

8. EVALUATING THE PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN

This Public Participation Plan describes the roles and responsibilities of the CCRPC in meeting federal and state requirements, and in honoring our commitment to involving the public and other interested parties in transportation and regional planning in Chittenden County. The Plan also describes the techniques used by the CCRPC to reach and engage the public in its projects and activities. In order to determine the effectiveness of those techniques, a means to evaluate each of them is necessary.

Table 3 identifies evaluation criteria, performance goals, and methods to reach the goals for each public engagement technique. There are several ways to determine whether or not those goals have been achieved. Short surveys of event participants, CCRPC contacts, and other members of the public can assess which outreach techniques are effective or ineffective, and why. Analyzing the time spent by CCRPC staff on each technique and their subsequent success rate can help guide decisions on how to improve outreach methods, or which methods are ineffective and should be discontinued. On an annual basis, CCRPC staff and/or a communications consultant will use the following evaluation table to track the effectiveness of each public engagement technique. A summary report of the results will highlight successful public engagement efforts, note areas that could be improved, and offer recommendations that would benefit the public and the organization alike. The Public Participation Plan Advisory Committee will get together once a year for a review to assess the effectiveness of the PPP and the evaluation methods below.

Table 3: Evaluation Criteria and Performance Goals for Public Participation Techniques

Technique	Public Participation Strategy	Performance Measure	Evaluation Criteria	Methods to Meet Goals	Spectrum Level
Organizational Techniques	CCRPC Contact Information Database	Keep database current	Number of returned items	Make immediate corrections when items are returned	Inform
	CCRPC website	Annual increase in unique website visitors	Number of hits (monthly Google Analytics report)	Use other public participation tools to increase awareness of the website as an effective resource	Inform
	CCRPC newsletter	Minimum of 15% opening rate	Number of persons reached	Update recipient list based on undeliverable email (and/or postal addresses)	Inform
	Calendar of events	Keep calendar current	Calendar reflects all currently known events	Post on website in a timely manner	Inform
	Legal advertisements	Advertise all required public hearings 30 days in advance	All required public hearings are advertised 30 days in advance	Ensure system is in place to advertise public hearings with enough lead time	Consult

Note: This document is extracted from and can be found on pages 21-24 of the full 2014 Public Participation Plan.

	Title VI reporting: translation and interpretive services	Satisfy all requests	How many requests are made, and how many requests are filled?	Advance notice of meetings; opportunity for translation services is prominent and clear on all notifications	Inform
Technique	Public Participation Strategy	Performance Goals	Evaluation Criteria	Methods to Meet Goals	Spectrum Level
Project-Specific Techniques	Informational flyers, posters, brochures	Materials readily available and distributed on request	Calls, emails/letters; number of persons reached	Materials will be available at CCRPC public events, town offices, and on request	Inform
	Email announcements/ Internet message board	Minimum of 15% of meeting attendees/ survey respondents indicated they saw the announcement, and/or 15% opening rate	Calls, emails/letters; number of persons contacted	Update recipient list based on undeliverable email and postal addresses; fine-tune recipient list to accurately target affected areas; provide surveys to track usage of tools; monitor email opening rate	Inform
	TV/News conferences	Seek coverage from media outlets that reach the target audience	Number of news stories generated	Provide information in a 'ready to print' or broadcast format; pursue print publication in a prominent location; modify material based on public feedback	Inform
	Paid advertisements (print, radio)		Number of calls, letters and email responses; number of news stories generated		Inform
	Press releases		Number of calls, letters and email responses; number of news stories generated		Inform
	Featured stories (earned)		Number of news stories generated		Inform
	Social media	Create profile(s) on existing and new social media platforms as appropriate to target audience(s); maintain and post content regularly	Calls, letters, messages, number of fans/followers	Provide information, announcements, access to surveys, and meeting information; maintain and monitor account	Inform

Note: This document is extracted from and can be found on pages 21-24 of the full 2014 Public Participation Plan.

	Direct phone calls	Intended parties are reached via phone	Response, feedback	Keep contact database updated with accurate information	Inform
	Comment forms, surveys, questionnaires, response sheets	60% of meeting attendees filled out form OR 2% visitors to website submitted form OR 20% of mail recipients return form	Number of calls, letters and email responses; number of persons contacted	Encourage response by explaining the importance of receiving feedback to improve the planning process; provide incentives to fill out surveys (raffle to win gift certificate to restaurant in project area, etc.)	Consult
	Ad hoc groups / work groups	Meetings are held at the request of the affected groups; hold work groups in native languages	Number of calls, letters, etc.; met the expectations of the group; how many languages were accommodated?	CCRPC or consulting staff will be available in a timely manner to hold small group meetings regarding any CCRPC activity/issue. Meetings should be formatted to provide information requested by the group.	Consult
	Public forums, meetings, hearings, project meetings, workshops, open houses	Attendance reflects the public interest in a project (includes representatives or groups from affected neighborhoods, organizations, businesses, etc.); progress is able to be made using input from affected parties	Attendance, calls, emails/letters, etc.	Schedule at convenient times and locations; hold multiple workshops to allow for options; use multiple online and offline tools to increase awareness	Involve

Note: This document is extracted from and can be found on pages 21-24 of the full 2014 Public Participation Plan.

	Direct mailings	Reaches a minimum of 85% of households that are affected by a project	Calls, emails/letters; number of persons contacted	Update recipient list based on undeliverable email and US addresses; fine-tune recipient list to accurately target affected areas; provide surveys to track usage of tools; monitor email opening rate	Involve
	Advisory/steering committee	80% member participation across length of project	% of member participation	Schedule at convenient times and locations; ensure timely distribution of materials; keep members engaged and informed	Involve