

Community Engagement Continuum

	INFORM	CONSULT	INVOLVE	COLLABORATE	EMPOWERED/COMMUNITY DIRECTED 
Goal	<p>Informing provides:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communities with factual information. • Information to help communities to understand a problem, a policy, and alternatives, and to look for opportunities and/or solutions. • Outcomes of a process and/or decisions taken, why they were taken and the intended benefits. • Information on a process and opportunities for engagement. 	<p>Consulting with communities is a means of obtaining feedback from them through clearly defined channels. Consulting can help guide the development of policies and programs, analysis, alternatives, and/or decisions. It is also about listening to concerns and aspirations and gathering information.</p>	<p>Involving requires a two-way exchange of information that encourages discussion and provides an opportunity to influence the outcome. Involve communities by working directly with them through processes to ensure there is common understanding of the issue and that community views, concerns, and aspirations are reflected in the development of options or approaches.</p>	<p>Collaboration is working in partnership with communities as a team, incorporating their input and advice, jointly formulating solutions and/or options, and sharing agenda setting and deliberation on issues.</p>	<p>Empowering or Community Directed is about placing final decision-making in the hands of the community - the community decides what will be implemented.</p>
Message	<p>"We will keep you informed of our work."</p>	<p>"We will keep you informed of our ideas, listen to and acknowledge your concerns, and provide feedback on how community input influenced our decision."</p>	<p>"You have opportunities to provide ideas or input at multiple stages of the process. We will let you know how your involvement influenced our decisions."</p>	<p>"We will look to you for direct advice and innovation when formulating solutions. We will incorporate your advice and recommendations into the decisions and we will partner in creating and implementing decisions."</p>	<p>"Your decisions will drive the work. You have power and resources to create change. We will implement what you decide."</p>
Example tools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Press releases • Newsletters • Fact sheets • Websites 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public comment • Focus groups • Surveys • Public meetings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workshops • Forums • Coalitions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Advisory committees • Consensus-building • Participatory decision-making 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Juries • Ballots • Delegated decisions • Participatory budgeting

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open houses 				
Timeframe examples	Usually fast, often time-sensitive. For example, 1 day to 1 week.	Often episodic, usually tied to one-time projects, decisions, or grants. Often 1 week to 1 month, e.g., 30-day public comment periods.	Variable, often several months. Moving toward on-going relationships rather than episodic, e.g., 4 to 6 week RFP response times.	Often several months to on-going.	Variable, often weeks, months, or on-going.
Expenses related to this level of coordination	In this case, people doing the informing often have formal jobs and roles that include informing community members; other work is often dependent on volunteers.	Cost of focus groups and surveys; stipends for participants (could be administered by volunteers or staffed a part time position)	Payments to organizations representing the public, stipends 0.5 to 1.5 FTE.	Increasing FTE responsive to the work: payments to organizations, stipends, including salaries for liaisons, coordinated infrastructure supports (such as data collection and evaluation efforts, technical support efforts).	Fully staffed responsive to the work: including salaries for liaisons, stipends, coordinated infrastructure supports (such as data collection and evaluation efforts, technical support efforts, etc.).