

# COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PILOT PROGRAM

## WELCOME!

Thank you for joining us. We are interested to hear your thoughts on what method or methods we should test out for a one-year public engagement program. We have identified five methods of public engagement as a starting point and are looking to you for feedback on those and any other ideas you may have to make this program a success.

To give you some background, in fall 2016, Council passed a motion to establish informal, open topic community engagement and public conversation sessions to be held quarterly over one year. After one year, a follow up review will take place to evaluate the success, participation and accomplishments of the program.

To assist us in the development of the format, schedule and launch, we set up a committee consisting of members from City Council, Staff and residents. The committee initially met last week to go over what today's feedback session would look like.

In this handout you will find an explanation of what public engagement is and a summary of five method options featured on the boards around the room.

### Today, we ask that you:

- **Tour the information boards and provide feedback using the sticky notes provided.**
- **When prompted, sit down at a table to discuss the identified option or options. You will have 10 minutes for discussion before moving to another table.**
- **Complete the survey on your way out.**

For those unable to attend these sessions, we have posted a survey on our website containing the information on each of these boards to get their feedback. The survey is open until 12:00 PM on Friday, August 31 and is available at [www.nanaimo.ca/goto/publicengagement](http://www.nanaimo.ca/goto/publicengagement). If you know someone who you think would like to participate in developing this program but is unable to attend in person, please share the survey with them.

All your feedback will be compiled and brought to the committee, where they will review it and recommend a structure for the pilot program. We will then report back to Council the results of your feedback and the committee's recommendation for the program before launching it.

## WHAT IS PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT?

Public Engagement is a process that:

- brings people together to address issues of common importance, to solve shared problems, and to bring about positive social change.
- invites average citizens to get involved in deliberation, dialogue and action on public issues that they care about.
- Helps leaders and decision makers better understand the perspectives, opinions, and concerns of citizens and stakeholders.

*(Source: Intellitics, Inc.)*

## IAP2

The engagement methods starting on the next page were sourced from the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2), an international association of members who seek to promote and improve the practice of public participation in relation to individuals, governments, institutions and other entities that affect the public interest in nations throughout the world.

# OPEN HOUSES

## WHAT THEY ARE, HOW THEY WORK

A forum where the public can tour through several information stations at their own pace, ask questions and provide feedback.

The facility is set up with several information stations, each addressing a separate issue. Resource people guide participants through the exhibits.



PROS	CONS
<p>Foster small group or one-on-one communications.</p> <p>Ability to draw on other team members to answer various questions.</p>	<p>Difficult to document public input.</p> <p>Usually more staff intensive than a meeting.</p>

# TOWN HALL MEETINGS

## WHAT THEY ARE, HOW THEY WORK

A group meeting format where people come together as equals to share concerns.

Often hosted by elected officials to elicit input from constituents.



Image credit: vineyardgazette.com

PROS	CONS
<p>Views are openly expressed.</p> <p>Officials hear from their constituents in an open forum.</p>	<p>The meeting escalates out of control because emotions are high.</p> <p>Facilitators are not able to establish an open and neutral environment for all views to be shared.</p>

# REVOLVING CONVERSATIONS (ALSO KNOWN AS SAMOAN CIRLCES)

## WHAT THEY ARE, HOW THEY WORK

Leaderless meeting where people are seated in a circle encompassing another circle.

Only those seated in the inner circle are allowed to speak.

The inner circle should represent all the different viewpoints present, and all others must remain silent. The process offers others a chance to speak only if they join the 'inner circle'.



Image credit: euforicservices.com

PROS	CONS
<p>Can be used with 10 to 500 people.</p> <p>Works best with controversial issues.</p> <p>Stimulates active participation.</p>	<p>Dialogue can stall or become monopolized.</p>

# OPEN SPACE MEETINGS

## WHAT THEY ARE, HOW THEY WORK

A forum where participants offer topics and others participate according to interest.

Elements of an open space meeting include:

- No agenda, just a general topic or “invitation”.
- Participants to create the agenda in the first 30–90 minutes of the meeting or event by posting and prioritizing issues on a bulletin board.
- A number of breakout sessions/conversations take place from the issues bulletin board.
- Participants can choose which sessions they are interested in joining and can move on to another at any time.



Image credit: pinterest.com

PROS	CONS
<p>Provides structure for giving people opportunity and responsibility to create valuable product or experience.</p> <p>Includes immediate summary of discussion.</p>	<p>Most important issues could get lost in the shuffle.</p> <p>Can be difficult to get accurate reporting of results.</p>

# WORLD CAFES

## WHAT THEY ARE, HOW THEY WORK

A meeting process featuring a series of simultaneous conversations in response to predetermined questions.

Participants change tables during the process and focus on identifying common ground in response to each question.



Image credit: Co-creative recipes

PROS	CONS
<p>Participants feel a stronger connection to the full group because they have talked to people at different tables.</p> <p>Good questions help people move from raising concerns to learning new views and co-creating solutions.</p>	<p>Participants resist moving from table to table.</p> <p>Reporting results at the end becomes awkward or tedious for a large group.</p> <p>The questions evoke the same responses.</p>