

Public Engagement: Involving the Community in Decision Making

August 12, 2011

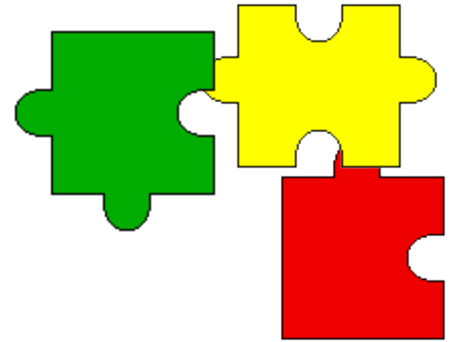
Terry Amsler, Program Director

Mahvash Hassan, Consultant

Public Engagement and Collaborative Governance
Institute for Local Government

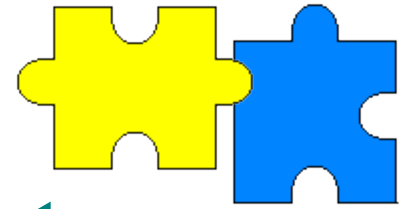


Session Objectives

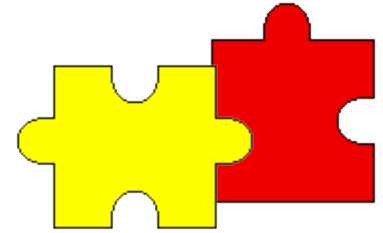


- **Understand important terms, benefits, challenges and strategies**
- **Understand and apply essential design principles**
- **Confidence to play a leadership role**

About the Institute for Local Government



- **Mission:**
 - Good government at local level
 - Resources for local officials
- **Program Areas**
- **Funding**
- www.ca-ilg.org

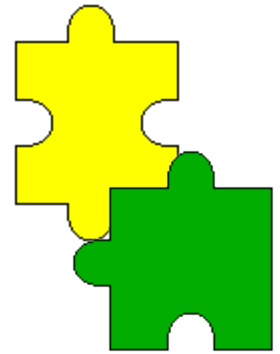


“We seem to be moving towards a different kind of system in which working directly with [the public] may be just as important as representing their interests.”

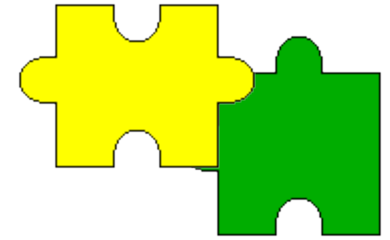
-- Local elected official

“..like throwing a rock at a hornet’s nest”



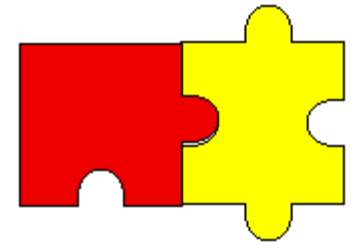


Why Public Engagement? (“textbook”)



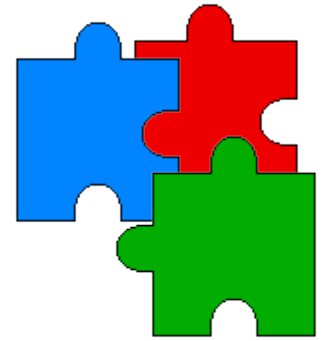
- **Discover public preferences**
- **Improve decisions**
- **Advance fairness and justice**
- **Enhance legitimacy of decisions**
- **Meet legal requirements**

Why Public Engagement? (practical)



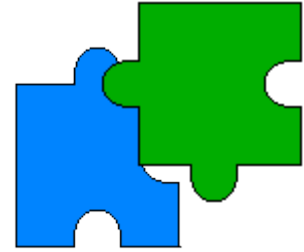
- **Tough, complex, “hot” problems**
- **A lot at stake**
- **Want to get things done (and done once)**
- **Need to know “what kind of community” residents want to have**
- **Need public support**

Doubts and Resistance



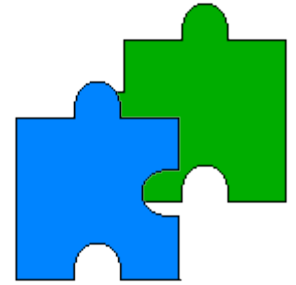
- **Only the same people participate**
- **Residents not informed...or interested**
- **We're elected/hired to do the job**
- **Not enough time or resources**

Public Engagement: What Is It?



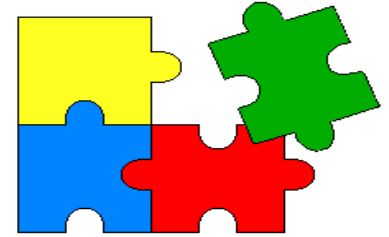
- **Civic vs. Public Engagement**
- **Types of Public Engagement**
 - Public information
 - Public consultation
 - Public deliberation
 - Sustained public problem solving

Distinctions in Approaches



- **More dialogue and/or deliberation**
- **Stakeholder and/or general public**
- **Large and/or small groups (or mixed)**
- **Different outcomes - values, visions, preferences/rankings, specific plans, agreements, etc.**

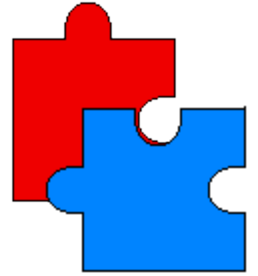
Mapping Public Engagement



The Public Participation Spectrum (IAP2)

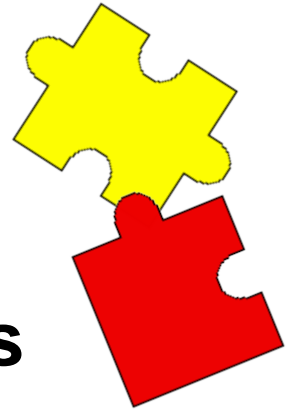


Examples: Involving the Public in Local Budgeting

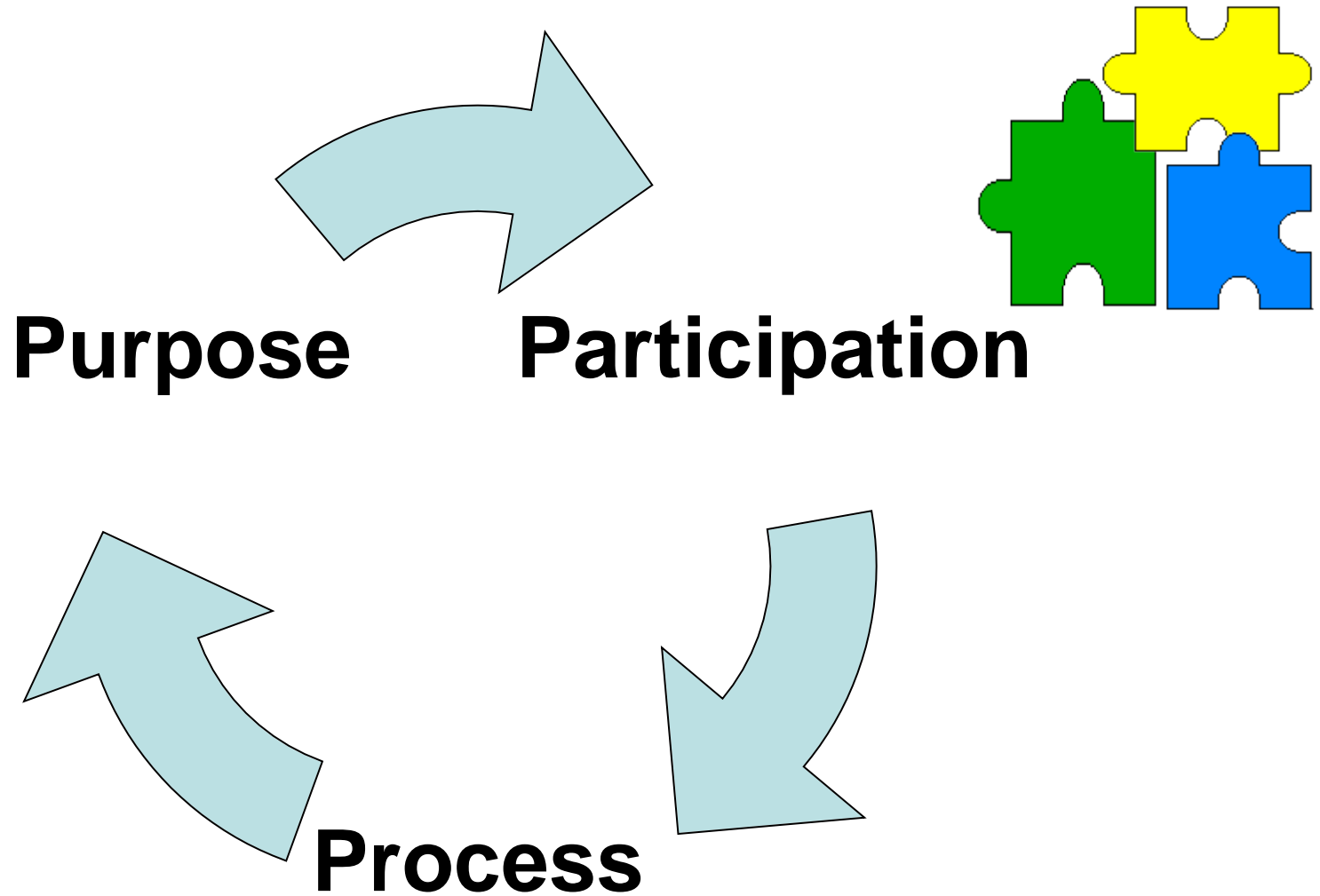


- **Public Information and Outreach**
- **Surveys**
- **Advisory Committees**
- **Workshops**
- **Deliberative Forums**

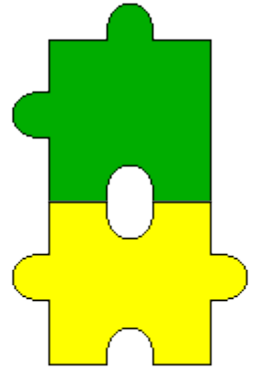
The Top Three Tips for Success



- **Clarify your public engagement purposes**
- **Identify who you want to reach and involve**
- **Choose the public engagement approach(es) that best fit your purposes and participation goals**

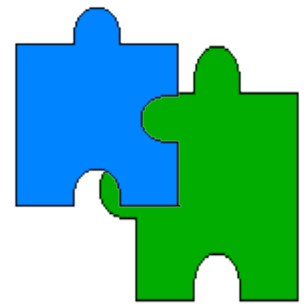


Planning for Success: 15 Steps



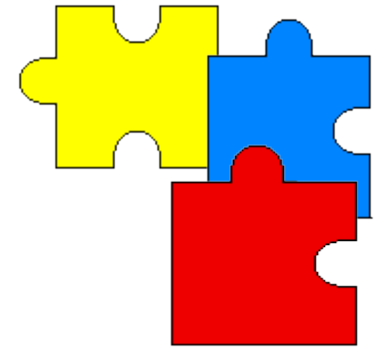
- **Start early; Reach out**
- **Clarify purpose/s (not “meetings”)**
- **Enough time and resources?**

Planning for Success - con't.



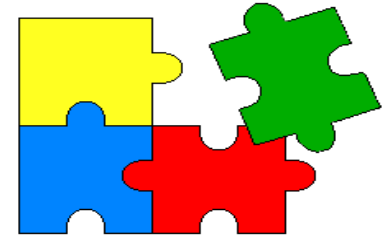
- **Determine who should participate**
- **Match process to purpose & participants --- be flexible**
- **Actively plan for inclusion**

Planning for Success - con't.



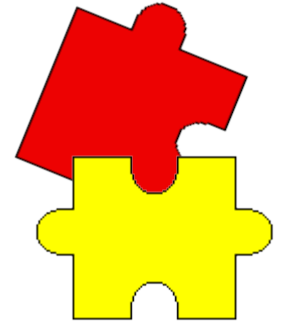
- **Identify planned use of public input**
- **Ensure commitment & clarity of decision-makers (assess political readiness)**
- **Give participants the information they need to do their work**

Planning for Success – con't.



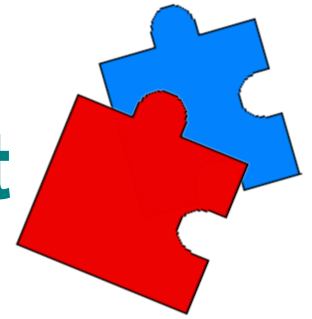
- **Be realistic. Changing views and reaching consensus takes time, effective process & good facilitation**
- **Communicate (for visibility not just transparency)**
- **Acknowledge and use the results**

Planning for Success – con't.

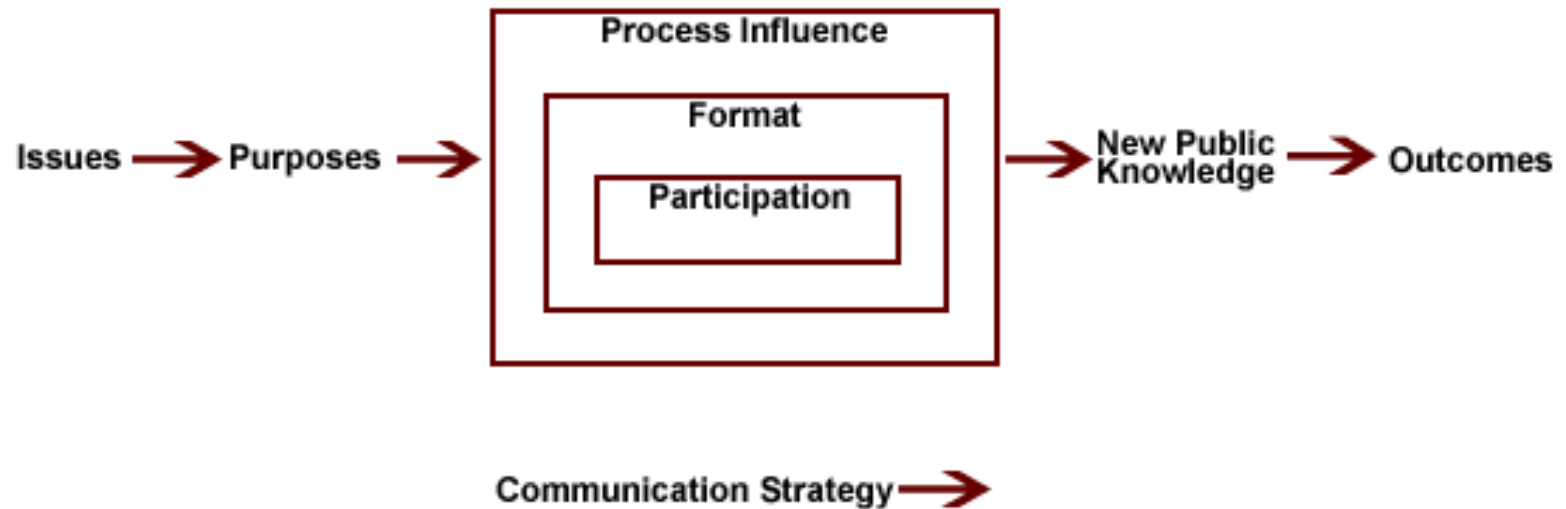


- **Close the circle & thank participants**
- **Assess your work**
- **Learn from the experience; build it in for the next time**

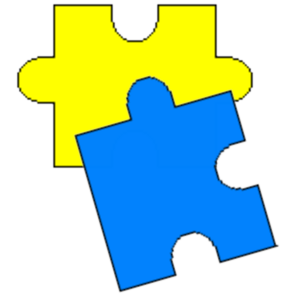
Public Deliberation Flow Chart



Public Forum Flow Chart



Plan for Inclusive Participation



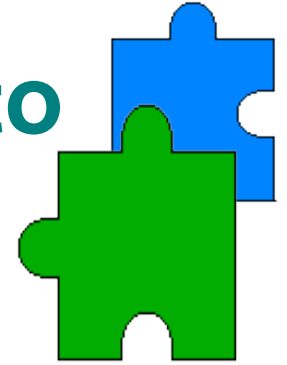
- **Start early and build relationships**
- **Consider your communities' interests and needs**
- **Set measurable goals**
- **Keep a long term view**

Plan for Inclusive Participation/2



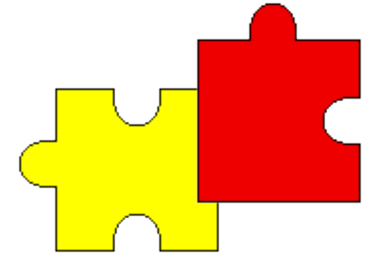
- **Use partnerships to support engagement**
- **Be flexible in your approach (choices)**
- **Aid participation (through preparation, language access, peer support, cultural appropriateness, transportation, “access” etc.)**

Building Public Engagement into Local Government



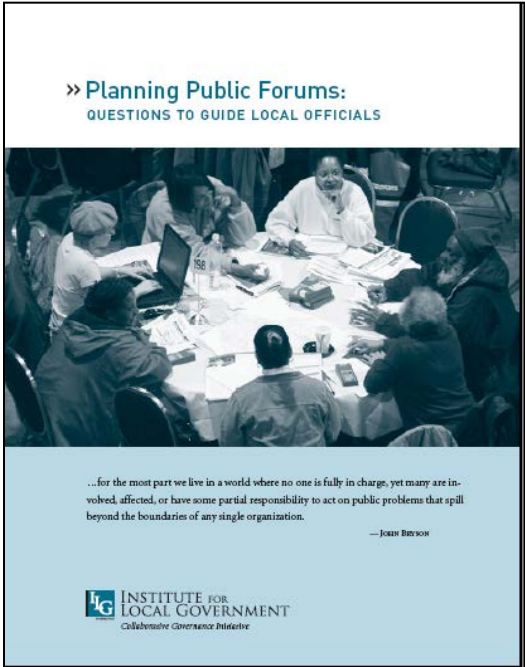
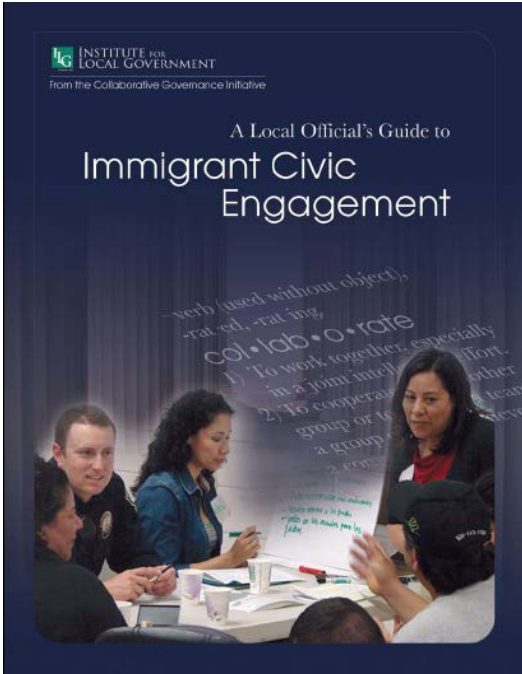
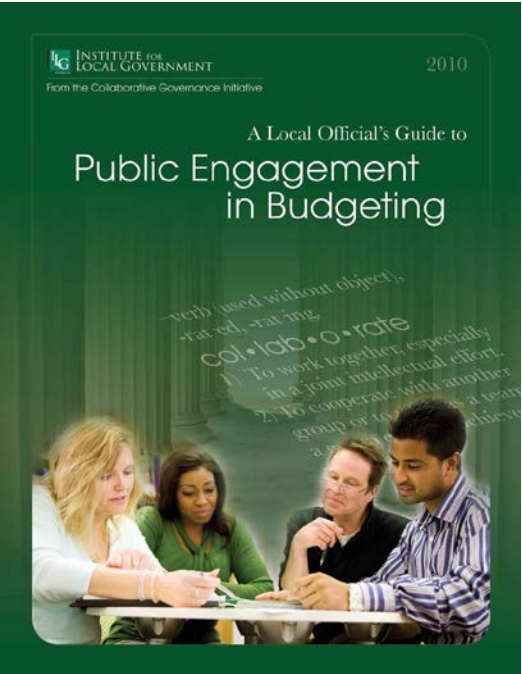
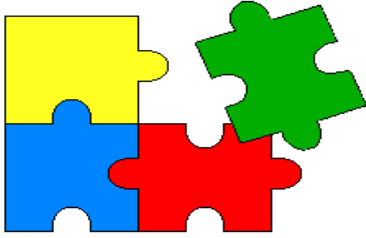
- **Learn from others**
- **Develop a plan together**
- **Add skills and capacities**
- **Develop protocols & assign responsibilities**
- **Experiment, learn, adapt**

Four Measures of Success

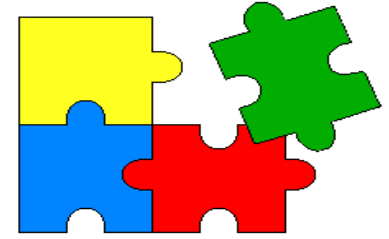


- **The process itself, including participant satisfaction**
 - **Impacts on decisions, policy and actions**
-
- **The community's capacity (for public eng.)**
 - **The local agency's capacity (for public eng.)**

Public Engagement Resources

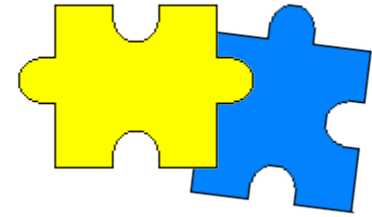


ILG Resources - *continued*



- ***Getting the Most Out of Public Hearings***
- ***A Local Official's Guide to Working with Clergy and Congregation***
- ***Assessing the Effectiveness of Public Engagement: Rapid Review Worksheets***

Check Out Website



The screenshot shows a Mozilla Firefox browser window displaying the website for the Institute for Local Government (ILG). The browser's address bar shows the URL <http://www.ca-ilg.org/>. The website header includes the ILG logo and the text "INSTITUTE FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT Promoting Good Government at the Local Level". Navigation links include Home, Categories A-Z, Event Calendar, Forums, Popular Content, and Site Map. A sidebar on the left lists "ILG Programs", "Issue Areas", "Publications", and "About ILG", with sub-links for "Issue Forums", "San Francisco Bay Area Climate Action Portal", "Upcoming Events", "Website User's Guide", and "About RSS Feeds". The main content area features a photograph of people at a meeting, with the headline "New Ethics Publications Debut at League Annual Meeting" and a sub-headline "Local officials review the Institute's new suite of ethics publications as part of AB 1234 training offered at the League of California Cities' annual conference." To the right, there is a "SITE SEARCH" box, a Facebook link ("Find us on Facebook"), and two featured publications: "A LOCAL OFFICIAL'S GUIDE TO IMMIGRANT CIVIC ENGAGEMENT" and "UNDERSTANDING THE BASICS OF PERSONAL & ORGANIZATIONAL ETHICS". The browser's taskbar at the bottom shows the Start button and several open applications, including "Inbox - Microsoft...", "Grand Jurors", "Microsoft Power...", and "Institute for Loc...". The system clock shows 9:01 AM.

www.ca-ilg.org



Questions?

