

Design Aesthetics Public Involvement Update

This update explores methods available to districts when additional public involvement is indicated for specific projects. This includes projects when we become aware of potential issues early in the planning process or during the initial public involvement process.

By incorporating design aesthetic techniques such as a design workshop into an already established Public Involvement Plan, stakeholders, including community members, will have the opportunity to share their varying project concerns.

The goal of a design workshop is to offer an opportunity to share information and explore issues regarding the proposed project. This open discussion will provide opportunities to reach consensus. Design the agenda to encourage everyone to freely share ideas and opinions as well as listen to others. A professional facilitator is required for such a meeting. ODOT has several facilitators with experience in this type of meeting on staff or a consultant with this experience may be selected.

The design workshop plan will clearly describe a structured decision making process, and may include the following.

- Identify the team member or consultant who will serve as the principal liaison with the community. This team member may be someone added to the team specifically because of their knowledge and experience in Public Involvement.
- Identify stakeholders.
- Identify community concerns to increase awareness of them.
- If a design workshop is right for this project, ask some of the stakeholders for suggestions regarding time and location for the meeting.
- Develop a detailed agenda for the workshop.
 - See sample workshop agenda attached.
- Develop and communicate a plan to follow up on workshop outcomes.
- Follow up by asking participants and other stakeholders to evaluate designs created in response to the design workshop. This step may already be part of an established Public Involvement Plan.

The design workshop process has successfully been used by ODOT prior to the initiation of a design and when the public has reacted strongly to a proposed design.

For additional information refer to the Community Participation section of the ODOT Aesthetic Design Guidelines.

Sample Design Workshop Agenda

Welcome and Introductions

- Use this opportunity to reinforce ODOT commitment to listening to and communicating with the community.
- Describe why the design workshop approach might work for this particular project.
- During introductions ask participants to share one of their project concerns or what they might like the outcome of the workshop to be.

Workshop Objectives

- Describe the goals of the meeting, many of the goals will have been mentioned during introductions, gently remind people that all of the stakeholders have similar goals.
- Ground Rules, either have pre established ground rules, or set them up with input from the participants.

Purpose and Need

- Clearly describe to the group the purpose and need for the project.
- Solicit additional needs by means of large group facilitation.
- Performance Criteria
- Safety concerns

Viewpoints

- Prior to the meeting ask up to three stakeholders with varying views to give 5 minute presentations to the entire group.

Break Out Groups

- During this process smaller groups will have a chance to discuss the issues and reach a consensus within their group.

Reporting Out

- Each group will have the opportunity to share their results with the entire group.

Consensus Building

- Large group facilitation to assure all opinions are being considered

Conclusion

- Use this opportunity to thank the attendees and assure them that we will consider all of the input from the workshop when developing designs. Also, remind them of the schedule and when they can expect the next step in the process, probably a public meeting to show the results.

This is only an example agenda, items may be added, subtracted or rearranged in response to project goals.