



ELECTRONIC UPDATES



More Information: tti.tamu.edu/policy/how-to-engage-people

Description

Electronic updates (by email or text) inform interested individuals about transportation project updates using any electronic format. These electronic updates promote broader public participation and offer a cost-effective way to communicate information. Like other outreach strategies, the effectiveness of electronic updates depends on the quality, timeliness, and accuracy of the information.

Target Market

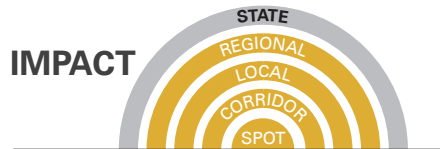
Electronic updates should be used throughout the life of a project or program to update interested parties of upcoming meetings, traffic alerts, new information alerts, input opportunities, project status or other timely information. Providing informative, short, and relevant messages increases the updates' effectiveness.

How Will This Help?

- **Distributes current, accurate, and relevant project-specific information** to travelers, community members, and other interested parties.
- **Allows interested parties to self-identify and become informed** on matters important to them.

Implementation Issues

Small portions of the population do not have access to email or text messaging. As of 2015, 90 percent of U.S. adults own a cell phone, and of those, 81 percent send or receive text messages. In 2014, 84 percent of U.S. households owned a computer. While access to these technologies continues to increase, it is important to consider traditional approaches, such as a mailer or newspaper announcement to reach those who do not use these devices.



SUCCESS STORIES

MoPac Improvement Project, Austin, Texas

The MoPac Expressway is one of the Austin's busiest arterials, carrying over 180,000 cars and trucks each day. When construction on managed lanes for the corridor began, the Central Texas Regional Mobility Authority engaged the public in a variety of ways using mobile, electronic, and social media platforms, including updates via email or text message by signing up on the website. Messages may include information on public forums, closures, and construction updates.

Gathering data such as email addresses and phone numbers can also be challenging. Many people may be hesitant to sign up for a list for fear of receiving too many or unimportant updates. Advertising ways to get involved on a project website or mailer can improve public awareness of how to receive updates and alerts.

ELECTRONIC UPDATES ON THE SPECTRUM OF PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

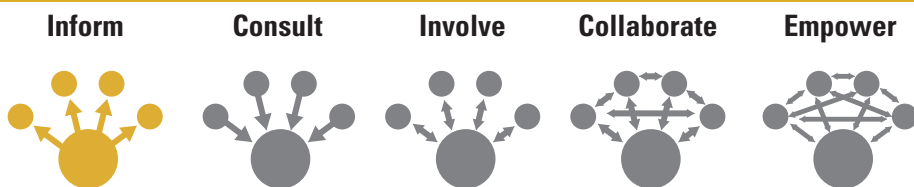


Figure 1. Spectrum of Public Engagement (Source: IAP2)

