



Public Engagement Plan

Heritage Library Needs Assessment

Physical Development - Buildings

6/2/2017



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:

The Heritage Library and License Center has not been changed in 17 years since it was built in 2000. A needs assessment will be conducted to keep library services at acceptable levels to meet public needs.

Engagement Level:

1 - Inform and Listen

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:

Gather input from the public and building users regarding improvements to library and license center building and services.

Consider feedback from the public and building users on design considerations for the project.

Share the purpose and need of the project.

Public Engagement Approaches:

Patron survey

Open House

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	One-on-one	
Area residents	x			x		
Dakota County staff	x				x	
Library Advisory Committee			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 need 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:

Receive feedback on issues important to patrons and the public at large.

Develop concept options based on feedback from stakeholders for review by patrons and the public at large.

Public Engagement Questions:

What features or arrangements do you think best meet library needs?

What features or arrangements do you think are not needed?

What concept option do you feel best meets the needs of the community for the next 15 years?

5. Action Plan by Project Phases

Phase I	Needs Assessment	2017
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Gather input by stakeholder surveys. Create design concepts for review at open house to receive public feedback.

Phase II	Design	2017
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Complete schematic design for review at open house to receive public feedback.

Phase III

6. Available Resources and Budget

County staff and consultant Leo A. Daly staff are available resources for public involvement on this project. The budget for the needs assessment is \$35,000. The total approved project budget for design and construction is \$5,080,000.

Patrons with an email address associated with their library card will receive a patron survey electronically. Notifications about the projects will be posted on the external county website.

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

The estimated staff and design consultant cost for surveys and one open house is \$7,300.