June 13, 2018

Picture it: your organization plans a community town hall meeting about a set of critical upcoming ballot proposals. Elected officials and department heads are called in to present, posters and info guides are created, the media is notified—and not a single person shows.
About the Alliance

Convene and Engage Networks of Thought Leaders

Provide Training to help Organizations Build and Sustain a Culture of Innovation

Identify, Distribute Leading & Emerging Practices/Trends Important to Local Gov
How To: GoToWebinar

Clicking the rectangle will place you in full screen mode.

Clicking the arrow on your Go To Webinar Toolbox opens and closes your viewer.

All attendees are muted, but we do want your participation!

Please ask your questions using your Go To Webinar Toolbox throughout the webinar
Today’s Presenters

With:

Dianne Miller
Assistant City Administrator
City of Eagan, MN

Kara Sokol
Director of Communications
City of Ferndale, MI
from BOMB to BOOM

How the City of Ferndale Used a Communications Bomb to Grow its Citizen Engagement

By Kara Sokol
Communications Director
City of Ferndale, Michigan
Let me *start* with a *story.*
And nobody showed.
What went wrong?

We used: Charts Graphs News media Twitter Hashtags PowerPoint presentations Council meetings FAQs Brochures The City's Facebook Town halls Seniors meeting Signage Speakers
What did we learn?

- Share stories, not stats
- Ask, listen, and be willing to change
- Meetings are out; P-2-P is in
- Love your "mistakes"

Go where the people are.
Share stories, not stats
Go where the people are

12,383 members

6,348 members

Crickets
Ask, listen, and be willing to change
Meetings are out; P-2-P is in
Love your mistakes (avoid the temptation to point fingers!)
Now, let’s talk about a more recent project.
Ferndale's Moving to a New Mobile Pay App!

Goal

Fear
We employed just three communications strategies.

NO: Charts  Graphs  News media
PowerPoint presentations  Cable
Council meetings  Press releases
Brochures  Town halls  Articles
I'm excited to announce that the City will be transitioning later this month to a new parking payment system/app. It's better all around and definitely worth the change! Have questions? I have answers—ask away.

Faster & easier, less information to enter (no more vehicle info or zone numbers), and FREE session extensions. Meet ParkFerndale, the City's new parking payment app, debuting later this month!
Rachel Bair: Is this something that will save the city money? Are our taxes paying for the transition? Will the kiosks work with the new payment system?

Kara Sokol: Hi Rachel! The costs are roughly the same, and will actually provide cost savings to users and residents by eliminating the 35-cent parking session extension fee that ParkMobile was charging. No taxpayer money has or will be used to fund anything parking related—our parking system is self-funded, which means proceeds go directly back into enforcement and system support. And yes, all kiosks and street meters will work with the new system... no replacement of hardware, we'll just do a replacement of stickers on the meters with the new information.

Ryan Busch: Earlier statements have said that the new parking system overlaps the Detroit system. Are these both integrated into ONE interface?

Kara Sokol: It's better for a few reasons. First, we've done away with the need to enter all of your vehicle information, as well as parking zones—you'll just enter a space number, and off you go.

Extending your parking sessions can now be done for free—no more transaction fee.

You'll receive a quick email receipt at the end of your session... good for records or reimbursement for work trips to Ferndale. You can also log in to your account and view/manage your past sessions and spends.

And the parking rate is staying the same! No increases.

Kurt Kruschinska: if it overlapped with the Detroit system, that would be fantastic.

Kara Sokol: Both cities will be using Passport Parking, but there will be two different apps. If you prefer streamlining, you can park using the larger Passport Parking app—you'll just need to know Ferndale's zone number (we'll publicize that with the launch).

Josh Thomas: What's better about it? Or better yet, what's different about it? Does it cost more for residents to park? What's the cost to the city?

Timothy Discenna: Good question. There was no explanation as to why it's better.

Kara Sokol: It's better for a few reasons. First, we've done away with the need to enter all of your vehicle information, as well as parking zones—you'll just enter a space number, and off you go.

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Sean Gauvreau: I like using the app to pay and have never minded knowing my zone/space # but as long as it stays as easy as it is now IDGAF. Thanks ferndale.

Kara Sokol: I think we should use "as long as it stays easy IDGAF" as our headline. 😊
In the **three days** since launch, we’ve had . . .

- 2,200+ views of video on Facebook and YouTube
- **166 comments & questions**
- Reach of 7,173 on City’s Facebook share
- **Viewed by more than 9,000 in community groups**
- Information shared on our behalf 34 times
Your community is engaged somewhere; discover where that is, share openly, and residents/visitors will become your organization’s brand ambassadors.
Questions
Comments
Connect

ksokol@ferndalemi.gov
facebook.com/karasokol
Linkedin.com/in/karasokol
FABULOUS FLOPS!

Dianne Miller, Assistant City Administrator
Eagan, Minnesota
What is Eagan Forward?

• City Council was ready to move beyond internal goal setting

• Hired Rebecca Ryan of Next Generation Consulting to lead a 20-year visioning effort

• Engaged residents by asking, “What is your one wish for Eagan?”

• Challenged our community to think about the legacy they want to leave for their children and grandchildren
Our Mission: ENGAGEMENT

- Chalkboards (numerous languages)
- Facilitated focus groups
- online chalkboard for ideas (no rules!)
- Business white boards
- Go to the people!
Mission Accomplished!

• Thousands of people responded to the call and it quickly became the **BEST COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT EFFORT** in Eagan’s history.
Pulling it All Together

Consolidated Feedback and trend analysis to set vision

Strategies are set to achieve the vision

Aspirational cities identified and benchmarked against Eagan
www.cityofeagan.com/Eagan Forward
The 6 Strategies of Eagan Forward

• #1 Eagan is a Place for all People
• #2 Eagan is a Healthy City
• #3 Eagan is Creative and Innovative
• #4 Eagan is a Destination Community
• #5 Eagan has an Updated Brand
• #6 Putting it to Work
So, where’s the flop, Dianne?
Eagan Forward Study Action Teams

Team #1: Keep Seniors Engaged

Team #2: Amenities for Millennials & Baby Boomers

Team #3: Become a welcoming community

Team #4: Amenities for families and school-aged children

Team #5: Eagan makerspace

Team #6: Economic strategy for Eagan’s arts and cultural sector

Team #7: Community art center

Team #8: Attract new restaurants and retail
The Dream and the Vision for Study Action Teams

• Our citizens are going to join the teams enthusiastically at the launch party

• Orderly teams of 10-12 people will be formed with strong leaders

• They will meet for 6-9 months, making recommendations

• They will complete their work, appreciating the opportunity to be a part of the inclusive process
And enthusiasm is what we got!
Setting the Stage…

- 200+ volunteers on eight study action teams
- Teams were asked to select their own leader
- A timeframe of 6-9 months was provided for each team to complete their actions and recommendations
- Execute the strategies outlined in the Eagan Forward Plan
- Making partnerships would be critical to your success
- This is a 20 year vision; don’t expect results overnight
The teams are off and running...
The Error of our Ways

• Leaders’ motivations and experience with the City varied
• No team budgets
• Staff’s hands-off approach resulted in a disconnect between the City and the teams
• Citizens’ expectations didn’t match reality, resulting in frustration
• Very limited understanding of the local government process

What’s a CIP?

They couldn’t even buy us cookies?

Comp Guide Plan...how long will that take?

I knew they wouldn’t follow through!

How are we to know where to find money?
From Fabulous Flop to Fabulous Feat

- City leadership started Team Leader meetings; established relationships and reporting mechanisms with the Council
- Got rid of the bad apples
- Provided Local Government 101—budgets, CIP, legal authority, etc.
- We bought the cookies!
- Document and shared team successes with the community, teams, and City Council

Now I know I should have been patient.
We have the best staff in Eagan.
We made that happen!
What can we do next?
I see that’s planned in the 2019 CIP.
Let’s celebrate and remember…

The best don’t rest!
Questions?
Q&A

With:

Dianne Miller
Assistant City Administrator
City of Eagan, MN

Kara Sokol
Director of Communications
City of Ferndale, MI
Save the Date!

Upcoming learning events:

http://transformgov.org/virtual-events

- 6/14/2018: Team Triumphs: A 2018 Innovation Academy Showcase -
https://transformgov.org/events/team-triumphs-2018-innovation-academy-showcase

- 6/20/2018: So You Have a New Strategic Plan - Now What? -
https://transformgov.org/events/so-you-have-new-strategic-plan-now-what

- 6/27/2018: Making the Grade: In-House Dashboards for a Data-Driven Culture -
https://transformgov.org/events/making-grade-house-dashboards-data-driven-culture

- 7/12/2018: A Strategic Plan for Smart Cities: Going Beyond Technology -
https://transformgov.org/events/strategic-plan-smart-cities-going-beyond-technology

- 7/18/2018: Neighborhood Engagement Program: Empowering Residents and Building Community -
https://transformgov.org/events/neighborhood-engagement-program-empowering-residents-and-building-community

- Civic Innovation Lab: Ideas with Love on 6/18/2018: https://transformgov.org/events/civic-innovation-lab-ideas-love

- Workforce of the Future Workshop – TN on 7/24/2018:
https://transformgov.org/events/workforce-future-workshop-tn
Turning Fabulous Flops to Fabulous Feats in Community Engagement

Thank you for joining us today!