WORKING EFFECTIVELY WITH LOCAL CLERGY & CONGREGATIONS

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Public Engagement & Collaborative Governance
The building blocks of good government:

- Informed
- Effective
- Transparent
- Ethical
- Collaborative
The Institute’s Mission:

To promote good government at the local level
New Institute Publication

A Local Official’s Guide to Working with Clergy and Congregations

Supported by the Silicon Valley Community Foundation

www.ca-ilg.org
Scope of the Religion Sector: S. F. Peninsula

Between Daly City & Sunnyvale:

• 310 Congregations
• 440 Clergy
• 1000s of Congregants
Benefits of Working Relationships with Clergy and Congregations

• Channel for outreach to residents
• Source of participants (and sites) for public engagement
• Support and extend local agency programs and services
Diversity of Religion Sector

• Of religious denominations
• Of race
• Of ethnicity
• Of culture, and
• Of nationality
Local Clergy: Many Roles

• Organizational managers
• “Thought/opinion” leaders
• Important gatekeepers
• Informed members of the community
• Conveyors of information
Opportunity for Relationships

• Clergy and congregation members typically welcome overtures by local agencies

• Service is an important component of many religions

• 2004 Peninsula Clergy Network study found a significant interest in public engagement by clergy in the region
What are the Obstacles?

• Local agency uncertainty about the appropriate level of interaction

• The lack of “linking” infrastructure within the local religion sector

• Local agencies haven’t built relationships, identified potential activities, or learned how to work with clergy & congregations
Positive Results Possible

• More informed residents
• Greater, more diverse, community participation
• Additional support for local programs and services
• Fuller use of religion sector potential/resources
To Make These Partnerships Work…

• Involve local agency staff in the effort from the beginning

• Ask them to think about possible partnerships

• Ensure department preparation and plans for effective relationships
Key Recommendations for Successful Relationships

1. Develop an up-to-date database of clergy & congregations

2. Develop & maintain relationships with local clergy

3. Understand religion sector language & practices

4. Involve & prepare local agency staff & departments

5. Think broadly & strategically about ways to work with local clergy & congregations

6. Attend congregational worship, festivals, and other events
Contact Information

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Public Engagement and Collaborative Governance

The Public Engagement and Collaborative Governance program provides information and resources to help local officials in California make good decisions about the design and use of public engagement in their cities and counties.

View our website pages to find best practices, identify strategies to broaden participation, and learn from the experiences and lessons of communities throughout the state.

For topic-specific examples and information (such as public involvement in planning and budgeting, for example) see the "Public Engagement Topic Areas" pages of the website.

Check out our Guides and One-Pagers:

Available for purchase or free download

- A Local Official's Guide to Working with Clergy and Congregations
A Local Official's Guide to

Working with Clergy and Congregations