



Perspectives on Public Engagement and Local Government

News from the Institute for Local Government

About ILG

[The Institute for Local Government](#) promotes good government at the local level with practical, impartial, and easy-to-use resources for California communities.



ILG is the nonprofit research and education affiliate of the League of California Cities & the California State Association of Counties.

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Greetings!

Welcome to the third issue of the Institute for Local Government's ***Perspectives on Public Engagement and Local Government***. We hope this occasional e-newsletter continues to be of interest to local officials as well as to others concerned with the capacity of city, county and other local agencies to pursue the effective and inclusive engagement of their residents.

The Institute's Public Engagement program, author of this e-newsletter, provides information and resources to encourage and support the public engagement efforts of local officials in California.

This issue of *Perspectives on Public Engagement and Local Government* contains information about the Institute's activities and new publications, stories of local public engagement throughout California, and information and resources from other public sector, practitioner and academic organizations involved with deliberative practice and theory. This issue continues a local official video feature begun in the last issue and launches a new section on research and commentary on public engagement - especially relevant to the public sector - that we hope our readers will find of interest.

We continue to document local public engagement activities around the state and have included below a budgeting-related goal setting exercise held in the City of Bell, a community forum on pension reform sponsored by Marin County, and an online effort by the City of Vallejo that seeks public input on the use of new tax revenues.

We hope you enjoy this issue. We welcome your comments and extend our appreciation to our funders, especially The James Irvine Foundation, for their support.

Terry Amsler, Program Director
Public Engagement Program
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ILG Public Engagement Team

[Immigrant integration and inclusive public engagement.](#)

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New Resources and Publications from ILG

Several new Institute publications and resources are available for local officials to help them organize or support effective and inclusive public engagement.

- [Dealing with Deeply Held Concerns and Other Challenges to Public Engagement Processes](#). This tipsheet presents ideas to help design and facilitate public engagement efforts in which participants have strongly held concerns and emotions that may challenge the participation process itself.
- [Three Orientations of Local Government to Public Engagement: Passive - Active - Sustaining](#). Working from less to more of a "sustaining" commitment to public engagement, this paper can help communities to be more aware of their present public engagement efforts and to suggest approaches that embed public participation into local decision-making.
- [Eleven Tips to Improve Public Engagement on Realignment Issues](#). This publication offers general tips to help guide effective public engagement relating to public safety realignment.
- [Resources for Involving the Public in Land-Use Planning Decisions](#). Appearing in the March 2012 Issue of *Western City* magazine, this article highlights the Institute for Local Government's resources to help local agencies engage a broad spectrum of the community in local planning decision-making.
- [Local Agency Opportunities for Website Transparency](#). Appearing in the June 2012 issue of *Western City* magazine, this article highlights what an agency can do to increase transparency through the use of their website.
- [SB 375 Resource Center](#). The Institute has created an SB 375 Resource Center that provides resources for local officials to learn about this important law, and how it effects regional planning and greenhouse gas reduction in California cities and counties.
- [New to Local Public Service](#). The Institute's Local Government 101 program has helpful resources for local officials, staff and media that include information about:
 - The types of local agencies in California and their functions;
 - How local officials make decisions on behalf of the communities they serve;
 - Information about specific kinds of decisions, including decisions relating to finances and land use; and
 - Other resources targeted to those new to public

service.

All ILG public engagement publications can be found at: www.ca-ilg.org/pepubs. Find a comprehensive list of all of the Institute for Local Government publications and resources at www.ca-ilg.org/ILGResourceList.

ILG Public Engagement Trainings and Conferences for Local Officials

The Institute for Local Government's Public Engagement program organizes and presents public engagement-related trainings, workshops and conference sessions for local officials.

Recent Events...

[City Managers Learn about Immigrant Welcoming Initiatives in California](#). City managers from throughout California participated in the session, *Strengthening Communities: Building Relationships between Immigrants and Longer-Term Residents*, at the February 2012 League of California Cities' City Managers Department Annual Meeting.

[Institute Organizes Immigrant Integration Program for Local Officials in S.F. Peninsula Region](#). The Institute for Local Government organized an interactive session on immigrant integration issues for the League of California Cities' Peninsula Division on March 22nd. This session, *Pathways to Immigrant Engagement and Integration: Timely Resources for Changing Communities*, presented elected officials and staff from thirty-six area cities with strategies to better engage and integrate their immigrant community members.

Upcoming Events...

Transparency and Public Engagement: Ideas and Strategies and for Special Districts. The California Special Districts Association Gold Country Regional Chapter will be hosting a workshop about transparency and public engagement on July 11, 2012 in El Dorado Hills.

Achieving Broad Public Engagement in the San Joaquin Valley. Two regional public engagement workshops offered jointly by the Institute for Local Government Local and the Local Government Commission will be held on September 20th in Visalia and September 27th in Modesto. Contact Shannon Bowley at sbowley@ca-ilg.org for more information.

[Engaging the Public in Making Difficult Decisions](#). The Institute for Local Government is organizing a session for the California School Boards Association's Annual Education Conference. This interactive session will feature school district leaders and public engagement experts presenting stories, strategies and best practices to help districts increase the success of their engagement efforts.

Public Engagement in California Communities

[City of Bell Holds Community Forum on Budget Priorities](#). On

January 21, 2012 the City of Bell convened a historic bi-lingual Community Forum that brought more than forty residents together to deliberate and to offer guidance to local officials on goals and budget priorities for the 2012-13 fiscal year.

[Marin County Holds Public Forum on Pension Issues.](#) On April 3, 2012, the Marin County Board of Supervisors convened a public forum on the topic of developing "sustainable" pensions for Marin County government. The event was an educational opportunity for members of the public to learn more about pension issues and reform efforts, to share their views, and to have their questions answered.

[Vallejo Involves Residents in Plans for Use of New Tax Revenues.](#) The City of Vallejo, California has emerged from bankruptcy and is seeking to establish a stable financial base. With the passage of a recent ballot measure (Measure B), the City Council will have additional tax revenues to appropriate in FY 2012-13 and is seeking public input on how these revenues should be spent.

[Crossing Barriers to Create a Vision and Action Plan Together.](#) This video outlines how Santa Barbara, California organized dialogues about education and neighborhood safety. More than 100 people participated in dialogues about creating a more vibrant community that works for everyone. Local public officials and law enforcement officers joined residents in an action forum to hear their ideas.

ILG Immigrant Engagement/Integration Resources

[Citizenship and Public Engagement of Legal Permanent Residents Project.](#) With generous grants from the Zellerbach Family Foundation, Werner Kohnstamm Fund and The California Endowment the Institute will develop resources for California's local officials to support immigrant democratic participation. Three critically important points on the continuum of democratic participation are:

- 1) naturalization and citizenship;
- 2) voter education and participation; and
- 3) non-electoral public engagement in local decision-making.

[New Immigrant Welcoming Initiatives in California.](#) The Institute for Local Government partnered with Welcoming America to support the launch of the first two immigrant welcoming initiatives in California. Both communities - Redwood City and Oakley - undertook intensive multi-sector planning efforts, with local officials as substantial partners to develop their respective "welcoming" programs. These two programs are now underway - Redwood City Together and You, Me, We = Oakley.

Public Dialogue & Deliberation News from Around the United States

From the National League of Cities (NLC):

Planning for Stronger Local Democracy. The NLC's democratic governance project has prepared a toolkit designed to assist city leaders in strengthening local democracy by creating a culture of participation that is transparent and inclusive, incorporating shared responsibilities and mutual accountability for addressing and solving problems.

From the National Coalition of Dialogue and Deliberation (NCDD):

[The NCDD has recently announced their First Book Club.](#)

The highlighted book is new from the Kettering Foundation and will be coming out this spring. The book, *Democratizing Deliberation: A Political Theory Anthology*, brings together recent and cutting-edge political theory scholarship on deliberative democracy. You can order your copy now so that [you can participate fully in the book club](#) when it starts. Call 1-800-600-4060 to order your copy of the 184-page book, or email your order and mailing address tinfo@ait.net. The list price is \$15.95, but there is a 20% discount effect right now.

[The NCDD's 5th National Conference on Dialogue and Deliberation.](#)

This conference is scheduled for October 12th through 14th, 2012 in downtown Seattle, Washington. The NCDD conference will bring together hundreds of the most active, thoughtful and influential people involved in public engagement and group process work across the U.S. and Canada.

Sponsorship Info: www.ncdd.org/events/sponsor

Event Info: www.ncdd.org/events

From the Deliberative Democracy Consortium (DDC):

[Frontiers of Democracy 2012: Innovations in Civic Practice, Theory and Education.](#)

This year's conference will have a different format than last year, one centered on a series of 10-minute presentations on aspects of civic studies and democratic renewal, each followed by small-group discussions. The conference will be held at Tufts University School of Medicine in Boston July 19th through July 21st.

[Journal of Public Deliberation.](#) In this issue the authors ask: Does deliberative democracy exist in China? Was deliberation on Facebook a critical element of the Arab Spring movements? What do public participation practitioners really think about their work? What is deliberation technology? Deliberative leadership? Can you engage citizens in productive 'just-in-time' discussions on an urgent issue?

[Civic Engagement: The Next Chapter.](#) A new position paper from the Alliance for Children and Families and the United Neighborhood Centers for America, written in partnership with Matt Leighninger of the DDC. The paper is intended to help the human service organizations, neighborhood centers and settlement houses in the Alliance and UNCA networks re-envision and reshape how they work with the public.

[Daniel Schugurensky's interview with Elliot Shuford of the Oregon Citizens' Initiative Review.](#) Is there a way to preserve the democratic benefits of ballot initiatives while reducing their shortcomings? Daniel Schugurensky gives us a

closer look at this question in his interview with Elliot Shuford of the Oregon Citizens' Initiative Review.

From the Davenport Institute for Public Engagement and Civic Leadership

[Annual Public Engagement Program](#)

The Davenport Institute with support from the James Irvine Foundation has announced their fifth consecutive Annual Public engagement Program that begins June 1, 2012. The institute, through this program is committing \$50,000 in funded consulting service to cities, counties, special districts and civic organizations looking to legitimately engage residents in local policy issues.

From the Alliance for Innovation: Transforming Local Government:

[Priority Based Budgeting Conference](#)

The first priority based budgeting conference will be held June 28th and 29th in San Diego. This two day conference will look at ways to engage community residents in the budget processes.

From the International City/County Management Association (ICMA):

[Measuring Community Engagement](#). The International City/County Management Association's (ICMA) capstone team was asked to evaluate the citizen engagement programs for the city of Montgomery, Ohio. ICMA has prepared a report, *Measuring Community Engagement*, which offers a guide to define success, measure efforts and share stories. This report describes in detail the measures developed by the city's citizens' academy and volunteer programs and explores how a community can determine the outcomes of all its engagement efforts.

[Social Media and Local Government Playbook](#). ICMA and Blackboard Connect have collaborated to develop *The Playbook: Social Media and Local Government*. The *Playbook* provides tips, strategies, examples, and best practices to help you use social media to communicate with constituents efficiently and effectively.

From the National Association of Counties (NACo):

[New Online Award Winning Game Lets Students "Run their Own County"](#) Students in schools across the country are now able to learn about county government through an online interactive award winning game and curriculum created by the National Association of Counties (NACO) and iCivics.

The game, "Counties Work," educates students, grades 6 through 12, about the important role and functions of county government by letting them run their own county. Curriculum and lesson plans are also available to assist teachers in the classroom.

From the Kettering Foundation:

[Citizens, Deliberation, and the Practice of Democracy: A Triptych](#) from the Kettering Review brings together writing by 19 leading

thinkers on the contemporary challenges of democracy. These provocative essays challenge readers to rethink conventional notions of democracy, public deliberation, and citizenship.

Focus on Public Engagement Research and Commentary

This e-newsletter will feature periodic information and links associated with public engagement-related research and commentary that may be of interest to our readers - at least to the public engagement "wonks" among you. Generally, these listings will be related to engagement sponsored by and/or involving the local public sector.

[Staging Deliberation: The Role of Representative Institutions in the Deliberative Democratic Process](#). This very academic article by Stefan Rummens is important as it underscores the essential role of traditional representative government bodies to the successful institutionalization of deliberative democratic practices. It appeared in the March 2012 *Journal of Political Philosophy*.

[Participatory Democracy Revisited](#) This is the text of Carole Pateman's Presidential Address, delivered before the American Political Science Association in September 2011, that challenged deliberative democracy for leaving "intact the conventional institutional structures and political meaning of democracy." Carole Pateman is Distinguished Professor Emeritus in the Political Science Department at UCLA, and Honorary Professor in the School of European Studies, Cardiff University (UK).

We hope that you found the content of this newsletter of interest. Your comments and feedback are always welcome. Please send comments to Carmen Pereira at cpereira@ca-ilg.org.

Sincerely,

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