



Public Engagement Plan

County Project 26-47

Dakota County Transportation



1. Introduction

Public engagement is a critical aspect in ensuring that all Dakota County government services are performed efficiently, effectively and in a responsive manner. Dakota County strives to ensure that the proper level of public engagement is realized in all projects. To identify this proper level of engagement, the County utilizes a public engagement process tool that is standardized across the organization and results in consistent approaches and outcomes. If a project scores a 1-3 a public engagement plan must be created. The levels of engagement and what each entails in terms of description and specific examples can be seen in the table below.

Level	Description	Examples
Level 1 – Inform and Listen	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explain, educate or gather information. • Use when priorities and decisions are still being shaped. • Can explain the issue, while gathering information to understand and perspectives and ideas of citizens. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public meeting with information presentation and collection of comments. • Open houses. • A webpage with information about a project but also provides an email address for people to submit questions or comments.
Level 2 – Discuss	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Generally involves two-way information exchange in which the public discusses a policy, issue, or research priority. • Discussion among and with different stakeholders is encouraged. • Can deepen knowledge by exploring and responding to ideas and concerns described by individual participants. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public meeting with information presentation and collection of comments. • Open houses. • A webpage with information about a project but also provides an email address for people to submit questions or comments.
Level 3 – Involve	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Different perspectives are shared and parties can influence each other and develop consensus. • Allows the organization and participants to explore and work through issues together, understand each other's perspectives and values, and consistently address concerns. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public meeting with information presentation and collection of comments. • Open houses. • A webpage with information about a project but also provides an email address for people to submit questions or comments.

1. Introduction (cont.)

Project Description:

CP 26-47 will consist of converting the existing all way stop intersection of County State Aid Highway (CSAH) 26 Trunk Highway (TH) 3 to an urban roundabout with pedestrian/bike accommodations. Dakota County and the Minnesota Department of Transportation are the co-lead agency with construction scheduled to begin in spring 2018.

Purpose/Objectives

The purpose of the proposed action is to reduce existing delays in traffic flow due to the existing four-way stop condition and to allow for more efficient traffic flow in the future as traffic volumes.

Need/Deficiencies

The County monitors traffic delay and safety at all County intersections and has identified the need for changes at the all-way stop intersections of CSAH 26 and TH 3. Analysis shows the delays at this intersection justify a new traffic control, which is also supported by citizen complaints received. This intersection has been operating in its current all-way stop condition since 1998.

Engagement Level:

2 - Discuss

Based on the above engagement level score, this plan will utilize certain methods and tools to reach stakeholders based on the table from the previous page.



2. Public Engagement Objectives and Approaches

The purpose of this Public Engagement Plan is to serve as a means of process planning and engagement designing in order to achieve a desired level of public engagement. An important aspect in achieving this is identifying the key objectives and potential outcomes and then deciding which approaches are best suited to achieving those outcomes. The following lists the key objectives and approaches for this Public Engagement Plan.

Key Public Engagement Objectives:

Share purpose and need as part of building public support for project.

Discuss and gather input on project schedule and construction staging.

Clearly communicate staging options and implications for construction length, project cost and duration of detours (if necessary)

Consider feedback from stakeholders pertaining to design decisions where appropriate.

Keep stakeholders updated throughout project construction.

Public Engagement Approaches:

Open houses

Neighborhood meetings can address issues specific to one area of the corridor, particularly when residential impacts are a concern

One-on-one meetings with property owners

Speaking engagements with stakeholder groups and civic organizations can be an opportunity to provide information about the project, answer questions and solicit input regarding opportunities to avoid or minimize impacts to the community during construction.

Focus groups with stakeholders and partners

3. Major Groups to Engage and Methods

A holistic public engagement process requires a diverse group represented by various populations that are involved from start to finish. A process that involves diverse stakeholders assists in achieving a project that is reflective of the County’s diverse interests and ever-changing population. However, in order to effectively reach and involve various stakeholders different types of specific engagement methods need to be used as their effectiveness can vary from one group to another. Major groups to engage and methods of engagement most likely to be successful are listed in the following table.

Groups to Engage	Scientific Survey	Workshops	Focus Group	Open House	Proj Mgmt Team	One on One
Nearby and Adjacent Residents		X		X		X
City of Inver Grove Heights		X		X	X	
MnDOT				X	X	
Private Utility Owners				X		X

4. Key Questions to Ask

Once the methods of engagement have been identified the questions that need to be asked then need to be created. Questions that are asked in the public engagement process must address the major concerns and issues of the proposed project. Questions that do not necessarily lead discussions towards the end goals of learning about the major issues can result in a more disjointed discussion that lacks effectiveness which is why it is important that questions are well thought out and refined. Questions needs to be asked in such ways where they encourage participation and dialogue amongst those people asked to respond. They should also be asked in a way to solicit responses from a variety of groups rather than only a limited amount. Similar to the methods of engagement, certain types of questions can be more effective than others in garnering a response from certain groups of individuals.

Project Issues to Address with Questions:

Right of way implications to impacted stakeholders

Improving pedestrian safety and access

Construction staging and access

Public Engagement Questions:

How can the project reduce the impact to area residents while still meeting future needs?

How can the construction of the project be staged to allow for access and minimized disruption to area residents and businesses?

Time-line for actions?

What will the intersection look like when the project is finished?

5. Action Plan by Project Phases

Phase I

Design/Right of Way

2017-2018

We are able to convey project details and information in a way the public understands and ultimately are supportive of the project. Dakota County engineers are able to design a project that improves the overall safety and efficiency of this stretch of roadway with the least amount of public friction.

Monitor, evaluate and adjust the public involvement plan as needed

- Evaluate effectiveness of plan Build evaluation into the plan
- Tie evaluation to plan's goals and objectives
- Identify measures/performance goals
- Track performance against goals

Evaluate, ask:

Was relevant information was obtained from the public?

Did input shape the findings e.g. alter or refine alternatives?

Did participants see their fingerprints in the process and in the decisions?

Identify areas for improvement

Show results internally

• Follow-through with stakeholders to demonstrate that input was considered

Phase II

Construction

2018-2019

The project letting meets deadlines while staying within budget and we execute a contract with a capable and responsible contractor. The construction goes smoothly while residents, businesses, and pedestrians are informed, able to access their residence or place of business, and conduct daily activities as normal as possible until completion.

Phase III

6. Available Resources and Budget

PROJECT COSTS AND FUNDING SUMMARY

Estimated Project Costs

Roadway Costs: \$2,935,000
Trunk Utility Cost: \$589,000
Bridge / Culvert Bridge Costs: \$0
Right of Way Costs: \$1,157,000
Design Engineering Costs: \$360,000
Construction Administrations Costs: \$0 (MnDOT)

Total Estimated Costs: \$5,041,000

Anticipated Funding

Federal STBG Funds: \$2,120,000
CSAH Funds: \$1,085,000
MSAS Funds: \$367,000
Northwest Area Funds: \$518,000
Local Funds: \$951,000

Briefly discuss any increased project costs, project delays and additional staff/consultant resources required by this public engagement plan, if any.

None