, Amalia, and Leistner, Paul. 2009. From Neighborhood Association System to Participatory Democracy: Broadening and Deepening Public Involvement in Portland, Oregon. *National Civic Review,* Volume 98, Issue 2, 47-55.

Fung, Archon. 2006. Varieties of Participation in Complex Governance. *Public Administration Review,* December 2006, 66-75.

Hoene, Christopher, Kingsley, Christopher, and Leighninger, Matt. 2013. *Bright Spots in Community Engagement: Case Studies of U.S. Communities Creating Greater Civic Participation from the Bottom Up.* Washington, DC: National League of Cities.

Institute for Local Government. 2007. *Planning Public Forums: Questions to Guide Local Officials.* Sacramento, CA.

Kopell, Malka R. 2010. Civic Engagement: Bringing in the Real Experts: A Commentary on the Shaping America's Youth Initiative. *Pediatrics,* 126;S90.

Leighninger, Matt. 2006. *The Next Form of Democracy: How Expert Rule is Giving Way to Shared Governance … and Why Politics Will Never Be the Same.* Nashville, TN: Vanderbilt University Press.

OTHER RESOURCES: ORGANIZATIONS/WEB SITES

Deliberative Democracy Consortium

   http://www.deliberative-democracy.net

Institute for Local Government

   http://www.ca-ilg.org

International Association for Public Participation

   http://www.iap2.org

National Coalition for Dialogue and Deliberation

http://ncdd.org

USING TECHNOLOGY FOR COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT IN CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS: A LIST OF EXAMPLES

IN SAN FRANCISCO

ImproveSF

http://www.improvesf.com/

San Francisco Public Utilities Commission Mission & Valencia Green Gateway Project

http://valencia.metroquest.com/

IN OTHER JURISDICTIONS

Denver Public Schools: Bond and Mill Levy Information Site

http://bond.dpsk12.org/

City of Portland: Interactive Map with Construction, Project, and other Data

http://www.portlandmaps.com/

OTHER NETWORKING/ENGAGEMENT PLATFORMS FOR SAN FRANCISCO PROJECTS

Textizen: Getting citizen feedback via cell phone

Poll Everywhere: Text message polls and voting and audience participation

Twilio: Helping citizen engagement platforms cross the digital divide through SMS platforms

Nextdoor: Social networking with your neighborhood

PublicStuff: Way to report concerns to city officials

Open Town Hall: Government leaders need online forums that build public trust in government

PlaceMatters: Better decisions and government

Schema: Event tagging to enhance search

APPENDIX B: LIST OF INTERVIEWEES

SAN FRANCISCO

Ron Alameida	San Francisco Department of Public Works
Sarah Ballard	San Francisco Recreation and Parks Department
Brian Bannon	Chicago Public Libraries
Maureen Berry	San Francisco Public Utilities Commission
Carmen Chu	Assessor-Recorder of San Francisco and former member of the San Francisco Board of Supervisors
Linda D'Avirro	Parks and Recreation Open Space Advisory Committee
Kim Drew	Community member
Jake Gilchrist	San Francisco Recreation and Parks Department
Phil Ginsburg	San Francisco Recreation and Parks Department
Patrick Hannan	City Fields Foundation
Luis Herrera	City of San Francisco
Jen Isacoff	Trust for Public Land
Michelle Jeffers	San Francisco Public Library
Ian Kalin	Socrata
Dawn Kamalanathan	San Francisco Recreation and Parks Department
Rachel Kraai	San Francisco Public Utilities Commission
Mindy Linetzky	San Francisco Department of Public Works
Fran Martin	Visitacion Valley Planning Alliance
Gabriel Metcalf	SPUR
Lynne Newhouse Segal	Friends of Lafayette Park Group
Aaron Peskin	Community member and former member of the San Francisco Board of Supervisors
Mike Theriault	San Francisco Building and Construction Trades Council
Meredith Thomas	San Francisco Parks Alliance
Lydia Vincent	Community member
Ruth Wallace	Portola Neighborhood Library Campaign

SAN JOSÉ

Jennifer Garnett	City of Sunnyvale
Ernest Guzman	City Manager's Office
Kip Harkness	former Director of the San José Strong Neighborhoods Initiative
Carrie Jensen	Community member
Matt Krupp	City of Palo Alto
Ed Rast	Community member
Dayana Salazar	San Jose State University
Tony Santos	Community member

DENVER

Diane Barrett	Mayor's Office, City and County of Denver
Kendra Black	Community member
Benita Duran	Office of Community Engagement, Denver Public Schools
Jim Griesemer	Community member
Scott Hergenrader	CH2M HILL
Paula Herzmark	Community member
Gretchen Hollrah	Office of CFO, City and County of Denver
Don Hunt	Department of Transportation, City of Denver
Steve Kaplan	Community member
Roxane White	Office of the Governor, State of Colorado

PORTLAND

Megan Calahan	Bureau of Environmental Services, City of Portland
Tim Hall	Community Information & Involvement, Portland Water Bureau
Elizabeth Kennedy-Wong	Portland Parks & Recreation
Paul Leistner	Office of Neighborhood Involvement, City of Portland
Linda Nettekoven	Hosford-Abernethy Neighborhood Development (HAND)

NOTE: As we wanted to encourage interviewees to be as candid as possible, we informed them that although they would be identified as being on the interview list, the contents of the interviews would not be attributed to anyone specifically, so we do not include the notes from the interviews in this document.

APPENDIX C: SURVEY INSTRUMENTS

SAMPLE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR STAFF

1. Could you please provide an overview of the processes the City/County uses to engage the community about large capital projects?

- Purpose

- Outreach

- Meetings, hearings

- Written materials

- Other?

(Please provide as much detail as possible on the above.)

   a. Describe the processes used to get input from community members as well as the process used to inform community members.

   b. Are these two purposes – to inform and to get input – considered separately or do they generally happen at the same time?

2. From your point of view, how successful is the City/County's community engagement? What works well, and what do you wish you had done differently?

3. What feedback, if any, have you received on the City/County's engagement processes? If you were to gauge the perspective of others, how successful would they rate the community engagement efforts?

4. In general, what is the nature of objections to capital projects? What are the most significant problems that community members raise? How does the City/County address them?

5. How does the City/County structure community engagement within the schedule for the project as a whole?

   a. At what points are the community engaged? (Please be as specific as possible.)

   b. In retrospect, what is your assessment of how well (or poorly) the community engagement timing has affected the timing of the projects?

   c. Have community objectives derailed your plans (budget, scope, schedule)? In those cases, how did you adjust the plans?

   d. If you experienced project delays, what were the lessons learned?

   e. Did you make substantial changes to scope or design as a result of community engagement? How?

6. Please describe any significant community input that did NOT come at the times you solicited it – the nature of that engagement, how it came about, and its effect on the timing of the project.

7. What project-related topics are generally covered by the engagement process, and when?

8. What is your internal communications process (with other staff, elected officials) about what to expect (and what is coming out of) the community engagement process?

9. Who else would you recommend we speak with?

SAMPLE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS: COMMUNITY

1. What is your opinion of the community engagement processes you've seen conducted by the City/County on large capital projects?

2. What do you feel has been done particularly well by the City/County? What could have been done better?

3. How well informed in general do you feel about project plans? (Is the outreach/information distributed adequate?) What topics/project issues are of particular interest to you?

4. What opportunities do you have to provide input during the process? (Please be as specific as possible) Do you feel that you had enough opportunity to give input during the process? If not, what could be done to provide more opportunity for input?

5. How do you feel your input is received and used? (Do the agencies and city officials listen to you and take your comments seriously?)

6. What effects, if any, do the community engagement processes conducted by the City/County have on your community in general? Are you generally able to achieve your goals through the community engagement process (meetings, public comment, etc.) or do you have to pursue other means of input (lawsuit, appeal, etc.)?

7. Who else would you recommend we speak with?