

Pop-Up Meetings

What it is

Pop-up meetings are a way to engage the public by bringing the meetings to where people already are, rather than asking them to go out of their way to come to a meeting at a specific location. The physical format of a pop-up meeting is only limited by an agency's creativity and resources: It can take on the traditional 'tent and tables' format or be as elaborate as the retrofitted truck shown below. The purpose of the pop-up meetings can be simply informative (distributing pamphlets, displaying posters, etc.) to more participatory (administering surveys, holding impromptu Q and A sessions, etc.).

Why it Works

It can be hard to recruit participants for traditional public meetings. Many people do not have time or are simply unable to go out of their way to attend. The benefit of a pop-up meeting is that it can be organized in convenient and heavily trafficked places such as farmers markets, shopping malls, downtown streets, and busy parking lots. A pop-up meeting is also effective because it doesn't have the 'one and done' limitation of a traditional public meeting: It can be moved to different places, allowing



Public Art Saint Paul has an artistically retrofitted city truck that is used to engage communities in public venues and customize civic meetings based on place. In exchange for their thoughts, survey responses, or handwritten love letters to the city, participants receive ice pops.

for multiple meetings in different locations in a single day. Further, if certain areas or venues prove to be more effective for attracting participants, the pop-up can quickly and easily be set up there again.

When to Use It

Pop-up meetings are effective when an agency wants to distribute information or solicit feedback from a community without having to jump through the usual hoops to garner participation. It is also an opportunity to advertise a specific project or program (or perhaps the agency itself).

Audience

Pop-up meetings can be used to approach and solicit feedback from any population in any heavily trafficked area. However, the usual considerations of how to accommodate the anticipated audience should be maintained (i.e. - If a pop-up meeting is being organized in a neighborhood with many LEP Spanish-speakers, information should be provided in Spanish and bilingual staff members or translators should be on hand).

Examples

[Public Art Saint Paul, St. Paul, Minnesota](#)

[River North/Streeterville Transit Study, Chicago, Illinois](#)

Resources

[“Engaging the Public on Transit” - Blog post by Foursquare ITP](#)

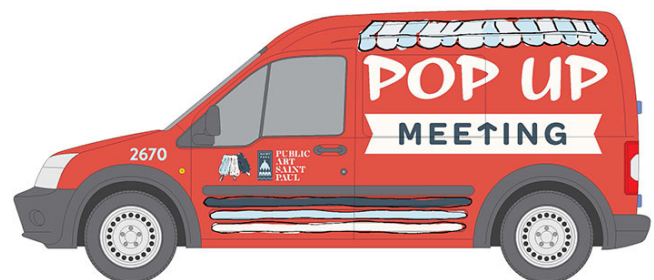
[“3 Ways to Boost Public Involvement in Your Project” - Article by Sharp & Co](#)

Estimated Level of Effort

The amount of effort exerted to organize a pop-up meeting will vary greatly depending on the nature of the materials being developed or distributed, the number of events and locations the pop-up is organized for, and the physical form of the pop-up itself. A ‘tent-and-table’ approach is fairly simple and straightforward, but it may not be as eye-catching and inviting as other more elaborate approaches (such as retrofitting a vehicle).

Cost Considerations

Depending on the format of the pop-up meeting and the materials involved, there could be a significant initial monetary investment. Staff may also need additional training to effectively hold pop-up meetings in diverse venues. However, any costs associated with organizing a traditional public meeting (advertising, renting a space, providing refreshments, offering payment or travel reimbursements in exchange for participation) could be eliminated.



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