

Stakeholder Participation

Definitions

Stakeholders are those who make decisions about resource management and/or are affected by the consequences. The term "stakeholder" has evolved to mean a person or organisation that has a legitimate interest in a project or entity. Stakeholder participation includes a variety of means of raising awareness, identifying objectives, agreeing criteria and policy, and building capacity to encourage people to actively participate in developing policy options and implementing programmes.

Context and Policies

To develop more realistic and achievable transportation plans, agencies must actively engage the public. People want to have a voice in transportation decision making for their communities. Public participation is important to help articulate a vision and goals, provide the public with the opportunity to champion a variety of transportation interests, and receive valuable input into the planning process. Through hands-on techniques such as workshops, facilitated discussions, and preference surveys, members of the general public, government staff, elected officials, and developers engage in a dialogue over how to improve the design of their communities and their transportation systems.

The target audience of a consultation process will be, amongst others, social groups (such as urban citizens, urban transport users, employers and employees of urban transport agencies), economic groups (such as local businesses), representatives of the urban transport industry (including bicycle, public transport and car operators or manufacturers as well as contractors); national, regional and local authorities and relevant associations.

The advantages of citizen involvement can be summarized as follows:

- A creative public involvement process enables citizens to participate in developing solutions.
- An interactive communication process informs citizens about progress in designing and implementing solutions.
- Citizens see the result of implemented measures originating from the consultation process.
- Citizens take ownership and change their mobility behaviour.

Examples

Road Charging Options for London (ROCOL) In 1999, the Road Charging Options for London (ROCOL) Working Group undertook a programme of market research surveys to identify the public's attitudes to charging options in London and their likely behavioural responses if a scheme were to be introduced. The results revealed that Londoners considered there was too much traffic in London, it caused congestion and pollution and it adversely affected the operation of London businesses. When asked which would be the single most effective solution to reduce traffic levels, people cited traffic restraint measures as well as traffic improvements. Respondents were then asked, "This will

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Resources

Documents

- **Assessing Public Involvement Effectiveness in Long-Term Planning**, 2007, Angel Aparicio, Centre for Studies and Experimentation of Public Works, Ministry of Transportation (Spain)
- **Building consensus to face the Sustainable Mobility Challenge: Experimenting Citizen Juries in Italian Cities**, 2007, Rodolfo Lewanski, Faculty of Political Science, University of Bologna (Italy)
- **Center City-West Greenville Streetscape Master Plan: Public Outreach Program**, 2007, Public Outreach Program, City of Greenville, NC (USA)
- **Home Zones - Public Participation**, 2002, Department for Transport (UK)
- **Moving Together: Towards a New Culture for Urban Mobility: Citizens statement**, 2008, Citizens statement, MOVE-TOGETHER project (EU)
- **Road Charging Options for London (ROCOL): A Technical Assessment: Chapter 4 - Public reactions to Charging Schemes**, 2000, ROCOL Working Group, The Stationary Office (UK)
- **Towards Sustainable Urban Mobility for Europe: The European Mobility Week: Evaluation and Good Practices of the European Mobility Week 2002 and 2003**, European Commission (EU)

Presentations

- **Mobility Services for All Americans**, 2008, Kim Adair, Paducah Area Transit System, Paducah, KY (USA)

Recommended Links

- **CIT-U-M (Greece)**
- **MOVE TOGETHER (EU)**

involvement. 'Informing' is at one extreme whilst

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need to be paid for. How do you think this money should be raised - increased public transport fares, increased council tax for Londoners, increased income tax, increased fuel tax, increased car tax, or a charge for driving or parking your car in parts of London?" The most popular preference was "a charge for driving or parking in parts of London". This provided the Mayor of London with the knowledge that the majority of Londoners would back his congestion charge proposal and enable him to proceed with its implementation despite the criticism of a powerful but vocal minority of opponents.

EU Green Paper on urban mobility. To support the preparation of its Green Paper on urban mobility, the European Commission held a broad consultation of stakeholders and citizens during the first half of 2007. Large-scale conferences, with participation ranging from expert to ministerial level, were organised to mark the beginning and the end of the consultation period, which lasted from 31 January 2007 to 4 June 2007. Technical workshops were also held on specific themes (Green Propulsion, Financing, Intermodality and Intelligent Transport, and Integrated Urban Transport Approaches). The Commission also launched an internet consultation that took place in March and April 2007 and that yielded 915 responses from citizens, associations, and public bodies. Suggestions for urban mobility policy measures and proposals were included in 64 letters and position papers that were submitted by different organisations, public bodies and citizens.

Issues

When setting up a "Public Participation" process, an awareness of the pitfalls and problems that the situation may involve is essential: the fear of losing power, the fear of others, the time to be dedicated to its organisation, the need to provide a specific budget, etc. The acquisition of an awareness of these barriers and how to integrate them is a critical requirement that must be met before any participatory process is started. Politicians and professionals can see stakeholder cooperation as a challenge to their credibility and reputation. It is extremely important to be receptive and be aware that planning and decision-making need to be shared with people from a diverse range of backgrounds - both political and professional. Communication is crucial for a successful stakeholder process.

Actions

- Stakeholder involvement is the starting point for stimulating behavioural changes. By involving those opposed to sustainable transport solutions (such as passionate car users) in stakeholder decision-making processes, they are often converted into sustainable movers! Stakeholders and citizens should be involved and be able to participate early in the process. Stakeholders should be offered opportunities to influence the key stages of the planning process. The views of stakeholders and citizens are needed before plans are developed. There are various degrees of

'delegating power' or 'empowering' is at the other:

- **Inform:** One-way dissemination of information is needed as a part of the process of passing information to stakeholders about the progress of work. Informing, however, does not allow stakeholders to participate in the planning process.
- **Consult:** Two-way communication involvement; the receiving of information and input, through listening and reading, and then the exchange of views regarding draft, early or outline ideas and suggestions.
- **Involve:** Interactive discussion and dialogue that serves as a supplement to an existing decision-making process.
- **Collaborate:** Stakeholder representatives at the same table with the planners acting as active team members in formulating and recommending alternatives.
- **Partnership** is cooperation where both sides hold veto power over decisions. It is mainly used when cooperating with equal partners like NGOs and private enterprises.
- **Empower:** Decisions are made by a group or organization with specific delegation of power from the authorities: for example, youth parliaments and local boards.

Tools

- Visioning exercises to be used at the initial stages of a project, when stakeholders and residents are asked to "visualise" their ideal community and the features that would make up those communities. They can create a real sense of involvement using the knowledge and understanding of local people.
- Focus Groups explore issues in depth, and bring together a cross-section of community interests. Experienced facilitators are needed to guide the discussions, which can be convened at any stage during the project.
- Fun Days, Mock-ups and Community Workshops are useful, not only as a way of raising awareness of the project within the community, but also as a means of engendering a community spirit. Workshops can identify fresh skills, as well as seeking views on design proposals.
- Topic Groups often contribute local ideas throughout the life of the project. They can help to build consensus and seek local solutions to difficult issues.

Other useful established techniques include, for example, "Planning for Real" and "Place Check", where residents are actively involved in assessing their area and planning the layout of the proposals. On-site walk-about are also useful tools in getting design engineers engaged with the local residents and stakeholders in describing proposals in situ.

For further information

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