



THE CITY OF BAINBRIDGE ISLAND, WA

Client interview with Sandy Fischer, Project Director Winslow Tomorrow

The Mayor of Bainbridge Island, in Puget Sound, Washington USA, convened a 'Community Congress' of 120 citizens to collaborate on a plan for the Island's downtown area. At the completion of the first phase over 300 people were actively participating and several hundred more were interested in being kept informed.

CHALLENGES IN COLLABORATION, COMMUNICATION, AND COST REDUCTION

The implementation phase of the project included initiatives to amend the comprehensive plan, revise zoning and development regulations, introduce design guidelines, plan a new neighborhood, resolve parking issues, study feasibility of structured parking, design a half-mile streetscape, and coordinate the with other agencies on long-range transportation planning.

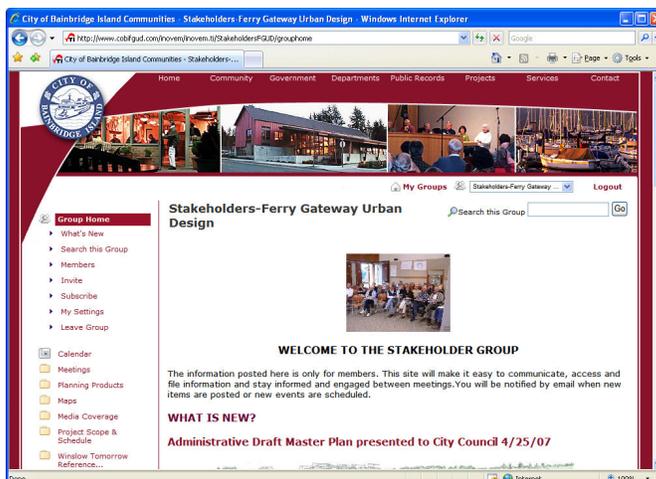
There were three major challenges that Winslow Tomorrow director Sandy Fischer, hoped to resolve when she looked at e-participation products:

"We wanted to capitalize on citizen input. Good ideas were being generated in meetings and in lengthy email discussions. I found myself forwarding emails in an attempt to connect people with similar interests. The effort was time consuming, people were excluded, and there was no central repository except for my inbox!

"A second challenge was to reduce cost, waste and the amount of time we were spending on project administration and communication. During the first phase, my project assistant worked nearly full time managing outreach activities and responding multiple requests for information."

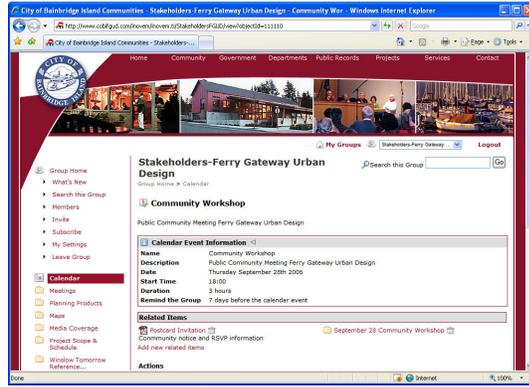
"The third challenge was to improve communication and creating an accurate and complete record of the process. We were looking for online tools to distribute information, consult with the community, support decision-makers and overcome perceptions that government is not accessible, transparent or inclusive."

Looking for a solution that was affordable and could be implemented and maintained with minimal IT support, Sandy Fischer researched and reviewed many products and ultimately selected INOVEM.



WHY DID THE CITY OF BAINBRIDGE ISLAND CHOOSE INOVEM?

“Most impressive is the ability of the INOVEM system to support team members and interest groups on a variety of initiatives and throughout all phases.



“The products are flexible and allow project managers design processes tailored to the needs of specific projects. The integration of the messaging system with user’s email is a tremendous benefit to stimulating involvement and simplifying project administration.

“Being able to implement the collaboration and consultation systems within the City’s existing brand as a hosted service and with moderation features was well received by IT director who has concerns about security and appropriate content.”

The City is using INOVEM tools to support policy development, programming, planning, design, public review, environmental review and document publishing. The purchase and hosting options allowed the city to begin with an initial investment for use on a single project, with the ability to expand for use on several projects or throughout the organization.

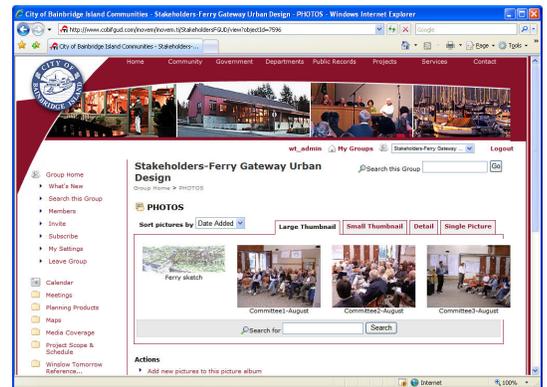
“As INOVEM’s first US client, we were pleasantly surprised by how well the online training and support worked. Our internal project team of two was able to successfully manage four on-line consultations, support team collaborations on three projects, manage eight groups and run two procurement exercises in a six month time frame, with less than 10% of our time devoted to website maintenance!”

Feedback from the community has been positive and Sandy expects usage to grow as the community sees the City Council using the information to support decision-making.

RESULTS TO DATE

“We’ve reduced administration time and cost and have improved communication, both with the community and between team members”, says Sandy Fischer.

“We’ve also built a good stakeholder database. Within six months we registered over 5% of the Island residents. This allows us quickly notify interest groups and conduct preference polls.”



Those who routinely use the collaboration features are convinced of the benefits. Some have not taken time to become familiar enough to make full use of the tools. The ability to belong to multiple groups has caused some confusion, which project managers believe will be overcome on future projects by continuing to train users, and branding different groups more distinctively.

Meeting dates and tasks for Stakeholders Group will be posted here.

List calendar events

Type	Name	Date	Time	Duration
	City Council & Planning Commission Briefing Special Meeting with decision makers (planning commission, city council, directors and steering committee) to introduce consultant team and review project approach and work plan and listen to concerns and expectations.	Tuesday July 18th 2006	02:30 pm	2 hours
	Property Owner Briefing Brief Property Owners Hear concerns & expectations	Tuesday July 18th 2006	11:45 am	1 hour 15 minutes
	Property Owner, Developer & Investor Meeting Hear from developers and investors about the challenges of developing in the Ferry and Gateway Districts	Tuesday July 18th 2006	10:00 am	1 hour
	Decision-Makers Meeting	Tuesday July 18th 2006	02:30 pm	1 hour
	Community Focus Group Meet with members of committees, commissions, neighbors and staff to explain the project and learn about initiatives that may affect the plan.	Tuesday July 18th 2006	07:00 pm	1 hour 30 minutes
	First Stakeholders Meeting	Wednesday July 19th 2006	03:00 pm	2 hours
	Related Project Team Workshop Coordination with WSP, WSDOT, KT related to on-going projects and initiatives	Wednesday July 19th 2006	08:00 am	3 hours 30 minutes
	Agency Technical & Safety Briefing Meet with police, fire, portland, WSDOT and WSP to discuss safety and security concerns and applicable standards and regulations	Wednesday July 19th 2006	11:30 am	1 hour
	Business Owner Meeting Meet with Business owners and staff to explain project and hear concerns	Thursday July 20th 2006	08:00 am	2 hours
	Stakeholders Meeting FQUD Stakeholders Meeting in City Council Chambers 7-9PM	Tuesday August 29th 2006	07:00 pm	2 hours

Registered citizens regularly visit the site for information; however some are reticent to participate in public discussions and prefer to send emails to small groups or directly to the managers. The team are working to overcome this by asking permission to post pertinent email comments as discussions.

“We’ve been careful not to share without permission and to not overly moderate. We want to build trust and avoid public perception that contributions are selectively posted. With the e-consultations, we find people comment more freely when the content is not linked with their name.

“We recognize that trust is based on relationships and therefore face to face meetings remain an important part of our outreach. INOVEM compliments our communication strategy and allows everyone to stay connected between events.

“People are beginning to understand the value of engaging in respectful, informative and inclusive conversations toward a shared goal of shaping sustainable places. Our INOVEM solution supports this dialogue.

“We’ve reduced administration time and cost and have improved communication, both with the community and between team members”

LET'S GET TOGETHER

To find out more about INOVEM eConsultation Systems, Stakeholder & Community and Project & Partnership Portals, call INOVEM today on +44 (0)1488 648 468 or email info@inovem.com

INOVEM Limited, 1 Weston Court, Weston, Berkshire RG20 8JE, UK