



Public Engagement Plan

CP 97-160 (Parks Project P00093)

City of St Paul and Dakota County MRT

Harriet Island to South St. Paul



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 97-160 is the Harriet Island to South St. Paul Trail connection project, filling major identified gaps to connect the Saint Paul Mississippi River East Bank Regional Trail (Harriet Island/Lilydale Regional Parks) to the MRRT, the Dakota County BRRT, and River to River Regional Trail systems. The project will serve as an integral part of the trail system that provides both transportation and recreational trail connections between residential areas, employment centers, and the regional park system.

Engagement Level:

3 - Involve

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 the project's purpose and need with stakeholders.

Share the project's design with stakeholders from preliminary to final design

Consider feedback from stakeholders pertaining to design decisions where appropriate.

To provide consistent and clear communications about the project need and project benefits to residents, businesses and decision-makers, focusing on improvements for both commuters and residents/businesses that regularly travel within Lakeville's Kenwood Trail area; facilitate continued trust and confidence in the process.

Public Engagement Approaches:

Notice of the Open House was given to business and property owners on the trail alignment via mail and e-mail.

Notification to the broader public, the meeting was announced via new releases, City and Dakota County websites, and automated email distribution lists.

Updates to County Board Provide updates to the County Board throughout the design process.

One-on-one meetings with property owners Hold individual meetings with stakeholders who may have specific questions or are directly impacted by the project (typically those with right of way implications).

Public events provide an opportunity to share information about the project and talk to area residents one-on-one about project concerns. If timing is appropriate, comments regarding project decisions may also be solicited. Staffed booths should be planned for the following events

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	Meeting Periodically	
Dakota County Board and City of Saint Paul		X		X		
Cities of Lillydale and South St. Paul		X		X		
Federal Highway Admin					X	
Federal Rail Authority		X			X	
Union Pacific Rail		X	X		X	
Saint Paul Port Authority					X	
Metropolitan Airport Commission (M.A.C.)					X	
Ramsey County		X			X	
Dakota County Staff: Parks and Rec, Transportation, Environmental Resour				X	X	
City of Saint Paul Staff, Parks and Rec, Public Works (Sewer, Transportati				X	X	
MnDOT , National Park Service, MN Dept. of Natural Resources, Watersh					X	
Regional Trail Users			X	X		

Representatives host a booth at the Saint Paul Bicycle Classic

Conduct meetings with the Southport Terminal businesses to provide information

- Additional Public Information Meetings
- West Side Community Organization meeting
- Saint Paul Bike Coalition/Saint Paul Women on Bikes
- Friends of the Mississippi River

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:

Right of way implications to impacted stakeholders

Safety of trail users ranging from security to reducing vehicle/ trail user interaction

Construction Staging and residential & business access impacts

Amount of truck traffic along Plato Boulevard between Wabasha and Lafayette Road

Access to the trail east of Lafayette Road is limited

Public Engagement Questions:

What considerations need to be made to maximize safety of the trail?

What alignment best completes the existing gap of the trail?

What issues need to be addressed with landowners?

Timeline for actions?

5. Action Plan by Project Phases

Phase I	PROJECT SCHEDULE	2016-2018
----------------	-------------------------	-----------

Project Memo: January 2018
Public Meeting(s): April 2016
Right of Way Acquisition: May 2018
Plans, Specs and Estimate: April 2018
Bid Opening: July 2018
Desired Construction Start: 2018-2019

Phase II	Future Stages or		TBD
-----------------	-------------------------	---	-----

The City of Saint Paul intends to pursue a grade separation for the trail crossing at Barge Channel Road.

Phase III

6. Available Resources and Budget

PROJECT COSTS AND FUNDING SUMMARY

Estimated Project Costs

Trail Costs: \$4,825,000

Bridge Costs: \$2,930,000

Landscape/amenities Cost: \$400,000

Right of Way Costs: \$300,000

Design Engineering Costs: \$1,100,000

Construction Administrations Costs: \$800,000

Total Estimated Costs: \$10,355,000

STIP Details

STIP Document Years: 2018-2021

STIP Project Year: 2018

STIP Sequence Number: 1412

STIP Federal Funding Amount (AC): \$6,154,624

STIP Estimate Construction Cost: \$7,693,280

A STIP Modification (Seq. 1412A) was approved 12/18/2017 adding \$278,355 Non- Motorized funding in FY 2018 for the project.

This project will be constructed in advance of the federal funding being available; an Advance Construction Agreement will be executed for this project.

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

None