

Meetings

Available reasonable time of day for meetings.

Announce notification for meetings.

Diversity begins with dialogue!

More good faith efforts by local governments to engage citizens – town meetings, panel discussions.

Involve citizens in small meeting groups (face-to-face) first to build trust and open communication to get their input.

More rap sessions

Public meetings at a time when citizens can attend.

True dialogue

Need to work through communities and across communities – maybe with “sister” civic leagues to facilitate understanding.

Leadership commitment to effective listening and acting on the voice of the customers.

Encouraging smaller focused group discussions.

Better accessibility and prompt responses from local government.

One SPACE in newspaper to announce.

Training & Teaching

Train/teach elected officials good listening techniques to use when citizens speak to them at all meetings or interactions.

Need training in how to evaluate information – reliability, etc.

More classes and instruction on civil discourse.

Regionalism

More regional emphasis by governments and media.

Do not feel that information quality and flow are the major issues. Getting people to engage is more important. Easing the sense of cynicism is important to accomplishing this.

Constitutional

The fundamental issue is centered in the concept and principle of “representative” government and how do citizens communicate their interests and concerns to the people they have elected to “represent” them?

Ensure what you’re deciding on is Constitutional and benefits all.

Respectful Inclusion

Actions from elected officials that **match** stated values and policy. True transparency in government; an end to back room deals and rule by a select few.

First, you must understand each community and each neighborhood. , its culture, demographics. The results should provide the vehicle of reaching the citizens. Church groups, social clubs, radio, schools

More timely solicitation of citizen input – no narrowing option to government’s approved choices.

Willingness to learn – open to different points of view.

Address the disconnect between citizens not feeling asked to engage and leaders (supposed) desire for citizen engagement.

Listening to the other party “respectfully.” Value the experiences, opinions, perspective of each party/group. Authority figures should not be paternalistic with groups, people. Say what you mean and mean what you say.

Make certain that all persons feel accepted – when information is given. Most persons are sensitive when they don’t know something. “Show response!”

Need to look at the journalistic model of focusing on conflict.

Greater shared sense of community.

Make sure people feel their opinions matter

Transparency/Honesty

TRANSPARENCY and Unbiased media.

Honesty, transparency, factual, no government involvement.

Add development of more comprehensive goals as result of more inclusive planning deliberations.

Encourage full disclosure and openness.

Sincerity and transparency.

Greater transparency and access.

Full disclosure and transparency in all government operations and provide Web accessibility to that information.

Mutual trust =transparency in government.

Be honest in reason for the decision – show proof of why – documentation with facts and actual figures.

Honesty and more trust – If someone has been truthful in the past, then you would trust him.

To make public decision making better and improve trust – transparency of government, recorded votes, open meetings, no decisions made in informal settings.

We need transparency from and greater openness in local and regional government. In addition, a greater willingness to listen to one another.

Increase mutual trust.

Technology

A common shared repository for data, information and opinion, accessible to the public in a variety of ways – information portal.

Use information technology to educate and highlight the conversation between citizens and elected officials to make representative democracy work better.

Employ new technology to reach citizens i.e. cell phones.

PBS Pro and con forums.

An alert system – “information alert” (delivery mode) could be set up that is transmittable through our phones, cellular and TV channels. If it is really really urgent – text people or put on bulletin board or flash marquees for driving public.

Web sites: news about issues.

Internet/ways to make information more accessible to people/advertising/etc. -text messages/emails/new technology.

Region-wide blog involving issue experts and citizens in the broader sense.

Utilize the internet to disseminate and collect opinions.

Create a forum for discussing outcomes online as well

A regional interacting Web site that identifies problems/needs and elicits citizen input.

Citizen email information (snail mail for those without computers) from local government on issues.

Make it easier for governmental and civic information to be located and in a timely fashion. Better web sites, better use of media especially public access television.

Finding ways to get information out to, and information from, people who are underrepresented as evidenced by data in report. Those living here less than 15 years; Those with incomes less than 50,000; Diverse in Race (A.F. Americans, Hispanics, etc.); Youth

Create a unified radio channel to access for information.

More media engagement – local PBS, but especially local TV news, which is deplorable in its present state.

Provide all citizens access through libraries, civic center (computers and training).

Put all the city/county TV stations on some common channel accessible to all – perhaps through WHRO.

Information Gathering / Surveys

Phone/Internet/survey/other.

Once a month have citizens email City Council with a concern or suggestion.

Phone surveys.

Use polls to collect information on-going

Neighborhood surveys (door to door) or through active civic leagues to discover how residents get information locally and how they would prefer to communicate their ideas/responses to government agencies.

Data (Better/Improved)

Certain planning info could be mandated of each city (such as specifics of classes of housing and income) put on a city Website to be available and comparable across the region.

Need basic background info on major regional issues (often hear only from people with a strong position – not broadly reasoned or understood)

Distinguish between data, information and knowledge.

More detail and honesty in analysis and presentation of data to citizens.

We are inundated with information but not always useful information. Need more good local information.

Issues always include how the solutions alternatives will be specifically financed.