Citizen Engagement in the Government of British Columbia

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INTRODUCTION: THE PURPOSE OF THIS DOCUMENT

The purpose of this document is to provide guidance to ministries, Government Communication and Public Engagement staff, and B.C. public servants that are interested in planning a citizen engagement initiative.

Since 2012, there has been growing interest from B.C. government ministries in engaging the public on a variety of topics. In total there were 218 opportunities for the public to give input between June 2012 and September 2016. Here is a breakdown of those topics by sector:

The Public has provided input to government on 218 topics: 13 Business & Commerce; 7 Education & Training; 32 Environmental Protection; 10 Families & Residents; 24 Government; 13 Health & Safety; 19 Land & Animals; 56 Natural Resources; 24 Recreation & Parks; and 20 Transportation.

During this time the B.C. government received more than 361,087 contributions through a variety of input methods including 50,920 blog comments, 48,820 feedback forms/surveys and 33,146 emails and letters.

How are Citizens Engaging? 37,995 Telephone Townhall Participants; 48,820 Surveys and Feedback Forms; 145,054 Online Ratings; 24,982 Face-to-face Participants at Townhalls or Community Meetings; 3,938 Stakeholder Submissions; 4,057 Phone Surveys; 50,920 Blog Comments; 33,146 Emails and Letters; 361, 087 Total Citizen Contributions.

This document references many internal-to-government processes, but may also be useful to other governments and citizen engagement practitioners. A complimentary document to the Citizen Engagement Handbook is the B.C. government's Service Design Playbook which focuses on improving service delivery to British Columbians.

For those reading this for the first time it is important to note that the Citizen Engagement Team will do a lot of the heavy lifting and help to guide ministries through the process, however, the ministry's subject matter expertise and their Government Communication and Public Engagement Communications Shop are vital to the overall process. A citizen engagement initiative is a three-way collaborative partnership.

INTRODUCTION: WHAT IS CITIZEN ENGAGEMENT?

Citizen Engagement is the process of inviting feedback and input from citizens on programs, policies and services that impact their lives.

Governments have several reasons for wanting to engage citizens:

- Citizens should have a say in the issues that affect them and are more likely to support government decisions when they've been consulted and have had a say in shaping those decisions. Quality public engagement gives people a sense of ownership over issues they believe are important to both themselves and the province.
- Government doesn't have all the answers: many of the issues that face us today are complex topics like climate change; addressing these issues requires input from a lot of people – many of whom don't work in government - engaging these people in conversation and action will help us work towards positive sustainable solutions.
- Assisting government in prioritizing: engaging citizens helps government better understand peoples' interests and opinions, knowing what's important to people can help lead to a more responsive and transparent government.

Why do public engagement well?

Poor citizen engagement creates problems—at a day-to-day level poor processes create pushback, or frustration in communities. At a strategic level, poor engagement can undermine public agreement with an approach or program, or spark public backlash.

Through experience, we have seen that British Columbians want to have an opportunity to provide their input on big decisions that affect their lifestyles, their environment, their personal privacy or their children's future. They want good services and decisions from government, but they also want to be listened to. By meeting those demands we can earn the following:

- A reputation for listening;
- Protected investments;
- Support for reform;
- Allies, supporters and validators;
- A steady supply of quality input; and
- Informed, risk-managed decisions.

How does government engage?

By providing options of ways to give input, we can be more inclusive of diverse demographics and perspectives from around the province. There are many different ways for citizens to interact with government including:

- Talking about issues or concerns;
- Suggesting new ideas for government to implement;
- Contributing personal thoughts or opinions on issues;
- Helping set priorities; and/or
- Answering specific policy questions.

Some of the tools that have been used to gather this feedback are face-to-face meetings, townhalls, focus groups, surveys, blogs, online discussion forums, Twitter or Twitter Townhalls, direct comments on public documents and/or sending emails or letters.

INTRODUCTION: WHY ENGAGE?

Citizen engagement represents a significant policy and communications activity of government, ranging from high profile projects that gather large amounts of public input from around the province to local processes that gather public input on regional infrastructure plans or public services.

Citizen engagement initiatives work to involve key audiences in the public. At a basic level, they support more informed decisions by delivering information about preferences or priorities around policy options. While at a more sophisticated level, they can also drive priority setting, a better understanding of trade-offs, and can clearly connect government action to the informed judgement of contributors. Meaningful public engagements have the ability to garner mutual goodwill and respect between government, stakeholders and citizens.

Collectively, the B.C. government engages tens of thousands of British Columbians per year, and Government Communications and Public Engagement (GCPE) has catalogued over 200 projects since 2012 on govTogetherBC, B.C.'s public engagement listing site.

PRE-ENGAGEMENT: INITIATING AN ENGAGEMENT

"All Ministries must now obtain GCPE approval for any new online development activities including the launch of new citizen engagement initiatives and will be required to adopt corporate technologies as well as following corporate approaches and standards….As with any material prepared for public consumption, Ministries must proactively engage GCPE for approval before any new online project can be initiated, and GCPE must review and sign off the final *project before launch."*

- *Message from Athana Mentzelopoulos, former DM of GCPE to all Deputy Ministers in 2013*

Previously, ministries could initiate their own citizen engagement activities with advice from the Citizen Engagement Team; however, the government now takes a more coordinated approach to citizen engagement to ensure that all initiatives:

- Are accessible and available to all citizens;
- Are recognized as a trusted and reliable source of information;
- Provide a consistent, citizen-centric user experience;
- Eliminate redundancies and increase efficiency for government; and
- Are based on quality principles learned through each engagement.

An important difference to note is that ministries must now partner with the Citizen Engagement Team, as well as their ministry's respective GCPE Communications Shop in order to proceed with a public engagement.

There are 4 stages to an engagement initiative:

1. Pre-Engagement/Planning
2. Live/Active Engagement
3. Engagement Close Outs
4. Engagement Archive

It is never too early in the process to reach out to the Citizen Engagement Team for guidance. The Team can help to brainstorm possible approaches, and assist in clearly defining the purpose and key audience of the proposed engagement. The Citizen Engagement Team can be contacted directly by email at: CitizenEngagement@gov.bc.ca.

PRE-ENGAGEMENT: PROJECT APPROVALS

Depending on the scope of the project, there may be several approvals needed prior to launching a citizen engagement initiative. In some large cross-government projects such as the BC Liquor Policy Review or Red Tape Reduction for British Columbians, a number of approvals were required; these could range from Ministry Executive, cross-government committees such as the Service Delivery Board, the Deputy Minister's Committees, GCPE Executive, Cabinet Committees, Caucus, Minister's Office, Parliamentary Secretary's Office and/or the Premier's Office.

Projects do not always require this level of approval but it is important to determine which approvals will be required ahead of time. It is also important to remember that these approvals take time, and should be built into any project plan and its timeline. Your Communications Shop Director and the Citizen Engagement Team will help you to facilitate the required approvals for your project.

PRE-ENGAGEMENT: ROLES

"GCPE may set standards to mandate the use of specific communications and public engagement services or practices (i.e. advertising, research, online development, etc.). Ministries must follow these standards in the execution of all activities listed on GCPE's website, unless an exemption has been approved by GCPE. Exemptions will be time-bound and reviewed regularly. Any materials prepared for public consumption, regardless of the medium used, must be approved by GCPE, through the Communications Director assigned to the ministry." Section 22.3 of the [Communications and Public Engagement Core Policy](#)

The Citizen Engagement Team's role has changed over the years, to reflect the provincial government's commitment to citizen-centred services. The team began as an advisory group that offered professional development, support and advice to all Ministry staff. Now, the mandate is to work with ministries to plan, implement and approve all citizen engagement approaches across government, while ensuring corporate technologies, approaches and standards are used as outlined in the Communications and Public Engagement Core Policy. For citizen engagement projects, the Citizen Engagement Team will do much of the heavy lifting and will help to guide ministries throughout the process.

GCPE has several teams all with different roles, and all who become part of the engagement. The **Citizen Engagement Team** in most cases will:

- Lead and facilitate design of the engagement;
- Create and authorize the engagement plan and project plan;
- Negotiate budget and partnership agreement;
- Manage access to vendors available through GCPE's Citizen Engagement Corporate Supply Agreement;
- Get approval from Joint Working Group on URLs;
- Help to initiate other approvals that may be required;
- Facilitate the privacy impact assessment;
- Set up the [tool](#) (for example blogs, surveys etc);
- Liaise with GCPE graphics department, GCPE social media teams and GCPE marketing department;
- Facilitate posting and tweets on [govTogetherBC](#);
- Support Ministers with social media content (if needed or in tandem with GCPE Shops);
- Moderate comments from citizens and export data for review;
- Provide weekly engagement results;
- Prepare a final themes report and do a preliminary analysis on the comments received;
- Close down and archive the web content; and
- Facilitate and prepare the Lessons Learned.

The **Ministry GCPE Communications Shop** will have an integral role in a public engagement:

- Participate in planning meetings as they deem appropriate;
- Facilitate approvals from the Minister and Minister's Office;
- Identify proactive communications opportunities to promote the engagement;
- Identify risks and issues, and managing responses to the media;
- Sign off on all publicly facing materials related to the engagement, including web site content;
- Lead and arrange any launch events and news releases;
- Sign off the engagement plan;
- Manage any media issues that come up during the engagement;
- Arrange any closing activities, like news conferences, news releases; and
- Participate in the Lessons Learned.

The **GCPE Graphics Department** will prepare the graphics, infographics and social media graphics for the engagement in concert with the Citizen Engagement Team, and Ministry GCPE shops.

The **GCPE Marketing Team** will be involved in an engagement if there is any paid advertising (traditional print, radio plus social media) during the course of the engagement.

The **GCPE Social Media Team** will be informed of all engagements so they can help promote the engagement through government social media channels.

The **Ministry's** role in a public engagement will include:

- Participate in planning meetings;
- Secure budget and resources;
- Provide subject matter expertise;
- Identify audience and stakeholders;
- Assist to facilitate approvals from the Minister and Minister's Office;
- Identify proactive communications opportunities to promote;
- Identify risks and issues;
- Feedback analysis;
- Policy development and implementation.
- Assist to draft publicly facing materials related to the engagement, including web site content;
- Assist to manage any issues that come up during the engagement; and
- Participate in the Lessons Learned.

PRE-ENGAGEMENT: PLANNING MEETINGS

Prior to the Planning Meetings it is crucial that you ensure you have informed your Communications Shop (GCPE Shop) so that they are aware of your intent to engage the public, and that you have reviewed the Citizen Engagement Handbook so that you are familiar with the process.

After which, you should contact CitizenEngagement@gov.bc.ca to set up the planning meetings. In these meetings, the Citizen Engagement Team will walk through Appendix A which is used to determine:

- Purpose: What do you want to achieve through this engagement?
- Scope: What level of impact will the outcome have? Is it regional? Provincial? Etc.
- Audience: Who are your target audience, and how do they connect with you?
- Tools: What sort of tools do you think will be useful to engage your audience? ex.: email, open discussions, surveys, polls, face to face?

Key Conditions for a Successful Citizen Engagement can be found in Appendix B.

In addition to the Citizen Engagement Team, your ministry's GCPE Shop must be made aware of these planning meetings and invited to participate. Ministry Communications Shops are integral to planning communications activities and managing risks.

At the conclusion of the final planning meeting, a budget and partnership agreement will be discussed for moving forward. The Citizen Engagement Team will also draft an Engagement Plan to move decisions forward.

Due to the public nature of citizen engagement, check-ins will be required with Ministry Executive, Communications Shops, GCPE Executive and/or Ministers at several points throughout the process.

PRE-ENGAGEMENT: TOOLS PLANNING

Once the purpose of your engagement has been defined, the Citizen Engagement Team will help you to determine the right tools for your engagement. There are a number of tools that can be used to engage the public:

Face-to-Face Engagement: One way to engage citizens is through face-to-face dialogue, which has many benefits:

- Citizens tend to feel more involved when they can hear directly from, and speak directly to, the people who are making the final decisions;
- Participants can see other people's body language and gestures – important information that's lost when using only written words;
- Participants don't have outside distractions so they are often more attentive and engaged in the conversation; and
- Decisions can be made more quickly as participants must focus their efforts for a limited time.

Some useful documents to help plan a face-to-face meeting are Public Deliberation: The Manager's Guide to Public Engagement, Reinventing Public Consultation and A Guide to Hosting Successful Face to Face meetings; as part of the Corporate Supply Arrangement, there are also experts in hosting public meetings available to assist when needed.

Engagement Platform (blog and online discussion forums): The B.C. government's engagement platform is used frequently as it provides an easy to use platform for two-way conversation between government and citizens. Some of the benefits of using blogs are that:

- They are relatively easy and cost effective to set up;
- They allow for open dialogue between citizens and government, as well as amongst citizens;
- There is a strict Moderation Policy and Terms of Use that participants must adhere to when using the discussion forum which typically results in thoughtful and polite input; and
- The comments can easily be exported from the blog for analysis.

Some examples of the blog platform are the Emergency Program Act engagement and the Reducing Red Tape initiative.

Online Poll Questions: There have also been instances where the public has been presented with background information, and then asked to answer questions related to the content, such as:

(Choose one) How concerned are you about distracted driving in B.C.?

- ☐ **Not at all**
- ☐ **Somewhat**
- ☐ **Very Concerned**

Online Surveys or Feedback Forms: Sometimes it makes more sense to ask the public specific questions without their personal responses being public. A well designed survey or feedback form can provide government with good detail and also provide a strong mandate for action; on the other hand poorly

designed surveys can provide misleading results and consequently be seen as insincere attempts at engagement. The Citizen Engagement Team has extensive experience developing well-designed surveys and has access to resources, tools, and expertise (such as B.C. Stats and external private polls) that can help you decide whether using this type of tool would be a valuable.

Twitter: Twitter allows you to ask questions of the public and initiate dialogue through short and concise messages called "tweets". Tweets are restricted to 140 characters or less and can easily be read, shared or forwarded thus expanding the reach of the original tweet. They are often used to broadcast messages, news or emergency notifications but can also be used to solicit feedback. One example of when the B.C. government used Twitter to collect ideas was during the B.C. Liquor Policy Review, when the hashtag #bcliquor was used to solicit ideas from citizens. During the course of the engagement there were 4,892 tweets and hundreds of ideas that were submitted using this hashtag. Those ideas were then collated and subsequently became part of the review process which included ideas received through stakeholder meetings, online and email. Ultimately the final recommendations report included tweets as part of the report back on what government heard.

Twitter Townhalls: Twitter Townhalls are a way to utilize Twitter that prompts immediate replies on specific questions. Online users are invited to a public online gathering that has a specific start and end time. Within that timeframe online users ask questions and receive direct responses, the idea is for interested parties to gather and share information. Questions are labelled with a unique-to-the-event hashtag allowing for them to be easily segregated from unrelated tweets. During the Liquor Policy Review Parliamentary Secretary John Yap hosted a Twitter Townhall to connect directly with the public.

PRE-ENGAGEMENT: CONFIRMING BUDGET

One of the most common questions from ministries during the planning phase is 'How much will this engagement cost?' The Citizen Engagement Team is cost recovery, which means that once through the planning phase there is a charge for implementation and expertise. The Citizen Engagement Team will provide you with a budget based on the work they provide. Depending on the scope of the project, priorities of government and the number of projects already underway, the Citizen Engagement Team may also connect you with a pre-qualified contractor who can help to implement your project.

Costs vary depending on a number of factors including the scope of the project, the length, the tools used, the use of contractors, etc. For that reason it is extremely important to go through the planning process with the Citizen Engagement Team prior to confirming a budget. The planning phase helps to shape the project and to establish a budget based on your specific project's needs. The Team can also provide you with some examples in advance of past projects and their costs that may be comparable.

PRE-ENGAGEMENT: PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT

The Citizen Engagement Team will draft a Partnership Agreement which outlines costs and accountability for the engagement based on the scope, approach, timelines and budget agreed upon in the planning phase meetings.

The Partnership Agreement describes the joint commitment of GCPE – the Government Digital Experience (GDX) division – and the ministry to deliver the project. It outlines the project scope, deliverables, roles and responsibilities, timelines, and costs. The Partnership Agreement is then signed off by the Ministry Executive and the Executive Director for Citizen Engagement. Signing of the Partnership Agreement indicates initiation of the project and that both parties agree to fulfill the responsibilities outlined within the document.

Below is a sample of the content of a Partnership Agreement:

- **Introduction:**
    - What is the Partnership Agreement?
    - Project Background
    - Purpose of the Engagement

- **Approach:**
    - Work Stream Details
    - GCPE Team Responsibilities
    - Ministry Responsibilities
    - Assumptions & Dependencies

- **Schedule & Budget:**
    - Partnership Agreement Approvals of Approach and Costs
    - Ministry Financial Coding for Billing Purposes

GCPE's Project Management Office and Financial Services Branch will coordinate the quarterly billing with ministries, and a journal voucher will be sent to the partner ministry requesting payment.

PRE-ENGAGEMENT: MANAGING PRIVACY

Citizen engagement is about collecting opinions, emails and sometimes demographics, which may be considered personal information, for that reason, the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* plays a significant role. With any government engagement initiative, including face-to-face events, you must assess privacy impacts and mitigate any privacy concerns.

Depending on the tools you wish to use, a Privacy Impact Assessment (PIA) may be required. A PIA is a process used to evaluate and manage privacy impacts and to ensure compliance with privacy protections rules and responsibilities. For government, completing a PIA is a legislative requirement.

A number of corporate PIAs have been approved for different engagement tools. One of the roles of the Citizen Engagement Team is to help steer ministries through the PIA process. If there is not a corporate PIA, some additional work will be required. The Citizen Engagement Team will help you to navigate this process. Helpful links, a description of the process and privacy templates are available on the GCPE Intranet (internal link only).

PRE-ENGAGEMENT: IDENTIFYING AND MANAGING RISKS

Prior to the start of a citizen engagement initiative, there are some general questions to ask about risk:

- Who are the citizens who care most about this issue?
- How do they make complaints currently?
- What do they say?
- Who are your most active critics?
- How do they typically contact you?
- What is their message?
- How will the media report this engagement?
- Will they report it?
- What will you do if no one participates?
- What will you do if the comments are very negative?
- What will we do if someone takes over the conversation?
- What about stakeholders, are they supportive?
- How will they find out about the engagement?
- Will they have a specific role in the engagement?
- Do they need to find out ahead of time?
- Will there be formal submissions requested from stakeholders?
- Are there possibilities for blockades, protests, online petitions?
- How will we monitor issues?
- Who needs to know about the issues?

The Citizen Engagement Team will help you work through some scenarios that could occur during the engagement. As with any project that involves the public, your ministry's GCPE Communications Director needs to be involved to help manage any issues that may arise. They can also provide assistance in a number of areas such as helping to mitigate public relations risks, project specific risks and managing timelines.

In some cases there will be formal project management implemented and a project risk register will be created; the Citizen Engagement Team has templates and samples that can be utilized for this purpose.

PRE-ENGAGEMENT: SETTING UP AN ENGAGEMENT WEBSITE

a. Determining your URL

Once you have a Partnership Agreement, the Citizen Engagement Team will do the heavy lifting to determine the URL and complete a Web Property Application Form. This form helps align the project with technical, data, branding, promotion, social media and public engagement standards and includes a proposed URL. URLs for engagement sites are always: engage.gov.bc.ca/*projectname,* for example for the George Massey Tunnel Engagement, the URL was: http://engage.gov.bc.ca/masseytunnel

The URL cannot contain acronyms and must accurately describe the project to the public. Think about how a citizen might search for the website, or what key words they might use. The Citizen Engagement Team will navigate the approval through the GCPE Joint Delivery Working Group. If you are interested in creating public facing web properties, please see the Web Property Governance Standards.

Once a project URL is approved for an engagement, the Citizen Engagement Team will set up a test site. The Internet Strategy and Web Property Application Form can be found on GCPE's intranet.

b. Graphics

GCPE is responsible and accountable for all government communications material and services, including graphic design. Graphics must always follow corporate guidelines, and therefore must be designed or approved by GCPE's graphics department prior to use. The GCPE Graphics Design Unit provides graphic communications services including design and production for all types of media, for more information please visit the Graphic Communications Divisions Intranet Site.

The Citizen Engagement Team will lead ministries through the development of graphics for engagement projects. Web graphics include an image for the top banner and site widgets, as well as infographics and project timelines. In addition to graphics, all photos and videos posted to the website must be first approved by ministry GCPE communications and have the correct permissions/copyrights for use. The GCPE Social Media Team manages the corporate Flickr account. Any photos for the Flickr album must

follow the Newsrooms guidelines for size, naming convention, description and tags. YouTube videos can also be embedded on the engagement sites. The Citizen Engagement Team will work with the GCPE Social Media to have videos posted to the corporate YouTube channel.

c. Website Navigation

Through user testing, the Citizen Engagement Team has established best practices for website navigation. This includes the top navigation menu, sub menus, content flow and graphics. All engagement projects follow standard navigation. Here is a screen shot of what that could look like:

d. Writing Web Content

Once the navigation and pages have been determined, it is the responsibility of the ministries along with the Ministry GCPE Shops to write the engagement site web content. The B.C. government has guidelines for developing, writing, and formatting web content. The Content Development Guide and Web Style Guide provide advice on audience analysis, as well as stylistic and formatting standards for writing consistent and high quality content. All web content must be approved by your ministry's communications shop prior to being posted to the engagement site.

PRE-ENGAGEMENT: OUTREACH PLANNING

Thorough stakeholder identification, analysis and outreach will ensure that your engagement reaches and resonates with those that are most interested in your topic. It is essential to remember that your stakeholders are both citizens and organizations, and that they are not mutually exclusive. There are several stakeholder analysis exercises that could be helpful that the Citizen Engagement Team can help you to facilitate.

Stakeholder identification and understanding motivations

An important first step for the ministry program area to take is to carefully identify and plan stakeholder relations so that they capture different stakeholders' interests and what motivations they have for engaging with your ministry. Simply offering an opportunity to help government improve is not necessarily motivation enough, generally, people will choose to engage when the issues align with their own personal interests, such as:

1. They have a stake in the issue;
2. They have skills and experience to lend to the issue; and/or
3. They want to be part of something meaningful that is bigger than themselves.

When designing meaningful engagement and creating outreach messages, consider ways to address these motivations to help inspire greater participation; start by identifying **who** your audience is, then understand **what motivates** them to engage, and finally develop strategies to **maintain momentum** throughout your engagement from planning to completion. Some things you will want to consider are:

1. Is this project controversial?
2. Are your stakeholders excited and ready to begin?

A stakeholder analysis and outreach planning session is part of every engagement planning process and will be facilitated by the Citizen Engagement Team.

PRE-ENGAGEMENT: SOCIAL MEDIA PLANNING

One thing to discuss during the planning process is how social media will be used during the engagement. It is also important to talk to the Minister responsible to determine if they want to be directly involved; often times it will be the Minister or your GCPE Shop who will lead the approach and use of social media.

Social media is a great way to help spread the word. There are several government feeds that will help to promote every engagement such as @BCGov News and @govTogetherBC. Your GCPE Shop should always be involved in this process and will help to guide and direct you on which are the best strategies for your project. Asking your stakeholders to assist you in spreading the word to their communities is also a very valuable tool.

After the decision has been made to use social media, the Social Media Handbook and Guidelines are good resources to read. Additional material was also developed in 2011/12 that can help with social media planning: Writing Engaging Content, Getting Participation, Building your Community and Measuring Engagement Success. *Please note these links are internal to the BC Public Service Intranet and were intended for employee training purposes.

Advertising

There are times when advertising on Twitter, Facebook or LinkedIn are used to help promote participation in consultations. In past engagements where social media ads were used there was a significant increase in the response rate. For example, from the day ads launched during the Distracted Driving engagement there was a 61% increase in the number of respondents overall.

The Citizen Engagement Team will coordinate with your Communications Shop and the GCPE Marketing Team to determine if ads should be used. Social media advertising is often good value because it can reach a large amount of people directly for a low cost in comparison with traditional advertising.

PRE-ENGAGEMENT: CHECKLIST FOR BC GOVERNMENT CITIZEN ENGAGEMENT PROCESS

Planning the Engagement:

☐ An engagement plan will be prepared to assist with decision making and planning which will include a clearly defined purpose that is agreed upon by both Project Sponsors. The plan will be approved by the Citizen Engagement Team, Ministry GCPE Director, and Ministry representative.

☐ A Partnership Agreement will be signed by both partners and will outline the fees and recoveries and roles of each partner.

☐ Human resources must be made available by the ministry staff as subject matter experts on the topic, and to help complete administrative tasks, these resources must be available for the duration of the engagement.

Building the Engagement:

☐ The purpose of the engagement and context for the discussion will be presented to the public in an easy to understand format. There is a clear statement about the purpose of the engagement and key dates and decisions are communicated. The context for the engagement is set in plain language and an accessible format. It is very clear to the public what is happening to their comments and when the public will hear back with regards to results and in what format.

☐ The use of a variety of tools, including face-to-face, are explored to meet the needs of all citizens including First Nations, youth, single parent families, people who are unemployed or low income, seniors, persons with disabilities and people in rural areas.

☐ The tools that are selected to engage the public are government standard or have been approved for use by the Citizen Engagement Team.

☐ A Privacy Impact Assessment has been completed, and the project and tools meet B.C. government privacy requirements.

☐ Engagement websites will follow the prescribed government engagement template including: consistent branding, navigation and Terms of Use.

☐ The graphics, images and content that is used is in accordance with the *Canadian Copyright Act* and any other legally recognized licenses and permissions, and has been approved by GCPE Graphics.

☐ The engagement is posted to govTogetherBC.

☐ The Ministry must find avenues to expedite and get efficient levels of approvals of content, well in advance of going live with an engagement.

Throughout the Engagement:

☐ The moderators comply with moderation policy, standards of conduct and social media guidelines as per training offered by the Citizen Engagement Team.

☐ Ministries will keep informed on the comments that are coming in and the key themes that are arising and brief Ministry Executive as required.

☐ The Project Team will brainstorm ways to get the word out and encourage all Ministries, citizens and stakeholders to assist in spreading the word.

Post-Engagement:

☐ Participants should be thanked for their participation and given information about how to contact government in future.

☐ Final engagement statistics will be produced, posted and communicated back to the public.

☐ The engagement website comment area will be closed according to records management policy.

☐ A debrief to discuss close out will be discussed at the end of an engagement.

☐ Information will be made available on what will happen or has happened with the feedback. Often this is in the form of a final report or recommendations that is posted to the engagement website shortly after the engagement closes.

☐ A final results page will be created for the engagement and posted on govTogetherBC. The page will explain what happened during the engagement and how citizen ideas are becoming government action. See some examples of results here.

ACTIVE: LAUNCHING AN ENGAGEMENT

a. Events, News Releases, Information Bulletins, Newsroom

There will typically be considerable promotional and communications planning related to the launch of an engagement. Your GCPE Communications Shop will be responsible for building a communication plan that will identify any events, news releases and media that is related to the project. For example, the day that the McKenzie Interchange was launched there were the following communication activities:

- A media availability by the Minister prior to the public launch;
- A News Release;
- An engagement site and survey was choreographed to go live at the same time as videos of traffic simulations on the Province's YouTube channel, and design option photos on Flickr; and
- Media by the Minister throughout the day.

The communications plan is a comprehensive plan which includes media activities, paid advertising, public outreach through social media, and sometimes informing stakeholder groups that have an interest in the project. It is important to ensure that all communications on the engagement are coordinated between the teams.

b. Government Websites and govTogetherBC

The biggest struggle in any engagement is making people aware of it. Take a few minutes to think about which government websites your audience visits and how you may connect those audiences with your engagement. Can you get stakeholders to point to the engagement from their website? In high profile engagements we may also put information on the gov.bc.ca or BCgovNews websites.

All B.C. government engagements are listed on govTogetherBC, which is a hub that allows citizens to find out about past and present public engagement opportunities, and to search through them using keywords, topics or regions. Outcomes and reports of past initiatives are posted here on an ongoing basis, and monthly newsletters are sent out to those who subscribe for them.

c. Search

For large province-wide engagements, the Citizen Engagement Team will ensure that the search engine within gov.bc.ca can easily direct the public to the engagement by building a collection of key words and phrases that citizens will likely be using to search for the engagement.

ACTIVE ENGAGEMENT: govTogetherBC

govTogetherBC is the hub for all B.C. government public engagement initiatives both past and present. Having a centralized website where public engagements are listed allows individuals and organizations to browse through open engagements in which they can participate, and to find out more about closed engagements and their results. The site allows users to search for specific engagements by keyword, topic, region or status. govTogetherBC allows government to both promote engagement opportunities, and to close the feedback loop between participants and what happened with their ideas.

govTogetherBC also has an active Twitter account which is used to highlight open engagement project to its followers. Retweeting govTogether's tweets about your project will help it to reach a larger and more diverse audience.

ACTIVE ENGAGEMENT: MODERATING COMMENTS

Many engagements feature the use of an online, open moderated discussion forum, similar to a blog. In this format every comment is first reviewed before being posted publicly to the site. When a user comments on the blog their comment is held privately pending review by a B.C. government moderator, and once reviewed and approved is then posted publicly.

The Citizen Engagement Team will determine the best approach to staff the moderation team for your project. The moderators' main responsibilities are to review the public comments against the Corporate Moderation Policy. If the comment is deemed appropriate the moderator then approves it at which point it becomes visible to the public. Those comments that do not meet the Corporate Moderation Policy are not posted publicly, in cases where contributors comments are relevant but deemed inappropriate, the contributor may be contacted and asked to resubmit (for example if they have used inappropriate language). The provincial government never edits public comments.

The Moderation Team resources will be determined prior to the start of the project and a moderator shift schedule will be created. The Moderation Team is often made up of both ministry staff and members of the Citizen Engagement Team. While comments aren't moderated 24/7, there are often weekend and evening shifts if an engagement is particularly busy.

The Terms of Use and Moderation Policy for engagement sites have been approved corporately, and are posted on each relevant engagement site to ensure that citizens understand the expectations surrounding polite discourse. These documents may not be edited or altered, as they are legal and corporately approved. From time to time, these documents are reviewed and updated to ensure that they remain relevant.

ACTIVE ENGAGEMENT: MOBILIZING STAKEHOLDERS

One of the most challenging parts of any engagement, large or small, is getting the word out. When an engagement is first launched we tweet, produce news releases and sometimes host events, and while announcing the launch is important, it is also just as important to remember that there needs to be a concerted and sustained push to get the word out **to all interested citizens** in **all regions of the province** throughout the entire engagement. Spreading the word to and mobilizing key stakeholders is a great way to further your reach, which is why planning your stakeholder approach in advance is critical.

Now that your engagement is active, it is a good time to review your approach to stakeholder engagement, and to make whatever changes are necessary. Are you getting the response you anticipated? Are your stakeholders actively participating and/or promoting your engagement? If not you may need to change your approach or use new tools.

The Citizen Engagement Team can help you to brainstorm and find new ways of mobilizing your stakeholder groups. Sometimes that means sending letters or emails reminding them about your engagement, and asking for their help to promote it or asking them for formal submissions, such as this letter from MLA John Yap to stakeholders during the Liquor Policy Review.

ACTIVE ENGAGEMENT: ANALYTICS

Depending on the tool(s) you use to engage citizens there are a number of ways to track their progress. The Citizen Engagement Team will prepare weekly trending reports for those involved. If applicable, reports include:

- Number of visitors to the site;
- Number of comments received;
- Number of ratings;
- Average time on spent on the site;
- Top referring sites;
- Number of face-to-face meetings held;
- Number of participants at those meetings;
- Number of formal stakeholder submissions received;
- Number of emails received;
- Number of document downloads;
- Top pages visited within the site;
- Relevant tweets;
- A media scan;
- Public Sentiment: How does the public feel about a particular issue? Is it positive or negative? What percentage feels which way? Or a sample of comments;
- How many ideas have been submitted; and

The majority of these data points will be collected directly by the Citizen Engagement Team; however, some metrics may be tracked by your ministry. It is expected that subject matter experts within your ministry will work with the Citizen Engagement Team to determine what data will need to be reported out on and what information executive will expect to see.

If an engagement website is developed, a public engagement counter will be created for the home page (examples can be found down the right side of this page). How much information is displayed within these counters varies by engagement.

Persons with Disabilities
Engagement Total
DEC. 3, 2013–MAR. 11, 2014 | SINCE LAUNCH:

IN-PERSON SESSIONS	23
COMMUNITIES VISITED	15
ATTENDANCE	1,149
*COMMUNITY CHAMPIONS	116
SITE VISITS	27,965
AVERAGE SITE VISIT min.	7:56
TOOLKIT DOWNLOADS	696
IN-PERSON SUGGESTIONS	>4,500
**SOLUTIONS WALL	1,650
ONLINE COMMENTS	1,103
OTHER SUBMISSIONS:	405
MENTIONS ON TWITTER	1,281

*Community Champions are community members who understand the issues facing people with disabilities and their families, and volunteered to help facilitate the in-person discussions.
**Solutions Wall was a specific exercise during the in-person sessions where participants could submit solutions or ideas for cutting red tape on sticky notes.

Climate Leadership Plan
Final Engagement Numbers
PHASE 2: Jan 25, 2016 to April 8, 2016 | Since Launch:

WEBSITE VISITS	12,887
FEEDBACK FORMS	1,631
CONSULTATION GUIDE DOWNLOADS	3,457
EMAILS RECEIVED	7,917
AVERAGE SITE VISIT min/sec	5:52

REDUCING RED TAPE
Final Engagement Totals
OCT 22 – DEC 3, 2015 | SINCE LAUNCH:

WEBSITE VISITS	5,973
BLOG COMMENTS	192
EMAILS	63
TWITTER #helpcutredtape	514
IDEAS BEING REVIEWED	284
TOTAL RATINGS Thumbs Up/Down	603
AVERAGE SITE VISIT min/sec	6:28

Citizen Engagement in the Government of British Columbia

The most important information gathered during an engagement is the feedback received, whether you are collecting quantitative (numeric) information, such as multiple choice or [Likert](#) style survey questions, or qualitative (text-based), the Citizen Engagement Team can assist in the analysis of this data. To resource the ongoing and closing analysis effectively, it is important to discuss and clearly define the type and depth of analysis that is expected, during the planning stage of the engagement. This includes identifying the audiences (e.g., public, executive, policy areas) for different types of reports.

The Citizen Engagement Team has a number of processes for helping to classify, organize and theme citizen feedback and can assist in coordinating graphic resources if reports need to be made print ready.

POST-ENGAGEMENT: EXIT STRATEGY, CLOSE OUT, AND ARCHIVE

Closing down an engagement may also mean closing down a website and moving and archiving existing content. When information is shared or advice is provided online, government must ensure that all necessary records are being captured, retained, filed and managed appropriately in the office recordkeeping system. The Citizen Engagement Team will assist and advise you on best ways to do this. You will also be required to help document the Lessons Learned from your project. Citizen engagement is an evolving practice and we want to ensure that we build and improve upon each experience.

One thing to consider is how you will provide feedback to participants in the short, medium and long term:

- **Short term feedback** could include auto-generated emails to thank participants for adding an idea and ensuring they receive email notice about new comments on discussions they are participating in.

- **Medium term feedback** could include updates on the status of an idea (labeling things 'in process' or 'being considered') or providing ongoing summaries of what's been heard to date.

- **Long term feedback** is about "closing the loop" and letting participants know how their ideas have been considered in formulating the next steps. The Skills for B.C. project was one where government provided a lot of feedback to participants. This was done through newsletters, auto-generated email updates, phone calls, and a thank you video from the Premier to all contributors. The Premier also met with or called some contributors to follow up on their ideas and let them know about the solutions.

POST-ENGAGEMENT: REPORTING OUT

Once you have received feedback and your engagement has closed, new work begins. The next step is to analyze the comments for sentiment, trends, ideas or solutions. Information will then be made available to the public on what will happen or has happened with their feedback; often this is in the form of a final report or recommendations that is posted to the engagement website shortly after it closes. Every citizen engagement project run through the B.C. government **must** include a public report back. For example:

- During the Skills for B.C. project analysis took place throughout the engagement and updates were posted to the site in the form of Discussion Summaries. At the same time, ministry staff reviewed all comments for ideas and solutions and began a process of implementing and announcing the ideas. Citizen ideas that turned to actions were then posted to the site.
- Following the Liquor Policy Review, analysis of all face-to-face meetings, blog comments, emails, and tweets resulted in 73 recommendations to government. These were then posted to the website on January 31, 2015, three weeks after the end of the engagement.
- The Red Tape Consultation blog posts gave updates on results throughout the engagement, and now regular updates are provided on the website regarding the status of ideas that were submitted and whether they were actioned, possible, or with limitations.
- Similarly, the Person's With Disabilities Consultation saw analysis and themes emerge from their discussion which were then posted in a Disability Consultation Report following the engagement.

In all cases where a citizen engagement process takes place, the results are subsequently posted for the public to see. The Citizen Engagement Team has refined a number of approaches to organize and theme written feedback, including using a combination of manual and software enhanced methods.

govTogetherBC

It is expected that after each engagement, there will be a final summary that connects the results of citizens' ideas to government actions, these summaries are called Results Pages and can be found on govTogetherBC where a page is housed for each project. The pages summarize the consultation, share the main themes gathered from the feedback and link to the direct actions that are being taken in response. In this way, the results pages become living archives that are continually updated as work is completed or announced.

It is important for ministries and Communications Shops to check in regularly to ensure that the information on their project's results page is kept current.

POST-ENGAGEMENT: LESSONS LEARNED

Lessons Learned sessions are facilitated by the Citizen Engagement Team following the end of each engagement. It is best to hold the session immediately following the project so it is still fresh in everyone's minds. The questions are sent to the project team in advance of the session allowing participants time to prepare their responses to share at the session. A draft of the Lessons Learned report will be sent to the team for review after the session has been completed. A final Lessons Learned document will then be posted to the GCPE intranet.

The Lessons Learned session typically includes the following questions but additional questions may be added depending on the scope and tools used:

Project summary and engagement results:

- Where there any difficulties in getting executive buy-in to a public engagement project?
- What influenced your communications and marketing strategy and how did you advise the public of your engagement?
- What could you have done differently?
- What were the key risks that you took into account when developing your engagement plan?
- How did you engage with interested stakeholders?
- What would have worked better?
- What surprised you about conducting the engagement?
- Is there anything that you would do differently, or could do better, when designing or implementing an engagement project?
- What advice would you offer to other ministries or back to GCPE and the Government Digital Experience (GDX) division about how things could have gone smoother?

Examples of Lessons Learned:

- BC Jobs Plan/Skills4BC
- Liquor Policy Review
- Distracted Driving

APPENDIX A: Outline

a. Defining the Purpose for Engagement Scope (please note that determining purpose and scope will be facilitated by the Citizen Engagement Team).

The first step in designing a citizen engagement initiative is to clearly define what you want to achieve. Perhaps you want to get input on a changing policy, you want to involve the public in solutions to reduce homelessness, or you are looking for citizens to play a role in emergency preparedness; regardless of your overall idea, it is essential to clearly define your purpose.

We suggest that ministries spend time upfront defining the purpose as this will help decision making throughout the project. It is also important that all staff working on the project understand and are working towards the same purpose. A defined purpose is key to clear communication with your audience, so it is very important to be clear and concise.

One way to define your purpose is to use the following sentence guide: We [**who is responsible** for the engagement] want to understand the views of [**the audience**] about [the **topic or question you are asking** the audience] so that [**who is responsible** for taking action] can [take the following **action**] by [**timeframe**] to achieve [the **corporate or social aims**].

Example: Parliamentary Secretary John Yap wants to understand the views and values of stakeholders and the public about existing liquor rules so that he can provide recommendations to government on changes to the liquor laws by the end of 2014.

b. Determining Scope (please note that determining purpose and scope will be facilitated by the Citizen Engagement Team).

The Province is involved in a diverse range of services, projects, activities and planning matters, and it is recognized that processes may vary according to the level of impact of a particular issue. A good conversation to have upfront is the levels of impact you are anticipating, for example: Is the project local, site specific, regional or province-wide? Does it involve service delivery or policy development?

Also important is to determine what information we are seeking. What is the scope and limitation of the discussion? A clear understanding of what is needed from the discussion, and what decisions are likely to be influenced by the findings helps to keep the process relevant and avoid misunderstandings with citizens about possible outcomes that may be outside the scope of the process.

Similarly defining the timeframe for the engagement process is important. At what stage of the project will the discussion with the public be undertaken? When will the process begin and end? Are we talking to citizens at the very beginning or scoping stage of a project, or are we addressing a specific element of an overall plan? Are there key dates or deadlines to be considered? Are there decisions that will need to be made during the process?

c. Defining the Audience

Defining the desired audience is an important component to planning an engagement. It is important to identify who they are and how they prefer to provide input. Some questions to ask are:

- Who is the primary audience? (Individuals and groups within specific demographics that you want to ensure you hear from)
- Who is the secondary audience? (Individuals and groups who it would be beneficial to hear from outside the initial group)
- What is the key perspective of each audience?
- How large are each of the intended audiences?
- Have you engaged this audience previously? On what? How? What did you learn?
- How do you think your audience prefers to be engaged?
- How does our audience connect with you now? What are their issues?
- It is important to consider any geographical communities and/or communities of interest. You should be able to define specific groups that should be invited to participate.
- Are there other organizations, agencies or partners involved with this issue? I.e., consultants, provincial and/or federal government representatives, other local government agencies etc.
- What are the perceptions/concerns/needs of British Columbians? A summary of our current knowledge can enhance the process by ensuring that we consider and/or address any perceptions or concerns that have already been expressed. Successful community discussion relies on genuine efforts to inform all stakeholders about the process and to address barriers that may impact on the community's active participation.

As a few examples, here are a few groups that might form your target audience and some considerations to facilitate their participation:

Older people or people with disabilities: Consider working with seniors groups to facilitate additional publicity and participation: Schedule meetings during the day. Participants may require assistance with transportation. Venues must be accessible to those with disabilities. Printed material should be appropriate for people with impaired vision.

Young families, single parent families: Consider using local schools and libraries for additional publicity. Connect with service providers. Consider providing childcare or children's activities at meetings.

People who are unemployed or low income: May require assistance with transportation. For engaging youth, an innovative 'event based' consultation process is more likely to be successful. Consider using local high schools and youth networks for publicity and participation. This group may also require assistance with transportation.

First Nations: Consider talking with your Ministry's Aboriginal coordinator or the Ministry of Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation to determine how best you can connect with First Nations groups. Rural

Areas Brainstorm the unique ways you can connect with people outside of Victoria and Vancouver. Is there a local newspaper, a newsletter or a meeting taking place where you can let people know?

APPENDIX B: Example of Stakeholder Letter

Dear Stakeholders,

On June 7, 2013 I was appointed by Premier Christy Clark as Parliamentary Secretary to the Honourable Suzanne Anton, Attorney General and Minister of Justice, to conduct a comprehensive review of B.C.'s liquor laws and to make recommendations with respect to the modernization of liquor legislation.

In making recommendations, I am being guided by my terms of reference, which offer the following guiding principles:

- Government revenue is maintained or increased;
- Minimize health and social harms caused by liquor;
- Balance economic and social interests by ensuring public safety and the public interest of British Columbians and their communities is protected;
- Be evidence-based and transparent; and,
- Respect obligations under collective agreements and international and inter-provincial trade agreements.

This review is to consider all aspects of liquor policy including licensing, control, and Liquor Distribution Branch distribution. I am charged with providing recommendations that:

- Create a licensing system that responds to emerging marketplace realties and reflects current lifestyles and societal values;
- Provide flexibility for businesses and remove operational barriers to help grow the economy, while protecting public safety;
- Recognize the importance of jobs and investment in the hospitality, tourism and agrifoods sectors, in support of the BC Jobs Plan;
- Ensure there is a sustainable liquor manufacturing sector; and,
- Provide for an efficient and effective liquor distribution system.

A key component to success of this process will be receiving comprehensive input from varied groups and individuals throughout British Columbia. Groups will include those from industry, local government and First Nations, police, and health and social policy associations throughout September and October. I will also be writing to all liquor licensees and liquor agency stores in the province inviting their written submissions. As well, a Liquor Policy Review website will be launched in September where British Columbians can provide their input to the review. This opportunity will assist British Columbians in better understanding how our liquor system works today, and provide opportunities for them to explore balanced, common sense approaches for government's consideration.

I would like to meet with your organization to hear recommendations for modernizing B.C.'s liquor laws. In order to arrange a meeting with me, please contact ████████ or ████████ during business hours at ████████ by August 26th. I expect that meetings with stakeholders will be scheduled for up to 90 minutes in duration.

My report is to be submitted to Minister Anton by November 25, 2013 and will be publicly released. The report must include results from the consultation sessions, identify potential opportunities and challenges, and make recommendations for liquor reform. Minister Anton will then consider the recommendations and has responsibility to bring forward to Cabinet any proposals for reform.

If you wish to meet, I would appreciate receiving a written submission outlining your key themes that align with the principles and objectives of this review. Having this document ahead of time will help me better prepare for our meeting. Please email it to liquorpolicyreview.meetings@gov.bc.ca. I would note for you that in order to promote the transparency of this review, written submissions will be made public along with the titles of the groups that I meet with.

I look forward to meeting with you in the fall. Together, we can modernize and improve B.C.'s liquor laws.

Sincerely,

[SIGNED]

John Yap, MLA
Parliamentary Secretary
to the Minister of Justice for Liquor Policy Reform

APPENDIX C: Key Conditions for Successful Citizen Engagement

The B.C. government has created a draft Citizen Engagement Handbook to assist employees in their step-by-step planning for consultations. Now for the first time, there are also draft 'conditions' that set expectations for successful public engagement. These 'conditions' have been developed based on Lessons Learned, feedback from staff involved in projects, and consultation with internal engagement champions. The 'conditions' are intended to identify to government employees involved in public engagement how to achieve a successful citizen engagement experience.

Engagement Initiation

a. A Citizen Engagement document is prepared that will guide decision making and planning

Supporting Evidence
- The engagement plan includes:
  - A clear purpose statement;
  - A definition of the primary and second audience;
  - A reasonable timeframe for the public to provide comments, at minimum 4 weeks to provide input, using tools that are suitable, at times in the year that make sense for the specific audience to be available;
  - A description or options for the engagement design and tools that will be used; and
- The engagement plan has been reviewed by the program area and GCPE shop.

b. There is a clear governance structure, resources, budget and support for the engagement

Supporting Evidence
- There is clear support for the engagement plan and an understanding of the risks and issues from the Ministry Executive, Minister's Office, etc.;
- Reporting structures, escalation processes and roles are identified;
- Someone in a leadership role is designated to be the public face for the engagement;
- A budget is established to implement the process; and
- A work plan is created that identifies resources/skill sets required for the different phases of the project.

Engagement Planning and Design

Based on the purpose and audience, you will need to finalize the process and tools that will be used to engage. Regardless of the process, you must ensure the needs of the First Nations, young people, single parent families, people who are unemployed or low income, seniors, persons with disabilities and people in rural areas are considered in your planning. You will need to have found ways to ensure representative participation for regions, age and demographics.

a. Face to Face Processes

Face to face processes will be created based on the advice of the Designing Face to Face Engagement Handbook. Some important components:

- Citizens should receive 2 week notice of the event. The process for notifying citizens is planned with GCPE Ministry and GCPE marketing division;
- Citizens can easily find event information on a web site and have a contact email for follow-up and questions;
- Any emails between citizens and government/contractors about the logistics are responded to in a timely manner, with a customer service focus;
- Adequate resources are dedicated to coordinate and communicate the logistics of the face to face events;
- Event locations accommodate First Nations, young people, single parent families, people who are unemployed or low income, seniors, persons with disabilities and people in rural areas.
- Contextual information for the engagement topic will be written in an easy to understand, accessible format that has been approved by Ministry GCPE;
- A communications and issues plan is created specifically for these events;
- A methodology for recording citizen comments is developed; and
- Results of face to face meetings are recorded, like how many people attended.

b. Online Processes

Online processes will be created based on government engagement template and based on advice from the Citizen Engagement team. Some important components:

- The URL has Joint Working Group approval;
- The home page includes a very clear, concise purpose statement that will explain to the public what is happening to citizen comments, the closing date for the engagement and when citizens can expect to hear back about the results;
- The questions being posed to the public will be easy to read and understand and focus tested with some citizens;
- The electronic tools selected to engage the public have been discussed with and approved for use by the Executive Director, Citizen Engagement;
- Engagement web sites will follow the prescribed engagement template which includes consistent branding, navigation and URL naming;
- The top navigation will follow government standard, and include basic information that will provide context for the engagement;
- The graphics, images and content that is used is in accordance with the Canadian Copyright Act and any other legally recognized licenses and permissions, and approval of GCPE graphics; and
- The privacy impacts of the processes are discussed with the OCIO and all necessary forms (like the Privacy Impact Assessment) are completed prior to the engagement launch.

Engagement – Implementation

- In the case of a blog, moderators will be trained and provided with information about moderation policy, standards of conduct and social media guidelines;
- In the case of a blog, moderators will be cordial, welcoming, friendly and interactive;
- The tactics within the communications plan for informing the public are implemented and adjusted based on progress and success;
- The stakeholders are informed, know about and help to spread the word;
- The engagement information is posted to govTogetherBC;
- The first report on progress occurs within the first business day of launch and regularly for the duration of the engagement;
- Promotion is regular and often during the period the engagement is open;
- Government social media channels are used to promote the engagement;
- Comments begin to be analyzed for themes and ideas;
- A news release informs citizens about the closing of an engagement, one week prior to engagement close; and
- Weekly project meetings occur while the engagement is open, to check in on the status and to make any course corrections.

Engagement – Close Out

- On project close, the engagement home page indicates specifically when citizens can expect the results of their input and how they will hear back;
- On project close, the content on the web will be changed to reflect a closed process;
- govTogetherBC will be informed of the closing date;
- Contributors will be thanked for their participation;
- The results will be posted to the site when the analysis is complete. The engagement web site is closed within 6 months of posting the results, the contextual content is moved to Ministry web site, and comments archived according to government records policy;
- Lessons learned are documented and shared internally; and
- A final results page will be posted to govTogetherBC.

APPENDIX D: Corporate Moderation Policy

The following is the Corporate Moderation Policy that is updated for each engagement to include ministry specific information.

MODERATION POLICY

The Blog is a discussion forum that welcomes candid dialogue and diverse views. This Moderation Policy is intended to ensure that all Blog users are able to participate in an exchange of information and ideas in a positive, constructive and beneficial way.

Blog Content
In accordance with the Terms, all comments, questions, ideas, materials and other contributions submitted by Blog users in relation to the Blog (collectively, "Content") will be moderated before being posted.

Blog conversations are expected to follow the conventions of polite discourse. They should be carried on in a constructive and good-natured manner and should focus on the issues being discussed rather than the person making the comment. Personal attacks will not be tolerated.

Unlawful, objectionable or inappropriate Content does not belong on the Blog and should not be submitted for posting. This includes any Content that:

1. contains profanity or is defamatory, threatening, hateful, personally disparaging, harassing, indecent, vulgar, obscene, illegal, immoral or sexually explicit (partially masking profanity or other unacceptable language by substituting asterisks or other symbols into a word is not acceptable if the word remains recognizable);
2. is disrespectful of the Blog hosts or moderators, other Blog users or their opinions, ideas or beliefs;
3. appears to, or does actually, infringe the copyright, trade-mark, right of privacy, right of publicity or any other intellectual property or other proprietary right of any third party, including other Blog users (links to any third party materials should be included, rather than copying significant portions of those materials into the Content);
4. contains information about, or images (e.g., photographs, videos or illustrations) of, any person other than the person submitting the Content;
5. impersonates another person, living or dead;
6. attempts to make contact with a minor outside of the Blog forum;
7. advertises any product, person or organization, or directs attention to another website for personal gain;
8. provides links to, or information about, other sites that contain unlawful, objectionable or inappropriate content;
9. contains long embedded URLs, excessive links, code or other materials that could compromise the integrity or security of the Blog, or of the server or the Website;
10. appears to be spam-like messaging or repeat postings; or
11. is far off-topic or intentionally disrupts a Blog forum discussion.

Any concerns you may have about Content posted by you, or about inappropriate Content posted by others, should be sent by email to [insert email address], citing the date and author of the Content in question.

Media Inquiries
Media inquiries will not be posted on the Blog. Reporters are asked to send questions through their regular channels.

Hours of Operation
The Blog is expected to be available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, subject to unforeseen circumstances such as power outages and system failures. Content can be submitted at any time. However, given the need to manage provincial resources, Content may not be reviewed and posted immediately. Moderating and posting of Content will generally occur during regular business hours Monday through Friday, excluding statutory holidays in British Columbia. Content submitted outside of these hours will be reviewed and posted at the earliest opportunity.

Freedom of Information Requests
Please be aware that most government information, including the contents of the Blog, may be the subject of a freedom of information request. Please consider this when submitting Content as it is possible that some or all of the Content will be disclosed publically under the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* (British Columbia).

To protect your privacy, do not include your phone number, e-mail address or other personal information you would not wish to be disclosed publically in the body of any Content submitted for posting on the Blog. Instead, if you have an inquiry of a personal nature, please contact **[insert contact info]**.

Questions
If you have questions about this Moderation Policy or how it is applied, please contact: **[insert email address and/or other contact information].**

APPENDIX E: Terms of Use

The following are the Terms of Use that are updated for each engagement to include ministry specific information.

<p align="center">TERMS OF USE</p>

Submission and Moderation of Content
You agree that you will only use the Blog and submit Content in accordance with the Terms. Your failure to do so may result in you being temporarily and/or permanently suspended from using the Blog.

In accordance with the Terms, all Content will be read and moderated before being published on the Blog and you expressly grant the Province the right to moderate, edit, refuse to post, remove and/or delete any Content that the Province deems, in its absolute discretion, to be unlawful, objectionable, inappropriate or otherwise contrary to the Terms.

Ownership and License
You retain ownership of all Content you submit to the Blog. You represent and warrant that you have obtained all necessary rights and permissions to grant to the Province the license described below in these Terms of Use, and that Content submitted by you does not and will not infringe the intellectual property or other rights of any other person or entity.

You hereby grant to the Province a non-exclusive, perpetual, irrevocable, royalty-free, worldwide, unrestricted license to exercise in respect of your Content those rights set out in the *Copyright Act* (Canada), including the right to use, reproduce, modify, distribute and display your Content in any and all formats now known or hereinafter devised. You agree that the Province may engage independent contractors and service providers to assist the Province in exercising these rights.

You further agree to waive any moral rights that you may have in your Content.

With the exception of Content submitted by you and other Blog users, all intellectual property (including copyright, official marks and trade-marks) contained in the Blog and the Website is owned by the Province or its licensors. If you wish to make use of any such intellectual property, you must first obtain permission in accordance with the Province's policies.

Third Party Websites
The posting of any Content that includes links to any third party websites does not imply any association with, or endorsement of, such websites by the Province. The Province does not control, and is not responsible for the content of, any third party websites.

Warranty Disclaimer
You agree that your use of the Blog and the Website is entirely at your own risk and that you will be liable for any failure to abide by the Terms. In addition to the Province's general Warranty Disclaimer, the Province makes no representations or warranties, expressed or implied, regarding:

1. the availability of the Blog or the Website; or

2.   the accuracy, completeness or currency of any information, including Content, posted to the Blog or included on the Website.

Limitation of Liability
In addition to the Province's general Limitation of Liabilities, you agree that under no circumstances will the Province or any of its respective servants, employees or agents be liable to you or any person or entity for any direct, indirect, special, incidental, consequential, or other damages (whether based on contract, tort, strict liability or otherwise) as a result of any:

1.   use of or reliance on any Content or other information included on the Website;
2.   use of the Blog or the Website; or
3.   failure to abide by the Terms.

Without limiting the general nature of the foregoing, you agree that the Province is not responsible for any lost, intercepted, incomplete, illegible or misdirected Content, connection failures or Website unavailability, failed, incomplete, garbled or delayed transmissions, or hardware, software or other technical malfunctions.

Indemnity
You agree to indemnify and hold harmless the Province and its servants, employees and agents from and against any and all claims, actions, causes of action, liabilities, damages, demands, losses, costs or expenses (including any claim of infringement of intellectual property rights, rights of privacy or publicity, or any claim with respect to libel, slander or other defamation), arising directly or indirectly out of or in connection with: (a) any Content submitted by you; (b) your use of the Website, the Blog and/or any Content; or (c) your breach of any provision of the Terms, including if any representation or warranty provided by you is or becomes untrue.

Termination of Blog and Amendments to Terms
The Province reserves the right to stop providing the Blog at any time. The Province also reserves the right to modify the Terms at any time, without notice being provided directly to you.

You understand and agree that it is your responsibility to review the Terms on a regular basis to ensure that you are aware of any modifications that may have been made. Your continued use of the Blog constitutes your acceptance of any such modified Terms. In the event that you do not agree to be bound by any such modified Terms, then your sole remedy is to stop using the Blog.

Collection, Use and Disclosure of Personal Information
Your name, e-mail address [**insert age, role and/or region if these will also be collected**] and opinions are collected and will be used by GCPE for the purposes of obtaining your views and facilitating discussion with other Blog users.

In addition, the details of your visit to the Website, including your IP address, the date and time of your visit, and your acceptance of the Terms, are collected and will be used by GCPE for the purpose of administering the Blog and the Website.

The authority to collect your personal information comes from Section 26(c) of the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* (British Columbia). If you have any questions about the collection of your personal information, please contact: David Hume, Executive Director, Citizen

Engagement, 2nd Floor - 525 Superior Street; PO BOX 9439 STN PROV GOVT, [insert postal code], tel: 250-589-9043

Your name and opinions will be used for, and publicly accessed and disclosed worldwide on, the Blog.

Your name [**insert role, age and/or region if these will also be disclosed**], email address and opinions will also be disclosed to the [**insert ministry/ministries**] to allow [**that ministry/these ministries**] to consider your views and facilitate the Blog.

Your name and e-mail address may also be used by GCPE and the **[insert other ministry/ministries]** to contact you in order to clarify your Content, to notify you of future opportunities to participate in public consultations and to keep you updated on the progress of issues that are related to the Blog topic(s). If you do not wish to be notified of future opportunities, please notify the contact listed above in these Terms of Use.

By accepting the Terms, you hereby consent to the use, disclosure of, and access to, your personal information, inside and outside of Canada, for the purposes set out above. Your consent will be effective from the date that you confirm your acceptance of the Terms until the date that you withdraw (in writing) your consent to the contact listed above in these Terms of Use.

Any personal information collected from you will be collected, used and disclosed in accordance with the Terms and the Province's legislation and general Privacy Policy. If you think that your personal information has been improperly disclosed on the Blog, please notify us immediately by e-mail at [insert email address], citing the date and author of the Content where the disclosure occurred.

General
The Terms, including the information for which links are provided within the Terms, constitute the entire agreement between you and the Province with respect to your use of the Blog.

The use of "includes" or "including" in the Terms is not intended to be limiting.

If any term or provision of the Terms is invalid, illegal or unenforceable, all other terms and provisions of the Terms will nonetheless remain in full force and effect.

The Terms will be governed by and construed in accordance with the laws of British Columbia and the laws of Canada applicable in British Columbia. You agree that any action at law or in equity in any way arising from the Terms and/or in any way associated with your use of the Blog will be resolved by arbitration under the *Arbitration Act* (British Columbia) and that the place of arbitration will be Victoria, British Columbia.