Civic Engagement through Social Media

Shannon G Kettering, Pond | Ecos
Judith Dovers, Atlanta Regional Commission
Nicole Jones, Public Broadcasting Atlanta
Jonathan Lewis, Atlanta BeltLine, Inc.
Many communities are searching for ways to break the ‘public dialogue barrier’ and get closer to the true essence of democracy.
Social Media:

Enables shared community experiences through e-places, e-tools and e-services

Is the fourth most popular activity on the Internet (and email is 5th!)

Resource: walksquawkblogs.com; Nielson Report, 2009
What are the possibilities?

I'm switching everything over to the internet—my phone, my bills, my TV, my human contact.
Varying levels of Involvement

Creators
- Publish a blog
- Publish your own Web pages
- Upload video you created
- Upload audio/music you created
- Write articles or stories and post them

Critics
- Post ratings/reviews of products or services
- Comment on someone else's blog
- Contribute to online forums
- Contribute to/edit articles in a wiki

Collectors
- Use RSS feeds
- "Vote" for Web sites online
- Add "tags" to Web pages or photos

Joiners
- Maintain profile on a social networking site
- Visit social networking sites

Spectators
- Read blogs
- Listen to podcasts
- Watch video from other users
- Read online forums
- Read customer ratings/reviews

Inactives
- None of the above

Groups include consumers participating in at least one of the indicated activities at least monthly

Resource: Groundswell, Forrester Research, 2008
As of 2008, nearly 1/3rd of American adults had a profile page on a social networking site.

How appropriate are these tools for inviting public input and gauging support on community planning initiatives?
Social Media and Planning: Considerations

• Controlling information internally and externally

• Need leadership and staff resources

• The AICP Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct directs planners to

  “seek social justice by working to expand choice and opportunity for all persons recognizing a special responsibility to plan for the needs of the disadvantaged and to promote racial and economic integration.”
Effective tool for audience building

Social Networking and Planning Project (SNAPPatx) is a project of Toya Citizen Fund, an Austin based non-profit and funded by a Federal Transit Administration grant. SNAPP works collaboratively with the City of Austin and partners with other non-profit organizations, blogs, media outlets, and integrated efforts to make sure as many people as possible have the opportunity to give their input.

SNAPPatx gives people easy, 24/7 opportunities to use social media, you also help us make improvements.
Opening up decision-making for review and scrutiny

Social Media and Planning: Benefits

Introduction
This wiki is a forum for information and commentary on multi-municipal planning. Pennsylvania’s unique approach to regional land use planning. It is intended as a resource for Pennsylvania's planning community, and for anyone interested in sound land use management in the commonwealth. Its contents are based on (1) research conducted by 10,000 Friends of Pennsylvania for its report Plan Regionally, Implement Locally: An Evaluation of Multi-municipal Planning and Implementation in Pennsylvania; (2) a series of roundtable discussions conducted by 10,000 Friends and sponsored by the Pennsylvania Local Government Training Partners; (3) contributions from members of this wiki. The site Friends of Pennsylvania serves as moderator of the wiki.

How to Contribute to This Site
Anyone may view and edit this site. You can add in
1. To add a comment: At the top of each page, be a new page where you can add your comments elaborating upon the contents of the original page.
2. To edit a page: You can edit or add to the original page you would like to change. Use this option to express an opinion, use the discussion link.
3. Email your comments: If you'd like to contribute your comments to Grant Ewin at grant@1000friends.org.

Transportation
Overview

PLAN 2040
Maps
Get Involved
What We've Heard
Background Information
Plan Documents
Quick Guides and Other Resources
Glossary Terms

Transportation Investment Act of 2013
Regional Transportation Plan
Transportation Improvement Program

Equitable Target Areas (ETA)

In early 2011, ARC developed the Equitable Target Area (ETA) Index to identify...
Social Media and Planning: Benefits

Foster common interest networking and advancing democracy

Lens on Atlanta is a first-of-its-kind, online social community — a family of websites that focuses on civic engagement, education and the arts. Come participate to build stronger relationships and elevate issues you care about to make metro Atlanta a better place!
The social networking options offer planners:

- Excellent tools for disseminating information
- A more successful process when used in tandem with face-to-face communication
- A constant opportunity to educate on critical and timely issues through a more organic approach
How can social media help us cope with the challenges of an aging community with different needs?

Are you having a challenge analyzing and reporting back the input collected in a timely manner so that you can indeed address the issue in a timely manner, which is what social media is best at?

How do you get people to your site/to engage in your platforms?

If you receive a comment that isn’t substantive, how do you handle answering these questions? Do you edit/police your platforms?

Words of advice for how others can change their organization’s culture and skills toward a social media/network focus?

Are there new skills/new tools on the horizon that will help the planning community when it comes to communicating and engaging the public?