

Beyond Town Hall Meetings: Multifaceted and Meaningful Citizen Engagement

Presented by:

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Director of the Public Policy
and Management Center



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Who are you and why are you talking to me?



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Perspective



“Leading a public engagement process, is like being a quarterback for a pro-football team. Only in this case, your own team can tackle you.”

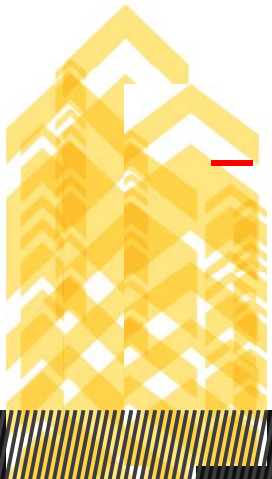
ACT-ICT Team



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Perspective

- About the PPMC...
 - More than 55 of years of applied learning
 - Integrated teaching, research and service
 - Environmental Finance Center
 - In Kansas, we serve 96 of the 102 counties
 - Activities in 8 states, reached 3 different countries in 2014-15
 - **Community Engagement...**
Holy Grail for Democracy



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Perspective



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Perspective

“Citizens who attended a public meeting on town or school affairs” has fallen from 22 percent in 1973 to less than 13 percent.

Roper Center for Public Opinion Research at the University of Connecticut

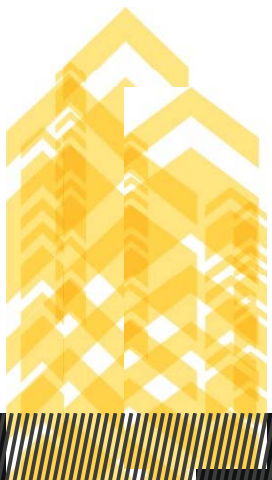


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Perspective

“You can howl at the moon all you want, but all you are going to end up with is a sore throat.”

***City of Wichita
Council Member
George Rogers***



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Perspective

A national survey conducted by Hart/Teeter for the Council for Excellence in Government found that **9 out of 10 respondents** could readily cite examples of the "**biggest problems**" with government.

Only 42 percent could identify any successes.

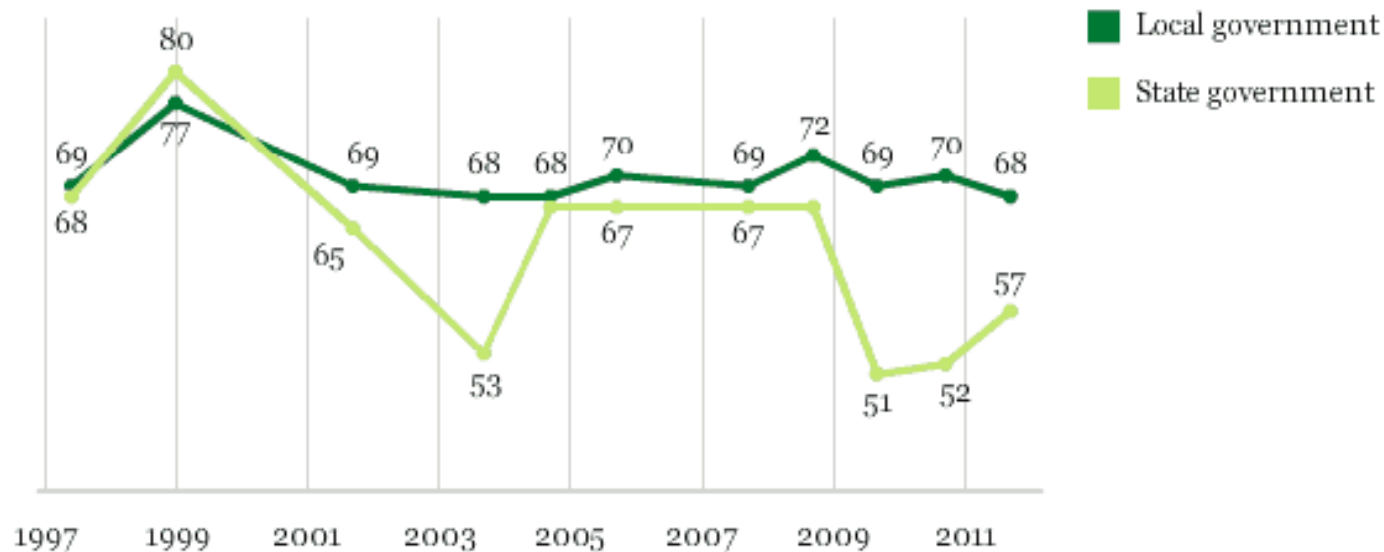


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Perspective

Trust and Confidence in Each Type of Government to Handle Problems -- Recent Trend

% Great deal/Fair amount of trust and confidence



GALLUP®



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Perspective

- **Kaifeng Yang** “Public Administrators’ Trust in Citizens: A Missing Link in Citizen Involvement Efforts”
 - “Whether I trust citizens or not has no impact on my decision making in my job.”
 - 46% of Public Administrators Agreed
 - The study finds that **public administrators’ trust in citizens is a relevant predictor of proactive citizen involvement efforts.**



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Perspective

Kathleen E. Halvorsen “Assessing the Effects of Public Participation”, 2003

Findings include that “quality participation may have short- and long-term effects on participants....exposure to **high-quality participation** can lead people to see a public agency as **significantly (two-thirds)** more responsive.”



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Perspective

- Recent or current project?
- Why are you engaging?
 - One Sentence
- Biggest challenge?
- What is your role?



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Phases of Community Engagement

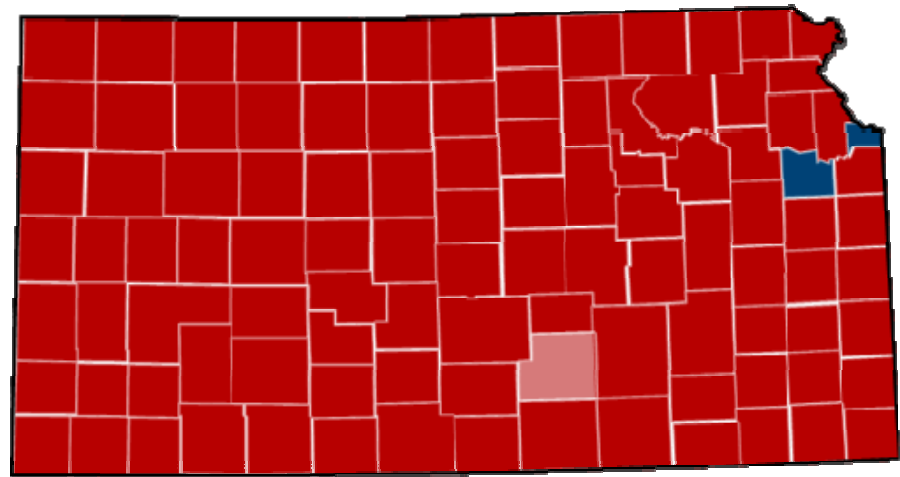
1. Defining the Engagement
2. Understanding the Issues
3. Getting Direction
4. Developing the Plan



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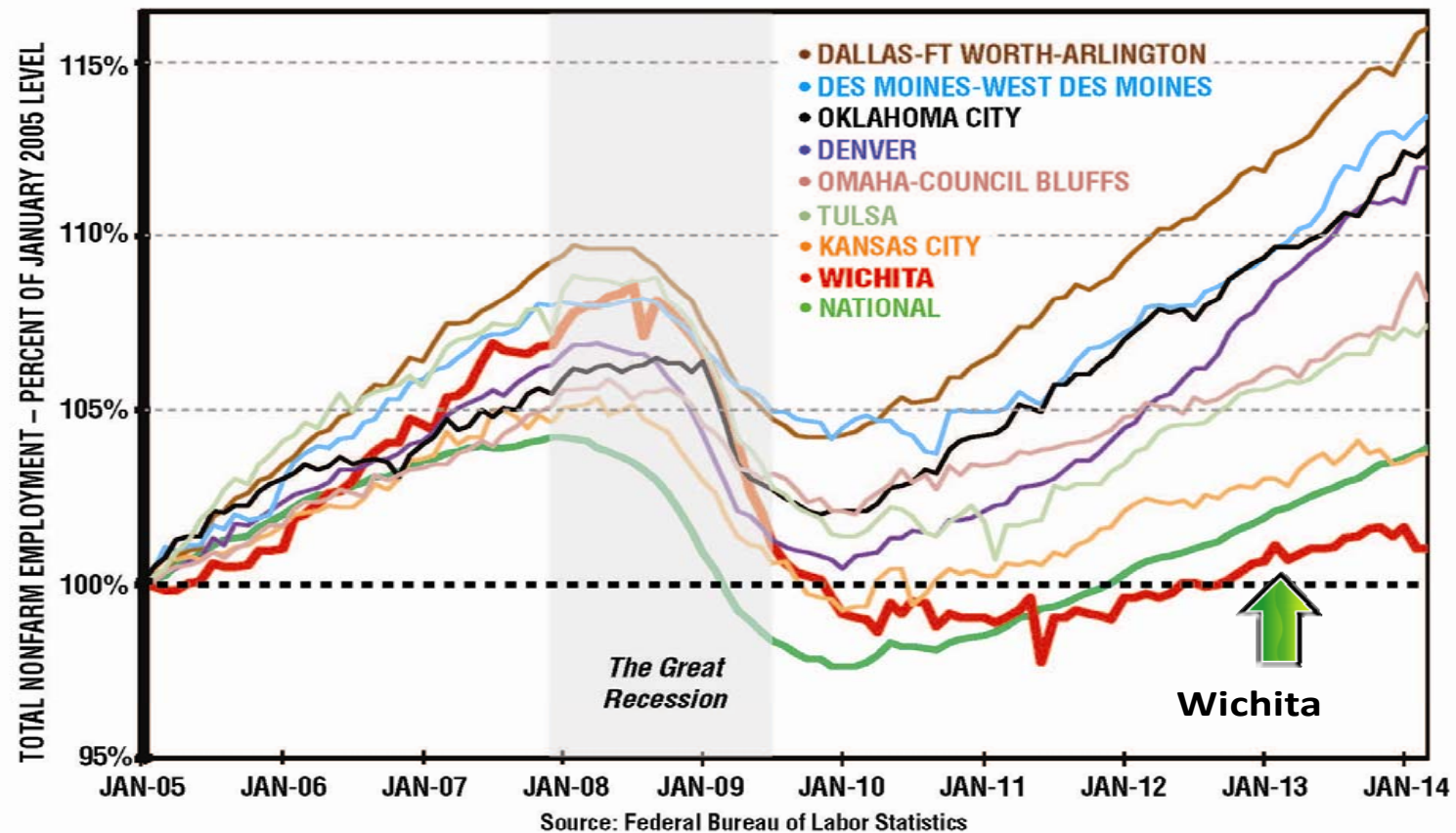
Perspective: Wichita-Sedgwick County

- 650,000+ population
- Aging population
- Demographic changes
- Recession impact
 - 31,000 jobs lost (1-10)
- Political Landscape



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Perspective: Wichita-Sedgwick County



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Perspective: Wichita-Sedgwick County

U.N. Agenda 21, adopted June 1992

“Meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.”

- Use limited public funds more efficiently
- Connect people with quality jobs through coordinated workforce development
- Align regional housing, transportation, and infrastructure investments
- Protect important resources such as water, air and farmland
- Build safe, healthy and attractive neighborhoods
- Create lasting value for our local communities and economies



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Defining Engagement

Case Study: Part #1

- Exchange – The sharing and processing of information in a one-way process. The focus is primarily educational, with limited citizen input.
- Engagement – The ability for citizens to come together, deliberate and take action on problems or issues that they have identified as important.



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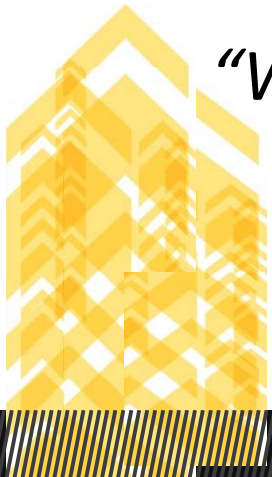
Defining Engagement

“You talk, I talk, we call it a conversation.”



“What we have here is a failure to communicate.”

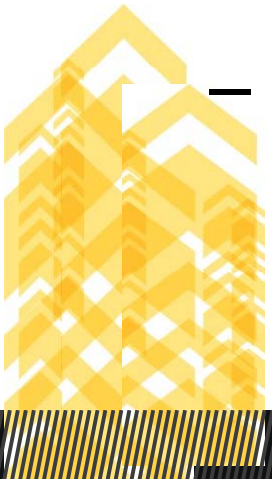
...Cool Hand Luke



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Defining Engagement

- Principals of Community Engagement
 - Purpose matters
 - Personal impact matters
 - Language matters
 - Timing matters
 - Transparency matters
 - ROI matters



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Defining Engagement

Recognition of the need for something different:

- Engage more than “frequent flyers”
- Process is two-way learning
- Local government has to be aggressive on getting the issues and information to citizens
- There has to be room for engagement

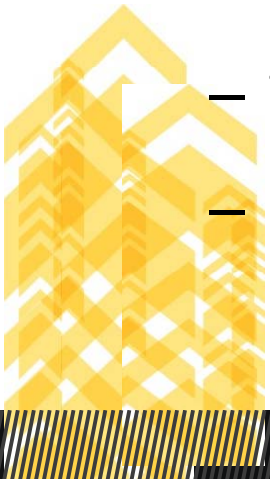


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Defining Engagement

Phase 1: Focus Group

- Invitation from Mayor/Commission Chairman to 500 Residents (10% participation); follow up phone calls
- 90 minute session in four quadrants
- Informational white papers and presentation on critical issues: water, economic development, transportation, community development
- Time for dialogue and feedback
- Draft survey



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Defining Engagement

Phase 1: Results

- The presentations on the subjects helped me understand issues impacting our local governments. (98%)
- The conversations helped me think about issues impacting our community. (96%)
- I believe other citizens could learn more about issues impacting our community by attending similar sessions. (98%)
- Staff made me feel welcomed and valued in the session. (100%)



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Understanding the Issues

- Case Study Part 2: Gathering Information



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Understanding the Issues

- What do you need to know?
- What do citizens need to know?
- How do we create a conversation?
- How do we promote?
- How do we share?
- What is the best format?



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Understanding the Issues

- Communities are losing capacity because of the Great Divide
 - **Division between citizens**
 - **Division between citizens and government**
 - **Division between citizens and community**
- Our survey asks citizens to rise above self-interests by making recommendations that are consistent with the long-term well-being of the community



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Understanding the Issues

Survey Logic

- **Step 1. *Establish need to Change*:** Global Economy and Fiscal Challenges
- **Step 2. *Community Attachment as a Frame of Reference*:** Respondents are encouraged to reflect on their basic values and responsibilities to community
- **Step 3. *General assessment of citizen concerns and public investment recommendations related to four functional areas*:** Economic Development, Community Development, Transportation, and Water



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Understanding the Issues

Survey Logic

- **Step 4. *Local Government and Demonstrated Trust: Approval of how local government has invested public resources***
 (“The community is a better place because we invested in...”)
- **Step 5. *Establish Investment Priorities and Recognition of Opportunity Costs*: Recommended change in the level of investment (Much Less, Less, No Change, More, Much More)**

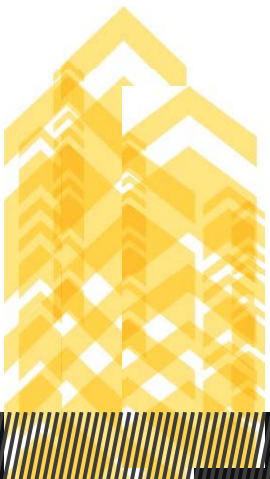


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Understanding the Issues

Survey Logic

- **Step 6. *Priorities and Willingness to Pay: Predictive Validity***
 - (“I’m willing to pay increased taxes or fees to pay for investment”)
 - (Definitely Not Willing to Pay, Probably Not Willing to Pay, Probably Willing to Pay, Definitely Willing to Pay)



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Understanding the Issues



Survey Process

- 25,000 Surveys
- Oversampled in four areas
- Media Announcement
- Received 4,000+ surveys
- 16% response rate



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Understanding the Issues



“They don’t ask those questions because they don’t fit into their paradigm, and their paradigm is ‘We want government to do more,’.”

Commissioner Karl Peterjohn

Read more here: <http://www.kansas.com/news/article1107519.html#storylink=cpy>



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Understanding the Issues

- **Community Attachment Index: A Proxy for the Public Interest**
 - **Index Component 1: Self-Interest versus Community Well-Being**
 - I am willing to put community interests above personal interests (71.7%)
 - Most people are willing to put community interests above personal interest (28.2%)



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Understanding the Issues

- **Community Attachment Index: A Proxy for the Public Interest**
 - **Index Component 2: Balancing Concerns of Current & Future Generations**
 - I am willing to make personal sacrifices for the well-being of future generations (85.7%)
 - Most people are willing to make personal sacrifices for the well-being of future generations (41.7%)
 - Our community should strive to balance the needs and concerns of current and future generations (97.0%)



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Understanding the Issues

- **Community Attachment Index: A Proxy for the Public Interest**
 - **Index Component 3: Balancing the Concerns of Advantaged and Disadvantaged**
 - Our community should strive to create employment **opportunity** for all individuals that are willing to work (95.3%).



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Understanding the Issues

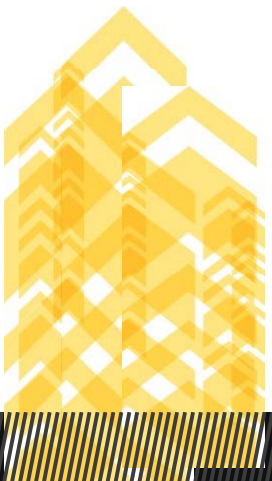
- **Functional Area 1: Economic Development including**
 - Local government should use **public resources** to encourage investment when business can demonstrate that community benefits are greater than public dollars invested (83.6%)



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Understanding the Issues

- **Functional Area 2: Community Development**
 - Neighborhood-Based Organizations need to be strengthened
 - **Public resources** should be used to improve neighborhoods when neighbors are willing to do their part (88.4%)



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Understanding the Issues

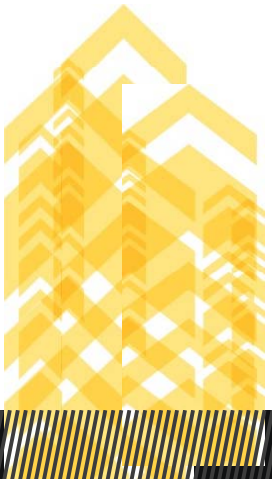
- **Functional Area 3: Transportation**
 - Local government should reduce residential street maintenance by making repairs only when absolutely necessary to protect our investment (26.3%)
 - Local government should improve public transportation now to prepare for the future where petroleum is limited and more expensive (81.1%)



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Understanding the Issues

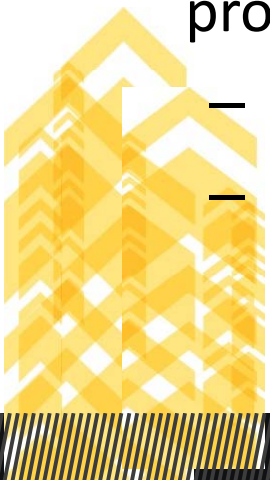
- **Functional Area 4: Water**
 - To make the best use of a finite/limited supply of clean water the community should reduce water consumption now and **invest** in infrastructure to ensure that we will have water in the future (88.9%)



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Understanding the Issues

- **Recommended Change in Investment: Priorities & Opportunity Costs**
 - **Increase Investment:** Develop a reliable long-term water supply **(83.4%)**
- **I'm willing to pay increased taxes or fees to pay for investment** to create a reliable source of water that will provide for the future water needs of the community **(85.3%)**
 - **Low community attachment= 61.8%**
 - **High community attachment= 90.4%**



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Understanding the Issues

Investment Priorities and Willingness to Pay More Taxes or Fees

- ...to create a reliable source of water that will meet the future water needs of the community (85.3%)
- ...to improve street maintenance (66.4%)
- ...to establish passenger train service connecting Wichita to cities such as Kansas City, Oklahoma City, Fort Worth(65.3%)
- ...to meet the needs of those who are homeless (63.4%)
- ...to encourage economic development, business investment and job creation (62.3%)

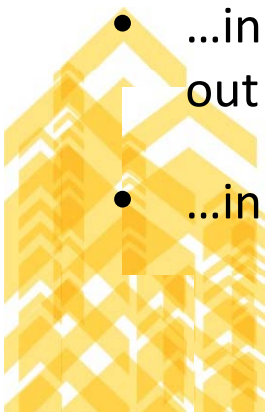


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Understanding the Issues

Investment Priorities and Willingness to Pay More Taxes or Fees

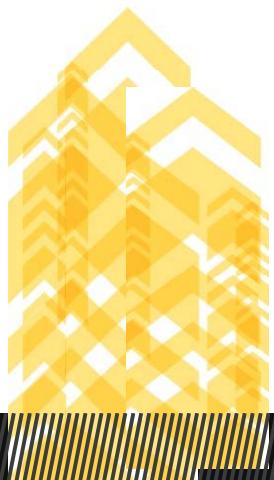
- ...that creates a regional storm water drainage system to reduce flooding (56.5%)
- ...in public transportation including bus service that is faster and more convenient (54.7%)
- ...in incentives for airlines that are willing to reduce the cost to fly into and out of Wichita Mid-Continent Airport (54.6%)
- ...in freeways such as Kellogg and K-96 (51.4%)



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BREAK



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Getting Direction

Case Study Part #3: Now What?



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Getting Direction

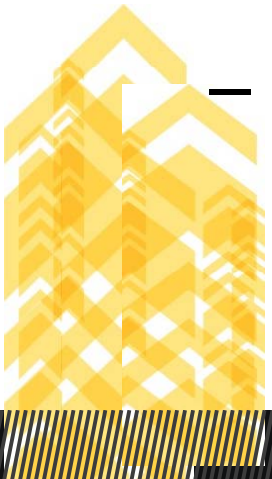
- What do you need to know?
- What do citizens need to know?
- How do we create a conversation?
- How do we promote?
- How do we share?
- What is the best format?
- What is the ROI?



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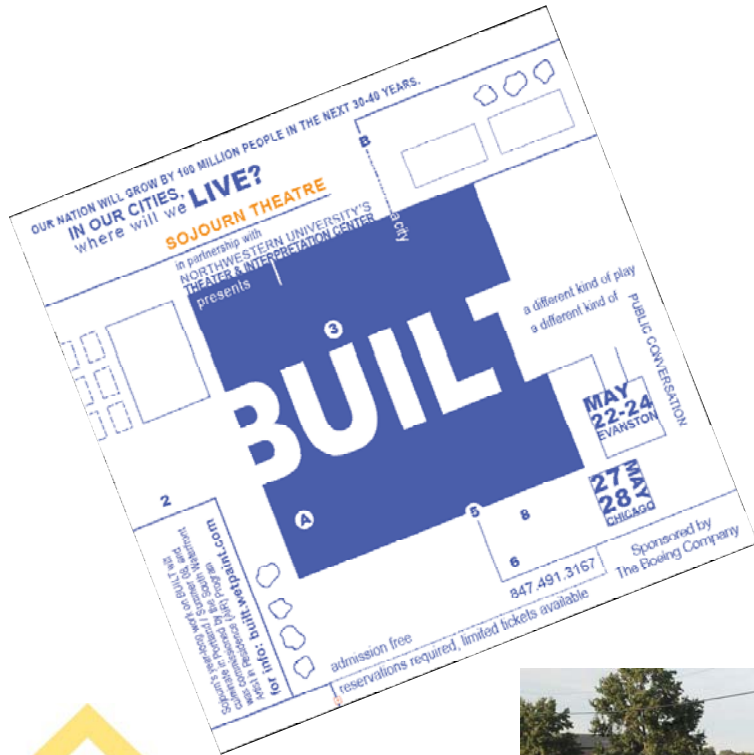
Defining Engagement

- Principals of Community Engagement
 - Purpose matters
 - Personal impact matters
 - Language matters
 - Timing matters
 - Transparency matters
 - ROI matters



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Getting Information



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Getting Information



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Getting Direction

ACT –ICT

- Ownership of the project
- Address comments from the critic
- Provide support system
- Create energy
- Further the conversation



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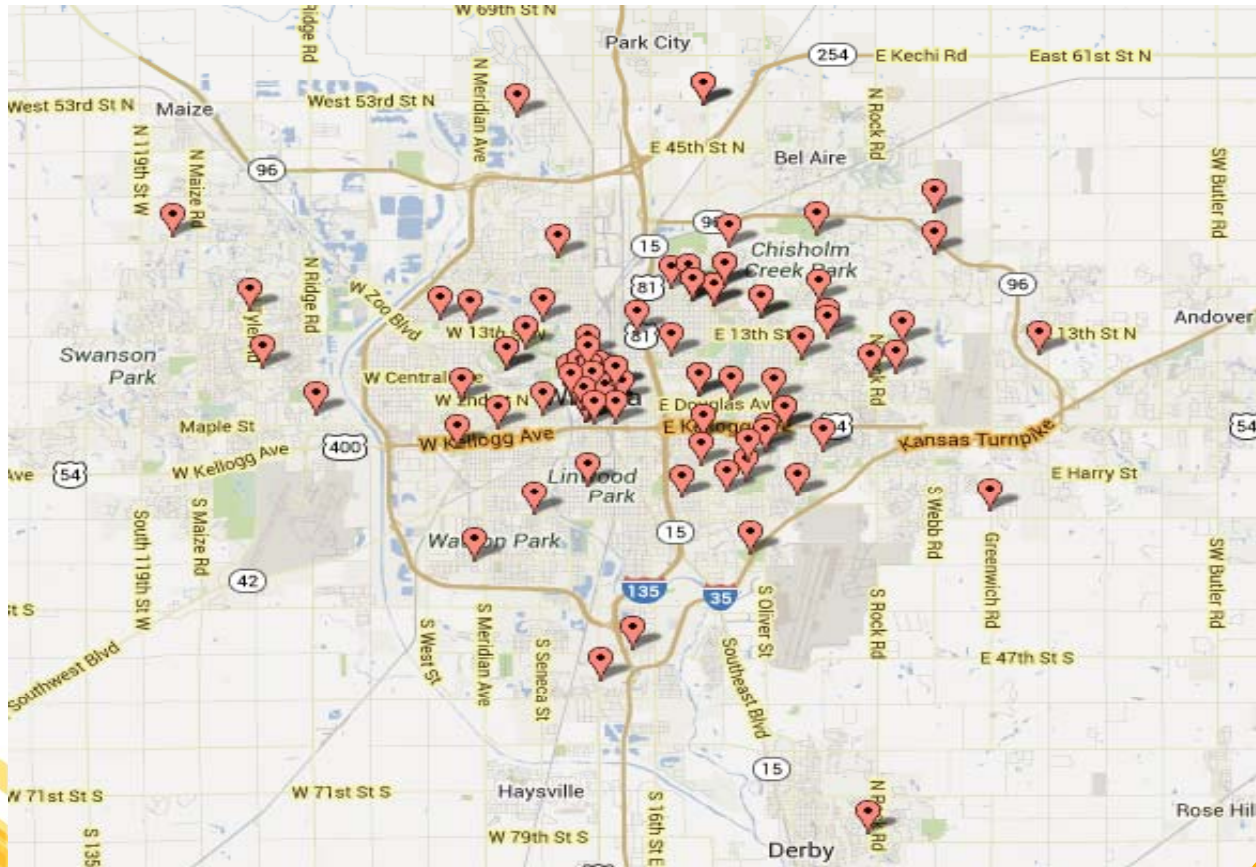
Getting Direction

- Trained 15 internal facilitators
- Four Months
- 102 citizen meetings
- 400 organizations
- 2,000 citizens participating
- “Only four months to live...”



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Getting Direction

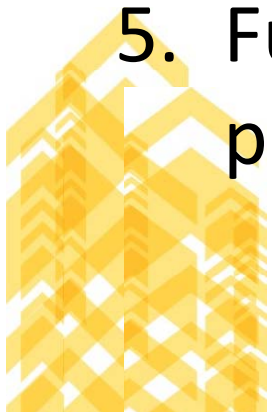


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Getting Direction

1. Visioning Exercise
2. Presentation on issues defined in the survey
3. Survey results
4. Prioritization Exercise (Define the most important issues for the community)
5. Funding Exercise (Define how to pay for the priorities)



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Getting Direction

- Prioritization Exercise

Make sure clicker channel number is set to **41**. If not, change it by doing the following:

Ch Press "Ch" button

4/A Press "4" button

1/D Press "1" button

Ch Press "Ch" button to save



Feedback button



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Getting Direction

**62 cents for
community
safe**



**5 cents for
Administration**

17 cents Public Works

**16 cents for a
livable community**

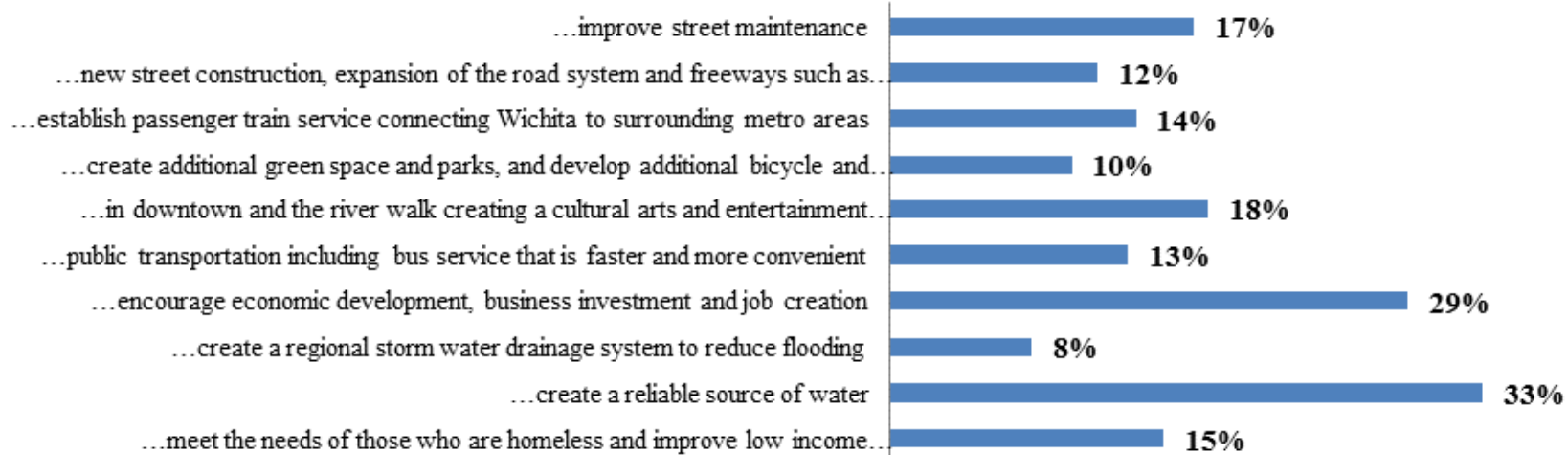


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Getting Direction

Question: What are the Most Important Priorities for Our Community for the Next Generation?

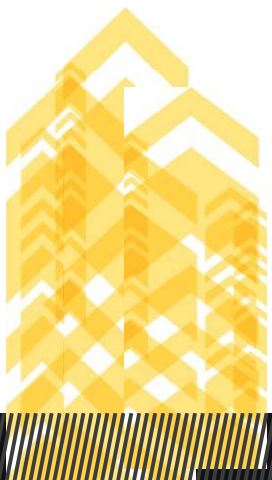
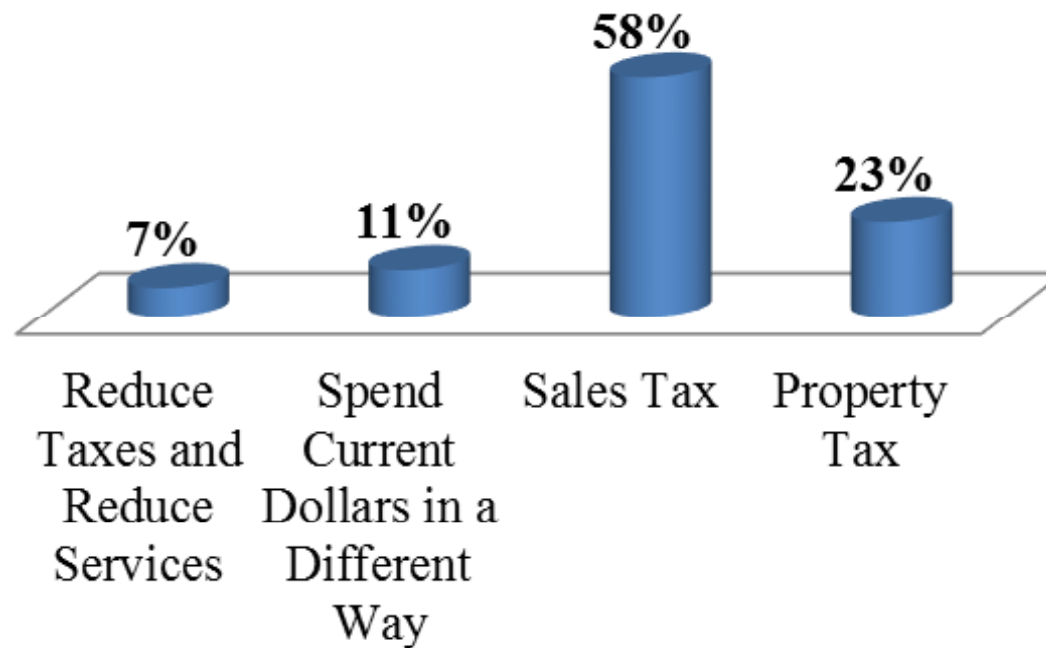
■ % of Total Participants



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Getting Direction

How Should We Invest to Create Our Community's Vision for the Future?

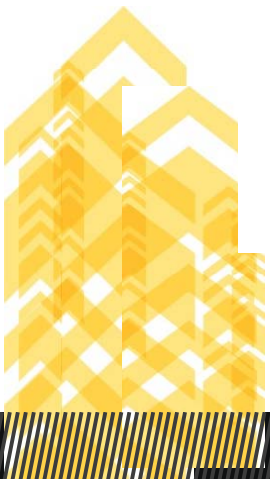
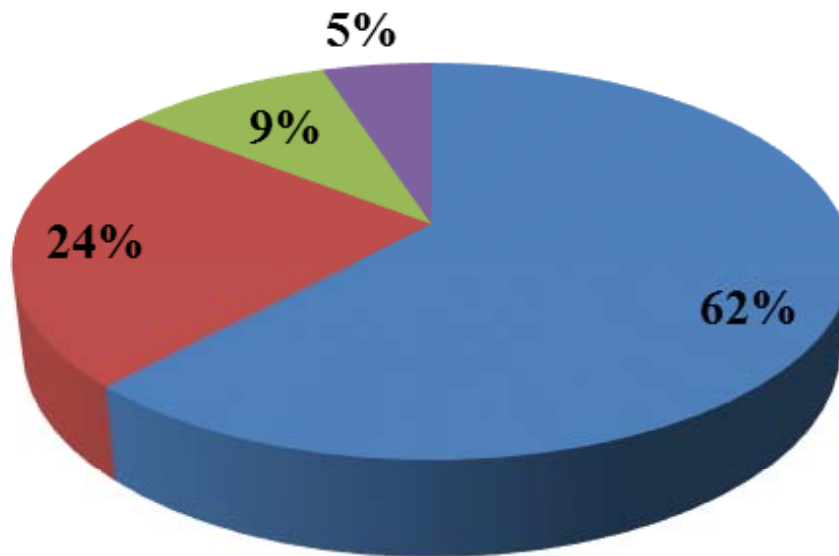


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Getting Direction

Sales Tax

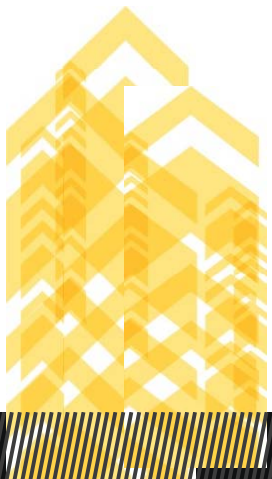
■ 1 cent ■ 1/2 cent ■ 1/4 cent ■ Other



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Developing the Plan

Case Study Part #4: Cooks in the Kitchen



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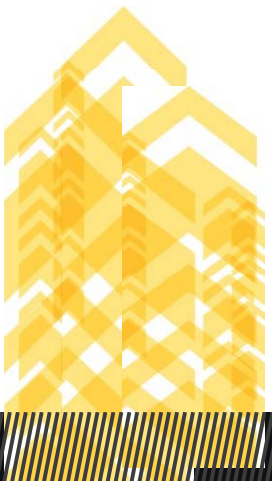
Developing the Plan

Project Components

- Vision
- Issues
- Goals
- Strategies
- Implementation

Process Components

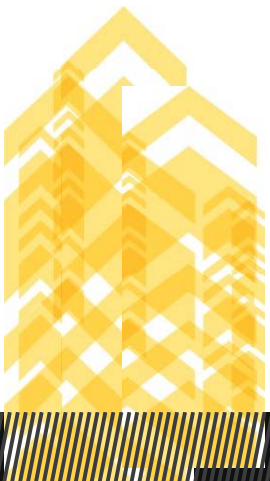
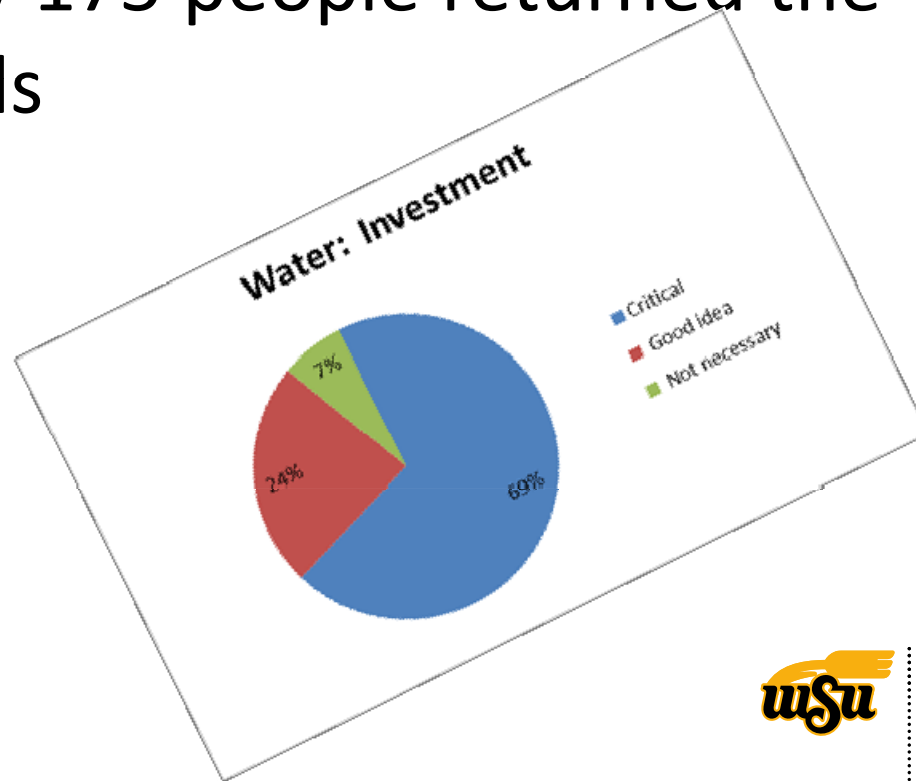
- Clear message
- Consistent message
- Clear champions
- Trust
- Transparency



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Developing the Plan

- 440 participants in the meetings
- Approximately 175 people returned the comment cards
- 30 day period



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Developing the Plan

- Results from the public sessions:

Water

- How would you describe this plan as an investment for our community? (176 respondents)*
Critical – 69% Good Idea – 24% Not Necessary – 7%
- How would you describe this plan as a benefit for the next generation? (173 respondents)*
Critical – 73% Good Idea – 23% Not Necessary – 3%
- How would you describe this as a plan that is well designed and will generate the community's preferred results? (165 respondents)*
Good plan – 59% Don't know – 24% Needs more work – 17%



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Developing the Plan

- Results from the public sessions:

Jobs

- How would you describe this plan as an investment for our community? (166 respondents)*
Critical – 58% Good Idea – 28% Not Necessary – 13%
- How would you describe this plan as a benefit for the next generation? (168 respondents)*
Critical – 59% Good Idea – 28% Not Necessary – 13%
- How would you describe this as a plan that is well designed and will generate the community's preferred results? (164 respondents)*
Good plan – 51% Don't know – 26% Needs more work – 24%



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Developing the Plan

- Results from the public sessions

Public Transit

- *How would you describe this plan as an investment for our community? (170 respondents)*
Critical – 47% Good Idea – 42% Not Necessary – 11%
- *How would you describe this plan as a benefit for the next generation? (169 respondents)*
Critical – 44% Good Idea – 46% Not Necessary – 9%
- *How would you describe this as a plan that is well designed and will generate the community's preferred results? (165 respondents)*
Good plan – 44% Don't know – 33% Needs more work – 23%



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Developing the Plan

- Results from the public sessions

Pavement Maintenance

- *How would you describe this plan as an investment for our community? (170 respondents)*
Critical – 39% Good Idea – 52% Not Necessary – 8%
- *How would you describe this plan as a benefit for the next generation? (171 respondents)*
Critical – 40% Good Idea – 54% Not Necessary – 6%
- *How would you describe this as a plan that is well designed and will generate the community's preferred results? (158 respondents)*
Good plan – 51% Don't know – 29% Needs more work – 20%



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The Rest of the Story



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The Rest of the Story

transparency +
engagement +
performance +
accountability =

trust



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The Rest of the Story

- The measure was voted down 62 percent to
- Koch Public Sector division spent more than \$1 million to defeat the proposed city sales tax
- 5-1 spending gap



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The Rest of the Story

- What can we learn from the case study?
- What were critical decision points?
- What do you think was successful?
- What do you think was not successful?
- What advice would you have in hindsight?
- How does this apply to your own work?



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