

Association of Scottish Community Councils



# Stakeholder Analysis

Information Gathering Tool Kit

# Introduction

There are two overriding reasons to identify and involve stakeholders in a planning process. One is that from stakeholders, you can get values-based information: find out what is important to whom and why it is important. This needs to be taken under consideration along with factual information obtained from studies, data, and resource experts. Second, we find the end result is more likely to have broad-based approval because, if stakeholders are involved throughout the process, the final recommendations represent compromises among potentially conflicting objectives.

## Definition

A person who has something to gain or lose by the outcomes of a planning process or project.



## Essentials

Business people, elected officials, landowners, conservation groups, recreation groups, historical and cultural groups, and other individuals and organizations who have an invested interest or involvement in what happens to a resource are all stakeholders. They will either benefit or suffer from what is being proposed. In the case of elected officials, the project impacts their constituents.

A hypothetical example of two stakeholders is a canoe group and landowners. If the project proposes increasing the number of access points to a river, that may benefit a canoe group but be perceived as a detriment to riparian landowners. By identifying and including both of these stakeholders in the process, there is an opportunity to better understand the community's needs and diffuse potential proponents of a project.

It is valuable to keep stakeholders involved whether informally or by asking them to participate on a task force, advisory group, or steering committee. Never assume an individual's or group's position, whether positive or negative, based on past affiliations, political standings, or other activities.



# How to Use It

## 1. Make a list

Look at key resources, issues, current and potential users, businesses, traffic patterns and anything else that will be affected by the planning process. Then list people and organisations that have a related interest and/or current involvement. This can include neighbourhood, civic and cultural groups in the project area. Also remember to list affected elected officials, Community council members, municipal leaders, and MSP's. Make special note of key players, and be sure to include those who may oppose the project as well as those who are likely to support it. Check the list with other people to get their input.

## 2. Create a strategy

Decide ahead of time what you want from each of the people and organisations. Is it to keep them informed and seek their support? Do you want them to appear or speak at a special event? Do you want access to their mailing lists? Do you need their support for funding or want them to participate on a task force? Identify who will make each contact, when, and if, or how often, there will be follow up.



## 3. Prepare to meet

Make appointments to meet with individuals or key contacts within an office or organisation. You may only have a few minutes to speak, so prepare in advance

short statements that address important issues. This includes information about your project, what you want from them, and how involvement may benefit them. Leave behind flyers, newsletters, or brochures that explain the project in more depth.

#### **4. Keep in touch**

In addition to any group mailings, personal letters and phone calls will keep the project on the front burner. This is especially true for elected officials.

### **Use It If.....**

- You want to build consensus among people who have different viewpoints.
- You are building a strong, inclusive public involvement campaign.
- You are trying to draw a lot of attention to a resource and its value in the community.

### **Not Recommended If...**

You cannot find anyone who has an invested interest in the resource or the process.

