



Virtual Engagement Strategies

Reaching Your Audience

Stakeholder input is critical for advancing projects in the public realm. For many reasons, online engagement can be an effective means of sharing information and gaining feedback. These include reaching a larger group of stakeholders, time and travel savings, and more recently, the need to practice social distancing. While public engagement needs continue to evolve, what hasn't changed is the universal need for simple, effective communication. Stantec has always approached engagement with multiple strategies to get a variety of stakeholders involved.

CUSTOMIZED PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLANS

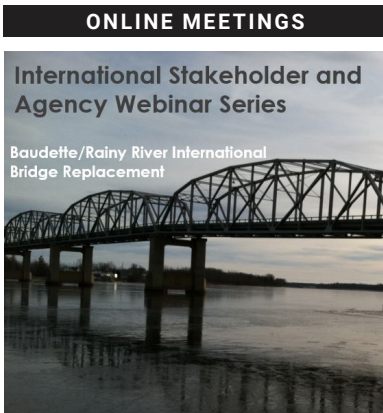
Engagement starts with an outreach plan tailored to your project's unique needs. Our experts will work with you to develop a targeted engagement plan that is responsive to numerous critical factors including funding sources, local environment, agency requirements, and stakeholder demographics.

Ultimately, our goal is to give people every opportunity to be a part of the decision-making process. Our outreach plans are designed to identify and reach your target audiences, and then employ multiple platforms to encourage and bolster engagement. We bring proven experience with innovative virtual strategies designed to inform and engage a diverse range of stakeholders who each bring their own needs and expectations to the process. Our methodologies can provide opportunities for stakeholders to experience information in multiple languages, provide written and verbal feedback, and engage in a timeframe that works for them.



“Stantec’s online strategy helped us engage with a wider audience to get more of the community involved. The Stantec team built a website, designed an interactive StoryMap, developed content for our social media and listservs, and designed online surveys—one survey got more than 700 responses! Stantec helped us craft the survey questions to get the critical information we needed and make the process an effective one. Through the online tools, we felt like we were able to extend our reach and engage people who wouldn’t necessarily make it to traditional planning meetings, which was integral in aligning the project development with the community’s vision.”

–Derrick LaPoint, Downtown Moorhead Inc.



In today’s world, we are accustomed to online meetings and actively host meetings virtually. At Stantec, we can develop specifications that recognize agency requirements for public meetings and hearings. We are familiar with a variety of tools including Skype, GoToMeeting, GlobalMeet, Zoom, and more. Recently, Stantec hosted a series of webinars for various agencies on the Baudette/Rainy River International Bridge Replacement project.

Our teams used GlobalMeet to provide information to the stakeholder agencies spread across the US and Canada. The site allowed people to post questions during the live session and to ask questions in the open Q/A session at the end. We had between 35-50 agency staff who attended each webinar. At

the time these meetings were held, several agencies had imposed travel restrictions. The webinar was provided in lieu of in-person multi-agency meetings. A main goal of these sessions was to allow the agencies to understand who was involved and how each agency’s decisions had an impact on the decisions/approvals of other agencies. The meetings encouraged data sharing and discussion between the agencies and their US or Canadian counterparts.

RESULT: The webinars allowed for both key decision making agencies as well as peripheral agencies interested in the project’s progress to see the most up-to-date information and provided an efficient platform for comments/questions at key milestone points during the project.



A dedicated online tool to ask stakeholders questions. These can be quick and effective if given the right attention. Stantec helps clients develop the right questions to ask so that engagement is meaningful and productive. We can use various survey platforms including SurveyMonkey, Google Forms, Typeform, Surveygizmo and more. Most recently, we received more than 700 responses for an engagement survey for the [Downtown Moorhead Plan](#).

Additionally, in lieu of an in-person meeting for a second stakeholder meeting, Stantec created online visioning survey for the 76th Avenue South Corridor. The survey was also made available to the public in the following ways: A newsletter mailed out half a mile north and south of the entire corridor, via the project website, Metro COG’s website, and Metro COG’s Facebook page.

RESULT: Stantec utilized multiple avenues to advertise the Downtown Moorhead Plan survey which allowed for more than 700 responses.



Stantec offers the following additional traditional outreach tools to connect with the public when barriers exist such as:

- Newsletters
- Postcards
- Telephone town halls
- Public access television
- Public advisory networks

PROJECT WEBSITES

MANKATO AVENUE RECONSTRUCTION PROJECT [Home](#) [About the Project](#)



About the Project


Mankato Avenue is an important and heavily-utilized corridor in the city of Mankato, Minnesota. It is the single artery on the east side of Lake Winona and doubles as Highway 1, the only route to cross the Mississippi River for nearly 20 miles in either direction. At its northern intersection with Highway 61, just south of Lake Winona, it serves as a critical link between Winona, Interstate 90 and the greater region. Under the Mankato Sugar Loaf rock pinnacle, the Mankato Avenue corridor serves as an entrance to the city of Mankato from the south.

Many people use the internet to stay up to date on current events, including what's happening in their own backyard. Websites create a starting point for sharing and soliciting information from stakeholders. These can include videos, layouts, graphics, and link to other resources. Websites can be optimized for mobile devices to increase accessibility. Our teams routinely use project websites as part of their engagement toolbox, including recently on the MnDOT Mankato Avenue Reconstruction project (www.mankatoaverconstruction.com).

RESULT: The website has received more than 7,000 views and was used to collect more than 150 comments using Facebook, online surveys and an interactive map during our first public engagement session. When combined with the comments received from the public meeting, pop-up sessions, listening sessions, bike audit and walk audit we received more than 400 comments.

SOCIAL MEDIA

Join us for a "Bike Audit" at the end of the Open House on Tuesday! We will leave the Armory at 6:30pm and take a ride along the project corridor, making a few stops to talk about conditions along the way. Bring your bicycle!



MANKATO AVENUE RECONSTRUCTION

2,181 People Reached 100 Engagements [Boost Again](#)

Boosted on May 25, 2019
By Joe Polacek Completed

People 1 OK Post 66

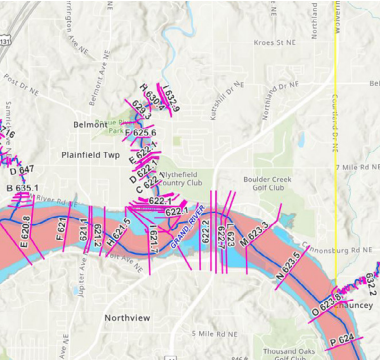
In the last few years, social media platforms have revolutionized communications between people around the world and across the street. Advertisement tools on Facebook and Instagram are an effective way to communicate with people and can be focused on specific ages, demographics, and geographies.

Stantec develops the strategic messaging to target general or specific audiences depending on the needs of the client. Stantec successfully used this technique on the [TH 43 Reconstruction in Winona for MnDOT](#).

Stantec creates Facebook pages or copy and graphics for clients to post on an existing account. Messaging is targeted to reach specific audiences and Stantec

RESULT: One post was seen by more than 2,000 people in the project area and generated more than 100 likes or comments. More than 80% of visitors to the project website came through Facebook due to this social media campaign.

INTERACTIVE MAPS



Using Esri's Web AppBuilder for ArcGIS, Stantec creates maps that allow the general public to review "draft" flood hazard information and provide comments. The user can place a point on the map indicating the location of their comments. By providing a familiar, interactive web interface the general public can search by address, review the data, view base flood hazard information overlaid on aerial photography to "see" the impacts of the floodplain data. Links to the web application are provided through project websites, City or County websites, newspaper publications and through project leaders within the community.

RESULT: The result is positive public engagement that results in the community being aware of impacts to flood hazard boundaries and higher acceptance rates. Interactive maps enable us to track activity and engagement, helping to narrow down areas of concern to direct future attention on priorities or discover previously unknown issues. This technology allows people to zoom in specifically to what they care about most but also understand the project within a contextual whole.



Connect with us



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